

## **Past Members**

The Lansing Woman's Club has been blessed with many intelligent, talented, community-minded members who have dedicated their lives to the pursuit of knowledge and the enrichment of the City of Lansing.

In 1874 twenty-five charter members inaugurated the Lansing Woman's Club. Some would remain members throughout their lifetimes, while others participated for only a brief period before leaving the Lansing area. Though each made unique contributions to the club, it is their combined legacy that endures most brightly still today.

### **Frances "Fannie" Howard Baker**

(1844-1929) Born the daughter of Matilda Williams and Sanford Howard, Fannie married Dr. Henry Brooks Baker in 1867 in Lansing. Together the couple welcomed at least six children: Henry Howard, Howard Bigelow, Louis Sanford, Henry Brooks Jr., Barton Adams, and Helen Frances. A talented artist, Fannie's handwork graced the clubroom for many years. Fellow members collected and treasured the beautiful Christmas cards she created. She also served as the historian and registrar of the Lansing Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution.

### **Gertrude Berry**

(1855-1935) Gertrude Berry was born to Langford Berry and Margaret Ramsdell (his third wife) in Adrian, Michigan. In 1889 she married Thomas Tonkin McCabe, with whom she had one son, Thomas Tonkin McCabe Jr. Records suggest that she left Lansing by 1880.

### **Adelia (Delia) Munroe Case**

(1831-1887) Born to Harriet Parker and Jesse Munroe and raised on a farm in Clinton County, Michigan, Delia married Daniel Case, a dry goods merchant and lawyer who served as Michigan Auditor General 1859-1860. Delia's legacy lived on in LWC for subsequent generations through her nieces, Ida Longyear (daughter of Harriet Longyear), Marion, Addie, and Eva Turner (daughters of Marion Turner), and her nephew's wife, Sophie Scott Turner (wife of James M. Turner).

### **Frances "Fannie" Foster Cowles**

(1843-1889) In 1843 Fannie Foster was born in Ann Arbor to Frances and Theodore Foster, who moved his family to Lansing to superintend the newly created State Reform School in 1856. As a young woman Fanny attended Lansing schools and assisted her father when he edited the *Lansing Republican* newspaper. In 1864 she married Albert Cowles, a lawyer. In addition to serving as the first secretary of

LWC, she was the president of the Young Ladies' Loyal League of Lansing during the Civil War and active in the Lansing Equal Suffrage Association.

### **Ella Crosby (Longyear)**

(1857-1887) Hiram and Celia Crosby were living in Livonia, Michigan, at the time their daughter Ella was born. In 1875, just one year after the formation of LWC, she married banker Denison Longyear, with whom she had at least one son, Frank, born in 1879. Ella died in 1887.

### **Carrie W. Holmes**

(about 1852-?) Carrie W. Holmes was born around 1852 to physician and druggist James W. Holmes and his wife Harriet B. Wright. After completing her education, she became a teacher and was a longtime member of the Lansing Library and Literary Association. Carrie never married, and spent many years living with her cousin, Frances Longyear.

### **Matilda Williams Howard**

(1803-1897) Born in 1803 to Rhoda Howard and Joshua Williams, Matilda married farmer and author Sanford Howard in Maine in 1829. Both husband and wife wrote for agricultural publications. After her husband's death, Matilda became the editor of the rural department of the *Lansing State Republican*. She served as LWC's second president and held the position of corresponding secretary from 1884 to 1896. A portrait of her was presented to the Club upon the dedication of our first club house. At the time, she was 87 and the Club's oldest living member.

### **Helen Marie Jenison**

(1830-1897) Helen Marie Butler was born on November 27, 1830, to Orange Butler and Wealthy S. Handy. In 1851 she married Orien Austin Jenison, a bookkeeper and voracious collector of historical and scientific artifacts. Together they had at least three children: Frank, Isabella, and Orien Jr. Many other members of the Jenison family eventually joined LWC, including Helen's daughter-in-law, granddaughter, granddaughter-in-law, and her great-granddaughter.

### **Irma Theoda Andrews Jones**

(1845-1929) Dr. Charles and Nancy Andrews welcomed daughter Irma to the world in 1845 while living in Rockford, Illinois. The valedictorian of the first graduating class of West Rockford High, she married Nelson B. Jones in Lansing in 1865. An active, community-minded woman, Irma helped found the Industrial Aid Society, was the first president of the Unity Club, an early leader in and the second president of the Michigan Federation of Women's Clubs, editor of the *Mid-Continent Magazine* and the *Industrial Aid Quarterly*, participated in the International Association for the Advancement of Women,

served on the board of the Ladies Library Association, and attended annual Women's Congress meetings where she met Sojourner Truth, Julia Ward Howe, and Mary Livermore.

### **Polly Phelps Kerr**

(1828-1899) Polly Phelps Kerr was born to Ruth Hawley and Israel Phelps in Cayuga County, New York, in 1828. After attending the Auburn Female Seminary in New York, Polly married John Kerr about 1853. Roughly four years later the couple moved to Lansing, where her husband, John served as the city's second mayor, published the *Lansing Republican* newspaper, and printed state documents for many years. Both Mrs. Kerr and her niece, Irma T. Jones, were founding members of LWC.

### **Sophie Howard Knight**

(1839-1891) It was the gift of music (along with family ties) that brought Sophia Amelia Howard to Lansing in 1864 to teach at the Misses Rogers Academy (also known as the Michigan Female College). Born in Ohio in 1839, Sophie studied vocal and instrumental music in New York and Boston before relocating to the Midwest where she married Thomas D. Knight. She continued to perform throughout her life, giving concerts in Detroit, Chicago, and Pensacola, and serving as the Director of Music at the Southern Chautauqua in De Fumae Springs, Alabama. Sophie sang a solo and gifted a portrait of her mother, Matilda W. Howard, to LWC at the dedication of the 118 W. Ottawa clubhouse in 1890.

### **Ammoretta Lanterman**

(1831-1901) The Lanterman family, comprised of Ammoretta (born in 1831 to Jonas and Susan Crisman), her husband Jacob Luce Lanterman, and their three children spent a relatively brief period of time in Lansing. A dentist, Jacob suffered from lung problems, which eventually inspired the family to move west and purchase land near Los Angeles known as Rancho la Cañada. Lore holds that the family struggled to obtain water from a neighbor (who dammed the closest source) until Ammoretta grabbed a shotgun and confronted him herself, forcing him to negotiate. Today the Lantermans are remembered as a significant pioneer family in greater Los Angeles.

### **Celia H. Longyear**

(1836-1901) The Lansing Woman's Club owes a great debt to Celia Hawthorn Crosby Longyear who opened her parlor to a group of ladies who were interested in forming a club in 1874. Born in New York, Celia married Hiram B. Crosby, with whom she had at least one child, daughter Ella. After Hiram's death she married Ephraim Longyear, a lawyer and banker. His son, Denison (by his first wife, Frances) eventually married Celia's daughter, Ella, who was also an LWC founder. Celia worshipped at Lansing's First Baptist Church, where she served on the building committee and participated in the groundbreaking ceremony for the new church in the 1890s.

### **Fanny Mead**

(1846-1883) During her short life Frances Allaban Mead lived a full life. Born in New York to Nancy M. and Wilson S. Allaban, Fanny married James Frank Mead, the son of local pioneers, with whom she had at least four children. Her husband Frank worked as a traveling agent selling dry goods, while Fanny maintained an active presence in the community. Like many founders of LWC, Fanny served on the board of the Lansing Library and Literary Association.

### **Lozana “Lozie” Paddack**

(1836-1930) Lozana Parsons Walker Paddack was born on September 26, 1836, in Oakland County in the new state of Michigan. Lozie, as she was known, married Hedges Lewis Paddack about 1858 and the couple made their home for many years in Lansing. Like many LWC husbands, Hedges worked in the Capitol where he was a bookkeeper for the State Land Office. Together the couple had at least three children, one of whom – Mabel (b. 1864) – eventually joined LWC.

### **Eunice J. Porter**

(1824-1903) Like so many of her fellow founders, Eunice hailed from New York State, where she was born in April 1824 to Aphia A. Johnson and Eleazer H. House. Eunice married James Ballard Porter, a merchant, insurance and real estate agent, and Michigan Secretary of State (1861-1866). Eunice was active in her church, the Women’s Christian Temperance Union (W.C.T.U.), and was a founding member of the Women’s Hospital Association that founded Sparrow Hospital. A number of her family members also enjoyed membership in LWC.

### **Abigail Pratt**

(1805-1882) Abigail Rogers married her husband Eliakim Pratt in her native Cornwall, Connecticut, in 1829 when she was twenty-four years old. The family moved to Flint, Michigan, where Abigail was a founding member of the Flint Library Association. By 1860 Abigail lived in Lansing, as did her son Hubert (who worked for the Auditor General) and her daughter Frances, another LWC founder (see below.)

### **Frances “Frank” Pratt**

(1832-1882) Frances “Frank” D. Pratt was born in 1838 to Abigail Rogers and Eliakim Pratt. Frances never married, and probably spent much of her life living with her mother and brother Hubert. Frances died in September of 1882, in the same month as her mother Abigail. (See above.)

### **Alice Seager**

(about 1844-1879) Unlike many of her Yankee friends, Alice Emily Berry was born in the young state of Michigan to Langford and Mary Ann Hart Berry (his third wife). Alice married Schuyler Fisk Seager, a lawyer, with whom she welcomed at least three children – James Harry, and Schuyler. Alice was an active member of St. Paul's Episcopal Church, where she made possible the building of their rectory. Both her half-sister, Gertrude Berry, and her sister-in-law, Eliza Seager Smith, were also LWC members.

### **Ann Shank Farrand**

(1854-1918) Dr. Hurlbert and Frances Shank were living in Lansing in 1854 when their second child, a daughter they named Ann, was born. In 1877 Ann married Hart Farrand, a grocer, with whom she had at least four children. According to her obituary, she was known to many as the sister of Dr. Rush Shank, a prominent local physician. She attended the Universalist Church. Several members of her extended family, including two sisters-in-law, her niece, and her daughter's sister-in-law, were also members of LWC.

### **Eliza Seager Smith**

(1840-1930) Eliza Seager, born in 1840 in Albion, New York, came to Lansing as a youth with her aunts Delia and Abigail Rogers, who founded the Michigan Women's College in 1855. She married Samuel Smith, a legislator and general merchandise retailer, around 1866. Together the couple had at least four children. Like her aunts, Eliza was active in the community, where she led the Temperance Union, founded the U and I Club, and belonged to the Lansing Library and Literary Association.

### **Eliza Stebbins**

(1832-1888) Eliza Marie Smith was born in 1832 to Hannah Severance and Israel Smith, who commandeered the first packet to navigate the Erie Canal. After attending the Tracy Institute in Rochester, New York, she married Cortland Bliss Stebbins of Lansing with whom she had at least four children. Cortland worked as a real estate agent and served as the Deputy Superintendent of Public Instruction for the state. An active reformer, Eliza helped organize the local chapter of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union and served on the Board of Control for the Industrial Home for Girls, a state institution in Adrian.

### **Harriet Augusta Edgerton Tenney**

(1834-1899) The eldest daughter of Delia Doug and John Edgerton, Harriet was born and educated in Vermont, where she attended the Franklin Academy. In 1854 she married Jesse Tenney, a lawyer with whom she moved to Michigan. After working in education for a few years, the Tenneys relocated to Lansing when Jesse was appointed State Librarian in 1859. Ten years later, in 1869, Harriet succeeded her (still living) husband, becoming the first female State Officer in Michigan and only the third female state librarian in the country. Harriet ultimately held the position for twenty-two years, during which time she was appointed by seven governors who belonged to two different political parties. Aware and

proud of her groundbreaking role, she noted in her first state report that “By the advice of the Chief Executive of the State, and with the *unanimous* consent and approbation of the Senate, on the 31st day of March, 1869, this Library was placed in the charge of a WOMAN.” Harriet was a busy innovator who helped found and served on the boards of a number of local and state organizations including the Lansing Military Aid Society, the Lansing Library and Literary Association, the Michigan Pioneer Society, and the Arbutus Chapter of the Order of the Eastern Star. She served as LWC’s founding president for a record four years.

### **Lida Wells**

(1844-1879) Lida (or Lydia) Jones was born about 1844 in Ohio. As a young woman she married Frank P. Wells, a druggist. Together the couple welcomed at least three children. Like several of her fellow LWC founders, Lida attended St. Paul’s Episcopal Church where she was a member of the Ladies Society.

### **Ellen Westcott**

(about 1834-1914) Ellen Louise Rice came to Lansing with her widowed mother Emily in 1852. A seamstress, Ellen did plain and fancy sewing to earn a living. Appropriately, she married Thomas Westcott, a tailor. Together the couple had at least two children. Ellen was active in the Lansing community, where she was a member of the Lansing Library and Literary Association, the First Universalist Church, helped found the local D.A.R. chapter, and was secretary of the Industrial Aid Society for twenty years.