

## **Evangelicalism, Revivalism and the Female Contribution: Emily Spencer Kerby**

ANNE M. WHITE

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On 3 October 1938, Emily Kerby, a noted and respected Calgarian and “Pioneer Clubwoman,” died at the age of 78. This was just eight days before she and her husband, George W. Kerby, were to celebrate their fiftieth wedding anniversary.<sup>1</sup> In a report of the funeral service held at Central United Church, the *Calgary Daily Herald* noted that over 1,000 people were seated in the flower-filled church to pay tribute to her. Emily Kerby was considered a woman who had exerted a profound influence on “the ministry and laity of the United Church of Alberta.”<sup>2</sup>

So highly respected was Kerby that leading United Churchmen from across Canada attended the funeral. Two prominent United Church ministers and an Anglican Bishop officiated at her burial service. United Church Minister, Rev. Mr. Aitken, observed in his concluding funeral address: “For her monument, look around you. The many here today are few in comparison with the many throughout Canada who are paying tribute with us in spirit.” Aitken continued by expressing gratitude for a life “. . . filled with beautiful devotion and loyalty to Jesus Christ. Mrs. Kerby lives, will continue to live, and her memory will live as a greater beacon on the horizon to challenge our young women to loftier and holier lives.”<sup>3</sup>

### ***Identifying the Elusive Mrs. Kerby***

Surprisingly, apart from the glowing accolades and the obvious popularity of the old lady, the life story of Emily Kerby is not a familiar one.<sup>4</sup> This is somewhat bewildering as she was a co-worker alongside Nel-

lie McClung, Alice Jamieson, Emily Murphy, Irene Parlby, Lily Woodhall, Henritta Muir Edwards, Kate Underwood and Annie Davidson, to name a few, in the struggle for female equality.

Primary source material presents Kerby as an evangelical Christian strongly committed to female emancipation, education and far-reaching social reforms.<sup>5</sup> She was a strong and forceful person with a mind of her own.<sup>6</sup> Sometimes her approach was considered brusque for which she was openly criticized.<sup>7</sup>

When Kerby moved west to settle near the Canadian Rockies in a small city called Calgary she found a rugged frontier society wide open to innovation and experimentation. Calgary, or “Cowtown,” afforded her ample opportunity to participate in the building of a city, a social infrastructure and a truly western identity.

That Emily Kerby was passionately involved in social issues is not surprising if one considers her background within Methodism. Methodism was the product of the eighteenth-century evangelical revival. At its very centre Methodism possessed a belief system centred around evangelism and social renewal. This zeal was transported to Canada and led to the successful establishment and rapid growth of the denomination within Canadian society.

Emily Kerby’s life, personal development and lasting influence sprang out of her evangelical, revivalist roots. Her unique contribution can be identified through the ways she was able to utilize these dynamics during a truly fascinating period of Canadian history – the establishment of the west.

### ***Background***

Emily Spencer was born in Toronto on 26 March 1859.<sup>8</sup> Her family came from an established prosperous Methodist background with United Empire Loyalist roots.<sup>9</sup> Unfortunately, but not surprisingly, there are no details available about Emily’s mother. There are, however, records available which show that Emily’s father was a Methodist minister, one James Spencer, M.A., a professor at Victoria College, Toronto, who went on to become editor of the Methodist publication, *Christian Guardian*.<sup>10</sup>

Emily Spencer was an intelligent young woman. In keeping with the Methodist emphasis on education, she was well-educated, graduating from the Toronto Normal School in the mid-1880s. Later she became principal of a large public school in Paris, ON.

Miss Spencer first met the newly-ordained Methodist minister George William Kerby in Woodstock, ON. It was Kerby's first charge and significantly the couple met during a revival that was occurring in Woodstock under his preaching. During the early days of the Woodstock revival in 1888 attendance swelled from 100 to 400 persons. By the end of 1888 the revival had increased numbers to around 1,000 which caused chronic seating problems.

It was on October 11 of that same year that George Kerby and Emily Spencer were married.<sup>11</sup> The Methodist minister officiating at the marriage ceremony was the Rev. Dr. J.S. Williamson.<sup>12</sup>

### ***The Revivalist Minister George Kerby***

George Kerby was a charismatic man and a notably gifted preacher. He became one of a select band of evangelists set apart by the Methodist Conference to travel throughout Canada and the United States, preaching the Methodist conversion experience in a revival context.<sup>13</sup> Methodist evangelists went out in teams of two; there are many references in the *Christian Guardian* during the early 1900s to the work of these ordained men.<sup>14</sup> In keeping with this tradition George Kerby was "set apart" along with fellow minister George R. Turk, at a special service held on 25 August 1901, at Dundas Street Church, Woodstock, for this work.<sup>15</sup>

