The World Student Christian Federation, 1895–1925
Motives, Methods, and Influential Women

JOHANNA M. SELLES
THE WORLD STUDENT CHRISTIAN FEDERATION, 1895–1925
Motives, Methods, and Influential Women

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Manufactured in the U.S.A.
transformation. The Scriptures were considered the ultimate authority as a record of God’s saving work. Historian George Marsden observes that the American university system was built on a foundation of evangelical Protestant colleges, and most of the major universities evolved directly from such colleges. Until the 1920s, the vast majority was evangelical in character. The Protestant and evangelical character of many institutions of higher education created a hospitable climate for student religious voluntary associations.

At the same time, historian Timothy Wahlstrom reminds us that in the early nineteenth century, the concept of mission opportunities for college students was largely unknown. The college environment in general neither offered such opportunities, nor did it provide an intellectual environment where such choices would be encouraged. American higher education was shaped by the rationalism and materialism associated with the French Enlightenment. The intellectual climate at North American women’s colleges, on the other hand, had stronger links to evangelical theology. For male students, the commitment to overseas service often required a conversion experience and a shift in expectations and beliefs, whereas for women students, the call to serve was a logical extension of the spiritual commitment within which their educational privilege was situated and offered an outlet for the skills and training which they had acquired.

Education both shaped the movement and provided momentum for its growth. While developing and co-operating with national student movements around the world, student secretaries, many of whom were women, were extending the practice of international relations before that field became professionalized and generally limited to men. In their work the women simply extended the practice of hospitality over tea, established recreational opportunities and summer camps, distributed readings on biblical, social, and even feminist subjects, and provided hope and relief for hundreds of foreign or displaced student refugees in the process. To understand their contribution, the next chapter will explore the involvement of women in the student movement.

82. Marsden, *Soul of the American University*, 5.
tention to male leadership in the founding of the WSCF neglects the active role played by women in the formation of wider student organizations, such as the Student Volunteer Movement, that were immediate antecedents to and components of the WSCF. Biographical interest tends to focus on the leaders of the student movements, especially John Mott, Robert Speer, Robert Wilder, and Luther Wishard. Recent work on women missionaries and teachers is moving toward balancing the historical record with a critical appraisal of their many contributions.4

Many of the individual women participants in student voluntary movements had multiple overlapping commitments that can be discerned only by reading from inside the individual lives as much as the records allow. The women’s missionary and service organizations of the second half of the nineteenth century can rightly be spoken of, along with the SVM and YWCA, as precursors to the WSCF.

WOMEN’S ENTRY INTO HIGHER EDUCATION

Emma Douse (1849–1926) arrived at the Wesleyan Female College in Hamilton, Ontario (also known as the Wesleyan Ladies’ College) in 1866 to begin her studies for the academically demanding Mistress in Liberal Arts (MLA) degree. She studied Latin, French, English, Mathematics, Astronomy, and Chemistry. After graduation, she was employed for two years as a teacher before she joined the faculty of the WLC to teach a variety of courses in the academic stream.

Missionary zeal was an inherent part of the learning community at the WLC. An accepted alternative to direct missionary service was service as a missionary wife. As the previous chapter indicates, missionary wives such as Ann Judson and Helen Newell made a lasting mark on missionary lore through their writings. These revealed women who drew on deep spiritual resources and faced overwhelming suffering with heroism. In the mission field, missionary wives “were considered essential to modeling appropriate behavior to their indigenous counterparts.”5 Their presence also served to curtail the allegations of impropriety that threatened single male missionaries in the field.

When Emma met single missionary Thomas Crosby on a speaking tour that brought him to her college, it took her only a week to perceive a call to marry and accompany him to his missionary post in British Columbia a few months later. Douse’s affections for Crosby were no doubt sincere, as was her sense of call. She attempted to articulate both in letters to her mother who did not share her daughter’s enthusiasm for this radical change in plans. Emma assured her mother that she was not carried away by the romance of the thing; she believed “that a blessing will rest upon my life.”6 Like many women in Canada and the United States, her expectations for marriage and for career as a missionary wife were formed and sanctioned by the educational environment of the ladies’ college learning community.

The religious revivals that had galvanized religious life in the Maritimes and Ontario in the 1850s and 60s and again later in the 1880s were based on an egalitarian notion of sin and salvation that ultimately sanctioned women’s right to participate in extended lay opportunities for service.7 In Canada, the involvement of women in such work did not gain momentum until the post-Confederation era, partly due to the frontier nature of much of the country and partly due to the lack of educated women to provide leadership in such work.8 Although the church became the primary agency for women’s public involvement, education shaped the models of organizing, teaching, communicating, and leadership appropriate to women. Women embraced the challenge; before the turn of the century, Canadian women outnumbered men in many overseas posts.9

In the United States, the participation of women in service and missions work had been accelerated by their experience of service work in the Civil War. Women’s education was justified on the basis of building mothers for the nation. In an earlier era, as Porterfield explains, educator Mary Lyon’s (1797–1849) educational drive was rooted in New England

6. Emma Douse to her mother, Feb 18, 1874 and Feb 27, 1874, quoted in Hare and Barman, Good Intentions, 13–14.
8. Ibid., 12. Some missionary efforts were initiated by the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1824 and work was concentrated on converting native peoples of British Columbia. Minimal success in evangelistic efforts in Quebec among Roman Catholics presumably made the goal of foreign missions an attractive challenge. Missionaries were sent to Tokyo in 1873.
Puritanism that attracted women through its “egalitarian spirituality.” Joseph Emerson, a New Divinity teacher, influenced Lyon to join the Congregational Church and shaped her education. Central to her life and educational mission was the New Divinity notion of self-sacrifice as the central element of Christian virtue.

