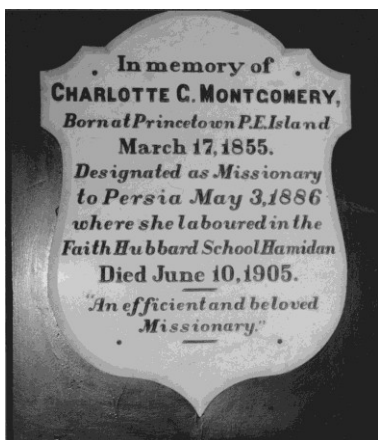


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Annie and Charlotte Montgomery: Teachers and Evangelists in Persia

Jack C. Whytock

Several years ago when I was leading a bus tour group, we stopped to see the Princetown United Church in Malpeque (formerly called Princetown), Prince Edward Island. On the wall was a memorial plaque to Charlotte G. Montgomery, “Missionary to Persia.” It was because of this plaque that I set out on a trail to find out who this Montgomery lady was who went to Persia. This paper contains the findings from that trail of discovery which is still ongoing and just keeps becoming more and more interesting each year.¹



The first discovery that amazed me was that there were actually three Island women who went to work as missionaries in Persia (modern Iran) in the nineteenth century: Miss Annie Montgomery of Malpeque in 1882; Miss Charlotte Geddie Montgomery, also of Malpeque, in 1886; and Miss Adeline Hunter of Alberton in 1889.² Together these three women gave fifty-seven years of cumulative missionary service as educators in Persia. Since Annie was the longest serving of the three (thirty-five years) and also the first to go, she will receive the

bulk of my focus in this paper. (I will only give a side note on Adeline Hunter.) I will present the case that as missionaries the Island Montgomery sisters combined education and evangelism as the two key components of their missionary work. In so doing, they are highly representative of single female missionaries in Protestant missions in the second half of the nineteenth century. The time period covered is c.1881–1917. This supports the assertion of Ruth Compton Brouwer (and others) that for Canada the era of most vitality for evangelical Protestants in foreign missions was the last quarter of the nineteenth century basically through to the First World War.³

¹ This “trail” took me to spend one week in 2010 researching in the archives of the Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia, PA, and I express my appreciation to the staff there for their excellent assistance. Also thanks to many “Islanders” who have spurred me along on the trail.

² I believe a local Malpeque history wrongly identifies Miss Melissa (Mabel) Manderson from Malpeque as a “Missionary to Persia” and a “Medical Missionary to China.” All records indicate only China and that there was no connection ever with Persia. See Malpeque Historical Society, *Malpeque and Its People* (N.p.: n.p., 1982) 81. There is no evidence whatsoever in the holdings of the Presbyterian Historical Society of Miss Manderson and the Persian mission. Mabel Melissa Manderson, M.D. served with the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, United States of America in Peking [Beijing], China at Union Medical College, Union Training School for Nurses, and the Sleeper Davis Hospital. See *Year Book Woman's Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1919* (Boston: Women's Foreign Missionary Society, Methodist Episcopal Church, 1919) 66. A special word of thanks to Dr. Earle Lockerby for pointing out this source. This does raise need for more research about another woman from the Malpeque area who served through an American missionary agency.

³ Ruth Compton Brouwer, *New Women for God: Canadian Presbyterian Women and India Missions, 1876-*

Thus this paper's time focus fits perfectly with the great era of foreign missionary work undertaken by evangelical Protestant churches.

The Montgomery Sisters

Today the immediate question which comes to mind is, "Were Annie and Charlotte related to Lucy Maud Montgomery?" The answer is yes, Annie and Charlotte were first cousins to Lucy Maud's father, thus first cousins once removed to Lucy.⁴ In one of Lucy Maud's stories, there is a reference to a cat from Persia brought back by a male missionary.⁵ I am convinced that Lucy Maud's imagination was inspired by her missionary cousins. I quote from *Further Chronicles of Avonlea*: "It had been presented to her [Aunt Cynthia] when a kitten by a missionary nephew who had brought it all the way home [Prince Edward Island] from Persia [. . .]"⁶

The three gravestones along the road in the Princetown Cemetery make the story quite tangible for the genealogist. Charlotte and Annie's grandparents were Donald and Nancy (Penman) Montgomery [stone #1]; Charlotte and Annie's parents were James Townsend Montgomery and Rose (McCary) Montgomery [stone #2]; and then follows stone #3, the daughter and granddaughter, Charlotte Geddie Montgomery.

Both Annie and Charlotte were born in Malpeque: Annie in 1847 and Charlotte in 1855. They attended the Fanning Grammar School in Malpeque and then the Normal School in Charlottetown before its amalgamation with the Prince of Wales College. I have not been able to confirm in which school Miss Annie first taught, but in 1878 she was on the staff of the Normal School in Charlottetown as the Model Teacher.⁷ John Harper's report for the "Provincial Normal School, 1878" includes this description:

During the year several changes have been made in the organization of the [Normal] School the appointment of Miss Annie Montgomery to the position of Preceptress, as an addition to the staff of instructors, having enabled me to arrange the work of instruction into three departments, corresponding to some extent with the district grades of Licences. I take this opportunity of testifying to the zeal and industry with which Miss Montgomery has conducted her classes [. . .].⁸

It appears Miss Annie was the first female to be on staff, hence the feminine title "Preceptress"; one cannot also help but wonder if Mr. Harper's report is also defending having a female instructor on staff in the Normal School. Miss Annie was also on staff in 1879, when the amalgamation of the Normal School with Prince of Wales occurred. Whether Annie taught more than two years in the Normal School appears uncertain. From the Normal School, she went to teach at the Davies (sometimes spelled "Davis") (High) School in Summerside, and this was her

1914 (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1990) 4.