Kerby and Turk embarked upon an extensive preaching tour of Canada and the United States commencing in 1901. Kerby was a popular evangelical preacher who attracted large audiences. On one occasion in San Francisco he preached to 10,000 people. Kerby also preached to an equally large crowd under the cover of a Barnum and Bailey Circus Tent, in Chattanooga, Tennessee.<sup>16</sup> In the meantime, dutiful Emily was left on her own, with sole responsibility for the care of their two children, Helen and Spencer and the upkeep of the household. During this preaching tour George Kerby traversed Canada twice and consequently saw little of his wife and children.<sup>17</sup>

When Kerby concluded his preaching tour in 1902 he returned home to Ontario a famous, established Canadian preacher. Many invitations awaited him to take a pastoral charge at various churches in settled parts of Canada. One invitation made a distinct impression upon both Kerbys. It was from a Methodist church in the Northwest Territories, from a new city called Calgary. According to George Kerby the call hit them "Like a bolt out of the blue."<sup>18</sup> Emily Kerby is credited with having been the major

influence upon George to eventually take up the invitation. It is recorded that she “. . . plumped for the west, urging the frontier over the security of central Canada.”<sup>19</sup>

On 2 January 1903 the Calgary press reported that a telegram had been received from the Rev. George W. Kerby. The famous preacher had accepted the call and would take up his ministry on the frontier, in the Northwest Territories, at Calgary Central Methodist Church.<sup>20</sup> The Kerbys, genteel easterners, from settled central Canada, would soon experience rugged western society in the city of Calgary which had developed from a primitive fort encampment into a rough but dynamic centre in approximately nineteen years.<sup>21</sup>

### *The Call of the West*

The area known as the Northwest Territories was a wild place . (Alberta became a separate province in 1905.) To the credit of the North West Mounted Police (NWMP) law and order was kept efficiently. Intriguingly, the application of the law itself was sometimes open to surprising innovation. At times it was creatively interpreted on the spot, so flexible was the environment in which law enforcement found itself.<sup>22</sup>

Calgary was nicknamed “Cowtown.” There was good reason for this because, apart from Catholic and Protestant missionary work and the whisky trade, ranching was primarily the first established white endeavour in the area. In the city’s early years cows would walk or run through the streets along with stampeding sheep and sometimes a herd or two of rampaging pigs.<sup>23</sup>

When the Kerbys arrived they found a city which was home to many noted and wild eccentrics. For example, Mrs. Caroline Fulham (Mother Fulham) raised pigs which she sheltered in her basement during the frigid winter months. She collected pig swill from the downtown hotels by using her old horse and dilapidated buggy to haul her cargo. Mother Fulham was belligerent when drunk but was known also to do great acts of kindness for needy neighbours.<sup>24</sup>

The climate and terrain of the foothills of Alberta also presented health and safety problems. The banks of the Bow and Elbow rivers often displayed the bloated carcasses of dead cows, sheep and other animals that had either floated down the river or collapsed on the banks. Flies were in great abundance and in the dry heat of summer, combined with the strong prairie winds, the discomfort and stench could be intense. In winter, the

Chinook winds melted the snow, leaving muddy ground. This warm weather would then be followed by severe cold which would freeze the mud and snow. The resulting terrain and rotting, unsafe ice, proved treacherous for people and livestock alike.<sup>25</sup>

There was no zone planning and shanties proliferated the surrounding areas.<sup>26</sup> With the influx of settlers and migrants passing through, Calgary was initially a sprawling mass of chaos except for a few select sections such as Mount Royal and Elbow Park.

The Canadian Pacific Railway stopped in Calgary daily.<sup>27</sup> Trains brought not only freight but also hundreds of settlers of all nationalities. There were the Canadian-born, Scots, English, Irish, Welsh, Ukrainians and Austrians, Chinese and Polish; and they came in droves. According to the Census of the Northwest Provinces for the year 1901, the population of Calgary was 4,091. In 1906, the population had risen to 11,967. By 1911 it had reached 60,502.

The potential for expansion and evangelistic opportunity was not lost on the Methodists of central Canada or the western Canadian frontier. The correspondence of the time stressed the need for ministers, local preachers, missionaries and settlers to heed the call and venture out to the frontier to become nation builders.<sup>28</sup> Even the noted missionary the Rev. John McDougall of Morley Mission fame was interviewed by the *Christian Guardian* to emphasize the need for dedicated Methodists to settle in the west.<sup>29</sup>

It was into this melee of raw expansion and city-building that George Kerby decided to plunge at the prompting of his wife. In the typical heat of a dry foothills summer, during the month of July 1903, the Kerbys arrived in Calgary, via the CPR. From this time on Emily Kerby never looked back. She developed into a noted pioneer social reformer and a hard hitting, articulate representative of women's rights in Canada.

