



The *Great* Canadian
Catholic Hospital History Project

Documenting the legacy and contribution of the
Congregations of Religious Women in Canada,
their mission in health care, and the founding and operation of Catholic hospitals.



Projet de la *Grande* Histoire
des hôpitaux catholiques au Canada

Retracer l'héritage et la contribution des
congrégations de religieuses au Canada,
leur mission en matière de soins de santé ainsi que la fondation et l'exploitation des hôpitaux catholiques.

**Souvenir of the
Golden Anniversary of the
Holy Cross Hospital, Calgary
1891-1941**

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Souvenir

of the

GOLDEN
ANNIVERSARY

of the

HOLY CROSS
HOSPITAL

1891

CALGARY

1941



HIS EXCELLENCY
FRANCIS P. CARROLL, D.D.
BISHOP OF CALGARY

EARLY DAYS OF HOLY CROSS

The Holy Cross Hospital of Calgary, operated by the Sisters of Charity, members of the Order of the Grey Nuns, became operative on January 30th, 1891. Four Nuns of the Order had arrived from Montreal, and in the true pioneering spirit trudged from the railway station to the distant location where the new hospital building was under construction. There were few buildings between them and the Sacred Heart Convent, in that district known as the Mission, where they were to spend their first night in their chosen field of action. Sister Agnes Carroll, the first Superior of the hospital was in charge of the party, the other members being Sisters Beauchemin, Valiquette and Gertrude, the last of whom is still living and residing in the hospital.

Western Canada was opening up and need was great for hospitals throughout the great and sparsely settled communities. Bishop Provencher, the prelate in whose diocese the greater part of the western prairies were located had asked the aid of the Grey Nuns to assist in this great work which was begun in St. Boniface in 1844.

So that when the Sisters arrived in Calgary they had already become known through the west. There were hardships, there were trials, but there was the support of the people and the pleasure in aiding the sick who were greatly in need of medical aid and assistance.

On January 30th, 1891, the Sisters took possession of their hospital, an unfinished building 24 ft. square, with accomodation for four patients, with a proposed extension in size to accomodate eight patients.

When the Sisters arrived in Calgary they had a very small sum of money, \$73.75 to be exact, being what remained from a collection taken on their behalf at Saint Patrick's Church in Montreal. Financial assistance soon came, from the construction camps along the Canadian Pacific Railway came the sum of \$300, from the small congregation of Saint Mary's Church came a further sum of \$40. Friends provided furnishings, and private donations were received—in those days money went a long way—and help from members of all denominations was received, so that between April and December, 64 patients had been admitted to the institution. It became apparent that larger quarters would have to be obtained.



VENERABLE MOTHER d'YOUVILLE
Foundress of the Sisters of Charity
(Grey Nuns)

In April 1892 the Oblate Fathers donated the land for the new building, accompanying the gift with a contribution of 25,000 bricks. To assist in raising the money necessary for the new building, different methods were devised, the Amateur Dramatic Society, as a result of their efforts, gave \$247, the sum of \$60 was received from a concert presented by the congregation of Knox Church and other donations were received from organizations and private parties. From its beginning until the present time the Holy Cross has been actively supported by the public, not only of Calgary, but of the whole of Southern Alberta.

The new hospital was 50 ft. square and three stories high. It opened November 20th, 1892, and still forms part of the present hospital organization.

Calgary grew rapidly and the hospital kept pace with the thriving town. Important additions were made in 1906, 1907, 1913 and 1928. By 1906, the hospital had a staff of 15 members of the order, several of whom held professional certificates as trained nurses. In 1919, it was recognized by the American College of Surgeons, duly standardized and classified in Group "A" as a hospital of 200 beds, having all the required modern appliances.

The last addition, built in 1928, took almost a year to complete and is known as the new wing. It opened Easter Monday, April 1st, 1929, with a staff of 18 sisters, 95 pupils and graduate nurses and 48 other employees. Its opening meant an increase of 112 beds. There are now 335 beds, and the hospital was approved for internes in 1940. The new hospital wing can take care of 3,500 patients each year, while the hospital as a whole will care for 7,000 yearly.

In 1892 what was thought a very complete hospital demanded the outlay of about \$400 per bed; in 1929, \$3,000 per bed was scarcely sufficient to build and equip a hospital. From \$25 to \$50 would furnish a room in 1892; the furnishing of a room in the new wing costs \$500.



REV. MOTHER AGNES CARROLL
Foundress of Holy Cross Hospital

beautiful altars in hand-carved Carrara marble were donated through the generosity of the late C. J. Duggan.

