



DR. ANNIE (AMELIA) BACKHOUSE (BACKUS)

1907 - 1909

Dr. Annie A. Backhouse was the daughter of John H. and Sarah D. Backhouse. She was born in 1856 and raised in the family home, the large brick house above the Backus Mill, north of Port Rowan, Norfolk County. She attended private schools and graduated from Bishop Strachan School, Toronto.

As a teenager, aged 18 or 19, she married Albert Hamilton Backus. She graduated as a Medical Doctor from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, and practiced in Adrian, Michigan. She did post-graduate studies at Chicago University, Chicago, Illinois. She wanted to return to Canada and set up a practice, but authorities insisted upon four or five years at Medical School here. She insisted upon writing the examinations without attendance. Col. Pratt, M.P.P. used his influence and had a special order-in-council to allow Annie to write. She passed with "flying colours".

She set up a practice in Aylmer West, Ontario, approximately 1898, living at "Greenwoods" estate, one block west of the Aylmer Collegiate Institute. Both she and her husband liked horses and they showed in horsemanship at the fairs.

Dr. Backus organized the Aylmer Women's Institute in 1902, Courtland W. I. in June 8, 1906 in the Soldiers' Memorial Hall and the Port Rowan W. I. in 1918.

She served as the first District President of the Elgin East District Women's Institute during the years 1907-1909.

At the time of her Mother's death in 1918, she returned to Port Rowan and set up her practice there. Her patients were mostly women and children and she was kind to the poor. She lectured for the Ontario Department of Agriculture especially in Northern Ontario.

Dr. Annie Backus died June 16, 1938, age 83, and is buried in the Backhouse plot in the Bay View Cemetery, Port Rowan, Ontario.



MRS. D.D. FINCH

1909 - 1911

Mrs. Finch, nee Amy Charlton, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Charlton, was born on the 11th Concession of South Dorchester township, $3/4$ mile east of Mapleton. She was raised on the farm and attended Mapleton Public School. Her grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. John McLachlan, settled on this farm in 1847 and built their home of mud and stone which was plastered white. The walls were one foot thick, and there were fireplaces in each room. A verandah was on three sides of the house. At the age of 12 her grandfather gave her a piano and she took lessons from the local music teacher.

In 1883 she married D. D. Finch, and settled on the Gostick farm, just east of her parents home. Here they raised a family of three children, one son and two daughters.

Mrs. Finch was the first President of the Mapleton Womens' Institute which was organized in January 1907. (At that time there were only five branches and six branches were needed to form a district. After talking with the ladies at Richmond, Mrs. D. Anna Backus and Mrs. Finch drove a horse and buggy there and organized the Bayham branch. It was an all day trip, 15 miles each way. Thus was formed the District Womens' Institute of East Elgin, under the supervision of the Farmer's Institute.)

Mrs. Finch was appointed 1st Vice President, and in 1909 she became president of the District, which office she held for two years. She helped to organize branches at Luton, Lyons, Lakeview, Copenhagen and South Yarmouth.

After the London Area was formed in 1914, she was asked to preside at one of the afternoon meetings held in the old Y.M.C.A. in London. Later when the Federation of Institutes was formed, she was asked to explain this new name to all the branches in East Elgin, and was appointed the First Federated Representative. When Byron Sanatorium was started, she and Mrs. D. Anna Backus helped turn the first sod.

Mrs. Finch was an energetic worker in the Church of Christ Disciples, the Womens Institute, the old Mapleton Literary Society. She was also a charter member of Verdun Chapter # 36, Order of the Eastern Star, and was presented with a Life Membership in that order.

She was a kind and generous neighbour, always willing to help in times of sickness and death in the community. She lived to be 80 years of age, and her interest in her church, the W. I., her fraternal societies, and her friends and neighbours never waned.

Mrs. Finch passed away February 8th, 1946, and was laid to rest in the family plot beside the Mapleton Church.



MRS. D.O. WHITE

1911 - 1913

Mrs. Laura Lenentine of Indianapolis, Ind; married Mr. David White of Mapleton, in 1906. She had three daughters, Mrs. Louise Leathers of Kingsmill, (deceased 1958), Mrs. Mae Wolfer, Jamestown, North Dakota, and Mrs. Jean Mahoney of Boston, Mass. Mr. White had one daughter, later Mrs. Mabel Campbell, Detroit, Michigan.

