

## **Report on findings at Presbyterian Archives (visited by Anne Toews, January 2013).**

**Road map.** I am going to start with what I have actually found on intermarriage (very little); what I have found out about Mrs. Adams; then provide some info specifically related to the newspaper article you sent me; and follow up afterwards with more general info and what I might look at next if you want me to continue.

Note that any underlining or italics in the excerpts is copied from the source; bold type indicates my emphasis:

### **1. ITEMS ON INTERMARRIAGE** (Only the first six are from Ontario)

#### Item one:

... “Mrs. W. F. Adams, also, was appointed to work among the white women married to Chinese in Toronto. There are over 200. Mrs. Adams has had great experience as a missionary both in China and Canada. The whole Eurasian Problem has been made possible by the fact that Chinese women, under the Immigration Act, have not been permitted entrance to Canada, or at an impossible head-tax. **Intermarriage** is therefore increasing and presents a difficult problem.” ...

Source (printed and bound volume – FYI, some of these are available at various libraries, not just at the archives):

Presbyterian Church in Canada. The Acts and Proceedings of the Sixty-Third General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada. Held in Ottawa, Ontario, June 2-9, 1937. Appendices, p.23. (note that the minutes of the proceedings are numbered separately from the appendices, so if you were to cite this you would need to include “Appendices, 23” to avoid confusion with the other page 23 ...).

More detail on source:

Appendix title: The General Board of Missions, Home and Foreign Mission Report;

Section heading: Home Mission Report, Reports of Synodical Missionaries

Sub-section: Chinese in Canada [submitted by David A. Smith]

Report sub-section: “I. *Workers.*”

Item two:

“(b) **Mixed Marriages**. – In Toronto, under Mrs. Adams, formerly a missionary in North China, an excellent piece of work is being done among white women married to Chinese. This is a difficult work, but one that demands attention. There are almost 200 such women in the city. Visiting in the homes, weekly meetings for hand work and Bible Study, are proving most helpful. This year the class decided to work for the support of a Bible woman in our Manchuria mission. In Montreal there is also a very pressing problem of intermarriage. Plans are now being considered to meet this need also.”

Source: Presbyterian Church in Canada. The Acts and Proceedings of the Sixty-Fifth General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada. Held in Midland, Ontario, June 7-15, 1939. Appendices, p.16.

More detail on source:

Appendix title: The General Board of Missions, Home and Foreign Missions

Section heading: Home Mission Report, Reports of Synodical Missionaries

Sub-section: Chinese work in Canada, 1938 [submitted by David A. Smith]

Report sub-section: VI. *Other Mission Activities*.

Item Three:

Excerpt: “On Monday evening Mrs. Adams has her class of **non-Chinese women**; she has won their confidence and many of them attend the Friday meetings, too, and seem grateful for a place to come to. This is a far-reaching work, mostly done by visiting.”

Source: Twenty-Fourth Annual Report of the Women’s Missionary Society W. D., Presbyterian Church in Canada, 1937. p. 76

Section: Chinese in Canada. [Report submitted by “(Mrs. J. C.) Margaret E. B. Wood, Secretary”]

Item Four:

Excerpt: “Mrs. Adams visits thirty-three families. The Monday evening class, instituted by the **Anglo-Chinese women** themselves, welcomes all who care to come to enjoy a friendly time, with the Gospel sing-song, Bible lesson, sewing, knitting, lantern slides, and an occasional visit from missionaries; they all have their Bibles and the roll call is answered with a Scripture vers. This class gave generously to Chinese relief, and have over \$30.00 toward the support of a Bible woman in China. They, too, had a farewell for Miss Gibbs [Helena Gibbs, who worked with the Mission Band and the kindergarten] and presented gifts; they were greatly interested in the Manchurian slides showing where she would live and work.”

