

Citizens - M.E. Ladies Aid Society

By Barbara Bedau Brow
White Lake Area Historical Society



M. E. Ladies Aid Society about 1911: Standing L to R – Mrs. James Dillabaugh, Mrs. H. H. Boyden, Mrs. A. L. Dickenson, Mrs. Hattie Stewart, Mrs. Ella Hawks, Mrs. Nellie Moreau Whitbeck, Mrs. M. W. Ripley, Mrs. Emma Titus, Mrs. Martha Rogers, Mrs. Kittridge, Mrs. Joseph Pike, Mrs. Joseph Apoll, Mrs. Wiley.

Seated L to R – Mrs. Flood, Mrs. Van Lear, Mrs. Geboo, one of the Ripley girls, Mrs. L. G. Ripley, Mrs. Ellen Smith and Eleanor, Mrs. Gerald Whitbeck, Mrs. Walworth, Mrs. Ernest Hulbert, Mrs. Emily Lanford, Mrs. Henry Hulbert.

This is another one of many wonderful historic pictures that can be found at the Montague Museum. Fortunately, someone took the time to identify the ladies that are pictured.

Back in the day, it seems that women were known by their husband's name while he was alive, then by their own first name after he died. But not always. Their close friend probably addressed them by their first names.

Thought it would be interesting to put given names with the faces and find out a little bit more about these women. Some of the spelling of the names has also been corrected based on records that were

found. Instead of listing the names alphabetically, they are listed in the same order as they appear in the picture.

Mrs. James Dillabaugh – Sarah Malma Robinson was the daughter of Robert and Rosella Eddy Robinson. She was born in Livingston County, MI, on 20 April 1849. James Maitland Dillabaugh was born 26 Jul 1840 in Ontario, Canada. He immigrated to the US with his parents when a small boy. When the Civil War broke out, he enlisted three different times and was assigned to the Second Battalion of Veteran Reserve Corps which saw much active service. He was honorably discharge at the close of the war 31 January 1866. Sarah married James Maitland Dillabaugh at Oneida in Eaton County on 6 October 1867. The next spring, they came to Montague where they continued to live until their deaths. During their marriage, they would have eight children, five of whom lived to adulthood. James died at his home 3 October 1909. Sarah was a member of the M.E. Church and the Eastern Star. She died at her home 15 December 1918

Mrs. H. H. Boyden – Florence Theodocia Betts was the daughter of Peter Betts and Sarah Hoy and was born in Ohio 24 June 1859. She married Harvey Howard Boyden around 1875. They would have 9 children. Sometime between 1900 and 1910 they made their way to Montague where they lived on Prospect Street. Harvey worked as a carpenter. By 1920 they had moved to Muskegon where Florence died at her home on 20 August 1920. H. H. Boyden died on 15 October 1935 in Mount Clements.

Mrs. A. L. Dickinson – Ida May Wooster was born in October 1856 in New York. She married Aldamar L. Dickinson on 13 October 1881 in O'Brien, Iowa. They came to White Lake where A. L. Dickinson operated a blacksmith shop in Whitehall while living in Montague. He later operated the Montague Roller Mill. By 1920 they had moved to the Flint area. During their marriage, they had two daughters: Winnifred and Grace. Ida May died in Flint 25 June 1939. Mr. Dickinson was born in Cayuga County, NY 24 September 1854. He died 26 February 1940 in Flint.

Mrs. Hattie Stewart – Hattie Mutz was the daughter of John Mutz and his wife Phoebe Williams. She was born 9 December 1864 in Nebraska. On 1 April 1884, Hattie married Adrian T. Stewart in Auburn, Nebraska. They had three children. Adrian was born in West Point, Iowa 13 July 1857. By 1920 they had moved to Montague where he founded the White Lake Oil Company. Hattie died in Montague 14 July 1937. Adrian died in Elgin, Illinois 27 Jan 1946.

Mrs. Ella Hawks – Ella A. Rowe was born in Leviston County, New York on 31 December 1858. She was the daughter of William A. Rowe and Elizabeth Hewitt. By the 1870 Census, she and her siblings and parents had moved to Montague. She married William Hawks in Montague on 18 July 1880. They had no children. Her husband William was born in White River 17 Jul 1859. He died in Montague 16 Mar 1919. Ella died 19 Jun 1919 in Grand Rapids.

