

A Brief Summary on the History of the North Dakota
State Association. Period of 1912-1934.

Your Committee regrets that it cannot ^{even} bring in a completed copy to you this ~~morning~~ ^{afternoon}. We have been busy at our work to assemble the data and will present a brief sketch for your information. Please be as charitable with your committee as you can, for you will know that there is some material not available now. And some of our sources of information have slipped away-much has happened in these fifty years. So in our efforts to arrange our material we have had to do much reading and studying and hope you will get the picture of these early, busy women, who did so much to organize the state that it might be a better place for us who would come later. Let us never forget that. Had it not been for them, we today would not enjoy today's privileges in our profession.

In the early 1900's and late 1890's, several nurses came to North Dakota to take up their professional duties. They were not content with simply filling their own tasks, but sought how their efforts might reach out and benefit the whole community-even the nursing group as a whole within the state.

Miss Bertha Erdmann had come out to Grand Forks from Minnesota to take over duties at the University of North Dakota with the possibility of establishing of School of Nursing there. Mildred Clark had come to Devils Lake from Pennsylvania. She was especially interested that nurses in this new state should become organized, and that they might have their own State Registration Law for the protection of its nurses. We learn that as early as 1911 Grand Forks County had a County Association and it was this Association which formed the nucleus for the members who undertook the forming of the state nursing organization envisioned by these early workers.

In December, 1911 a committee on State Nurses Association was formed with L. Mae McCulloch, Minnie Traynor, Bertha Erdmann, Chairman. This committee began work at once. The state was divided into districts, with from four to ten counties in each district. The cities or towns where more nurses lived were designated as the "headquarters", and a nurse residing there appointed as chairman. The nurses living in these areas were visited and real interest was aroused in a professional organization.

In the spring of 1912 Miss Erdmann visited each such district, addressing groups of nurses, graduates and pupils, speaking on the topic "The objects and purposes of an organization for nurses". The members of the

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committee agreed that the time for organization had come, and as a result, arrangements were made, and a meeting was called for May 6-7 at Grand Forks, N.D. A Constitution and By-Laws had been prepared and was discussed. Plans for the Association work were outlined. Miss Emily Orr was elected secretary pro tem. The Constitution and by-laws were adopted with but slight changes. Officers and three members were elected. 155 charter members were reported and elected as ~~members~~ charter members. The same day, after the organizational session, a meeting was held with a brief program. The following officers were elected:

President: Bertha Erdmann, Grand Forks, N.D.
1st. Vice Pres. , Maude Sides Jamestown, N.D.
2nd. Vice Pres. Louise Hoerman Bis marck, N.D.
Secretary Emily Holmes Orr
Corresponding Sec'y. Emily Scripore Fargo, N.D.
Treasurer Eshel Stanford Fargo, N.D.
Directors: Mildred Clark; Devils Lake: Iva Know
Eldora Poland

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A Committee on Education was appointed at this meeting who were to plan a Curriculum for the Schools which would be submitted to the National League. The Committee on Education was as follows:

Bertha Erdmann, Chr. Blanche Pyne
Louise Hoerman Iva Know
Mildred Clark Elizabeth Bartle
Maude Sides Minnie Traynor
Muriel Starck

A Committee on Red Cross Nursing Service was also appointed. This has always been one of North Dakota's strongest committees. Its members were:
Bertha Erdmann, Chr.
Maude Sides
Mae McCullough

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The Committee on Education got busy at once. We find they held three meetings that first year on a proposed curriculum and when convention was called to order that next year were ready with a course of study which was adopted by the convention as outlined by this committee.

This Committee on Nursing Education continued as such until the spring of 1920, when in April, 1920 at the time of the annual meeting the No. Dak. State League of Nursing Education was organized with Mother Leo as its President. Up to that time they had met each year when the State Association held its annual sessions. This was again re-organized in 1948.

As we look thru the minutes of former conventions, and especially the earlier ones, we wonder at the courage of these early women. They never had a large budget to work on, still they generosity they displayed, giving to this and that fund, here and there, never saying "no", when a request came. They tried to do something. I am told "A dollar went farther on those days". But I say, there was only a budget of \$600.00 for the year, and we had to live respectably on that, and keep up our credit. Frankly, I do not see how they did it.

Then there were several conventions when we had as much as three outside speakers besides our "home talent". How did our leaders do it?

We were accepted for affiliation by A.N.A. in June, 1912. and remember were just an infant organization, organized in May, 1912. Five representatives attended the A.N.A. convention. What did they do? They pledged No Dak. State AssN. to the Amt. of \$50.00 to the Relief Fund.