In 1922 the hospital authorities purchased the Waterloo Apartments and the Forbes' home to provide adequate and fitting accommodation for the young ladies of the training school. Here they can take their rest and recreation far removed from the hospital and its work. The nurses' residence is in a separate building, which provides accommodation for 144 nurses. The home contains everything that can bring comfort to the students while off duty.

The grounds surrounding the home are divided into the following: a large tennis lawn, with a beautiful floral garden kept by the nurses.

The main building of the present hospital is fireproof throughout; frames, floors and stairs are of concrete and steel.

Classic columns guard the main entrance and the visitor, after ascending a few steps, will find himself in a stately hall, floored with tyndal limestone, its walls impressively finished with ornamental plaster work.

On the second storey, and running two stories in height, is the beautiful chapel, and through its stained glass windows a mellow light will filter down on oaken pews and marble altars for the years to come. It is finished in Roman style and here has been built "A House where God may dwell." The three marble were donated through the



REV. MOTHER M. EVANGELINE GALLANT
Present Superior General

During the summer months several outdoor amusements are indulged in by the nurses.

The present Superior of the Hospital is Sister Saint Simon, who has been in charge of the institution since 1935.

In 1907 the Holy Cross Hospital opened the School for Nursing. The first graduates, five in number, received their degrees on February 8th, 1910. Each year since that date has seen its quota of well trained nurses go forth from the institution. Well toward 600 nurses have trained in this school. This year 144 students are in training and 52 graduates, under the direction of Sister Mansfield, director of the School of Nursing, received their degrees.

At the luncheon which took place in the Hospital on May 3rd of this year a plaque commemorating the event was unveiled by His Honor J. C. Bowen, Lieutenant Governor of Alberta. Dr. J. D. McEachern acted as Chairman at the luncheon and he spoke most interestingly of the tremendous strides made in Medicine and in the treatment of diseases since the time of the founding of the institution.



HOSPITAL 1891



HOSPITAL 1892

His Honour, Lieut.-Governor Bowen, in paying what he was pleased to call "A Tribute" to the hospital and to the Sisters in charge said:

"Mr. Chairman, Reverend Clergy, Reverend Sisters,
Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is my first, and most pleasant duty on behalf of the Province of Alberta, to extend hearty congratulations to the Order of Grey Nuns under whose auspices this hospital has now come to its year of jubilee. For fifty years, amid all the changing vicissitudes of a new country, they have continued their mission of mercy to the inhabitants of this city, and the southern part of the province. From a small beginning, by unremitting toil they have continued to build, until to-day they have to their credit this splendid institution. Every modern equipment is here, utilized by a medical staff of skilled physicians and surgeons, and nurses, highly trained. In every respect they have achieved the highest standard in a fully up-to-date hospital which is a credit to this province, and to the city of Calgary where it is situated.

Back of, and beyond everything we may visualize to-day, there lives an heroic record of sacrifice, devotion to duty, and of Christian fortitude. We are to-day looking upon the material evidence, which is indeed great in itself. But greater are the impishable spiritual values which, throughout the years, have been built up in this place. And they shall never perish.

Fifty years, against the background of a new and rapidly growing province may not seem very important as an element in time. But fifty years is of tremendous significance in the evolution of a pioneer community into a modern city. In it are drama, pathos, struggle, courage, and finally, a splendid achievement.

The pioneers of half a century ago were men and women of vision and determination. To their honour, to-day we realize that they read the future, in the light of far horizons. They pressed forward against adversity and hardship with unbeatable tenacity to fulfill a great task set them by destiny in a new country. They matched their strength and fortitude against the possessions upon which they had firmly set their feet. They laid surely and well the foundations upon which generations to come may build a super-structure of national pride and greatness.

The Grey Nuns, under the leadership of Sister Superior Carroll, were of the type, and possessed the spirit of pioneers. They were crusaders in the enterprise of providing hospitalization for the needy and sick in the community in those early days of settlement. By their faith and endurance, little by little as the years went on, they laid the foundations upon which this magnificent hospital rests.

To those of us who are able to visualize, in memory what Calgary was like fifty years ago, and to those who are here to-day, it is a source of admiration and inspiration to contemplate the character, faith and fidelity of the founders of Holy Cross Hospital. The patience, perseverance and labours of those who served for the love of suffering humanity was then amply rewarded in the completion of the first hospital in the community.