⁴ Malpeque Historical Society, *Malpeque And Its People – Volume II: 1700-1999* (Malpeque, PE: Malpeque Historical Society, 2000) 59-61, 18c.

⁵ Lucy Maud Montgomery, "Aunt Cynthia's Persian Cat," *Further Chronicles of Avonlea* (1920; London: Harrap, 1979) 7-19.

⁶ Montgomery 7-8.

⁷ Marian Bruce, *A Century of Excellence: Prince of Wales College, 1860-1969* (Charlottetown, PE: Island Studies Press/PWC Alumni Association, 2005) 231.

⁸ John Harper, "Provincial Normal School Report," *Report of the Provincial Auditor on the Public Accounts of the Province of PEI for the Year 1878* (Charlottetown: Coombs and Worth, 1879).

last place of Island employment before going to Persia. The Davies School opened in 1879, so she likely taught two years there (1880–1882).⁹

From my assessment of reports to date, I have concluded that while Miss Annie was Preceptress at the Normal School, her sister Miss Charlotte G. obtained her second class license in 1878 at the Normal School and then went to Summerside to teach in 1879. Prior to this, Miss Charlotte G. had taught for a year at Fanning Grammar School in the Lower Division, which would have been a third class license.¹⁰ The conclusion becomes obvious—these two Montgomery sisters were in the elite category of female educators on Prince Edward Island in the late 1870s.

The logical question then must be asked, “Why would these two Montgomery women, who appear to have been solidly entrenched in the educational work of Prince Edward Island, go to Persia?” There is a whole cluster of reasons. The church environment of these two women was an atmosphere of global missions concern. For Presbyterians on the Island, Malpeque (Princetown), New London, and Alberton were key centres for the missionary enterprise. The garden of foreign missions had been well watered in these areas through Rev. John Keir, Rev. Edward Pidgeon, Rev. John and Charlotte Geddie, and the Gordon martyrs.¹¹ The seeds of missionary enterprise had been planted here early, with roots of inspiration going back to the London Missionary Society’s adventurous annals and the establishment in Princetown of one of the earliest women’s missionary societies in all of Canada.¹² The great Presbyterian field of the 1880s, the New Hebrides (Vanuatu) in the South Pacific, was now much more mature and also much more influenced by Australia than by Canada.

A very significant factor was the Maritime connection with America. Annie and Charlotte would have been abreast of the foreign Presbyterian missionary fields conducted by American Presbyterians. They had family in Iowa and Massachusetts, and there was a healthy exchange of news about mission fields and needs from the Presbyterians to the south into Canada.¹³ Brouwer’s work here clearly establishes the triangular flow—Britain, America, Canada—with America being far more influential than we have often given credit for this great

⁹ Marjorie McCallum Gay, ed., *Roads to Summerside, The Story of Early Summerside and the Surrounding Area* (N.p.: n.p., 1980) 99. Annie Montgomery’s sister Christie L. had taught in the Summerside Grammar School in 1878 and then appears to have transferred over to the new Davies (High) School in 1879. She was one of the first teachers in that new school. See Harper’s 1878 “Report” and compare this to the list of the first teachers for the Davies High School found in Gay, *Roads to Summerside* 99.

¹⁰ *Malpeque and Its People* (1982) 124.

¹¹ There is a fascinating genealogical family connection which could be explored here as well, because Mary Montgomery married Rev. Pidgeon. See “The Montgomerys of PEI,” File 1 of 2, at the Prince Edward Island Public Archives and Records Office, Charlottetown.

¹² I will not rehearse all this mission’s history here, tracing the lines back to Rev. Pidgeon and the London Missionary Society and through to the emergence of a strong women’s missionary society work in many of these communities. Some of the lines are interesting but hard to assess the full level of impact in concrete terms. For example, Charlotte and Annie’s maternal grandfather (Rev. John McCary) was supposedly one of the first Methodist missionaries to Newfoundland. I have not been able to verify this genealogically beyond “The Montgomerys of PEI,” File 1 of 2, at the Prince Edward Island Public Archives and Records Office, Charlottetown.

¹³ Annie and Charlotte Montgomery’s sister Christie (Christiana) married James Gordon, and they lived in Malden, Massachusetts. Annie did visit Malden and also Iowa in 1909 when home on furlough. Iowa was home for her sister Margaret (Nancy) Montgomery, who had married Donald Montgomery. They resided in Ireton, Iowa, and the Hon. Donald was an early pioneer of northwest Iowa.

era of Canadian foreign missionary endeavour. Two Canadian Presbyterian women had already gone to India to work with the American Presbyterian mission board. India would remain popular, but for American Presbyterians in the 1870s and 1880s, another field which received much attention and interest was Persia. It was also a field where educational mission was a central plank of the work, and single female teachers were needed to continue to expand the work. Thus it may strike us as odd today—why Persia? But given the context of these women, the circles in which they grew up, and the precedents of others in Canada, coupled with close family ties to the States, it is quite logical. American Presbyterians have had a long interest in Persia dating back to the 1830s with the American Board of Foreign Commissioners and then the 1870s as their own organized field under the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America.¹⁴

There is another important factor to be stressed: this was the era of single female missionaries.¹⁵ The era immediately before this had far fewer single females. One will often see that there are more women than men in the missionary group photos of many stations.¹⁶ Many of these women in the 1870s and 1880s were single and were undertaking pioneering mission work often through education. The Montgomery sisters were actually riding on the crest of that great wave of single female missionaries.

