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"The Complete Feminine Personality":

Female Adolescence in the Canadian Girls In Training (CGIT)

1915-1955

by

Gabrielle Blais

Thesis presented to the School of Graduate Studies and  
Research of the University of Ottawa in partial fulfilment of  
the requirements for the Master of Arts degree in History.



Gabrielle Blais, Ottawa, Canada, 1986.

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## INTRODUCTION

In the eyes of many middle and upper class Anglo-Protestant Canadians, the ~~last~~ decades of the nineteenth century were a time of great social upheaval during which the strength and durability of the values they promoted were severely tested. Immigration, industrialization, urbanization, and to some extent, certain forms of nationalism were by then exerting pressure on Canadian society. To their great consternation, Canada was being exposed to the dilution of British culture that resulted from immigration, to the poverty, overcrowding, pollution, lack of moral control and violence associated with industrialization and urbanization, as well as to the discord caused by certain forms of nationalism such as the one exhibited in Quebec. Fearing the worst, English Canadians who believed in a strong British and Christian society sought in greater social action protection from foreign ideas and new trends. If Canada was to change, then they should have a say in the charting of its new path, salvaging as much from the old while suitably transforming what little permeated from the new. Confident that their vision of society was superior, they set out to "socialize" and Christianize those who dared to differ.

At the centre of these concerns, providing a feminine perspective on the era, was the women's club movement. (1) Through this form of unified feminine action the more affluent Anglo-Protestant women of Canada expressed their concern about those social issues over which they claimed moral dominance. Club women, along with their husbands, believed in a progressive social order. Canada was to be allowed to grow, but only within strict guidelines determined by Protestant religion, British traditions and the values of their own social class. Where better to ensure such traditions and values than in the home, the great stabilizing force ensuring a harmonious transition from present to future.

Club women were above all mothers, and as such responsible for the values that were transmitted to the youth of the nation. This particular role of guardian of family life enabled them to legitimize their entry into the public sphere. As social reformers, they assumed responsibility for all issues which could ultimately affect the homes of the nation. Club members thus felt justified in speaking out on controversial matters such as temperance, child welfare, urban reform, public health, child and female labour, missionary endeavours, and suffrage. Instilled with their newly found vocation, they became major instigators in the

field of volunteer work.

Inspired by their own involvement in social issues through clubs, these same women were among the first to advocate the need for young people to do the same. Volunteer organizations taught responsibility, and for this reason, children had to be given the opportunity to participate in them. Moreover, by organizing children in movements similar to theirs, mothers could increase the popularity of their own causes while grooming future club members. The Women's Christian Temperance Union, for instance, founded the Bands of Hope and the Juvenile Temperance Unions. Advocating preventive medicine, the WCTU urged young recruits to sign a pledge of lifetime total abstinence and, after they did so, provided them with intensive education in the physiological and moral dangers of excessive use of alcohol.(2) The Women's Missionary Societies, for their part, were involved as early as 1879 in Mission Bands.(3) Working in collaboration with the Sunday Schools, they promoted missionary enterprises in the hope that the youth of the church would come to support, financially or otherwise, WMS activities. Youth movements such as these reinforced women's mothering role, thus adding to their educational responsibilities.

Towards the end of the century, a new philosophy, stressing the uniqueness of adolescence, caused youth organizations to change in emphasis. Influenced by theorists such as George Stanley Hall, North American psychologists, sociologists and educators were, by 1900, turning their attention to those years when the individual was neither a child nor an adult but someone "in-between." Basing their ideas on perceivable physiological change, these specialists now explained adolescence as a period of unequal growth during which the body often controlled the mind, when emotions were stronger than reason, bodily change faster than one's capability to adapt and where maturity and childishness co-existed. These were years of "storm and stress" when the adolescent's mind was susceptible to both good and bad. And it became the task of conscientious adults to ensure that "the new powers now given suddenly and in profusion are husbanded and directed."<sup>(4)</sup>

By placing adolescence in such a context, behaviour experts were redefining the life cycle of the human personality. The years between twelve and nineteen were now considered a crucial period of growth during which the fundamental elements of the adult personality were formed. Realizing that today's youth would be tomorrow's adults, parents were warned that in the nation's children lay the

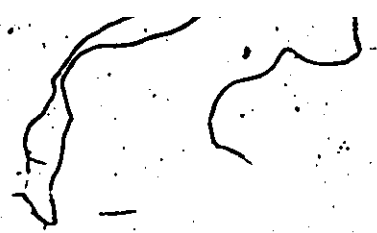
seeds for a better tomorrow. And it became their responsibility to ensure that the minds of their offspring were subjected to the kinds of stimuli that would in time produce responsible and caring twentieth-century citizens. Self-sacrifice, service to others, tolerance, industriousness, patriotism and Christian morals were seen as the key to improving the industrial and urban environment.

In such a context, youth organizations changed.—They became one of the principal methods through which these values were disseminated to the receptive minds of adolescents. As a complement to the existing system of education, youth movements were expected to fill the spaces left vacant by a restricted curriculum. While the schools provided students with a solid foundation in the 3r's, the youth movements reached into those fields which were beyond the authority of the traditional school system. Good manners, appreciation of art and literature, social studies, sex education and physical activities were but a few of the issues considered outside the competence of the schools. By providing adolescents with a structured environment within which they could play, experiment, deviate, but ultimately learn, youth organizations became an instrument of control which gave an illusion of freedom and yet contained all the socializing aspects present in the family, school and

community.

Finally, youth organizations favoured the growth of a new class of professionals -- so-called youth workers -- whose vocation was to advise and guide less-informed adults in the proper education of their children. Under their leadership, adolescents were weaned from the control of their parents and encouraged to grow within a new reality tailored to what the experts perceived were their needs. By placing so much power in the hands of youth professionals, youth organizations contributed to the progressive erosion of parental control in the socializing of their children.

Youth workers and the theory of adolescence they promoted flourished after the First World War, at a time when other methods, such as the Sunday Schools, were perceived as failing in the task of preparing people for what many believed to be a rising new world order. Particularly in the field of girls work, they established new standards for feminine adulthood, calling on adolescent girls to enter the public sphere for the sake of the home, the nation and the church. The Protestant dream of a new world order generated new values of Christian womanhood. Volunteerism as had been promoted by the women's club movement was replaced by a form of social service that transcended the sexual barriers;



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women's role in society was comparable to that of men. As Christians, both sexes shared the responsibilities of citizenship, parenting, service to others, propagation of the faith and the promotion of a better society.

The Canadian Girls In Training (CGIT) was a product of this development. With the early support of the YWCA, it became, after its establishment in 1915, the core of feminine youth work within the Protestant churches of Canada. Influenced by social gospel ideology, recent successes in organizing Protestant boys, modern educational theories, and faced with the need to revise a faltering Sunday School system, the founders of the CGIT turned their attention to the spiritual and social environment of the adolescent girl. By suggesting a Christian approach to the total development of the feminine personality, they provided prospective CGIT members with a programme for personal growth which would lead to a life of service for God. Sexually exclusive, the movement concentrated on the particularities of women's role in twentieth-century society. CGIT leaders began by accepting the supremacy of woman's maternal calling, but eventually they promoted feminine action within a larger realm. Stressing the immensity of a Christian's task, they worked at forming a new generation of superwomen: active church members who would embrace the social, political and

spiritual arenas of Canadian public life. The breadth of this ideology only had the sanction of the churches who sponsored the CGIT as long as it also achieved religious goals, such as church membership and vocations. When questions were raised about the effectiveness of the programme in these latter areas, the movement was stripped of most of its wider-reaching goals.

The CGIT programme introduced to Canadian girls the new concept of leadership, borrowed and adapted from the YM-YWCA and Protestant boys' organizations. Each September, groups of eight to ten girls, preferably from the same congregation, were organized by church or CGIT officials and entrusted to the care of young women volunteers whose duty it was "to help the girl, through educational processes, in the building of her character." (5) The leaders played a dual role of participant and moderator. They set the example for the other girls to follow, and yet shared in the learning process. As apprentices learning the skills that would eventually transform them into youth professionals, leaders were expected to devote a considerable amount of time mastering leadership skills. This was to be achieved through personal self-improvement programmes, taking an active part in the life of the congregation, and subscribing to the various leadership courses offered by the CGIT executive.

For many years the CGIT was the movement which reached the greatest number of Protestant girls throughout the country. The ideals it prompted, thus, played a major role in the education of the girls who participated in the programme. This thesis will study those ideals and how they were adapted to reflect the interests of CGIT officials and the preoccupations of its sponsors. This can be done on two levels: by looking at the work officials did with leaders -- those women who were expected to reflect most accurately the CGIT ideals -- and by analyzing the programme offered to members. Emphasis will be placed on the post-1921 years; the early period (1915-21), which is covered in the first chapter, lends itself less easily to such an analysis because during that time promoters concentrated on the development of a basic ideology, methods, and the recruitment of members. The subsequent period is broken down further into two chapters each of which explores the two objectives of this thesis within a separate time framework.

The promoters of the CGIT were not insensitive to the environment in which they worked. Hence, from 1915, when it was established, to 1955, when a major study of the programme was undertaken, the CGIT oscillated between social and religious commitments. In this, it reflected the ideas of

the denominations who sponsored it, as well as the goals that officials had for Canadian girlhood. The years studied can be divided into three separate periods. At first, the CGIT was founded to correct weaknesses within both church and society. The programme that developed between 1915 and 1921 was expected to increase young girls' religious commitment as well as provide them with necessary social skills that were not taught elsewhere, and yet were required to build a "Christian" world. From 1921 to the eve of the Second World War, however, CGIT promoters concentrated on the increasing social responsibilities given to women. Never doubting the quality of the conventional religious education offered to girls, they emphasized the training of women leaders for the workplace and the church. After the Second World War such activities were both less open and less attractive to women as the increasing secularization of society limited the influence of religious organizations such as the CGIT. By 1955, the movement was but a modified version of the Sunday Schools which had preceded it.

Material concerning the CGIT is both voluminous and scattered. In addition to the CGIT's own records, it can be located among the papers of the four denominations that founded it, as well as in those of the YWCA, the numerous organizations with which it cooperated or to which it

belonged, and in the personal papers of some officials. Consequently, it is relatively easy to trace the history of the CGIT as an organization; it is not, however, as easy to sketch a portrait of the many girls who belonged to it. In time, oral history could enlighten us in this matter. For the purposes of this thesis, I have concentrated on the CGIT papers and publications for an analysis of the movement's ideology. The minutes and annual reports are mostly complete and consequently reveal fairly accurately the movement's evolution. Additional programme literature, such as pamphlets and the Leader's Book, support and illustrate the policies stated in the official records. The only weakness in the collection is the virtual lack of correspondence among officials, leaders and members.

Probably the best source of information on the CGIT's goals is its magazine, The Torch, which was first published in 1924. Before then, the CGIT had cooperated with the Boys Work Board in the production of The Mentor but, as the movement matured, the executive realized that leaders would best be served if they had a magazine of their own. The Torch was distributed, on a monthly or bi-monthly basis, free of charge, to every leader. Each issue contained between fifteen and thirty pages of editorials, feature articles, seasonal suggestions, book reviews, stories, photographs,

poems, administrative updates and occasional advertisements.

The Torch was not intended to be a glossy publicity magazine but rather an open forum where leaders could contribute their ideas and enthusiasm about the CGIT while receiving judicious advice from experts. Containing the most recent information about the 'churches' position on basic issues, educational trends, and CGIT decisions, it established lines of communication with all groups. Thus, its usefulness as a promotional tool cannot be overlooked. The magazine reflected the National Executive's outlook on the movement and the images that the latter wished to impress on leaders, and through them members.

In many ways, the CGIT preceded by decades, educational trends for girls in the schools and other organizations. During those years, it offered an alternative to traditional forms of education and this accounts for much of its early popularity. Only when the schools and other organizations caught up with its programme, was the CGIT's own presence in the adolescent community questioned. Furthermore, its failure to achieve certain basic church goals, such as increased church membership, undermined its support among the denominations who paid for the programme. In the end, the CGIT, while offering an interesting curriculum, of work and

play; had not answered a most basic question: what, indeed, did religious education really consist of?

## NOTES TO INTRODUCTION

1. For a longer discussion of the women's club movement, consult Linda Kealey's introduction to A Not Unreasonable Claim. - Women and Reform in Canada, 1880's-1920's, Toronto: Women's Educational Press, 1979 and Veronica Strong-Boag's The Parliament of Women: the National Council of Women of Canada 1893-1929, Ottawa: National Museums of Canada, 1976.
2. Morrison, T.R., "Their Proper Sphere" Feminism, The Family, and Child-Centred Social Reform in Ontario, 1875-1900," part I, Ontario History 68, No.1 (March 1976), p.57.
3. See Wendy Lynn Mitchinson, "Aspects of Reform: Four Women's Organizations in Nineteenth-Century Canada," PhD dissertation, York University, 1977, p.70.
4. Hall, G. Stanley, Adolescence Its Psychology And Its Relations To Physiology, Anthropology, Sociology, Sex, Crime, Religion and Education, New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1907, p.xv.
5. National Girls Work Board, Canadian Girls In Training. A Book For Leaders, Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1922, p.14.

## Chapter One

For Jesus Christ and a life of service

The CGIT 1915-21

From the late 1800s, the Canadian Protestant churches grew increasingly concerned with the moral education of the young. Disappointed at the fact that the Sunday Schools had not succeeded in increasing church membership and religious vocations, they explored new programmes of religious education.<sup>(1)</sup> In this they were assisted by the YMCA and the YWCA whose interests also lay with the moral quality of Canadian life and the proper formation of adolescents. In 1915, Church and Y officials cooperated in the establishment of the Canadian Girls In Training, a movement for Protestant adolescent girls interested in the formation of the complete adolescent personality. Based on new educational concepts, the CGIT worked at training girls for future adulthood within a Christian context defined by the social gospel, ecumenical ideas and the churches' response to the First World War. From 1915 to 1921, the basic ideology of the CGIT programme was developed; thereafter, succeeding generations of promoters would have to adapt these ideas and methods to suit their own vision of the movement.

The religious education of the young had always been a

matter of concern to Canadian churchmen. From the early settlement days, the Sunday School system of the Protestant churches of Canada had provided a rudimentary programme of religious education. Patterned on the successful British initiative, the Sunday Schools also acted as substitutes for the public school in many isolated communities. Indeed, its teachers were known to devote as much time to teaching the 3r's as preparing youngsters for pious adulthood.(2) The programme served this dual purpose until the education system evolved to the point of being able to provide youngsters with a full school curriculum.

Thereafter, church officials became solely concerned with the moral and intellectual characteristics of young people. In this they were influenced by new ideas about the nature of childhood and adolescence.(3) Children were now judged to be "clay to be moulded by society" into proper moral creatures and potential church members.(4) By introducing them gradually but continuously to the religious life of the congregation Sunday School promoters hoped, to avoid losing Church members from within their midst. Children instilled with proper religious values would avoid the moral dangers lurking in an urban, industrial and multicultural Canada.

The new ideas about young people that influenced church educators gained more popularity with the advent of the social gospel. By incorporating social action with religious faith, this socio-religious theology called for a different kind of commitment. (5) In addition to their normal religious practices, social gospellers were also impelled to action. Their participation was needed in the development of a Christian society. Using the theme of complete Christian development, which emphasized all aspects of the personality instead of just the spiritual one, this theology went beyond the traditional boundaries of religion. The will of God could be achieved as much at home or in the work place as in the church.

Ecumenism was another strong factor which united the Protestant denominations in the field of religious education. For some years, certain Protestant churches had grown closer in their national, social and, to some extent, evangelical outlook. (6) Further united by their concern about the Great War and the evolution of a new Canadian society, they wanted to build a strong common front from which they could spread their own vision of the nation. Some even espoused the idea -- realized in 1925 -- of creating a new united church in a new land, as a vehicle for building a new world. (7)

While the Sunday Schools provided a thorough spiritual programme, they had not yet evolved to the point where the other aspects of young people's personalities, as identified by theorists of adolescence and by the social gospel, were duly dealt with. Particularly in the case of adolescent girls, there were no institutions which united personal, school, home, church and community interests in one programme. Church workers, concerned about the special role of women church members, and wanting to "draw into the service of His Kingdom a band of earnest and great-hearted women, trained from girlhood to be His witnesses by life and word," clamored for a rejuvenated Sunday School programme. (8) If this was not possible, a new organization could be established to convey a total philosophy of higher Christian life to the girlhood of Canada.

Such a proposal interested the YWCA. For some years, the Y had been engaged in the same initiative but efforts made to recruit young girls through a College Students' section or in cooperation with the Girl Guides had not been successful. The first experiment did not attract a substantial number of recruits for Y work itself while the Girl Guides resisted the Y's attempt to transform it into a more evangelical organization. (9) The Protestant denominations might possibly be more compatible partners.

Even though both parties differed in their vision of Canadian womanhood -- the Y still adhered to a moral/reformist ideology while the churches were interested in a general programme of religious education more in line with the ones offered to boys -- they shared views on the spiritual and temporal virtues of women, and on the need to offer girls a special programme of self-development. When approached by the churches, the Y volunteered leadership and financial help; in return, it expected the participation of the Sunday School Boards with their huge constituencies. The CBIT-YWCA alliance would set new standards for Canadian womanhood. Christian education, service to others, self-improvement and, for the length of the Y's involvement, promotion of woman's moral role in society, were the four main aspects of the programme they developed.

In September 1915, representatives from the Methodist, Baptist and Presbyterian churches, and officials from the YWCA, met to discuss the formation of a national movement for adolescent girls.<sup>(10)</sup> Influenced by the war effort, which stressed service for the country, discipline and physical well-being, and the new popularity of adolescence, these individuals decided to call young Canadian girls into service. While young men prepared for active military service, girls would become Canadian Girls In Training for

"Canada and for God." (11) The hopes of the founders were later recalled by Winnifred Thomas:

Canada was at war, and with the roll of dead steadily mounting, it was realized that the women and girls would have to face a totally different social world. Teen-age girls would soon be called upon to play an important part in the life of the Church and of the nation. Consequently, it was felt that they should receive the best training that Canada could offer - training for living. (12)

Convinced that they were fighting for the eventual advent of the Kingdom of God, certain Canadian Protestants were particularly susceptible to the claims that an allied victory was intrinsically linked to a new world order based on Christian morals, peace and cooperation. (13) They were already planning the programme of social reconstruction that would be implemented once the conflict ended.

