



Dr. Jennie Kidd Trout

(1841-1927)

Dr. Jennie Trout was born in Kelso, Scotland in 1841. In 1847, at the age of six, she immigrated with her parents to Ellice Township, Ontario where she attended public school. In 1860 she moved to Toronto to attend the Normal School for Upper Canada where she graduated in 1861. She then returned to Stratford, Ontario, where she began her career as a teacher. She taught from 1861 to 1865. In 1865 she married Edward Trout. Soon after marriage, Dr. Trout developed personal health problems. This inspired her to pursue a career in medicine.

In 1871, Dr. Trout was one of two women who fought for admission to a one-year qualification course at the Toronto School of Medicine. They were admitted and Dr. Trout completed the course but no medical schools in Canada would accept women to medical school. She therefore transferred to the Woman's Medical College in Pennsylvania. She graduated in 1875 with her medical degree and returned to Canada. She wrote and passed the licensure examination for the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario. On March 11, 1875, Dr. Trout became the first woman to be licensed to practice medicine in Canada. She remained the only Canadian female to be licensed to practice medicine until 1880.

In 1875, Dr. Trout opened a medical practice with her colleague (and fellow Woman's Medical College graduate) Dr. Emily Tefft. She specialized in electrotherapy for women. She opened a free dispensary for patients that could not afford to pay and took on speaking engagements to fund it. In 1877, Dr. Trout and Dr. Tefft expanded their practice to open the Medical and Electro Therapeutic Institute in Toronto, Brantford, and Hamilton. In 1882, due to demands on her personal health, Dr. Trout retired from medical practice at the age of 41.

After retirement, Dr. Trout continued to advocate for medical education for women. In 1883 a group of doctors from the Toronto school of medicine were planning a new medical school for women in Toronto. Trout promised \$10,000 of financial support on the condition that women formed the majority of the Board of Trustees and were allowed to teach on faculty. Her proposal was rejected. Instead, Trout became involved with the creation of the Woman's Medical College in Kingston, Ontario. In 1894, the Woman's Medical College and the Toronto's Medical College merged to become the Ontario Medical College for Women in Toronto. After retirement, Dr. Trout also became President of the Women's Temperance Union and Vice President of the Association for the Advancement of Women. On November 10, 1921, Dr. Trout passed away in Hollywood, California.

In 1991, in honor of Dr. Trout's outstanding contribution to the Canadian healthcare landscape, Canada Post released a postage stamp featuring her photo. That same year, a Canadian Heritage Minute video was released, highlighting her accomplishment and the adversity she overcame. It aired on both the CBC and CTV networks. Since 2021, March 11 (the date of Dr. Trout's licensure) is known as Canadian Women Physicians' Day.