There is, in the dome of St. Paul's Cathedral in London, a Latin inscription, which, freely translated reads, "If ye seek a memorial, look around." The Holy Cross Hospital is a memorial to the Order of the Grey Nuns, those consecrated daughters of the Roman Catholic Church, who in regular succession throughout the past fifty years have pressed forward so successfully to a splendid achievement. It is a memorial to the spirit of the pioneers, who by faith and fortitude extended the boundaries of civilization, to expand the areas of human habitation, and to prepare a dwelling place for generations to come. It is a memorial to the spirit of the Christian religion, whose mission is not only to bring the light of hope and salvation to the world, but also to heal the sick, and to bind up the wounds of the broken hearted.

A lasting memorial to the spirit and endeavour of the pioneer Sisters is to be found in the great procession of men and women whose bodies have been healed, and whose hopes have been rekindled by new health and life; and the great procession of folk who were born here; and in the army of nurses who have graduated from the training school; and in the medical men who have found that their mission of healing and cure of human ills has been made more effective by the care and skill of the staff of this great institution.

The crowning glory of the work of the Reverend Sisters, in and through this institution is that it is in the name and for the sake of Him who said "In as much as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, ye have done it unto me."



AIR VIEW OF HOSPITAL

His Excellency Francis D. Carroll; D.D., Bishop of Calgary, in reviewing the history of the Order and the growth of the Hospital, made the following address:

"We have gathered to-day to rejoice over the attainment of age and to pay a tribute of gratitude for what the years have seen accomplished. It is not always that mere age is a reason for rejoicing; for in spite of Browning, man does not wish to grow old. In spite of the poet's words that the child "earnestly provokes the years to bring the inevitable yoke", man approaches the threshold of age with regret and caution.

But it is not so with institutions. As the years roll on, an institution becomes conscious of a continuous life which in the midst of changes and alterations, is its own. If the identity of that life is maintained, if its tradition, —as we call it,—has been preserved, then the advance of years is an occasion for sincere rejoicing.

That is why this is the year of Jubilee in Holy Cross Hospital. For what is the tradition for which Holy Cross stands? Its life-blood is the conviction that the care of the sick and the dying is marvellously improved and bettered when it is inspired by religion and by the charity of Christ. It does not claim that this is a unique position. It gladly recognizes allies. But that is the



OPERATING ROOM



LUNCH TIME

principle, buttressed by organization and method, which constitutes the tradition which the founders of Holy Cross Hospital brought from Montreal in 1891 and laid down here in the heart of this young city.

Since then, Holy Cross Hospital has seen many changes. It has grown in size and equipment. It has advanced with scientific progress. It has swung into the full current of modern hospital life. But throughout all these changes, Holy Cross has been true to its tradition. It has sacrificed nothing essential to its own life which it began 50 years ago. This enduring vitality, this preservation of tradition, is a reason for rejoicing today and not the least reason for sounding the note of jubilee.

Carlyle once said that "the history of the world is the biography of great men". The current making of world history certainly centres round the few. It is true, too, to say that the history of an institution is the biography of those who made it. When the story of Holy Cross Hospital comes to be written, whose biographies will it contain? Who gave Holy Cross its vitality and its tradition and by whom have they been maintained during half a century?

In a recent history of the Grey Nuns of Montreal, the opening of Holy Cross receives a single sentence, not because of our insignificance, but because of the vast enterprises of this community. The sentence is this: "In spite of heavy burdens already assumed, the Community acquiesced, in 1891, to the request of the saintly Bishop Grandin, to send some Sisters to Calgary, to open there a hospital, which, from the beginning, has been marked with the seal of approval". I quote the sentence, not through episcopal partiality, but to give credit where it is initially due. To Catholics, whose whole religious life is fundamentally based on authority, every movement



NURSES' RECEPTION ROOM

within the fabric of religion, must have at its source a bishop; and the bishop in this case was the saint of the North-West, Bishop Grandin.

The chronicles of the mission of our Lady of Peace of Calgary give us further details of Bishop Grandin's action. They declare that in 1887, the bishop began his efforts to provide Calgary with a hospital. It required three years before he succeeded in obtaining a community to listen to his plea. But when the decision of the Grey Nuns reached him, he travelled from St. Albert to Calgary, called his council together, and on October 26th, 1890, commissioned that valiant missionary, Father Leduc, to set up a provisional hospital. By the end of January 1891 when the Sisters arrived, Father Leduc had fulfilled his commission. But what a hospital! It is described in the mission annals as 24 feet square with accommodation for four patients. Fortunately for Bishop Grandin and Father Leduc this hospital, which still stands in an enlarged state on 18th Ave. West, was described from the outset as provisional and temporary. And such it was. A year later Bishop Grandin dedicated the new Holy Cross Hospital, the 'nec plus ultra' of its time. In a letter written on the occasion, the good bishop marvelled at its grandeur—the hot and cold running water, the baths, the electricity, the telephone, the sumptuous accommodation for 25 to 35 patients. It is little wonder that he marvelled, for 20 years earlier he himself had lain sick and near death close to the site of the new hospital, but on the hard floor of Father Scollen's cabin.