The late nineteenth century witnessed an unprecedented growth in women’s participation in female seminaries, ladies’ colleges, and universities. In the United States, women’s colleges such as Mount Holyoke Female Seminary (founded 1837) in South Hadley, Massachusetts established traditions of service, self-sacrifice, and missionary involvement under the leadership of Principal Mary Lyon. In the Protestant and non-denominational college, habits of piety were encouraged through attendance at communal chapel services and talks, prayer, and Bible study, as well as private devotions twice a day. The spiritual formation embedded in college life and experience tied education closely to piety in a way that made missionary service a logical outcome of one’s education.

Since women students were not considered fully formed adults, a schedule of rules and duties was implemented to provide a parental structure. This structure persisted from the early Mount Holyoke days into early twentieth-century universities and women’s residences. Historian Helen Lefkowitz Horowitz argues that Mary Lyon transformed women’s lives into ones that could be planned: in every element of the building, the curriculum, schedules for tasks, exercise, and spiritual devotions, she created a form of discipline that “propelled students out into the world.” Although Holyoke shared many aspects with Amherst, its brother college, Holyoke was designed on a house model that allowed for strict control and oversight of student lives. By contrast, students at Andover enjoyed a realm of freedom in dormitories with multiple exits that allowed unsupervised involvement in secret societies and traditions. The curriculum at Mount Holyoke bore some resemblance to that at Andover, but lacked Greek and upper-level work in Latin and mathematics. Holyoke’s mission to educate teachers met with great success; of graduates between 1838 and 1850, 82.5 percent taught school.

Bonds of friendship between alumnae continued after college graduation when women gathered at events related to missionary fellowship, read missionary narratives, attended lectures by missionaries on furlough, and participated in alumnae associations. The story of Harriet Newell, wife of Andover graduate Samuel Newell, was widely read and very influential. On her way to the mission field with her husband, she died on board ship off the coast of India at the age of nineteen.

Lyon was instrumental in establishing several New England schools for women including Ipswich, Hartford, and Wheaton Female Seminaries. These schools followed the lead of Sarah Pierce’s Female Seminary in Litchfield (1792) and Catharine Beecher’s Seminary in Hartford, Connecticut (1823). The ninety women accepted in the first year of the Mount Holyoke seminary’s existence were subject to a strict routine of religious observance, physical work, outdoor exercise, and academic rigor. Education and self-sacrifice were part of Lyon’s educational philosophy: education was a means of “facilitating women’s role in the process of global redemption.” The effectiveness of her teaching is evident in the contributions of Mount Holyoke to the missionary endeavor; in the first fifty years of its existence, the college provided one-fifth of all missionaries sent out by the United States. In addition, many other women’s seminaries and academies were modeled on Lyon’s school, including Vassar and Wellesley.

In the religious climate of women’s colleges and female seminaries, missions became the focus of clubs and academic culture. Missionary service was an accepted expression of student piety and spiritual formation. The Mount Holyoke Missionary Association (MHMA) formed a club around the subject of missions led by Mariana (MaryAnn) Holbrook in 1878. This small group met in secret, reticent about letting people know they were considering foreign missionary service. Each member

10. Porterfield, Mary Lyon, 16.
11. This increase has been documented in a variety of educational histories. For Australia, see Marjorie Theobald, Knowing Women; for England see, Hunt, Lessons for Life; for Canada, see Heap and Prentice, Gender and Education; and for the United States, see Barbara Solomon, Company of Educated Women.
14. Porterfield, Mary Lyon, 6. Another notable missionary heroine was Nancy Hassettine who was connected to Mary Lyon through their common teacher Joseph Emerson. Hassettine married Adoniram Judson, another member of the missionary group at Andover run by Samuel Mills.
15. Ibid., 17.
that day melted my stubborn will, and in my room I told my Heavenly Father I was willing to go if He would make the duty so plain I could not doubt.”

She surrendered to the call and experienced a peace and a love she had never known before, with a hearty interest in mission work at home and abroad.

She left the college in the spring due to illness. During that summer she joined the Missionary Association of the Women’s Board of Missions in Rockland and began teaching again in the fall of 1875. Then in 1877, a Mrs. Lord of East Braintree asked her to consider the mission field. She decided to go as a physician and returned to the seminary to finish the necessary courses, taking a private course with Dr. Kelsey, the physician at the college.

In the fall of 1877, a committee of the church met with her and asked her to consider an alternative placement in the South as a teacher. She prayerfully considered it but decided it was not for her. At this point there was no prospect of another teaching post because the public school semester had already started. With no funds left, she asked her father for a loan: “At last at my request he told me I might give him my note for what I would need that year and I might pay it back, or in case of inability to do so, the amount would be deducted from my share of the property when divided.”

With her studies thus financed, she returned to Mount Holyoke for the 1877–1878 academic year. When no teaching opportunity emerged, she increased the amount owed to her father and entered medical school in 1878 at the University of Michigan.

