



MRS. CHARLES MINARD

1935 to 1937

Mrs. Charles H. (Mary) Minard was born at West Lorne on October 14, 1866, one of seventeen children in the family of Mary McCallum and Richard Axford.

Mary Axford and Charles H. Minard were married by Rev. C. Cousens of West Lorne, May 27, 1884. Her family later moved to North Dakota, U.S.A.

Mary came as a bride to live with her husband on the Minard family farm Lot 22, Concession 6 Yarmouth township, with his parents Mr. and Mrs. Adney Minard. She lived here for the remaining sixty years of her life.

Charles Minard died in 1939.

Mrs. Minard taught school as a very young girl before her marriage and was always interested in community life and church activities.

She was a member of the Methodist Church in Sparta, (later the United Church) and taught Sunday School for many years after her marriage, driving a horse and buggy a distance of three miles.

During world War 1, a group of women of Cole's School Section No 13, Yarmouth formed a sewing circle to assist with Red Cross Work. This continued after the war as a friendly community group under the name of Willing Workers. Mrs. Minard was the third President.

During her presidency the name was changed to Sorosis Society, (Sorosis" being the Greek Word for sisterhood).

In 1930 the organization merged into the larger organization of the Sparta Sorosis Womens' Institute, it being Mrs. Minard's expressed wish that the name "Sorosis" be retained. Mrs. Minard was the first secretary-treasurer of the new organization, a position she held until 1935, when she served for one year as president.

Mrs. Minard was President of East Elgin District Womens Institute in 1935-1937 with Mrs. Carlton Dance as Secretary.



MRS. EARL HANEY

1937 - 1939

Mrs. L. E. Haney, nee Mae Falkins, was born in Culloden, Oxford County, where she attended public school. In those days there was a little opportunity for advanced education unless one lived in a larger centre. Mrs. Haney left her paternal home at the age of 12 years to attend the Springfield Continuation Achool, and concluded her secondary education in 1913. Attendance at the London Normal School followed.

In 1964, on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of her graduation from the London Normal School, she was presented with a Life Membership Certificate as a member of the London Teachers' College Alumni.

Mrs. Haney taught school in East Elgin for twelve years and was at one time President of the East Elgin Teachers' Institute.

Mrs. Haney's ancestors were among the pioneers of the hamlet of Culloden. Her maternal grandparents, the late Frederick Richards and Sophia Johnson came from Nottingham, England, in 1869. Her paternal ancestry originated in Scotland and Wales. They settled in Newfoundland, and came to Culloden in 1890, where her great grandfather, the late Joel Waite, was the collector of fees on the toll road at Culloden, midway between Ingersoll and Richmond. These families are mentioned as early settlers in the Tweedsmuir History of the Culloden Womens' Institute.

While residing in Malahide township after her marriage, Mrs Haney became interested in Womens' Institute work and joined the Springfield branch. After serving her branch two years as President, she held the office of District President from 1937 to 1939. She then advanced to the Provincial Board of Directors and was appointed Provincial Convenor of Social Welfare in 1942.

In April, 1941, Mrs. Haney entered the Social Work field and was in the employ of the St. Thomas and Elgin County Childrens' Aid Society for the next 18 years. It is in that field that she is best known and remembered as the work was intensive and far-reaching, especially durin the years of World War 2, when social help was in such great demand. She advanced her knowlege of Social Work by attending an intensive course at the University of Toronto Shcool of Social Work.

Mrs. Haney resigned her work in 1958 due to ill-health and has retired from active duties. She resides in St. Thomas. Among the most pleasant memories of a busy life are those associated with her work with the Women's Institute.

MRS. WILLIAM H. LEGG

1939 - 1941

Mary Elizabeth Caughell was born on March 28, 1882, the daughter of Henry and Susan Caughell of New Sarum. She was educated in New Sarum and Aylmer.

In 1910 she married William H. Legg and they resided on the homestead, R. R. #3, Belmont, for 39 years.