The men and women who attended the founding conference were committed to such goals. And while they acknowledged the fact that in the present social context boys were destined to be more visible public figures, they nonetheless firmly believed that girls would also be called upon to play a major role in a new society built on Christian values. A girl's life, they believed, "is of such infinite value to Canada that no foresighted thinker dare ignore it. In the latent powers of teen-age girls lie those faculties and

characteristics which will make the foundations, good or bad, of the homes on which the Dominion is built." (14) Through the CGIT, the participants hoped to redefine the nature of Christian womanhood. They wanted to train girls, between the ages of twelve and eighteen, to become active participants in the social process, greater church activists, and all the while remain the guardians of morality. In promoting such ideals, the CGIT founders transcended women's "proper sphere" and encroached upon a male dominated world.

A new movement for adolescent girls was also a reflection of the earlier success of the boys' work programme of the YMCA and the Sunday School Boards. (15) The Canadian Advisory Committee on Co-operation in Boys' Work, the forerunner of the National Boys Work Board, and the Canadian Standard Efficiency Tests (CSET) were the models for the Canadian Girls In Training. Introduced in 1911, the aims of the Tests were to even out unbalanced adolescent development and address adolescent problems within a fourfold programme of development. (16) This programme divided personal growth into four categories: intellectual, social, physical and religious. The CSET were applied to the two groups sponsored by the Committee: the Trail Rangers, for boys from twelve to fourteen, and the Tuxis Squares, for those fifteen to seventeen. (17)

As the first book for CGIT leaders noted, the CGIT programme "parallels the Canadian Standard Efficiency Training Programme for teen-age boys, and thus makes possible a community of interests, habits, and ideals between the boys and girls of any church or community." (18) Such sharing, however, was not to be easily accomplished. As in the case of the YM-YWCA and the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides, boys' work and girls' work universally segregated adolescents by sex. In a society where feminine and masculine roles were clearly defined, mutually exclusive programmes seemed to reflect with greater accuracy the realities that lay ahead. But CGIT workers could consider themselves innovative by the mere fact that they promoted a development programme for girls that was so similar to that of the boys. It contradicted previous beliefs that during the teen years sexual differences should be stressed to prepare youth for adult life in the private or public sphere.

By emphasizing the merits of a compatible programme, CGIT promoters justified feminine intervention into politics, theology, culture and sports. Because they were intelligent human beings possessing valuable social skills, and not necessarily because of their moral superiority, women had an important role to play in the building of a new world. (19)

Consequently, their participation should not be restricted to the maternal aspects of church work, such as missions, where they were already over-represented.

At the first conference, in September 1915, all parties agreed to the formation of the National Advisory Committee for Cooperation in Girls' Work. (20) Its functions consisted of advising on and implementing programmes of Christian education for girls. Its most immediate and important task, however, was the formation of a movement for adolescent girls. The Committee became the official sponsor of the CGIT programme and its Executive Secretary was given the leadership of the movement. Early membership on the Committee was established as follows:

- Two representatives from each Denominational Sunday School Board, and their Secretaries related to Sunday School Work.

- Two representatives from the Canadian Council of Provincial Sunday School Associations, and their Provincial Secretaries throughout Canada.

- Two representatives from the Dominion Council of the Y.W.C.A. and the Council's Secretaries, specially related to Girls' Work and general supervision. (21)

Although representation seemed to favour the Protestant denominations, in fact most members were involved in both church and Y causes. Constance Body, for instance, represented the Church of England; she would later become the National Secretary of the YWCA. (22) Olive Zeigler also

successfully combined careers within both the YWCA and, in her case, the Methodist and United Churches. (23) Such people ensured the maintenance of common social and evangelical interests between both institutions.

The most important principle behind the formation of the CGIT was that responsible adulthood had to be learned. Girls could just not live as apprentice adults until they reached the age (between twenty-one and twenty-five) of maturity. They had to be "trained for living," nurtured into builders of a better world. As Winnifred Thomas later explained,

12-17 are the years when life takes its direction, when a girl is capable of and should be led to make decisions that are of life-long importance. (24)

Basing their ideas on the perceivable physical change which affected adolescent girls, the CGIT founders wanted to counter those troublesome years with sympathetic adult guidance and friendship.

Adopting the pattern of the Canadian Standard Efficiency Test, the CGIT advocated the use of the same fourfold programme. The development of the spiritual, intellectual, physical, and social aspects of the human personality were considered key elements in the maturation of adolescents. CGIT members were taught that

As a Canadian Girl In Training

Under the leadership of Jesus.  
 It is my purpose to  
 Cherish Health  
 Seek Truth  
 Know God  
 Serve Others  
 And thus, with his help become  
 The girl God would have me be. (25)

The fourfold programme was believed to have been inspired by Jesus' personal growth. (26) According to Luke 2:52, "Jesus increased in wisdom and stature and in favour with God and man." The CGIT programme invited members to follow Jesus' path to maturity by keeping their bodies in health, growing in their love of truth, training themselves to the right choices, and setting their hearts to love God and their neighbor. (27) These goals were to be reached through organized physical exercise, inspiring reading, discussions, group activities, community service and worship.

The CGIT founders believed that small groups of eight to ten girls, each under the leadership of a young woman, should be the nucleus of girls' work. These groups would meet twice a week: on Sunday for a worship class comparable to other Sunday School classes, and once during the week for an activity session. At the mid-week gathering members were shown how to integrate their spiritual learning with the temporal sides of their lives. The mid-week meeting also gave them "an opportunity of self-expression in spiritual matters." (28) It was a chance for question and

experimentation in worship. Either through personal worship exercises, such as morning and evening watch (a personal daily period of prayer), or other group activities, participants were encouraged to reflect on and learn aspects of adult life. These could be church membership, careers, current events, art, literature, community work or games.

One of the most important decisions concerning the CGIT programme was to exclude personal awards. YWCA and church representatives were determined to discourage any semblance of aggressive behavior. (29) Young girls should not be encouraged to compete with one another. Other means of reaching objectives without sacrificing basic Christian principles of love, charity and fellowship had to be sought. As it was explained in a YWCA report,

The founders of CGIT consciously refused to decide issues on the basis of the question, "What will appeal to the girls?" Rather they asked, "What is sound from a religious and educational point of view?" The desire to excel rather than to do one's best, to win recognition, marks, awards, prizes rather than enjoy and value an experience for its own sake, were considered unsound. Competition in school and in business and social life was felt to be harmful to the girls. (30)

Girls, the founders believed, would not benefit from the type of aggressivity that was usually conveyed by competitive exercises. As future leaders, Christians, missionaries,

teachers, nurses, social workers and mothers, they had to develop their feminine instincts, their desire to serve rather than conquer.

In this aspect the CGIT differed considerably from its male counterparts, the Trail Rangers and Tuxis. In each area defined by the fourfold purpose, these organizations had "standard graded tests [that] were devised, so that a boy might pass from one "stage" to another. Points were given for such varied accomplishments as attending a conference, reading a passage of scripture, having a regular bowel movement." (31) While the CGIT experimented with a similar code of conduct in its early years, it was soon dropped for a more cooperative philosophy. (32)

Group awards were the only rewards tolerated, and this only for the sake of the movement's popularity. In 1920, "Honour Groups" were first introduced. (33) Then, in 1924, the chevron system was set up, bestowing honours upon all groups which had met a series of requirements. Regular attendance at meetings, participation in suggested activities, observance of the procedures established by the National Executive and the completion of activity reports twice a year qualified groups for a chevron. (34) The requirements were so simple that any group which showed a

minimum effort could meet them. Within such a context, the real purpose of instituting awards was defeated. Chevrons were not a symbol of excellence but a witness to a group's longevity. It was also an efficient method of ensuring that the programme of activity suggested by the National Office was followed.

The CGIT was introduced to the nation through pamphlets, conferences, rallies and summer camps. Its integration within church circles was also made easy by the participation of the Sunday School Boards. By making the CGIT a midweek extension of the Sunday School class, promoters were able to recruit prospective leaders and members. They offered teachers help in dealing with the adolescent years "when the simple, individualistic life of a child must be remade into the complex social life of full-orbed womanhood." (35) Armed with expert advice, they pointed to the new challenges of twentieth-century society and to the solutions that the CGIT programme could provide.

As a new organization, the CGIT sought cooperation with all the other church groups already active with girls. Church officials in their support of the CGIT encouraged the amalgamation of all of its girls' organizations. In 1920, for instance, the Presbyterian Women's Missionary Society

agreed to disband its Girls' Missionary Society in exchange for one CGIT meeting per month devoted to missions. Four years later, the Women's Christian Temperance Union decided to distribute its temperance literature as part of the CGIT programme suggestions. (36) By 1925, the CGIT had become the sole movement for adolescent girls functioning nationally within the framework of the Protestant churches of Canada. Thereafter, church officials left to the NGWB the responsibility for the development of its girls' programme.

Cooperating with the Girl Guides, however, was not so easy. Active in Canada since 1910, they did not welcome the arrival of a new girls' movement. Indeed, in some communities, Guide officials were openly hostile to the implementation of the CGIT. They correctly noted that the two organizations had such similar goals (promotion of citizenship, good health habits, etc.) and methods (group work under the guidance of a leader) that coexistence would prove difficult. Early attempts at establishing contacts between the two failed and it was not until 1923, presumably at Lady Baden-Powell's instigation, that the Canadian Girl Guides agreed to consider discussing their common interests with the CGIT. (37) Nothing concrete ever resulted from this decision. (38)

Although identical in many ways, the CGIT and the Girl Guides differed in certain key areas of their work. The Guides, for one, had an established system of awards. Also, they offered a structured curriculum while the CGIT programme was purely optional. Each year, the CGIT groups were provided with a series of suggestions from which they were free to select projects best suited to their needs and interests. The only restriction was that all aspects of the fourfold programme had to be covered during the year. Groups were encouraged to alternate sessions among the four ideals. On an evening devoted to intellectual activities, the girls might discuss current events, public speaking, reading or the ideal girl; a physical session would stress health standards, good sportsmanship, hikes or group sports; spiritual sessions would be devoted to church membership, Bible readings, the Kingdom of God, missions and stories of holy people; and social sessions could be seasonal parties, community work, singalongs or plays. (39) Apart from the activity component, each meeting also had a period devoted to group business, religious devotion, and, on occasion, a practical talk from the leader.

Such latitude weighed heavily on the programme's administrators who were expected to provide scores of suggestions and expert background literature. For this

reason, the executive depended on a large pool of volunteers. Over the years ministers, authors, politicians, educators, leaders and other various experts contributed many pieces for leaders and girls to share. For instance, Ernest Thomas wrote about marriage, Agnes Macphail about citizenship, Marius Barbeau about culture, W.B. Creighton about the state of Christianity and Olive Diefenbaker about patriotism. (40) They are just a few of the notables who assisted regular contributors such as Marion Royce, Marjorie Trotter and Harriet Christie. The preparation of programme material proved to be a highly successful venture in ecumenism, except where worship literature was concerned. Since religious education remained the responsibility of the particular denominations, it was never easy to prepare material that was agreeable to all. Projects for writing such material often failed; a proposed Book of Worship, for instance, had to be cancelled in 1937 because its authors could not agree on its contents. (41)

In CGIT work, the effectiveness of the programme rested upon the integrity of those who directed it. That is why the National Executive recruited as leaders young women who possessed those special qualities that inspired girls, as well as skills compatible with leading a group. In its opinion, girls needed the inspiration of mature women who

possessed the integrity and strength that experience provided, and all the while exhibited the energy and idealism of youth. Also, by sharing the movement's "growing" experience with the girls in their group, leaders could be used as models of self-improvement.

The task of enlisting leaders was made easy by the fact that there were few requirements for CGIT work. The most important one was an earnest desire to share one's faith in Jesus Christ with others. And while prospective leaders might be attracted to a flexible programme of total education, religious commitment had to be central to their work:

To see the goal clearly, to find a path to it, to inspire in others an eagerness for the quest, and to go with them through its adventure--this is leadership. The ultimate goal of Christian leaders is a world fellowship of friendly persons doing the will of God in every relation of life--the Kingdom of God. (42)

This Christian commitment was the sole quality which differentiated the CGIT leaders from all other group leaders. They obtained their inspiration from God, their goals from the church, and their methods from the latest educational, psychological and sociological theories.

To that basic requirement, recruiters added the qualities of enthusiasm, interest in girls, personal

friendship and willingness to help.(43) They believed that adult women possessing these skills, and willing to devote the time required, could enter into the world of adolescents, deal with the trials of leadership, and eventually ease the girls into adulthood. Stressing the emotional nature of the adolescent personality, CGIT promoters insisted that leaders have an abundance of patience and humour, along with a judicious sense of authority. They had to be sensitive to the feminine growth cycle. Among girls from twelve to fourteen, for instance, leaders had to overcome "argumentativeness, combative positiveness...[and] prevailing giggling," the latter being caused by a "nervous instability."(44) While these problems were less frequent among older girls, they were replaced by a tendency to day dream which could interfere with practical aspects of group work such as procedures, planning, and the achievement of set goals.

All leaders were encouraged to keep private notebooks in which useful information about each member could be collected for future reference. Details such as a girl's age, class in school, place in family, father's occupation, church affiliation, hobbies, special problems, and home environment were all important. Since these factors influenced the development of the adolescent's personality, they would

naturally have an effect on the CGIT group. The leaders had to be aware of them so they could encourage the girls to achieve CGIT goals while responding to each of their needs. After all, it was from these accomplishments that they would derive personal satisfaction. Even though leadership helped one acquire inner strength, confidence, and the ability to achieve goals, its greatest rewards lay in the success of others

In its first years of operation, the CGIT obtained many members through the summer camps it operated with the YWCA. It was at these annual events that many girls admitted to having been captivated by the CGIT spirit. As in the Victorian era, Canadians in the early twentieth century were attracted to the mysteries of nature and the spiritual benefits that resulted from being in its proximity.(45) Fearing that industrialization and urbanization were alienating men and women from their natural context, nature enthusiasts advocated the need for all city dwellers to experience, on a regular basis, encounters with the Creator in an environment complementary to His work. Removed from the artificialities of a man-made world, city folk regained their God-like qualities of honesty, simplicity and harmony.

In addition to providing a wholesome holiday, the CGIT

camps were intended to assist in the proper education of the adolescent girl. They were held.

First, to offer to girls the rich experience of mingling with other girls who are the embodiment of the Canadian Girls In Training spirit and training, and secondly, to provide a programme of training as well as recreation, every feature of which is designed to give the girls new ideas and greater efficiency in taking part in the activities of their own groups. (46)

In the seclusion of a picturesque setting, campers underwent a moving personal and spiritual experience. Camps were a variation on retreats, immersing participants in CGIT ideals. As in "Y" and Bible camps, organizers hoped to lead campers to individual encounters with God. Events such as Morning Watch and Twilight Talks, when girls meditated in a natural setting of their choice, encouraged the participants to reconsider their faith and make new commitments. Mixed with swimming, hikes, arts and crafts, and parties, these spiritual encounters aimed to arouse enthusiasm for girls' work and a desire to take part in it.

In 1930, the National Secretary summarized the success of the camps for the whole period studied:

The programme planned largely by the girls themselves, gives freedom in the choice of camp and group enterprises, while the leadership, informal in nature, emphasizes sharing and cooperation. Through Worship, Bible Study and the beauty and wonder of the out-of-doors

spiritual appreciations are developed; Interest Groups make possible the acquisition of new skills and interests; Council Hour discussions provide further insight into the purpose and programme of Canadian Girls In Training while the whole camp life with its recreational activities, its opportunities for learning various camp crafts, its whole some friendships is a revelation of life as it might be -- rich, creative, loving. (47)

Summer camps were by far the most successful of CGIT's activities. In 1925, for instance, 2,913 girls (9.8 percent of the membership) attended one of the CGIT girls' summer camps. In 1935, 4,065 girls (11.8 percent) did so while, in 1945, the number rose to 6,633 (23.5 percent). Since officials hoped to attract an average of one girl per group to the annual camps, one can say that this objective was reached. (48)

The progress made by the CGIT was temporarily hampered in 1921. Faced with a serious financial plight, the YWCA made the following decision:

The members of the Council present reported that the Council was anxious to continue to carry the full budget of the Girls' Work Department, if it were at all possible, but felt that the time had come when to do so might seriously hinder the development of other Departments more peculiarly within the special field of the Association--such as City, Industrial and Travellers' Aid. (49)

While it was still willing to provide voluntary leadership,

the YWCA could no longer afford to appoint its secretaries to the NGWB or to assume other financial responsibilities. By withdrawing to a lesser role, it placed the CGIT in the hands of the cooperating denominations.

After 1921, the Protestant churches through the National Girls' Work Board of the Religious Education Council of Canada employed a National Secretary. Chosen from a pool of young church women who had previously shown exemplary leadership qualities and dedication to the achievement of Christian ideals, the National Secretary—followed in the tradition of the YWCA's Girl Secretaries. Usually a university graduate, she had willingly forsaken married life for a religious vocation. With the exception of Eula Lapp, the National Secretaries were all single women whose careers are easily traced through the annals of the church. (50) In addition to their work with other religious education programmes, they served the movement faithfully, working long hours, travelling from coast to coast, giving the CGIT its direction, recruiting leaders and ensuring harmony and efficiency within all groups. From their position on numerous church boards and committees, they represented the adolescent community to church officials and vice-versa. Being National Secretary offered a unique challenge in a society where professionalism for women was still limited to

the helping vocations and where there were few opportunities for them to occupy such influential positions. To some, however, faced with so many responsibilities and so few personal rewards, girls' work must have also appeared as a disguised form of missionary work, thus explaining why they held the position for so short a period of time. (51)

By 1921, the CGIT occupied an important position in the religious and educational fields. In serving its mandate of helping bring about a new Christian society by educating Protestant girls, the movement put in practice theories and methods which before then had been left in textbooks and specialized psychological and educational works. Girls' work, although religious in spirit, emphasized life in the public sphere and general educational goals for girls. Emphasis on these two issues originated with the young group leaders and officials who were seriously committed to the greater participation of women in all aspects of life which the church could influence. Under their leadership, the first steps in increasing the number of religious education students and improving the curriculum of the Protestant education programmes had been taken. And an examination of the membership statistics reveals that they were successful -- there were 31,710 members in 1925-26 -- so successful that the conventional Sunday School part of the CGIT was

increasingly neglected by officials, leaders and girls alike.