Holbrook maintained an interest in events at Mount Holyoke and noted in 1879 that there were twenty-seven in the Missionary Association, many of whom were interested in studying medicine.

She was initially very interested in the possibility presented to her of working in the Kyoto Home School in Japan but, by 1880, she had shifted her interest to the North China Mission. She interned in Boston at the New England Hospital for Women and Children and then went to Tung-cho, North China in 1881. In ill health, she returned to the

22. Mary A. Holbrook to N. G. Clark, 10 May 1879, quoted by Enoch Bell to Ruth Rouse, 20 May, 1942, box 71–576, YDS.
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s c i e n c e b o o k . 2 4 H o l b r o o k a l s o r e s i g n e d d u e t o i l l h e a l t h ; s h e d i e d i n 1 9 1 0 i n E a s t H a v e n,
s h e l a t e r s e r v e d a s a h o m e m i s s i o n a r y i n N o r t h C a r o l i n a . 2 3 I n 1 9 0 7,
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24. Clipping file in the Mount Holyoke Library Archives, copied in, box 71–576, YDS.

23. Enoch Bell to Ruth Rouse, 20 May 1942, RG 46, box 71–57, YDS.
27. Typescript by Mary Mathews, 1937, box 71–574, YDS.
28. YWCA file, box 71–570, YDS, show that there were mission study classes at Mt. Holyoke as follows: in 1902, two classes, with twenty-one enrolled; in 1903, six classes with eighty-seven enrolled; in 1904, five classes, with ninety-one enrolled; in 1905, twelve classes with 181 enrolled. The figures for subsequent years are similar. In 1919/20 when study classes were called World Fellowship classes; that year there were fifteen classes with 229 enrolled. The numbers reflect a growing interest in missionary concerns among students.
principal Mary Electa Adams. Adams was an experienced educator who had studied at Montpelier Academy in Vermont (originally Newbury Seminary and renamed Vermont Female College) and worked as a teacher and lady principal at a number of schools in Ontario, including Dundas Female Seminary, Hamilton Ladies' College, Ontario Ladies' College, Picton Ladies' Seminary, and at the Albion Female Seminary in Michigan in the 1850s.

Adams' experience in a variety of institutions, combined with her travels—sometimes with her sister—to visit schools in the United States, Canada, and Britain meant that she could create a school that combined the best features of all that she had seen. Although the schools with which she was associated generally had a missionary society or club, the emphasis on mission and piety seems to have been more muted than at Mount Holyoke. Historian Alison Prentice notes that Adams saw herself as a mentor and guide to her students but was no republican and valued a "solid" education for women that "encompassed moral principles." According to Prentice, Adam's working life extended across the romantic period of early female seminaries into the reformist period of establishment of women's colleges like Wellesley, Smith, and Vassar.29

Adams opened a school in Cobourg, Ontario in the 1870s, Brookhurst, which she had hoped to develop into a women's university parallel to Victoria University. However, various difficulties including financial led to the closure of Brookhurst and the absorption of women into Victoria.

Other Methodist ladies' colleges in Ontario, such as Alma College in St Thomas and Albert College in Belleville also had a Missionary Society.30 Ella Gardiner taught at the Methodist Alexandra College, also in Belleville, from 1884 to 1928. A graduate of the University of Toronto, Gardiner was supportive of the development of a Student Missionary Society at the college. The mission movement had begun in June 1876 when a group of women organized the Women's Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church. In 1887 a mission band was formed and one member, Minnie Wilson, went to Shanghai, China. Other missionaries from the college included Kate Curtis, who taught music in India; Annie Lake, missionary to Africa; Marion Lambly, teacher and evangelist to Tokyo Girls' School; Rose Swayze, 1890, teacher in a Native mission school at Norway House, Manitoba; Mary Doyle, who attended between 1892–1893 and served as a teacher at a mission college in South Africa; and her sister Martha Doyle, who matriculated 1897 and studied medicine at Trinity Medical School to prepare for the mission field.31

Educational institutions that fostered ideals of women in service and leadership led to the expansion of education opportunities around the world. Graduates of ladies' colleges, seminaries, and academies saw service as a direct expression of a spiritual call. Not only did the graduates themselves spread the word of a larger world; missionary narratives formed a popular account that provided vicarious experiences for those at home.32

Travel began to open up as a possibility, and the stories of intrepid early women travelers created precedents for women travelling alone. These women adventurers, who published accounts of their heroic quests, brought the exotic attractions of the world into the public imagination.33 Rail and steamship travel provided leisure opportunities for women who could afford adventure, rest, or respite from domestic duties. Publication of missionary observations and travel books, and visits of missionaries on furlough generated a great deal of interest in foreign lands and cultures.

The increased numbers of women in higher education also affected the numbers who enrolled in mission societies, churches, or mission service. Several factors led to this increase: the greater availability of primary and secondary schooling that provided the necessary preparation for higher education; the public acceptance of coeducation, preparing many girls to follow their brothers to university; and the creation of the ideal of the middle-class woman who would use her educational gifts to provide moral guidance to the domestic sphere and society.

