

At the Service
of the People

Earls court Methodist Churches

TORONTO

Superintendent :

REV. PETER BRYCE
129 Westmount Ave. Jct. 1311

Associate :

REV. ARCHER WALLACE, B.A.
1328 Lansdowne Ave. Jct. 4989



EARLS COURT CENTRAL CHURCH

Secretary :

MISS JESSIE LOVEYS
Jct. 2742

Superintendent of Children's Home :

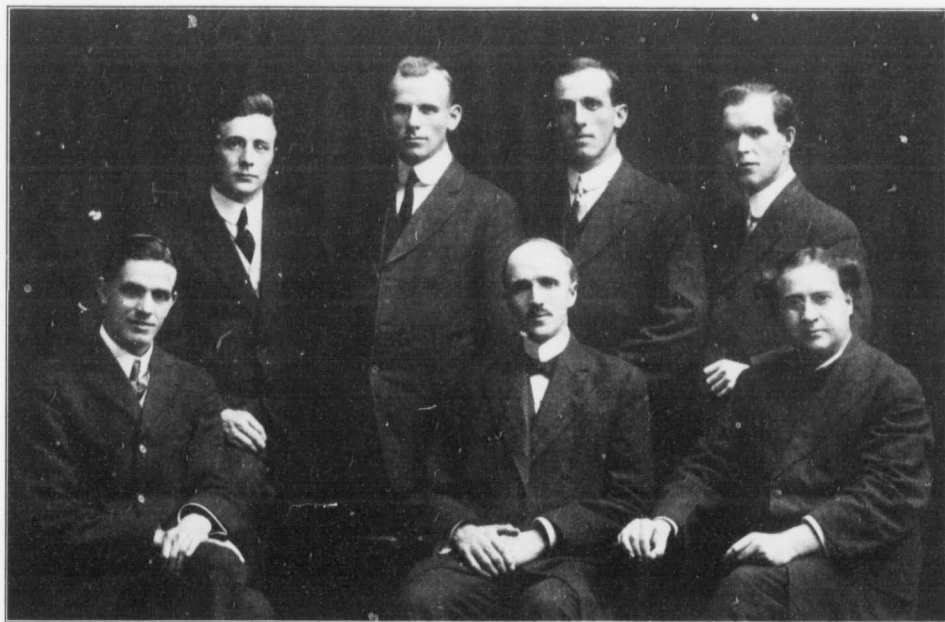
MISS HATTIE INKPEN
46 St. Clair Gardens. Jct. 4074

Deaconesses :

MISS GODDARD MISS MYRTLE KARN
H. 6160

*Branch Churches at North Earls court, Fairbank, Oakwood, Silverthorne,
Prospect Park and Caledonia.*





THE STAFF

HARRY PAWSON,
Oakwood.

ROY RICKARD, B.A.,
North Earlscourt.

