



Montgomery Historical Society
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Rev Grace Brooks

Believed to be the first woman in the State of Vermont to be an ordained minister.

Excerpted from "Montgomery, Vermont: The History of a Town

It was also a member of the Baptist church who was to seek a unique vocation for one of her sex. At a time when women commonly stayed in the home, Montgomery's Miss Grace Brooks sought out the ministry as her profession. "On November 3, 1922, a good company of people met in the Baptist Church at Georgia Plains to consider the advisability of setting apart to the Gospel Ministry Miss Grace Brooks," it was stated in the church's minutes for that date. "The candidate was then introduced by the Moderator Dr. W. A. Davison after which she gave an account of her conversion, declaration of faith and Christian doctrine.

After a brief questioning it was moved by Rev. J. S. Brown and seconded by Deacon C. H. Wood and unanimously voted to accept Miss Brooks for ordination." Miss Brooks had previously acted as a supply pastor for this church in 1908 and later as a regular pastor in 1919. By the time she retired she had served as a regular pastor for twenty-eight years.

She was a determined lady: once during her pastorate a heavy snow storm prevented many parishioners from attending church-in fact, only seven gathered around the warm box stove in

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the vestry. At the appointed time Reverend Brooks announced, "when only seven gather in Thy name I preach the sermon just the same" and promptly proceeded with the hour-long service. When Miss Brooks finally retired in 1947, it marked the end of forty-one years of Christian service in the state of Vermont. It was a unique accomplishment for a woman of her day and age.

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