

The University of Toronto and Aboriginal Residential Schools:

A Silent Partner

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The Indian Residential School System in Canada, which lasted from 1879 to 1986, has been categorized as one of the darkest periods in Canadian history. The impact of this dim historical era has been deeply tragic and has affected many generations. To make matters worse, there is a great deal still unknown about this aspect of Canadian history. Great strides, however, are being made to remedy this. A clear example of this is the newly created Indian Residential Schools Truth and Reconciliation Commission, whose mandate is to inform all Canadians about what happened in these schools and “to document the truth of survivors, their families, communities and anyone who has been personally affected by the Indian Residential Schools legacy.”<sup>1</sup> While the existing historiography of residential schools situates the schools in the context of government relations and the relations of Aboriginal Canadians and various churches, this paper will add to the body of research on residential schools by addressing a new site of relations: academic institutions and residential schools. The role of Canadian universities in creating and maintaining aboriginal residential schools is a topic that, for the most part, has been largely ignored. This paper is meant to be an entry point into a much-needed discussion about the role that one academic institution in particular, the University of Toronto (U of T), played in the development and support of residential school system. It is an administrative history that addresses the broader institutional connections between the University of Toronto and the residential schools system.

The connection between the University of Toronto and the aboriginal residential school system was largely an informal one, led by individual members of the university community. Most of the connections that this researcher found came out of the school’s

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<sup>1</sup> Indian Residential Schools Truth and Reconciliation Website. <http://www.trc-cvr.ca/about.html>, Accessed on 3 March, 2009.

denominational colleges and missionary organizations on campus. This paper largely explores the role of Anglican organizations and colleges at U of T, as these connections seem to be the most deeply rooted. Further research needs to be done, however, in regards to connections between other denominations with a historical presence on campus. Knowing that the topic of this paper has been extremely under-investigated, research for the paper was conducted with the aim of finding out as much as possible within a short time period. As such, the scope of the paper is large and covers activities that happened over a large time period. Greater detail needs to be explored for many of the topics covered in the paper. The gendered component of many of the organizational activities, for example, deserves to be further analyzed on its own. Connections between the Department of Social Work and preparations for students to work in residential schools also need to be further investigated. In addition, although the topic of this paper is broader institutional connections between U of T and residential schools, the role of U of T in creating racist discourse about the Canadian aboriginal community more broadly, for example through publishing and widely disseminating racist historiographies of aboriginals in Canadian history texts, also needs to be further explored.

While conducting research for this paper, the author discovered that a great deal of historical records that would contribute to a better understanding of the role of U of T in creating and maintaining residential schools, are incomplete and disorganized, were never kept to begin with, or as one university archivist fears, have been destroyed. As this is the case, it is particularly alarming that the work of the Indians Residential Schools Truth and Reconciliation Commission has faced so many delays. Due to the lack of historical records, oral testimonies from former, and current, faculty and students at U of T who have

knowledge of activities in relation to residential schools, is greatly needed. There is some urgency to conducting these interviews considering the age of the demographic involved.

The paper begins by looking at the broader ideas that guided the creation of residential schools. This section sheds light on the University of Toronto's participation in creating the intellectual milieu that guided residential schools. The primary document that is analyzed in this section is a collection of papers from a conference at the University of Toronto in 1939 entitled "The North American Indian Today." The second section situates residential schools into the broader institutional history of the University of Toronto. Because the paper largely focuses on connections between residential schools and the religious colleges and missionary organizations on campus, this section pays particular attention to the federation of religious colleges with the university. The third section looks at the missionary impulse on campus, an impulse that dates back to before the doors of the university even opened. After providing a brief account of Anglican missions in Canadian aboriginal communities, an analysis of the workings of two missionary organizations on campus is provided: The Canadian School of Missions and the Anglican Women's Training College (AWTC). Greater attention is paid to the history of AWTC, as it had a formal specialized program to prepare women missionaries to work in residential schools. The fourth section of the paper draws attention to activities on campus involving the recruitment of U of T students for work in residential schools. The final part of the paper showcases two members of the University of Toronto community who fought publically against the residential school system.

Guiding Ideas and Principles: “The Indian problem is one of acculturation”

Dating back to the time of Confederation, federal policy towards Aboriginal Canadians has historically been one of assimilation. Sir John A. Macdonald, Canada’s first Prime Minister, once told Parliament: “do away with the tribal system and assimilate the Indian people in all respects with the inhabitants of the Dominion, as speedily as they are fit to change.”<sup>2</sup> The federal policy was one designed to remove Aboriginal peoples and communities from a “savage” to “civilized” state. In doing so, Canadians would become a united non-Aboriginal, Christian community.<sup>3</sup> At the centre of this policy was education.

Of all the actions that could be taken, it was believed that education held the greatest promise for successfully achieving the goal of assimilation.<sup>4</sup> These sentiments are made clear by the words of Frank Oliver in 1908, the Minister of Indian Affairs at the time. He declared that education would “elevate the Indian from his condition of savagery” and make “him a self-supporting member of the State, and eventually a citizen in good standing.”<sup>5</sup> In order to learn how to be a civilized Canadian citizen, it was thought that the aboriginal child had to be removed from their communities and families and their “savage” ways and as such, residential schools were viewed as the optimal method to promote assimilation. According to John Milloy, “Almost no one involved in Indian Affairs...seemed to have any doubt that separation was justified and necessary or that residential schools were the most efficacious educational instrument.”<sup>6</sup> Upon coming

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<sup>2</sup> Quoted in John Milloy, “A National Crime: The Canadian Government and the Residential School System, 1879-1986,” (Manitoba: The University of Manitoba Press, 1999), 6.

<sup>3</sup> Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, Chapter 10: Residential Schools, 1996.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Quoted in John Milloy, “A National Crime,” 3.

<sup>6</sup> John Milloy, “A National Crime,” 28.

to the schools, children would symbolically leave their culture and enter into the “White world” by having their hair cut short and their traditional clothing replaced by European clothes and boots. In all activities, the children were to learn the “Canadian” way.<sup>7</sup>

Although the churches and government officials may have run the schools and enforced a mission of assimilating aboriginal children, the principles that guided them were shared with the majority of the White Canadian population. As argued by Milloy, “Officials and missionaries, even if they operated in remote corners of the land, did not stand outside Canadian society. They shared with other Canadians a discourse about Aboriginal people that informed their activities and, in this case, their educational plans.”<sup>8</sup> The University of Toronto and its administrators, faculty and students, played a role in creating and enforcing a discourse of assimilation. Evidence of this is found in the papers presented and discussed at a conference held at the University of Toronto in 1939 entitled “The North American Indian Today.”

The 1939 conference was co-sponsored by the University of Toronto and Yale University. It took place from September 4-16<sup>th</sup>. In 1943, a collection of the papers presented at the conference was published in a book edited by Charles Loram, Chair of the Department of Race Relations at Yale and Thomas McIlwraith, a Professor of Anthropology at the University of Toronto. This collection provides incredible detail of the discourse that informed the curriculum and overall mission of residential schools, as well as all relations with Aboriginal peoples and communities, more generally. It is significant to note that the conference took place at the height of residential schools in

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid, 37.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, 26.

Canada. At their peak in the 1930s, 80 residential schools operated in seven provinces with an annual enrolment of 17,000 students.

Missionaries, government representatives, residential school principals, academics, church representatives, merchant and traders, as well as directors, curators and representatives from museums, attended the conference. Few members from Aboriginal communities were in attendance and none presented papers or lead discussions. This is an interesting fact considering the objective of the conference was to “plan with them [aboriginals in Canada and the United States] for their future.”<sup>9</sup> In the beginning of the edited collection of papers, McIlwraith states the objectives of the conference. He writes,

Those aware of the problems comprise a small fraction of the people of North America, including Indians, government officials, missionaries, scientists, merchants and traders in the pioneer belts, and a few of the “general public.” The aim of the University of Toronto-Yale Conference was to bring together representatives drawn from these groups to discuss those problems in an informal and unofficial way. There was no expectation that the Conference could settle vexed matters, but since understanding comes from discussion, it was hoped that a sharing knowledge would be definitely helpful to all concerned.<sup>10</sup>

He further stated that conference participants wished that a volume of the papers submitted be issued to “both to give a permanence to the views expressed, and to enable them to reach a wider public.”<sup>11</sup> This statement demonstrates the desire of the University of Toronto and members of its faculty, as well as all attendees of the conference, to shape the discourse and agenda concerning the future of aboriginal Canadians. The prevailing theme of the conference centered on the desirability and inevitability of assimilation. The

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<sup>9</sup> “The North American Indian Today: University of Toronto- Yale University Seminar Conferences,” Edited by: C.L. Loram and T.F. McIlwraith, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1943), 3.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid, ix.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

only difference of opinion between the speakers was over the timing and speed of the process of assimilation.<sup>12</sup> Those in favour of a slower process of assimilation, however, still believed that it was unavoidable.