32. See Austin, Canadian Missionaries.
33. Some early women travelers who defied Victorian conventions included Harriet Martineau, Isabella Bird, Gertrude Bell, and Mary Henrietta Kingsley. Part of their relative safety in travelling was a result of European imperialism. Their impressions were recorded in travel diaries that recorded observations from a woman's point of view and gained an avid readership. On women travelers see, Lapiere, Women Travellers and Birkett, Spinsters Abroad. Missionary writings also provided an insight into little travelled areas of the world. See Romero, ed., Women's Voices on Africa.
Historians Gidney and Millar have identified the rural or middle-class small town Ontario origins of those who entered medical and other professions. The forces of economic change, rural depopulation, and urbanization combined to push both girls and boys off the farms. In addition, from the 1860s onward, high school was accessible to women who could therefore achieve the same qualifications as boys for white-collar work, as well as the matriculation certificate required by universities and the professions. Women were motivated by both the need to support themselves and the desire to pursue adventure. Missionary work provided a socially acceptable rationale for professional education for nurses, teachers, and doctors.

The first generation of women university students experienced their education as a privilege. Their first-hand experience of the forces of social change that resulted in the educated woman as a middle-class ideal made them optimistic that this change could be extended around the world with college graduates as ambassadors.

The momentum gained in the nineteenth century with the opening up of educational possibilities, the growth of clubs and women's movements, the increased numbers of women participating in teaching, nursing, medicine, and missionary work, found an outlet in work for the Y, SVM, and eventually the WSCF in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

With the entry of women into coeducational universities, change was required: previously male mission groups had to consider whether to include women. Or should there be separate women's missionary clubs? Societies and clubs that flourished in the United States made their way north to Canadian universities. A branch of the Young Women's Christian Association was established at Victoria in the 1870s at its original Cobourg campus and continued once the college moved to Toronto in 1892. Other missionary organizations included Inter-Collegiate Missionary Alliance (ISMA) in 1885. From the 1870s until the First World War, a variety of clubs and organizations emerged to engage students' commitment to missionary work, including social and moral reform. These included the Methodist Missionary and Women's Missionary Society, the denominational Epworth League and Young People's Forward Movement for Missions, and the non-denominational Student Volunteer Movement, and in 1921 the Student Christian Movement.

A Ladies' Missionary Society was formed at the coeducational Victoria in 1891, but previous to this women were generally welcome also in the nominally male missionary societies. Forerunners to the YWCA, founded in England in 1855, include an array of efforts by individual women and endeavors by women's organizations to meet the needs of women industrial workers as well as displaced or immigrant women in the cities. Though these early efforts were limited in scope, over time they coalesced to inspire the international organizational vision of the YWCA. Most directly two individual efforts in England gave rise to what eventually became the YWCA—one was a prayer union founded in 1855 by Emma Roberts, and the other was a London hostel established by a Mrs. Arthur Kincaid. The vision of the YWCA that emerged was based on a commitment to serve those in need, including the displaced, the marginalized, and the working poor, as well as the high school or college girl.

The American YWCA, inaugurated in 1858, began with a commitment to personal piety and social service and grew to incorporate educational methods and leadership training, traditions that were also part of the English and Continental YWCAs. Y associations offered a structure that transcended denominational lines and allowed for the building of local organizations with the help of voluntary, unsalaried leadership. Emphasis on Bible study and special evangelistic work was common to the YWCA work in various countries. In addition, programs such as summer camps and courses promoted the health of body, mind, and spirit.

The trans-denominational approach of the YWCA provided an opening to work in new fields where a church- or missions-based strategy might have been denied access. Such ecumenical work characterized the student branches of the YWCA as well; indeed, the YWCA was more ecumenical than even the interdenominational church boards.

34. Gidney and Millar, Professional Gentlemen, 323.

35. Semple, Faithful Intellect, 216.

36. At Silver Bay Conference Center on Lake George, New York, YWCA conferences drew enthusiastic participants. In 1904, there were 810 delegates to a YWCA conference, of whom 550 were college students and fifty were preparatory students. In 1905, there were 734 students from 111 institutions in twelve states and Canada. See E. Clark Workman, Contribution of Silver Bay.
By 1920 it had dropped the condition of membership in a Protestant evangelical church. By 1894, the vision of an international movement led to a debate among YWCA members, who argued the merits of the title “International” versus “World.” They finally settled on the name “World’s Young Women’s Christian Association” because it emphasized unity, whereas for them “International” would signify only co-operation between separate entities. The constitution provided YWCA members with active membership in the worldwide association but this was limited to those who had a national organization. At the first World’s Conference in 1898, representatives of national organizations were present from Great Britain, United States, Norway, Sweden, Canada, Italy, and India.

The rapid diffusion of the YWCA opened up worldwide employment possibilities for young women. Women university graduates who sought meaningful employment were attracted to the possibility of service work with organizations like the YWCA or the WSCF that offered local, national, and international opportunities. Such involvement continued the interests that had already been established in college years.

The rapid growth of the YWCA led to problems organizationally since there were multiple organizations now working in the same international field. Some countries resisted what they saw as an aggressive takeover of work by British or American leaders. At the World’s YWCA meeting in 1902, the decision was made to approve and sponsor the development of the association in countries then regarded as “mission fields,” with the proviso that the association intended only to supplement, not to take over, the work of missionary societies.