### ***Revival Times in Calgary***

George Kerby was pastor of Methodist Central Church in Calgary from 1903 to 1910.<sup>30</sup> Shortly after his arrival Kerby was preaching to packed audiences.<sup>31</sup> He also commenced open air services, often conducting them in the beautiful Canadian Pacific Railroad gardens.<sup>32</sup>

Under George Kerby's evangelical preaching there appears to have been a substantial religious ingathering in Calgary. Methodist records are unclear, however, as to whether they made the correlation between

numbers, conversions and a full-blown revival.<sup>33</sup> There was mention that the number of new members and families moving into the city was “very great.”<sup>34</sup>

In a letter to the *Christian Guardian* George Kerby wrote that “there were signs of a great awakening in the Sabbath school and a change of viewpoint,” in dealing with people “in need of the Christian religion.”<sup>35</sup> Kerby, the revivalist, was also quoted as saying that there was “great opportunity” and that “the people had been very responsive, “with conversions occurring on a regular basis.<sup>36</sup> On one occasion in the latter part of July 1904, Kerby preached to over 1,500 persons in the open air. In that same year it was also noted that the “Methodists had a most prosperous year,” and that communicants had increased by 117 persons, making a total of 417 members.<sup>37</sup>

George Kerby’s preaching not only emphasised conversion experience but also placed great importance on reaching the transient young male population of Calgary. Indeed, George embraced this cause whole- heartedly and took up the crusade for establishing an outreach for them via the Calgary Young Men’s Club in 1904. This cause became one of the George Kerby’s greatest endeavours in evangelism during his pastorate at Central Methodist. In his writings he constantly emphasized that “the whole working force of the church needs an infusion of young, virile manhood.”<sup>38</sup> Kerby was also an outspoken critic of many of the social ills affecting Calgary.<sup>39</sup> Unfortunately, the problems of female transients or immigrants did not seem to affect him as deeply as did the lot of the young men.<sup>40</sup>

#### ***Emily Kerby as a Church Worker***

Emily Kerby was an educated, shrewd, capable woman who possessed considerable organizational skills. As the minister’s wife she also participated in the experience of the revival movement in Calgary during this time. From the beginning, however, she was identified as being “different.” There were specific church duties which she was expected to fulfil but the records indicate that she was not the typical pastor’s wife. Tactful observations were made that “she was not active in offices as many women we could mention, but her name appears in the old minutes of the women’s organizations; she gave Scriptural readings with comments, led in prayer, gave talks, offered many motions and ideas, and also, she sang in duets.”<sup>41</sup>

Mrs. Kerby's use of exhortation in itself at that time was unusual in a western Canadian context. Women did not, in mixed company, give Scripture readings with comments or lead in prayer. This was a tradition from central Canada where female preachers and class leaders in Ontario and Manitoba exhorted and expounded.<sup>42</sup> However, in the district identified as Alberta during this era, women did not generally lead in mixed church gatherings, and that included the traditional Methodist class meeting. The only exceptions were deaconesses or minister's wives if they were competent. Emily Kerby was a marked exception. The first record of her appointment as a class leader was in 1910. This was the same year that George Kerby left his pastoral charge to become the first Principal of Mount Royal College.<sup>43</sup> Again, two years later in 1912, Emily Kerby is recorded teaching an especially esteemed group within the Methodist Church, this being the young men's Anti-Knockers Bible Class.<sup>44</sup>

#### ***Revival According to Emily Kerby***

From articles appearing in the *Christian Guardian* around this era Methodists appear to have been seeking a full-scale Canadian revival.<sup>45</sup> In fact, in 1912 George Kerby was writing of the need for ". . . a revival of the mystic element in religion – the search after God, the better to fit us to cope with the bewildering issues of our age."<sup>46</sup> From the correspondence of the time, there appears to be a general consensus that revival meant "the renewing and increase of spiritual life."<sup>47</sup>

It is from the writings of Emily Kerby, however, that a new twist or emphasis on the qualities of revival emerges. Emily Kerby's definition of an indispensable element within revivalism was a prototype feminist interpretation of freedom. The sentiments she expressed in written rebuttal to a particularly offensive idea prove illuminating in this context. Some Methodist men, in their quest for revival and holiness, believed that liquor, tobacco and women were inextricably woven together and proved to be a demoralizing influence. Kerby wrote from around the time of the revival in Calgary early in her work as an activist: "Yes, we need a revival, a revival that will not make the name of womankind a byword or a jest." She continued further by stating

Woman is a human being, endowed with capabilities as great as man, but she has never had a chance. Men have told women for centuries just what they are, what they must be and do. They must be ignorant

to please the men. But God came to our rescue in the way of education, and the revival is upon us. Educated womanhood is asserting her right to a place in the sun. Can someone tell me why men think God made the world for the male half (or less than half) of his creation? It is the most utter case of egotism imaginable.<sup>48</sup>

The sentiments expressed in this passage embody the creed and dynamic by which Emily Kerby lived and worked. Kerby channelled her evangelical, revivalist beliefs into causes which would aid society and women in particular. She believed that freedom, self-respect and education were the fruits of revival and were rights that women should possess in the Kingdom of God.