Hamadan, Persia

Miss Annie went to the central Persian city of Hamadan in 1882. Geographically it lies about half way between Baghdad and Tehran. Hamadan of 1882 was quite a contrast to Prince Edward Island. Culturally and linguistically it had a fascinating mix. There were Persians who spoke Farsi and who were predominately Muslim yet from a variety of tribal groups. There were Assyrians who spoke a dialect of Aramaic and many of these were either Orthodox or Nestorian. There were Armenians who spoke Armenian and had been brought from Eastern Turkey to Persia by the Persians, many of whom were Orthodox. There were Jews who spoke Farsi on the street and Hebrew in their homes and in worship. There were Medes or Kurds, a smaller ethnic enclave distinct from the Persian Muslims. Hamadan was the place which claimed the tombs of Queen Esther and her uncle Mordecai and from whence the great Jewish Feast of Purim originated. What a city for the Island teachers to enter! Hamadan then and even today was known for its great Persian carpets and had its own distinctive carpet traditions.¹⁷ It was an area where there were social challenges that the Island teachers would encounter: women were

¹⁴ *The Forty-Fourth Annual Report of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America [P.C.U.S.A.] (1881)* (New York: Mission House, 1881) 42.

¹⁵ See a work which has now become a standard in this field: Ruth A. Tucker, *Guardians of the Great Commission: The Story of Women in Modern Missions* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1988) and also Ruth A. Tucker and Walter Liefeld, *Daughters of the Church: Women and Ministry from New Testament Times to the Present* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1987). See also Dana L. Robert, *American Women in Mission: A Social History of Their Thought and Practice* (Macon, GA: Mercer UP, 1997).

¹⁶ In the Hamadan Missionary Group photo of April 1889, the statistics are five women and three men. (Image held by the Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia as RG116, “Iran Photos.”)

¹⁷ One of these Persian Hamadan carpets is in the Anne of Green Gables Museum at Park Corner, Prince Edward Island together with other items such as Persian money, a vase, spoon, beads and craftwork. Viewed by the author 1 July 2010 at Park Corner, PEI. Special thanks to Pam Campbell for allowing me to examine each of these Persian items brought back to PEI by the Montgomery sisters (we believe by Annie in particular on her furlough of 1908 and the dedication service that year) and now belonging to this museum.

discouraged by many from learning to read; the wine industry of the Jews, Armenians, and Assyrians created various social issues; and there were new social customs on arranged child marriages. And what a cold city Hamadan could be. It has been described as the coldest city in all of Persia with heavy snowfalls in winter. Adeline Hunter, in her application to the Board of Foreign Missions PCUSA in New York, said she believed that weather on PEI prepared her for Persia. Perhaps it really did! What a place Hamadan was—the ancient capital of the Medes, the place Alexander the Great (Ezra 4:2) came and conquered (Ecbatan), one of the world’s oldest continuously inhabited cities—quite a contrast to Princetown (Malpeque), Prince Edward Island.

The Presbyterian mission in Hamadan built upon the work of colporteurs who came there in the 1870s. In 1881 the first residential Presbyterian missionary began work in Hamadan. This was Rev. James W. Hawkes, who established a boys school.¹⁸ (The period of 1881–82 was also the time of a localized awakening amongst many Jews of Hamadan.)¹⁹ The next year Miss Annie arrived, and the title “the foundress of girls’ education in Hamadan” was accorded her because of her pioneering educational work. She immediately established a girls school which initially was for Armenian and Jewish girls. In 1882 Miss Annie started with twenty students, by 1884 she had forty-eight students, by 1886 seventy-two, and by 1888 ninety-three, sixty-five of whom were day students and twenty-eight boarding students.²⁰ Also by then a change had occurred as there were now several Persian Muslim girls in the school as well.²¹ The school eventually was named the Faith Hubbard School.²² It reached over one-hundred students in the 1890s with 104 students in 1892 and 121 in 1900.²³ In 1912 the reports show 108 students at the Faith Hubbard School in Hamadan plus another twenty-four in the branch school in Sheverine.²⁴ We need to pause to consider three facts. First, though the school which Annie founded was a girls school, it was not just for girls as small boys also attended before they were transferred into Rev. Hawkes’ Boys’ School.²⁵ Next, Faith Hubbard School, Hamadan also established “branch schools” in the

¹⁸ Arthur Judson Brown, *One Hundred Years: A History of the Foreign Missionary Work of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., With Some Account of Countries, Peoples and the Policies and Problems of Modern Missions* (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1936) 505.

¹⁹ *The Forty-Fifth Annual Report of the Boards of Foreign Missions of the PCUSA (1882)* (New York: Mission House, 1882) 58.

²⁰ *The Forty-Seventh Annual Report of the Board of Foreign Missions of the PCUSA (1884)* (New York: Mission House, 1884) 71; *The Forty-Ninth Annual Report of the Board of Foreign Missions of the PCUSA (1886)* (New York: Mission House, 1886) 91; *The Fifty-First Annual Report of the Board of Foreign Missions of the PCUSA (1888)* (New York: Mission House, 1888) 90.

²¹ *The Fifty-First Annual Report* 90.

²² It was named in honour of Mrs. Faith Hubbard, who was the late president of the Women’s Board of New York, PCUSA. *The Fifty-First Annual Report* 90. The Women’s Board was a vital source of revenue, personnel, prayer, and encouragement and can easily be ignored next to the presence of the denominational Board of Foreign Missions. See Robert, *American Women in Mission* 302.

