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 santéainsi que la fondation et l'exploitation des hôpitaux catholiques.

The Story of St. Martha's Hospital, 1906-1925
Antigonish, N.S.

The Story of St. Martha's Hospital

1906—1925

HELP US GIVE YOU BETTER SERVICE

The Story of St. Martha's Hospital

1906—1925

ISSUED BY
St. Martha's Hospital Fund Campaign,
ANTIGONISH, N. S.

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To the Friends and Benefactors,
St. Martha's Hospital.

Ladies and Gentlemen,—

As an earnest sympathizer with whatever may be helpful towards relieving sickness and distress in the general community, I gladly embrace this opportunity to give a brief word of encouragement to the promoters and organizers of the campaign that is now being launched for funds for the construction and equipment of the New St. Martha's Hospital at Antigonish. If disease is to be successfully combated in the several counties of this part of the Province, it is surely and manifestly essential that there be provided a hospital of sufficient capacity and equipment to efficiently take care of the ever increasing demands that are being made for hospital treatment, and it is to meet these pressing requirements that the new St. Martha's Hospital is now being erected.

Financially the undertaking is an onerous one, involving as it does the expenditure of some three hundred thousand dollars ($300,000), but it will be money well spent and usefully employed in that it will save for many additional years a large number of lives of the people in these parts of the Province who in the years to come must inevitably have recourse to hospital treatment. In view, therefore, of the need of such an institution and the obligation of successfully financing its construction, the Chairman and officials of the Campaign, as also the various cooperating Committees throughout the country, should receive the most wholehearted and generous financial support from the general community for this very laudable and necessary undertaking.

While the Hospital will willingly open its doors and give of its best to suffering humanity from wheresoever they may come, nevertheless most of its patients will be received from the Counties of Antigonish, Guysborough and St. Mary's, Richmond, Southern Inverness and Eastern Pictou. Hence, it is by the people of these several localities that the present Hospital Campaign appeal should be received with the most tangible and substantial sympathy, and each of us should be willing, even under considerable personal sacrifice, to contribute to this Campaign Fund in such a manner and measure as will be justly creditable to the public spirit of the various communities within the Hospital constituency.

Only through earnest and active, public and private, cooperation can this Campaign effort be made a success, as surely we all desire it to be, and therefore for each and all of us let the watch word be: "a long pull, a strong pull and pull all together."

Very respectfully,

† JAMES MORRISON,
Bishop of Antigonish.

The Story of St. Martha's Hospital.

PRIOR to 1906 there was no hospital in that large section of Nova Scotia between Sydney and New Glasgow. The imperative need of a hospital within easy reach of most of this unprotected country had been felt for sometime. The Sisters of St. Martha who had lately taken up hospital work as a branch of their activity, opened in that year, a small hospital on West Street in Antigonish.

Immediately after its opening a typhoid epidemic broke out in the district and the value of the hospital was proved in a striking manner. Accommodation, however, was afforded for only six patients and it was soon seen that the Hospital must enlarge its capacity.

A suitable dwelling house was then purchased. It was situated on the site of the present Hospital. In the new building 28 patients could be admitted. But with every year the usefulness of the hospital became more apparent. Increasing demands were made for the service it rendered until once more its quarters became too cramped. In 1912 the building was enlarged and accommodation was provided for forty patients. In 1917 in order to provide still more space a nurses' home was erected near the main building.

Such is, in outline, the story of the hospital from the tiny six-bed dwelling house to its present forty bed capacity. It is a record of continual growth, a story of increasing service. For nineteen years the number of patients treated has steadily increased. The reason for this is not because a larger population had to be served nor because there has been increase in sickness in the community, but because there has been an ever growing appreciation of hospital service and a fuller realization of the value of hospital treatment.

So large is the use made of the hospital that it is no longer able to supply the needs of the community. Another milestone has now been reached on the path of mercy and helpfulness. The Hospital Management has decided that the Hospital must keep to the policy it has always hitherto followed. When the need arose steps were at once taken to provide greater accommodations and better service. And the need is very apparent today. The present hospital, as we shall show more fully later on, is too small for the constituency it serves. Its equipment

and space for equipment must be increased. Hence the decision of the Directors to proceed immediately with *the erection of a new standard, modern, fully equipped* 100-*bed hospital.*

The Community Served by St. Martha's Hospital.

