

Alice Jane Jukes Jamieson

1860 - 1949



Alice Jamieson was born on July 14, 1860 in New York City to James Jukes and Isabel Duxbury, who were both born in England, and emigrated to the United States as children. She had three sisters (one of whom died in infancy) and three brothers (one of whom died in infancy). The family moved to Chicago where her father ran his own engraving business. This is where Alice was educated.

Alice married Reuben Rupert Jamieson in Springfield, Ohio on March 8th, 1882. "R.R." was the son of John Jamieson, who was born in Cooksville, Ontario of parents who had emigrated from an area near Belfast in Ireland. 'R.R.' was fifth of eleven children. He had 8 brothers (one of whom died in infancy) and two sisters.

At the time of their marriage, 'R.R.' was working in Toronto for the Canadian Pacific Railroad. Alice and 'R.R.' had two sons and two daughters during the time they lived in Toronto. A fifth child was born when 'R.R.' was promoted to a position with the C.P.R. in Smiths Falls, Ontario, but the boy died in infancy.

'R.R.' became Superintendent of the C.P.R.'s Western Division and was posted to Calgary. After being promoted to General Superintendent of the CPR's Central Division at Winnipeg, he retired after being elected Mayor of Calgary in 1909. He served until early in 1911, when he became ill. He died on May 30th, 1911 at the age of 54.

Alice Jamieson became extremely active after her husband's death. She was a founding member of Calgary's YWCA. She became the first president and the driving force behind the Calgary Local Council of Women. * The CLCW lobbied for the enfranchisement of Alberta women in 1916, legal aid for women and the inclusion of women on local boards and government committees. (*information from the Glenbow Museum Archives)

Alice was a very proud Canadian. She always said that she was more Canadian than those born here. "I chose to be Canadian", she would point out.

In 1916, Alice became the first woman to be appointed Judge of a Juvenile Court in the British Empire. She later became the second female police Magistrate in Canada presiding over the Calgary Women's Court.

In 1917 a lawyer appealed Judge Alice Jamieson's ruling in a case. He cited that she was legally "incompetent and incapable" of officiating in the matter as women were not considered to be 'persons' under the law in Canada. The Supreme Court of Alberta found in Jamieson's favour, confirming her right to hold office.

Alice served for many years before ill health forced her to retire. She died June 4th, 1949 in Calgary at the age of 88 years, 11 months.