The YWCA in America developed as a separate women’s movement, even though one of the early organizers, Luther Wishard, had originally supported the college Y’s that had developed organically at coeducational Midwestern universities. When this development was reported to the executive of the American YMCA, they adamantly insisted on separate YMCA and YWCA organizations and thus ordered Wishard to undo this coeducational work. Women were told that they were best served by

37. Rice, YWCA, 50. See also Boyd, Emisaries, 92.
38. Seymour-Jones, Journey of Faith.
39. Ibid., 13.
41. Seymour-Jones, Journey, 15.

having their own movement. Women graduates, especially those who left other jobs to work for the organization, provided the YWCA with a skilled workforce. For example, Corabel Tarr left teaching in 1889 to become the second General Secretary of the International Committee and served until her marriage in 1892.

Nineteenth-century activists belonged to a variety of organizations concerned with social betterment, and they brought an ethos of social service, outreach, and leadership that in many cases eventually carried over into the WSCF. Helen Barrett Montgomery (1861–1934) illustrates the multiple social service commitments that were common to many women in this period. After graduating from Wellesley in 1884, she taught high school in Rochester and then worked for two years at a school in Philadelphia. She married a widower and moved back to Rochester where she was active in women’s clubs and the Baptist church. She worked to open the University of Rochester to women, and she served on the Rochester Women’s Education and Industrial Union. Her book, Western Women in Eastern Lands, sold 50,000 copies in the first six weeks. In addition to playing on the irresistible appeal of Eastern women to the mind and heart of women in the West, the book described the wrongs experienced by women in the East and offered a social gospel rationale for missions, arguing that women had to intervene to end the degradation of women in heathen lands.

Among her many activities, Montgomery was president of the Women’s American Baptist Foreign Mission Society from 1914–1924. She helped organize the Worldwide Guild of Northern Baptist Young Women. Her views on the importance of women’s education and the need for mission work provided a strong impetus for missions. In her

42. For example, Luther Wishard who was urged to reverse the gender-integrated policy he had started in the United States arranged for Fanny Beale, YWCA delegate, to speak at an Ohio state convention in 1883 to advocate for a separate association for women. Beale argued that only a girl could reach the heart of a girl. See Ober, Association Secretariats, 69.
43. Rice, History, 50.
44. See Brackney, “The Legacy,” 174–78. See also Marshall, Peabody Sisters.
45. Montgomery, Western Women.
46. Ibid., 56.
47. Parker, Kingdom of Character, 58.
own words, missions were shown to be "great social settlements suffused with the religious motive." 48

Annie Marie Reynolds (1858–1892), born in Kiantone, New York, and the daughter of a clergyman, was another influential nineteenth-century activist. She was a sister of J. B. Reynolds who played a leading role in the pioneering work of the International YMCA in Berlin and Paris. After attending a private school in New Haven, Connecticut, she studied at Wellesley for two years and then left for France and Germany, where she studied French, German, possibly Spanish, and later learned Swedish. She taught school in Nyack, New York, and became secretary of the YMCA in Brooklyn; State Secretary for the YMCA of Iowa 1889–1892; secretary of the YMCA in London. For nine years she travelled through Europe, Asia, and South Africa and realized in the process that the World YMCA must serve a common ideal despite regional variations. In her first annual report as Secretary of the World YMCA, she claimed that "the aim of the world’s Association must be to encourage unity of purpose while recognizing liberally great diversity of method." 49

In 1899, during a tour of India, Reynolds attended the opening of the new YMCA building in Bombay. She tried to work out a plan for co-operation between the National YMCA movement and the student movement established in 1897 by British university women. Ruth Rouse, who also arrived in 1899 to work with the Bombay Settlement and to be a Student Secretary for the YMCA, helped facilitate a plan for co-operation between the Y and the Missionary Settlement for University Women (see chapter 3). The plan assigned workers to specific regions: Agnes de Séljcourt of the Missionary Settlement for University Women was appointed Student Secretary for North India; Laura Radford of the YMCA for Bengal; and Ruth Rouse served as general student worker for India and Ceylon. 50

Reynolds sailed to China and Japan in 1900 to investigate conditions there. She found some possibilities for pioneering association work among missionaries who were familiar with the movement from home. Two student YMCAAs were established in the 1880s in China after the visit of Mr. and Mrs. Wishard (Eva Fancher of Mount Vernon, Iowa). Willard Lyon, education secretary for the Y, went to China to continue this work in 1894. The YMCA helped start a movement for women. Both the YM and YWCA in China recognized the importance of developing indigenous leadership. China sent a special appeal to the World Committee of the YWCA, inspired by the need to help the thousands of women employed in industrial and factory work. Japan had similar concerns about women working in industries and living away from home. In addition, Japan was seeing a growing number of women graduates who had no opportunity to apply their education or to engage in social service. The appeals from China and Japan led to discussions at the Second World Conference in Geneva in 1902 as to the proper function of the work of the YWCA and the extent and character of the missionary program of the YWCA.

Annie Reynolds resigned from the YWCA in 1904 and wrote a brief history of the World’s YWCA. In 1904 she settled in the family home in North Haven, Connecticut. She was an active member of the North Haven Congregational Church and a member of the Daughters of the American Revolution and the Wellesley Club.