McIlwraith gave credit for the initiation of the conference to Charles Loram. The question of education for minorities was one of keen interest for Loram, who chaired several conferences on the topic in the late nineteen thirties.<sup>13</sup> In his book "The Highest State of White Supremacy: The Origins of Segregation in South Africa and the American South," John Whitson Cell makes reference to Charles Loram's professional career and describes him as a 'humane paternalist.'<sup>14</sup> He writes,

...the educationist Charles Loram, might contend that even beyond a certain stage the African child's intelligence was probably not inferior. But Loram...argues that education must be practical, shaped according to the child's background and needs as an adult member of society that unfortunately would remain racially discriminatory.

Whitson Cell further goes on to state that Loram supported James Barry Munnik Hertzog, South Africa's prime minister in 1924. An Afrikaner nationalist, Hertzog established Afrikaans as an official language and laid the basis for apartheid by supporting racial segregation. Loram demonstrated support for Hertzog's segregationist program by helping him draft speeches that defending it.<sup>15</sup> Loram brought his advocacy efforts for initial segregation and eventual assimilation, to the 1939 conference at the University of Toronto, an agenda that residential schools in North America attempted to embody.

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<sup>12</sup> "The North American Indian Today," 7.

<sup>13</sup> See Clive Whithead's "Colonial Educators: The British Indian and Colonial Educators," New York: I.B. Tauris & Company, 2003.

<sup>14</sup> John Whitson Cell, "The Highest State of White Supremacy: The Origins of Segregation in South Africa and the American South," (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 221.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

According to Loram, “the Indian Problem [was] one of acculturation” and “In the end, of course, the civilization of the white man must prevail.”<sup>16</sup> In Loram’s introduction to the conference and its objectives, he set a tone that would be carried out through the entirety of the conference. He stated that,

This year the University of Toronto and Yale University have invited a number of Indians, anthropologists, sociologists, officials, missionaries, traders, and others to confer together on the important question of the past, present, and possible future of the... Indians in the United States and... Canada, in the hope that in the atmosphere of a great university...we may reveal the actual condition today of the *white man’s Indian wards*...(emphasis mine).<sup>17</sup>

Following Loram’s lead, a number of other presenters referred to the parental responsibility of White Canadians to raise their Indian neighbours out of their “savage” ways. The goal of the 1939 conference was not to preserve Indian culture, rather, it was to progressively weaken and separate individuals from it.<sup>18</sup> As noted by Alain Cairns, the guiding belief of the conference was “that Indian peoples were to be the recipients of change, not the choosers.”<sup>19</sup> In line with general sentiments of the time, the presenters at the conference advocated for an agenda of assimilation with education at the center.

Loram considered himself to be part of a group that he deemed, the ‘formal acculturators.’ In contrast to ‘informal acculturators’ who “know little or care less about Indians,” this group believed in a slower process of assimilation.<sup>20</sup> He explains that formal acculturators,

...see the inevitability of [the Indian civilization’s] replacement by the dominant modern civilization of the white man. They wish, however, to direct this cultural change, to make it a gradual process, to avoid as far as possible

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<sup>16</sup> “The North American Indian Today,” 5.

<sup>17</sup> “The North American Indian Today,” 3.

<sup>18</sup> Alan Cairns, “Citizens Plus: Aboriginal Peoples and the Canadian State,” (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2000), 54.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> “The North American Indian Today,” 8.

the dysphoria, or sense of confusion of disturbance, which characterizes sudden and haphazard culture contact, and to prepare the Indians by education, using this term in its broadest sense, for their inevitable acculturation. In short, they wish to apply to the phenomenon of acculturation...<sup>21</sup>

According to Loram, education was the cornerstone for formal acculturation. Many of the conference participants, in fact, were of the opinion that education was a critical instrument in the process of assimilation. For example, in his 'Valedictory Address' for the conference, Reverend E.W. Wallace, President and Chancellor of Trinity College at the University of Toronto, reiterated this importance. After emphasizing the need for the work of academic scientists and missionaries to inform the decisions of politicians and lawyers, Wallace went on to argue the importance of educational ministry. He stated, "...the greatest change in Christian missionary work in the last quarter century, has been the improved character of its education. The educational missionary has something of incalculable value to contribute to the world..."<sup>22</sup> Coming from the president of an Anglican College at U of T, the denomination that perhaps had the strongest ties to residential schools at the University of Toronto, this is a significant statement.

Other academics from the University of Toronto present at the conference, most of who fell into Loram's category of formal acculturators, also pushed for the future agenda for Indians to be based on the process of assimilation. C.W.M Hart, a professor of sociology at the University of Toronto, for example, advocated for a middle way between complete eradication and complete preservation of Indian culture. He argued that, "any such middle way must clearly recognize two facts: a) that the goal of all Indian administration and Indian education is assimilation, and b) that any rules and regulations,

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> "The North American Indian Today," 342.

administrative or legislative, made to ease the contact of the two cultures should be relative to local specific situations.”<sup>23</sup> The University of Toronto academics, who presented papers that addressed the topic of assimilation, seemed to agree that a gradual as opposed to hasty process of assimilation was the better option. ‘Formal’ or ‘Informal’ acculturators, their view of acculturation remained one that was based on unequal power relations.

In his paper entitled “Problems in Indian Education in Canada, J.F. Woodsworth, a principle of a residential school in Alberta, described what he viewed as the positive contributions of residential schools. He stated that, “The residential school during these years has been a most effective and efficient instrument in the process of assimilation. The development of the residential school from the white man’s standpoint has been rapid and satisfactory. For the most part, its work has been steady and practical, giving the children a wholesome, healthy home...”<sup>24</sup> These words from Woodsworth, captured in a publication that aimed to inform the general public and academic community of issues regarding “The North American Indian Today,” masked the realities of the poor conditions that characterized residential schools, conditions which greatly contradicted a vision of a “wholesome, healthy home.”

The role of missionaries in carrying out processes of assimilation was a topic widely addressed at the conference. In line with the view of Wallace, speakers that addressed the topic of missions in Aboriginal communities, saw educational ministry as

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<sup>23</sup> C.M.W Hart, “The Problem of Laws,” in *The North American Indian Today: University of Toronto-Yale University Seminar Conferences*, Edited by: C.L. Loram and T.F. McIlwraith, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1943), 253

<sup>24</sup> J.F. Woodsworth, “Problems of Indian Education in Canada,” in *The North American Indian Today: University of Toronto- Yale University Seminar Conferences*, Edited by: C.L. Loram and T.F. McIlwraith, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1943), 272.

the cornerstone of their “success.” As argued by T.B.R. Westgate, Secretary of the Indian and Eskimo Residential School Commission of the Church of England in Winnipeg, “it is the well established conviction of the missions engaged in this work that the residential schools are indispensable if the Indian is ever to be enabled to make the fullest contribution of which he is capable to either the Christian Church or the Christian state.”<sup>25</sup> Christian missionary out-reach in residential schools was a topic that was familiar throughout the halls of the University of Toronto. The campus had a long history of preparing students to be sent to residential schools. Before this history can be addressed, however, it is important to provide a brief history of the federation of U of T’s religious colleges.

#### The Federation of the Denominational Colleges:

On March 15<sup>th</sup>, 1827, King’s College, the precursor to the University of Toronto, was granted its royal charter by King George IV. In its almost two centuries of existence, U of T has been home to many infamous presidents, students and academics. It has also been the source of significant research achievements such as the discovery of insulin, the creation of the first electronic heart pacemaker, the single lung transplant and the discovery of the gene responsible for the most severe form of Alzheimer’s disease. Further, six Nobel Prize winners are U of T graduates.<sup>26</sup> An introduction to the university’s history in its entirety is beyond the scope of this paper and has been addressed in previous works.<sup>27</sup> However, as most of the formal and informal institutional

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<sup>25</sup> T.B.R Westgate, “The history, policy, and problems of protestant missions to the Indians in Canada,” in *The North American Indian Today: University of Toronto- Yale University Seminar Conferences*, Edited by: C.L. Loram and T.F. McIlwraith, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1943), 120.