THE six-bed hospital founded for the needs of the Town of Antigonish was soon called upon to serve a much wider constituency. Indeed the first surgical case treated was a patient from Sherbrooke. Soon patients came from Inverness, Richmond and the nearer parts of Pictou County. A glance at the map will show how large the territory is to which the hospital has given its beneficient service. From all sections of this area over 12,000 patients have been treated since 1906. The dis ribution of patients for a stated term according to county and religion is shown in the table below.

Patients treated from June 1, 1923 to June 1, 1925.

	Catholics	Non-Catholics
Antigonish	876	205
Guysborough	215	512
Pictou	35	33
Richmond	41	43
Inverness	294	58
Other places	83	56

It will be noted that the hospital has treated Catholic and Protestant alike. In fact no discrimination has ever been practised, either with regard to religion, wealth or station. Evidence of this is the whole hearted praise that is given the Sisters in charge of the hospital by members of all churches. Further evidence is the support that has been accorded it by everyone in its undertakings in the past.

Antigonish is the logical centre for a large hospital to serve all the needs of this wide territory. There is no central point in Guysborough that can be reached so easily from all parts of the county as can Antigonish. Richmond has daily train service which in the short space of five hours can take a patient from St. Peter's to the hospital. Southern Inverness and Eastern Pictou are within even shorter distance.

There has lately been erected at Inverness a hospital which will serve a part of the constitueucy which was once served by St. Martha's Hospital. That the hospital at Antigonish will

continue to serve the remainder of the territory is practically certain. Although hospitals are projected in other portions of the territory these will necessarily be small and devoted exclusively to emergency and minor cases. A large central hospital will always be needed in the district to give the complete and more scientific treatment that only larger equipment can provide.

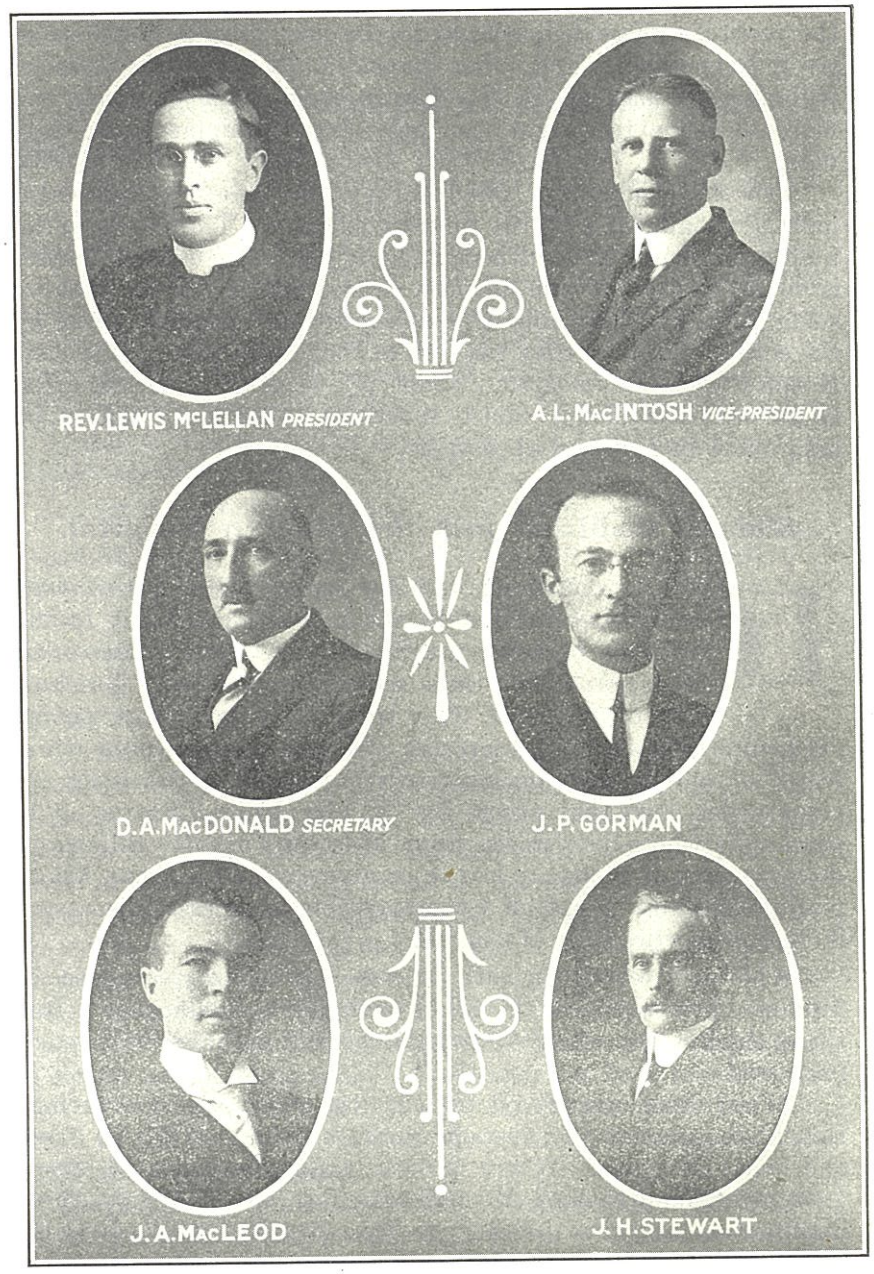
To the residents of this territory, therefore, the Hospital is making its appeal with the fullest confidence. The new hospital building is being erected because it is needed if efficient service is to be given, and the country cannot afford to be without such service. That this is realized by our people is shown by the cordial approval they gave when the campaign for the new Hospital was first mooted. From all sections of Antigonish, Guysboro, Richmond, South Inverness and East Pictou came assurances of substantial support.