Clarissa Hale Spencer was appointed to succeed Miss Reynolds. Her father was a Methodist clergyman who became Secretary to the Board of Extension of the Methodist Church and moved to Philadelphia. Spencer attended Wellesley for one year and returned home for a year due to ill health. She resumed her studies and graduated from Goucher College, Baltimore, Maryland with a BA in 1895. Spencer was the organizer and first president of the college YWCA at Goucher. She became a student volunteer and travelled for two years, particularly among the Southern colleges. Between 1896 and 1901 she spent five years in Japan under the auspices of the Methodist Church, returning home when her father died. Back in the United States she became involved in the YWCA and attended the summer training course in 1902 sponsored by the American committee. She was appointed the State Secretary for Ohio and then the General Secretary of the World’s Committee.

Work in these voluntary student movements was often a family affair; brother and sister teams included Annie Reynolds and James Bronson Reynolds and Robert and Grace Wilder. Married teams included Luther Wishard and his wife, Eva Fancher, who was a founding member of the YWCA and accompanied her husband on his tours abroad from 1889–1893. John Mott’s wife, Leila White Mott, a graduate of Worcester College, Massachusetts, travelled with her husband.

48. Peabody, cited in Montgomery, Western Women, 121.
50. Rice, History, 85.
overseas and represented the women's interests while he worked on behalf of the WSCE. Douglas Fraser, eventual missionary to Africa, travelled and worked with his wife, Agnes Fraser, a medical doctor. Emma Bailey Speer, who became president of the American YWCA after the death of Grace Dodge in 1914, apparently drew heavily on the field experience of her husband Robert Speer who served as Secretary of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church (1891–1937).  

**GRACE DODGE (1856–1914)**

Nineteenth-century activists belonged to a variety of organizations concerned with social betterment and they brought an ethos of social service, outreach, and leadership that in many cases was carried over into the student movement. One activist whose influence and leadership was felt in organizations around the world was Grace Hoadley Dodge, the granddaughter of William Dodge, a metals business executive. Her leadership and philanthropic work supported an array of charities and dispensed more than a million dollars of funding. In 1880 she founded the Kitchen Garden Association (later renamed the Industrial Education Association) to foster manual and domestic training and industrial arts in the public schools. She funded the New York College for the Training of Teachers in 1886, which was absorbed by Teachers College in 1892. In 1884 she organized a club for working women that became the Working Girls' Societies and served as its president until she helped to merge the group into the YWCA in 1905. She served as president of the YWCA board until her death in 1914.  

Dodge travelled to Vassar, Bryn Mawr, and Smith College to speak about the cause of working girls. While a student at Bryn Mawr Emma Speer heard Dodge speak—not realizing that someday she would succeed Dodge as the head of the YWCA (1915–1932). Another person in her audience was Vida Scudder (1861–1954) who became a leader in the college settlement movement and an educator. Scudder differed from Dodge on her interpretation of the roots of change. Dodge emphasized change at the level of individual character, whereas Scudder emphasized the need to analyze root causes of economic conditions and their effect on the workers. After hearing theologian and Baptist minister Walter Rauschenbusch (1861–1918) in 1914, Dodge was disturbed by the economics of his gospel of the social order. She believed that the wealthy should hold their goods in trust for all.

Dodge entertained many prominent women educators and social activists, including Bryn Mawr alumna Ume Tsuda who was a guest at Riverdale in 1913 and who began her own school in Japan. Another visitor was Mary Mills Patrick who had a PhD from Berne in Greek and philosophy and who began a school that became Constantinople Women's College. Established in 1871 in Istanbul, the school went through a succession of names: the American High School for Girls, the Istanbul Girls' School, and the Constantinople Women's College. Mission staff had targeted educational opportunities for girls early on, including the need to move from primary to collegiate to higher education.

This educational mission in Constantinople was supported by a Mrs. Henry Bowker of Boston, who worked for soldiers in the Civil War, headed the Union Maternal Association, and was president of the Women's Board of Missions for twenty-two years starting in 1867. When Grace Dodge was originally approached for support for the Constantinople Women's College, she was too preoccupied with establishing Teachers College to assist, but later became involved. The realization that Mary Mills Patrick, principal of the school, functioned without a budget, convinced Dodge to become president of the board and to provide not only cash but also administrative training for the leaders of the school. (Other financial donors included Mrs. Russell Sage, Mrs. Henry Woods, and Mrs. Rockefeller.) Dodge pursued an interfaith stance in her support of Constantinople and she did not expect all students to be

53. Graham, Merchant, 114.
54. Ibid., 263.
55. Mary Mills Patrick (1850–1940) was an American missionary to Turkey, Greece, and Armenia. In 1871 she was sent by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions to teach in an eastern Turkey mission school. In 1875 she began teaching at the Constantinople Women's College. Her leadership kept the school open through the Balkan Wars, the Turkish Revolution, and World War I. She retired as president of the school in 1924 and wrote a history in 1934.
56. See Curti, *American Philanthropy*, 164–68. Some of these missionary efforts in education were notable because, as in the case of an American sponsored school for poor children in Agora, they made no attempt to convert children away from the Orthodox Church. See also Patrick, *Bosphorous Adventure*.  

Christian. Such interfaith understanding was part of Dodge's approach; in New York, she had been a friend of Rebecca Kohut (1864–1951) who was a social worker and educator and became president of the World Council of Jewish Women.