From 1931 to 1935, Mrs. Legg served as 2nd vice-president, 1st vice-president and president respectively of the Kingsmill-Mapleton Women's Institute. She was District Director for East Elgin from 1935 to 1939 and then was president of the East Elgin District from 1939 to 1941.

Mrs. Legg was a leader of the 4-H Girls Homemaking Clubs from 1935 to 1939. In 1936 while she was a leader of the 4-H Supper Club, the judging team won many honours at the C.N.E. Toronto and at the Western Fair, London.

By, a member stating the invisibility of the now known Norfolk and Western Railway crossing just north of New Sarum, Ontario, at a meeting of the Crossley-Hunter group, where two fatal tragedies had occurred and also another couple narrowly escaping the identical fate, Mrs. William (Mary E.) Legg was appointed to interview the Railway Company. Consequences were the brush was cleared away and "flashing signals" installed shortly thereafter.

Mrs. Legg, not having any family, seemingly had the extra time to prove her cleverness and talents in achievements for the Women's Institute, the Red Cross and the community. She was active in musical circles and contributed to the community by singing and accompanying herself on the auto harp. She served the Rebekah Lodge, No. 239, Belmont as noble grand and district deputy president. She was highly esteemed by all who knew her.

Mrs. William Legg passed away December 17, 1949, at the age of 67 years.



MRS. WARD BENNER

1941- 1943

Mrs. Ward Benner was the former Annie Crane. She was a very popular public school teacher after her graduation from Normal School at London. She married Ward Benner of the township of Malahide and they reside at R R # 1 Aylmer, and a daughter Mrs. Max (Jean) Mitchell at R R # 1 Eden, and a son Murray at R R # 1, Aylmer.

Mrs. Benner Joined the Bayham Women's Institute in 1924 and has been an active member ever since. She was elected president in 1933 and held that office until 1938. In 1941-1943 she was District President of East Elgin Womens Institute.

In 1949 Mrs. Benner brought honour to the Bayham Womens Institute by being elected a member of the Provincial Board, which position she held for three years. The branch presented her with an Ontario Board Member badge at a meeting held at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Max Mitchell.

Mrs. Benner has been active in community work. She attends the Richmond United Church and Sunday School. She taught the Brotherhood class for a number of years. In later years she taught the combined Busy Bee and Brotherhood class every other month. She was also active in the former Ladies' Aid, the Womens Association and later the U.C.W. She was President of the former groups and also held other offices. She was also president of the Women's Missionary Society for a number of years. She was always ready to help when asked.

In their home life Mr. And Mrs. Benner have been successful tobacco growers.



MRS. W. C. WHEATON

1943 - 1945

Mrs. W. C. Wheaton, the former Beatrice Moss, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. F. S. Moss, was born August 11, 1898, in Sandusky, Ohio.

In 1899, the family moved to Leamington, Ontario, where she attended the public and high schools. Then she went to the Margaret Eaton School, Toronto, where she studied languages, dramatics, ballet and history. After graduation, she married Port Stanley druggist, W. C. Wheaton on October 4, 1922. They have one daughter, Sheila, now Mrs. Park, Toronto.

Mrs. Wheaton was a member of the Port Stanley Presbyterian Church, a life member of the Women's Missionary Society and served a term as provincial president of the W.M.S. attending council meetings of the Synod in Toronto. She was a president of the St. Thomas Art Association and also of the Port Stanley Women's Institute.

Mrs. Wheaton passed away July 10, 1965, and is buried in the family plot at Leamington Lakeview Cemetery.

MRS. HARLEY EVERT

1945 - 1947

Mrs. Harley Evert was the former Hazel Mildred Bennett, and was born in Bayham Township, the daughter of Thomas and Amelia (Hiepleh) Bennett. Previous to her marriage to Harley Evert, she was a school teacher, teaching at Luton, Lakeview, and Straffordville. Following her marriage she resided on the Evert homestead near Fairview.