Modern Medicine and the Modern Hospital.

LIFE is our most valuable asset. The life of each individual is valuable not only to himself but to the country in which he lives. The Bible allots to all as a normal life three score years and ten. But how few of us reach that term of years! Most people die before they are fifty years old. Most deaths are premature. Much of our sickness and disease is preventible. Statistics are given which show that every day in the United States 1700 people die whose lives might have been prolonged. Billions of dollars worth of goods are lost to us every year by those whose productive value is cut off by preventible sickness. The same is true proportionately of Canada.

This is a terrifying truth to face. It is our greatest social problem, before which all others dwindle in significance. But the outlook is not entirely black, for conditions have been much improved.

When Jener discovered the cure for small-pox by vaccination he lengthened the average duration of human life by three and one-half years. Where before vaccination out of every 1000 three hundred died of small-pox now we find only three deaths in every thousand due to this disease. Similarly with regard to other diseases. In reading history we frequently come



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

upon mention of the great plagues which wiped out whole sections of the population of the earth. But today we need have no fear of the recurrence of such scourges as the dread Black Death; Yellow Fever has been conquered and Diphtheria, Typhoid, Diabetes and Cholera no longer claim their victims as a matter of course.

To the discoveries of modern medicine and modern surgery is due the credit for this. Some of man's greatest achievements have been in this field. The germs which cause disease have been segregated and the specific remedy for each has been discovered. Correct methods of treatment have been devised by study and research. In the discovery of the anesthetics and the consequent increase in the power of surgery is found one of the greatest boons ever conferred upon man.

Who can estimate the number of lives that have been saved on the operating table.

But complete victory has not yet been attained. We have but to think of the ravages made by Cancer, by Influenza, by Pneumonia, by Tuberculosis and by other fell diseases to bring this home to us. The enemy is by no means completely routed. But our doctor-scientists are every day gaining brillant triumphs in the great fight for health. And while awaiting complete victory the enemy is to some extent held in check by the treatment given in our hospitals.