At her family estate, Greyston, in Riverdale-on-Hudson, New York, Dodge used her resources to entertain and to run training programs from home, including the first YWCA training course in 1908. She established the Riverdale Library Association in 1883 out of her greenhouse, which merged with Riverdale Neighborhood House in 1937. In addition to these commitments, she managed to care for her invalid mother and run the household.

John Mott appealed to Dodge for support for a women's secretary devoted to women's work. As he explained to Dodge, "The world field is too large for me to cover properly. Moreover there are certain problems and opportunities in work for women students which a woman can treat far better than a man. The woman's student field is enormous. Such a worker can serve all the Christian organizations at work in this field." Dodge was concerned that the prospective candidate have a "broad" Christian sympathy and be able to appreciate the "broad" Christian thoughts and work that was being undertaken, work that she assumed many would not consider evangelical. Mott replied that Ruth Rouse was a person with broad sympathies who had won support in the New England women's colleges, as well as among women students in Britain, and showed adaptability in Scandinavia, Germany, Holland, Russia, and India. The challenge for Rouse, explained Mott, would be to develop self-directing and self-supporting national student movements and to work largely through their leaders. By contrast, in the first decade of student work, Mott had to devote himself entirely to planting national student movements and doing pioneer work.

Dodge met with Rouse and found her a satisfactory choice for a women's secretary for the student movement. The non-sectarian goals of the service organizations such as the YWCA were a comfortable fit for Dodge. Her instincts for ecumenism led her to attend the Edinburgh Conference in 1910 where she served on an educational commission.

Dodge's involvement in voluntary movements allowed for an extension of the values that she held and promoted from her New York

Male and Female

base. She supported a movement based on education that would extend knowledge to areas of the world that had been disadvantaged, and provide skills training appropriate to one's social level.

Dodge was one of the first women appointed to the New York Board of Education in the late 1880s. She also served as a member of the Educational Commission for the Ecumenical Missionary Conference, which she attended. Dodge worked for a united effort among Jewish, Roman Catholic, and Protestant women to greet incoming girls at the stations and docks. The National Vigilance Committee, which later became the American Social Hygiene Association, was formed at her house in 1905. This organization involved itself in the development of laws against the trade in women.

Influenced by the writings of Johann Pestalozzi (1746–1827) and Friedrich Froebel (1782–1852), Dodge had a talent for organization and creativity and was deeply dedicated to providing education and training. Ruth Rouse, who became the Women's Secretary for the WSCE, spoke about the opportunities in student work to a group in Dodge's home. Dodge apparently left a bequest for women's work in the WSCE, one that by the 1940s had been redirected into the general funds of the organization. When she died at the age of fifty-eight in 1914, she had bequeathed a million and a half dollars to a variety of causes including the WSCE.

Dodge's varied interests and wide involvement provide an excellent example of the overlapping engagements of those involved in Christian social service, student work, and YWCA-sponsored activities. Her broad philanthropic and mission participation arose not merely from her inheritance, but even more from her commitment to provide practical help to those in need in order that they might have the skills necessary

57. Mott to Dodge, 18 July 1904, RG 45, Series 1, 23/433, YDS.
58. Mott to Dodge, 25 July 1904, RG 45, Series 1, 24/433, YDS.
59. Johan H. Pestalozzi (1746–1827) was a Swiss-born educator who attempted to apply Rousseau's ideas to education by encouraging children to learn through activities and to draw their own conclusions. Froebel was a German-born educator influenced by Pestalozzi who is credited with the introduction of the kindergarten movement with its emphasis on activity and play.
60. Mackie to Rouse, 29 June 1942, RG 46, box 1, file 2, YDS. Mackie wrote: "I did not know that this money was still supposed to be set against women's work, but I have no qualms of conscience on the subject. The only two members of staff being paid directly from our central funds are Suzanne and myself, and quite obviously a very high percentage of the students in the movements we are seeking to help are women students."
for survival. Many of the early supporters and leaders in the WSCF carried forward this commitment to multiple constituencies. Dodge did not live to see the demise in 1928 of one of her projects, the National YWCA Training School.62

Educated women were inspired to take up careers in student voluntary movements such as the YWCA. YWCA leader Annie Reynolds observed the following on the connection between education and the growth of the YWCA movement: "It is the best education, the best brain, the strongest constitution and the deepest consecration that must stand in the breach of this advanced stage of the world's civilization. There is work for all, but now, when everywhere the standard of education has been so much raised, there is an especial need for those who have the higher advantages of any land to make their influence felt for Christian womanhood."63

Education made it possible for women to bring skills to the job but education in the late nineteenth century was not automatically linked to employment possibilities that offered sufficient challenge. Women had a limited range of occupations to choose from, including teaching and secretarial work. Organizations like the YWCA and the WSCF offered the opportunity for both travel and meaningful work at a time when choices at home were limited.