#### ***Feminist Christian versus the Methodist and United Church***

In furthering her goals for social reform Emily Kerby encountered many obstacles. Her writings bear witness to her alienation and frustration with both the Methodist and then the United Church in its attitude towards women. In 1915, under her non deplume Constance Lynd she was one of a vocal number of women in the suffrage movement, censuring the organized Methodist church for its reluctance to allow women equal rights in the church courts.<sup>49</sup>

The ordination of women was also a volatile issue with many Christian female thinkers of the time. Kerby's intense estrangement from the hierarchy of the Methodist Church was expressed very articulately when, as Constance Lynd, she pondered the absence of women in the ministry:

She is the one who first teaches the infant lips to lisp the name of Jesus; she is the one who first endeavours to set the tiny feet upon the right paths, yet when it comes to that day when these same children are of an age to be taken into the church, only men stand at the altar to receive them. No kindly face of motherly woman greets with outstretched hands to welcome them into the church, and to encourage them in the way she has sought to lead them.<sup>50</sup>

It was not until 1935 that the issue of ordination for women was resolved within the United Church with the ordination of Lydia Gruchy.

Emily Kerby effectively pursued most of her own personal innovative social activism through the various clubs to which she



belonged.<sup>51</sup> Remarkably at the same time, she still played an important role within her denomination despite the contradictions and disillusionment she experienced as women fought for equality within it.

Alongside her husband, Emily helped develop many church activities to address the needs of the rapidly expanding Calgarian population.<sup>52</sup> As a Methodist churchwoman she played an influential role in both the Ladies Aid Society and the powerful Women's Missionary Society (WMS).<sup>53</sup> The WMS was very active in evangelization not only overseas but within Canada. In Alberta alone there were numerous missions, including ones to the Ruthenians.<sup>54</sup>

### ***The Pioneer Calgary Clubwoman***

To do justice to Emily Kerby's achievements it is necessary to examine some of her endeavours. It becomes apparent that the commitment necessary to sustain and complete many of the objectives was enormous and her record of influence and social commitment within Calgary proves impressive.<sup>55</sup> Emily Kerby helped design, fashion and build a great part of the social infrastructure of Calgary, wider Alberta and, to a degree, even wider Canada.

### **The Young Women's Christian Association**

By 1906 the population of Calgary had swelled to 11,967. The projections for 1907 anticipated another giant leap in the immigrant population. 1907 did prove to be a particularly heavy year for immigration to the western provinces and Calgary was, as always, a focal point along the way. When the immigrants started to arrive in March it was clear that there was going to be an accommodation crisis. Some of the leading clubwomen in Calgary were concerned about the plight of single girls and women who would be in need of shelter and aid.

On 2 July 1907 Emily Kerby convened a meeting at Central Methodist Church to discuss the problems that immigrant women were going to face. Mrs. John McDougall, Mrs. G.S. Jamieson and Mrs. Thomas Underwood, together with several other women, met to discuss the feasibility of organizing a Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) in Calgary. The meeting was opened with prayer led by Kerby. Fundraising was planned and Emily Kerby suggested that every woman be asked to raise \$100 each. This was unanimously agreed.<sup>56</sup>

On 29 October 1907 the board minutes record that Kerby, seconded

by Mrs. Patterson, moved that a meeting of all young ladies in the city be called for Monday evening, November 4. By the time this meeting convened suitable accommodation for the YWCA had been found and enough money raised to pay one month's rent in advance. Mrs. Kerby moved that the accommodation be rented immediately. That same month the YWCA opened to meet the needs of some of the many immigrant females in Calgary.<sup>57</sup>

As part of the on-going aggressive fundraising campaign, the YWCA took charge of the publication of a major Calgary newspaper, the Calgary Daily Herald, for one day. The owners of paper were Methodists. All proceeds from the sale of the newspaper for that day – 31 July 1909 – were donated to the YWCA. The YWCA Minutes for 31 May 1909 record the various job descriptions; Emily Kerby was managing editor.<sup>58</sup>

By 1910 there was a Travellers Aid program in place and by 1912 not only did the YWCA have a facility of its own but it also offered social service programs.<sup>59</sup> In addition, there were physical education courses, summer camps, accommodation and employment services, and swimming and basketball tournaments for girls and women.<sup>60</sup> The board minutes for 3 August 1914 recorded that the number of trains met to that date for that year was 490. The total number of women assisted was 941.<sup>61</sup>

Emily Kerby was elected honorary president of the YWCA in 1907 and continued to serve as president and then board member until 1920.

### **Mount Royal College – Unpaid Teacher and Mentor**

In 1910 George Kerby left his very successful ministry at Central United Methodist Church to become Principal of Mount Royal Junior College. By 1911 Emily Kerby was a teacher and mentor within the college. Using her teaching skills, she taught the junior grades for some years. Although holding a very influential position she donated all her expertise and never received financial payment of any kind.<sup>62</sup> At the college Emily Kerby enjoyed discussing cultural and political events and was “. . . in the habit of entertaining ladies who shared her interests in cultural causes at lunch at her table in the dining room.”<sup>63</sup>

It was from these interests that one of her greatest and most enduring contributions to Mount Royal College evolved. Emily Kerby organized the Mount Royal Educational Club for female students in about 1923.<sup>64</sup> (The Club continues to this day.) The Educational Club was designed “to draw women together from all walks of life” notwithstanding class or cultural background.<sup>65</sup> Membership was restricted to 65 members and each year the

club would present a scholarship to a girl in financial need who would otherwise not be able to complete her studies at the college.<sup>66</sup> The women would spend time studying issues of national and international interest. Each year a different country would be examined in depth. Members would break off into groups to collaborate on research pertaining to specific aspects of the designated country's religious, historical and cultural background. The women met on a monthly basis and the program ran from September to May each year.<sup>67</sup>

In the second year of the club's operation the leaders were listed as being Mrs. Emily Kerby and Mrs. Nellie McClung. It was their task to present the program and oversee it until the completion of studies.