Mrs. Nellie Whitbeck – Nellie Eldora Dodge was the daughter of Isaac Dodge and Julia Quick, and born in Lowell MI 4 March 1869. On 24 October 1906 she married Moreau S. Crosby Whitbeck in Gowen, Montcalm, MI, coming at once to Montague to live. She was prominent in social and fraternal circles. She served as state president of the Women's Relief Corps in 1910 and was promoted to the exalted position of national vice president of that order in 1911. She was a matron of the Montague O.E.S. lodge and served as master of the Lonsdale Grange. She was a lifelong member of the M.E. church and was an active member in the Ladies Aid Society. Nellie died at her farmhouse on 17 February 1932. Moreau

was the son of Gerard and Minerva Whitbeck of this area and was born 24 May 1870. He died at Mercy Hospital in Muskegon 24 January 1938.

Mrs. M. W. Ripley – Katherine Webster married Montague Woolsey Ripley, son of L. G. Ripley and his first wife May Brackney, on the 25 August 1903 in Albion, MI. They had 5 children. Katherine was born in England 13 January 1878. M. W. Ripley was born in Montague 28 September 1878, and where he lived most of his life. By 1940 they had moved to the Lansing area. M. W. Ripley died in Lansing 31 August 1943. Katherine died 31 December 1948 in Grand Rapids as a result of injuries she sustained in an automobile accident, which also injured her three daughters.

Mrs. Emma Titus – Emma was born Emma Aley, daughter of William Aley and Caroline Fass in White River in 1871. She married Frank Titus 12 February 1899 in White River. They had no children. Frank was born 27 Aug 1866 in Ohio. He was a sailor on the Great Lakes for many years and later was connected with the passenger ferries on White Lake. Emma died 16 January 1930. Frank died at the Muskegon County Home in Muskegon 17 Oct 1936.

Mrs. Martha Rogers – Martha was born Martha Smith 27 March 1851 in England. She moved to Canada with her parents when she was seven years old and from there she came to Michigan in 1882. She was a devoted member of the M. E. Church since childhood. She welcomed everyone with a cheerful happy smile. Martha married Asa Wing Rogers 23 September 1896 in Grandview, Oceana County. Asa was born 23 December 1840 in Canada, where he grew to manhood. In 1871 he moved to Lenawee County where he married his first wife. They came to Oceana County in 1880 where she died in 1894 leaving 6 children. Asa was a well-known and highly respected Claybanks farmer. He died at his home in White River 10 October 1905. Martha was listed as living on Ferry Street in Montague in 1910. She died 3 April 1930 in White River.

Mrs. Kittridge – Adelia Trimm was born in New York 14 Dec 1840. She came to Michigan with her parents in the early days and settled in Imlay City, Lapeer County where she married John Kittridge 16 May 1857. They had twelve children during their marriage. They came to this area about 1889 first locating on a farm in Rothbury and later in White River. John was born 21 May 1834 in Alma Michigan and died 3 November 1917 in White River. Delia died 25 December 1924.

Mrs. Joseph Pike – Hattie E. Sprague was born at Albion, PA, 6 August 1849 and was united in marriage to Joseph A. Pike 30 August 1864 in Albion, PA. To this union were born five children; three of whom died in infancy. They moved to Ohio in 1878 where they lived for a year before moving to Montague in 1879. On coming to Michigan, he ran out of funds at Grand Rapids and sent his wife and two-year-old son on ahead by rail. He walked the entire distance and joined them here. Joseph work in the mills along White Lake, with the last one being the L. T. Covell mill, the last mill to close on the lake. He also served as Justice of the Peace. Joseph was born in Albion, PA, 6 August 1849 and died at the home of his son in Muskegon Heights 7 Jun 1927. Hattie died at her son's home 6 February 1930.