Source: Twenty-Fifth Annual Report of the Women’s Missionary Society W. D., Presbyterian Church in Canada, 1938. p. 65

Section: Chinese in Canada. [Report submitted by “(Mrs. J. C.) Margaret E. B. Wood, Secretary”]

Item Five:

Excerpt: “Mrs Adams holds meetings on Monday evenings, but the main part of her wonderful work is visiting the homes of these **non-Chinese girls who are married to, or living with, Chinese men**. There are nearly 800 in the city and the number is increasing. In most cases, Mrs. Adams is the only friend and good influence they have. Forty members and children were at their Christmas party at her home, and each woman received a jar of fruit, from the Supply Department. We are grateful to Miss Wright of St. Andrew’s for her musical help and to two Bible College students who take charge of the children during the meetings. Most of these women lost out in girlhood, through lack of helpful home and Church environment, and it is our privilege to win them back to honourable womanhood and for Christ. Their offerings go to support a Biblewoman in Manchuria.”

Source: Twenty-Sixth Annual Report of the Women’s Missionary Society W. D., Presbyterian Church in Canada, 1939. p. 65

Section: Chinese in Canada. [Report submitted by “(Mrs. J. C.) Margaret E. B. Wood, Secretary”]

Item Six:

Excerpt from unsigned “Report of Work of the Chinese Presbyterian Mission 1943” [I might be able to find out probable author for this report but I haven’t done this yet; let me know if it is worth the time]

“**Mrs. Adams**, our worker among the white mothers also retired in Sept. feeling that for the present there was not the same opportunities for reaching them.”

Source:

Presbyterian Church in Canada, Women’s Missionary Society, Records of the National Missions Department, Chinese Secretary. File name: WMS (W.D.) Chinese Secretary: Chinese in Canada, 1927, June – 1945, Dec. File number: 1988-7004-9-14.

Item Seven (Montreal):

Excerpts from unsigned "1944 ANNUAL REPORT Chinese Presbyterian Church in Montreal"  
(report is unsigned, but could probably get name)

"A two weeks Daily Vacation Bible School was held in July. Sincere teachers came to help us, whose efforts were responsible for the happy instructive time the thirty-five pupils had. **Most** of those pupils were Chinese Children. [capitalized in original]... Just after the Bible School we were enabled to send three Chinese boys to a Christian Boys' camp near Sherbrooke. Those boys came home in excellent health and filled with enthusiasm for such a camp."

...

"Visiting in the homes has been part of our regular duties and new contacts have been made both with Chinese people and with **white wives of Chinese men**. Tracts and Scriptures have been distributed [sic]. Several Hospital visits have also been our privilege. Some deputation work has been done by each of the three workers, at which times the progress and needs of the work have been told."

[NB: There is no mention of white wives of Chinese men in 1943 report.]

Source:

Presbyterian Church in Canada, Women's Missionary Society, Records of the National Missions Department, Chinese Secretary. File name: WMS (W.D.) Chinese Secretary: Chinese in Canada, 1927, June - 1945, Dec. File number: 1988-7004-9-14.

Item Eight (Victoria):

Letter from Gertrude Scott, 1008 Carberry Gardens, Victoria, B.C. to Mrs. Ferrier [new secretary for the Chinese work in Canada, as of 1944], March 27, 1944.

[Only a brief mention of intermarriage but interesting]

Excerpt: "... I suppose Victoria and Vancouver are where you would find more Chinese families than anywhere else in Canada. In years gone by Victoria's Chinese lived in a segregated district known as Chinatown, but now the greater number of the families have moved to residential areas, and as the families prosper they buy or build their own homes, and live very like their Canadian neighbours. Probably in a few more years the chopsticks will be discarded, and rice no longer hold its place as the staple food. The war has made a big difference in the status of the Chinese. A few years ago girls would not be accepted as nurses in training in the hospitals, or be employed in office work in Canadian business firms, and the professions were closed to the young men and women. Now the girls are gladly accepted as nurses, are working in government departments, the Navy Yard, ship yards and all sorts of jobs; and the young men are in the ship yards, taking courses in radio, wireless, engineering etc. and urged to do work prohibited to them before. This all means a big change in the lives of the young people. They are making more friends among the white people and I do not doubt but that there will be more **intermarriages**. When I think back to when I first became acquainted with the Chinese people in 1926 I realize what an entirely different type of people they have become. Of course the adults have not been affected so much but the young people are different. I notice the Kindergarten children speak much more English when they first attend the school than they used to, and almost all of them play with white neighbour children. Little three year olds can carry on quite extended conversations with me in English, and their mothers say the children don't know whether they are speaking English or Chinese.