We have contributed to several funds: tho our numbers were not large, we never shirked our obligations. We have helped to maintain the Nurses Relief Fund. This Fund was created so assist members who were in distress due to illness, or for other reasons. When the A.N.A. decided to no longer maintain this fund, we were given our share on a per capita basis. This is now deposited in one of our local banks. It has not been necessary for us to call upon this fund since the re-deposit was made.

We have given as was possible to the McIsaac and Isabel Hampton Robb Loan Funds, particularly in the earlier years.

Following World War 1 the nurses banded together and gathered a sum of money in memory of the nurses who gave their lives in World War 1. This Hospital was located in Bordeaux, France. Thru the aid given by the American nurses they were able to rebuild their Hospital and re-open their nursing school. The nurses also assisted in sending uniforms to them. The first year north Dakota sent \$104.00 to this fund. Several contributions were sent after that, but not quite as large as that.

It was believed during the experiences of the War that if the members of the Army Nurse Corps had been ranked as officers, certain questions of status might not occur. Therefore it was brot before congress that the nurses be given relative rank. Again nurses were asked to help financially, this time \$1 per capita. We sent in \$54.

We made a small contribution to the Ben Eilsen Memorial Fund. He was known to some of our membership, and remembered by us all by one of North Dakot's boys who thot not of himself but gave his owb life that someone else might live. He lost his life in the A laska area.

We gave liberally to the work of the Grading Committee and with the help of the Board of Nurwe Examiners paid in full our rather large assessment.

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We were saddened by the passing of Mrs. Ethel Stanford-Miles. She was one of our Charter members, our first state treasurer and also a member of the Board of Nurse Examiners and Inspector of Schools of Nursing. She had been overseas and this may be where her health was ruined. At her death a fund was raised and two beds endowed in the Children's Pavilion. A Plaque was dedicated to her and placed in the admitting hall at the Sanatorium at San Haven,

Upon the untimely passing of Miss Delia Odden a fund to purchase books for the nurse's library at San Haven in her memory.

It was reported at the 1915 convention that our New Nurse Precaution Act had passed the Legislature and would become law on July 1, 1916.

In the winter months of 1916 there developed an under-current of dissatisfaction of what specific reason was never quite clear. But in the spring 37 members withdrew from membership. They organized their own group, calling themselves the "N.D. State Registered Nurses Assn."

However,, this Assn/, the No. Dak. State Assn., the original State Assn. felt it was not legal for any state to have more than one state organization. Miss Adda Eldredge. Interstate Secretary visited the state and stated that the N.D. was the Incorporated Association. and stated it was legal for any state to have more than one state organization. There could be only one official organization. After several meetings, the new organization dissolved its organization. Many of them re-joined the No. Dak. State Ass'n.; some never did.

It is most unfortunate when such hindrances creep in and energies that could be used in building are dissipated, causing heartache, and misunderstanding. But that is now ancient history, and need not be dwelt upon. Be it a part of our history, could hardly be avoided at this time.

During the years of 1919-1920 the By-Laws were revised. This changed the status of memberships for active membership. Active memberships were either ^{Individual} Active, or else those whose Alumnae Associations were located within the state came in their own Alumnae groups. This took much work to inform all the alumnae associations of this and get them accustomed to the new plan of action. It did increase our membership. We thus had sixteen Affiliated Alumnae Associations. Within the organization we did organize Sections thru the years, but the general plan remained the same until during the 1930's when we again revised by-laws and broke up into smaller groups or Districts. But I shall not infringe upon the territory of my fellow committee members.

The North Dakota State Association has been instrumental in helping to get a few things "off the ground". The State Mental Health Assn. was first cradled as a Committee on Mental Health in the the State Nurses Association. It now is an organization of its own, but No. Dak. St. N. Assn. has a keen interest in its program.

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In 1934 began the publication of a monthly magazine called "The Bulletin". Mrs. Mildred Isaackson was its editor. All Alumnae Associations were supposed to contribute interesting items to her, but I am not sure we were as diligent as might have been in this task. Later Sister Katherine took it over.

When had a full time Executive Secretary in Mrs. Jone E. Williams, she had the pleasure. It was then that it was christened to "The Prairie Rose".

Miss Gladys Wentlandt is its present editor, and it is issued quarterly.

The discussion of the organization of the Districts will be given by one of the other committee members.

Among some of the precious items in the files we found a letter- hand written by Miss Jane A. DeLano. This we must guard most carefully.

The North Dakota State Association does some pretty things, too. It is not all work and no play, and there have been some of us who have been beneficiaries of great kindness. Just now I am thinking of the year when North Dakota became of age, and at the 1933 convention all past presidents were given a Birthday gift-a Past President's pin. That, with my Life Membership. I hope to be worthy of both.