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## NOTES TO CHAPTER 1

1. See Patricia Dirks, "Beyond Family and School: An Analysis of the Changing Place of Protestant Churches in the Lives of Canada's Young, 1900-1918," paper presented to the Canadian Historical Association Annual Meeting, Vancouver, 1983.
2. For more on the role of the Sunday Schools, particularly in Upper Canada, see Allan Greer, "The Sunday Schools of Upper Canada," Ontario History 67, No.3 (September 1975), pp.169-84.
3. For more about the changing attitudes towards childhood, see Philippe Aries, L'Enfant et la Vie familiale sous l'Ancien Regime, Plon, 1960. Aries argues that western civilization's revised concept of childhood, which dates back to the last days of the seventeenth century, stemmed from a decrease in infant mortality and the development of affectionate bonds between members of the family. From then on, the theme of the preciousness of children and the importance of education in the socialization process (in contrast with the previous use of apprenticeship) became the dominant philosophy. On the topic of adolescence, see John and Virginia Demos, "Adolescence in Historical Perspective," in The American Family in Socio-Historical Perspective, edited by Michael Gordon, New-York:St. Martin's Press, 1973, and Joseph Kett, Rites of Passage: Adolescence in America 1790 to the Present, New-York:Basic Books Inc., 1977.
4. See Neil Semple, "The Nurture and Admonition of the Lord": Nineteenth Century Canadian Methodism's Response to "Childhood," Histoire Sociale/Social History 14, No.27 (May 1981), pp.157-75.
5. ← See Richard Allen, The Social Passion, Toronto:University of Toronto Press, 1971.
6. For more on ecumenism, see J.W. Grant, ed., The Churches and the Canadian Experience, Toronto:Ryerson Press, 1963, particularly p.105.
7. ← See Mary Vipond, "National Consciousness in English-Speaking Canada in the 1920's: Seven Studies," PhD dissertation, University of Toronto, 1974.
8. National Girls Work Board (NGWB), Canadian Girls In Training. A Book For Leaders, 1922, p.14.

9. See Diana Pedersen, "On the Trail of the Great Quest": The YWCA and the Launching of Canadian Girls In Training, 1909-1921," paper presented at the Canadian Historical Association Annual Meeting, Ottawa, June 1982, p.16.
10. Among those attending were the prime instigators of the initiative: Una Saunders, of the YWCA, Constance Young, of the Episcopal Church Commission, Winnifred Thomas, a Methodist teacher from the Maritimes, and Olive Zeigler, also from the YWCA.
11. Public Archives of Canada (hereafter PAC), Canadian Girls In Training Papers (CGIT), Mg 28, I 313, vol. 1, file 2, "Summary of Board Minutes of C.G.I.T. Movement, 1915-1955," 1955, p.3.
12. Thomas, Winnifred, "Time Marches On!" The Torch 16, No.4(March-April 1940), p.66.
13. For an example of denominational interest in the First World War, see Michael Bliss, "The Methodist Church and World War I," Canadian Historical Review 49, No.3(September 1968), pp.213-33.
14. PAC, CGIT Papers, vol.12, file 311, "Program Suggestions, 1917-1920," Canadian Girls In Training. Suggestions For The Mid-Week Meetings of Sunday School Classes, Clubs, Etc., For Teen-Age Girls, 1917, p.3.
15. See Patricia Dirks, "Beyond Family and School," and David Macleod, "A Live Vaccine: the YMCA and Male Adolescence in the United States and Canada 1870-1920," Histoire Sociale/Social History 11, No.21(May 1978), pp.5-26.
16. David Macleod, Ibid, pp.20-1.
17. For more on this topic, see also Margaret E. Prang, "The Girl God Would Have Me Be" The Canadian Girls In Training, 1915-1939," Canadian Historical Review 66, No.2(June 1985), pp.154-84.
18. NGWB, Canadian Girls In Training. A Book For Leaders, 1922, p.8.
19. The churches' changed attitude towards women was not reflected in all aspects of religious life. On the question of the ordination of women, for instance, the

ghurch hierarchy resisted all attempts at reform, even from such influential members of the denominations as Nellie McClung. See Mary E. Hallett, "Nellie McClung and the Fight for the Ordination of Women in the United Church of Canada," Atlantis 4, No.2(Spring 1979), pp.2-16.

20. In 1920, it became the National Girls' Work Board (NGWB) of the Religious Education Council of Canada. The RECC was the official education committee of the Canadian Protestant churches. It replaced the Sunday School Associations. The Council was composed of subservient boards such as the National Girls' Work Board, National Boys' Work Board and National Children's Work Board, and various committees dealing with adult religious education, temperance, leadership training, vacation schools and financial matters. See the NGWB, The Leader's Book, 1944, p.xi. In 1947, the Council changed its name to the Department of Christian Education of the Canadian Council of Churches and the NGWB was divided into two separate committees. The National Girls' Work Committee was made responsible for general activities in the field of girls' work while the CGIT Committee took over sole responsibility for the CGIT.
21. PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 1, file 3, "National Advisory Committee and Executive Committee of National Girls' Work Board: minutes, September 1915-December 1924," A Brief Synopsis, Historical Statement Or Review, For Information, ca.1916.
22. Ibid, minutes of meeting of 20 December 1915.
23. She sat on the Committee as a representative of the YWCA. She would later become the first Secretary of the NGWB. She also directed the University Settlement in Toronto and was editor of Missionary Monthly, published by the Women's Missionary Society of the United Church. Ibid, minutes of the meeting of 20 December 1915; PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 1, file 1, "List of C.G.I.T. Committees and Officers of Committees, 1915-1970," 1970; PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 1, file 4, "Executive Committee of National Girls' Work Board: minutes, January 1925-December 1929," minutes of the Annual Meeting, 11-12 April 1928, report of the National Secretary; The Torch 16, No.4(March-April 1940), p.71
24. PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 1, file 2, "Summary of Board Minutes," 1955, p.13.

25. The CGIT Purpose as it is known today was officially adopted in 1923. Other versions of the motto existed before. PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 1, file 3, "Executive Committee," minutes of the meeting of 18 January 1923.
26. NGWB, Canadian Girls In Training. A Book For Leaders, 1922, p.17.
27. Ibid, p.15.
28. NGWB, Canadian Girls In Training. A Book For Leaders, 1926, p.80.
29. This attitude about feminine competition was widely accepted in all circles. In an article on Canadian women and sports, for instance, Ann Hall remarks that in 1923 the Women's Division of the National Amateur Federation of the United States condemned competition for women and supported instead a "fun for all and all for fun" philosophy" for feminine sports. Canadian educators agreed with this policy. "Rarely Have We Asked Why: Reflections on Canadian Women's Experience in Sport," Atlantis 6, No.1(Fall 1980), p.54.
30. PAC, Young Women's Christian Association of Canada Papers, Mg 28, I 198, vol. 40, file 32, "Girls' Work-Canadian Girls In Training, 1919-1923," The Beginning of the CGIT Movement, n.d., p.5.
31. Ross, Murray G., The YMCA in Canada. A Chronicle of a Century, Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1951, p.202.
32. This exercise was called "A Girl's Standard" or simply "the Girl's Code." It was a system of establishing good habits. Under it, each girl was asked to determine which of her character traits most needed improvement and then to develop a plan to correct these weaknesses. With the code card, she could chart her progress. NGWB, Canadian Girls In Training. A Book For Leaders, 1926, pp.104-109.
33. PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 1, file 3, "Executive Committee," minutes of the Annual Meeting, 20 January 1920, p.2.
34. Ibid, minutes of the meeting of 11 June 1924, p.3.
35. PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 16, file 378, "Materials for Mothers of CGIT Girls, n.d., 1963," "For the Mothers of Canadian Girls In Training," pamphlet, n.d.

36. PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 1, file 3, "Executive Committee," minutes of the Annual Meeting, 20 January 1920, Evening Session, p.2; Ibid, minutes of the Annual Meeting, 30 April-1 May 1924)
37. PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 1, file 3, "Executive Committee," minutes of the Annual Meeting, 23 and 26 April 1923, p.11.
38. The Secretary of the National Girls' Work Board met Lady Baden Powell in 1923. Both agreed that the CGIT and the Girl Guides should not hinder each other's activities and thus not push one movement in areas where the other was well established. When officials of the NGWB approached the Girl Guides' National Council with this resolution, however, they did not receive an enthusiastic response. After a few years of trying to improve the relationship, the Board let the matter drop. By that time the CGIT was gaining enough momentum that it did not fear the Girl Guides' presence anymore. PAC, CGIT Papers, Ibid, minutes of the meeting of 19 September and 15 December 1919; minutes of the Annual Meeting, 23 and 26 April 1923; minutes of the Annual Meeting, 30 April and 1 May 1924. By 1925-26, the CGIT was well established within the church community; it had 31,710 members compared with 23,638 Girl Guides (which also included Brownies, Rangers, Sea Guides and Lone Guides). PAC, CGIT Papers, Ibid, minutes of the Annual Meeting, 17 March 1926; Girl Guides of Canada, Toronto, Annual Report, April 1925-April 1926. It would eventually expand to Newfoundland, Bermuda, Trinidad, Formosa, Japan, China, Africa, India and British Guiana -- wherever there were Protestant missionaries. For a report on groups in other countries, see PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 1, file 5, "Executive Committee," minutes of the Annual Meeting, 17-18 June 1930, p.4.
39. Canadian National Advisory Committee For Co-Operation In Girls' Work, Canadian Girls In Training. Suggestions For The Mid-Week Meetings of Sunday School Classes, Clubs, ETC., For Teen-Age Girls, 1917, pp.10-17.
40. See these articles published in The Torch: Ernest Thomas, "Preparing for Christian Marriage," vol. 5, No.3(January-February 1929), p.45; Agnes Macphail, "Citizenship," vol. 7, No.3(February-March 1931), p.48; Marius Barbeau, "Art and Life," vol. 9, No.1(October-November 1933), p.47; W.B. Creighton, "Why A Christian World?" vol. 21, No.1(October 1944), p.1;

- and Mrs John Diefenbaker, "Being A Canadian," vol. 36, No.5(March 1960), p.20.
41. PAC, Lapp, Eula (nee Carscallen) and the Reverend Gordon Lapp, Mg 30, C 195, vol. 1, file 8, "Diary, 1935-1949," 6 December 1937.
  42. Moxcey, Mary E., "Creative Leadership," The Torch 1, No.1(September-October 1924), p.5.
  43. NGWB, Canadian Girls In Training. A Book For Leaders, 1922, pp.114-116.
  44. Ibid, chapter XI.
  45. For a concise look at Victorian Canada's interest in the natural sciences, see Carl Berger, Science, God and Nature in Victorian Canada, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1983. These ideas evolved in conjunction with the development of national parks and the city parks movement in North America. See Marion Clawson, "The Development of Recreation in the United States and Canada and its Implications for the National Parks," in Canadian Parks In Perspective, edited by J.G. Nelson, Montreal: Harvest House Ltd., 1970, pp.35-45.
  46. "Let's Go Camping," The Torch 2, No.4(March-April 1926), p.65.
  47. PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 2, file 16, "Annual Meeting, National Girls' Work Board: minutes, 1930," 17-18 June 1930, p.3.
  48. PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 1, file 4, "Executive Committee," minutes of the Annual Meeting, 17 March 1926; vol. 2, files 22 and 29, "Annual Meeting, National Girls' Work Board: minutes," 2 April 1936 and 23 April 1946. Camps were also popular with other girls' organizations. In examining past and current publicity about the Girl Guides and YWCA, one is struck by their predominant place. The whole activity year often seems to be aimed at this particular event.
  49. PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 1, file 3, "Executive Committee," minutes of the meeting of 24 March 1921, pp.3-4.
  50. For instance, Harriet Christie resigned as Ontario Girls' Work Secretary in 1943 to become the Associate National Secretary of the Student Christian Movement of Canada. PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 2, file 27, "Annual

Meeting, National Girls' Work Board: docket of reports, 1943; Jessie Macpherson, one of Christie's predecessors, was appointed Dean of women at Victoria College in 1933; PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 2, file 20, "Annual Meeting, National Girls' Work Board: minutes, 1934," p.3; Marjorie McBride, one of the Girls' Work Secretaries from the Maritimes, also served as Associate Secretary of the Department of Christian Education, Director of Christian Education at First Baptist Church in Halifax and held a special lectureship in Christian education at Acadia University. "A Tribute," The Torch 34, No.1(October 1957), p.11; and Margaret Webster, the National Secretary from 1948 to 1952, left the CGIT to become Director of Organization for the Women's Missionary Society of the Presbyterian Church. "Changes in Secretarial Personnel," The Torch 29, No.1(October 1952), p.13.

51. For example, Mary Allison held the position of National Secretary for two years (1924-26), Marion Royce for five years (1927-32), Jessie Macpherson for three years (1932-35), Muriel Jacobson for four years (1941-45), Constance Young for two years (1946-48), and Marjorie McBride for four years (1953-57). PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 1, file 1, "List of C.G.I.T. Committees and Officers."

## Chapter Two

### "People of initiative and originality"

#### The CGIT 1921-39

By the 1920s, the CGIT was fast becoming a national organization responsible for the total Christian education of Protestant girls. Much of its success could be attributed to the young women who served on the executive or in leadership roles. Responding to new trends in education and a revised ideal of Canadian womanhood, they introduced new themes and methods to the programme. In addition to teaching each denomination's doctrinal views in worship, Bible Study and missions, these promoters stressed the importance of proper leisure activities, knowledge of current events, culture and healthy attitudes towards adolescent boys. From 1921 to the eve of the Second World War, the CGIT took advantage of the fact that it was one of the few organizations catering to the needs of adolescent girls to assume responsibilities that went beyond the traditional realm of religious education. Above all, it sought to prepare a whole generation of women leaders whose lives would be guided by Christian principles. By doing so, the movement limited its work to those special girls who had leadership qualities and for whom such goals were socially possible. And while this policy produced some encouraging results, it also rendered the CGIT vulnerable to

the criticism of those who advocated a programme of religious education based uniquely on worship and church membership.

For the years immediately following its official withdrawal from the CGIT, in 1921, the YWCA retained transitional authority and influence over the movement. Even though it had transferred all of its financial and administrative responsibilities to the newly created Religious Education Council of Canada, the Y continued to be represented on the executive of the National Girls' Work Board, encouraged its members to lead CGIT groups, and promoted the latter as a worthwhile venture in girls' work. But, as new religious education professionals emerged from the ranks of the denominations, the Student Christian Movement, and numerous colleges, universities and normal schools, the YWCA's role was eroded.

Most of the young women chosen to lead the CGIT were among the first generation of women college or university graduates. (1) As such, they represented new ideals for Canadian womanhood. These teachers, nurses, social workers and office workers possessed valuable skills which facilitated their entry into the work place. And in the role of National, Provincial or Denominational Secretaries, they were in positions of sufficient authority to put into action

the new educational and social theories that they had encountered in their studies. Influenced by the philosopher John Dewey, and educators such as Friedrich Froebel and William Heard Kilpatrick of Columbia University, they wanted to transform the CGIT into a model of contemporary education. The integration of the "new education" was made easy by the fact that its first three elements, as outlined by a writer for the CGIT paper, The Torch, were compatible with progressive Christian thought:

- (1) A philosophy of individualism which demands that we train youth -- not to be mere automatons, but dynamic, creative personalities;
- (2) An emphasis on the necessity for social planning and the creation of a new social order;
- (3) A philosophy of internationalism and world-mindedness: (sic)
- (4) A scientific method of approach to the study of education, and the incorporation and utilization of what psychology has to contribute to the understanding of the nature of the child and his training. (2)

Describing their approach as a "total philosophy in Girls' Work within the Church," CGIT officials took on the task of interpreting Protestant teachings to the girlhood of Canada. They also wanted to help mould character, develop social skills, provide conscious experience of God, afford opportunities for service, and provide fellowship. (3) Since many of these officials adhered to the progressive stream of Protestant theology, they oriented the movement towards it,

thus reflecting their own beliefs more than those of the participating denominations. CGIT promoters encouraged the practice of an active faith, where one's beliefs transcended the realm of the religious and embraced the home, the community, the country, and eventually the world. The exercises they prepared were expected to inspire "dynamics for Christian living." (4) Drawing on Jesus' love of men, members were to open their eyes to the sores of the world and to their capacities for healing them. As A Book For Leaders warned,

Faith dies unless it finds expression. Religion cannot be separated from service. As Fosdick puts it: "Religion is action, not diction." (5)

Membership in a Christian church implied duty as much as privilege. Faith had to take form: it was to live through the daily acts of every CGIT member.

As could be expected, the spiritual education provided by the CGIT incorporated basic elements of Christian thought and action. From a spiritual conception of God and prayer, the adolescents were to acquire appreciation of all truths, the experience of group worship and private meditation, an intellectual appreciation of the Bible, of Christ's life and teachings, fellowship in the church, a new Christian approach to personal relationships, and finally, the eager espousal of social ideals. (6) The religion CGIT members were taught to

practice was an intelligent one, where every aspect was open to question and discussion until it was understood. As students of the "Sharman method," which stressed "the encounter of men with God as revealed in Jesus," the members of the Religious Education Council of Canada had been converted to the belief that it was in Jesus' human life that Christians would find inspiration for their own lives.(7) Consequently, much of what they taught emphasized the New Testament, extracting from it models for Christian action. They encouraged young people to echo Jesus' path to maturity to the point of claiming that

The unique justification for the C.G.I.T. programme is that it focusses[sic] the life of the teen-age girl upon the person of Jesus and has as its aim the translation of Jesus' way of life into the every-day life of the normal girl.(8)

CGIT members were told to investigate the Saviour's life on earth: his teachings, his deeds, his relationships with others. They could then tailor their lives according to the Gospel and thus become individuals of "initiative and originality,...[girls] of power and personality."(9)

The formal aspects of the religious education programme were taught at the Sunday meetings which were usually structured along the Sunday School format. These worship sessions were designed to provide girls with a solid formation in conventional religious ideology and practice.

Each girl was made conscious of being in the presence of God, was helped to develop "right" attitudes towards Him, and shown how to express her personal religious emotions.(10) Through the singing of hymns, prayers, Bible readings or stories, they were taught the principles of Protestant life and their role within their respective churches. Conscious that passivity engendered indifference, officials strongly advised that worship meetings provide opportunities for each girl to contribute to the service, with the leader ensuring an atmosphere of reverence.

The Sunday segment of the CGIT programme tried to conciliate modern life with religious beliefs. Fearing that simple explanations would eventually arouse the skepticism of members, particularly when further schooling would expose them to the scientific discoveries and philosophic advances of recent years, promoters sought ways to make the girls understand the "findings of science in relation to religion."(11) They hoped to instill in young girls principles which would withstand the assaults of those who attempted to oppose scientific and religious views. CGIT members were taught to think of God "as the source of all life and of the universe as His creation [and to possess] a truth which is capable of growth as [one] grows."(12) Their faith was to be intelligent, not emotional, and open to new

ideas and interpretations.