Nettie Dunn Clarke, first national secretary of the YWCA in the United States, who went to India in 1893, commented on the cooperation between the WSCF and the YWCA. Looking back in 1940 on her career with the Y, she observed in a letter to Rouse,

You may remember how I really hunted for something to do in YWCA lines. In our first Station, Ludhiana [India], we had a YWCA mostly made up of young medical students and nurses of the Medical School there. But it was only after five years, when we moved to Ambala and had that camp that I felt that this was YWCA work that counted. By that time I had been hearing about the Federation and was rejoiced to have its help from you and Miss Cooke and to feel that here was an organization made to really help our student associations in a sympathetic way. It was something that the Federation has its own financial budget and paid workers who could give time to college groups in India, as we knew it was doing in various parts of Europe and other lands.


liberalization of Protestantism. Social gospel beliefs emphasized the establishment of the kingdom of God on earth through social reform. Women members of nineteenth-century Protestant churches found that the social gospel validated the efforts of laywomen working together to bring forth the kingdom. Although women did not occupy a large place in national Canadian political parties, their influence was felt through pressure groups. After forty years of organizing in the Women's Christian Temperance Union, the National Council of Women, and various farm organizations, women were able to push for social reforms. Methods of social investigation developed gradually from settlement house work to social research. Canada's first school of social work was established in 1914 in an attempt to professionalize the investigations of the social conditions of the poor and immigrant classes and the services to them.

Women's missionary work also aimed at social reform through industrial and vocational instruction, orphanages, and relief efforts. Medical and public health missions included training of health care workers, dispensaries, and direct assistance.

CONCLUSION

Women joined organizations like the YWCA and the Student Volunteer Movement that allowed them to find or support meaningful work at home and overseas. Many women's colleges had helped socialize women to the notion of service and missions. Although a desire for adventure and a fascination with exotic cultures around the world contributed to such missionary service, missionary engagement was also celebrated as the ultimate expression of piety. Such service was supported by those at home through financial donations, prayer, and publicity through written and spoken word.

According to Austin and Scott, Canadians sponsored more missionaries than any nation in Christendom. In the absence of formal diplomatic relations in the 1880s, the missionary movement was Canada's foreign policy and provided the main source of information about the

larger world. The connection between foreign policy and student movements is more than symbolic. As Catharine Gidney indicates in her study of university student culture, experience in the student movement was linked to leadership in the university in the roles of president, dean, don, and tutor. Thus, for women, involvement in student movements could result in positions as deans of women and lecturers.

Women who worked in the field served as informal diplomats. They developed expertise in local culture, language, and religion and adapted their programs in crisis situations with a high degree of autonomy. In these decades, Western women working for voluntary organizations claimed for themselves freedoms that were greater than they would have achieved at home. A vision of Christian internationalism and ecumenism would attempt to consolidate diverse student movements in various countries into a vision for the future. The ultimate failure of that vision to encompass the diversity of the world does not undermine the contributions of individual women and of the organizations they represented in furthering intercultural and interfaith dialogue. As a vision, Christian internationalism recognized that religion could not be separated from politics and that diplomacy began with understanding and friendship.

Such a simple approach proved effective time and again in countries around the world where students gathered for meals, fellowship, study, sport, prayer, and music. A world where hospitality, trust, and friendship found central place was a world where the experiences and traditions of the colleges and universities were expanded to a world stage.

Arguments against women's education which resounded loudly throughout the nineteenth century were gradually reduced to a persistent whine in the twentieth—dismantled by the apparent academic success and physical stamina of women students in seminars, academies, colleges, and universities in Canada, the United States, England, Australia, and parts of Europe.

Graduates were eager to apply their new learning and leadership skills to a vocation that called for a life of service. This eagerness was inspired partly by a spiritual call to vocation and partly by an adventur-

67. Christie and Gauvreau, Full-Orbed Christianity, 117.
68. James, "Reforming Reform," 55–90.
69. For a study of the origins of social research and the relationship between settlement house work and investigation, see Shore, Science of Social Redemption.
70. Curti, Philanthropy, 164.
71. Austin and Scott, Canadian Missionaries, 5.
73. For a study of Christian internationalism, see Wright, World Mission.
74. See for example, Brouwer, New Women For God; Robert, American Women; Reeves-Ellington, Competing Kingdoms.
ous curiosity that quietly defied middle-class expectations for marriage and home and made the world home to educated women. Missionary service was carefully cultivated by the socialization of women in the early academies and seminaries and provided a normative example of the type of service one was expected to give. Such service was freighted with expectations and assumptions that provided women graduates with the moral authority that was felt to reside particularly in those who were Western, white, middle class, and Protestant. The extension of middle-class domesticity to a realm outside the home provided a realm for action and involvement that opened up the world at a time when travel also made such experience feasible.

Women for whom the university years had been formative hoped to share the experience with their less fortunate sisters in various parts of the world. Western-educated Protestant women, whose role in terms of moral superiority was already exalted, were duty bound to extend this moral influence within their families and charged with extending this mothering role to the world. They provided models of the elevated womanhood whose education provided them with skills that others would need to be recreated in their image. Values implicit in this transfer included middle-class ideals for relationship, family life, hygiene, industry, hard work, and honesty—values that were consistent with the liberal arts and character-building education they had experienced. Having been formed in women's educational settings, graduates were prepared to repeat the process—teaching by example and assuming that the lessons were as appropriate in the new context as they had been at home.

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1. The North American student movement consisted of the Intercollegiate YMCA, the Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions, and the Inter-seminary Missionary Alliance. All three of these movements functioned in both the United States and Canada.

2. Fries, quoted in Adler, Memoirs, 13.