Mrs. Joseph Apoll – Ann Catherine Kropf married Johannes Joseph Apoll 5 July 1890 in Montague. They had no children. Ann was born in Germany 18 May 1865 and immigrated to the U.S. as a child. Joseph was born in Holland 31 January 1861 and immigrated about the same time. In 1880 he was found working in a sawmill with another brother. Between 1880 and 1900, Ann and Joseph were living in Muskegon where he worked for the Davis Iron Work. Then they moved to Montague in 1900 where he took a job with the Montague Iron Works. In 1910 they were listed as living on Prospect Street. By 1920

they had moved again, this time to Manistee where he continued to work at the Iron Works there as a molder. They eventually returned to Montague after 1930. Joseph died 18 December 1934 in Montague and Anna died 4 January 1940.

Mrs. Wiley – After searching the local City Directories, U.S. Census and newspapers, nothing could be found for a Mrs. Wiley. Perhaps she had not yet come to town in 1910 when the census was taken that year. And she could have left town by 1920 when the next one was taken. There were no listings for a Wiley living in the Montague area in the City Directory during that time period either. Or perhaps she was a summer resident who was in the area at the time. So, unless someone knows Mrs. Wiley, I guess her true identity will remain a mystery.

Mrs. Flood – Anna Sophia Cox was born in West Virginia 12 Dec 1866 the daughter of Harry Cox and Mary Woodburn. She was the second wife of Emory Baxter Flood whom she married 10 November 1904 in Benzonia, Benzie County. They had a son, George Franklin Flood (1913-1994). E. B. Flood was born in Claybanks in July 1864 to Lyman and Diana (ne Wheeler) Flood. He was a local area photographer from 1909 to 1917. He took the picture of the M. E. Ladies Aid Society and many others. In 1917 they moved to a farm in Beulah. With their departure, it once again left Montague without a photographer. Anna died in Manistee 18 Nov 1933. Emory died 15 June 1945. They are both buried in Benzonia Township Cemetery.

Mrs. VanLear – Mary Catherine Rogers was born in April 1835 in Ohio. She married William Jackson VanLear in New Brighton, PA, in 1853. They had six children during their marriage. In the early 1870's they made their way to Montague where they lived and raised their family. William was born in Pennsylvania in December 1832. He enlisted in the Civil War 22 February 1864 and served in the First Regiment Pennsylvania Cavalry. He died at his home in Montague on 22 March 1904. Mary died 1 January 1925 in Kalamazoo, MI.

Mrs. Geboo – Mary Emerilla Davies was born in White River Township to Walter and Eliza (ne Wanamaker) Davies 20 April 1862. She married Herman Cook Geboo on 8 July 1879 in Montague. During their marriage they had three children. Herman was born in Winchester, Ontario, Canada on 29 August 1854. He was living in Montague in Oceana County with his parents, John and Margaret and three siblings according to the 1870 census. Herman was listed as a shingle sawyer in the 1880 census. Mary died 21 September 1921 in Brooklyn, Jackson County, MI. When Herman died at Hackley Hospital in Muskegon 19 March 1926, his occupation was listed as foreman for Lyman T. Covell Lumber Company.

One of the Ripley girls – This is probably the granddaughter of Mrs. L. G. Ripley as all of her children were born between 1872-1888. This child is most likely one of the daughters of Mrs. M. W. Ripley (also pictured and previously mentioned). She could be either Alice (1905-1952) or Florence (1907-1949), but most likely Alice.

Mrs. L. G. Ripley – May Edith Brackney was the first wife of Lafayette Gilbert Ripley. She was born in Sunbury, Pennsylvania on 16 December 1844. May and L. G. Ripley married on Christmas Day 1871 in Towanda, KS. From there they moved to Little Rock, Arkansas when he was appointed hospital steward. Their first child was born there but died in infancy and is buried in the National Cemetery there. They eventually made their way to Montague in 1874 where they would live and raise 8 children. May passed away at her home on 6 June 1915. L. G. remarried in California in March 1916 and they returned to the

house in Montague to live and where his second wife died 10 July 1916. L.G. Ripley died at his home 25 April 1919.