#### **The Calgary Local Council of Women**

The Local Council of Women (LCW) acted as a forum and lobby for women's societies.<sup>68</sup> In 1912 the Calgary LCW was organized by Henrietta Muir Edwards. Alice Jamieson was elected interim president and Emily Kerby the first vice-president. In 1917-1918 Kerby served as president and she remained active in the LCW as a board member for many years.

Emily Kerby was personally involved in many issues of the day both locally, provincially and nationally. Her endeavours within the LCW included temperance issues, women's rights and suffrage. In addition, she was also actively involved in mundane things such as building and zone bylaws which included the enforcement of the prohibition of "so called" boxing bouts within the city limits.<sup>69</sup> Part of the LCW's civic platform also included weed control, the disposal of sewage and the discouragement of Sunday trading.<sup>70</sup>

In the LCW, Kerby was active in lobbying for equal enforcement of the law for both men and women and the appointment of a "woman policeman" or police matron.<sup>71</sup> Emily Kerby's commitment to women's rights also led to her involvement in the successful campaigns which saw the election of the first female Calgary Public School Board chairman and the first female school trustee.<sup>72</sup> She was also actively engaged in the successful campaign to elect the first female alderwoman in Calgary and, for that matter, within Canada.<sup>73</sup>

Emily Kerby was very aware of issues at the local level. As chairperson at the first Women's Forum in Calgary held in 1912, she recounted a statement which she had overheard on Eighth Avenue in central Calgary regarding the upcoming municipal elections. It reflected the antagonism

felt by some male voters towards the participation of women in the elections. She recounted, "We could run these elections all right if only these darned women could be kept out."<sup>74</sup> When, at the Forum, aldermanic candidate Alexander Ross, stated his appreciation that the women were there to be addressed as men, Mrs. Kerby quickly responded "No, not as men, sir! As Women." And then later, in response to yet another inappropriate statement made by Ross, she commented, "As women, sir, with our own rights."<sup>75</sup>

Emily Kerby was also extremely concerned about the child marriage custom for girls from Ruthenian (Austrian and Ukrainian) cultural backgrounds. In December 1913 she stressed that the girls from these communities were being denied a formal education and had no rights to the choice of a marriage partner. In these communities it was considered a disgrace if by the age of fifteen a girl was "not married and the mother of one or two children."<sup>76</sup> The LCW strove to bring this to the attention of many women's groups and lobbied both on a local and national level to have the marriage age raised from 18 to 21 to counter younger girls under 18 being passed off as of legal marriageable age.<sup>77</sup> The lobby was unsuccessful.

On the matter of equal franchise, at the January 1914 LCW Annual Meeting, Emily Kerby stated

. . . Don't tell me the old story about woman being placed on a pedestal. Things are usually placed there on account of their value or for protection. Men are afraid the possession of the franchise will drag women down, but men do not hesitate to drag down the pedestal . . . We did not lose any of our womanliness in the recent civic election, why should we in provincial or Dominion?<sup>78</sup>

The struggle for the franchise was a long one. Kerby was the convenor of the Franchise Committee for the LCW. At the same time she was a personal friend of Albertan Premier Arthur Sifton, and spoke to him personally about the franchise issue.<sup>79</sup> In this connection she met with Sifton, together with her colleagues Mrs. Jamieson and Mrs. Langford. As a trio they "requested that the franchise be granted."<sup>80</sup> While McClung and Murphy applied political pressure, Alice Jamieson as president of the LCW and Emily Kerby as convenor, also worked strenuously for the cause within the group. When the date was fixed for the Suffrage Bill's final reading Sifton phoned Emily Kerby with the details of the time set for the debate and vote.<sup>81</sup> Emily Kerby, Alice Jamieson and the editor for the

Woman's Page of the *Calgary Daily Herald* organized a large delegation from Calgary to travel to the Legislature via the CPR. The second reading of the Bill was passed on Thursday, 2 March 1916, and the franchise was gained.<sup>82</sup>

Continuing on with the right to vote, commencing in the spring of 1916, Nellie McClung launched a federal franchise petition from her base in Alberta. In 1917 Emily Kerby, as president of the LCW, wholeheartedly supported the campaign, and the full lobbying support of the Calgary Council was behind McClung in yet another drawn out political wrangle.<sup>83</sup> Finally, on 24 May 1918, Canadian women, 21 years and over, were granted the federal franchise.<sup>84</sup>