In 1907 Mrs. White helped organize the Kingsmill- Mapleton Women's Institute and served as its President from 1909 to 1913. From 1911 to 1913 she was District President and was called upon to speak at the Toronto Conference, which she did in her usual emphatic but charming manner. She was presented with a life Membership certificate in November 1934.

Mrs. D. O. White was a beloved and active resident of the Kingsmill-Mapleton area for 41 years. During her lifetime at Mapleton she was also active in Lodge and Church work. She was Worthy Matron of Verdun Chapter of the Eastern Star, Kingsmill, and a member of the Church of Christ Disciples at Mapleton, holding offices in the Christian Women's Board of Missions from time to time. She was hostess many times to the Institute and the C.W. B. M. in their home, well known in the district as "Cedar Lodge." She was a fluent speaker and an avid reader, always interested in new and better ways for the women of her district to function as helpmates to their husbands and as inspiration to their children.

Mrs. Laura White died February 22, 1940, at the home of her daughter Mrs. Roy Wolfer, Jamestown, North Dakota.



MRS. JAMES C. HAGGAN

1913 - 1915

Mrs. James Craig Haggan was the former Ellen Eldora McDonald, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Robert McDonald.

Mrs. Haggan spent her lifetime in Aylmer and the vicinity. It was while she was residing on the farm near Luton that she joined the Luton Branch of the Women's Institute where she took an active part in all phases of the work.

Mrs. Haggan was a member of the Aylmer Baptist Church, and was for several years president of the Ladies Aid Society. She was also a member of the Mission Circle and a member of the choir for more than sixty-five years.

She was a woman of many and varied talents and was also an amateur artist of considerable note.

Upon retiring from farming, Mr. and Mrs. Haggan moved to Aylmer, where she died in July, 1949.



MRS. A. B. RIDDELL
1915-1916.

Mrs. (Dr) A. B. (Susan) Riddell was the daughter of Mr and Mrs. Wm. Ford of North H^{all}. She was married to Dr. Riddell in 1905. They had three children: One son, the late Fenton Riddell of Orillia; two daughters, Miss Letitia Gwen Riddell and Margaret Elizabeth Riddell, both of 145 St. George St., Toronto, 5, Ontario.

In the summer of 1907 the Bayham Womens' Institute was organized in her home and she was elected its first president. She held this office from 1907 till 1910, and was president again in 1924 to 1926. She held the office of Secretary-Treasurer from 1912 to 1914. At the first meeting after the Institute was orgaized she demonstrated "Making a Carrot Pudding". At another meeting, "Lessons on Cooking." A few of her outstanding talks were "Womens Influence on the Empire", "Home Influence on the Y oung", and "Dishpan Science". She held several other offices in the Institute, and worked on diff erent committee s.

She was active in Red Cross work during the First World Was. Mrs. Riddell was also active in the Richmond U nited Ladies Aid, being president of that organization for some time. She was also very interested in amateur acting, taking a very active part as director and also in playing parts in which she showed great talent. In 1922 she worked energetically on the committee which was formed to have cement sidewalks built in the Village of Richmond.

In 1962 an autograph quilt was made for the 55th Anniversary of Bayham Institute. Mrs. Riddell's name was placed in a very prominent place.

Mrs. Riddell is now deceased.



MRS. J.W. BOYES

1916-1917

Mrs. J. W. (Jean S.) Boyes was a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. William Fairweather, and was born in West Nissouri Township.

She lived at Lyons with her husband from 1904 until his death in 1944. She moved to Aylmer in 1946, residing at 15 St. Andrews Street. Her family included one son, William Boyes, of Weston; and two daughters Miss Jean L. Boyes, of Hamilton and Mrs. Harry (Jessie) Gassard of Toronto. She also had one grand-daughter, Mrs. Paul (Mary) Stager of Toronto.

Mrs. Boyes served as President of East Elgin District while she was a member of the Lyons W. I. Upon moving to Aylmer she became a member of that branch, and was a Life Member of Aylmer W. I., also a life member of East Elgin District.