Mrs. Ellen Smith & Elinor – Ellen Augusta Schureman was born in Connecuit in 1878. She married George H. Smith 4 June 1901 in South Vineland, New Jersey. They came to Michigan in 1902 where he entered Albion College. They came to Montague in 1907 after he graduated from dental school and remained here until he retired in 1949 after 42 years of practice. George was born 25 April 1877 in England and came to the U.S. with his parents at the age of 3 years. He served as the village President for 7 years from 1912 to 1918 and became the first Mayor of Montague serving from 1935 to 1939. Mrs. Smith was a life member and post matron of the Montague Chapter No. 404, Order of the Eastern Star, former member of the Rebekah Lodge of Whitehall, the White Lake Women's Club and the Womens Society for Christian Service of the Montague Methodist Church. George died at his home 3 May 1960. Ellen died 29 January 1968 at the home of her daughter Elinor in Muskegon where she had been living.

Baby Elinor was born 11 Oct 1911, the only child of George and Ellen Smith. She married twice and later died 22 Dec 2014. Based on Elinor's birthdate, it would appear that the M.E. Ladies Aid Society picture was actually taken c1912, perhaps in the Spring.

Mrs. Gerard Whitbeck – Minerva A. Hitchcock was born in Wayne County, New York 3 October 1836 and came to Michigan with her parents in 1848, settling in Ionia. On 5 November 1867 in Portland, Ionia, MI, she married Gerard A. Whitbeck, a Civil War Veteran, and they came to this community. Five children were born to this union, with one dying at age 11 years from Scarlet Fever. Gerard was born in Wayne County, New York 24 April 1838. He came to Montague with his parents Thomas and Lois in the Spring of 1855, and where he remained the rest of his life. He died 23 February 1917, in Lynn Haven, Florida, where they had spent several years during the winter months. Mrs. Whitbeck was active in civic affairs, a member of the grange, a leader in the Women's Literary society, a member of the Women's Relief corps and the Montague Methodist Church. She was living with her son M.S.C. Whitbeck on the land homesteaded by her and her husband for more than 70 years when she passed away 23 October 1936 three weeks past 100 years of age.

Mrs. Walworth – Florence Amelia Boyden, daughter and H. H. and Florence (ne Betts) Boyden, was born 1 July 1886 in Hillsdale, MI. She married James Marvin Walworth in Chicago 15 December 1904. They would have three children. James was born 10 April 1883 in Hillsdale. He died 19 August 1910 in Cassopolis from TB. Florence died in Muskegon in 8 May 1946.

Mrs. Ernest Hulbert – Martha E. "Mattie" Buchanan was born 8 May 1873 in Philadelphia, PA. and came to Montague with her parents when she was three years old. She married Ernest Lyle Hulbert 29 November 1897 in Montague. They would have three children. Ernest was born in New York 24 June 1868, to Herbert & Melissa (ne Streeter) Hulbert. He died 24 February 1958. Mattie was a life member of the Women's Christian Temperance Union, an honorary member of the White Lake Women's Club and a former member of the Montague Methodist Church. She died at the home of one of her daughters on 25 July 1963.

Mrs. Emily Lanford – Emily Raby was born 14 April 1854 in Cornwell, England, the daughter of Samuel and Elizabeth (ne Brent) Raby. She came with her family to America two years later. For a time, they lived in New York, and Canada before coming to Montague in 1872. She married Isaac L. Lanford 29 June 1875 in Montague. Isaac was born 15 September 1850 in Grand Rapids, MI. They adopted a daughter

Stella (1895-1925). He was a tugboat captain during the lumber days. In the early 1890s they went to California to live, returning to make their home in Gladstone, MI before coming back to Montague. Upon his return he became captain of the ferry boat Cayuga. After Isaac retired from life at sea, he went into the hardware and insurance business. In 1917 they built a new store building with living quarters above on Ferry Street. Isaac died 10 April 1926. Following his death, Emily continued to operate the hardware and insurance business. She was a lifelong member of the Methodist Church, and for many years was the Superintendent of its Sunday School, also a faithful member of the Ladies Aid Society. After finally retiring in 1932, she went to live in Grand Rapids to be closer to relatives. She died at the Fulton Street Home in Grand Rapids 24 November 1934.

Mrs. Henry Hulbert – Melissa Elma Streeter was born 26 Apr 1844 in St. Lawrence, NY. She married William Henry Hulbert 1 January 1865. They had four children, two of whom, twin boys, passed away in infancy. The family came to Montague in 1868. William Henry Hulbert was born 26 August 1847 in Edwards, NY. He passed away 9 May 1920. She died 23 Jun 1930.