In 1921 Emily Kerby was still actively lobbying, this time for the right of women to be legally considered "persons." Recognition must, of course, be rightly given primarily to the famous petitioners – the "Famous Five" – Murphy, McClung, Muir Edwards, Parlby and McKinney. It is fair to state, however, that Emily Kerby campaigned in her capacity as Vice President of the National Council of Women (1922-1924) and also later as an ordinary member.<sup>85</sup>

#### **Overview of Other Clubs**

Emily Kerby played an influential role in many other clubs locally and nationally. In 1911 she was a charter member of the Women's Canadian Club and was president of that organization in 1913. She was a member of the Women's Christian Temperance Union, the Red Cross, the Women's Civic Organization and the Women's Research Club. In 1921, collaborating with Dr. G.W. Kerby, Emily Kerby organized the Canadian Authors Association.

Kerby was also a prolific writer contributing to various magazines and religious periodicals. Her work and letters were published in publications such as the *Women's Century*, *Chatelaine*, *The New Outlook*, *Christian Guardian*, *Maple Leaf*, *Calgary Daily Herald* and *The Albertan*.

Emily Kerby was a dynamic woman, with ordinary faults and extraordinary virtues. What made her special was the unique blend of socio-religious influences which forged her distinctive personality. Middle-class, sometimes autocratic, she was still a committed evangelical Christian who effected great change in her time. In death the testimony of her life was clear – by her community she was regarded as "A Mother in Israel."<sup>86</sup>

**Endnotes**

1. *The Albertan*, 5 October 1938.
2. *Calgary Daily Herald*, 7 October 1938.
3. *Calgary Daily Herald*, 7 October 1938.
4. See Michael Owen, "'Do women really count?' Emily Spencer Kerby – Early Twentieth-Century Alberta Feminist," *Historical Papers: Canadian Society of Church History* (1995): 101-126. In *A Leaven of Ladies: A History of the Calgary Local Council of Women* (Calgary: Detselig Enterprises, 1995), Marjorie Norris, discusses Kerby in relation to the Local Council of Women. Emily Kerby is mentioned in relation to her contribution to the work of Central Methodist Church and then upon Central United, Calgary (*They Gathered at the River* [Calgary: Central United Church, 1975]).
5. John Howse, "A History of Mount Royal College," unpublished manuscript, Mount Royal College Archives, chapter V, 3.
6. Dr. W.J. Collett, past-President of Mount Royal College, Interview by author, March 1996, Calgary, AB. Dr. Collett remembers Emily Kerby as a gifted organizer, possessing strong determination.
7. During the First World War she urged Calgary wives to persuade their husband to enlist. George Kerby at that time was Chief Recruiting Officer for the Province of Alberta. "Before Mrs. Kerby gives this advice, she should clean out the pool rooms and round up all the young single men who have no obligations. If all our married men are to go and leave young single men at home what is to become of Alberta? Who is to take care of the thousands of orphans who will be left? Who will help the war widows raise their families?" (see Howse, "History of Mount Royal College," chapter V, 4).
8. *The Calgary Herald*, 4 October 1938.
9. Howse, "History of Mount Royal College," chapter V, 4.
10. H. Baden Powell, untitled manuscript, n.d., Central United Church Papers, Glenbow Archives (hereafter GA).
11. Howse, "History of Mount Royal College," chapter V, 9.
12. Mrs. Doris Kennedy, Interview by author, April 1996, Calgary, AB. Mrs. Kennedy was awarded the Woman of Distinction medal in 1953 for community service. She was Executive Director of the Young Women's Christian Association from 1959-1964. In 1963 she started Operation Eyesight Universal in Calgary. Dr. Williamson was Mrs. Kennedy's maternal

grandfather. Mrs. Kennedy, nee Bingham, was ten years old when the family trekked westward from Ontario to Calgary in 1919. At the time of the move Dr. Williamson was concerned that he would never see them again as they were moving “so far away.”