<sup>26</sup> The University of Toronto Website, “A Rich Tradition,” <http://www.greatpast.utoronto.ca/>, accessed on April 28, 2009.

<sup>27</sup> For a detailed account of the University of Toronto’s history refer to: Friedland, Martin, “The University of Toronto: A History,” Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002.

connections between residential schools and U of T were rooted in the denominational colleges, it is necessary for their history be briefly addressed here. It is of particular importance that the history of the federation of the denominational colleges be addressed because although there may have been ties between the colleges and residential schools before they were federated, it would be inaccurate to include these in this analysis. It is for this reason that the author did not further analyze connections between the Jesuit Residential School at Spanish and Regis College, the graduate Jesuit College at U of T. Regis did not officially join the Toronto School of Theology until 1969, 11 years after Spanish was closed.

Traditionally, the history of the University of Toronto was rooted in religious affiliations. In 1826, John Strachan, the Archbishop of the Anglican Church in Toronto, left for England to present the case of the need for a University in Upper Canada. Strachan argued that that the university was to be run by members of the Church of England. The president, the university's charter stated, would for 'all times' be the archdeacon of Toronto. All members of the governing council would also have to subscribe to the 29 articles of Religion of the Church of England.<sup>28</sup> All did not warmly receive when Strachan, nor the charter when returned to Toronto in 1827.<sup>29</sup> The outlined administrative ties to the Anglican denomination did not sit well with many. Martin Friedland, states that "there was particular concern about a pamphlet Strachan had circulated in England to raise funds, which described the proposed university as a Church of England 'missionary college,' and greatly exaggerated the number of members of the

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<sup>28</sup> Martin Friedland, "The University of Toronto: A History," (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002), 8.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

Church of England in Upper Canada...”<sup>30</sup> The concern over the power of the Church of England in the control of the university was so great that it caused a fifteen-year delay in the construction of King’s College.<sup>31</sup> When King’s officially opened in June 1843, however, the influence of Anglicanism remained strong. The curriculum borrowed heavily from that of Trinity College, Dublin, and its students were overwhelmingly Anglican (22 of the first 26 students).<sup>32</sup>

On April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1849, Robert Baldwin, co-premier, introduced a bill into the parliament of the province of Canada to convert King’s College into the University of Toronto. If passed, the bill would completely secularize the university and such, eliminate any publically funded chairs of divinity and all religious tests for any member of the university, whether student or professor.<sup>33</sup> Baldwin argued that the bill would ensure “the abolishment of every religious observance which could possibly prove offensive to any proportion of the students attending the University.”<sup>34</sup> The bill past by a vote of 44 to 14 and became law on May 30, 1849. The University of Toronto came into existence on January 1, 1850.<sup>35</sup> Acting fast to re-establish an Anglican faith-based institution, within days Bishop Strachan started organizing a campaign for funds for his proposed new Church of England institution, Trinity College.<sup>36</sup> In early 1851, thanks largely to the fund-raising efforts of Strachan, twenty acres of land were purchased on the North side of Queen Street- now Trinity Bellwoods park and Trinity College opened in a half-completed building to 30 students on January 15, 1852. Being the staunchly

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<sup>30</sup> Martin Friedland, “The University of Toronto: A History,” 10.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid, 17.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid, 25.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid, 24.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid, 28.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid, 29.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

Anglican institution Strachan had hoped for, Trinity College students were unable to receive their degrees unless they declared allegiance to the Church of England.<sup>37</sup>

In 1852, an attempt was made to change the structure of the University.<sup>38</sup> The new structure would make the university an examining body, with the teaching left to affiliate denominational colleges and a non-denominational University College.<sup>39</sup> In September 1852 a bill was passed adopting the new model and it was given royal assent on April 22, 1853. Aside from Knox College, a Presbyterian divinity school, no other college joined. Although St. Michael's College expressed an interest in affiliation, the University rejected it.<sup>40</sup> It would not be until 1881 that St. Michael's would affiliate with the University of Toronto.<sup>41</sup> In 1885, Wycliffe College, an ecclesiastical college, became affiliated with the University of Toronto. Wycliffe had been originally founded in 1877 by Low Church Anglicans, a term used to describe Anglicans who place more emphasis on the Protestant nature of the faith and are more evangelical in nature. Trinity College did not join the University of Toronto until 1904, upon which time it relinquished its right to grant degrees in any faculty other than divinity.

The government introduced legislation in April 1887 to allow federation and was passed. The act would not be proclaimed in force, however, until Victoria College agreed to move to Toronto.<sup>42</sup> In late 1888, Victoria College decided to federate with the university and made the move from Cobourg to Toronto. Due to strong opposition to both the idea of federation and the move and subsequent delays, the act of 1887 was not

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid, 31.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid, 37.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid, 38.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid, 39.

<sup>42</sup> Martin Friedland, "The University of Toronto: A History," 109.

enforced until 1890 and the formal opening of the new Victoria College did not take place until October 1892.<sup>43</sup>

In 1944 four theological colleges on the University of Toronto campus—Emmanuel, Knox, Wycliffe, and the theological faculty of Trinity College formed the Toronto Graduate School of Theological Studies (TGSTS). The goal was to pool their resources together in order to create opportunities “for study beyond the regular theological course.”<sup>44</sup> TGSTS was both an impromptu and informal effort. Resultantly, by the 1960s the need for a more unified and strengthened coordination between the denominational colleges was becoming clear. At an annual meeting of the TGSTS on 25 November 1968, an initial concrete proposal to bring into being a Toronto School of Theology was made. According to John Webster Grant, the proposal “extended cooperative arrangements to the basic degree, laying down a common curriculum and common standards of admission and graduation, and requiring a certain amount of cross-registration among colleges.”<sup>45</sup> In 1969, TST came into existence. Today, the Toronto School of Theology (TST) and its member schools make up the largest ecumenical centre for theological education in the English-speaking world.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid, 111.

<sup>44</sup> John Webster Grant, “Toronto School of Theology: The Formative Years,” Ed. Brown, Graham, “Theological Education in Canada,” (United Church Publishing House, Toronto, 1988, pp. 49-71) 49.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid, 53.

<sup>46</sup> TST Website, <http://www.tst.edu/>, Accessed on November 3, 2008.

### Missionary Zeal:

“The missionary impulse is as old as Christianity itself,” said John Webster Grant, a former professor of Church history at the University of Toronto.<sup>47</sup> The first time this missionary impulse was directed at Canadian aboriginals was in July of 1534, when Jacques Cartier erected a cross and told a group of Iroquoians in what is now Quebec that they should look to it for redemption.<sup>48</sup> For centuries to follow, missionaries from all Christian denominations were sent out to convert Canadian Aboriginal communities and peoples, an act that was deemed natural and morally just by the majority of Canadians. In more recent decades, however, it is no longer the acts of Indians that are under fire, but rather those of Christian missionaries. As stated by Grant,

Christian missionary activity, as one of the most conspicuous expressions of European presence, has provided critics with an obvious target... By their very presence, it is said, they prepared the way for land-grabs, validated the government’s good faith in treaty making, and provided spiritual justification for the European’s sense of destiny. Such criticism has effectively discredited an enterprise that not long ago was almost universally applauded.<sup>49</sup>

As some of the oldest and largest religious training centres in the country, the denominational colleges at The University of Toronto took part in preparing students and faculty for missionary work in aboriginal communities.