But the conquering of disease is a social problem with which doctors and scientists alone are not capable of coping. The solution of this problem demands the active cooperation of all. This co-operaton is chiefly accorded in the equipping and maintaining of hospitals. Without hospitals the greatest discoveries of medical science would be brilliant but useless gestures.

In the hospital alone can a complete and accurate diagnosis be made. Here alone can be found the X-ray machinery, the laboratories, the individual records so necessary to a useful diagnosis.

In the hospital alone can the surgeon's knife be applied under safe conditions and with every chance of success. For here alone are found the anesthetizing and sterilizing rooms, the proper instruments, and the needed assistants and facilities for continuous treatment.

In the hospital alone can the complicated treatment which some diseases demand be intelligently and efficiently supplied.

THE OPERATING ROOM

For here alone are found trained nurses, dietician and the constant presence of physicians.

In the hospital alone can the proper conditions for research, study, and experiment be found. For here alone are the patients submitted to the constant observation necessary for profitable study.

The hospital is the health centre of the community. The presence of a hospital means not only the treatment of disease but also the communication to the people of much valuable information in regard to health and disease.

A New Hospital Needed.

THE inadequacy of the present hospital is a fact of common knowledge. Although the building has a normal capacity of forty beds, during the past few years space has had to be found for over seventy patients at a time. This has not been an extraordinary incident; it has been the constant condition at St. Martha's for sometime.

At times patients have been given beds in the corridors, and place for the sick had to be found even in the office rooms of the

staff. Equipment such as the X-ray department and the laboratories has been crowded into the smallest corners, there is no room for a maternity department nor for a nursery. Thus the service of the Hospital is limited, its work is hampered on every side.

This overcrowding results in:

1. Delays in admittance of sick to hospital—possible complications perhaps weeks in the hospital, where a few days would have sufficed.

2. The undue hastening of convalescents from the hospital to make room for emergency cases.

3. Lessening the efficiency of the hospital—overcrowded conditions handicap the work of physicians and nurses.

In order to provide for emergencies such as epidemics the daily average number of patients in a hospital should not be more than 75 per cent of its total capacity.

At the present time the Sisters and nurses in charge of the hospital are badly crowded. Three or four occupy the same room and in some instances the nurses on night duty must occupy the beds vacated by the day nurses. These conditions can be tolerated no longer. After many hours of strenuous duty our faithful nurses need a place where they may relax and rest. Only by and through the hospital can the trained nurses be provided who are needed in the homes of the country. Unless generous help is given to build the hospital in which they may receive their training, it can hardly be expected that nurses will be available when they are needed.

The new hospital is being built to provide:

New and enlarged operating rooms with latest scientific appliances.

A large and thoroughly modern maternity department.

A large and properly arranged children's department.

Adequate ward space for men and women medical and surgical patients.

A nurses' home which will provide class rooms, recreation rooms and decent living quarters.

Full laboratory equipment for all hospital needs.

Complete radiology and fluoroscopic apparatus.

A department for general health service where by means of clinics and follow-up work the message of health will be carried to the community.

THE STAFF

In short, everything that can be found in the best appointed hospitals will have its place in our hospital.

Hospital Finance.

A HOSPITAL which answers all the needs of a community cannot possibly be a money-making institution. There are, of course, some private hospitals which cater to the rich alone and thus make money. But the general hospital which is founded to care for the health needs of a section of the country cannot close its doors to the poor. The examination of the patient's pocket-book can never form part of its preliminary diagnosis.

In this latter class is St. Martha's Hospital.

Besides the money to pay the ordinary running expenses of the hospital, funds are continually in demand for improvements and replacement. By economical management and by paying very meagre salaries St. Martha's has always been able to meet its ordinary expenses by its earnings, and by the aid granted to it by the Nova Scotia Government and the Town and County of Antigonish. Last year the ordinary hospital expenses were $38,295.66. The Nova Scotia Government aid amounted to $4,272.40 and the Town and County of Antigonish contributed $600.00. (At their last year's meeting St. Mary's District voted $500.00 for the same purpose). The balance came from hospital earnings.

