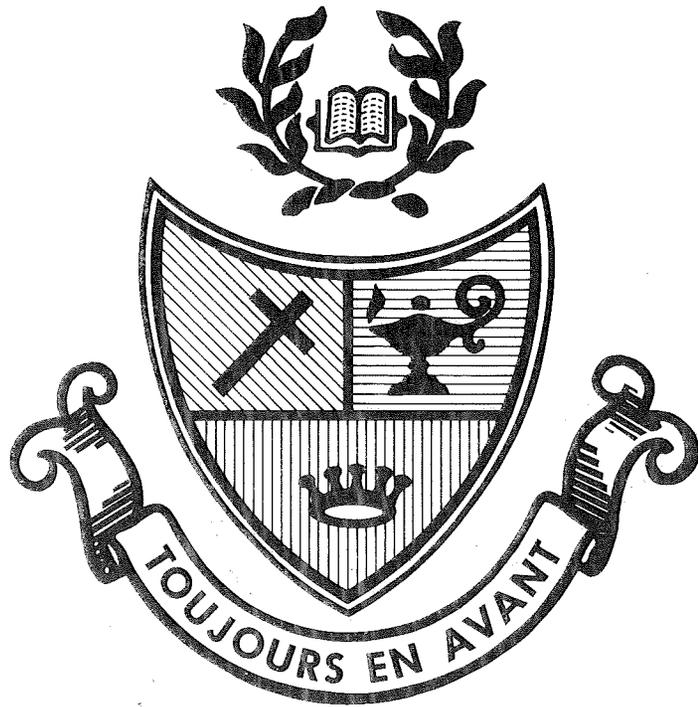


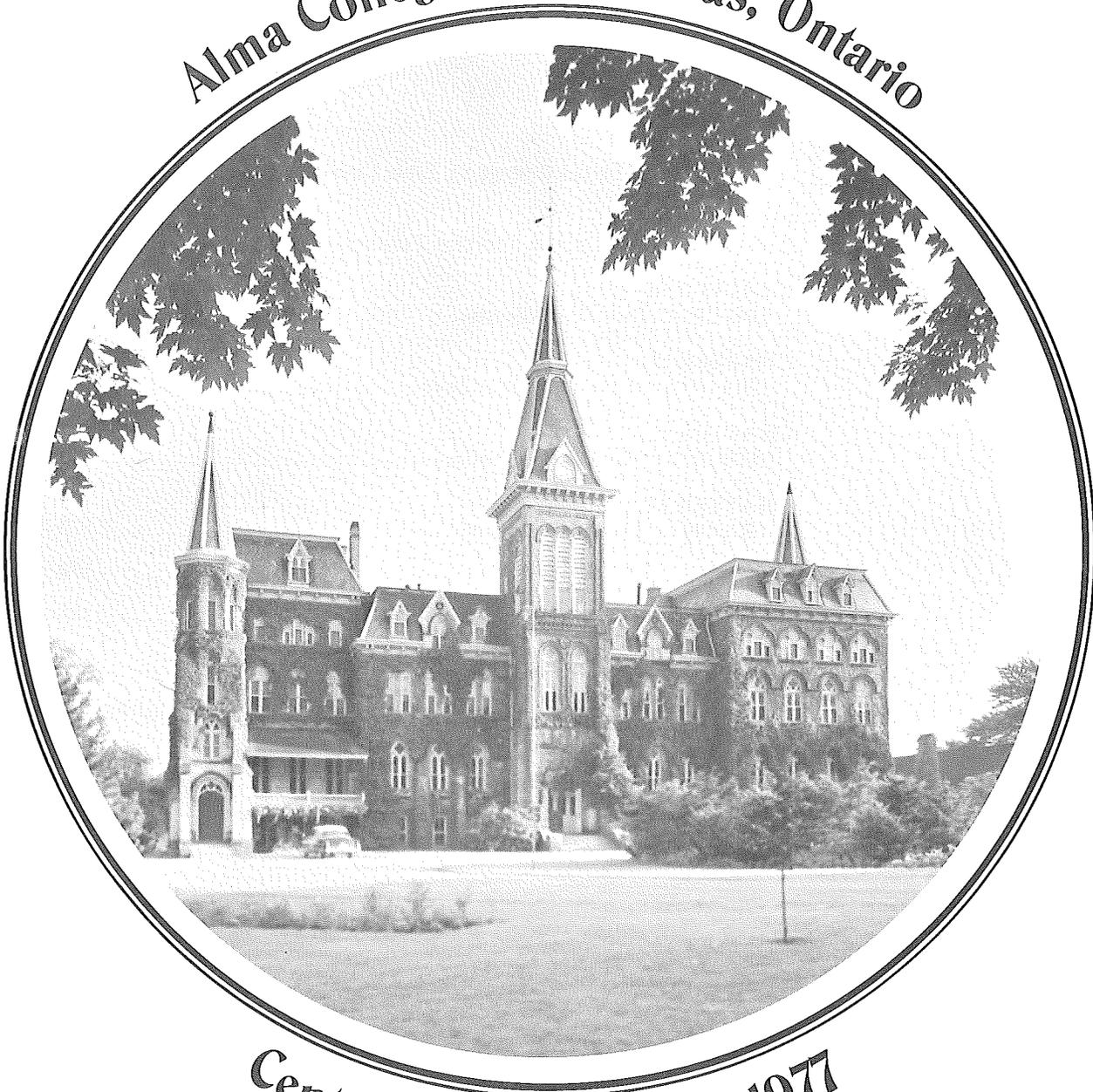
Alma College

St. Thomas, Ontario

1877 - 1977



Alma College - St. Thomas, Ontario



Centennial Book 1877-1977

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Foreword

This Centennial Book has taken matters into its own hands and grown into a shape quite unrecognizable from the little history that we first planned. There were to be founders and dates and builders and progress all neatly ordered to give the sweep of a century of education, but in spite of our best intentions, people and memories and impressions kept swirling in to push the history back. Now, instead of telling you what happened through Alma's ten decades, we are telling you what it was like to be there, what influenced the quality of our lives, and widened our horizons.

As we have put together this Alma memory book, we have discovered a consistently irrepressible spirit of the people who speak to us out of these pages. Students in those early years and students now seem to admire and respect the same qualities, circumvent the rules with the same initiative and glee, and treasure many of the same values. The photographs have come from everyone and they too are proof of this effervescence and continuity.

But the value of recording history is not only to help us recapture the shine of remembered moments, but to help us feel the strength of the past as we shape today and the years ahead. The Centennial Book is a vote of confidence in Alma and her ability to go forward into the future with added momentum.

It is not possible to acknowledge the contribution of all those who have helped to compile this very personal story, but its chief researchers and writers have been Leda Ferguson Scarlett, Mary Geddes Kerr, Flora Mooney Sifton, Sally King Burbank, Mary Sanders, Catherine Waffle, Joan Gibson Chesterfield, Emily Acheson Nichols, Marion Raven Whitcroft, Mary Jackson, Mary Elizabeth Bone, Berenice Chalk, E. F. S. Sanders, Q.C. Our special thanks go to John Sifton for his editorial help with Chapter I, and to Dr. Flora Sifton for every kind of assistance in writing to former students for their suggestions, for detective work with photographs, and for special research and writing, and for her constant encouragement and counsel.