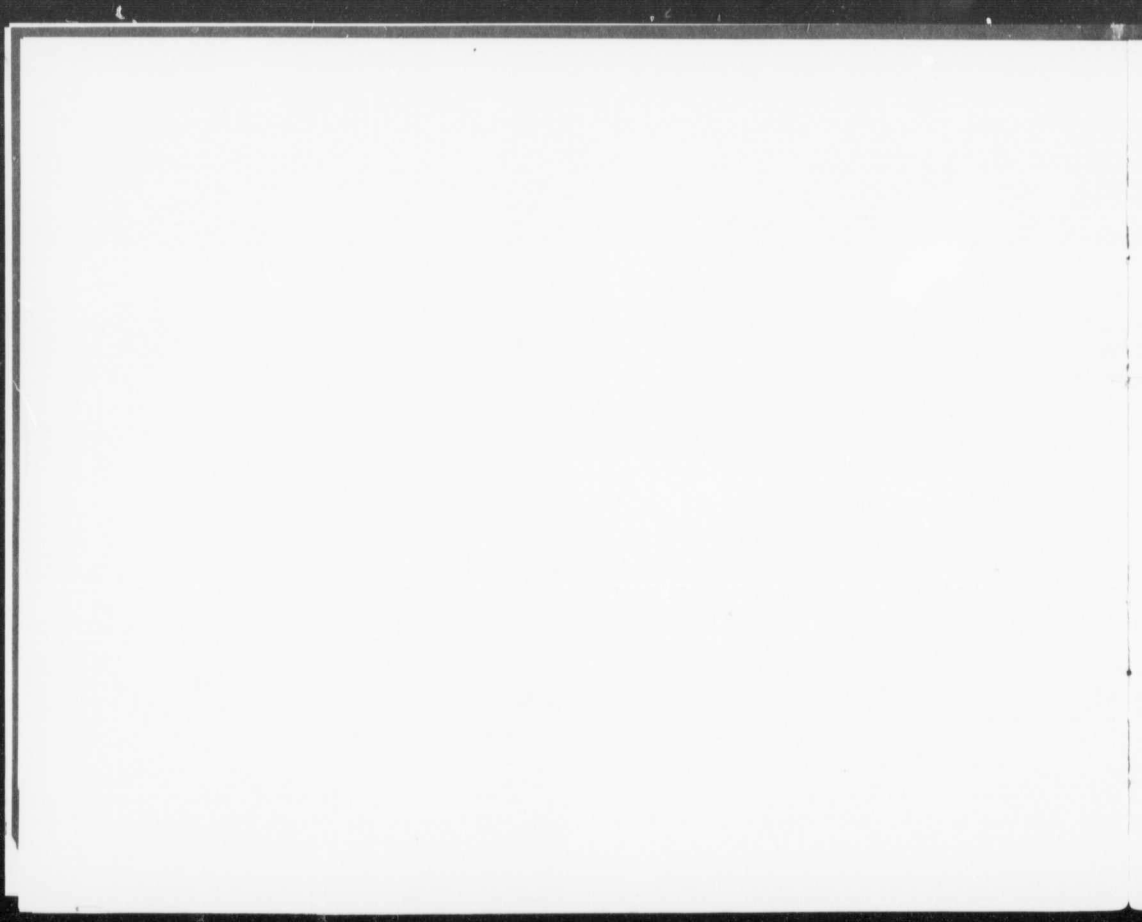
FRED. MANNING,
Fairbank.

WM. DAY,
Prospect Park and Caledonia.

REV. JOHN LINE, B.A.,
Silverthorne.

REV. PETER BRYCE,
Superintendent.

REV. A. WALLACE, B.A.,
Associate Superintendent.



At the Service of the People

By Peter Bryce



It has seemed good to me, on the Ninth Anniversary of my ministry at Earls court to issue a brief statement respecting the principles directing me, the work being attempted and the results achieved. I am under obligation to do so because of the many friends who have honoured me with their confidence and support.