To be successful, the CGIT's guidance in worship had to be closely associated with the other elements of the programme. This was partly achieved by the inclusion of an additional spiritual session at the midweek meetings. In 1927, the National Executive went one step further in reaching this goal. It officially changed the emphasis of the CGIT from "fourfold" to "relationships." Previously, leaders had been told to alternate meetings between the religious, physical, intellectual and social aspects of life, thus treating them as separate compartments. They were now instructed to combine all four and link them to their daily lives. Girls were

challenged to discover the needs of the world in which they live and to see their responsibility for the character of their home, their school, their church and their community, gradually extending their conception or responsibility to include the nation and the world. (13)

The vision of Christian adolescence that the CGIT upheld was indeed a magnanimous one. It called for members' total commitment to the propagation of CGIT ideals.

With the new emphasis, the National Executive hoped to revitalize the spiritual aspects of the CGIT. As an official had sadly remarked,

Our girls like the physical and social meetings, are fairly interested in the intellectual meetings, but we cannot get them to come out on spiritual night. (14)

Obviously, leaders had trouble generating the amount of enthusiasm in worship that was necessary to maintain a balanced programme of religious and personality development. Worship had to cease being something that was taught by adults and learned by adolescents. Girls had to make conscious efforts at experiencing the spiritual aspects of their lives and let those aspects permeate their personalities. "After all religion and the spiritual life is closely concerned with all of life, and religious attitudes may be developed through every activity in which girls participate." (15) Now, through the four chosen "relationships," -- the home, the school, the church and the community -- members would find it easier to integrate their faith with the material side of their lives.

As part of the new integrated programme, young girls were taught administrative, organizational and implementation skills. In a society in which women had few opportunities to share in the decision-making process, and accept responsibilities transcending the home environment, these lessons were welcomed by all. Using a method borrowed from the parliamentary tradition, groups were given freedom to suggest activities, debate their educational values, select

the best ones, and plan and carry them out. Leaders restricted their role to that of advisor; they suggested methods of working out problems and achieving goals, mediated conflicts, and initiated the group evaluation of every completed activity. They could suggest ways of setting up discussion groups, of making well-planned proposals, of dividing the work, of taking advantage of members' strengths while correcting weaknesses, or even of reproving those who erred. In doing this, they resorted to the psychological and educational advice provided by the CGIT National Office.

Adopting John Dewey's then revolutionary approach to education, the CGIT officers of the 1920s and 1930s promoted a form of democratic action which emphasized the group's right to self-determination and the need for individuals to express themselves on issues which concerned them.(16) Through it, they hoped to develop members' rational thinking process. Girls had to learn to act out of reason, not out of passion.(17) If they were to play an important role in society, they had to be able to think and act wisely. Emotions could serve as a catalyst; they did not, however, have a place in the planning and carrying out of the activity.

The use of the democratic method of learning in the CGIT

preceded similar occurrences in the provincial school systems. Proud of the uniqueness of their programme, CGIT officials emphasized the movement's contribution to adolescent life, often by comparing it in method and achievement to the more traditional forms of education. In refuting claims that CGIT activities interfered with members' school and home responsibilities, they argued that the movement complemented rather than hindered its members' formal education by reinforcing social values and supplementing neglected areas. In the movement, young girls also enjoyed a rare opportunity to incorporate theory and practice. The CGIT, for instance, did more than discuss current events. Members were encouraged to do something about them. Concern over world peace led to membership in the League of Nations, a talk on health values resulted in personal improvement projects, and a visit from a missionary inspired the girls to prepare care packages. In an article in The Torch praising the educational value of the programme, the author used a group composed largely of factory girls to prove this point:

[The girls] from homes where the arts of reading and writing are seldom practised, where "balanced diet" is a phrase unknown, where daintiness of serving is thought a waste of time, decided to hold a banquet. Table decorations, color schemes, place cards, favors were studied, discussed and decided upon. A simple menu was prepared. Songs were chosen and the giving of toasts was practised. This one project was, for each girl of that group, a "development

and cultivation of "the natural powers" far-reaching in its effect. (18)

Group work as such could easily be transposed to other aspects of girls' lives. In this instance, the participants had acquired skills which their social positions had previously deprived them of. It was hoped that they would return home with an appreciation of these values and a desire to adopt them.

Finally, since leaders occupied positions of receding authority, members had to rely on their own enthusiasm to maintain the quality of the group's work. CGIT leaders worked hard at forming "people of initiative and originality," whose roots lay in knowledge of truth, reason, and selflessness." (19) "Whatever trains young people to think, and gives them confidence in their own conclusions, is the most educative of all experience." (20) After all, "what shall it profit a woman to have a mind stored with wisdom and beautiful things if she cannot express what she knows and thinks to other people." (21) While initially the adolescents' thinking and approach might be confused and rash, leaders were reassured that with time, guidance, and experimentation, CGIT objectives would be reached. (22)

As part of the CGIT learning process, members were taught how to make proper use of their leisure time so as to

avoid activities that led to irresponsible thinking and decision-making. As in the Victorian era, inactivity, or fun for the sake of fun, was frowned upon. Pastimes were regarded as just another form of personality development. In the CGIT, most suggestions were aimed at counteracting recent innovations in the world of entertainment, such as the proliferation of radios and movie theatres. In the case of movies, for instance, readers of The Torch were told to base their choice on the plot, the quality of the dialogue, the acting, the type of humour, the photography, the publicity and the underlying philosophy. (23) What concerned officials the most was the possible emotional harm done to adolescents by leisure activities which falsified, either by glorification or condemnation, adult life. Realizing that sheltering members from such images would only increase the girls' vulnerability, they confronted the problem, armed with expert information and a long list of alternatives.

Temperance was also considered a factor in the proper use of leisure time but promoters expressed reservations in dealing with it. And even though they regularly endorsed initiatives aimed at restricting the use of alcohol, there were few efforts made to incorporate temperance ideology into the movement. Promoters feigned incompetence in the field, or questioned whether The Torch was the best medium through

which the question should be introduced. (24)

Reading was by far the most popular "mind-opening" pastime endorsed. It was considered the best medium through which young minds could expand. Good books cultivated an interest for issues which transcended the immediate surroundings and preoccupations of adolescents. Because the immature mind was so sensitive to outside influences, leaders had to monitor their group's choice of reading material. Canadian books, great novels, adventure stories, poetry, biographies or historical novels were the preferred categories.

The proposed biographies reveal the models of womanhood which CGIT officials promoted. Individuals whose accomplishments were the result of faith, vision, determination, originality, and a concern for the welfare of others were the favourites of CGIT leaders. Madame Curie, Gandhi, Stalin, Mary Queen of Scots, Helen Keller, and Florence Nightingale are examples of these. Officials believed in emulation as a tactic for inspiring girls to attempt greater deeds. Girls were told that if youthful energy was harnessed in time, anyone could achieve deeds as great as those of the model men and women. One of the best examples, was that of Elsie Inglis whose comradeship,

according to the Book For Leaders,

with a father in advance of his day, who believed in the broad education of women...stimulated a virile intellectual life. Led by a deep desire to work with God in His world, she determined to study medicine. It was a profession that offered many unjust obstacles to women. Her dauntless spirit overcame them all, she rose high in her chosen work, and, having herself suffered injustice, became an influential leader in the fight for the emancipation of women. (25)

The role models used were not necessarily famous ones. It was important to teach girls that public acclaim was not the ultimate sign of success. After all, many great achievements, particularly in the religious field, had been shrouded in anonymity.

Discriminating reading could also lead to greater social awareness. As a promoter of good citizenship, social justice, internationalism, and peace, the CGIT was committed to a girl's clear perception of current events: a sharp intellect, developed through reading, was crucial. Because a "narrow horizon is the curse of many women," and wanting to avoid this among its members, the CGIT strongly recommended the daily reading of newspapers and magazines. (26) Through them, CGIT members like other Christians were to monitor the progress made in building a Christian world. In addition, The Torch was used to raise the social awareness of members. Articles to be read to the groups dealt with the League of

Nations, international ecumenical conferences, the National Youth Congress, the Appeal of Women in support of the Briand-Kellog Peace Pact, the Boys' Parliament, and others. (27) It also discussed crucial questions such as the duties of citizenship, the Depression, disarmament, and race and class prejudice. (28)

The missionary education programme of the CGIT also reflected these concerns. Through books, visits by missionaries, and projects on other countries, students of missions were expected to increase their appreciation of other cultures. By encouraging world friendliness, mission classes benefited the cause of internationalism. They taught girls to think of themselves as world citizens and to seek through greater knowledge of other cultures bases for cooperation. For example, in an article describing her group's missionary project, Christine M. Gardiner declared that after a visit from an Indian post-graduate student from Victoria College, the "members of the group have changed their ideas of girls of India. No more do they think of them as heathen, but as a great people with whom they are eager to share the message of Jesus." (29) Mission work did not restrict a girl's involvement to the immediate parameters of the Women's Missionary Societies. The League of Nations, the International YWCA, the Red Cross and other similar

organizations gained from the involvement of CGIT members. On the national scene, this was particularly felt after the Second World War when Canada was besieged by an influx of refugees. Church women and CGIT members were seen at all points of arrival, greeting the immigrants with a smile, a Bible, and assistance in getting them established in their new homes. (30)

Preoccupied with its goals of world fellowship, social action, vibrant Christianity and superior girlhood, the CGIT had little time for the promotion of the traditional feminine virtues of wifehood, motherhood and housekeeping. The Torch, from its first issue in October 1924 to March-April 1940, published only one article on the vocation of mother and wife and seven on the girl's relationship with her family. Six other articles were devoted to the annual Mother-Daughter Banquet. A partial explanation for such an omission may be the fact that the majority of CGIT officials were young single church workers who had little practical experience, and possibly interest, in these skills. And while it was universally accepted that most members would eventually choose marriage over outside work, it was felt that the CGIT was not the medium through which they should be prepared for it. In this area, mothers were considered more competent to teach their daughters the necessary skills. The movement had

other ideals for its members; ideals that were probably more appealing to youngsters than the more conventional ones upheld by their mothers.

The whole question of family life was neglected in the CGIT. Although members were encouraged to be good daughters and siblings, there were few exercises which stressed this theme. More emphasis was placed on the relationship between leaders and parents. The young women in charge of CGIT groups were not expected to supersede the traditional role of parents. As teachers and guides, they were trained to respond to the needs of adolescents in areas where parents, unfamiliar with modern psychological theories, were at a loss. But this could only be true if the leaders followed the available training courses and read all the suggested literature. Only then could they be considered specialists upon whom fell the task of adapting young girls to a complex world.

Even though the CGIT encouraged communication between leaders and parents, it never stressed the need for consultation or even cooperation between the two. And at times, it even placed them in adversarial positions by pointing to parental shortcomings and giving advice as to how leaders could correct the harmful influences emanating from

the home, defend the predominance of the CGIT over other activities such as housework, and tactfully manipulate parents to achieve certain goals. In numerous articles in The Torch discussing the special needs of adolescent girls, parents were depicted as indifferent, unloving, uneducated, or materially deprived; the leader, by judiciously choosing her activities and counseling girls, could correct the behavioral problems caused by a doubtful home environment. (31)

Parents' participation in the CGIT was kept to a minimum. There was an annual Mother-Daughter Banquet but it served largely symbolic functions and was of little consequence. Parents were expected to approve unconditionally their daughters' association with the CGIT and the feminine ideals it promoted. It was not until the 1940s, when mothers were recruited as leaders, and when the participation of the WMS increased, that the relationship warmed. But by that time the lack of candidates for leadership had provoked changes in the high standards once expected of them and of the special work accomplished by the movement.

From the very beginning, the CGIT had been an avid proponent of cooperative action, or, in its terms, unity of

effort. This ideal was applied to all levels of the movement, a good example being the National Girls' Work Board where all of the participating denominations worked together. Cooperation was supposed to help one develop the qualities of understanding, discrimination, dignity, self-respect, courtesy and tolerance. (32) As for the CGIT members themselves, a major part of the cooperative programme involved work with adolescent boys. Although by tradition distrustful of mixed activities, officials soon realized the values of such undertakings:

It is the co-operative enterprise, in which acting and thinking together they forget themselves, that boys and girls work most effectually and naturally. There are decided values in encouraging such co-operation; boys and girls together may form judgments (sic) that are invaluable in their daily experience which could never be reached in segregated groups. (33)

To help those leaders who might be uneasy at the thought of introducing boy-girl activities, the National Office produced and distributed relevant project suggestions. Intent on not upsetting anyone, it proceeded cautiously, promoting congregational work as the most desirable and mutually satisfying mixed activity.

Leaders were encouraged to organize projects that would combine the naturally feminine tasteful and meticulous talents of girls with the physical and manual dexterity of

boys. Providing entertainment for younger groups, sponsoring joint worship services, and taking on the repair and maintenance of church equipment were singled out as worthwhile activities. When these had been tried, leaders could then introduce recreational events such as corn roasts, sleigh rides, debates, an Eaton's catalogue treasure hunt, nature hikes and group games. Action was the key to safe and successful boy-girl work; the participants were not to be given time to reflect -- for fear of giving rise to unworthy thoughts -- but were to be involved in specific projects that would absorb their excessive imagination and energy. (34)

It is hard to evaluate whether or not the CGIT succeeded in its co-educational venture. For one thing, it is evident that many Secretaries and leaders doubted that such endeavours were in the best interests of their girls. The following recommendation, passed at the 1932 Annual Meeting, is representative of the uneasiness and ambivalence of many women workers:

That the policy of promoting joint activities between senior Canadian Girls In Training and Tuxis Squares be reconsidered in view of the very small success achieved so far. (Note: There is a conviction that the basic reason for this is the greater maturity of senior Canadian Girls In Training.) Agreed that this recommendation be adopted, deleting everything after "reconsidered." (35)

Obviously, some leaders felt that their girls should not be subjected to the immaturity of boys their own age. Many of the younger leaders were also probably attempting to come to terms with these questions in their own lives and consequently were as unsure as the members about how relationships with the other sex should evolve.

Quite clearly, leaders were ill at ease with the issue of adolescent sexuality. As a movement which advocated a complete programme of personal growth, the CGIT was committed to its members' moral and sexual education. For the benefit of leaders, The Torch and other publications suggested different approaches when explaining sex to young girls. Married women and mothers stressed the role of sexual relationships in the building of a good marriage and family; ministers, such as Ernest Thomas, concentrated on the theme of the "Christian Marriage;" other specialists in the fields of health and education reassured leaders that sex was a normal aspect of adult life which should be discussed with an open mind. (36) None of the authors approved, however, of any form of sexual contact between adolescents. They only wanted this knowledge communicated to young girls to prepare them if they ever became mothers and to prevent them from committing unforgivable mistakes out of ignorance.

In all the teachings on the subject, self-control was the predominant theme. Responsibility for moral purity was said to be a woman's concern, mainly because girls had less of a sex drive than boys. It was thus easier for them to exercise control. (37) Irrespectful attitudes towards sex as promoted in movies, novels and "love-less" homes were pointed out; "petting" and other familiarities between adolescents also came under attack. CGIT members were instructed to avoid occasions which could encourage promiscuity, such as drinking, solitary car rides or têtes à têtes. (38) Taking liberties with boys constituted an abyss from which one could never escape: "For there are experiences which, once known, leave us never the same." (39)

Mrs. R.G. Dingman described the Christian view of sexual relationships when she wrote that

If mating love is looked upon as a beautiful thing which is part of God's purpose, will not its physical intimacies be less a matter of casual and promiscuous playfulness than part of the precious dower of physical and spiritual health and beauty which a girl will give to that other personality with whom she hopes to enter upon an immeasurably valuable spiritual as well as physical unity? (40)

Placing great trust in CGIT members, officers chose to believe that such an attitude existed among their girls. They agreed with Mrs. Dingman's claim that "because of their

standards of a full, rich life, [they] may have less inclination than some others for this form of fun [petting]." (41)

Although carefully thought out, the programme of sexual education was not without its problems. Some leaders often felt that they lacked the necessary expertise to discuss such a sensitive issue. They bemoaned the lack of acceptable literature on sex upon which they could depend. They frowned upon the increasingly popular world of entertainment which promoted a vision of love that was alien to Christian beliefs. Finally, parents were criticized for not steering their children away from these images and not doing their share in upholding the Churches' ideas.

Even more serious than the problems associated with the sexual education programme were the failures the CGIT experienced with senior work. Co-education, in addition to its learning values, had been initiated as a way of dealing with the exodus of older members. Realizing that the needs of girls between the ages of fifteen and seventeen required more than what the standard CGIT programme offered, officials had tried to meet these needs. They claimed that "the girl of from 15 to 17 faces crucial problems which must be our concern. Her clamant needs justify what otherwise might seem

to be a disproportionate amount of time spent with her in mind." (42) Organizing activities with boys was one step in solving the problem. Separating seniors from the others was another, as well as giving them more freedom to plan their group's work. But even with these concessions, membership among girls over fifteen remained far from encouraging. In 1929, the National Secretary reported that in "every province Intermediate groups outnumber the Senior." The following year, the NGWB concluded that "there are fewer seniors than intermediate groups in every province." (43)

In analyzing the situation -- something which occurred almost every year at the Annual Meeting -- the Executive had a variety of excuses. Weaknesses on the part of leaders were mentioned, along with the absence of precise goals, insufficient literature, misunderstandings about the movement's philosophy, a lack of communication between the field and the National Office, the recruitment by the Young People's Societies of members as young as sixteen, a crowded high school curriculum and the entrance of teen-age girls into the work force. (44)

There was little that movement officials could do about the problems originating from outside the movement but changes could be made to the CGIT programme itself. For

instance, even though leaders were spending more time on senior work, comments from the field indicated that issues such as mixed activities, sex education and vocational planning were not being handled properly. Many leaders were not giving sufficient freedom to senior girls to conduct their own sessions even though the latter were anxious to do so. "The senior group to be successful must be one in which the leaders and girls are co-workers." (45) Also, older members had to be allowed to participate more in adult activities. If adolescence was an important period of apprenticeship for adulthood, the years from fifteen to seventeen represented its most crucial time.

The demands of working with older girls led officials to reconsider their programme of leadership training. The National Executive was dismayed at the fact that many of the women volunteering for leadership lacked some or all of the basic skills desired for CGIT work, and consequently needed long periods of activity in the field before they were judged by the CGIT Secretaries and Supervisors to be competent leaders. As early as 1930, the Maritimes Girls' Work Secretary stated that the "greatest plea of the Maritimes -- and I believe it does not belong to us alone -- is for more leadership and better equipped leadership." (46) Since the CGIT was committed to providing leaders to all groups, it

could not restrict its choice of volunteers to only those who qualified for fear that not enough candidates would be found. With time, leadership courses could correct the weaknesses of the ill-equipped leader. Moreover, this type of training had another advantage: to recruit senior girls as leaders and thus maintain their interest in the movement.