Since the time it was but an idea in the mind of a few eager settlers, the University of Toronto embraced a spirit of Christian missions. The university was seen as a vehicle through which a civilized European way of life could be diffused throughout the colony. Civilizing the country’s native “savages” was part of this mission. Envisioning ‘a college of a higher class’ for Upper Canada, John Graves Simcoe, the first lieutenant governor,

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<sup>47</sup> Grant, John Webster, “Moon of Wintertime: Missionaries and the Indians of Canada in Encounter since 1534, (University of Toronto Press, 1984), 9.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid, 3.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid, 204.

wrote to the Anglican bishop of Quebec in 1796 stating that the university would 'have a great influence in civilizing the Indians.'<sup>50</sup>

As demonstrated in the previous section, the University of Toronto was built on a foundation of Christian morals and principles, which subsequently became engrained in the institution. As the university was originally built as an Anglican institution, and more generally a Christian institution, it is unsurprising that a missionary zeal was commonplace on campus from the days the University first opened in 1850 until the 1960s. As this section of the paper will largely focus on analyzing two Christian missionary associations on campus with strong Anglican affiliations, the Canadian School for Missions (CSM) and the Anglican Women's Training College (AWTC), it is critical to briefly address the central role missionary activities have played in the Anglican religion in Canada. It is important to note, however, that missionary activities were not exclusive to the Anglican Church but rather were, and remain, central to the work of many Christian denominations in Canada. Similarly, a focus on missions was also reflected in the curriculum and activities of many of the denominational colleges of U of T beyond Trinity and Wycliffe College. Emmanuel College for example, had a long history of students and faculty that were actively involved in missionary activities in both Canada and overseas.

From the time Anglicans first arrived in Canada, they identified their Church as a missionary organization. For Anglicans, Christian missions meant giving Christian service and witness to non-Christians and aiding new congregations as they tried to

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<sup>50</sup> Quoted in Martin Friedland, "The University of Toronto: A History," 5.

become financially stable.<sup>51</sup> In his 2004 historical account of Anglicans in Canada, Alan Hayes, the current director of the Toronto School of Theology, wrote, “Being an Anglican meant being a member of a missionary church, and that meant growing with the country, bringing the Gospel to its indigenous people, and participating in the evangelization of the world.”<sup>52</sup>

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, Indian residential schools began to feature prominently in Anglican missionary activities. Support for these efforts was widely solicited in congregations throughout the country. As described by Hayes, “By the 1940s domestic and overseas missions and Indian residential schools enjoyed prominence in Anglican periodicals, parish programming, and Church budgets at the national, regional, and local levels.”<sup>53</sup> There were two English missionary organizations that operated in Canada that were crucial to the organization and sponsorships of home and foreign missions: The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (SPG) and the Church Missionary Society (CMS). It is this second organization, CMS and its Canadian predecessor, the Missionary Society of the Church of England in Canada (MSCC), which plays prominently into the story of the relations between the University of Toronto and aboriginal residential schools.

Unaccepted by the SPG and its high-church principles, a group of lay people and clergy with evangelical sympathies founded the CMS in 1799.<sup>54</sup> According to Hayes, for nineteenth century Anglicans, the term evangelical held negative perceptions linked to “the theological authority of the Bible alone and stress on the personal dimensions of

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<sup>51</sup> Alan Hayes, “Anglicans in Canada: Controversy and Identity in Historical Perspective,” (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2004), 11.

<sup>52</sup> Alan Hayes, “Anglicans in Canada,” 11.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid, 16.

faith and vocation.”<sup>55</sup> High Church Anglicans emphasized what Hayes refers to as ‘the corporate dimensions of faith,’ which include the upholding of formalities of tradition such as a strong sacramental and liturgical life and reverence to Church leaders.<sup>56</sup> According to Hayes, evangelicals were not only unpopular with members of the high church because of their theology, but also as a result of their “meddlesome, disruptive social activism, which they applied in campaigns against slavery and educational programs for the underprivileged.”<sup>57</sup> Hayes goes on to explain that friction also existed between the SPG and CMS because they had different priorities for home missions. He states, “The mandate for the SPG was to serve settlers and native people under British authority; the CMS wanted to convert “the heathen” – that is, non Christians.”<sup>58</sup> In light of their mandate for home missions, the high church’s characterization of evangelicals as ‘disruptive social activists,’ is clearly a historically subjective phrase.

In 1820, Rev. John West, the first CMS missionary to British North America, was sent to Red River, south of Lake Winnipeg. Soon after his post, he approached the CMS about funding Indian schools at Red River. The CMS took on the project. West later published a journal of his time as a missionary in Red River. His journal appealed widely to Anglicans across Canada. Its broad appeal provides insight into why missions to the Northwest played such a central role in the Church’s identity and vocation.<sup>59</sup> According to Hayes, the interest in this work was largely due to four factors: the romantic elements of the missions he described, the fascination of the Indian ‘Other,’ the

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<sup>55</sup> Alan Hayes, “Anglicans in Canada,” 16.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid, 17

<sup>59</sup> The title of West’s Journal was “The Substance of a Journal During a Residence at the Red River Colony, British North America: and Frequent Excursions among the North-West American Indians in the Years 1820, 1821, 1822, 1823.”

dependence on eternal salvation on saving souls, and lastly, like every good adventure story, there was a villain. In this case the villain was painted to be the unbelieving European men who drank too much, “mistreated women, and harassed and exploited Indians.”<sup>60</sup> Of all of its missions, ones to aboriginal communities were the most popular for CMS supporters.<sup>61</sup> Describing missions to northern communities in romantic and heroic terms is common in many of the documents that were created to entice Canadians, including students from the University of Toronto, to head north for service. A couple of such documents will be further explored below.

Among missionary activities, Christian schools figured prominently. Although education had been regarded as invaluable to the work of Indian missions since the outset, Grant states that, “When the Davin Report of 1879 gave it national priority and opened new sources for funding to the churches, education took on added importance and came in the end to overshadow all other types of work.”<sup>62</sup> This expansion was not limited to the Anglicans; all denominations greatly expanded their educational programs during this time.<sup>63</sup> The CMS continued to support missions to aboriginal communities until the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century when it adopted a policy of gradual withdrawal, greatly impacting residential schools for the next couple of decades.

Between 1903 and 1920, as the CMS began to withdraw from Canadian work, the majority of British missionaries returned home, taking with them large amounts of funding. The Missionary Society of the Church of England in Canada (MSCC), which had formed in 1902 as the Anglican national missionary society, could hardly match the

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<sup>60</sup> Alan Hayes, “Anglicans in Canada,” 19.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> Grant, John Webster, “Moon of Wintertime,” 176

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

funding nor personnel and expertise that the CMS had been putting into projects in the western dioceses.<sup>64</sup> Things changed around 1920, however, when the MSCC began to gain support and authority via the Anglican Forward Movement, a strong economy following WWI, improved cooperation with the Women's Auxiliary, and improved marketing and public relations.<sup>65</sup>

### *The Canadian School of Missions*

It was about this time that the Canadian School of Missions was founded. In 1917, representatives from several mission boards and several theological colleges which were part of the University of Toronto (Knox, Trinity, Victoria and Wycliffe) began to seriously discuss the formation of a school for missions; the result was the founding of the Canadian School of Missions. The founding denominations were Anglican, Baptist, Congregational, Methodist, and Presbyterian. After an extensive period of planning, the school opened in 1921 with a gala celebration at Knox College.<sup>66</sup> The School's first director was Dr. J. Lowell Murray, a former protestant missionary and participant in the Student Volunteer Movement. Lowell Murray would remain the director of the CSM until 1947.

Much of the School's work was funded by donations from churches and individuals. In 1928-29, a campaign committee raised \$55,000, which was matched by the Rockefeller Foundation to purchase its first property at 97 St. George Street.<sup>67</sup> The stone inscription, "Canadian School of Missions" that can still be seen above the entrance

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<sup>64</sup> Alan Hayes, "Anglicans in Canada," 30.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> The Canadian Churches' Forum for Global Ministries, "History," <http://www.ccforum.ca/history.htm> Accessed on February 2, 2009.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

to the building, dates back to 1929. The CSM building housed an extensive missions library, a chapel, as well as facilities for conference and study. When the building opened there were 150 students from across the country and the lecturers were drawn from participating divinity schools, from the University of Toronto Department of Social Service, Ontario College of Education, Toronto Conservatory of Music, Royal Ontario Museum, and the Toronto Public Health department.<sup>68</sup> For at least one divinity school, teaching at the school was mandatory. In Kenneth Cousland's "The Founding of Emmanuel College," he writes, "Among their [Emmanuel College professors] responsibilities was teaching at the Canadian School for Missions."<sup>69</sup>

Between one hundred and one hundred and fifty student enrolled in the school annually, including missionaries on furlough and missionary candidates.<sup>70</sup> Students from other the denominational colleges were also welcome to take classes at the school and were often able to receive credit for these. Emmanuel College students registered in theology, for example, were able to take courses at the CSM as electives and receive credit in their course of study.<sup>71</sup> This was particularly popular in the 1930s, when the pursuit of higher degrees to satisfy the requirement of education and medical instruction, resulted in the development of elective courses for theological and training college

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<sup>68</sup> "Classics Newsletter," Faculty of Arts and Science, University of Toronto, Volume 5, Number 2. December 1997, <http://www.chass.utoronto.ca/classics/Newsletter/Dec1997/st.george.html> Accessed on February 2, 2009.