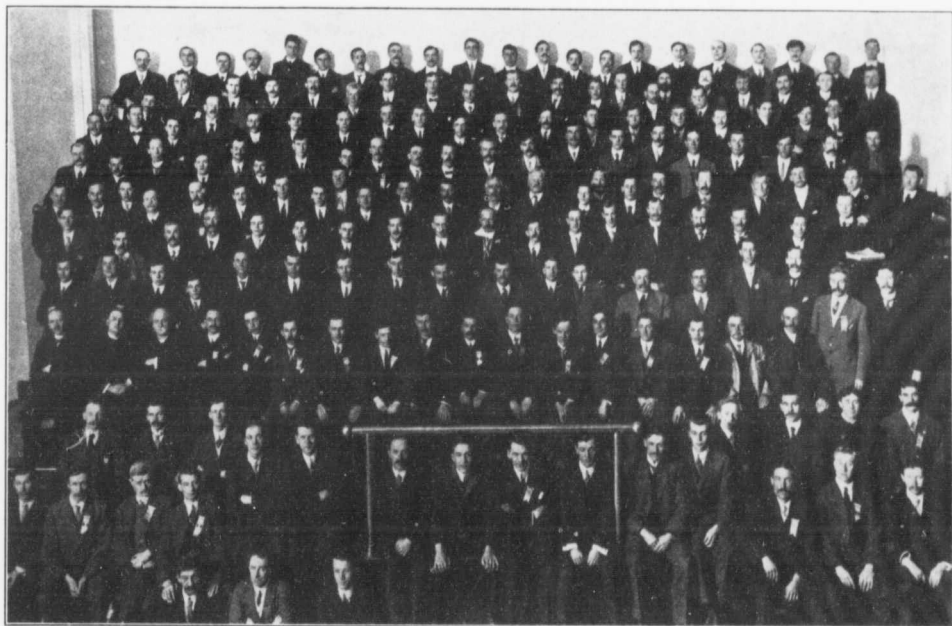
We have fulfilled what are recognized as the ordinary functions of the Church. We have conceived, however, the ministry of the Church to be as wide in its sympathies as the love of God, and as humanitarian as the teaching of Jesus, and in consequence our programme of service presents some unusual features. They have all been prompted by the realization of a need which we were constrained to supply. Aggression, organization, adaptation, efficiency and evangelism may be claimed as characteristics of our work. It has been to us a serious business demanding the pouring out of life, the white fire of enthusiasm, a steadfast love and a consecration of energy to one definite purpose.

Nine years ago the district contained very few homes and these of the class commonly termed "shacks." There were no modern conveniences, and the roads at certain seasons were impassable. Gradually at first, then very quickly, changes took place. The sound of the hammer could be heard until midnight, men building their houses after the day's work was done. Men were possessed with

the ambition to own a house, and they worked long and strenuously and denied themselves much that they might realize that hope. To the critic, the unsympathetic, and the man who understood not, the structure might seem contemptible and ludicrous, but the man looking upon his own creation saw that it was good.

Now the speculator condescended to look upon us, and land prices began to soar. Annexation to the City for some blocks north of St. Clair Avenue then took place, and not long afterwards concrete sidewalks, asphalt pavements, water, gas and sewer mains were laid. While this was proceeding, builders were buying land and rows of brick houses began to appear and co-extensive with them, stores and picture shows and banks, then the firehall, the Public Library, the supervised Playground, the enlarged churches and schools, and the municipal street car. Lo! in nine years, the wilderness has blossomed as the rose and become the dwelling place of over twenty thousand people, a people progressive and ambitious, and, in every respect, good citizens. This estimated population includes the communities to the north, north-east and north-west, all part of our great parish. It is significant that even now, December, 1915, there are extensive building operations in the district.