The leadership training courses were prepared by officials and professionals solicited by the National Executive. The curriculum addressed issues that were not discussed in the contemporary school programmes and yet were judged essential to anyone contemplating youth work. Students were taught the basics of child psychology, Christian education (particularly Bible and worship courses), programme planning, administrative and organizational methods, as well as practical skills such as effective story-telling, handcrafts, recreation and dramatization. The courses were offered annually at leadership summer camps, through correspondence courses, or in regular classes organized by the local CGIT committee. While the courses emphasized CGIT work, administrators stressed that they were general enough to be used in all types of group work. Graduates could consider themselves more than certified volunteers; they were quasi-professionals possessing sufficient knowledge to play a leading role in the community.

At first, the leadership training courses were aimed at young women attending universities, colleges, and normal schools. CGIT officials succeeded in convincing several of these institutions to let them offer one credited course in leadership training to interested women students. Since most of the students were already preparing for the "helping" professions -- nursing, teaching and religious and social work -- they had a basis of psychological, educational and social knowledge that could be successfully transposed to volunteer work, once they graduated.

Promoters hoped to interest the best female students in CGIT work and provide

an increasing number of worthwhile contacts with future leaders. Some of the secretaries have found that the following-up of girls who have participated in this leadership training work has been valuable in maintaining interest and encouraging them to accept the responsibility of work with groups of girls. (47)

At first, the young educated woman was judged to be most adaptable to CGIT standards. She could be expected to maintain enthusiasm and objectivity about her work. "She must keep her mind open, flexible. She must be ready to abandon old notions and prejudices and to move on with the times. Otherwise how can she understand young people..." (48)

Also, she would normally "give just enough thought to her clothes that her skirts go up when most skirts are short, that she tilt her hat when hats are tilted, that she change the lines of last year's dress if necessary..."(49) In recruiting leaders, officials looked for women who were intelligent, independent, innovative, and with personalities that appealed to young girls. Consequently, even one's wardrobe was important in projecting the image that the CGIT was youthful and energetic. Since leadership implied example and activity, it was important for the leader to be worthy of emulation. Hence, the stress on image.

For the first years following the introduction of the programme, in the early 1930s, it does seem that this form of training and recruitment worked.(50) - Since many young professional women were already working in areas compatible with the CGIT the latter could be a natural extension of their career preoccupations. By participating in what was considered an innovative educational programme, they also had an opportunity to implement the latest theories in education, psychology, and theology that they had encountered during their studies. Many had also been among the first generation of CGIT members, had graduated into the Student Christian Movement, and were now maintaining an active role in their denomination. Finally, since most of them were single, they

had more time than wives and mothers to spend on CGIT work. Leading both Sunday School and midweek sessions, taking a personal interest in every girl in the group, following current religious ideology, researching possible activities for the group, and liaising with parents and church officials was more demanding than many other forms of female volunteer work.

The preponderance of young professional and clerical working women among leaders is attested to by a survey of the province of Ontario that was compiled in 1931. In it, it was revealed that

The approximate average age of leaders was somewhere in the middle twenties; the vast majority being reported as between 20 and 30...[out of these in the past five years in the churches surveyed] there have been 178 public school teachers, 230 women in business offices, 86 married women with teen-age daughters, 35 women at home, 4 nurses, 6 music teachers, 3 librarians, 5 deaconesses, 3 social service workers, 2 chicken farmers, 1 factory worker, 1 osteopath. (51)

As can be expected, in Ontario, where the movement was strongest (52) and where the population was most urbanized, young working women outnumbered all other groups as leaders. In the Toronto and southern Ontario areas particularly, the pool from which the CGIT could choose its leaders was vast. Religiously affiliated institutions such as Alma College, in

St. Thomas, and Victoria and Emmanuel Colleges, on the campus of the University of Toronto, were noted producers of church and hence CGIT workers.

In the rural areas, the Prairie provinces and the Maritimes, however, the state of leadership during the inter-war period is not as easy to define. While school teachers often doubled as Sunday School and CGIT leaders, the success of the movement often rested on the shoulders of mothers. The approaches adopted by such leaders differed considerably from those used in urban centers. For many groups with mature leadership, the programme lost much of the flexibility it was supposed to have and became a conventional fellowship of young girls or a basic Sunday School class. And since such leaders could not attend leadership classes as full-time students, and received few visits from the National and Provincial Secretaries, they were left to themselves, with little more than the literature provided, to devise methods of projecting the movement's philosophy.

By the mid-1930s, new approaches in leadership training were developed to deal with the case of mature leaders and the ever-present need for new leaders. This change in policy was also the result of the decreasing popularity of

leadership courses within schools. College women, responding to the secularization of society in general, were not as committed to church work as before. By the Second World War, there were no leadership courses being offered in any school. An attempt to revive this initiative at the University of Toronto in 1949 met with little success.(53) The new programme of leadership training made greater use of summer camps, conferences, correspondence courses and apprenticeship training. These methods had been used previously but were always overshadowed by the Normal School programme. Weekend and other conferences always attracted large crowds (4,899 for weekend conferences in 1930-31; in 1936, 565 girls attended the Leaders' Camps and Summer Schools) but the results were originally not as good as with Normal School students.(54) The goal of the leadership courses was first to attract candidates and then to train them; finally, they could be used to improve the performance of current leaders. It thus made it possible for a mother, or a young CGIT graduate, to consider leading a CGIT group as competently as her school-trained counterpart.

In the new leadership training courses, religious work occupied a larger place than before. For too many years, good church members had been excluded from CGIT work because they did not possess the education that officials preferred.

But this was not the only problem. Promoters were increasingly concerned about the integrity of the CGIT programme. For more than twenty years, they had worked at developing a new form of vibrant Christianity which emphasized the completeness of the human personality and the intrinsic relationship of spirituality with one's social, intellectual and physical traits. But, on evaluating the situation, officials had to admit that on the purely religious side, the CGIT had failed. This was due

in part to the efforts of the leader to carry out a girl-centred and activity programme in which she has failed to keep in mind the Christian motive, thus the activities tend to become ends in themselves. (55)

Obviously, the leaders of groups had not succeeded in integrating all four aspects of the fourfold programme. While officials understood the relationship between Christian ideals and social, intellectual and physical activities, group leaders did not. Many groups, thus, had become mere youth clubs catering to the leisure time of young girls.

Concern over the religious content of the CGIT was also new to the executive. After the shift to "fourfold relationships," in 1927, officials had been satisfied that all activities undertaken by the groups were part of a greater Christian commitment. Indeed, in many cases, they stressed the other relationships over the religious one,

always sure that the latter was at the core of the CGIT. But as the years passed, and a new group of officials succeeded the earlier ones, the achievements of the movement in the purely religious field were not visible enough to justify such a policy. Church membership among young girls and women had not increased dramatically, the church did not occupy a position of greater leadership in society, and the nation -- by that time in the midst of a disastrous economic depression -- was not more Christian. To the new executive, these facts proved that the programme needed new directions.

In 1937, the National Girls' Work Board decided to realign the movement, placing new emphasis on church-centered activities. (56) The Torch explained that

Therefore its spear point must be specifically religious. Its projects, using the best educational techniques, ought to be religious-centred; that is, the group shall concentrate on such activities as definitely religious dramatics, religious arts, religious music; etc. (57) -

Leaders were instructed to develop their expertise in fields such as the dramatization of Bible stories, the study and illustration of the life of Jesus, the story of the Church, learning of good hymns, biblical map-making, visits to other churches with subsequent discussion, and puppet creation of religious characters. At this point, officials conceded that most girls would not, at the onset, be interested in a

movement which emphasized Bible Study; they much preferred fun and games. But if leaders succeeded in arousing members' curiosity about certain religious themes or events, they could be won over.

Another cause for concern was the multiplication of youth organizations and the development in the schools of new child-centered curricula which incorporated many educational concepts that were until then only familiar to CGIT groups. With their role being undermined by these two trends, leaders questioned the movement's relevance in such a modified social context. To the question "What is left for us to do?" the National Executive stressed the movement's religious mandate and its goal of recruiting church members. (58) To that advice, Ann Fountain, the British Columbia Provincial Secretary added:

No other agency (except the home, which unfortunately usually does little along this line) has responsibility for Bible study, training in worship, missionary education so we can continue to major in these and kindred studies. (59)

Officials remained optimistic that there was sufficient room for all. Since the Girl Guides, the YWCA, the Young People's, and other such organizations concentrated on a particular aspect of youth development, there was no duplication of work. What these people neglected to consider, however, was the effect of many associations

recruiting from the same constituency. Most girls might join one group, but seldom more than one, and their choice would be determined by those aspects of the programmes that appealed most to their taste for fun and friendship.

Through the 1930s, CGIT officials also became increasingly concerned with adolescent life in an urban setting. Influenced by the sheer numerical strength of the Central Canadian membership (which generally accounted for 1/3 of the total membership for the whole period), the National Executive prepared programme suggestions which mainly suited girls growing up in cities. Such an attitude did not sit well with small town and rural groups and as early as 1930 the Ontario Girls' Work Secretary lamented that

It has been especially hard to secure girls from villages and isolated rural groups... (60)

Thirteen years later, her successor reported that out of the 166 groups lost in the province, 152 came from smaller places. (61) Even in Manitoba, in 1929-30, out of the 424 registered groups, rural groups were found in only 88 centers. (62)

The lack of good leadership in non-urban centers seems to have been at the heart of the problem. And while the introduction of correspondence courses for leaders did much

to help the CGIT to survive in areas of low population, the results were still far from encouraging. Most officials doing field work declared themselves inept when dealing with rural girls because there was little for them to offer in the CGIT programme. The emphasis on group work, community involvement, higher education, and structured physical activities were not compatible with the interests, needs and material realities of young girls living on farms or in small communities. Too often the CGIT work there followed the conventional Sunday School curriculum and neglected the other aspects of the total development programme.

CGIT officials also noted different characteristics in their rural and urban members. City girls were more sophisticated while the country girls had greater potential for initiative and originality. For some time, the editors of The Torch experimented with a column aimed at rural leaders in which items such as the use of Travelling Libraries, worship sessions for multi-denominational groups, and practical activities were discussed. But articles were hard to come by and the rural component of The Torch eventually disappeared.

By devoting so much time to the organization and functioning of city groups, the CGIT redefined the frontiers

of its constituency to urban centers. This environment fit most easily the structures of the movement as well as its basic aims. City girls were also more apt to participate in organized activities. And since most city members came from middle class families, they had more leisure time to devote to extra-curricular activities than girls living on farms or from working class families who were expected home promptly after school so they could help with the many household chores or, in the case of working class girls, care for the younger siblings until the return of both working parents. Finally, in cities, it was easier to organize CGIT groups in the congregations since the number of church members justified such an initiative. In small centers or rural areas, leaders were forced to organize along multi-denominational lines and over a greater area, a task requiring great diplomatic skill.

As Canada edged towards another war, the CGIT was in the midst of a transition. For two decades the movement had experimented with a more social approach to girls' work. Recent educational and theological trends had received special attention from officials and leaders. And while the programme had appealed to many girls, it failed in achieving the two goals that were most important to the sponsoring denominations: increasing church membership and religious

vocations. Furthermore, the CGIT was now faced with the growth of competing organizations and the presence of a new generation of leaders less knowledgeable in the psychological and educational background of girls' work. They were more interested in the revitalization of the movement's Christian mission, a theme that would dominate the following period, of CGIT history.

## NOTES TO CHAPTER 2

1. For example, Winnifred Thomas was a graduate of Mount Allison University, Mary Allison eventually obtained an MA in religious education from Columbia (1928), Marion Royce had a BA from McMaster University in English and History (1922), a degree from the Ontario College of Education, and later studied at the University of Chicago, Jessie Macpherson had a BA in Philosophy, English and History from the University of Toronto (1923) and a degree from the Ontario College of Education, and Harriet Christie had attended Western University and Victoria College at the University of Toronto. The Torch 6, No.1 (September-October, 1929), p.18; PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 1, file 5, "Executive Committee," minutes of the Annual Meeting, Report of the Ontario Girls' Work Secretary, 22 March 1932; The Torch 1, No.4 (March-April 1924), p.62; The Torch 6, No.1 (September-October 1929), p.18.
2. Russell, Olive R., "The Philosophy of the New Education," The Torch 12, No.1 (January-February 1936), pp.3-5.
3. PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 1, file 5, "Executive Committee," minutes of the meeting of 15 March 1934.
4. NGWB, The Leader's Book, 1934, p.69.
5. NGWB, Canadian Girls In Training. A Book For Leaders, 1926, p.33.
6. These ideas were summarized in an article by Marjorie Trotter entitled "A Girl's Religion" in The Torch 9, No.2 (January-February 1933), pp.36-8.
7. Dr. Henry Burton Sharman was a wealthy businessman who devoted most of his life to teaching Bible studies. He was most popular among young Protestants, particularly those who belonged to the Student Christian Movement, the YMCA and YWCA, and the Religious Education Council of Canada. His teaching method, based on the human life of Jesus, was limited to two questions: Who is this man? What is he saying? Individuals were asked to think about these questions and arrive at personal conclusions from which they could base their lives as Christians. His contribution to religious thinking is summarized in This One Thing. A Tribute to Henry Burton Sharman 1865-1953, Student Christian Movement, Toronto: Thistle

Printing Ltd., 1959.

8. Nichol, Helen R.H., "The C.G.I.T. Movement—A Means to True Education," The Torch 1, No.4 (March-April, 1925), p.50.
9. Ibid.
10. NGWB, Canadians Girls In Training. A Book For Leaders, 1922, p.69.
11. NGWB, The Leader's Book, 1934; p.89.
12. Ibid.
13. "The Change of Emphasis From "Fourfold Life" to "Relationships," The Torch 4, No.1 (September-October 1927), pp.4-7.
14. Ibid.
15. Ibid.
16. In 1937, Dewey summarized democratic work as "the participation of every mature human being in formation of the values that regulate the living of men together." Winn, Ralph B., John Dewey: Dictionary of Education, Westport Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1959, p.24.
17. This attitude was even encouraged in the girls' religious practice. They were told to avoid exercising an emotional religion because such emotionalism lacked "the balance of intelligent thought as to one's responsibility toward God and one's fellowmen and because it is not given validity in the conduct of life." NGWB, The Leader's Book, 1932, p.125.
18. "Educational Value of C.G.I.T. Programme," The Torch 1, No.4 (March-April 1925), p.48.
19. Nichol, Helen R.H., "The C.G.I.T. Movement—A Means to True Education," The Torch 1, No.4 (March-April, 1925), p.50.
20. Hall, L.K., "When Is Experience Educative?" The Torch 4, No.2 (November-December 1927), p.24.
21. NGWB, Canadian Girls In Training. A Book For Leaders, 1926, p.29.

22. NGWB, The Leader's Book, 1932, pp.32-40.
23. ←Royce, Marion, "What About Movies?" The Torch 8, No.3 (February-March 1932), p.51.
24. PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 1, file 4, "Executive Committee of National Girls' Work Board: minutes, January 1925-December 1929," minutes of the meeting of 20 January 1927, Report of the Torch Committee, p.3.
25. NGWB, Canadian Girls In Training. A Book For Leaders, 1926, p.16.
26. Ibid, p.27.
27. See "A Permanent Foundation for World Peace," vol. 3, No.2 (November-December 1926), p.23; "Youth Section of the League of Nations Society in Canada," Ibid, p.35; "Learners of All Nations" and "Women at Jerusalem," vol. 5, No.2 (November-December 1928), pp.19,23; "Canada's First National Youth Congress," vol. 6, No.1 (September-October 1929), p.8; "The Christian Youth Council of North America," vol. 7, No.2 (December-January 1930-31), p.42; "Appeal of Women," vol. 7, No.4 (April-May 1931), p.71; "Oxford," vol. 8, No.4 (January-February 1938), p.65; "Boys' Parliaments," vol. 14, No.2 (November-December 1938), p.16.
28. ←See "High Lights on World News," vol. 7, No.2 (December-January 1930-31), p.40; "Citizenship," vol. 7, No.3 (February-March 1931), p.48; "Some Things to Do About the Present Situation," vol. 7, No.3 (February-March 1931), p.63; "The Need for Disarmament," vol. 8, No.1 (October-November 1931), p.8; "Depression," vol. 8, No.1 (October-November 1931), p.4; "The Economic System," vol. 8, No.2 (December-January 1931-32), p.24; "The Consequence of Depression," vol. 8, No.3 (February-March 1932), p.44; "Race and Class Prejudice," vol. 11, No.3 (October-November 1935), p.46; "The World Situation-An Introduction," vol. 12, No.3 (September-October 1936), p.52; and "What Is Wealth and Poverty," vol. 14, No.2 (November-December 1938), p.7.
29. ←"An Attractive Missionary Project," The Torch 5, No.2 (November-December 1928), p.33.
30. The work accomplished at Halifax, for instance, was told by Dorothy Gray in "Welcoming Our New Canadians," The

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Torch 26, No.2(November 1949), p.8.

31. ←See, for example, "Educational Value of C.G.I.T. Programme," The Torch 1, No.4(March-April 1925), p.48; "In Defence of a High School Education," The Torch 5, No.4(March-April 1929), pp.64-5; "The Leaders' Problems," The Torch 9, No.1(October-November 1932), pp.14-5; and "C.G.I.T. and The Home," The Torch 9, No.2(April-May 1934), p.28.
32. Dingman, Mrs. R.G., "Relationships Between Girls and Boys," The Torch 4, No.2(November-December 1927), pp.34-5.
33. "The Value of Co-operation," The Torch 4, No.2(November-December 1927), pp.21-2.
34. See "The Value of Co-operation," and "Joint Activities Already Tried," The Torch 14, No.2(November-December 1938), pp.10-1.
35. PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 2, file 18, "Annual Meeting, National Girls' Work Board: minutes, 1932," 22 March 1932, Second Session, p.7.
36. See, for example, Mrs. R.G. Dingman, "Relationships Between Girls and Boys" and Rev. Ernest Thomas, "Preparing for Christian Marriage," The Torch 5, No.3(January-February 1929), p.45.
37. In a pamphlet published later, in 1951, girls were told that they were responsible for setting the standard in their relationships with boys. PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 13, file 332, "Talks and Discussions, n.d., 1954," Let's Talk It Over, No.13, 1951, p.20.
38. PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 12, file 318, "Health and Sex Education, n.d., 1949," A Home of Her Own, 1944, pp.31-38.
39. Thomas, Rev. Ernest, "Preparing for Christian Marriage," The Torch 5, No.3(January-February 1929), p.45.
40. Dingman, Mrs. R.G., "Relationships Between Girls and Boys," The Torch 4, No.2(November-December 1927), pp.35.
41. Ibid, p.35.
42. PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 1, file 4, "Executive Committee,"

minutes of the Annual Meeting, Report of the Quebec Girls' Work Secretary, 10-11 April 1929.

43. PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 1, file 4, "Executive Committee," minutes of the Annual Meeting, 10-11 April 1929, Report of the Secretary of the National Girls' Work Board; vol. 2, file 16, "Annual Meeting, National Girls' Work Board; minutes, 1930," 17-18 June 1930.
44. See, for instance, PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 1, file 4, "Executive Committee," minutes of the Annual Meeting, 10-11 April 1929, Report of the National Secretary, Local Leadership, p.2; vol. 2, file 16, "Annual Meeting, 1930," Findings on Promotion from Staff Conference, The situation in regard to Senior Groups; vol. 1, file 5, "Executive Committee," minutes of the Annual Meeting, 22 March 1932, Leadership Training.
45. PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 2, file 25, "Annual Meeting, National Girls' Work Board: minutes and reports, 1940," 15 April 1940, Brief summary of the Survey of Reports and Survey Presented at the Annual Meeting of the National Girls' Work Board, p.2, IV, The Senior Girl Problem.
46. PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 1, file 5, "Executive Committee," minutes of the Annual Meeting, 17-18 June 1930, Report of the Maritimes Girls' Work Secretary.
47. PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 2, file 17, "Annual Meeting, National Girls' Work Board: minutes, 1931," 6 May 1931, Recommendations to the National Girls' Work Board Growing Out of Conferences with Provincial Secretaries, Boards and Group Leaders.
48. ← "Leaders and Their Task," The Torch 10, No.3 (October-November 1934), p.47.
49. "Easter Bonnets," The Torch 1, No.4 (March-April- 1925), p.54.
50. The following are examples of the success achieved in Normal Schools (more precise data is not available): In Alberta, in 1929, approximately 50 per cent of students in the three Normal Schools registered for the courses. In 1931, attendance stood at 287. PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 1, file 4, "Executive Committee," minutes of the Annual Meeting, 10-11 April 1929, report of the Alberta Girls' Work Secretary; PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 1, file 5, "Executive Committee," minutes of the Annual Meeting, 6

- May 1931, report of the Alberta Girls' Work Secretary. Throughout Canada in 1930, 851 Normal School students attended the Girls' Work Training Courses. PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 1, file 5, "Executive Committee," minutes of the Annual Report, 17-18 June 1930, report of the National Secretary, p.2.
51. PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 2, file 17, "Annual Meeting, National Girls' Work Board: minutes, 1931," 6 May 1931, report of the Ontario Girls' Work Secretary, Survey of the Province and the New Year's Conference, p.2.
  52. In 1931, Ontario accounted for 12,169 of the 39,383 CGIT members. Nine years later, the number stood at 14,641 out of 36,304. PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 2, file 17, "Annual Meeting, 1931" and file 26, "Annual Meeting, National Girls' Work Board: docket of reports, 1941."
  53. PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 2, file 8, "C.G.I.T. Executive and Sub-Executive Committees, Canadian Council of Churches: minutes, May 1947-October 1949," minutes of the meeting of 9 May 1949.
  54. PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 2, file 17, "Annual Meeting, National Girls' Work Board: minutes, 1931" and file 23, "Annual Meeting, National Girls' Work Board: minutes, 1937."
  55. PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 2, file 23, "Annual Meeting, 1937," Recommendations From Staff Conference.
  56. Ibid.
  57. McCurdy, Avis, "To All Leaders," The Torch, No.2 (September-October 1937), p.71.
  58. PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 2, file 6, "Executive and Sub-Executive Committees of National Girls' Work Board: minutes, February 1935-December 1940," National Staff Conference on Girls' Work, 23 March 1936, CGIT And Its Problems, pp.6-7.
  59. PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 2, file 23, "Annual Meeting, 1937," Girls' Work in British Columbia.
  60. PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 2, file 16, "Annual Meeting, 1930," report of the Ontario Girls' Work Secretary.
  61. PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 2, file 27, "Annual Meeting, National Girls' Work Board: docket of reports, 1943," 28

April 1943, report of the Ontario Girls' Work Secretary.

62. PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 2, file 16, "Annual Meeting, 1930," report of the Manitoba Girls' Work Secretary.

## Chapter Three

## "Winning members for the church"

The CGIT 1939-45

At the end of the inter-war period, the CGIT had begun a re-evaluation which resulted in major shifts in its goals, programme and place in the community. In the first twenty-five years of its existence, the movement had concentrated on an all-inclusive programme of youth education aimed at developing leadership skills in girls. Now, the emphasis of the CGIT was placed on the religious aspects of young girls' lives, a consequence of the greater role played by church workers and of the competition from other organizations. To promote church membership and religious vocations, and to increase its popularity, the movement offered a programme of conventional religious education mixed with fun and games in which the greatest number of girls could participate. Under such a policy, the ideals of Canadian womanhood transmitted by the CGIT changed. From the end of the Second World War to 1955, the themes of matrimony, missions, religious vocations and charity work dominated the curriculum. Girls were once more encouraged to adopt the caring, loving, and serving characteristics which had earlier been attributed to turn-of-the-century women.

As with all other volunteer organizations, the advent of the Second World War severely curtailed CGIT aspirations and activities. Along with other groups in the Protestant churches, the CGIT became a reluctant partner in the war effort, channelling its energies into prayers, peace literature, anticipation of the birth of a new world order, and war work projects such as those sponsored by the Red Cross. (1) In November 1939 The Torch published a series of articles to set the movement's course for the duration of the war. Confident that CGIT ideals were as relevant as ever, leaders were instructed not only to carry on as before but also to accept certain tasks for which Christians had special responsibility. (2) Included in those were the duties of defending democracy at home, healing those suffering from the effects of the war, forgiving the enemy, and working towards a just peace.

There were also more immediate concerns for CGIT leaders in wartime. The times had changed: adolescent girls were experiencing the effects of economic prosperity, less parental supervision, a more attractive labour market, the preoccupations of war, and what some considered to be greater emotional and psychological stress. (3) A disillusioned Maritimes Secretary echoed much of the leaders' concerns when she lamented that in her region

Dances, for visiting cadets, to which entire groups are invited, amateur shows for the men in uniform-these are new C.G.I.T. activities. Several 15 and 16-year-old brides in middies have attended our Conferences. Drinking is most flagrantly done, and there is no version of the "pick-up" problem unknown to us. (4)

The CGIT was called upon to help balance Christian values with those tolerated by wartime society.

Since CGIT leaders still upheld the pre-war ideals of cooperation, internationalism, and the achievement of Christian goals, they became responsible for helping girls see through the artificialities created by the war. For this reason, and because they were disappointed that the faith they had had in internationalism had been misplaced, the National Executive refused to include traditional war work in its programme. Instead,

it was agreed that groups be advised to carry on as usual, to stress the purpose of the movement, and if anxious to do war work to do it outside the group, in Red Cross or at home, or some church committee doing war work. (5)

Officials refused to be diverted from their original course of Christian action. They even went as far as claiming that

If it is ever saved, this world will be saved by people working with God. Christian education is of more value to the world than any imaginable number of socks and bandages. (6)

CGIT workers remained convinced that their own mission was

far more important than that of the war volunteer organizations. Instead of responding to a particular emergency, the CGIT intended to continue contributing to the formation of better citizens who, because of their Christian values, would commit themselves to the eradication of atrocities such as war.

For the duration of the conflict, CGIT workers had nonetheless to concentrate on maintaining their adolescent constituency. Decreases in membership were cause for concern: from 1939 to 1947, the movement went from 35,707 members to 27,490 (excluding Newfoundland). (7) Muriel Jacobson, the National Secretary in 1943, claimed that this situation was being caused by

declining interest in the Sunday School, lack of leadership aggravated by war conditions, part or full time employment of Senior girls, and intense competition in the adolescent field... (8)

Consequently, various new group activities were added to the programme to make it more appealing. Mixed groups, organized events with soldiers in military towns, and experimentation with makeup, movies and other notorious products of wartime society became standard CGIT activities.

When the war did finally come to an end, the CGIT was expected to revert to its original preoccupations. For many

pre-war leaders, however, the return to peace did not necessarily mean a return to girls' work. Between 1939 and 1945, many leaders, secretaries, and promoters had temporarily abandoned the CGIT to concentrate on the national emergency. As workers for the Red Cross, the International YWCA or other similar organizations, or even as workers in war industry, they were given the opportunity to practice their leadership skills in other environments. And in the end, many of them decided not to return to their previous occupations. Among provincial and denominational secretaries, for instance, not one who was active in 1939 remained with the organization in an official capacity in 1945. Of those leaders and secretaries whose departure was announced in The Torch, we learn that Winnifred McIlroy (Saskatchewan) and Anna Orchard (Baptist) married, Violet Tennant (Presbyterian) became General Secretary of the YWCA, Harriet Christie (Ontario) became Associate National Secretary of the Student Christian Movement, Betty Foss Stehelin (United Church) was named Executive Secretary of the Missionary Education Department of the United Church, and Margaret Robb (Ontario) became Dean of Residence at the United Church Training School in Toronto. (9)

Although the post-war period did not sustain the expansion of women's role in the public sphere that war

publicists had predicted, it did acknowledge their presence to a greater degree. Particularly for those women who had a solid educational background, years of working experience, and the respect of their male peers -- three attributes which most CGIT officials and numerous leaders possessed -- new opportunities arose. These single women diversified their working experience either by joining the staff of international organizations, as Marion Royce did with the International YWCA, heading denominational schools, as Constance Young did at Alma College in St. Thomas, Ontario, or joining missionary enterprises, like Nina Yeomans who accompanied the Canadian "Relief to China" team and then became Executive Secretary of the Community Vacation Church Schools of Greater Toronto. (10)

Within the CGIT, there were few women who remained, or for that matter came forth, to fill the key positions now available on the movement's executive. As a consequence, CGIT work became the responsibility of the few remaining church workers, young girls just graduating from the ranks, and those older women who now considered girls' work an acceptable form of denominational work.

Of this new group of CGIT leaders, mothers represented the most stable source of volunteers. While for many young

women leading a group was a temporary occupation, it became a serious endeavour for older ones. They were committed to church work. But even though they considered the CGII a religious organization, many were not aware of its particular educational and spiritual goals. They were familiar only with the Sunday School portion of their activities, the fun projects and the annual Mother and Daughter Banquet at which they might have been a guest. To make the work easier for them, officials structured the CGII programme more so as not to deprive girls of some aspects of CGII life and to keep mothers from using a more traditional curriculum. That was how the Girl Guides functioned and the CGII followed suit. The chevron system, which set prescribed goals, was put to greater use, more literature was provided, and officials supervised groups more closely.

Unfortunately, however, it seems that the new leaders rarely met the expectations placed upon them. The following opinion, volunteered by the Alberta Girls' Work Secretary in 1949, is echoed throughout the period by other members of the National Executive:

The major problem in Alberta as elsewhere is that of securing consecrated leadership. The standards of group life seem to be lower than formerly, although key girls are still the true embodiment of their purpose. Seemingly our movement will not come into its own again, until leaders can be challenged to take time to

become better trained. (11)

Since most leaders had never held a teaching position before, or a higher church office, sharing their personal spiritual beliefs and those of the denomination was not easy. Leading a group thus became a complicated task where one was forced to put into words and actions concepts that were undefined and often emotional.

Deprived of those leaders and secretaries who possessed a wider vision of religious education, the CGIT realigned itself with the more traditional arm of the Protestant churches. And, as society became increasingly secularized, it retreated into the religious realm. All aspects of CGIT work were now explained in purely religious terms. The CGIT purpose, for instance, was stated in the following fashion:

C.G.I.T. is based upon the Christian principle of the essential worth of human personality. Therefore, the leader expresses her purpose in terms of helping the girls to develop in Christian character, and in commitment to God. C.G.I.T. helps the girls to understand the significance of Jesus and to work, play and worship in a group within the Church. (12)

Intellectual, social, cultural or physical activities could not be undertaken for their intrinsic value. Their results in religious terms (ie. the congregation had to benefit from them) had to be clear to leaders, girls and sponsors alike.

Pressed to redefine itself by the growing number of organizations competing for the same constituency and an expanded school curriculum which introduced extra-curricular activities, the CGIT had to depend on the specificities of its programme. In confronting the YWCA, the Inter-School Christian Fellowship, the Girl Guides, the Young People's societies and others, the movement declared its singularity in spiritualism. There were two vital tasks left to church groups: complementing the school system where weaknesses appeared and re-emphasizing religious aspects.

In accepting the fact that many of the earlier responsibilities of the CGIT had been relinquished to others, The Torch rationalized that

In many specialized fields, such as education for women, child welfare, medical services and literacy, the Church has set the pace first, and carried on until some secular agency was ready to take over and it could move on to another emergency area. (13)

The few "emergency areas" left for the CGIT to work in were homemaking skills, craftmaking, certain aspects of health education not provided by the schools, particularly in the area of sex education, and in vocational guidance.

Leaving to others the task of nurturing educational,

social, intellectual and most good health values, the CGIT limited itself to one major goal: the promotion of religious ideals and practices among young girls. The CGIT's new orientation was widely publicized by its officials, and disseminated faithfully by The Torch. The National Chairman, Margaret Govan, urged leaders to consider that

it [CGIT] shares with the Sunday School the purpose of winning members for the church. In other words your ultimate purpose as a leader of a church group is that the group come to share your faith in God the Father...in Jesus Christ...and in His Church. This is not to increase statistics. It is to give a girl the only security that she can ever have, a real purpose for living, the opportunity to fulfil her life. Her choosing to become a church member is her signature to this contract with God. (14)

By limiting group activities to the confines of church life, officials adhered exclusively to a conventional form of religious action. Members were no longer free to determine their own path to higher Christian life but instead were assigned a specific programme of worship, Bible readings, mission and charity work. Previously, a girl's intellectual, social and physical growth had been considered a step towards achieving Christian ideals; now, this goal could only be reached if it ultimately resulted in church membership or church work. Living the "fourfold life" was not acceptable for CGIT members if it was not linked to the life of their own denomination.

The preoccupation with church membership overshadowed all other aspects of the CGIT. Leaders were lectured on their role as recruiter for their denomination. They were reminded that

A C.G.I.T. department, which does not present candidates for church membership regularly is failing in one very important phase of its activities. (15)

or

Nominal church membership is one of the great weaknesses of the Church. Then there are those who feel that they can be Christians outside the fellowship of the Church. They make substitutes in fraternal societies, and Service clubs. Good works are not enough. (16)

The recruitment of new church members was an ambitious endeavour. In an article entitled "Enlisting Girls as Church Members," for instance, the author suggested a confrontational technique. By way of personal interviews leaders were to interrogate members on this issue. As he advised

Don't be mysterious or emotional. Be practical, even business-like... Avoid the temptation to be over-endearing. (17)

The "business" of Christianity required good salesmanship in which leaders, because of their privileged position with young girls, could succeed.

The CGIT's new emphasis on a narrow definition of

religious education was partly the result of previous failures in the same area. By the late 1930s, some members of the executive were already complaining about the movement's lack of commitment to church interests. And while it may have been argued that the activities undertaken by groups did serve Christian purposes, the fact remained that on the average they did not result in increased church membership, vocations, and mission work. More often than not, there were few differences between the CGIT group and any other dramatic society, handicraft club or outdoor group.

One of the more vocal advocates of the change of emphasis was Harriet Christie, the Ontario Girls' Work Secretary from 1938 to 1943. In her annual reports, as well as her contributions to The Torch, she constantly denounced the lack of religious commitment on the part of leaders. Christie called for the development of the programme's "uniqueness" as a solution to existing recruitment problems. By emphasizing its religious aspects, she believed that the CGIT could emerge from the lethargy it now found itself in as other movements invaded its constituency. (18)

Responding to such concerns, The Torch changed accordingly. After 1945, it became increasingly concerned with religious themes. (19) Articles invited leaders and

girls to participate in the public life of their congregation. The groups could undertake Bible readings related to church services or upcoming religious events, take part in worship activities and seasonal church services, present the annual Vesper Service(20), or even serve at church teas and suppers. And in the field of missions, they could work on a mission project provided by the congregation's WMS. This curriculum was not intended to make girls reflect on religious doctrine and their personal beliefs; it was meant to integrate them with the rest of the church community early, in the hope that they would develop a sense of belonging that would eventually lead to church membership.

Out of this rejuvenated religious context there also arose a desire for greater moral control over members. Numerous officials, were convinced that

We are living in a generation which is losing its ability to blush and which has little or no sense of shame...We must tell them [adolescents] that clean thinking is necessary, (21)

They therefore urged parents, particularly mothers, to take a more active role in the education of their children by getting involved in church youth groups. This policy was promoted particularly in "busy" metropolitan areas, where mothers tended to be "sufficiently satisfied to know that

their daughter spend [sic] one evening a week at the church." (22) Mothers could be asked to host weekly meetings, attend the annual Mother-Daughter Banquet, participate in a public worship service, meet regularly with the leader, or teach a special skill to the group. (23)

There were certain pre-war elements of CGIT which survived the shift to greater religious emphasis. The summer camps, for instance, remained the CGIT's most successful activity and the executive was reluctant to tamper with it. The camps continued to grow; they were held in all parts of the country and attracted a substantial number of girls. In 1940, 5,444 girls (out of a possible 36,304) attended 115 Girls' Camps (24); in 1950, 5,982 (out of a possible 27,576) attended 109 camps. (25) For those who aspired to church work, there were also leadership camps which provided a more complete programme of formation in girls' work.

The camp programme reached a climax in 1952 when the National CGIT Committee organized the First National Camp for CGLI members. Sixty-four girls selected by the denominational and provincial executives were invited to Skeleton Lake, near Huntsville, Ontario, for twelve days of personal and group self-evaluation. During their stay, they were encouraged to share in the planning of policy and

programme of the CGIT, to appreciate its national character by meeting the other participants, to share in the enthusiasm generated from all regions of Canada, and to learn from the expert leadership training provided. (26) The campers also benefited from outdoor activities, Bible Study, talks from overseas guests and open forums about the place of the CGIT in every girl's life. Finally, they discussed the many problems facing the movement, from lack of interest in worship, to the "senior" problem, the weaknesses of leaders and the unpopularity of the uniform. In the history of the CGIT, the National Camp was considered a great success because it resulted in renewed enthusiasm for the movement from all those who participated.

