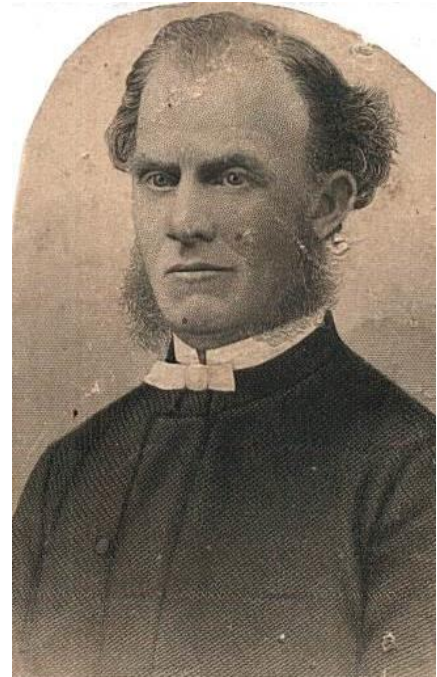


UEL HALL OF HONOUR

REV. ALFRED BYRON DEMILL UE & LUCELIA (HURD) DEMILL UE

Alfred Byron Demill was born on 10 July 1831 in Northport, Sophiasburgh Township in Prince Edward County. At the age of 15 he established a small tin stove and hardware business in Shannonville, which he ran for 5 years. He then went to study at Victoria College in Cobourg and in 1861 became a minister for the New Connection Methodist Church. He preached in Prince Edward County, Haldimand County and Ontario County over the next ten years. His final assignment was in Brock County. Lucelia Hurd was born on 24 September 1837 and was married to Demille in August of 1854. She also came from an educated background. Their only child, Frances Amelia Demill was born in Brock on 10 January 1870. During the years that Rev. Demill was on circuits he gave much thought to the subject of female education, and thought about creating a school in the province. Prior to commencing this enterprise, he visited many schools for the education of women in Canada and the Eastern and Middle States, spending nearly a year in making careful observations of their workings, the best methods of conducting them, and the best style of building for such purposes. Having fully completed his plans, he selected a location in Oshawa, overlooking Lake Ontario, commenced the building on the 1st of May, 1874, and opened Demill Ladies' College on 1 February, 1876.



The focus of the school was primarily on preparing the girls for domestic life as a housewife, and thus much of the focus of the school was on instilling moral values onto the girls, as well as religious instruction. The school only accepted girls who were 16 or older, and in order to keep costs down, the students also served as the domestic staff for the college, and they performed tasks such as cleaning. While the school was nondenominational, girls were still expected to attend Christian services while they were enrolled, and day students were also refused to ensure that the girls did not have many ties to the local area. The building was four stories high, with a capacity for accommodating 110 students. Reverend Demill served as the President of the College, and in an unusually liberal view for the times, his wife Lucelia was appointed to serve as the Principal for the school.

Demill Ladies' College published an annual calendar of its offerings, staff and students. The school soon developed a high reputation throughout the nation, as their staff was often held in high regard, and their low tuition rates allowed a broad range of people to attend the school. Courses in Ancient languages, modern languages, English, fine arts, music, and even the sciences later on in the college's life cycle were offered. A fire destroyed the school in 1896 during the Easter Break, but rather than rebuild in Oshawa, Rev. Demill opted to move the college to an existing building in St. Catharines. His wife died there on 12 November 1897. Reverend Demill died in Peterborough on 11 June 1913. They were both buried in Victoria Lawn Cemetery, St. Catharines, Ontario.

Reverend Alfred Byron Demill was a descendant of Isaac Demille UE and his wife Lucelia Hurd Demille was a descendant of Thomas Goldsmith UE, both settler in the Bay of Quinte region. They were inducted into our UEL Hall of Honour by Janet Eggleton at our branch meeting on November 12, 2022.