<sup>69</sup> Kenneth Cousland, "The Founding of Emmanuel College of Victoria University in the University of Toronto," (Toronto: The Porcupine's Quill, Inc., 1978), 81.

<sup>70</sup> The United Church of Canada, "Calendar of Emmanuel College in Victoria University, 1933-1934," (Toronto, 1934), 41.

<sup>71</sup> The United Church of Canada, "Calendar of Emmanuel College in Victoria University, 1929-1930," (Toronto, 1930), 49.

students.<sup>72</sup> Regular courses in the co-operating denominational colleges were also open to CSM students.<sup>73</sup>

The school ran a number of programs that were designed to raise awareness of the work of missionaries as well as prepare those getting ready for missionary service.<sup>74</sup> A 1929-30 Course Calendar from Emmanuel College provides insight into the type of courses that the school offered in its early years. In the calendar, the attention of Emmanuel College students was directed to the following courses at the CSM: Philosophy of Religion, Animism, Social Anthropology, A Study of Religions, Theory and Practice of Missions, History of Missions, Present Conditions in Mission Fields, and Moral Hygiene.<sup>75</sup> The focus of the curriculum at the school, similar to the missiology curriculum in denominational colleges at the time, focused on both foreign and home mission. "Home" missions referred to missions in Canada, including missions in Aboriginal communities. Home missions also generally referred to work directed toward new immigrants, peoples from other faiths, particularly Judaism, and other minority groups.

A significant finding, in relation to the topic of this paper, from the aforementioned 1929-1930 Emmanuel College Course Calendar relates to the courses that focused on "primitive peoples" taught at the CSM. The descriptions of the course content for two of the above listed courses, Social Anthropology and Animism, both state that they focused on the beliefs and practices of "primitive peoples." Evidence that these

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<sup>72</sup> The Canadian Churches' Forum for Global Ministries, "History," <http://www.ccforum.ca/history.htm> Accessed on February 2, 2009.

<sup>73</sup> Kenneth Cousland, "The Founding of Emmanuel College," 81

<sup>74</sup> The Canadian Churches' Forum for Global Ministries, "History."

<sup>75</sup> The United Church of Canada, "Calendar of Emmanuel College in Victoria University, 1929-1930," (Toronto, 1930), 49.

courses about “primitive peoples” most likely included a focus on Canadian aboriginals, comes from the listed instructor: Professor Thomas McIlwraith. McIlwraith was a pioneer anthropologist in Canada. In 1925 he became the first full-time academic anthropologist in Canada at the University of Toronto and from 1925-1933, he was the only anthropologist teaching in Canada. Between 1922 and 1924, McIlwraith spent eleven months in the isolated community of Bella Coola, British Columbia, living among the people now known as the Nuxalk First Nation. When he left Bella Coola in 1924, he had accumulated a large body of research. McIlwraith’s papers are currently housed in the University of Toronto’s archives. In 1948, he published a manuscript of his research entitled, *The Bella Coola Indians*. His two-volume book is considered the most comprehensive study of a Canadian Pacific Northwest Culture to date and is still used as a reference by many.<sup>76</sup> Due to his background, it is highly likely that the courses that McIlwraith taught at the CSM in part focused on lessons concerning aboriginal Canadians. What is unclear, however, is what his thoughts, as well as others instructors from CSM, were on residential schools.

In the 1920s and 1930s the Canadian School of Missions was a very busy place and many members of the Student Volunteer Movement and student mission study group of the arts and medical colleges enrolled in courses in mission. In addition to the lectures, ongoing courses were created for missionaries on furlough. The focus of these courses were varied and professors from across the University volunteered their time to teach the missionaries in areas such as refresher courses for radiology and dentistry and anesthesiology and other courses along medical lines. Others were catered to specific requests of individual missionaries with topics ranging a broad spectrum. Lovell was

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<sup>76</sup> Paula Wild, “Thomas McIlwraith among the Bella Coola,” *The Beaver*, December 1, 2004.

quoted in a 1942 issue of the *The Expository Times* as stating that, “Naturally there is broad and often amusing variety of subjects called for [by missionaries on furlough]... a Japan educator pled for instruction in cartooning; a South China missionary’s need was for poultry-raising; a lady from South America simply had to have instruction in morgue technique...”<sup>77</sup> The school remained a busy place through the 1950s and into the 1960s, continuing to offer courses related to Christian missions and functioned as a ah-hoc club and activity centre for returned missionaries.<sup>78</sup> In 1965, the Canadian School of Mission under went a major reorganization and was renamed the Ecumenical Institute of Canada. The building was sold to the University of Toronto in 1968 and the Ecumenical Institute moved to Madison Avenue.

### *The AWTC*

Beginning in the 1870s, women’s organizations in the Anglican Church began to flourish at the local, regional and national levels.<sup>79</sup> According to Hayes, a key contributor to this spike in interest was that “women were eager to support the missions movement that was capturing the imaginations of Canadians.”<sup>80</sup> The most significant women’s organization was the Women’s Auxiliary (W.A.). Founded in 1885 as an auxiliary to the male-controlled missions society of the Anglican province of Canada, the W.A. was an organization that focused on mission, mission education and mission fundraising. When the province of Canada gave up its mission society in 1902, the W.A. became auxiliary to

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<sup>77</sup> The Expository Times, Vol. 53, No. 9, 299-300 (1942).

<sup>78</sup> The Canadian Churches’ Forum for Global Ministries, “History,” <http://www.ccforum.ca/history.htm> Accessed on February 2, 2009.

<sup>79</sup> Alan Hayes, “Anglicans in Canada: Controversy and Identity in Historical Perspective,” (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2004), 168.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

the new Missions Society of the Church of Canada (M.S.C.C).<sup>81</sup> In the words of Hayes, “In virtually all dimensions of the Church’s life save the sacraments, the work of the Women’s Auxiliary paralleled the work of men in General Synod and on its board.”<sup>82</sup> As such a prominent female force, Canadian Anglicans did not always welcome the W.A. with open arms and it often came into conflict with “male bishops, male clergy, and male church committees which wanted to control it.”<sup>83</sup> It was largely successful, however, in maintaining its independence until 1959. The W.A. considered the formal training of women to work as deaconesses and missionaries, to be one of its greatest responsibilities.

In 1891, the Wycliffe College Alumni Association appointed a committee for a Canadian training school for women church workers. As a result of the efforts of the committee, in August 1893, the Church of England Deaconess and Missionary Training House opened in Toronto at 179 Gerrard Street East. The daughter of Sir Daniel Wilson, President of the University of Toronto, and a founder of Wycliffe, became the first “head deaconess” of the training house.<sup>84</sup> Although Anglicans of a “more Catholic persuasion” supported religious orders for women, those of a more evangelical nature were strongly opposed to them.<sup>85</sup> In order to undermine arguments for these orders, evangelicals needed to provide women with an alternative ministry. This came in the form of the ministry of deaconess.<sup>86</sup> A 1929-1930 course calendar for the school describes the early objective of the house, “The work for which the church of England deaconess and missionary training house has been established is the training of Christian women to

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<sup>81</sup> Alan Hayes, “Women in Canadian Anglicanism,” <http://home.cogeco.ca/~alhayes/anglicanacanada/anglicanhist8.htm> accessed on February 10, 2009.

<sup>82</sup> Alan Hayes, “Anglicans in Canada,” 171.

<sup>83</sup> Alan Hayes, “Women in Canadian Anglicanism.”

