

Historical Review of the Canadian Red Cross Society.

The Red Cross Society is an International Society, with branches or committees in every civilized country, working under the authority of the Geneva Convention, 1864.

The nominal headquarters are at Geneva, Switzerland.

Like other great philanthropic works, the Red Cross had its beginning in a very small way, and through the labours of one man, Henri Dunant, whose name deserves to be inscribed in letters of gold.

The Canadian Red Cross Society was organized in 1896 by Colonel George Sterling Ryerson, with the consent of and approval of the National Society for Aid to the Sick and Wounded in War, as by Letter of Authority dated at London, December 2nd, 1896.

It was the first Colonial Branch established in any country. It tendered its services to the belligerents in the Spanish-American War, but owing to the short duration and climatic conditions it was not able to accomplish very much in this war.

The Society was in the proud position of being ready for active work when the call came to Canada to assist in supporting the Empire in the war in South Africa, and it first solicited subscriptions from the people on October 5th, 1899. During the war fifty-three Local Branches were established throughout the Dominion of Canada, and the Society was the medium, through Red Cross channels, of contributing in kind to the amount of \$23,552.75, while the cash receipts were \$58,826.64.

This splendid showing was the result of the indefatigable and voluntary efforts of the following members of the Council: The President His Honour Colonel J. M. Gibson, Colonel George A. Sweny, D. R. Wilkie, Esq., J. T. Small, Esq., Mrs. Edith Boulton Nordheimer, Lieutenant-Colonel G. S. Ryerson, Colonel James Mason, Dr. C. R. Dickson, Dr. C. A. Hodgetts, Honorary Secretary, and Dr. J. George Hodgins, Honorary Treasurer, the last five of whom, together with the President, composed the Executive Committee, of which Committee Colonel Mason was Chairman during the absence of Colonel Ryerson in South Africa.

The success of the movement was in the main due to the loyal and patriotic support given by the women of Canada, and the proud record of this, the first work of the Canadian Red Cross Society, will remain in the history of our country as a lasting testimony to the loyalty of all creeds and classes.