13. See evangelist George R. Turk’s revival experience, “Two Years in the Evangelistic Work,” *Christian Guardian* (9 September 1903), 8.
14. *Christian Guardian*, 21 August 1901; 4 March 1903; 9 September 1903. In a November 1904 edition evangelists McLachlan and Hughson are mentioned in the High River area. Later, in 28 April 1915, evangelists Gilbert and McPherson are mentioned regarding evangelism in the Pincher Creek area.
15. *Christian Guardian*, 21 August 1901, 1.
16. Undated manuscript, United Church Papers, GA.
17. Lewis G. Thomas, “The View from Sheep Creek, 1918-1939, Calgary,” in *Citymakers: Calgarians After the Frontier*, eds. Max Foran and Shielagh S. Jamieson (Calgary: Historical Society of Alberta, 1987).
18. *Calgary Daily Herald*, 4 October 1938.
19. Howse, “History of Mount Royal College,” chapter V, 8.
20. Grant MacEwan, *Calgary Cavalcade: From Fort to Fortune* (Edmonton: Institute of Applied Art, 1958), 150.
21. Fort Macleod was established by Inspector A.E. Brisbois for the Macleod garrison in August 1875 eight years after Confederation. Brisbois set up camp in the angle formed by the confluence of the Bow and Elbow Rivers. Fort Macleod became Calgary in 1876. Calgary was the name chosen by settlers predominantly from Scottish backgrounds, after Calgary, on the Mull of Kintyre (Leishman McNeill, *The Calgary Herald’s Tales of the Old Town* [Calgary: Calgary Herald, 1967], 83-101).
22. MacEwan, *Calgary Cavalcade*, 3. The story of a Montana whisky trader around 1874-1875 is recounted. The whisky trader was apprehended by the NWMP and had his profits of 1,000 buffalo robes confiscated.irate, he confronted Colonel James F. Macleod. “Hey, Colonel,” he yelled, “is that the law?” Colonel Macleod is reported to have replied, “As matters stand at the present, we make the law as we go along.”
23. Sheep and cattle were ranged extensively in the Foothills area of Alberta. The pigs would have been mostly courtesy of Mother Fulham, the Pig Lady (see Grant MacEwan’s story of Caroline Fulham in . . . and *Mighty Women too: Stories of Notable Western Canadian Women* [Saskatoon: Western Producer

- Prairie Books, 1975). 119-126).
24. MacEwan, . . . *and Mighty Women too*, 119-120.
  25. Catherine Philips, "The Fair Frail Flower of Western Womanhood," in *Frontier Calgary: Town, City and Region, 1875-1914*, eds. A.W. Rasporich and Henry Klassen (Calgary: Univ. of Calgary, McClelland and Stewart West, 1975), 114-123.
  26. Mother Fulham's home was situated near to the shanties. After keeping her pigs all winter, she slaughtered them in the spring. The only problem with this was that the pigs had grown too large to get up the stairs of her basement. She adopted the practice of slaughtering the unfortunate animals in her basement and the squeals were heard at great distances. It was her unkempt ways that led to the introduction of municipal planning in Calgary and the surrounding district (see Howse, "History of Mount Royal College," chapter 1).
  27. The Winnipeg to Calgary section of the CPR was officially completed on 28 August 1883 (see McNeil, *The Calgary Herald's Tales of the Old Town*, 85ff).
  28. Rev. Walter Smith, "The Missionary's Enemy in the West," *Christian Guardian*, 1901. See also *Christian Guardian*, 14 August 1901; 14 May 1902; 28 May 1902; 16 September 1902; 31 December 1902; 14 January 1903; 2 December 1903; 24 April 1904; December 1904. George Turk's mentions George Kerby having "joined the ranks of nation builders in the great Canadian west" (*Christian Guardian*, 9 September 1903).
  29. *Christian Guardian*, 11 February 1903.
  30. The Methodist Book of Discipline limited duration of tenure to four years. Kerby was pastor at the same church for nearly eight years which indicates a special set of circumstances.
  31. *The Albertan*, 4 October 1938.
  32. *Christian Guardian*, 24 August 1904.
  33. Fraser Perry, "Central Methodist Church Before WWI," in *Frontier Calgary*, 181ff. Fraser Perry observes that congregations of whatever complexion never kept records indicating the views of members.
  34. "Calgary District," *Christian Guardian*, 9 March 1904, 28.
  35. "The Calgary Young Men's Club," *Christian Guardian*, 16 March 1904.
  36. *Christian Guardian*, 13 July 1904.



37. Undated clipping, United Church Papers, GA. The Methodist church immediately began a period of enormous growth under Kerby's pastorate. From 1900 to 1910 membership grew from 14 to about 1,250 (see *They Gathered at the River*, 46).
38. G.W. Kerby, "Calgary Young Men's Club," *Christian Guardian*, 16 March 1904.
39. MacEwan, Cavalcade, 152. Calgarians heard fearless sermons about Calgary's "moral mudholes" and strong messages about the need for better welfare programs.
40. "In his first sermon [at Central Methodist Church] he said that he would appeal to the young men during his ministry here, for through them he hoped to reach all their connection" (*They Gathered at the River*, 190).
41. Mrs. F.E. Graham, Central Women-Centennial Program, 1967, 4, United Church Papers, GA.
42. Elizabeth Muir traces the evolution of female preachers within British Methodism and the development of the same office within an Upper Canadian context (*Petticoats in the Pulpit: The Story of Early Nineteenth-Century Methodist Women Preachers in Upper Canada* [Toronto: United Church Publishing House, 1991]). Marilyn Färdig Whiteley identifies the tradition of female evangelists in the late nineteenth and early into the twentieth century ("Modest, Unaffected, and Fully Consecrated: Lady Evangelists in Canadian Methodism," in *Changing Roles of Women Within the Christian Church in Canada*, eds. Elizabeth Muir and Marilyn Färdig Whiteley [Toronto: Univ. of Toronto Press, 1995]).
43. *They Gathered at the River*, 303.
44. *They Gathered at the River*, 176.
45. See *Christian Guardian*, 4 February 1903, 3 April 1903, 3 June 1903, 20 January 1904, and 28 July 1915.
46. Rev. G.W. Kerby, "Milestones in Methodism: Calgary and Canada, 1912," in *They Gathered at the River*, 33.
47. "Wanted – a General Revival," *Christian Guardian*, February 1903.
48. E.S. Kerby, "A Defence of the Capability and Dignity of Women by a Human Being and a Woman," *Calgary Daily Herald*, n.d., 6.