Other elements of the CGIT programme survived the change of emphasis by becoming relevant to a particular religious theme. Democratic work is one such example. After the Second World War, as the Protestant churches continued to promote certain nationalistic values, CGIT group work was transformed. Officials no longer spoke of it as an educational approach developed by specialists, but as a model for cooperation inspired by the political process. "Democratic work," as group work was now called, was based on the parliamentary system of the great democracies. In The Leader's Book, for instance, the section on the "Group

"Method" explained how what was learned in the CGIT could eventually be transposed to the political and social processes. (27) As the Communist threat loomed over the "free world," religious educators accepted some responsibility for the teaching of democratic values. Asking "Are we Christians as devoted to the spread of our Gospel as the Communists are to the spread of theirs?" they attempted to counter leftist zeal with their own promises of justice, racial equality and better living conditions through the acceptance of the Bible and compatible political action. (28)

The "democratic method of government" became the model for all the CGIT groups. Girls were taught to respect others, accept responsibilities, participate in the decision-making process and the just sharing of privilege. (29) In its section on the functioning of the CGIT group, The Leader's Book claimed that

These little groups will be the nucleus of social consciousness on which a new society can be built where men's higher faculties of love and creative service will have soil to grow... Here the members of the group, so widely different, can learn to live and work together and achieve a fellowship within which creative forces may work. (30)

Democratic group work, as Margaret Govan, the National Chairman, commented, "was simply practical Christianity." (31)

Democratic work in the CGIT was carried through two main activities: discussion groups and service work. And in both, attention was placed on the individual within the group. Leaders were told that they had to realize that "each girl is different from every other girl," (32) and for that reason, they should not be expected to "play the same parts in a social world." (33) Girls were to consider their needs first, and then try to satisfy them within the group, with the option of asking for help from other members whenever solutions could not be found. In this context, the role of the leader consisted of making sure the requirements of the programme were met, and that discipline and self-control were enforced -- for

"discipline" means "learning"--"training". We are inclined to think of it, as restraint exercised upon a person or a group by someone in authority; but it should really be thought of as the developing of an ability within individuals and groups to impose the proper restraints and limitations upon themselves. (34)

While organizers had conveyed this opinion previously in certain aspects of CGIT work, such as co-education, they had not made it universal. Now, the energy of youth was seen as something to be controlled and, to some extent, muted.

Discussion groups were one method used to control the maturation of CGIT members. They helped leaders promote the

development of ideas favourable to CGIT ideals, and prevent hostile ones from infecting the group. The atmosphere of discussion groups was one of amicable exchanges. The members selected a topic of concern to them, shared their ideas, and then tried to arrive at some conclusion about it. The leader was an active participant in such groups. She often selected the topic (or strongly recommended it), and guided the discussion by providing relevant information which could liven the talk or lead to conclusions compatible with CGIT ideals. Because this activity required a certain amount of maturity, it was offered only to seniors. Girls younger than fifteen were not considered to be calm and logical enough to discuss reasonably with others. But senior girls, once they had finished growing, did not need physical outlets for superfluous energy; they could easily discuss the world around them, their own problems and impending adulthood. (35)

The most successful of all discussion groups was the Senior Quiz, added to the CGIT programme in 1944. In introducing the activity, officials were trying to prevent the desertion of older members. Over the years, senior participation had steadily decreased -- often to the advantage of the Student Christian Movement, Young People's and YWCA -- and officials were seriously concerned about it. In Manitoba in 1940, Jean Armstrong, the Girls' Work

Secretary, complained that the "senior problem" is still with us" and that numerous other organizations were coaxing away CGIT members and making "untold demands on the energy of the teen-age girl." (36) The following year Harriet Christie reported that "senior girls are particularly difficult to hold." (37) Statistics prepared for 1942-43 proved them right: only 8,522 girls out of 27,934 members were seniors (excluding Newfoundland). (38)

In an attempt to slow the exodus, older girls were given the option of joining separate groups designed according to their particular needs. Through discussion groups, they could order, from the National Office, quiz packets on a variety of subjects prepared by "specialists." These contained a discussion outline, material to help animate the discussion, and a report form to return to Toronto. Four projects with reports were required for the group to be recognized as a Senior Discussion Group.

The choice of Quiz packets ranged from practical topics such as "Finding the Right Job," "Clocking Your Day," "Fun Packet," to youth sensitive issues like "One Night Stands," "Youth and Alcohol," "Boy Meets Girl," to current events such as "Canada's Race Problem," "Social Services are Here to Stay," "Peace in the Making" and, finally, to religious

questions like "The Story of the Church," "What We Do On Sunday," "What Do We Believe?" Some of these were requested by leaders who wanted the church's advice on specific issues; others fulfilled organizers' opinions of what senior girls should be talking about. The packets usually contained material borrowed from the schools, certain political or social organizations, or the Canadian government. By comparing the sales record, it is obvious that the more conventional issues, such as boy-girl relationships and religious themes sold the most. Current events and social concerns ranked at the bottom. (39) While work in the last two topics could still be undertaken, it was not considered as vital a part of the programme as the other two.

The second aspect of democratic work consisted of applying the principles learned in the group. Service work, mission projects, and vocational planning were the three main activities open to members. During these practical sessions, the girls encountered what little was left of the original plan for total personality development. A girl's intellectual and social growth now restricted itself to choosing a vocation, emancipating herself from parental control, developing a proper attitude towards the opposite sex and accepting responsibilities as a future church member. (40) Gone were the goals of increasing one's

appreciation of the arts, involvement in contemporary social issues, and increasing girls' interest in physical activities that had previously been an important part of CGIT activities.

As the CGIT opted for a more conventional programme of religious education, close to the values of the Protestant churches, it drew even closer to the Women's Missionary Societies. For most CGIT groups, an affiliation ceremony with the WMS and mission projects became major endeavours during the year. (41) For many years, Protestant missionaries had directed their efforts at the Orient. But, as China closed its doors to Christianity and Japan concentrated on post-war nationhood and industrialization, missionary work shifted to the starving masses of India, Africa and, to a lesser extent, the native populations of Canada. In the mission projects, CGIT members learned about the plight of these starving and illiterate peoples, and of the spiritual and material contribution made by missionaries. In the practical part of the project, they usually collected money for mission work or prepared care packages.

After missions, community work was a popular form of CGIT work. Members assisted church women in enterprises such as public hygiene, help to displaced persons, day nurseries,

services for the aging and handicapped, first aid and, for some, it even meant serving dinner to the congregation's Men's Club. These projects had already been selected by officials, leaders or sponsoring organizations. Consequently, groups were channelled into activities which were already well organized and which represented the church's position on feminine volunteer work.

Under the post-war executive's leadership, the CGIT rejoined the feminine sphere of volunteer work. In that and other areas, promoters and leaders returned to Victorian preoccupations about the place of women in society. Motherhood once again became a primary calling for women and consequently training for it took up much space in the programme. Projects on Christian homemaking, cake and candy sales, the confection of afghans and babies' layettes, and courses on home nursing became standard projects. Even during mission projects, the preparation of care packages for needy countries reinforced maternal ideas. Instead of challenging girls to take on a wide range of educational and social activities, the CGIT limited itself to those closely associated with women, requiring little specialized training, and compatible with the skills required for matrimony, motherhood, and feminine volunteer work.

For those unfortunate girls who would not marry, the CGIT recommended the choice of a vocation which would satisfy some of their maternal instincts. After all, every woman possessed those qualities which enabled her to serve, care and convert. Suitable careers were those associated with women, such as nursing and teaching, and usually linked to the welfare aspects of Canadian life. In social work, for instance, there were "openings for working with babies, children, adults and the aged." (42) Girls were warned about the dangers of ambition: the more a woman rose in her profession, the less attractive she became to men because she developed qualities alien to her nature. (43)

Church work was a favourite suggestion as a vocation. To attract more girls to it, leaders urged members to put aside their prejudices about the deaconness, the missionary or the child worker as "someone who wears a black dress and dark stockings, and who has forgotten how to smile." (44) The girls were asked to consider the purposes of God and the needs of the world before choosing a profession. If one could not serve in marriage then she should serve society through God, foregoing salary, working conditions and self-fulfilment.

In ideals, content and spirit, the post-war CGIT

programme differed considerably from that of previous eras. Religious education had taken a new turn, one which disavowed early twentieth century claims that the Protestant churches had an important role to play in all aspects of girls' development and that such development was limitless. And even though promoters still claimed that activities without obvious religious significance should not be abandoned, for to "claim the whole person and the whole life for God" remained their concern, there were few efforts made to encourage such initiatives. (45) The fourfold life had been stripped of its original meaning and officials now spoke of the movement in terms of Games (Cherish Health), Bible Study (Seek Truth), Worship (Know God) and selective Community Service (Serve Others). (46)

But ultimately, even as much as the programme changed, the problems remained the same. Leadership was still considered weak and insufficient, membership was still limited to a small percentage of those eligible for it (47), the movement was still unable to maintain its hold on older members (48) and still had to withstand the pressure from competing organizations. While officials recognized the problems, they appeared unwilling to make the necessary changes. On the question of the uniform, for instance, they stuck by what had become an object of contempt, instead of

introducing something more attractive. The middy was so outmoded that most members refused to wear it or modified it to reflect the latest trends. Also, attempts at promoting the CGIT within the church community and through the media fell on deaf ears.

In its search for answers, the CGIT promoters looked to competing organizations for advice and inspiration. The YWCA in particular was approached for greater cooperation. Over the years, the latter's purpose had become less evangelical and it now concentrated on serving a wider segment of the adolescent community. By the 1940s, the YWCA had added to its Christian teachings educational and recreational progress for girls, a greater awareness of one's role in the community and personality development, citizenship and internationalism. (49) Y officials were attracting the same girls that were already being served by church groups, thus causing hard feelings among CGIT leaders. To alleviate the problem, CGIT officials suggested a return to the original relationship between both movements when the YWCA had been an important sponsor of the CGIT. Then, on another occasion, the CGIT suggested that the YWCA ought to decide on whether it wanted to undertake the specialized task of bringing girls to a knowledge of the Christian faith or whether it wanted to be a community organization providing general services. In

response, Y representatives stated that they did not see the necessity of eliminating certain aspects of their work and that with so many girls with so many needs there was bound to be enough work for all. (50)


To analyze and then deal with these problems, the National Executive in 1955 funded a study project to look into the CGIT's programme materials, compare them with the materials of other teen-age programmes and evaluate their usefulness in helping girls graduate to church membership and related work. (51) The research was conducted by Nancy Holman, a graduate student at the University of Toronto. One thousand questionnaires on programme principles were sent to Leaders and superintendents of the CGIT, the names being selected at random in proportion to provincial and denominational statistics. One hundred and seventy-five individuals responded, out of which one hundred were selected for analysis. Holman also undertook observation and discussion with CGIT groups, presumably all from the Toronto area. (52)

The author and twenty-one other women familiar with the CGIT also evaluated samples of the literature distributed to groups. While they agreed that the material did not lack in quantity, they raised questions about its value in teaching

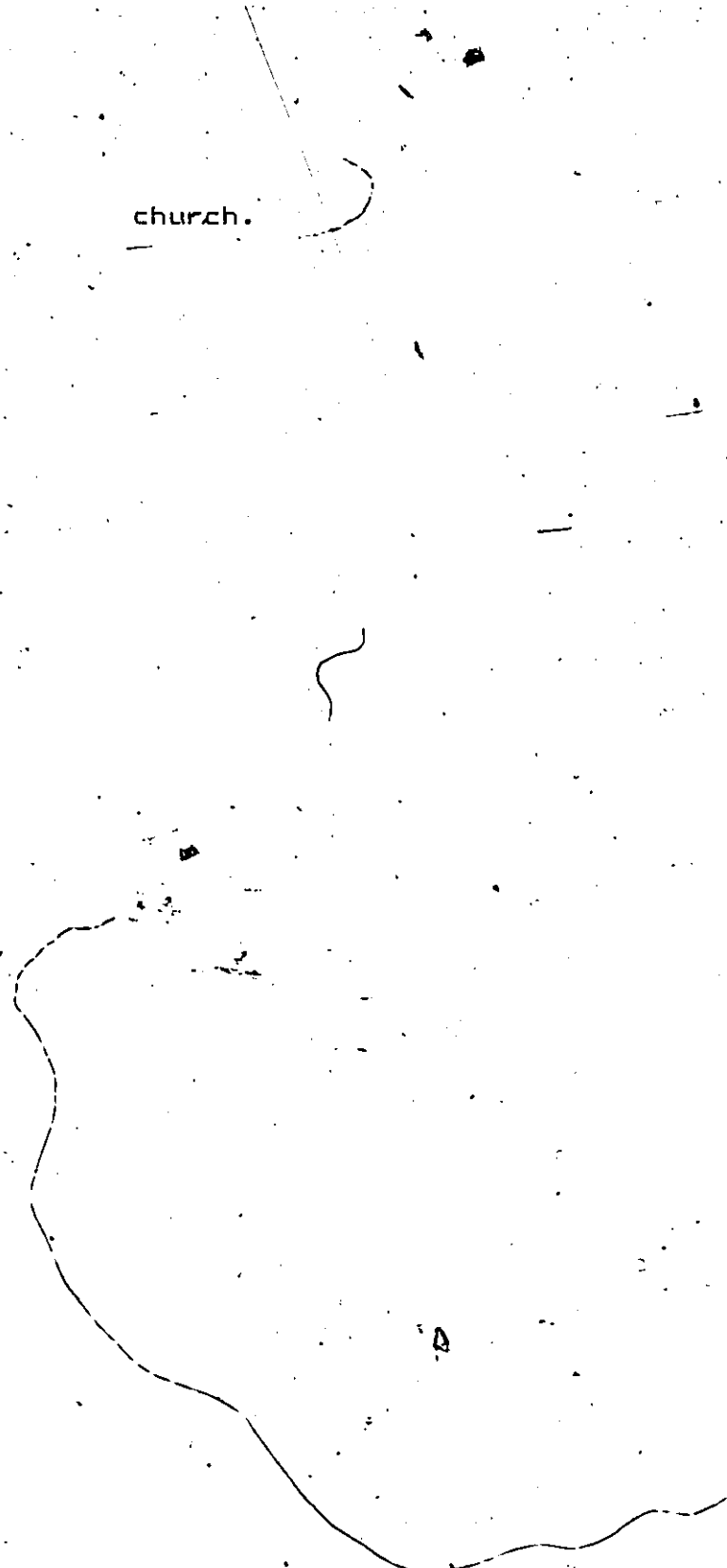
religious education. Even though the CGIT now stressed the religious aspects of its programme, there was little to show for it in recent publications. The religious teaching material closely resembled that of previous years and sometimes went back to pre-CGIT days. Bible Study, for instance, was considered weak, its approach being "historical and factual lacking opportunity for personal religious experience and application of Christian teaching to the lives of the girls." (53) It could be concluded that not much had been achieved in religious education methods since the rise of girls' and boys' work at the beginning of the century. (54)

The study of the programme materials led the author of the project to reflect on much deeper issues such as the principles of the programme, its achievements and its failures. Above all, Holman wondered about the CGIT objectives. From her survey, she realized that only 27% of the respondents identified the movement with some form of Christian development. (55) Then, she questioned the wisdom of having chevrons. (56) Finally, she confirmed leaders' beliefs that work with senior girls was faltering.

Like many officials and leaders, Holman criticized what little was left of the original fourfold programme. In her opinion, character building and the fulfilment of personality

were questionable goals for Christian education or for the CGIT. (57) Her vision of religious education limited itself, as it now did for many, to a programme of familiarization with the gospel which could eventually lead to church membership and vocations. Little of what Holman said was new to CGIT officials and moreover she did not suggest tangible solutions. While the report led to numerous conferences, CGIT promoters remained hesitant on the question of more change. After 1945, they had reduced the movement to one which followed a traditional religious curriculum, a mandate they believed was properly theirs.  doing so, however, they did not solve the existing problems of weak leadership and decreasing membership. The truth of the matter lay in the fact that if the CGIT pursued its perceived spiritual goals, it would always attract fewer girls than would a more general programme like that of the YWCA. A strict programme of religious education in an increasingly secular world could only attract those girls who were considering a church vocation, some form of volunteer work within their congregation, or were pressured into joining by their parents. By 1955, although the CGIT still saw itself as a vital instrument in the socialization of Protestant girls, it had become, in most congregations, a mere extension of other church movements such as the Sunday School and the Women's Missionary Society. It now produced faithful servants of the

church.



## NOTES TO CHAPTER 3

1. See Doris McCarthy, "The C.G.I.T. Purpose To-Day," The Torch 15, No.2 (November-December 1939), p.25; "Christians and the War," Ibid, p.26; "Harriet Christie, "A Leader's Purpose Now," The Torch 18, No.1 (October 1941), pp.3-5; "War-Time Policy," The Torch 18, No.2 (November 1941), p.2; Margaret P. MacVicar, "Christmas in War-Time," Ibid, p.3; "War Service Projects," The Torch 18, No.3 (December 1941), p.2; "Projects for War Time," The Torch 18 No.4 (January 1942), p.7; Ada E. Adams, "Help for the War-Time Nursery School," The Torch 19, No.7 (April 1943), p.3; "Help a Chinese Warphan," The Torch 20, No.1 (October 1943), p.4; and "Keeping Christmas for Europe," The Torch 20, No.3 (December 1943), p.4.
2. See "To the Leaders" and "Christians and the War," The Torch 15, No.2 (November-December 1939), pp.23-4 and 26-7.
3. See "To the Leaders," The Torch 15, No.2 (November-December 1939), pp.23-4; "The C.G.I.T. Purpose To-Day," Ibid, p.25; "A Leader's Purpose Now" The Torch 18, No.1 (October 1941), pp.3-5; and "War-Time Policy," The Torch 18, No.2 (November 1941), p.2.
4. PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 2, file 25, "Annual Meeting, National Girls' Work Board: minutes and reports, 1940," 15 April 1940, Report of the Maritimes Secretary.
5. PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 2, file 6, "Executive Committee," minutes of the meeting of 21 September 1939.
6. McCarthy, Doris, "The C.G.I.T. Purpose To-Day."
7. PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 2, files 25 and 30, "Annual Meeting, National Girls' Work Board: docket of reports," 1940 and 1947.
8. PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 2, file 27, "Annual Meeting, National Girls' Work Board: docket of reports, 1943," 28 April 1943, Report of the Executive Secretary.
9. The Torch 18, No.1 (October 1941), p.5; Ibid, vol.20, No.1 (October 1943), p.7; Ibid, vol. 22, No.1 (October 1945), p.6.
10. Interview with Marion Royce, Toronto, January 1982; "The

- National Secretary's Letter," The Torch 25, No.2(November 1948), p.2; "Miss Nina Yeomans," The Torch 31, No.2(November 1954), p.12.
11. PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 3, file 36, "Annual Meeting, C.G.I.T. Committee: docket of reports, 1949," Report of Girls' Work in Alberta.
  12. NGWB, The Leader's Book, -1944, pp.18-19.
  13. Bonwick, Frances, "Let's Give Out," The Torch 25, No.3(December 1948), p.10.
  14. Govan, Margaret, "Chevron Requirements," The Torch 28, No.7(April 1952), p.8.
  15. Jagoe, Eva, On Being a C.G.I.T. Superintendent, n.d., NGWB of RECC, p.25.
  16. PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 4, file 71, "Girls' Work Committee: minutes, April 1947-December 1949," minutes of the Annual Meeting, 2 May 1949, Record of Discussions, p.6.
  17. Helps, Fred J., "Enlisting Girls as Church Members," The Torch 26, No.6(March 1950), p.3.
  18. See the reports of the Ontario Girls' Work Secretary in PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 2, file 26, "Annual Meeting, National Girls' Work Board: docket of reports, 1941," 22 April 1941 and vol. 2, file 27, "Annual Meeting, National Girls' Work Board: docket of reports, 1943," 22 April 1943.
  19. The percentage of articles dealing with religious issues in The Torch went from 22.74, for 1925-38, to 28.69, for the period 1945-55. (or 266 articles out of 929 as compared with 126 out of 554 for the early years). In comparison, articles dealing with social events, books, and crafts went down from 27.79% in the early period, to 19.30% (or 154 out of 554 as compared with 179 out of 927). Nearly half of all articles for both periods dealt with administrative or leadership aspects of the CGIT (42.4% and 46.2%). The rest of the articles were divided between home, health, camp and vocation issues.
  20. In 1940, the National Vesper Service, an annual religious ceremony, was instituted. It was by accepting contributions from those attending the service that the CGIT was able to build a stable financial foundation.