We are greatly indebted to Mr. and Mrs. Kent Phibbs, two of our Alma parents, and to Phibbs Printing World for their unfailing interest and expertise in producing this book with such imagination and skill.

K.D.R.
Editor

Preface

I feel highly honoured to have been asked to write the preface to the Alma College Centennial Book. In good Alma tradition the story of the first century of this unique school has been put into printed form by many people working together: alumnae, parents, board members, staff, students and Alma friends in the community.

When the suggestion to write this history was first made, over a year ago, one name emerged as the most obvious and able person to oversee this project — Dr. Katherine Riddell. She had been a student, teacher, alumnae member and was the daughter of a long-time and much loved principal. Her life throughout many years has been closely associated with the College and for the last nine months she has lived with us, sharing our celebrations and our difficulties, talking to students — young and old, to staff, to senior citizens, alumnae, board members and friends. The history that follows is a “people history”. It is the story of an attempt to build an international, Christian community in a small Ontario city.

As Principal, I wish to express the appreciation of the Board of Management, to all who so willingly researched, wrote for the book, supplied photographs, typed the manuscript, gave advice and encouragement, and to Phibbs Printing World who exhibited more than a business interest in the book. It is an interesting, though not all-inclusive record of the first 100 years of Alma College.

M. Elizabeth Bone
Principal, Alma College

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