²³ *The Fifty-Fourth Annual Report of the Board of Foreign Missions of the PCUSA (1891)* (New York: Mission House, 1891) 159; *The Fifty-Fifth Annual Report of the Board of Foreign Missions of the PCUSA (1892)* (New York: Mission House, 1892) 196; *The Sixty-Third Annual Report of the Board of Foreign Missions of the PCUSA (1900)* (New York: Mission House, 1900) 196.

²⁴ *The Seventy-Fifth Annual Report of the Board of Foreign Missions of the PCUSA (1912)* (New York: Mission House, 1912) 354.

²⁵ *The Fifty-Third Annual Report of the Board of Foreign Missions of the PCUSA (1890)* (New York: Mission House, 1890) 182; *The Fifty-Seventh Annual Report of the Board of Foreign Missions of the PCUSA (1893)* (New

outlying villages as well as “satellite” schools run by graduates of the Faith Hubbard School.²⁶ And third, Miss Annie saw the boarding school (including staff) as a “family.”²⁷

The school was truly multilingual. Farsi, Armenian, Hebrew, and English were all used in the school’s curriculum.²⁸ It developed out of a mud building which was later replaced by a brick two-storey building. The reports indicate that Miss Annie was continually negotiating over property, partly because of refusal to rent or sell to Christians. From all accounts, Miss Annie’s perseverance won the day for the schools. The 1914 Annual Report reads: “Miss [Annie] Montgomery, after long years of effort, has succeeded in obtaining a piece of property which she has presented to the station [. . .].”²⁹

Miss Annie set forth a highly organized curriculum, no doubt a reflection of her teaching career in Charlottetown at the Normal School at the Prince of Wales College. Ordinarily it would take seven or eight years of study.³⁰ Kindergarten was first. Then the school was divided into three departments, each with two grades: Primary, Intermediate, and Senior departments. The Senior two grades often took three years to complete. The girls would graduate and marry, or many became teachers in the new branch schools, or helped as nurses in the dispensaries and hospitals of the mission across Persia. Miss Annie’s goal was to see a women’s college established as a central women’s college in Persia that would provide an opportunity for the girls to continue their studies. A bequest of \$200,000 was secured for such an undertaking; however, the college was not built before the time of Miss Annie’s death. (This women’s college would become Sage College in Tehran.) The school also had the standard features of music, concerts, and industrial arts (sewing and carpet weaving). The report on the school Christmas concert of 1885 gave this news: “Our Christmas this year was most enjoyable. Armenian boys sang for us. Jewish boys chanted part of Solomon’s Song and some Psalms in Hebrew.”³¹

York: Mission House, 1893) 162; John Elder, *History of the Iran Mission* (N.p.: n.p., n.d.) 34.

²⁶ *The Sixty-Fourth Annual Report of the Board of Foreign Missions of the PCUSA (1901)* (New York: Mission House, 1901) 240. These “extension sites” are not included in the Annual Reports to the Board of Foreign Missions. Thus it is difficult to estimate the full impact of the Faith Hubbard School. “Extension” work does appear to have been separate from “branch” schools, where Annie would also visit and give supervision. I conclude that the “extension” sites were more summer schools, thus of a shorter duration, yet nevertheless offering basic education to children who otherwise would have had no opportunity for such.

²⁷ *The Fifty-Third Annual Report* 182. Annie was quite adamant that this was not “simply a boarding school” but a “family.”

²⁸ *The Forty-Seventh Annual Report* 71; *The Fiftieth Annual Report of the Board of Foreign Missions of the PCUSA (1887)* (New York: Mission House, 1887) 87.

²⁹ *The Seventy-Seventh Annual Report of the Board of Foreign Missions of the PCUSA (1914)* (New York: Mission House, 1914) 329.

³⁰ The curriculum which Annie oversaw was communicated in great detail to Dr. Gillespie, the executive of the Board of Foreign Missions. I have transcribed Annie’s written report and included it as Appendix A to this paper. Annie Montgomery, Hamadan, 30 Mar. 1894, letter to Dr. Gillespie, New York, “Curriculum of the Faith Hubbard School, Hamadan,” MS in Volume 11 “Iran Letters: East Persia Mission (1894-1896): Board of Foreign Missions Correspondence and Reports, Microfilm Series, Reel #126. Letter #12, MF10 F761a.

³¹ Annie Montgomery, Hamadan, letter to Dr. Irving, 10 Feb. 1885, Annie Montgomery File 66-252, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

The Two “E” Philosophy

Presbyterian mission philosophy and methodology of the nineteenth century was heavily committed to the two “E” missiological principle, namely education and evangelism, also sometimes called “educational evangelism.”³² The work of Miss Annie and Miss Charlotte Montgomery in Persia is a perfect illustration of this methodology of mission. Miss Annie, often referred to as “the chief teacher and superintendent of the Boarding and Day Schools of Hamadan,”³³ was an educator and an evangelist, as was Miss Charlotte. Education and spirituality were not divorced, and the roots of this thinking ran deep in Scottish Presbyterian thinking on missions. Let me single out eight related activities these two educators undertook while in Persia which demonstrate the two “E” principle at work.