The parents are anxious that the children should learn to read and write in Chinese, so the majority of school children put in about two hours a day in study in one of several Chinese schools in town. At our Mission Rev. Leung Moi Fong and Miss Lee teach ... [goes on to discuss kindergarten, children's groups, etc.]

... I do hope you enjoy your contacts with the Chinese. Perhaps some day you can pay us a visit. I know you would like to meet our Chinese families here, and they would give you a warm welcome."

Source:

Presbyterian Church in Canada, Women's Missionary Society, Records of the National Missions Department, Chinese Secretary. File name: WMS (W.D.) Chinese Secretary: Chinese in Canada, 1927, June - 1945, Dec. File number: 1988-7004-9-14.

### Item Nine (Saskatchewan):

(p. 61) This report describes “the loving and sacrificial service rendered by nine deaconesses who are working in different parts of our Dominion. The people among whom they are working express appreciation for what is being done for them.”

Goes on to describe work in various locations across Canada.

(p. 62) Excerpt: “The problems of those who are working in the cities are different. [talks about Regina area] ... When making a survey of the Chinese in the surrounding towns, Miss Macarthur received a cordial welcome from the Chinese women and, particularly, from **women who were not Chinese, but married to Chinese men. ...**”

Source: Twenty-Second Annual Report of the Women’s Missionary Society W. D., Presbyterian Church in Canada, 1935. pp. 61-62,  
Section: Deaconesses-at-Large. [Report submitted by “(Mrs. W. H.) Tena A. Mitchell”]

## **2. MRS ADAMS**

Presbyterian Archives don’t have her personal papers.

Address was 53 Millwood Rd., Toronto, and she was listed as a part-time worker by the Women’s Missionary Society. She seems to have worked for them from 1937-1943. She was off sick for part of the year in 1937.

Just from some google searches, there is a Mrs. Adams with first initial R. married to a missionary W.F. Adams. The husband’s papers are in Lancaster, PA. This R. Adams would have been a missionary in the 1900s, which would have made her at least 50-ish when she was doing the work in Toronto.

## **3. NEWSPAPER ARTICLE:**

The very helpful and knowledgeable assistant archivist, Bob Anger, pointed out to me that the dateline of the newspaper article coincides with the Sixty-Second General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada held in Hamilton, June 3-10, 1936. [FYI – I looked the article up online and it was on the front page of the Star. I did not find any response in later letters to editor, etc.]

**Mrs. W.A. [Beatrice A.] McLennan**, who is mentioned in the article, was the president of the Women’s Missionary Society [WMS]. She presented to the Assembly a report about the activities of the **Women’s Missionary Society**. This report is only a few pages long and it is reprinted in the Acts and Proceedings of the General Assembly. The quotations cited in the newspaper article do not appear in her report. Bob Anger tells me that the written report presented to the General Assembly would have been accompanied by verbal comments from Mrs. McLennan, so it’s possible that the reporter was referring to those comments, of which we have no record.