<sup>84</sup> Alan Hayes, “Anglicans in Canada,” 171.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid, 174.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

work as Deaconesses and Missionaries in Mission Fields, in the Canadian North-west and at Home, either in parochial or Social service activities.”<sup>87</sup> Due to the evangelical nature of the ministry, in the beginning, in conjunction with their requirements to serve in hospitals and poor communities around Toronto, deaconess candidates studied theology at Wycliffe. The close relationship between the training house and Wycliffe is well described in the 1929-1930 course calendar, “...from the beginning the doors of [Wycliffe] have stood open to the Deaconess House, who, year, after year, have come to its halls of learning. This arrangement provides unexcelled opportunities for theological study and learning.”<sup>88</sup>

After World War II, however, the training house went through a transformation and became disconnected from the evangelical wing of the Church. The house was renamed the Anglican Women’s Training College (AWTC). As a result of the change, students could choose to take courses at both Wycliffe and Trinity Colleges.<sup>89</sup> In addition to cooperation with Wycliffe and Trinity, the AWTC worked closely with the Canadian School of Missions and the Social Service. Lectures at CMS were open to AWTC students training for work under the Women’s Auxiliary and each regular student at AWTC was required to take one subject at the Social Service Department during their first and second year.<sup>90</sup> Along with the more ideological changes after World War II, there were also physical ones. The training house moved in 1946 to a new location closer to the main university campus, 217 St. George Street. The perceived benefits of moving the

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<sup>87</sup> The Church of England Deaconess and Missionary Training House, Toronto, “Calendar: 1929-1930,” (Toronto, 1930), 3.

<sup>88</sup> The Church of England Deaconess and Missionary Training House, Toronto, “Calendar: 1929-1930,” (Toronto, 1930), 3.

<sup>90</sup> The Anglican Women’s Training College, “Calendar: 1946-1947,” (Toronto, 1947), 2.

training college closer to the university and with a space for accommodation were laid out in a memo written by a supporter of AWTC in 1943,

The location of the Deaconess House in Toronto is greatly in its favour. There is no city in Canada in which opportunities for training are so plentiful. In addition to our Theological Colleges and the University, we have the School of Missions and many other training agencies. If a central hostel were established, candidates could be enrolled in all manner of courses, long or short, fitting them for the particular field, which they have in mind. The work of our Indian schools, for example, calls not only for a background of Christian knowledge, but also some instruction in the field of child psychology and welfare, as well as practical training for the various departments of school life.<sup>91</sup>

The move to St. George Street, therefore, was seen as a strategic attempt to better integrate the college into the happenings of the university and leverage a wider array of course offerings for its students.

Graduates from the college were highly sought after to help aid overburdened male clergy in city parishes or to work in remote communities that could not find or afford ordained clergyman. Areas of service in the city, as listed in the 1989 AWTC background document prepared by Grace Haldenby, included: Immigration (“White Settlers Missions”), Jewish Missions, Oriental Missions, Japanese Canadian Evacuees, Canadian Indians in the city, Homes for girls and Women, Slum Clearance, Prison Work, and Hospital Work.<sup>92</sup> The training school also prepared young Anglican women (students were between the ages of 19 and 25) to work as missionaries abroad, in remote Northern communities in the East and West, on aboriginal reserves, and in residential schools.

Until the late thirties it appears that there was only one option for the AWTC girls’ course of study: a three-year diploma program. Courses of study included: English

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<sup>91</sup> Alderwood, “Memo on Training of Women Workers,” Winnipeg, October 27, 1943. ACC, General Synod Archives, M 75-57 Box 15 (AWTC Course Committee Findings).

<sup>92</sup> Grace Haldenby, “Anglican Women’s Training College: A Background Document,” Toronto: The A.W.T.C., 1989.

bible and prayer book, church teaching, the history of religion, Christian missions, child psychology, home nursing and social service.<sup>93</sup> The 1940s and 1950s course calendars, however, begin to show more offering for courses of study. These calendars describe course offering for three different programs: an “Honour Diploma Course”, a “Pass Diploma Course”, and a “Special Course.” The students of the Honour Diploma Course took the regular divinity courses through the particular theological college (Wycliffe or Trinity) in which they were registered. Only practical work was arranged by the AWTC and most of this fieldwork took place during the summer.<sup>94</sup> Graduates of the Honour Diploma course received a degree from both the AWTC and their respective theological college. The Pass Diploma Course was a three-year program. Courses were similar to the original courses of the college listed above. After successful completion of the program, students received a graduation diploma from the AWTC. The third program was a “Special Course.”

The minutes from a AWTC Committee on the Extension of Training meeting in the early 1940s that addressed “The matter of securing new candidates and of providing courses to meet the present day needs of the mission fields at home and overseas,” put ‘Indian and Eskimo Residential Schools’ at the top of their list for types of service and training needed.<sup>95</sup> A “Memo on Training of Women Workers,” dated October 27, 1943 and written by a member of the Committee on the Extension of Training, also stressed the need for more workers in residential schools. The member writes, “The residential schools administered by our Church need about 150 women workers, acting as teachers,

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<sup>93</sup> The Anglican Women’s Training College, “Calendar: 1932-1933,” (Toronto, 1943), 4-5.

<sup>94</sup> The Anglican Women’s Training College, “Calendar: 1956-1958,” (Toronto, 1958), 14.

<sup>95</sup> AWTC, “Minutes of the Committee on the Extension of Training,” 194?, ACC, General Synod Archives, M 75-57 Box 15. (AWTC Course Committee Findings).

nurses and supervisors of the kitchen, laundry, sewing room and of the boys and girls.”<sup>96</sup> The memo also emphasized the need for better training for workers in the residential schools in order to compete with the “strength of the R.C. [Roman Catholic] Church which comes through its use of religious orders.” The result of the efforts of the Training Committee was the development of the “Special Course.” The course first offered in the mid 1940s and continued through into the 1950s. It was available to candidates of the Woman’s Auxiliary who were preparing for work in residential schools and covered a period of two years. As stated in a study book about “The First Canadians: The Indians and Eskimos of Canada,” sponsored by the MSCC and prepared by Anglican youth in 1947, the W.A. viewed “the training, equipping and support of the women missionaries and workers engaged in evangelistic, medical, and educational work among large numbers of Indians and Eskimos in Canada,” as one of their major responsibilities.<sup>97</sup> As the only Anglican college in Canada devoted to the training of young women for full time Christian service, the AWTC played an important role in helping the W.A. prepare young women for service in residential schools.<sup>98</sup>

The creation of a formal “special course” to train students to work in residential schools did not mark, however, the beginning of a relationship between deaconesses from AWTC and residential schools. For example, in an 1898-99 Annual Report of the Canadian Church Missionary Association, reference is made to a Toronto Deaconess leaving to work in a mission school for aboriginal children. It states, “It was...with great gratitude and pleasure that they felt led at last meeting held, to accept as a missionary

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<sup>96</sup> Alderwood, “Memo on Training of Women Workers,” Winnipeg, October 27, 1943. ACC, General Synod Archives, M 75-57 Box 15 (AWTC Course Committee Findings).

<sup>97</sup> The Missionary Society of The Church of England, “First Canadians: The Indians and Eskimos of Canada,” (Toronto, 1947), 27.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

school teacher for Rainy River Mission, one of those being trained at the Deaconess and Missionary training home, Miss Mary A. Johnson.”<sup>99</sup> Later in the report the Reverend presiding over the Rainy River Mission, Jeremiah Johnston, praised Mary Johnson’s work: “I humbly thank God for enabling the C.C.M.A. to send me such an earnest and devoted helper. When I visited the school last I was so pleased to hear the Indian children repeating many choice portions of God’s Word which they daily commit to their memory. I trust the good seed thus sown will in God’s own time bear much fruit.”<sup>100</sup> Grace Haldenby’s in her 1989 account of the history of the AWTC also makes reference to a long history of women from the training home working in residential schools,

Many women from Deaconess House and A.W.T.C have served on staff at Residential Schools across the country. Some were there before the turn of the century. They were commended for their nursing skills and their rapport with children. While some were teachers or nurses, more often they were supervisors of boys or girls, looking after them at meal times, took them for walks after school and put them to bed at night. In other words, they acted as substitute parents, filling a need.<sup>101</sup>

Maternalist imagery, such as the term “substitute parents” used by Haldenby, is a common theme in language used to describe the work of female missionaries, particularly those who worked in residential schools.

The work of Myra Rutherford on maternal metaphors in the Northern Canadian Mission Field provides insight into historical motivation for evoking this maternal image. The image of missionary women as “mothers,” according to Rutherford, was consistently used in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century. They were described as mothers of the Church,

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<sup>99</sup> “Annual Report of the Canadian Church Missionary Association in Connection with the Church Missionary Society for the Year 1898-9,” (Toronto: The Bryant Press, 1899), 7.