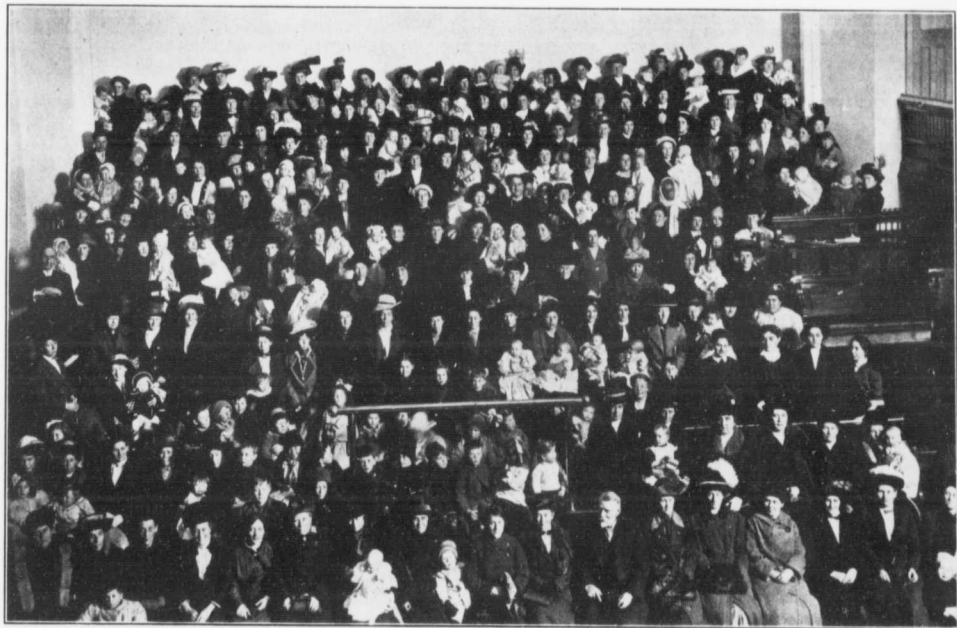
Our first church building at Earls court was crude and small, with ugly and uncomfortable forms, capable of seating one hundred and twenty-five people. It was soon over-crowded, and an extension was made, followed six months afterwards by another wing, then one year later a further enlargement was made, succeeded by the erection of a small building for the Primary. At the end of four years our fine Sunday School building was nearing completion, having an auditorium seating one thousand people, and providing excellent facilities for our special work. We continued to acquire land as we extended, and now we have a frontage of one hundred and eighty feet on Ascot Avenue and two hundred feet on Boon Avenue, a fine site for our future buildings. In the acquisition of this property, we were substantially assisted by the Methodist Union.



MEN'S OWN ANNUAL GATHERING

This Church has been for several years a beehive of religious and social activity. It is open from 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. each day, and its capacity is usually fully taxed each afternoon and evening. The Sunday School is our greatest organization, under most efficient management, with a total enrolment of fully two thousand, including a large Cradle Roll and Primary, and a force of nearly ninety workers. The Young People's Societies, including the Senior, Intermediate and Junior Leagues, the Gymnasium Classes and the Housekeeping Class, have a total membership of nearly five hundred and fifty. The Men's Own, which meets at 4 p.m. on Sunday afternoon, has three hundred members with about one hundred and forty actually present each Sunday. Until the war began, there was an average attendance of over two hundred men. The Women's Meeting has four hundred women enrolled and not less than two hundred present each Thursday afternoon. The Children's Hour meeting each Wednesday afternoon fills the body of the auditorium with eager young people. The Ladies' Aid has a large membership. The Women's Missionary Society and Society Classes each find a following. There are other organizations, and many other gatherings are held from time to time as the Newfoundland Re-union, the Irish Gathering, etc., etc. A Clinic and a Mother Craft Class under the direction of the Department of Public Health are held each week. The Secretary is in the office of the Church from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., and for three years, unless called elsewhere, I have spent each evening in the office. It is known in the District that I may be found there from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m., and in large numbers the people have called to see me in respect to many matters. Some idea of the extent of this phase of our ministry may be realized by the fact that nearly two hundred people visited me in the office each week during the five months of last winter. Our Self-Help Clubs, nine in number, each came into being to meet in a constructive manner a specific need, and the services they render amply justifies their existence.

With the remarkable and rapid growth of the District, it was found necessary to establish branch churches—North Earls court, Fairbank, Oakwood, Caledonia, Prospect Park and Silverthorne, with the Central Church at Boon Avenue, now form the Earls court circuit. The system of government