It also seems to me that the 2 paragraphs of the newspaper article are unrelated; it is possible that this was part of a longer article edited down to this length to fit the space that they had for it on the front page. In this case “the speaker proceeded” in paragraph 2 of the article might not actually be Mrs. McLennan. Note that there *is* another longer article

about the general assembly starting on p. 1 and continued on p. 2 of the same issue of the Star. (I don't think it's of interest but am sending anyway in a separate e-mail because of its opening lines about the Church decrying slavery – not sure what kind of slavery they are talking about.) It's strange that the little item about Chinese Marriage Ostracism is given a separate entry – perhaps because it makes for a more sensational headline?

Therefore, while **Northern Ontario** was mentioned in the article, the “hundreds of white women married to Chinese men” seems to have meant in Toronto, not in northern Ontario. The longing eyes that the women missionaries were turning to the north seemed to be more as an aspect of general missionary work - building the Church's “empire” in the north, generally speaking; regaining territory that they Presbyterians lost to the United Church after union in 1925. This excerpt will give you a sense of that, but there is a fair amount of text in this same vein:

“In Northern Ontario, we have the golden and iron links which bind Canada East and West, if not the whole world itself, the destined cradle of a civilization built up through agriculture, mining and manufacturing, the greatest home missionary opportunity which has ever come to the Presbyterian Church in Canada. It therefore behoves us as pioneers, trail rangers, path finders, ancients of the earth and in the (p. 16) morning of the times, to build courageously and fearlessly, leaving to Almighty God His Own prerogative to give the increase in His own good time and way. But while such an opportunity offers itself to us at the present time, we are in no adequate way prepared for it. The era of decadence is beginning to set in, owing, not merely to our disappointing financial situation, but owing more to our man power.” etc. Report signed by “W. M. MacKay, *Synodical Missionary.*”

Source: Presbyterian Church in Canada. The Acts and Proceedings of the Sixty-Fourth General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada. Held in Toronto, Ontario, June 7-15, 1938. Appendices, p.14.

More detail on source:

Appendix title: The General Board of Missions, Home and Foreign Missions

Section heading: Home Mission Report, Reports of Synodical Missionaries

Sub-section: Northern Ontario and Manitoba, Report for 1937 [Report signed by “W. M. MacKay, *Synodical Missionary.*”]

#### **4. GENERAL INFO**

The Women's Missionary Society [WMS] was an autonomous body with its own officers and administration, rather than a section of the Presbyterian Church per se. “W.D.” in the source notes above indicates “Western Division” but that included Quebec to BC. The WMS's short (less than 10 page) reports as published in the Acts and Proceedings of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church outlined its activities. Each year the WMS also published its own full annual report (200+ pages per year). These expanded reports include a section on the “Chinese in Canada” (usually 3-5 pages) which focusses on the work done by various individual missionaries and local branches, organized by region.

In general, the WMS work mainly seems to have consisted of foreign missions, work with children's and youth groups, and women's groups. They were responsible for some hospitals and three residential schools for aboriginal children. They had a "cradle roll" tracking births, and they kept in touch with families of babies that were future candidates for their kindergartens, Sabbath Schools, English classes, music classes, children's groups (Boys' Brigade and its predecessors), Mission Bands (fund-raising groups for mission work), Vacation Bible Schools, Canadian Girls in Training, Boy Scouts, teens, young women, etc. They made home visits to Chinese families. They had a good number of paid missionary workers *from* the Chinese community working within the Chinese community in Canada, working alongside non-Chinese missionaries.

I attach a couple of PDF files from the "Chinese in Canada" section from the WMS annual report 1934, so you can get a sense of what these reports are like. I selected 1934 because these are the clearest photos I could take of print-outs from microfilm reels, not because 1934 is particularly relevant. Note, however, that the Montreal section does mention **Eurasian children** and the **Eurasian "problem"** in last few lines of p. 63. I enclose them so you can get a sense of what kind of information is to be found in these annual reports. [Source for the JPGs: Twenty-First Annual Report of the Women's Missionary Society W. D., Presbyterian Church in Canada 1934. pp. 62 and 63.]

