



You are cordially invited to attend  
the formal opening of  
*The Union Missionary Medical  
School for Women*  
by  
His Excellency The Right Hon'ble  
*Baron Pentland of Lyth, P.C., G.C.I.E.*  
The Governor of Madras,  
at the Medical School Premises, Vellore,  
On Monday, 12th August, 1918, at 8.30 a.m.

## The Summer of 1918

*'We look forward to the time when all young women of the Madras Presidency preparing for the profession of medicine will seek enrollment in the Medical School at Vellore.'*

~ Anna Kugler, 1918

Towards the end of the First World War, on 12 August 1918, a British military doctor of the Madras Presidency was going to speak at the inauguration of a medical school in South India. Suspecting correctly that the little school in rented buildings did not possess a skeleton for anatomy classes, Col. Reginald Bryson decided to take one with him. The skeleton, decorously boxed, travelled by train from Madras to Vellore, where it became the teacher of anatomy for fourteen girls. The school's professor of anatomy was also its principal, Dr. Ida Sophia Scudder. The school had only two medical teachers.

Four years later, when the girls graduated, the professor of anatomy had become the professor of gynaecology. The beautifully planned graduation ceremony was held under a tent, since the school still had little in the way of buildings. Present at the ceremony was Dr. Anna Kugler, the first woman medical missionary in South India. She wrote a little booklet to commemorate the occasion. Self-effacing, Dr. Kugler did not include her full name in the booklet. The final lines read:

### EPILOGUE

We look forward to the time when all young women of the Madras Presidency preparing for the profession of medicine will seek enrollment in the Medical School at Vellore. This little booklet is written that the students of the future will be able to know something of the ambitions and aspirations of the First Class of Students and be stimulated thereby to such noble efforts that women of India will bless the day that saw the establishment of the Vellore School of Medicine for Women.

~ ASK

Why did Dr. Kugler have such aspirations for a fledgling institution? What happened to the school in the four decades that followed? We will seek answers in the lives and voices of those who enabled the birth of that medical college.

*The invitation to the opening of the Union Missionary Medical School for Women in 1918. (Preceding pages, 16-17) The Medical College campus, facing south from College Hill, 2011.*

*Before the hills in order stood  
Or earth received her frame  
From everlasting Thou art God  
To endless years the same...*

~ Isaac Watts, 1719