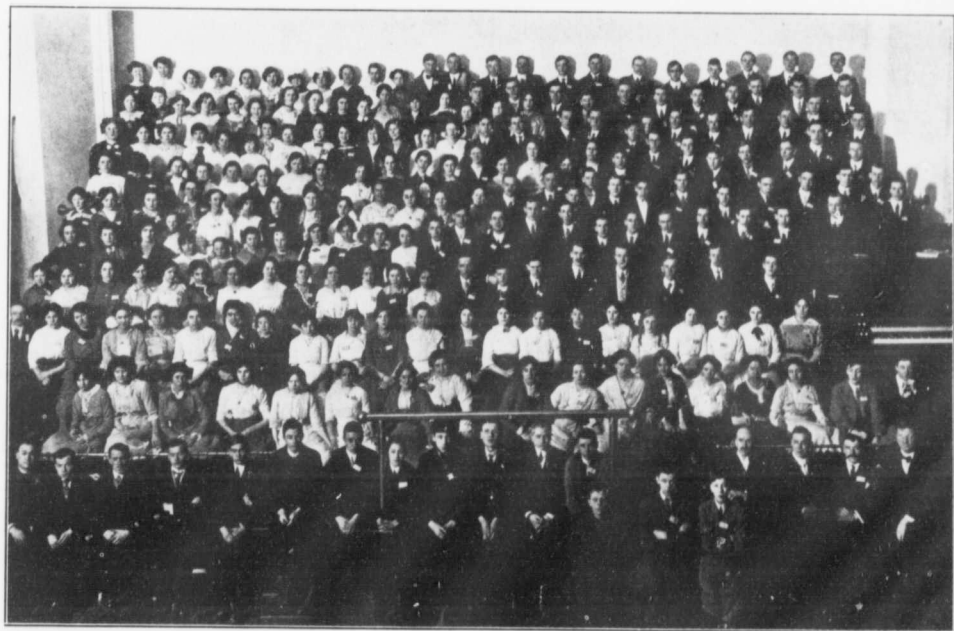


THE MOTHERS' MEETING

evolved includes a Board of Management for each church, thus providing for local initiative and autonomy. Representatives from all the churches meet in Quarterly Board to deal with all matters affecting the circuit. Each church reports regarding membership, organizations, finances and the general work of the congregation. Thus a Quarterly Review takes place of each church before the officials of all the churches. The Ministerial staff consists of a superintendent, an associate superintendent and five student pastors, assisted by two deaconesses and a secretary. The young men are recognized as the Pastors of the churches to which they are appointed, and give all their time to the work during the summer and their Sundays and what time they can spare from College during the winter. This plan has been adopted in the interests of good government, pastoral oversight and economy, consistent with a true conception of the potentialities of a suburban church in a growing district.

This is a very brief outline of our circuit system, combining local autonomy with pastoral oversight, under the direction of a superintendent, strengthened by the co-operation of the circuit and the united deliberations of the staff. Thus, the child may the better grow in favour with God and man, and when able to manage its own affairs will be encouraged to do so, as the child must become a man and take a man's place in life and do a man's work. The culmination of circuit work in the city is the ultimate assumption by each church of the responsibilities of a regular congregation in our connexional system.

Earlscourt and its environs was for several years peopled almost entirely by families from the United Kingdom. Many were attracted to the district by the prospect of acquiring property through the monthly payment system. This plan made it possible for a working man to eventually own a house, but to accomplish this and maintain a family in efficiency is a task of herculean proportions. It involved a tremendous struggle for at least five years, combined with the utmost self-denial. When



SOME OF OUR YOUNG PEOPLE

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THE CHILDREN'S HOME

ing that period we have worked in close co-operation with the city and local organizations, thus eliminating almost entirely overlapping and waste in the administration of necessary aid in our district.