During the period 1917—1921 service for which no remuneration was received was given to patients from the Town and County of Antigonish to the amount of $9,250.00, from Guysborough to the amount of $6,800.00, From Pictou to the amount of $550.00 and from Cape Breton to the amount of $5,240.00.

The additions made to the first hospital have been made possible not by earnings but by individual donations. To those generous benefactors of the past the thanks of the whole constituency are due. They have had a large share in the saving of many lives and in the relieving of much suffering. The fund that their gifts provided has been augmented by the money-raising activities such as tag-days and bazaars that were organized for the purpose.

The new hospital is too big an undertaking to be financed by

THE NURSING STAFF

the efforts of a few benefactors or the money raised by bazaars or other such means. The money must come from those whom the hospital benefits: and this is but just.

The hospital is *your* health insurance—it serves you every day by being ready to care for you or your family in case of sickness or accident. You *must* pay for your life insurance; you are *requested* to help pay for your hospital.

To "pay your way" as a patient is not enough. You have then paid for service received, but the Hospital was established and has been maintained for years in readiness for you, by the generosity of its supporters and by the sacrifices and economical administration of its management.

That you *have* never needed the Hospital does not mean that you *will* not need it, *perhaps to-morrow*. Sickness and accident come unannounced. The Hospital must be ready.

This campaign has been organized to provide full hospital service for this community. You or yours may be the next to need the service which the new Hospital will put with in your reach.

Money given to the building fund of St. Martha's Hospital is not only charity, it is a sound business investment.

First because those who are sick at home are deprived of the best treatment. Secondly other members of the family are interrupted in their regular work. Thirdly because recovery is retarded by lack of such facilities as can be found only in a hospital.

The difference between hospital treatment and home treatment is often the difference between life and death.

The Campaign.

THE Campaign for St. Martha's Hospital is not directed by professional campaign managers. The executive committee which is managing it has been chosen from among the citizens of our constituency. As a consequence every cent of the amount collected will go towards paying for the new building. The cause is so worthy and the assurance of the sympathetic backing of our friends is so strong that it has been felt that extraordinary efforts are unnecessary.

The actual canvassing and collecting will be done by a committee chosen in each district. A member of this committee will call on every resident of the district during the latter part of August. With him he will bring a card on which he will write the amount of money given and the amount promised. To each card is attached a receipt which will be filled out and given to the donor. The card is returned with the money to the central office. Another receipt will then be sent from the treasurer of the campaign.

Our objective is $150,000.00. This will not cover the total cost of the building but will reduce the debt to proportions that are more easily handled.

Contributions will, of course, have to be generous if we are to succeed in this undertaking. No one person, nor one group of persons can build the hospital. It requires the co-operation of all. Furthermore, the value of this institution to the community is so great that serious effort on the part of all is demanded. The subscription of every beneficiary of the hospital —and this means every resident of the counties served—must be a large one if the hospital is to exist. The objective cannot be reached if everyone contributes but a small sum.

During the campaign to raise the Liberty Loan in the U. S.

during the war the slogan "Give until it hurts" was used. In determining what should be given towards our great undertaking, the patriotic and public spirited citizen would do well to keep this slogan in mind, and ask himself if 50 or 75 or 100 dollars or even more really "hurts."

Since the actual construction of the hospital is now under way and money is sorely needed, it is highly desirable that as much as possible of your subscription be paid at once. For the remainder of the subscription, the following arrangements have been made.

First payment on amount pledged Nov. 15, 1925.
Second " " " " June 15, 1926.
Third " " " " Nov. 15, 1926.

By spreading the payments over this long period every citizen will be enabled to do his proportionate share in this great community work.

Memorial Gifts.

MANY persons may wish to create some distinct unit of the new structure, to provide some particular equipment, or to establish a private room, a ward or a part of a ward. Such gifts may be made in the name of the giver, or in the name of a relative or friend. What greater honor could be desired than to associate one's name with the alleviation of suffering and the saving of human life?