49. Constance Lynd, "No Votes for Married Women," *Christian Guardian*, 14 April 1915, 27. This editorial expressed shock that the municipal franchise for women in Ontario had been rejected by the Provincial Government. Lynd brought them to task for their hypocrisy, drawing attention to the fact that women had no vote or equality with men in the Church courts either. In 1918 the Canadian Methodist Assembly unanimously passed the resolution that women should have equal rights with men in church membership (see Mary Hallet and Marilyn Davis, *Firing the Heather: The Life and Times of Nellie McClung* [Saskatoon: Fifth House, 1993], 191-192).
50. Constance Lynd, "Grist," clipping, n.d., Provincial Archives of Alberta 75.387/6028, United Church of Canada, Box 181.
51. Graham, Central Women, 4. Graham states that Emily Kerby did not participate as frequently in church offices as many other women of her day did but that "Mrs. Kerby was busy in cultural progress and women's reform movements."
52. H. Baden-Powell, untitled manuscript, n.d., Central United Church Papers, GA, 4 3/4.
53. Norris, A Leaven of Ladies, 53.
54. Michael Owen, "Lighting the Pathways for New Canadians: Methodist and United Church WMS Missions in Eastern Alberta, 1904-1940," in *Standing on New Ground: Women in Alberta*, eds. Catherine Cavanaugh and Randi Warne (Edmonton: Univ. of Alberta Press, 1993), 1-18.
55. Baden-Powell, untitled manuscript, 4 3/4.
56. 2 July 1907, YWCA Board Minutes 1907-1910, GA.
57. 31 May 1909, YWCA Board Minutes 1907-1910, GA.
58. 31 May 1909, YWCA Board Minutes 1907-1910, GA.
59. 27 May 1912, YWCA Board Minutes, GA.
60. YWCA, Annual Report, 1911.
61. 3 August 1914, YWCA Board Minutes, GA.
62. Howse, "History of Mount Royal College," chapter V, 3.
63. Thomas, "The View from Sheep Creek," 42.
64. Introduction card dated 1936, File M8463, Mount Royal Educational Club Papers, GA. This item gives the date of origin as 1912 but this appears to be inaccurate. The other dates given are 1923 and 1927. As Nellie McClung only

moved to Calgary in 1923 and was a joint presenter two years later it would be reasonable to conclude that Kerby established the Mount Royal in 1923. In 1924 the Club had a whole program and calendar of research presentations recorded.

65. Thomas, "The View from Sheep Creek," 287.
66. Howse, "History of Mount Royal College," chapter V, 4.
67. File M8463, Mount Royal Educational Club Papers, GA.
68. Norris, *A Leaven of Ladies*, v.
69. Norris, *A Leaven of Ladies*, 57.
70. Norris, *A Leaven of Ladies*, 57.
71. Norris, *A Leaven of Ladies*, 57.
72. Norris, *A Leaven of Ladies*, 26, 27. Calgary's first female Public School Board Chairman was Mrs. Anne Langford. Calgary's first female School Trustee (1914-1917) was Annie Graham Foote.
73. Norris, *A Leaven of Ladies*, 27. Mrs. Annie Gale was Canada's first Alderwoman.
74. Norris, *A Leaven of Ladies*, 57.
75. Norris, *A Leaven of Ladies*, 57.
76. Norris, *A Leaven of Ladies*, 89.
77. Undated letter from the Local Council of Women, c. 1913, from Lillie McKinney, Correspondence Secretary, File M8463, Mount Royal Educational Club Papers, GA.
78. "Council of Women Out for Franchise: Past Year Saw Important Work Done," *Morning Albertan*, 24 January 1914, 9.
79. Sifton was also a Methodist and had helped George Kerby with the establishment of Mount Royal College. He was Premier of Alberta from 1910 to 1917.
80. Introduction card dated 1936, File M8463, Mount Royal Educational Club Papers, Miscellaneous clippings, GA.
81. Introduction card dated 1936, File M8463, Mount Royal Educational Club Papers, GA.
82. "Alberta Women Hear Reading of The Woman's Suffrage Bill," *Calgary News-Telegram*, 2 March 1916, 13.

83. Kerby was president of the LCW for the period 1916-1917.
84. Norris, *A Leaven of Ladies*, 96.
85. Norris, *A Leaven of Ladies*, 114. Kerby had input through petitions and lobbying through the NCU. Women's groups proved too weak to lobby at a federal level and Murphy went on to challenge this through the Supreme Court of Canada. Women were recognized as persons on 18 October 1929.
86. "Hundreds Pay Last Respects to Mrs. Kerby," *Calgary Daily Herald*, 7 October 1938.