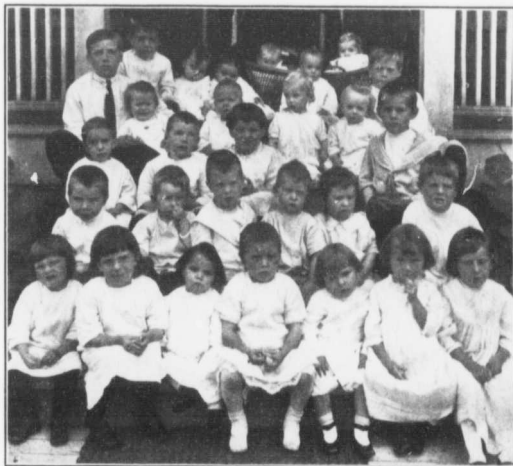
One of the most gracious phases of our activity has been the Children's Home, at 46 St. Clair Gardens, where little ones, temporarily homeless, find a home. The Home was organized to meet the needs

a period of sickness or unemployment came, there were no cash resources. During the depression of 1907-1908 and 1914-1915 our resources were taxed to the utmost to keep from actual suffering the many families obliged to seek assistance. Owing to the exigencies of our situation, this class of work has been laid upon us to a considerable extent. We early resolved never to allow a woman or child to be without the necessaries of life. No work requires more delicacy of touch and more complete knowledge. We have the inward satisfaction and assurance, in the light of subsequent knowledge, in being able to state that not more than one per cent. of our philanthropies was misplaced. In the past three years our social and philanthropic work has been more and more of a constructive character, having regard for all the issues involved. Dur-

of our great parish in caring for children by the day, when the mothers were obliged to go to work, also to serve as a Resident Home for the children of mothers confined in our hospitals. It is apparent such an institution was needed in the city, and months ago, in the interests of childhood, we began to receive children from all parts of the city. We have now forty children in residence. A successful Labor Bureau is in operation here. A cordial invitation is extended to any interested, to visit the Home. The work being done there has but to be realized to be appreciated.

Every movement for the good of the people has had our hearty endorsement, and many have been initiated by us. For one and a half years, we were enabled, through the generosity of a friend, to place a graduate nurse at the service of the community, with most excellent results. She became at the end of that period, a member of the staff of Public Health Nurses, a city organization doing a most valuable and efficient social work in the city.

Our men have enlisted in large numbers. Our registration shows that 320 have already gone from our Churches, considerably over two hundred from the Central Church and the remainder from the



SOME MEMBERS OF OUR FAMILY AT THE
CHILDREN'S HOME

branches. We are doing all in our power to minister to, and safeguard the interests of, the wives and mothers and children of our soldiers.

Nine years ago we began work at Earls court in the little building. The Sunday School had forty enrolled, and a few adults were in attendance at the evening services. To-day we have seven Churches, all well organized and each with many forms of ministry. The Sunday Schools are significant of the potentialities of the circuit. Our records show that we have a total enrolment of 3,300 in our Sunday Schools. Provision has been made for the development of the future by the acquisition of splendid sites purchased through the co-operation of the Methodist Union. The workers necessary to adequately cope with the great development of the past four years have been secured through the generosity of the Timothy Eaton Memorial Church, and our social and philanthropic ministry has been largely sustained from the same source.

We have been unable to realize our hopes and plans for development in the past year, owing to the unprecedented situation in national affairs occasioned by the war. Like many others, we have worked and waited. There are obligations resting upon us, however, incurred to meet the wonderful growth in the three years preceding the war. There is no doubt about the future of our district, and the psychological moment has come for advance at three of our centres, particularly where we have the portable buildings. Buildings of a permanent character are needed there. The equipment for complete and aggressive work in several of the branches is very meagre indeed. In other directions our service might be more effective. The special workers, including the two Deaconesses have done good work and made many things possible to others. In our great parish, a city in itself, there are always so many opportunities to befriend those who, for various reasons, are bearing very heavy burdens. Our organization, combined with our long and intimate knowledge of the district, has given us the ability to discriminate, both in respect to the person needing aid, and in regard to the character of the assistance.

We trust our work, with all its ramifications, may continue to commend itself to the judgment of our many friends. We have been humbled again and again by the confidence reposed in us, and quickened and inspired thereby to give ourselves more completely and efficiently to the service of the people.



OAKWOOD PORTABLE CHURCH



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