First, **mission bands** were organized in the schools for the children. These mission bands collected offerings which were forwarded to Presbyterian mission work in Korea and in West Africa.³⁴ The teachers, secondly, helped organize special **Jewish Christian services** on Saturday nights in the Jewish Quarter of Hamadan.³⁵ From this a **church plant** emerged (Penuel Church, which consisted of Jewish and Muslim converts). Third, the two ladies organized **ladies’ rallies** and meetings at the Faith Hubbard School. These rallies often saw ninety to one hundred in attendance.³⁶ Fourth, scheduled **family visitation** was conducted in Hamadan—Armenian families at Christmas, Persian Muslim families during the winter, and Armenian and Jewish families at Easter. Miss Annie wrote, “The importance of such hand-to-hand work can scarcely be overestimated [. . .].”³⁷ Fifth, separate **boys’ prayer meetings** for the boys from the Faith Hubbard School and the Rev. Hawkes’ Boys’ School were organized and **offerings** collected for Africa.³⁸ Sixth, on Sunday nights the **King’s Daughters** met as a **Prayer and Experience meeting**.³⁹ Seventh, **village itinerate preaching, visitation** and **colporteur** work was done. These itinerate trips were undertaken by both Montgomery women, but Miss Annie’s were far more extensive. The time away on these itinerate trips varied, sometimes just one to two weeks, sometimes one month, with the longest being six weeks.⁴⁰ On Annie’s itinerate village trip in the fall of 1899, she preached to the women in sixteen villages, conducted family visitation and distributed literature and occasionally food.⁴¹ These itinerate missions were also a way to encourage students to attend the mission schools, and to check on branch schools on occasion.

³² See Lyle L. Vander Werff, *Christian Mission to Muslims*, The William Carey Library Series on Islamic Studies (1977; Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2000) 132-38.

³³ *The Forty-Ninth Annual Report* 91.

³⁴ *The Fifty-First Annual Report* 90.

³⁵ *The Fifty-First Annual Report* 91.

³⁶ *The Fifty-First Annual Report* 91.

³⁷ *The Fifty-First Annual Report* 91.

³⁸ *The Fifty-Third Annual Report* 182.

³⁹ *The Fifty-Fifth Annual Report* 196; *The Fifty-Sixth Annual Report of the Board of Foreign Missions of the PCUSA (1893)* (New York: Mission House, 1893) 163.

⁴⁰ *The Fifty-Eighth Annual Report of the Board of Foreign Missions of the PCUSA (1895)* (New York: Mission House, 1895) 171; *The Sixty-Second Annual Report of the Board of Foreign Missions of the PCUSA (1899)* (New York: Mission House, 1899) 189-90.

⁴¹ *The Sixty-Second Annual Report* 189.

Miss Annie made this comment about one of her trips, “[. . .] long and fruitful visit among the villages to the south.”⁴² Concerning another period of itinerancy, she describes what she distributed during a twenty-one day tour: distributed Farsi books to pilgrim caravans, gave out seventy gospels or gospel portions and left tracts in every village.⁴³ She records one story of helping an impoverished and divorced woman in one of the villages, a woman divorced because a load she carried fell on her foot which eventually was amputated. She was “divorced because he [the husband] did not want a lame wife.”⁴⁴

Besides all of the above eight activities, Annie was also an **English as a Second Language** teacher. Her students were often Muslim boys who wanted to learn English and came to her for instruction.⁴⁵ It is again difficult to assess if and how many “conversions” resulted from this ministry. She also taught English to Armenian boys and men. One young Armenian man to whom she taught English was Hovanness Nahapetian, who later became the first Presbyterian minister ordained in Persia (in 1893). He in exchange helped Annie with her Armenian.⁴⁶

The work of Faith Hubbard School directly impacted St. Stephen’s Church. Well over a hundred, perhaps over 150, related to the school’s ministry became members of St. Stephen’s Church, and many of these received baptism.⁴⁷ From what I can discern, the majority of these additions were from Armenian background, unlike the Penuel Church, who were Jewish or Muslim in background. Clearly the goal with the Armenian ministry was to revive true Christianity amongst the Armenians, many of whom were lapsing from the faith and becoming Muslim, or else to awaken true Christianity in a weak and deformed culturally-bound form of nominal Christianity. There are clear evidences of Muslims being brought into the churches because of Annie Montgomery’s ministry. The reality is a great ethnic and religious complexity existed in Persia, and hence there is some lack of precision concerning religious background prior to conversion to evangelical Protestantism. Annie wrote the following in the 1901 report:

It is Isaac’s and Ishmael’s descendants dwelling together in love. To see, thus Persians, Koords and Jews all associating on equal terms and harmony with one another, pleasantly recalls Pentecostal days. It also affords a practical illustration of harmonizing influences of the Gospel of Christ triumphing over the bitter enmity and strong racial prejudices, and reminds us of the Spirit and times of the primitive Church.⁴⁸

Education, literature, itinerant visitation, ESL, prayer meetings, etc, all belong together for a unified mission philosophy—evangelism.

⁴² *The Sixty-Second Annual Report* 190.

⁴³ *The Seventy-Seventh Annual Report* 328.

⁴⁴ *The Seventy-Fifth Annual Report* 353.

⁴⁵ *The Forty-Ninth Annual Report* 91.

⁴⁶ Sherman and Alyse Fung, Pasadena, CA, letter to the author, 18 June 2010.

⁴⁷ *The One Hundred and Sixth Annual Report of the Board of Foreign Missions of the PCUSA (1908)* (New York: Mission House, 1908) 352; and Elder 37.

⁴⁸ *The Sixty-Fourth Annual Report* 238.