Overall impressions:

There is occasional mention of the "Eurasian problem" but, as you can tell from item eight above, there is also a sense that intermarriage was viewed in a more or less positive light as an aspect of integration (or assimilation). Interaction between the Chinese (adults/children) and other Canadians is generally described in positive terms and there are several accounts of mixed race children's groups. I have additional notes (not included in this summary) that include anecdotes about English children learning Chinese songs, about a little Chinese girl bringing a blonde friend to Mission Band one day, and then to Sunday School. So the Chinese Christian families were acting as missionaries to the Anglo community; they also raised a lot of money for mission work. Chinese children are also seen as a way to reach Chinese parents. Tone is often admiring of the Chinese, especially the Chinese Christians. Unlike the 1920s United Church missionary docs that I looked at earlier, there is no sense that Anglos are the "holy race," and when the Presbyterian missionary women use the word "white" it is usually in quotations.

Other topics discussed: missionary work overseas and among various ethnic groups in Canada – Hungarians, French-Canadians, Italians; positive effect of Chiang Kai Shek's profession of Christian faith and the "New Life Movement" in China; conflict in China; refugees and mission work in China; concern about agitation for registering Chinese and Japanese residents in Canada in the late 1930s, especially the "Oriental problem in BC"; lots of reports about funds raised by various groups including the Chinese; inter-denominational territorial battles over missions to the Chinese (in Montreal); distribution of literature; crisis in Saskatchewan (drought, poverty). WMS in Toronto discussed need for a car to pick up Chinese children "scattered all over the city" for Sabbath School.

“Surveys” in Saskatchewan and Northern Ontario which give prospects for missionary work in these areas.

The WMS also involved themselves with the children’s health – in Montreal, you might be interested to know that they used the services of the University Settlement (it is mentioned in 1938 and 1939, for example).

There are also financial reports, including total sums spent on work in the Chinese community, and lists of WMS staff and sometimes of salaries paid.

## **5. POSSIBLE FURTHER WORK AT THE PRESBYTERIAN ARCHIVES**

Files I have reviewed so far:

- Acts and Proceedings of the General Assembly 1936-1940 (mostly looking at the Home Missions reports for northern Ontario and Toronto)
- WMS annual reports for 1936 and 1937 (skimmed the annual reports to find out which sections were related to work among the Chinese – those would be Work and Welfare sections, reports about deaconesses and auxiliaries as well as the “Chinese in Canada” sections)
- The “Chinese in Canada” sections of the WMS annual reports for 1934-1939
- Correspondence files from WMS workers to head office for 1943-44.

As you can see in the items transcribed, the national reports indicate that there was a Eurasian problem but don’t specify what the problem actually is; they talk about “work” with white wives but most of the items don’t say whether that work is anything other than conversion to Presbyterianism. The WMS annual reports have been compiled at the national level from reports submitted by all WMS missionaries and groups working with the Chinese in Canada. The Archives have *some* of these original submissions. I have only had time to look through 1944-1943, which is the thickest file. They have a few documents dating back from 1942 to 1927 in one other file; it should only take an hour or so to go through the rest of these. I could also look at the three remaining “Chinese in Canada” sections of the WMS annual reports from 1940-1943 which should have further discussion of the work of Mrs. Adams. I would also check 1944 to see if anyone else took up Mrs. Adams work after she retired. I think that if there is anything to be found with useful detail on the missionaries’ interest in white women married to Chinese men, it would be in one of these places.

FYI, I also came across a mention of a Miss Murray, a deaconess in Toronto, who “visits women in 7 large hospitals and the Mercer Reformatory.” (1936) I have not looked for anything more about Miss Murray’s activities.

There is also mention of a book that women missionaries were studying, called *The Chinese Church in Action* – I was thinking I might take a look at that if they have a copy.

I have spent six hours at the Presbyterian Archives so far, with not much to show for it. I am happy to spend another day (or more if you like) out there, but I will leave it up to you to decide if pursuing this is worthwhile.