<sup>100</sup> “Annual Report of the Canadian Church Missionary Association in Connection with the Church Missionary Society for the Year 1898-9,” 11.

<sup>101</sup> Grace Haldenby, “Anglican Women’s Training College: A Background Document,” 66.

mothers of children in residential schools, and mothers of junior clergy.<sup>102</sup> This maternal imagery provided the women's work with credibility and legitimacy. Rutherford states, "The maternal image lent a sense of status and freedom and created boundaries of maternal authority that gave women missionaries a feeling of self-worth and responsibility."<sup>103</sup> The maternal identity was particularly strategic in northern Canada. Rutherford also points out that while they were creating identities as mothers and moral guardians, the female missionaries were simultaneously trying to reinforce a domestic, familial identity for the young aboriginal women they contacted. As argued by Rutherford, "Marriage, motherhood, or domestic service was all seen as positive choices for Aboriginal women."<sup>104</sup> This statement informs the reasons for the chosen curriculum at the Anglican Women Training College, as will be described below. Further, maternalist imagery riddles historical documents that describe the work of AWTC women who worked in residential schools.

Candidates for the special course were accepted with lower academic standards in comparison to the other AWTC programs, an interesting fact considering the common criticism concerning under-qualified teachers in residential schools. Required courses for this program included: Old Testaments, New Testaments, Church History, Prayer Book, Anthropology, English, Principal's Hour, Dean's Hour, Christian Education, Singing, Handicrafts, Leadership Training, Practice Teaching, Recreation Leadership, Swimming, Home-Nursing, First Aid, and Field Work (many of the students spent the summer

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<sup>102</sup> Myra Rutherford, "Mothers of the Empire: Maternal Metaphors in the Northern Canadian Mission Field," in Eds. Austin, Alvyn and Jamie Scott, Canadian Missionaries, Indigenous Peoples: Representing Religion at Home and Abroad (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 46.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid, 63.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

between their first and second year gaining practical experience in residential schools).<sup>105</sup>

A 1949 informational document created to generate publicity of the school, provides further information about the content of the program,

In this course greater attention is given to training in children's work. A simpler form of theology is needed for school children than for adults, and a greater skill in handicrafts and the planning of recreation as well as household arts. In our Indian schools any staff member might be called upon to supervise the cooking, laundry, sewing, or in fact any department of the school. At Fort George one of our graduates was acting principal last year.<sup>106</sup>

The emphasis on gaining more practical rather than academic skills in this course seems to come, at least in part, from responses to a letter that the curriculum committee for AWTC sent in the summer of 1942 to parishioners working in aboriginal communities, which solicited their advice for content of the program. One response from a principal of a residential school in Gleichen, Alberta seems to have had particular influence over the chosen curriculum. The letter is dated November 5, 1943 and states,

...I do know the general run of the theological institutions and for the life of me I cannot see how any of them can be adapted to produce anything that is going to be useful in Indian work. They produce people whose brains are trained to argue black is white whereas we need people whose characters and hands are trained to put Christian principle into cooking, healing and making life possible for a primitive people...A girl who is inefficient in her work gets no respect from the children and whatever her character or theological training she is useless as missionary...The only theology necessary for a worker is a thorough knowledge of the straightforward stories of the Bible. They seem to carry a message to the Indian which white people cannot quite understand...If there are some girls already in the D.H. who want to go into Indian work they would find additional course in Child psychology, home nursing...school management and deportment such as are given to teachers are of tremendous value. When a girl has to take care of fifty children she is under a disadvantage if she knows nothing of these things.<sup>107</sup>

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<sup>105</sup> The Anglican Women's Training College, "Calendar: 1954-1955," (Toronto, 1955), 16.

<sup>106</sup> AWTC, "Anglican Women's Training College," Toronto, Sept. 1949. ACC, General Synod Archives, M 75-57 Box 15 (AWTC Publicity Committee File).

<sup>107</sup> John House. "Letter to Miss Clarke," Gleichen, Alberta, 1943. ACC, General Synod Archives, M 75-57 Box 15 (AWTC Course Committee Findings).

Other respondents echoed the advice of the principal and pushed for practical over theoretical training, reflected in their suggestions for courses that would teach the girls how to make handi-crafts, cook, do laundry, and sew. This advice supports the previously discussed work of Rutherdale and her argument about female missionaries accepting, and being encouraged to accept, a strong maternal identity. The parishioners that responded to the letter thought it best that AWTC graduates be prepared to model by example and reinforce a domestic, familial identity for the young aboriginal women they worked with at the schools.

Between 1895, when the first deaconesses graduated from the school, and 1969, when AWTC merged with the United Church's Covenant College to become the Centre for Christian studies, the school graduated about five hundred women church workers. Although, from what this writer can tell, the exact numbers of the AWTC women who worked in residential schools is unknown, some of the residential schools that students and graduates (not solely from the "special course") worked at were: Sioux Lookout School, Shingwauk, Lesser Slave Lake School, Hay River, Chooutla, Alert Bay, St. George's, Old Sun, Girls' Hostel, Athabaska, St. Paul's, All Saints', Single Point, Onion Lake, Battleford, Elkhorn, Moose Fort, Bishop Morden Memorial School, Fort George, and Chapleau.

#### Recruiting Grounds:

In addition to serving as a training ground for workers in residential schools, the University of Toronto also operated as a recruiting ground for workers in residential schools, and aboriginal communities more generally. This tradition of recruitment

stretches as far back as the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. In a lecture series at Victoria College in 1886, Rev. Charles S. Eby, spoke on the topic of “Methodism and The Missionary Problem.” In front of a crowd at Victoria College, Eby made a plea for the most upstanding young educated men to head out into the Canadian mission field. He states, “...let the best of our young men win their spurs on home missions...Even our Indian missions should be manned by a selection of strong men...”<sup>108</sup> A couple of years later a similar plea was being made in the halls of Wycliffe.

In 1892, an infamous visiting missionary at Wycliffe College, Ike Stringer from Fort Macpherson mission, presided over a speaking engagement with Rev. William Day Reeve, Bishop of the diocese of Mackenzie River. Stringer seems to have been a frequent visitor to Toronto where he tried to “visit as many centres as at all possible and give a full account of his work for the Master in the far-away regions of the north.”<sup>109</sup> The night of the talk is well described in “The Jubilee Volume of Wycliffe College,” in a section about the ‘Spirit of Missions’. The unidentified author writes,

On a certain eventful evening, which the writer well remembers, in the month of November, 1892, the Wycliffe students, with “Ike” Stringer presiding, were addressed by one of the stalwarts, in physical form and missionary spirit, of the Church of Canada, the Right Rev. William Day Reeve...presented a plea for two men for service in the far northwest of the Dominion, one to ascend the great Liard River from its junction at Fort Simpson with the Mackenzie, and establish there an Indian Boarding School; the other for the evangelization of the Eskimo dwelling in the Mackenzie Delta...the plea was answered, the Chairman of the meeting volunteered for the Eskimo, and husky Tom Marsh, the man that no student could lick in a trial of physical strength, for the Liard River.<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> Eby, C.S., “Methodism and the Missionary Problem,” in Lectures and Sermons Delivered Before the Theological Union of the University of Victoria College Volume II, 1883-1887. (Toronto, 1888), 38.

<sup>109</sup> “Annual Report of Wycliffe Missions and The Canadian Missionary Association: In Connection with the Church Missionary Society for the Year 1894-5,” General Synod Archives, M 74-7.

<sup>110</sup> D. Hague, S. Gould, HJ Cody, et al., “The Jubilee Volume of Wycliffe College (1827-1927),” Toronto: The University of Toronto Press, 1927.