The first of the glories of Holy Cross Hospital is the fact that it began its life under the aegis of Bishop Grandin, whose cause of canonization is all but concluded, and whose zeal and sanctity could only bring the institution success. Hence on this 50th Anniversary, we gladly pay him a tribute of gratitude as we seek his heavenly protection for the institution he brought into being.



HOSPITAL CHAPEL

But Bishop Grandin did not work alone. Indeed he could not have succeeded without the labors and the co-operation of many others—too many, unfortunately, to mention at this time. But some I must mention, even briefly, for to them belong the glory and the reward of this jubilee.

And first there are the people of Calgary. A hospital has to have patients; and it must possess the co-operation and good-will of the municipality in which it is situated. It is an extraordinary thing—one which has contributed largely to its success—that Holy Cross from the day it opened its doors to the present moment, has been able to reckon as its best friends, the people of the city of Calgary. I do not know just what brought about this happy accord. Perhaps it was the fact that in 1891, the little city stood in need of even that four bed hospital. Perhaps it was the fact that the pioneer Sisters willingly isolated themselves in tents somewhere along Nose Creek in answer to the request of the Municipal Council of 1892, and cared for the victims of a small-pox epidemic which had broken out. Perhaps it was the proverbial good-will and friendliness of this city. In any case, good relations began in 1891 and have continued ever since. The hospital has grown with the city and has become part of its life. The city of Calgary, therefore, helped to bring Holy Cross to this day of jubilee, and deserves our tribute of praise and gratitude,—a tribute I gladly pay to His Worship Mayor Davison, who has guided the city's destinies so well and ably for so many years and whose presence at these festivities and whose words of encouragement are but another example of the understanding harmony which has always existed between the City of Calgary and Holy Cross Hospital.

And among the makers of Holy Cross, we must not omit the physicians and surgeons,—the doctors,—who from Dr. Rouleau, whom I think was among the first, to the present efficient and numerous staff, have made Holy Cross the excellent hospital it is, and have enabled it to meet its high standard during the past 50 years. There are many among these zealous men who deserve a large place in the records of Holy Cross; but I think I can include them all in one,—who stands as a symbol and a type of all the rest—our genial chairman, Dr. J. S. McEachern. I do not know how many are the years in which he has served the sick in this hospital. I am inclined to think that this could be a jubilee also of his attachment to its staff. But I do know that he has seen the hospital grow in size and efficiency, and he has contributed his great scientific learning, his extraordinary ability, his reputation and his sound advice to its growth and its efficiency. A debt of deep gratitude is due to Dr. McEachern, and in him, to all the doctors who have labored for sick humanity within these walls; and this anniversary would fail in its purpose, and the story of these 50 successful years would not be told, if that tribute were not paid whole-heartedly and without reserve or limitation.

I should include also among the makers of Holy Cross, the various boards of laymen who gave their time, their efforts, and their prudent counsel to the welfare of the hospital, and the donors of princely gifts who made its material progress possible. The Sisters reached Calgary with the remnants of a collection which had been given them by the people of St. Patrick's parish, Montreal. The whole collection amounted to \$200 and was intended to pay for the journey. But true to the vow of poverty, \$73.75 were ready on their arrival for investment in the equipment of that four-bed hospital. And I understand that the first piece of equipment to be purchased was a stove. January of 1891 was a cold month.

But it was not long before the people of Calgary showed their generosity. Not only were the Sisters able to erect the first Holy Cross, but also this present modern building—thanks to aid given them by many a generous contributor whose charity has made these 50 years so successful and this jubilee so worthy of celebration.

I think I should add a fervent word of appreciation, however brief, for the lay nurses. The Holy Cross School of Nursing is not as old as the hospital, but since its establishment in 1907, upwards of 600 nurses are counted among its graduates—600 nurses who have gone forth from this hospital excellently equipped to serve the sick and to aid the doctor in his contest with disease, and who have contributed more than words can say to the success of Holy Cross.