Mrs. Evert was a life member of the Women's Institute, being at different times a member of Lakeview, Luton and Calton branches. She served as District President in the years 1945 - 1947.

She was a devoted member of the Fairview United Church where she taught the Adult Bible Class for many years. She was a past president of the Women's Association, a life member of the W.M.S. and a member of the United Church Women.

She was also a past president of the Women's Section of the Aylmer Fair Board on which she served for a number of years. Participating in all worthy community activities, Mrs. Evert truly lived up to the Institute motto--For Home and Country.

She died at the Evert homestead near Fairview in January 1963.



MRS. C.M. WILLIAMS.

1947-1949

Mrs. C. M. Williams, (Mary Elizabeth Baker) St. Thomas, was born on a farm on the 10th concession of North Yarmouth, Elgin County, the youngest of the four children of Mary Jane Miller and Thomas Baker. She attended S.S.#23 Yarmouth, St. Thomas Collegiate Institute, and London Normal School. After teaching in rural public schools for 8 years, she married Cyril Moorhouse Williams. They have 5 children and 19 grandchildren have been added to the family.

In 1930 the North Yarmouth Women's Institute was organized. She is a charter member, and, was president in 1933 and again in 1958. She was president of East Elgin District Women's Institute in 1947- 1948, and Chairman of the London Area W. I in 1950 to 1952. In 1962 she was appointed at the London Area W.I. convention as the London Area Curator.

She is an active member of Grace United Church, St. Thomas and has held many offices in the congregation. She is a lay delegate to the Elgin Presbytery and to the London Conference of the United Church.

In 1960 she was lay commissioner, from Elgin Presbytery to the General Council of the United Church of Canada, in Edmonton, Alberta, and was concerned with the organizing of the united Church Women.

The work of the Women' s Missionary Society was of special interest, and, after holding many offices, on the Elgin Presbyterial level, served as President in 1954 to 1956 and again in 1960-1961.

During World War 2 she was active in Red Cross, and served as secretary of the Yarmouth Township Red Cross Society. Community activities and recently the Elgin County Pioneer Museum have been other interests.



MRS. E WHEATLEY

1949- 1951

Mrs. Wheatley a resident of Aylmer, joined the Women's Institute in Echo Place, Brantford in 1936, moving later to Port Stanley, where she was President of the W.I. from 1944 to 1948. At. present she is a member of Aylmer W. I. having been Secretary Twice, and now serving her fourth year as president of Aylmer, W.I. She was district president from 1949 to 1951.

Mrs. Wheatley is also interested in Eastern Star work, and is Past District Deputy of the Eastern Star of Ontario.



MISS HELEN MARTYN
1951-1953

Miss Helen Martyn is the only daughter of the late Mr. Arthur and Evelyn Roberts) Martyn. She has two brothers George and Arthur. She attended Sparta Continuation School and the St. Thomas Collegiate Institute. She also completed a business course at the Arthur Voaden Vocational School and studied dramatics at Alma College.

Helen has lived all of her life on the family farm in Yarmouth on the Sparta-Union road. She was a young girl when her mother died and she remained, her Father's companion until his death in 1960. At that time she was faced with a difficult decision, but chose to remain on the home farm which she manages most successfully.

Helen's interest in Women's Institute work began with the Elgin Girls Junior Institute of which she served a term as President. She then continued her interest as a member of the Sparta Sorosis W.I. where she twice served as secretary and also years as President, one year in 1947 and two years in 1963-64.

It was during her first term of office as president of that branch in 1947, that the historic old blacksmith shop became "Ye Olde Forge and Anvil" and its formal opening as an Institute hall took place.

Helen served as district president in 1951-1953 and originated the idea of compiling a District History of Women's Institutes in Elgin County.

She has also been actively interested in the Sparta United Church, where she is at present serving as a member of the Board of Session and Assistant Superintendent of the Sunday School, as well as being active in the work of the United Church Women.