A Side Note on Adeline Hunter

I have said very little about Adeline Hunter and will give here a sidelight on her missionary undertaking which will also bring illumination to the reality and difficulty of the Persian undertaking. Adeline Hunter was a member of the Presbyterian Church in Alberton and studied for two years at the Prince of Wales College.⁴⁹ She obtained a Grammar School license and served two years as principal of the Grammar School of Alberton prior to joining the missionary team in Persia, again a rather elite female educator on the Island. In her letter dated 5 January 1889 to the Board of Foreign Missions, New York she informed the Board that she could teach Latin, French, Greek and Music “but not drawing.” Miss Hunter arrived in Hamadan in 1889 and immediately began language studies. However, by 1891 her physical and mental health had deteriorated, and she had to leave Hamadan. Dr. E. W. Alexander of the Hamadan missionary team accompanied Miss Hunter from Persia to London.⁵⁰ She eventually returned to Prince Edward Island and married Dr. James Handrahan of Charlottetown.⁵¹

A female colleague of Miss Adeline, Anna Schenck, wrote to Dr. Gillespie back in New York, “Miss Hunter’s distressing illness is a surprise and blow to us all. She came out with such a picture of health.”⁵² This highlights the reality of the difficult life many of these women endured in the mission work and the costliness in both mental and physical sacrifice.

Women, Voting and The Secretary of the Board

One area, namely that of female missionaries, which was discovered while going through the correspondence on the Persia Eastern Mission (but which was not in the printed annual reports) was that of the matter of women voting on the field and also the high number of female single missionaries. The correspondence is not always conclusive, but it does certainly show that both of these closely related subjects were topics of discussion on the field in the 1880s and 1890s.

Adeline Hunter raised the issue of voting in correspondence with Dr. John Gillespie, the then secretary of the Board of Foreign Missions of the PCUSA. Miss Hunter was firmly of the opinion that women missionaries had a right to vote in mission business on the field.⁵³ Likewise, Annie Montgomery wrote to Dr. Gillespie of this same matter in January 1891 regarding the right of the missionary women to vote in the Station’s affairs. She posed this question to Dr. Gillespie, asking if the men will lose their vote on women’s work and further, “Loss of the privilege will take away the responsibility.”⁵⁴ The impression from these letters is clearly that

⁴⁹ Miss Hunter’s minister, the Rev. Arthur Carr, who was born on Prince Edward Island, was very much a missions promoter. He had studied in part at Princeton, New Jersey, married a Keir, was secretary for the Synod’s Missions Committee, and wrote the letter of recommendation for Miss Adeline Hunter to the Board of Foreign Missions, PCUSA. See A. E. Betts, *Our Fathers in the Faith: Being an account of Presbyterian ministers ordained before 1875* (N.p.: Maritime Conference Archives, 1983) 25.

⁵⁰ “Adeline Hunter” 175-8, Vol. 9 #17 of Iran Mission Papers, F. L. Esselstyn, 26 Mar. 1891.

⁵¹ File RG 360-69-46 (Adeline Hunter, 1889-1892—Hamadan), Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia; and Alice Green and The Alberton Historical Group, *Footprints on the Sands of Time: A History of Alberton* (Summerside, PE: Williams and Crue, 1980) 87.

⁵² Anna Schenck, 7 Mar. 1891, Hamadan, letter to Dr. Gillespie, New York, “Adeline Hunter” 175-8, Vol. 9 Col. #14.

⁵³ Adeline Hunter, Hamadan, letter to Dr. John Gillespie, New York, 12 Nov. 1890, File RG 360-69-46, “Adeline Hunter,” No. 66-82.

⁵⁴ Annie Montgomery, Hamadan, letter to Dr. John Gillespie, New York, 28 Jan. 1891, File 66-7 of Vol. 9,

women were voting in Station matters, but some were of the opinion this was not the best policy. Was this coming from New York, and was it in part contextual to Persian circumstances and a matter of deference? The correspondence lacks clarity, and as far as I have seen the official reports do not mention it.

Charlotte Geddie Montgomery weighs in also on the matter of women but on a different aspect. There appears to have been some comments made by Robert Speer,⁵⁵ the secretary of the Board of Foreign Missions 1891–1937, in correspondence in 1897 that perhaps there were too many single female missionaries in Hamadan. Charlotte responded in January 1898 affirming that all was quite fine with the number which were there!⁵⁶ Again, it is difficult to come to a firm conclusion on this. Speer could have feared that since so many single female missionaries were involved in educational work, the primacy of evangelistic work was suffering or would suffer.⁵⁷ There is no evidence that Speer curtailed the work of women missionaries, single or married, so it does not appear to have been a major issue; one does not find it at all a constant in correspondence or official printed reports.

Evaluation

The pioneer work in education in Hamadan of Annie Montgomery, Charlotte Montgomery, and Adeline Hunter in the 1880s is highly representative of the late nineteenth century's single female missionary movement. These women were actually connected to a worldwide Protestant missionary advance.

That these three women gave fifty-seven cumulative years in foreign educational missionary service in Persia alone is an impressive fact, but the fact that the story has suffered from neglect should spur us to find a remedy. Annie returned to Prince Edward Island in 1908 to speak about missions and to dedicate a plaque to her sister Charlotte Geddie Montgomery in the Princetown Presbyterian Church (now United). Charlotte had left Hamadan in 1905 in poor health and arrived in New York on May 31st. There she underwent surgery in the Presbyterian Hospital on June 2nd. She died on 10 June 1905 of complications from that surgery. Her funeral service was held at West Presbyterian Church, New York and interment followed in Malpeque, Prince Edward Island.⁵⁸ The plaque dedicated in 1908 has remained a lasting visible memorial and has helped preserve something of Charlotte's contribution. Yet upon Annie's death no

“Annie Montgomery.”

