

Short Biographies of significant people connected to the early struggle for rights for women in Canada (1890's-1950's)

<p>Benedictsson, Margret</p>	<p>Born in Iceland, Margret Benedictsson (1866-1956) came to Winnipeg in 1881. She was an early Manitoban activist who campaigned for woman's suffrage (the right to vote) through her speeches and the Icelandic journal Freyja, meaning "Woman", that she and her husband published. On February 2, 1893, Benedictsson gave her first lecture on women's rights to the Winnipeg Icelandic community. In 1908, she founded the Icelandic Suffrage Association in Winnipeg and became its first president.</p>
<p>Beynon, Frances Marion</p>	<p>Francis Marion Beynon, (1884-1951) was a founding member of the Political Equality League in Winnipeg (1912) and a member of the Canadian Women's Press Club. As the editor of the woman's page of the Grain Growers Guide, she brought issues such as the vote, and property rights, especially the property rights of rural women, to her readers.</p>
<p>Crawford, Dr. Mary</p>	<p>Dr. Mary Crawford (1876-1953) was a founding member of the Political Equality League in Winnipeg. She had moved to Winnipeg in 1903 to practice medicine and saw many patients working and living in deplorable conditions. She believed that, to improve their conditions, women must have the right to vote. She was elected to the executive of the Political Equality League where she served as president of it.</p>
<p>Dixon, Winona Flett</p>	<p>Winona Margaret Flett Dixon (1884-1922), a sister of Lynn Flett, was a founding member of the Political Equality League in Winnipeg and served on the executive of it for much of its existence. She worked for many causes including improved working conditions for women. She was a member of the Canadian Women's Press club and owned and operated her own business as a public stenographer.</p>

Flett, Lynn	Lynn Flett was a founding member of the Political Equality League in Winnipeg and a member of the Canadian Women's Press Club. She worked as a courtroom stenographer. She was a sister of Winona Flett Dixon and, when her sister died, she gave up her job as a courtroom stenographer and moved into the Dixon house to care for her sister's children and to support Fred Dixon (Winona's husband), who was also in ill health.
Hind, E. Cora	E. Cora Hind (1861-1942) was a founding member of the Political Equality League and a member of the Canadian Women's Press Club. She trained as a legal secretary and started her own business, the first "public stenographer" in Winnipeg. Later, she was hired as agricultural reporter for the Manitoba Free Press, where she became a noted journalist well known for her crop estimates. She was an advocate for better conditions for women and for the vote for women.
Konantz, