

NOTABLE WOMEN
OF
LEICESTER.

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Written for Col. Henshaw Chapter, D. A. R.

By Sarah A. Watson

My first memories of the leading women of Leicester begin with the Civil War in 1861. Women were then called from home duties by the urgent needs of those on the battlefields. Groups of patriotic women met to supply clothing and medical supplies to the Sanitary and Christian Commissions, which followed the army, cheering the wounded, and saving many lives.

The meetings were held at the home of Mrs. Ellen H. Flint, where the large parlors at Stonewall Farm were thrown open for the weekly gatherings, which crowded them. The meetings were opened with prayer -- there was a great deal of prayer in those days -- and then the busy women cut out and sewed garments, rolled bandages, scraped lint and knit. Knitting was constant of stockings and mittens. Each mitten had the fore-finger separated for use on the trigger of the gun. In the corner of the west room a group of little girls wound the large hanks of woolen yarn from swiftly moving reels into balls for the women to knit. I was one of the little girls.

Mrs. Ellen Flint, the hostess, came from New York and owned Stonewall Farm for many years. It was she who had the massive walls built to clear the fields of stone. They were reputed to be twenty feet wide. Mrs. Flint was large and tall, very independent and resolute, but benevolent and public-spirited; a lady in her parlor and a fine pianist; outside she was the farmer, loving her horses and dogs, always thoroughbreds, and directing the work. She drove her own steeds and her gardens were her pride. In them were rare plants. Through the figures of the iron fence around the front lawn one could see imported trees and shrubs. Two large smoke-trees were the wonder of every child. What a desecration when the next owner ploughed up her rare lilies and planted potatoes.

Foremost among the women of the time was Mrs. Zibiah (Bigelow) wife of Rev. John Nelson, a true helpmeet to a noted man. It is recorded that Dr. Nelson had at times an audience of five hundred, his parish including the whole town, except the Baptists and Quakers. All these Mrs. Nelson bore upon her heart; his interests were hers. Among the distinguished visitors at Rose Cottage, as the home was called, she

was a queenly, gracious lady, but she never forgot the least of the parish. She was the first president of the Ladies' Charitable Society, holding the office as long as her health permitted. Ready for any good work she started a Sunday School. The late D. Waldo Kent wrote in 1905, "It set in course a line of thought about the first Sunday School I ever attended or ever heard of, between eighty and ninety years ago, in the little, old, red north school-house. In one corner of the room was a great fire-place, which would perhaps take in a log three and a half or four feet long. The teacher was Mrs. Nelson. She told me that she read of the English Quaker, Robert Raikes, who gathered the children together on the Sabbath Day for instruction. She said to her husband, 'Why cannot I do something in that line?' So on Sunday afternoons she rode on horseback the two miles from her home until later the school was held in the Church between the morning and afternoon service."

Mrs. Nelson was an ever busy, capable woman. During the Civil War, though over seventy, she knit one hundred pairs of socks for the soldiers. In her later years she indulged her remarkable artistic taste in embroidery, much of which has been carefully preserved. She would copy the hue and shape of a flower or vine, as it lay before her, in natural colors. Her work would have been wonderful for even a young woman, and she was over ninety. Mrs. Nelson was born in Waltham, Mass., on October 15, 1787, and lived to be ninety-four. She retained her great intellectual and executive ability to the end. Though old in years, she was never so in spirit.

Caroline Nelson, her adopted daughter, was one of the beautiful women of the town. While a student at Leicester Academy, John E. Russell of Greenfield was attracted by her, and they married later. They were a devoted couple. Their early married life was passed in Nicaragua and their only child, a son, lies there. Mrs. Russell was very proud of her handsome husband, his talents and efficiency. In the hot climate of Nicaragua, white was mainly worn; she said "I used to think John looked like an angel." They passed one year travelling together in Spain. She declared her greatest enjoyment was "seeing so much of John." While there they procured copies of famous paintings, many of which now adorn the walls of our Public Library. The home was filled with treasures of art, which they collected on their various journeys. Mrs. Russell lived very quietly after his death, yet never lost interest in the affairs of the town. She was public-spirited and benevolent, remarkable for the elegance of her dress and manners, and enjoyed receiving her friends.

Mrs. Harriet M. Coolidge, wife of Rev. Amos H. Coolidge, succeeded Mrs. Nelson as president of the Charitable Society, and held it as long as she remained in town. She was a native of Palmer, and came here as a bride in 1857. Naturally retiring, Mrs. Coolidge took her place as the minister's wife in her sweet and modest way. Her Sunday School class was a large one, the membership counted as a privilege. She was a real friend and her influence far-reaching. Her good sense decided many things in church and society. She was above all a peacemaker, striving to remove prejudice and ill-feeling. The silver anniversary of Mr. and Mrs. Coolidge on December 6, 1881 was an occasion of great rejoicing, calling together many people of note from abroad, besides old residents. Praise was showered upon Mrs. Coolidge until she was embarrassed. Rev. Drs. Gould and Cutler, then prominent preachers of Worcester were speakers. The Chronicles of the Church by Mrs. Caroline Metcalf, written in Biblical style, were brilliant and witty.

The loss of the Coolidge family to the town at a later date caused great sadness. Many were the regrets heard from various sources. A father and mother in Israel had left us.

Opposite Dr. Nelson's was the hospitable home of Rev. Samuel May, first pastor of the Unitarian Church. Many noted people were entertained in this center of activities. Mrs. May was Sarah Russell, from a Boston family. To us of a later line the sisters, Misses Adeline and Elizabeth are a delightful memory. Miss Addie, with her beauty, her original wit and nobility of character, was admired by all. A newspaper classed her as the "Grand Old Lady of Leicester". She was the first woman of the town to speak in town-meeting. Indignant at a statement, she asked permission and courageously spoke her mind. She was the first regent of the Daughters of the American Revolution, the society having been organized at her home. She was a charter member of the Baldwinsville Hospital Branch, a leader in the Suffrage movement, a member of the Woman's Relief Corps. Every literary or charitable society claimed her attention. Her love for animals was a noble trait. She often carried lumps of sugar in her pocket, and would stop to treat a weary horse. At times she was in danger from animals who did not understand her good-will. For every cause she deemed worthy, she was a loyal champion, an unusual soul whose ministry cannot be wholly lost by death.

Elizabeth Goddard May was a rare soul. Practical she was, showing good sense with her benevolence. She gave generously and with good judgment. She founded the Leicester Samaritan Association and was its president till health failed.

Both sisters held their church dear to their hearts and spared no effort for its good. They were earnest workers in the Ladies' Alliance, faithful to every duty, cordial and kind. A certain part of their income was set apart each year for charitable purposes. It is not possible to express all that the May sisters meant to the town. Miss "Ade" was for several years president of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union. Miss Bessie was the business woman of the home. She was less in society, handicapped by a lack of hearing; a fine pianist in her youth, this pleasure was denied her. Both sisters found their greatest joy in giving pleasure to others.

Next the May home once stood the house of Horatio Gates Henshaw, father of Miss Harriet Henshaw and Mrs. Caroline Henshaw Metcalf. Miss Harriet's chief mission in life seemed to be collecting and preserving records of the Henshaw family. These were valuable to historians. Mrs. Metcalf was a brilliant and beautiful woman. She had been a teacher and was gifted in writing. Her children were educated at Leicester Academy and she resided here at times. Her Chronicles of Leicester, written in Biblical style and read at the twenty-fifth wedding anniversary of Rev. and Mrs. A. H. Coolidge, was a witty article now preserved in the archives of the Ladies' Charitable Society. She was an inspiring teacher.

In 1876 Miss Harriet published "Reminiscences of Colonel Henshaw", her grandfather, after whom the Leicester chapter of the D.A.R. is named. It was rich in curious and interesting information about the Revolution Period. Her rich stores of ancient manuscripts are preserved in the Public Library.

The Gates Henshaw house was razed to the ground and the land made a side lawn for the May estate. Misses Elizabeth and Sara Metcalf have resided for several years in the Philippines, teaching and travelling, meeting with many adventures.

Opposite the May home and east of Dr. Nelson's at the crest of the hill, Mrs. Abigail Sargent, widow of John Sargent, lived alone, her son being in business in Chicago. She taught the primary division of the First Congregational Sunday School for many years. Her home was a rendezvous for Academy girls boarding in town. Straight as an arrow, with sparkling black eyes, she was a commanding figure. The yellow house has been razed for many years.

West of Dr. Nelson's was the residence of Dr. Edward Flint, whose wife, Mrs. Harriet Emerson Flint, though a partial invalid, was a blessing to all who knew her. With her lived

Mrs. Partridge and Miss Anne Eliza Partridge. They were cultured and beautiful women. Miss Anne Eliza had a wonderfully sweet face. Cheerful under many burdens, she passed her life caring for others and died on her seventieth birthday.

Two houses west of ~~Next to~~ the Flint's was the Col. Thomas Denny house. Here three daughters had lived. Maria had married James Smith of Philadelphia, and his portrait hangs upon the wall of Leicester Academy as a benefactor. Sara Denny Ripley had a daughter who was a fine pianist. Col. Denny was recorded as bringing the first piano into the town. Mrs. Lucretia Denny Bertody was the widow of a merchant in the East India trade. They were women of wealth and distinction. We heard of their going to New York and to Philadelphia with a little touch of awe. Travelling was not so common then. Photographs kindly loaned by Miss Caroline Thurston show the style of the time.

Among the older ladies were three sisters whose lives as carried out by their descendants meant much to the town. The Davis sisters came from Oakham and married here. Catherine became Mrs. Josephus Woodcock; Elizabeth, Mrs. Alonzo White; and Lydia, Mrs. John S. Smith. Social and generous, ready for service to others, sincere and devoted to the church activities, their lives carried a blessing. Mrs. Woodcock was the mother of Mrs. Charles A. Denny and Miss Emily Woodcock; Mrs. White, of Mrs. Mandana Marsh and Mrs. Catherine Grout. Mrs. Smith's children died in childhood except one lovely daughter, Sara, who was taken in early womanhood. This left her leisure to show her sympathy with all suffering, caring for the sick, rejoicing with those who had good fortune, loving little children and patient with them. Her home was one of cheer. Many good times were had in those hospitable rooms.

The golden wedding of Mr. and Mrs. Alonzo White on April 11, 1884 called all their descendants around them, to the number of twenty-two. The spacious rooms were filled with friends to celebrate the honorable event with gifts and joy making. One hundred and fifty (150) called during the afternoon and evening. Mrs. White's Sunday School class presented a valuable book of Scripture engravings.

There are people who have a genius for entertaining. Such was Ida Warren, daughter of Leander and Sarah (Bond) Warren. Afflicted with spinal trouble from an early age, she had a spirit that rose triumphant over pain and a mind that was constantly inventing original ideas. She was the drollest of mimics and her hearty laugh was contagious. Ida liked to try unusual things. When the horsecars were introduced into

Worcester, Ida bought a dollar's worth of tickets at five cents each and rode from Webster Square to Lincoln Square, back and forth, till they were exhausted. She was musical, playing by ear and often improvising her own melodies on different instruments. There was always some fun at Sunset Villa, named for its broad covered piazzas added for out-door pleasures. Her hobbies were many. For a while it was pedigreed dogs of different sizes, which she delighted to train. At one time a black Newfoundland was fitted to a harness and drew her around the town in a cart. No horse was more obedient. Her Mastiff, Hamlet, the last, was a noble creature. Finally she sold him for a large price and mourned as for a human friend. Her aquarium in the parlor was an attraction to visitors. A zinc-lined square box of black walnut was filled with shells and stones, aquatic plants, fish and any water creature. Room to walk around was left. It must have been ten or twelve feet square. The boys of the town brought lizards, tadpoles without number, and any curiosity they could find.

One summer Ida had a horse and cabriolet, as she called it, and advertised to take out parties for pleasure. Once a day she made the trip to Worcester. It was a delightful change from the bungling stagecoach, and well patronized. Toward the last of her life she was an antique collector and became an excellent judge of old furniture, studying the different styles and periods. Then it was curios, finally bottles. One would not believe there were so many odd shaped bottles in the world as Ida collected. With all her other activities, she was one of the raciest of newspaper reporters, writing most interesting articles for the Worcester Daily Spy, and The Associated Press, for seventeen years. There was a touch of fun in every paragraph.

Entertainments she loved, straw rides on which all wore their old clothes and picknicked on Asnebumskit. Ida could write a good poem too, and did so on occasions. She delighted to gather around her people of wit and fun. A Valentine Party on February 14, 1891 will be long remembered by those present.

It was held at the Leicester Hotel with a banquet and after dinner there was speaking. Several poems were read. The following by her cousin, Mrs. Addie W. Harrington, gives a good idea of Ida's versatility:

Ida, dear Ida, what will you do next?
 Don't you get weary and often perplexed
 Thinking of fun 'tis your duty to make
 While all the people do laughingly shake?
 Don't your brain tire, does night bring relief,
 Drowned in sweet sleep, though the rest be but brief?
 Now 'tis a picnic, then fishing for pouts,
 Now 'tis a straw-ride, mid laughter and shouts;
 Now 'tis a party, remaining till late
 Helping Old Time to adjust a new date!
 Now 'tis a dog, very cunning and small,
 Now 'tis a beauty, both graceful and tall,
 Now 'tis their pedigree taking your time
 Then 'tis your lawn, which must surely be prime.
 But of your pranks I will keep rather dark,
 Since 'twould disturb the rare size of your heart.
 Plan us a trip that is novel and cold
 Give us a picnic around the North Pole,
 Something that's novel, 'tis all we demand
 Something unheard of on sea or on land,
 Ah! Well! There's a place for us all on this earth,
 Ida has her's, with her laughter and mirth.

Ida left us June 12, 1904, having lived all her life in the same house. There was and is none like her.

Among other gifted merry makers in town was Mrs. William U. Stone, who was Harriet Hersey of Spencer. She had a gift for original poetry, bringing in many local hits, which was enjoyable.

Mrs. Frances Trask was another of the witty ones. She could sing, she could dance, she could act, and also write a poem with wit and spirit. She was always in demand for entertainments, and often went beyond her strength to amuse others. Mrs. Trask had a funny story to fit every case. She never missed a chance for a joke. As a member of the School Board for several years she was the valued secretary. Her interest never waned in the schools. Every child in the village knew Mrs. Trask and honored her. To her last days, as she sat on her piazza, she had a pleasant word for all who passed.

There were mothers not quite as prominent in public life, whose children were leaders. Mrs. Joseph Addison Denny, wife of our town clerk for twenty-five years, was the mother of Charles A. Denny, a leading card manufacturer and church man, Sunday School Superintendent for twenty-five years, State Senator and associated in political life with officials of the State. Mrs. Denny was a gracious hostess, a noted housekeeper over valuable relics, retaining her beauty in great degree to the age of

ninety-~~seven~~^{three}. The Bible encomium of the efficient woman was hers, for her husband was well known in the gates where he sat among the elders of the land.

Her daughter, Mrs. Mary Denny Thurston, married Lyman D. Thurston, our postmaster for nearly forty years, and left two daughters, whose valuable services to town and church will not be forgotten. Miss Mary was our town librarian.

Mrs. Jane White, wife of Charles Warren, was the faithful mother of a large family. Rev. Albert Warren was the eldest; her daughters, Mrs. Maria Minott and Mrs. Addie Warren Harrington, are still with us. With all her cares, Mrs. Warren taught a Sunday School class of young ladies and was a leader to them. She was up to the times, and the first woman in town to cast a vote for School-Committee, all that was then permitted.

Her sister, Miss Maria White, was noted for her Bible reading and independence. Rebuked in her youth for love of dress, she renounced her vanity, and wore the same bonnet each summer, only changing for her constant winter one. When every one else wore hoops, her dresses were as straight as the present fashion.

The William Whittemore family was one of the old settlers. Mrs. Mary Whittemore, wife of Henry Warren, left an intelligent family, of whom Mrs. Eliza Warren Barnes is prominent in the D.A.R.

Mrs. Susan Whittemore Joslyn, by her untiring training of her only child, produced Mary Joslyn, intellectual and highly gifted. She was the founder of the Topic Club, whose slogan at its start was "No fees, no fines, no feed". This was strictly adhered to while she was the President and leading spirit. Many fine papers, historical, scientific, biographical were presented by its members. It is now merged into the Woman's Club, a term more descriptive of its present scope. Mary was the daughter of an artist, whose talent she inherited. Her favorite medium was water colors. An excellent likeness of Mrs. Zibiah Nelson hangs in the parlor of John Nelson Memorial Church. She left a legacy to the Public Library, designed to encourage the study of modern languages, especially French, in which she was proficient. While travelling in Italy she studied under noted artists. Her mother lies buried in Florence. On her return she lived with her aunt, Mrs. Eliza Whittemore Gilmore, whose hospitable home was open to many gatherings. Mrs. Gilmore lived to be ninety-two, retaining her brightness of mind and interest in life to the last.

Mary Joslyn was for six years Secretary of the Shakespeare Club, and one of its brightest gems. The following tribute was prepared by Laura Stone McNeish, Ruth E. Hatch and Drusilla Allen Reid for the Topic Club, after her death on June 24, 1899:

"Each of us feels a personal loss and The Club prostrate, for truly we may call her its heart and its life, she having called together a company of ladies in 1893 for the purpose of study and mutual instruction, when she was unanimously elected president, which position she filled faithfully and devotedly until her death. With its interests dear to her heart, her intellectual powers, talents and graceful hospitality were ever at its service. Her intelligent and instructive remarks gave inspiration and life to the Club."

The Shakespeare Club had some very talented members. Among them was Mrs. Ellen, wife of John Woodcock, a dramatic reader and actress. She was a good impersonator and had fine taste in costuming. She mingled in all literary circles, admired in all.

Mrs. Susan Eliza Whittemore, wife of Atty. Henry O. Smith, was a witty and valuable member of both Topic and Shakespeare Clubs. She was like a sister to her cousin Mary Joslyn in youth. Mrs. Smith kept the wheels turning for a large family, yet never relinquished her social duties nor her brightness of mind, which her children have inherited.

Miss Philena Upham was one of the original members of the Shakespeare Club of the Sixties. Her father, Daniel Upham, built the large brick house on Pleasant St. next the Methodist Church. He sold the land to the Church with the proviso that when it ceased to be used as a church the land should revert to the Upham heirs. Miss Philena lived with him and her nieces, Ruth and Esther Farr, who both married later. She was an interesting character, a good story teller, very entertaining. After her aged father died she started out to see the world at the age of seventy. On the trip to California she rode through Yosemite Valley on horseback, her first attempt at that method of locomotion. She told gleefully of the pride of her guide in his old lady. The younger ladies, who rode side-saddle, were exhausted while she was quite fresh, having ridden astride by his direction. Afterward she toured Europe with no language but her own. The pantomimes she described in her efforts to get food were most amusing.

Her nieces, Esther and Ruth Farr, were intellectual. When Enoch Arden was published Miss Esther committed the entire

poem to memory.

Mrs. Laura Hersey Stone, first wife of Dr. Alexander McNeish, was never weary in well doing. As a member of the Topic Club, she was a frequent entertainer in her beautiful home. For years she had the Busy Bees, a society of little girls, whom she taught to sew and much else. She had a class in Sunday School who loved her devotedly. Courteous to every one, she was most beloved by those who knew her best.

Eldora Loring was the first secretary of the W.C.T.U. one of those reliable persons who can be depended upon. In 1861 she became the first librarian of the Public Library and was found at her post day after day at the required hours. She had great skill in choosing the best books for the patrons, especially children. Eldora cared like a mother for her sister's orphaned children, twin girls and a son. She was faithful unto death. The Library was first at the Town Hall, a small case. Then as it grew, it filled a large case in Memorial Hall. Then the Watson library building gave freedom to increase. Eldora Loring was respected by all and a close friend of the best in town. She passed away December 30, 1891, aged seventy-five years. A memorial service was given by the W.C.T.U.

The Woman's Christian Temperance Union was organized in 1877. Its first president was Mrs. Cynthia Whittemore, wife of H. Arthur White, a noble christian woman. She entered into the temperance work with heart and soul, and with the vice-president, Mrs. Rebecca H. Bullock, visited the old Leicester Tavern and prayed with the saloon-keeper. He soon left the place. A worse man came after, but this was the only crusading done in our town.

Mrs. White had a fine voice which was heard in the church choir in her youth. Later in life she became crippled by rheumatism. Her patience under this trial was remarkable, as it was a long illness. Through it all she was thinking of others and showing many kindnesses. Mrs. White passed from suffering June 14, 1910, aged seventy-one years, nine months. She was a charter member of the W.C.T.U. and the D.A.R.

Mrs. Mandana Marsh was handicapped by lameness from an early age. She was a woman of great force of character, keeping up with the times by reading and much thinking. Her mind was a power. Her sons, Rev. E. L. Marsh and Dr. Arthur Marsh are well known.

Mrs. Caroline Woodcock, wife of Hon. Charles A. Denny, was a beautiful character. Her face was a mirror of kindness and courtesy. In spite of long-continued ill health, she was an admirable hostess. While the new house was being erected, there came an Independence Day, one of the hottest ever known. Nothing daunted, neighbors and friends were invited to gather under the frame of the house. There, with the breeze blowing through the upright timbers, they partook of cold ice cream and passed a delightful afternoon. Though very quiet and unassuming, Mrs. Denny had great executive ability. It was said, "When she plans a supper everything goes like clockwork". With practical good sense she was sure to do the right thing in the right way. There was no one more efficient in the church. She was a liberal giver, best of all of herself.

During the stirring years of Mr. Denny's political life this home was a center of influence. In 1886 the silver wedding was celebrated.

Miss Emily Woodcock, the sister of Mrs. Denny, (I speak her name with reverence) was the artist of the town. Grief for the death of her twin sister Amelia at the age of thirteen left her with a spinal trouble, a serious handicap. I recall her sweet christian spirit, her humility, her efforts to do good to all, especially the young. She always had a Sunday School of girls until they reached a certain age, when she insisted on taking a younger class. None ever left her without remonstrance and tears. Her care followed all her girls, none were forgotten. To many of them she gave painting lessons and studied to find ways to aid them. For herself, she economized that she might have the more to give. She loved all kinds of ornamental work, hair-weaving, wax flowers like nature, painting in water colors and oil. Her own home, now occupied by Mrs. Burnett, shows much of her art. Her pictures are scattered far and wide. Many were gifts. She had painting classes in Worcester as well as in Leicester, and her life was one of constant usefulness.

Her cousin, Ruth Woodcock, daughter of Lucius and Sara (White) Woodcock, was not one who had special genius. Her gift was the gift of loving. Never was she heard to speak ill of any one, and she was beloved as few people are. Though able to have every luxury, she dressed plainly for the sake of others. The law of kindness was the law of her life. At Ruth's funeral the large double house could not contain the mourners. The whole yard was filled with people standing grief-stricken at her untimely loss.

Mrs. Lydia Watson was, at the time of her death, the oldest person in Worcester County, one hundred and two years,

three months, and six days. All her life was passed in Leicester. The daughter of Capt. Samuel and Ruth (Baldwin) Watson, she was born near the Spencer line, the descendant of early settlers. She married her second cousin, Robert Watson, and was the mother of ten children. On her one hundredth birthday, Jan. 5, 1887, her descendants, to the number of sixty, gathered in the Leicester Inn. Four generations were present. At the time she had two great-great grandchildren. It was a memorable event. Her mind was vigorous and clear to the last; her memory of past events surprising, and her interest keen in passing affairs. She was a member of the First Congregational Church for many years. She had a serene mind and a happy, cheerful disposition, bearing all ills with calmness.

Mrs. Harriet, wife of Billings Swan, was a woman of great capability. They lived in the west end of the building known as the Central Factory, now torn down. She was a noted housekeeper and cook. The brides especially relied upon Mrs. Swan for their wedding cakes. She was a leader at the church suppers and all functions of the Charitable Society. She was a heavy woman. When large boxes of clothing were packed for missionaries, or after the Civil War for the Freedmen, Mrs. Swan would press down the clothing with her weight that more might be added. Mr. Swan would previously pound down every nail so that no lady should tear a dress.

Mrs. David Bryant, who lived near Paxton line, wove the first rag carpet in town.

Mrs. Ruth Woodcock, wife of Dwight Bisco, was the mother of six sons and one daughter. Mr. and Mrs. Bisco celebrated their golden wedding on Jan. 8, 1876. All were then living.

Mrs. George Olney of Cherry Valley was the "Lady Bountiful" of the Valley, caring for the families of her husband's workmen, sympathizing with and helping them, beloved by all.

Mrs. Emily Rice, wife of Parley Holman, observed her ninetieth birthday April 24, 1898. She was the great-great-grand-daughter of Jonas Rice, one of the earliest settlers of Worcester.

Mrs. Flora Winch, wife of Charles L. Davis, had two sons. Her life was given to christian work. She was for several years Secretary and afterwards President of the W.C.T.U. She will be best remembered as a Sunday School teacher, having a class of boys growing into young men, over whom her influence

was wonderful for upright and honorable conduct.

Mrs. Thomas Snow was a charter member of the W.C.T.U., a faithful member. Though not continuing her membership to the end, she opened her pleasant parlors for the meetings. Mrs. Snow was active in the Red Cross through the World War, and knit many sweaters for the soldiers.

Mrs. Adeline Edwards was a leader in the Wesleyan M.E. Church, and afterwards in the Methodist Episcopal.

Mrs. Daniel Craig was a genial hostess for many rides from the Church which she faithfully attended to the Craig home in Rochdale. There was a warm welcome and a jolly time there always.

Leicester has been noted in the line of education, the Academy having been founded early in the town's history. Mrs. Eliza Bullard was the last of the old school to be preceptress. Then the High School was gradually united with the Academy and it finally became entirely a town school.

There was the Quaker school of the sisters, Sara, Lucy, and Eliza Earle in Mannville. They taught young ladies French, painting, English and manners, with ordinary branches. This was quite noted at one time. Ex-Governor Washburn, who was present at an examination in the Friends' Meeting-house, said that he had often heard of the excellency of the school, "but the half had not been told".

Miss Anna P. Henshaw, daughter of Joshua Henshaw descended from the ancient and honorable family of Daniel Henshaw, was a teacher of French and English in Leicester Academy in 1862-3. Her early home was on Willow Hill where the house of Michael Rice now stands. Beautiful and graceful in person, she was rarely gifted in mind and charming in manner. To her pupils she was the model of the perfect lady each girl wished to become, and both boys and girls followed her with admiration. Her classes were an inspiration and a pleasure. Order was not mentioned, but there was no disorder.

Rev. Alexander Merriam, brother of the principal, was by her own request the clergyman at her funeral. His description could be verified by any pupil. It was "Those who knew her best in former days knew best the charm and power of her life, the beauty of her person matching the beauty of her soul; the graces of her mind matching the graciousness and dignity of her bearing. Miss Henshaw was a woman of rare literary accomplish-

ment and artistic ability. She had rare power as a teacher to inspire, and there was about her that indescribable air of gentleness and refinement which breathed like a perfume from her presence".

Her life had many disappointments borne with rare sweetness of character. Her last days were passed in Leicester where were her early friends, and where she was greatly beloved. Her remains rest in the Henshaw tomb in Pine Grove Cemetery.

Miss Mary Putnam taught in the Center School for over twenty-five years until she had as pupils children of her first classes. When she heard of a grandchild soon to come, she said "How many generations old am I?" She was one of the teachers born for the profession. She loved the work.

Miss Jennie Mann loved and taught young pupils for many years. Her last school was the Center primary. Cleanliness and manners were her topics as well as books.

Mrs. Ellen Hurd Holman was the first woman to serve on the School Board, where she did excellent service for seven or more years, most of the time as secretary. Her influence over teachers and scholars was marked. As a Sunday School teacher Mrs. Holman had great control. She had a room full of little children, who all loved her. It was a pretty sight at the close of Sunday School to see the door of the Primary room open and show a triangle of children, the smallest tot at the apex, and the rest graded to the largest. All were happy and quiet, and the teacher stood by with a smiling face. After Mrs. Holman, the children were divided into several classes, but she managed them alone.

Miss Eliza Pollard, music teacher at the Academy, was one who lived not for herself, but to do good. She gave many music lessons free of charge, trying to teach character as well as music. After living many years in Leicester, she ended her days in Los Angeles, California, where she taught music to girls where she boarded. She left friends who appreciated her sterling worth.

In the family of Mrs. Parley Holman of Cherry Valley were two teachers who meant much to that village; Mrs. Amelia Holman Keep and Mrs. Katherine Holman Fuller. Both were also teachers in the First Congregational Sunday School and active in church circles.

This chronicle takes in the women of an older generation, soon to be lost to the memory of most. There are others whom it would be a pleasure to mention. Of my own age there are those who deserve a better chronicler. Mrs. Maria Munroe, whose cheery welcome and merry jokes made the day pleasant to all who met her; Mrs. Louesa Cogswell Watson; Mrs. Catherine Grout, capable and efficient in home and church, dispensing sunshine all around. What a teacher she was, and what a Sunday School Superintendent! The world is better and wiser for her life.

The mirror is a small one and no doubt distorted by the personal outlook. It cannot hold all in sight nor do full justice to any. Yet it is sufficient to realize that no community ever had more noble-hearted, public-spirited, self-denying christian women than our dear old town of Leicester.

Read at a meeting of the Chapter, April 27, 1927