⁵⁵ A helpful essay on Speer is John F. Piper, Jr., “The Development of the Missionary Ideas of Robert E. Speer” in Wilbert R. Shenk, *North American Foreign Missions, 1810-1914: Theology, Theory, and Policy*, Studies in the History of Christian Missions (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2004) 261-80.

⁵⁶ Charlotte Geddie Montgomery, Hamadan, letter to Robert Speer, New York, 6 Jan. 1898. Microfilm, PCUSA Board of Foreign Missions Correspondence and Reports Microfilm Series, Calendar Iran 1870-1900, Vol. 18.

⁵⁷ James A. Patterson, “Speer, Robert E,” *Biographical Dictionary of Christian Missions*, ed. Gerald H. Anderson (New York: MacMillan Reference, 1998) 633; H. M. Goodpasture, “Speer, Robert Elliott,” *Dictionary of the Presbyterian and Reformed Tradition in America*, gen. ed. D. G. Hart (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1999) 249; and David Stone, “Anderson, Rufus,” *Biographical Dictionary of Christian Missions* 20. Rufus Anderson was Speer's “mentor.”

⁵⁸ *New York Times* (New York), 14 June 1905, 9; *Boston Evening Transcript* (Boston), 14 June 1905, 6; and New York Passenger Lists, 1820-1957. I am indebted to Ruby Cousins for these newspaper references and ship passenger manifestos.

similar visible marker was erected on Prince Edward Island as she was buried inside St. Stephen's Church in Hamadan.⁵⁹ Being missionaries to a Presbyterian board outside of Canada has also made the story less owned within Canada. It is fitting to record the place of these three Prince Edward Island women in Canadian missionary history. It certainly enriches Prince Edward Island Presbyterian missions history and shows an expansiveness which has often been missed. Just looking at names "Charlotte" and "Geddie" helps us to link Vanuatu, and another Charlotte Geddie, with Persia.

The Persian mission of Hamadan certainly was critical to the development of leaders in church and society for Persia and the diaspora of Persians, in particular Persian Christians, whether Armenian, Assyrian or Persian. These diaspora congregations or groups still exist, and when interviewed, links can be made back to such schools as the Faith Hubbard School of Hamadan. This has been the case with the Fungs of Pasadena, California, with whom I have been corresponding.

If one were to ask what kind of marks identified this Persian mission, the answer would be that it was evangelical, Christocentric, and established with the desire that an indigenous church develop. The time period of this paper, c.1881–1917, also takes us outside of the missions controversy which involved Robert Speer and J. Gresham Machen. Evidence in the research for this paper shows no such missions controversy.⁶⁰ Rather, when one reads the personal report of Speer's visit in 1920 to Hamadan after Annie's death, we conclude that Speer grasped something of the many facets to the work and the many complexities ("five races" as he calls them). "But complicated as the work may be, it is still as simple and direct as true missionary service is everywhere, and it is doing just one thing, making Christ known to all men in love and faithfulness and manifesting His power to heal the hurts and to redeem the lives of men."⁶¹

Where do we go from here?

This paper has helped tell the forgotten story of three female missionaries from Prince Edward Island to Persia in what was undoubtedly a key period in evangelical Protestant church history for missionary undertaking. But it is only a beginning. A major task now to undertake is for the historian and missiologist to draw a larger factual comparison; for example, the itinerant visitation work of the Zenanna work in India. How does this work compare with the study of Persia and these Island women? Next, the letters of the three women must be studied more carefully, particularly as they relate to Robert E. Speer and missionary methods and theory. The question also must be explored, "Did the three Presbyterian Island women missionaries inspire the Baptist women of Cavendish and Long Creek, Prince Edward Island to undertake single female missionary work?" (The Baptists on PEI would begin this in the 1890s.⁶² Is there any

⁵⁹ The "Memorial Minute" adopted by the Board of Foreign Missions, PCUSA is dated 19 November 1917 and can be found in the "file" on "Annie Montgomery," RG401-91-29 [RG360] at the Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia. I am grateful to the Fungs for confirmation concerning the memorial marker in St. Stephen's Church, Hamadan. Private correspondence between the author and the Fungs, 18 June 2010.

⁶⁰ See D. G. Hart, "Machen, J(ohn) Gresham," *Dictionary of the Presbyterian and Reformed Tradition in America*, 145-46.

⁶¹ Russell Carter and Robert Speer, *Report on India and Persia by the Deputation Sent by the Board of Foreign Missions 1922* (New York: Mission House, 1922) 339-40.

⁶² Zonta Club, *Outstanding Women of Prince Edward Island* (Charlottetown, PE: Zonta Club, 1981) vii, 110-11. Unfortunately this collection does not contain any material on the Island women who served in Persia pioneering mission work there.

relationship?) It would be extremely fascinating to trace where some of the Persian diaspora went who had passed through the Hamadan Presbyterian schools beyond what I have initially done for this paper. It would certainly help in an understanding of the global influence of the mission work. Then there are contemporary questions: what is the state today of the Penuel Church or St. Stephen's Church and of the legacies of these congregations and visible artifacts? What further history is there of Faith Hubbard School and the branch schools and student-led satellite schools following the death of Annie Montgomery in 1917? One wonders, "How long did they remain effective entities?" There appears to be a diversity of answers here.

