

WOMEN: ALWAYS DIPLOMATIC AND MORE RECENTLY DIPLOMATS



Agnes McCloskey, the first Canadian woman to serve as Vice Consul (New York, 1947).

Miss McKenzie "passed" officially in 1947. Listed with her in the first edition of the External Affairs biographical register in 1949 were nine other female officers, some of whom had joined as clerks, wartime assistants, etc.: Dorothy Burwash, Frances Carlisle, Mary Dench, Jean Horwood, Agnes Ireland, Elizabeth MacCallum, Katherine Macdonnell, Marion Macpherson and Margaret Meagher. The majority had become Foreign Service Officers.

Diplomatic missions were opened in Egypt, Israel and Lebanon in 1954 and, in October of that year, Elizabeth MacCallum became Counsellor and Chargé d'affaires in Beirut. She was born in Turkey, and her knowledge of Near Eastern affairs was reflected in more than 20 monographs published by the Foreign Policy Association of New York, where she had worked for six years before joining the Department in 1942. Soon she had become the drafting officer for Middle Eastern affairs in the Department and her desk could probably have been termed the Middle Eastern Division of the day.

There was some difference of opinion in the Department on how Miss MacCallum should be addressed in Beirut, whether as "Madame le Chargé d'affaires" or as "Madame la Chargée d'affaires". The majority seemed to believe "Madame la Chargée" the more acceptable form. On her arrival in Beirut, however, she was told by the Papal Nuncio that the matter had been discussed in the diplomatic corps two weeks earlier and an almost unanimous decision taken that the form "Madame le Chargé" should be used. This was accepted by the Department, though it led to some confusion in the mind of at least one diplomat, who, in writing to welcome Miss MacCallum to Lebanon, began his letter "Monsieur le Chargé et cher collègue".

The first female Canadian head of post was Margaret Meagher, who was appointed Ambassador to Israel in October 1958. She

did not find special problems in being a woman in what was largely a man's world, though her first posting, late in 1945, to Mexico as a Third Secretary (local rank) was made before the Department had established any scale of allowances for women officers. She suggests that she may have been fortunate in the choice of the countries to which she was sent as head of mission, but she was never conscious of any difficulty because of her sex. She was the first woman to be a head of post in Israel, Austria and Kenya and the second female Ambassador in Stockholm.

Marion Macpherson is another officer whose career has followed a pattern typical of so many of the Department: work in Ottawa in a number of divisions (one of which she headed), several postings abroad, and a slight pause for the Career Assignment Program — all before she reached Colombo, Sri Lanka, as High Commissioner. Included in her experience, was a posting to Vietnam, as an adviser to the International Commission for Supervision and Control, and as our Ambassador in Copenhagen. She is presently the Deputy Commandant at the National Defence College in Kingston.

Pamela McDougall joined the Department of External Affairs in 1949 as a Clerk 3, and became an officer two years later. She served in a variety of divisions and at several posts before being appointed Canadian Ambassador to Poland in 1968 — the first woman to hold this post. On her return to Ottawa three years later, she was seconded to the Privy Council, first as Assistant Secretary to the Cabinet for External Policy and Defence and then as Assistant Secretary for Government Operations.

Like Margaret Meagher, she experienced no difficulty in her role of Ambassador in Warsaw and like Marion McPherson, she too served in Vietnam. It was Pamela McDougall who chaired the *Royal Commission on Conditions of Foreign Service* and brought in such an extensive, well researched report.

Dorothy Armstrong has been Director of the Commonwealth Division since 1982. Her experience has included administering aid matters at the High Commission in New Delhi and serving as Permanent Delegate on the Development Assistance Committee when she was with the Canadian Mission to the O.E.C.D. in Paris — all before joining the Canadian Embassy in Bonn in 1968 as Counsellor for economic and labour affairs. On her return to Ottawa in 1973, she joined the Policy Analysis Group as Deputy Head then, in 1978, she began four years as Canadian Ambassador to Hungary.

While in Budapest she returned home briefly to receive a Doctoral Degree, honoris causa, from Mount Allison University, then upon her return in 1983 she became a "Diplomat in Residence" at the University of New Brunswick.

As the Department enters 1985, it has one woman Minister, Hon. Monique Vezina. Sylvia Ostry has just been appointed ambassador for the multilateral trade negotiations and the Prime Minister's personal representative for the economic summit. Three senior women are serving outside of Ottawa: Irene Johnson at our consular office in Philadelphia, Elsa Amadio at our consular office in Milan and Marion Macpherson in Kingston. Two women are Directors-General: Marie Andrée Beauchemin of the Corporate Management Bureau and Jean McCloskey of the Pacific Bureau and there are five Divisional heads: Dorothy Armstrong of the Commonwealth Division, Louise Frechette of the Western Europe I Division, Julie Loranger of the Western Europe II Division, Ruth M. Thompson of Library Services and Christiane Verdon of Domestic Legal Services Division. A former senior officer of the Department, Margaret Loggie de Fernandez, is now our Honorary Consul in Merida, Yucatan, Mexico.

Senior officers have paid tribute to women in the Department over the years, whether these women have grown up with External Affairs, come in from other departments or by Orders-in-Council. Several years ago, the Under Secretary stated: "While the number of women who have gained prominence in our ranks may be small thus far, it has included some quite striking personalities as well as women who have played a very substantial part in the development of foreign policy and in the carrying out of foreign operations on behalf of the Canadian Government."

Foreign Service Representation

Month/Year	Men	Women	%Women
Sept. 75	706	65	8.4
Sept. 76	722	64	8.1
Sept. 77	733	61	7.6
Dec. 78	714	59	7.6
Dec. 79	678	58	7.9
Dec. 80	659	61	8.5
Dec. 81	811	93	10.3
Dec. 82	1 001	136	12.0
Dec. 83	1 141	179	13.6
Dec. 84	1 094	176	13.9

SOURCE: PMIS, 1975-84