In 1944-45, for instance, the National Vesper Service accounted for \$4,831.33 out of the \$5,411.89 made during the year. PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 2, file 28, "Annual Meeting, National Girls' Work Board: docket of reports, 1945." With this source of income, organizers were able to plan on a long term basis and introduce programmes requiring an initial output of funds.

21. PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 4, file 71, "Girls' Work Committee: minutes, April 1947-December 1949," minutes of the Annual Meeting, 2 May 1949, Record of Discussions, p.8.
22. Saires, Florence L., "We Are Taking C.G.I.T. Home This Year," p.11.
23. See CGIT Committee, This is C.G.I.T., 1955, pp.17-19; Rebecca Caudill, "On Being A Daughter," The Torch 23, No.3(December 1946), p.7; "Christian Family Week," The Torch 26, No.7(May 1950), p.6; Marguerite Fidler, "How About a Reading List for Parents?" The Torch 27, No.2(November 1950), p.10; and "Mothers Just Aren't Interested!" The Torch 28, No.1(October 1951), p.5.
24. PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 2, file 26, "Annual Meeting," 1941.
25. PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 3, file 35, "Annual Meeting, C.G.I.T. Committee: docket of reports, 1951."
26. PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 3, file 37, "Annual Meeting, C.G.I.T. Committee: docket of reports, 1953," Report of First National C.G.I.T. Camp, p.iv-1a.
27. NGWB, The Leader's Book, 1944, pp.37-39.
28. Whale, Mary, "Make Missions Live!" The Torch 27, No.3(December 1950), p.10.
29. Ibid.
30. NGWB, The Leader's Book, 1944, p.37.
31. Gpvan, Margaret, "Democracy and Your Group," The Torch 23, No.3(December 1946), p.4.
32. NGWB, The Leader's Book, 1944, p.87.
33. Ibid., p.90.

34. CGIT Committee, This is C.G.I.T., Department of Christian Education, Canadian Council of Churches, 1955, Part II, p.59.
35. In a comparison between Seniors and Intermediates in This is C.G.I.T., p.7, the former were said to love serious discussion, games requiring physical and mental skills, gentler songs and the creation of things that need care while the latter were described as energetic ("like to whoop it up"), impatient, volatile and silly. The reasons for such differences still appeared to rest upon Hall's theory of adolescence.
36. PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 1, file 25, "Annual Meeting, 1940," Report of the Manitoba Girls' Work Secretary.
37. PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 2, file 26, "Annual Meeting," Report of the Ontario Girls' Work Secretary.
38. PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 2, file 27, "Annual Meeting, 1943.
39. In 1946-47, out of twenty-five quiz packets offered, the most popular ones were "Fun Packet" (324), "Boy Meets Girl" (275), "Best Foot Forward" (163), and "Getting Along With the Family" (156). The less popular ones were "Is There Work For All?" (3), "That Glorious Company" (20), "Swing and Symphony" (27), and "Community Welfare Is My Business" (28). PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 2, file 31, "Annual Meeting, C.G.I.T. Committee: docket of reports, 1948." Then, in 1955, the most popular quiz packets were "Pathways to Worship" (192), "Boy Meets Girl" (172), "It's Easy When You Know How" (155), and "Getting Along With The Family" (97); the less popular were "French and English Speaking Canada" (1), "Best Foot Forward" (7), "Millions on the Move" (8), and "Peace In The Making" (19). PAC, CGIT Papers, vol.3, file 39, "Annual Meeting, C.G.I.T. Committee: docket of reports, 1955."
40. PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 4, file 71, "Girls' Work Committee: minutes," minutes of the Annual Meeting, 2 May 1949, Record of Discussions, p.10.
41. Affiliation between the CGIT group and the local WMS occurred annually. At a special ceremony, the CGIT leader and her group promised to carry out the annual missionary project provided by the WMS, to share in its work as well as to make a financial contribution to the

- missionary efforts of the congregation. In response, the WMS offered to help the CGIT group by providing the necessary mission study material and supporting it in its endeavours.
42. Govan, Margaret, "Woman Wanted," The Torch 21, No.2 (November 1944), p.3.
  43. Cork, Ella Kendall, A Home of Her Own, p.16.
  44. Tillisch, Jo Anne, "A Career in the Church," The Torch 29, No.4 (January 1953), p.15.
  45. NGWB, The Leader's Book, 1944, p.114.
  46. CGIT Committee, This is C.G.I.T., 1955, p.3.
  47. In 1950-51, for instance, the total membership, always excluding Newfoundland, was 26,712 or 9.32% of those eligible for membership. This number was obtained using Table 7 of the 1951 Census from which the feminine population of Canada between the ages of 10 to 19, belonging to the Baptist, Church of Christ Disciples, Presbyterian and United Churches is listed among others. Percentages were then arrived at using the total CGIT membership for the given year. Canada, Dominion Bureau of Statistics, Ninth Census of Canada: 1951, Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1953. PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 3, file 35, "Annual Meeting, C.G.I.T. Committee: docket of reports, 1951."
  48. For example, in a survey of seniors conducted in 1949, it was discovered that in the United Church, out of 29,000 members, only 6,000 were seniors, or 15 years old and over; in the Presbyterian Church, out of 3,951 members, there were 514 seniors (1,659 girls also belonged to mixed age groups). PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 4, file 75, "Joint Boys' and Girls' Committee: minutes, June 1946-December 1951," minutes of the meeting of 1 March 1949, Survey of Senior Work.
  49. PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 2, file 30, "Annual Meeting, National Girls' Work Board: docket of reports, 1947," 29 April 1947, Younger Membership in Y.W.C.A. In Canada.
  50. PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 2, file 28, "Annual Meeting, National Girls' Work Board: docket of reports, 1945," 24 April 1945, Report On Younger Membership Programme Depart. Of National Council Y.W.C.A.

51. PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 6, file 139, "Study of C.G.I.I. Program: Materials submitted by Nancy Holman to National CGIT Committee: report, 1955," p.1.
52. Ibid.
53. Ibid, p.13.
54. For more on this subject, see Patricia Dirks, "Beyond Family and School."
55. PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 6, file 139, "Study of C.G.I.I. Program."
56. In this she was contradicted by a 1956 survey conducted by the Promotion Committee which revealed that out of 173 answers received, 164 justified the distribution of awards for the following reasons: "they provide a goal (70); they give a balanced programme (50); they give needed recognition (17); they encourage a group spirit (20); they encourage church and Sunday school attendance (19); they are valuable for evaluation or reports (5); they make the girls realize their responsibility to group and community (2); they are a means by which regular members can encourage the laggards (8); they relate the girls to a larger movement (1)." PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 5, file 109, "Promotion Committee: minutes, January 1956-April 1958," minutes of the meeting of 20 February 1956, p.2.
57. PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 6, file 139, "Study of C.G.I.I. Program," pp.39-41.

## Conclusion

Organizations are usually established to correct perceived weaknesses in society. They have as catalyst a need for change and consequently recruit from among those people who feel most threatened by the situation at hand. In the case of women's organizations at the turn of the century, most efforts were directed at correcting situations which were potentially harmful to the home, the environment in which women were most influential. The Women's Christian Temperance Union, for instance, believed that the eradication of alcohol would save children by restoring religion and morality to its proper place in society; the Women's Missionary Society, for its part, promoted the extension of Christianity as a way of improving the world in which their children lived. But goals such as these are sensitive to change, and for this reason organizations can lose their relevance if they do not adapt to the society in which they are active. A good example of this is the Big Sisters' Association which over the years changed its goal from the guidance of wayward women to the care of motherless or disadvantaged girls. While in many instances the transformation may be radical, it does ensure the survival of an administrative structure which took years to develop.

The history of the Canadian Girls In Training illustrates well how the passage of time exerts pressure on a movement's ideology and work. At first, the CGIT was established to fill a void in the educational needs of young girls. Like the boys' programme which preceded it, it was supposed to complement the young people's formal education in areas beyond the realm of the schools, such as religion, health, sports, art, and social manners. It also complemented the Sunday Schools and replaced girls' organizations established by women's groups such as the WCTU and the WMS. The most notable aspect of the CGIT was that it stressed training as a learning method. Adolescent girls had an opportunity to practice what was taught under the benevolent eye of an older sympathetic member of the group.

In its early years, the CGIT played an important role in the education of Protestant girls. Founded at a time when there were few organizations which catered to the general educational needs of girls, the movement offered an innovative programme of growth aimed at preparing members for active adulthood in the private and public spheres. For those girls who joined, there were opportunities to acquire knowledge and skills in areas that had previously been denied to women. In addition to worship, Bible and mission courses, the CGIT had girls taking part in cultural, political,

educational and leisure activities that widened their range of interest. It also showed them how to run meetings, organize their work, and cooperate with one another.

The young women who first served on the executive of the movement were responsible for these achievements. Through the CGIT, they introduced new methods of educating young girls in the work of the Protestant churches. These methods had been borrowed from the "new education," the social gospel and Canadian nationalism. Furthermore, it does seem that women like Winnifred Thomas, Marion Royce, and Jessie Macpherson possessed strong and attractive personalities which made them very popular with leaders and girls alike. They also represented a new image of Canadian womanhood: they were young educated professionals who showed that they could function within the male-dominated church hierarchy. (1) For girls growing up under such leadership, the incentive to do the same must have been strong.

The National Executive depended on the women who were active at the congregational level for the diffusion of the CGIT's image as a forward-looking organization. Consequently, it recruited volunteer leaders, who most represented this ideal. It found such people notably among women teachers, by far the largest single group of educated

women whose work took them to all regions of the country. Moreover, school work and the CGIT were compatible activities. A school teacher could easily extend her lessons to the Sunday School and the midweek meeting. Through leadership courses in Normal Schools, CGIT promoters successfully recruited women graduates for their programme.

Because of the influence these women had on the movement, the CGIT projected a vision of feminine adolescence far in advance of the school, the Girl Guides, or other such organizations. It rejected traditional ideas that adolescent girls should receive a formation aimed at making them better mothers. Members were encouraged to seek other avenues of service, to consider the immensity of a Christian's duty in the society in which she lived. This could be accomplished through various forms of community work, by being aware of current events, and by developing personal qualities. The CGIT member, because she worked hard at being healthy, knowledgeable, and pleasant, was an asset to her family, her school, her congregation, and her community.

But as society changed, so did the CGIT. The 1930s witnessed the introduction of the "new education" into the provincial school curriculum and the growth of secular youth organizations. These developments deprived the CGIT of much

of its original appeal. At the same time, various denominations expressed a renewed interest in educational programmes that would result in more church members and more religious vocations; such activity further hindered the efforts of those CGIT promoters interested in an all-encompassing programme of personal development. Eventually, the CGIT executive was replaced by church workers who were considerably more sensitive to the preoccupations of their church. During the decade after the end of the Second World War, they tried to implement a narrower version of the original fourfold development programme based on religious teachings and church service.

Within this new context, concern over the quality of leadership provided by the CGIT increased. The success of the movement had always depended on the competence of its leaders. They were the ones who organized the groups, motivated the girls, introduced the themes to be studied, and represented the CGIT before the rest of the congregation. It was thus essential that leadership standards be high; yet it was difficult to provide leaders for all groups and maintain these standards. As society brought with it other forms of both volunteer and paid work for women, first rate leaders were increasingly hard to find. Through general leadership courses, CGIT promoters tried to make CGIT work more

accessible to more women. It offered to train leaders who in turn would train girls.

The leadership training programme developed by the CGIT was an ambitious one. It attempted to provide untrained leaders (usually mothers) and prospective leaders (usually senior CGIT members) with knowledge and methods to help them build a sound programme with an emphasis on the participants' religious commitment. It also taught students to balance religion with leisure activities so as to attract more girls to the CGIT. Unfortunately, however, these courses were offered at summer camps, weekend rallies, or at night classes, making it hard for women with work, family or school responsibilities to attend. Eventually, correspondence courses solved part of the problem but it was still hard for some women to find time to add courses to their daily responsibilities and CGIT work.

Occasional comments from the Secretaries reveal that leaders often did not understand the meaning of a fourfold, flexible, development programme. Even after the shift, following the Second World War, to a more traditional form of religious education these concerns were regularly raised, thus indicating that the purely religious aspects of the programme may not have been adequately taught either. For

many, the CGIT consisted of an extension of the Sunday School or a fun group. Group leaders who allowed that to happen were likely those who had little formal education and who did not attend the leadership training courses. It might have been best, then, to restrict the number of CGIT groups to those with qualified leaders. That the CGIT did not do so, only made it harder to control the content and quality of what was being taught in the various groups.

A greater problem with the CGIT programme throughout the period studied, and one which caused considerable concern among the executive, was that adolescent girls did not seem to consider religion an important aspect of their lives. They were more interested in learning new skills, meeting boys, having friends, going to camp, knowing how to dress well, or even wearing makeup. Religion was something they had to be coerced into contemplating. From the early days of the movement, leaders had to be reminded constantly that religious teachings should make up a fair portion of the year's activities. When separate meetings devoted to religion failed, officials tried to integrate with the other activities. But even then, it seems that the religious purpose of the CGIT was lost on most members.

The CGIT succeeded in winning girls over to religious

classes only when it integrated them with more popular activities. Summer camps are a good example. From the camp reports and the attendance statistics, it is clear that organizers had no trouble getting girls to register for camp. At the site, the girls had the chance to "rough it" for a few weeks. Many camps also tried to imitate the early lifestyle of the native populations of Canada by dressing girls like Indians, living around the campfire, singing native songs, and learning native games and crafts. This was most exciting for young city girls. Into this lively atmosphere, CGIT leaders introduced special religious ceremonies compatible with outdoor life. Singing hymns by the campfire, finding a secret place in the woods to read the Bible, or having an outdoor church service was bound to make an impression on the campers.

But even if the CGIT's religious courses had succeeded in increasing members' religious commitment, it would still have been hard for the movement to make a substantial impact on Protestant girls when only 30 or so percent of them ever belonged to it. Furthermore, the movement was particularly structured to meet the needs of adolescent girls growing up in urban, middle-class, English Canada. Since its promotion was carried out mostly through the Sunday Schools, most of its members came from families of church-goers. Instead of

recruiting among those who did not attend church, so as to increase the number of prospective church members, officials chose to ensure the maintenance of a stable Protestant religious tradition in Canada.

Faced with constant promotional problems, and then competition from other organizations, CGIT promoters struggled with their desire to increase membership while fulfilling their mandate. Particularly during periods when the denominations showed some concern about the orientation of the programme, officials and leaders had trouble reconciling how both goals could be achieved. At the heart of the problem lay the issue of "complete personality development," a term widely used to describe the CGIT programme. Ideal girlhood, according to the CGIT, varied with the social and religious context. At times -- particularly when the Protestant churches were engaged in various social debates -- the potential girls had to become instruments of social change was fully exploited. During those years, a feminine movement which promoted social activism also encouraged the advancement of women by adding other responsibilities to their maternal ones. But these endeavours would only be tolerated as long as efforts to increase church membership and religious vocations also succeeded. In the case of the CGIT this did not necessarily

happen and the executive eventually had to face the problem.

The study project undertaken by Nancy Holman in 1955 is interesting in that it reveals that by that time the CGIT could no longer afford a total development programme. While promoters and leaders had been busy pushing girls into various other activities, they had neglected their religious responsibilities. The quality of the worship material proved it: it was described as "inadequate in arousing a sense of enthusiasm in the leader to learn more about the Bible and to communicate this knowledge to the girls." (2) Obviously, many of the earlier officials had preferred a form of religion based on social action and cooperation between individuals, and had consequently neglected to adapt the programme to various theological trends. By the 1950s, the CGIT executive could no longer ignore the cry, which had been heard occasionally before, that the CGIT should teach conventional religious education because a programme based on total development was not compatible with its true mandate.

By 1955, thus, the images of Protestant girlhood transmitted by the CGIT were certainly more conservative than the earlier ones. The programme simply attempted to prepare girls for marriage and maternity or for suitable occupations within a religious framework. This, after all, would be the

fate of most girls to whom the programme was offered. But in doing so, the movement ignored the trend towards better education for women and greater female participation in the work place that persisted during those years. Instead of innovating in the field of feminine education as it had done in the inter-war years, it retreated to less controversial grounds. For a religious organization to do so, was to limit its appeal even further.

## NOTES TO THE CONCLUSION

1. It is interesting to compare the role and image of CGIT workers with that of the deaconesses as described in John D. Thomas' article "Servants of the Church: Canadian Methodist Deaconess Work, 1890-1926," Canadian Historical Review 65, No.3 (September 1984), pp.371-395.
2. PAC, CGIT Papers, vol. 6, file 139, "Study of C.G.I.T. Program: Materials submitted by Nancy Holman to National CGIT Committee: report, 1955," p.13.

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