Tom Marsh left the following spring for Liard River where he established one of the first Anglican residential schools, the Hay River Indian Residential School, on the South Shore of Great Slave Lake. Throughout the years of its existence, connection to the University of Toronto and the missionary community on campus was strong, as demonstrated by another Wycliffe grad, A.J. Vale taken up Marsh's post as principal after he fell ill. Many AWTC graduates also worked at the school over the years. The school, like many residential schools, unfortunately suffered from disease epidemics and inadequate supplies. It eventually closed in 1937. Hay River was not the only northern mission that attempted to recruit Wycliffe grads. In a 1906 letter to an Anglican Parishioner written by Samuel Hume Blake on behalf of the principal of Wycliffe at the time, T.R. O'Meara, he states, "We have almost weekly demands from all the Bishops in the Northern territory for supply of men."<sup>111</sup>

The tradition of recruiting University of Toronto students for work in residential schools continued into the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. On November 23, 1956, a "Young Peoples' Missionary Night was organized by students from Wycliffe, Trinity, and the AWTC and held Wycliffe College. An informational booklet was prepared for students in attendance and they were urged to take the information home with them and to "read it prayerfully."<sup>112</sup> The front of the booklet states the objective of the meeting, it reads: "The purpose of our meeting this evening is to confront young men and women, whose age allows them to be eligible for missionary service, with the urgent needs of the Mission Fields at home and abroad." The informational booklet on opportunities for

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<sup>111</sup> Blake, S.H., Letter to F.W. Godsal, 1906, ACC, General Synod Archives, GS 75-03 (Special Indian Committee, S.H. Blake correspondence).

<sup>112</sup> "Young Peoples' Missionary Night at Wycliffe College," November 23, 1956. ACC, General Synod Archives, MM 52.6.

service includes a page on “Canadian Residential Schools prepared by a student at Wycliffe who was a former supervisor at Gordon’s Indian Residential School. The plea for students to volunteer for service in the schools went as follows,

In this land, in various stages of civilization is the Indian, to whom the Anglican Church has sent missionaries in the past, and has established day and residential schools. But, what are we doing today? Today...there is not one [school]which is sufficiently and adequately staffed. Many of the staff are putting in a fourteen to eighteen hour day with perhaps half a day off per week, and one month’s holiday a year... Is this what we expect of our missionaries? Is it all we have for His children, the Indian?...If you are a Christian, and an Anglican- a Priest with some educational knowledge, business administration and ability to lead; a leader of boys with a father’s love; a woman with a mother’s love and capable of guiding school children and fulfilling other tasks of a mother...there is a place for you...May God call many of His people to meet this challenge! May our Indian brethren come to accept Christ as their Lord and Savior, and walk in his way.<sup>113</sup>

Despite the many residential school enthusiasts at the University, as demonstrated by the passion and urgency illustrated in the excerpt above, unsurprisingly, not everyone at the University of Toronto was supportive of residential schools.

#### Criticism from the University Community:

Samuel Hume Blake was a famous Torontonians lawyer, judge, Anglican layman, philanthropist, social reformer and pamphleteer, known for his sharp-tongue and holding staunchly to controversial opinions.<sup>114</sup> Blake was also actively involved in the University of Toronto. He acted as the university’s counsel at the provincial royal commission appointed to inquire into the student revolt of 1895 and in the late 1890s he was elected to its senate and he served as a governor in 1906-09. Blake was also the chief founder of Wycliffe College and remained active in its administration until his death in 1914.

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<sup>113</sup> Ibid, 11.

<sup>114</sup> “Blake, Samuel Hume,” *Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online*, [http://www.biographi.ca/009004-119.01-e.php?&od\\_nbr=7214](http://www.biographi.ca/009004-119.01-e.php?&od_nbr=7214) Accessed on April 22, 2009.

In 1904 he chaired a multi-denominational committee to investigate church-run aboriginal schools. The investigation revealed the deplorable state of the schools. In a letter to Frank Oliver, the Minister of the Interior, dated 27 January, 1907, Blake listed the key findings of the investigation. He informed him of the appalling number of deaths in the schools caused by T.B., “incompetent” teachers, irregular attendance, lack of supplies, and concluded that due to the dismal quality of education provided, “The Indian is educated into a humiliating state dependence and higher aspirations are quenched.”<sup>115</sup> Blake urged for the schools to be given over to the government so that the Church’s mission funds could be used more wisely. Blake’s views on residential schools brought him into conflict with both missionaries and bishops.<sup>116</sup> One Anglican parishioner from Alberta, F.W. Godsall, angered by a pamphlet written by Blake in 1906 entitled “Don’t you hear the red man calling,” wrote to Wycliffe’s Principal, T.R. O’Meara, who also served as the chair of the Wycliffe College Missionary Society at the time. In a letter he informed O’Meara of how appalled he was with Blake’s accusations and expressed concern that it would cause contributions of home missions to dwindle.<sup>117</sup> Unfortunately, for Godsall, O’Meara was out sick and the person looking after his correspondence forwarded the letter to Blake. Blake was quick to respond to both the author of the letter, in which he further explained his views, and to Principle O’Meara, to whom he requested support from. He wrote, “...continue to help solve this Indian problem, and in the sacred name of truth, do nothing to retard the onwards progress that we all trust after six years’

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<sup>115</sup> Blake, Samuel Hume, Report to the Members of the Board of Management of The Missionary Society of the Church of England in Canada, 1907, General Synod Archives, MM52 B46.4 (Special Indian Committee, S.H. Blake correspondence).

<sup>116</sup> Ibid.

<sup>117</sup> F.W. Godsall, Letter to Dr. O’Meara, 1908, ACC, General Synod Archives, GS 75-03 (Special Indian Committee, S.H. Blake correspondence).

work we have urged the Superintendent to carry on.”<sup>118</sup> The urgent pleas in both the letter from Godsal to O’Meara and from Blake to O’Meara, points to the amount of power that the principal of Wycliffe must have had over the operations of Anglican residential schools.

In 1967, another Anglican with strong ties to the University of Toronto led another assessment of the work of the Anglican Church of Canada with aboriginal peoples and communities: Charles Hendry. Hendry was the dean of the Department of Social Work at the University of Toronto from 1951-1969. His views and findings were published in a book entitled *Beyond Traplines*, ‘an Assessment of the Work of the Anglican Church of Canada with Canada’s Native Peoples.’ The book was published in 1969, the year of Hendry’s retirement. Several other professors and students from the U of T also greatly contributed to the completion of the report (Francis Bregha, Professor of Social Work, Gorge Mortimore, a graduate student in anthropology, and Hubert Campfens, a doctoral candidate at the School of Social Work). The report drew attention to “past ‘apartheid’ policies” towards aboriginals in Canada and the subsequent two centuries of “exploitation, discrimination, paternalism, and neglect” it caused.<sup>119</sup> In addition to drawing attention to racist assumptions behind governmental policies and Anglican missions, the “Hendry Report,” as it was later dubbed, urged the Anglican Church to support aboriginals, with no strings attached and without regard to their religious affiliations, their political and economic pursuits. The report also included negative testimony about residential schools. According to Alan Hayes, many Anglicans endorsed the Hendry Report and “in the short term, caused the Church to withdraw from

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<sup>118</sup> Blake, S.H., Letter to Rev. O’Meara, 1908, ACC, General Synod Archives, GS 75-03 (Special Indian Committee, S.H. Blake correspondence).

<sup>119</sup> Charles Hendry, “Beyond Traplines,” (Toronto: Anglican Book Centre, 1969), 12 and 5.

the residential school system and generated discussion about the future of native ministries.”<sup>120</sup> Although Blake and later Hendry, may have been the figures who received the most attention for their criticism of both residential schools and the general treatment of aboriginal peoples, there have been many others members of the U of T community who echoed their concern and anger over racist policies for aboriginal peoples. Although Blake and later Hendry, may have received the most attention for their criticism of residential schools, and treatment of aboriginal peoples more generally, there have been many others members of the U of T community who have voiced concern and anger over racist policies for aboriginal peoples. This topic could is one that also deserves a separate study of its own.

### Conclusion

The aim of the this paper has been to create an entry point into a larger, and much needed, discussion about the institutional connections between Canadian academic communities and the aboriginal residential school system. As one of the oldest and largest universities in the country, U of T's contribution to the residential schools system is complex, to say the least. As demonstrated by this paper, the ties between the University of Toronto and residential schools, and to missionizing and acculturating aboriginal peoples more generally, are deeply rooted and span almost a century. Further, most of the connections came informally through individual members of the university community. These informal ties, however, were never stopped or discouraged, as far as this researcher can tell, by university administrators. In many cases, they were actually encouraged. Further research on the topic is greatly needed, and must not be conducted

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<sup>120</sup> Alan Hayes, “Anglicans in Canada,” 40.

exclusively with regard to the University of Toronto's role, but rather with a broader focus on the influence of all Canadian universities, particularly in western regions of the country. If justice and reconciliation are to be achieved, the truth surrounding the involvement of all parties who contributed to the residential school system must be carefully and thoroughly analyzed and discussed, including the significant role played by Canadian academic institutions.

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