There is also yet much more to be explored in the lives of these three women; more details about their lives still need to be known. For example, we need to explore the role of Persian hymns in Annie's ministry as this was something she helped develop. What about the remainder of Adeline Hunter's life? Was there ongoing missions support? Next, what of the Women's Board of New York? It needs to be more carefully explored, particularly in relation to money as this helps us understand more fully the role of the Women's Boards of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Two other areas hardly mentioned yet contained in the letters and reports of the mission are the opposition from Armenian and Russian priests to the schools and their criticism of teaching girls, and the military conflicts and their impact on these schools and the mission work. After all, as Annie was dying Hamadan was being occupied by the Turks and refugees were streaming through the city. There is much yet to explore!

Appendix A

Faith Hubbard School, Hamadan (1894)

Primary Curriculum [Preceded by Kindergarten]

Grade 1:	
Children's Catechism, Part 1	Commandments
1 John – 3 chapters	O.T. stories
Armenian reading	1 John as a primer
Arithmetic	Numbers, rules
Geography	Continents & Oceans, map work
Persian Reading	From board or primer
English Reading	Charts I & II

Grade 2:	
Children's Catechism (Compte)	John's Gospel 1-3
Bible verses against lying	Bible Stories, Life of Christ
Armenian Reading	John's Gospel I & II Reader
Arithmetic	Numbers to 1,000 in 4 rules
Geography	Countries, capitals, rivers
Grammar	Parts of speech and simple analysis
Persian Reading	10 chapters of John's Gospel
English Reading	Charts III, IV, V, & VI
Writing	Armenian and Persian

**Source: Annie Montgomery, Hamadan, March 30, 1894;
to Dr. Gillespie, New York, Board of Foreign Missions, PCUSA
(Transcribed at the Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia, PA, March 2010.)**

IV & V Years – Intermediate Department Curriculum

Grade 1:	
Shorter Catechism, 1st half	Bible Verses against [?], 1 & 2 Peter
Bible History, Creation to Joseph	
Armenian Reading	Psalms – III & IV Reader
Arithmetic	Long division and compound rules
Geography (particular)	Western hemisphere
Grammar	Declensions, conjugation & analysis
Persian Reading	Luke’s Gospel and Hebrews
English Reading	John’s Gospel
Writing	Armenian, Persian, and English

Grade 2:	
Shorter Catechism, 2nd half	Duties of wives, husbands, parents & children
Bible History, Joseph to Captivity	7 chapters Gospel of Mark
Armenian Reading	Psalms
Arithmetic	[?] Decimals, and fractions
Geography (particular)	Eastern hemisphere
Grammar	Particular analysis
Armenian History	[?] Close of 4 th Dynasty
Persian Reading	New Testament Bible history
English Reading	Luke’s Gospel and Ephesians
Dictation	Armenian, Persian, and English
Composition	Simple subjects

**Source: Annie Montgomery, Hamadan, March 30, 1894;
to Dr. Gillespie, New York, Board of Foreign Missions, PCUSA
(Transcribed at the Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia, PA, March 2010.)**

VI & VII Years – Senior Department Curriculum

Grade 1:	
Gospel of Mark, 9 chapters	Duties of rulers and citizens
Bible History	Captivity to close of O.T. history
Armenian History	Complete
Arithmetic	Complete
Armenian Reading	Pilgrim's Progress
Grammar	Particular analysis
Geography	Complete
Persian Reading	O.T. History & _____
English	History of Europe
General History	To partition of Alexander's Empire
Physiology	
Dictation	Armenian, Persian, English
Composition	

Grade 2:	
Deut. 32, Eccl. 12, Isaiah 9 & 53, Luke 2, 1 Cor. 13, [. . .], 1 Tim. 2:2	
Bible History	Close of O.T. history to close of Apostolic period
General History	From Alexander to fall of Greece
European History	Complete
Persian Reading	Pilgrim's Progress
Geography	Physical
Physiology	
Algebra	
Dictation	English Persian

General Review

Missing also industrial arts.

**Source: Annie Montgomery, Hamadan, March 30, 1894;
to Dr. Gillespie, New York, Board of Foreign Missions, PCUSA
(Transcribed at the Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia, PA, March 2010.)**

Appendix B

**IN MEMORY OF ANNIE MONTGOMERY.
BORN MAY 17, 1847 AT PRINCETON,
PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND.
DIED NOVEMBER 6, 1917 AT HAMADAN.
THIRTY-FIVE YEARS A MISSIONARY OF
CHRIST IN PERSIA.
'THANKS BE TO GOD WHICH GIVETH US
THE VICTORY THROUGH OUR LORD
JESUS CHRIST.'
AGE 70.**

*Memorial Plaque for Annie Montgomery on her grave inside
St. Stephen's Church, Hamadan, Iran*
(Note the spelling error – "Princeton", which should read Princetown".)

**IN MEMORY
OF
OUR BELOVED CHARLOTTE,
BORN MARCH 17, 1855,

ENTERED INTO THE JOY OF HER LORD,
AND HEARD THE MASTER'S
WELL DONE GOOD & FAITHFUL SERVANT,
JUNE 10, 1905**

**CHARLOTTE GEDDIE MONTGOMERY
DUTIFUL DAUGHTER,
LOVING SISTER,
FAITHFUL FRIEND,
CONSECRATED CHRISTIAN,
SUCCESSFUL TEACHER,
ZEALOUS, DEVOTED AND
BELOVED MISSIONARY OF THE
CROSS
IN PERSIA FOR NINETEEN YEARS
HAVING DONE WHAT SHE COULD
SHE YET SPEAKETH SAYING
TO LIVE WAS CHRIST - TO DIE IS GAIN**

*Inscriptions from Charlotte Montgomery's gravestone,
front and back, Malpeque, Prince Edward Island*