She was a member of St. Paul's United Church, Aylmer, where she taught the Bible Class for seven years. She was also a member of the U.C.W. of the Church.

Mrs. Boyes died at the Memorial Hospital, St. Thomas at the age of 89, July 12, 1966 after being in ill health for eighteen months. She was buried in the family plot at Clipperton Cemetery, West Nissouri township.

MRS. GEORGE LINDSAY

1917 - 1918

Mrs. George Lindsay, the former Elva Woolley, daughter of Wesley Woolley, was born in South Dorchester, 1 mile north of Springfield on March 25, 1868.

She received her early education in South Dorchester. Elva Woolley became the bride of George Lindsay on March 23, 1887, and they resided in Malahide near Glencolin, for 18 years then returned to take over the family farm near Springfield where they lived until about 1920 when they retired to the village of Springfield.

They raised two sons, Osmun and Arnold. Arnold died in 1956, and his two sons George and Max are both deceased. Osmun has a daughter, M. Elva (Mrs. Foster of Tillsonburg, R. R. # 2,) and a son, Carl who still lives on the farm originally bought by Wesley Woolley and where Mrs. George Lindsay was born. It is the same house which Carl lives in, that was built by Wesley Woolley when Elva Woolley was five years old. Osmun Lindsay farmed this land and lived there until his death in 1972.

Mrs. Lindsay was interested in Institute work and she was president of East Elgin District for one year, 1917 to 1918. She attended St. John's United Church and Arkess Rebekah Lodge in Springfield.

Mr. and Mrs. George Lindsay celebrated their 61st wedding anniversary on March 23, 1948.

Mrs. Lindsay died on January 29, 1953, and is buried in the Aylmer Cemetery.



Acknowledgement: Information and picture courtesy of Mrs. M. Elva Foster, R. R. #2, Tillsonburg.
April, 1973.



MRS. T. GORDON WINDER

1918 to 1919

Coming to Lyons in 1904 as a bride, Mrs. Winder served loyally, sparing no time or effort to further a project which would be beneficial to the community in which she lived.

From the time of institution of Lyons Women's Institute, in 1908, Mrs. Winder held many offices in her home Branch, and in addition was, District Secretary 1911-1915, District President 1918-1919, and again District Secretary 1921 to 1931, a period of 10 years.

During her membership and time in District Office Mrs. Winder advocated

- 1 Improvement and assistance in various communities.
- 2 Medical inspection and a school nurse in schools.
- 3 Building of Hospital
- 4 Building of home for the aged.

5 Assisted in the institution of branches in Lakeview, Corinth, Sparta, Union North Yarmouth and Pt. Burwell.

As a member of St. Paul's United Church, Aylmer, Mrs. Winder worked faithfully in various organizations of the Church, particularly among the children.

Also claiming her interest and support was Verdun Chapter, Order of the Eastern Star, of which she was a Past Matron and, During both World Wars was an active member of the Red Cross.

Mrs. Winder passed away in St. Paul's United Church Aylmer, in 1949, three years after the death of her husband, two daughters survive Mrs. J.A. Irvine, and Mrs. P.R. Locke. At the time of her death she was President of Women's Division of Aylmer and East Elgin Agricultural Society. Provincial Representative for counties of Essex, Kent and Elgin in the Ontario Fall Fairs Association.



MRS. FRED HAGGAN

1919- 1920

Mrs. Haggan, the former Hazel Caron, was the daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. John Caron of Malahide township. After her marriage to Mr. Haggan, the son of Mr. and Mrs. J. C. Haggan of Luton, they resided with his parents on the farm, at what was then known as Haggans Corner. It was while she was living here that she joined the Luton branch of the Women's Institute, serving as District President in 1919 - 1920. Mrs. Haggan was 1st vice president of the Provincial board of Ontario when Mrs. Walker of Stoney Creek was president.

Mrs. Haggan is a devoted member of the Aylmer Baptist Church. She has been active in all the various women's organizations connected with the Church. She is also a member of the Eastern Star.

About 1935 they retired from farming and moved to Aylmer where Mr. Haggan took over the Massey-Harris-Ferguson dealership, which he managed until his death several years ago.