Last but not least among the makers of Holy Cross are the Sisters themselves. The four Sisters who came to Calgary half-a-century ago—Sr. Carroll, the superior, with whom I would like to claim relationship, but unfortunately cannot; Sr. Valiquette, Sr. Beauchemin, whose name is still prominent in the medical life of Calgary, and Sr. Gertrude, whom we are privileged to have with us yet on the staff of Holy Cross, and all the Sisters who have conducted and staffed this hospital during the past half century, not omitting Mother St. John, the builder of this present building, who happily has come from Montreal to represent the Mother General at this celebration—belong to a Canadian community, and a Canadian enterprise of which Canada can be justly proud. Founded two hundred years ago in Montreal by the Canadian-born, Marguerite d'Youville, the Institute of the Sisters of Charity, more popularly and affectionately known as the Grey Nuns, has spread its numerous branches across Canada and United States and has reached the Esquimaux missions bordering on the Polar Seas.

I am not going to relate the life of Mme. d'Youville; but her life can be seen daily in action today, and has been seen daily in action for the past half century within these walls. And if Holy Cross Hospital has attained a place

in the sun and has accomplished the purpose for which it was founded, it is because the spiritual daughters of Mother d'Youville who came to Calgary 50 years ago, and who have served this hospital since, have inherited the spirit of their foundress. The successors of Madame d'Youville have learned her maternal compassion, her understanding love and her universal service; and wherever they have taken up a task, whether it is the care of children in their creches, of girls and boys in their orphanages and schools, of the sick in their hospitals, or of the aged and infirm in their hospices—they have done their work with charity and success as Mother d'Youville did two centuries ago. The members of her community, by their many and varied contacts with suffering and all forms of Christian Social Service are broadly human in their sympathies and well-balanced in their outlook on life. The story of the Holy Cross Hospital is the record of their self-forgetfulness and the whole souled outpouring of their hearts, their intelligence and their hands for the sick and the suffering. These are the things which have made them loved and revered here in Calgary and wherever they have established themselves. Their untold patience and assiduity, their humble cultivation of the corporal and spiritual works of mercy without the thought of any glory except the consciousness of duty well done, have made them chief among the makers of Holy Cross Hospital.

In these days when pagan communism and national socialism are destroying the happiness and peace of the world, by stressing the desire for power and wealth and materialism, this body of Grey Nuns still carries on self-sacrificingly and peacefully, solving the social question by teaching by example that mankind can only be saved by following the two old precepts of Christian charity—the love of God and the love of neighbor.

To the Grey Nuns of Holy Cross, then, our sincere congratulations on the 50 years of their Christian charity in our midst and our fervent wishes for greater success during the new half-century they begin today—To them and to all who have made Holy Cross the truly great hospital it is—all honor and praise for a work well done for God's glory and the welfare of suffering mankind".

His Worship A. Davison, Mayor of Calgary, in a felicitous speech, complimented the Sisters as follows:

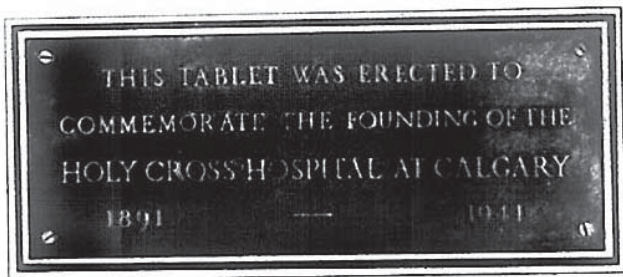
"It is a great privilege to join with His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor and other citizens in extending congratulations to the Sisters of Charity on the occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the founding of the Holy Cross Hospital in Calgary.

From a small beginning this institution has grown to be one of the finest hospitals in Western Canada. It has ministered to thousands of patients, without regard to color, class or creed, and stands today as a monument to the unselfish labors of the Sisters of Charity down through the years.

Fifty years ago Calgary was a small settlement in what was more or less an unknown country. The population was sparse. Means of transportation were inadequate. Most of the pioneer settlers were not blessed with much of this world's goods. Any business venture was fraught with uncertainty as to its ultimate success.

Despite these conditions and handicaps, the Sisters of Charity launched their hospital. No doubt in the earlier years it was extremely difficult to carry on but perseverance and patience had their reward and today the Holy Cross Hospital is an institution of which all Calgarians are proud and one that is rendering a service of the most necessary kind.

As Mayor of Calgary I wish to pay tribute to the work of this hospital, to comment upon the spirit of co-operation that has always been displayed by the management towards our civic authorities and to express the hope and wish that the next half century will be equally as successful and equally productive of good."



THE ABOVE PLAQUE UNVEILED BY
HIS HONOR J. C. BOWEN
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR
OF THE
PROVINCE OF ALBERTA
MAY THE THIRD
NINETEEN HUNDRED AND FORTY-ONE