For the convenience of those who prefer to have their gifts to the hospital identified in this way, the Board of Trustees has prepared a schedule of hospital units in the new building with the cost of each. There is a wide range of choice to prospective memorial subscribers with a corresponding range of cost.

In every instance in which the gift to the hospital is made in the form of a memorial, a suitable tablet, with an appropriate inscription bearing the name of the giver will be set up. When the gift is made in memory of another the memorial name also will be inscribed.

Memorial gifts, besides the satisfaction they bring to those who make them possess a value of their own which cannot readily be measured. Those who will visit the new hospital and who will see there the tablets placed and marking the memorial

THE SISTERS

gifts, will realize as they could in no other way how the hospital has been created through the individual efforts and sacrifices of its builders. Those who, as patients, will be the beneficiaries of the memorial gifts, will the more deeply appreciate the care which they receive because that care will be identified with the personal generosity and charity which helped to provide it.

The following suggestions will give some indication of the cost of possible gifts:

Private Rooms	$ 300
Ward	1,000
Hydro-therapy or Laboratory	$5,000

Final details can be arranged in conjunction with the Campaign Executive Committee.

A Progressive Movement.

We are a progressive, forward-moving people. The erection of a costly hospital is a signal proof of this. Altho the realization came but recently, once we have recognized that perfect hospital service is a necessary part of our community equipment, we have gone on with the work by leaps and bounds. Very few institutions of any kind in any country can boast of the measure of growth shown by the difference between the new hospital we are building and the small dwelling house that sheltered the six-bed hospital of 1906.

We have long since recognized that churches, schools, colleges, governmental institutions, etc., are the very corner stones of our civilization. But no better index of a people's standing among the civilized nations of the world can be had than its effort to build hospitals and to manage them efficiently. No people attended by ill-health day after day can build up the strong and vigorous bodies and brains necessary for the development of a high and permanent civilization.

We in Eastern Nova Scotia are denied many of the luxuries that are enjoyed in some more favored parts of the world but we shall not be denied a fair chance in the struggle with disease and death. At some future time these other great advantages will come to us but even now our people are not to be denied the opportunity to partake to the full of the benefits that the great advances of preventative and curative medicine have procured. This can only be done by a fully-equipped modern hospital. Such a hospital has been started but it will be built and paid for only *by the united efforts of all our citizens.*

The very idea of progress involves a continuous and steady march towards the goal of human perfection. Our pioneer ancestors under adverse conditions accomplished many things for the upbuilding of this country. Each generation has left as its monument some great institution in the religious or industrial or cultural fields. It is only logical that we should continue the good work. If we are worthy descendants of our sturdy and courageous ancestors we shall not fail to do our share in building up the institutions that minister to the happiness and welfare of all.

That we are able to accomplish this great work, cannot be doubted. The most superficial consideration of the great natural

resources of this country reveals the fact that, whatever may be our present financial difficulties, that day is not far distant when we must have prosperity and good times. We have done greater things than that which we are now undertaking. Let us recall our efforts during the war and in particular the raising of the great loans necessary in that titanic struggle. Such wartime efforts seemed almost superhuman. Now that we are undertaking a peace-time work of the greatest advantage to us all shall we not show a little of the grit of other days and again surprise ourselves with our ability to do things.

The Hospital Appeals To All of Us.
We Must All Help.

THE appeal is directly to you who may need the hospital for yourself, for your family, for your friends.

The appeal is to your humanity since only thru your effort can hospital service be increased for others as well as for yourself.

The appeal is to reason and fact, which prove the urgency of the need and make plain the only way to meet it.

The appeal is to your patriotism, for it is a reproach to this part of the world that its hospital capacity is insufficient to safeguard public health.

The appeal is to a people with fine traditions of service who will not be content until they have been placed more nearly abreast of progress in hospital service as in other fields.

Let your response to this appeal be generous. Before 1906 many of your friends and relatives met a premature death because of the absence of a hospital in this community.

How Can You Help?

By believing in the Hospital's needs.

By pledging as much as you are able to the fund.

By boosting the Hospital and the campaign to all your friends and associates.

By convincing others of their responsibility to the new Hospital.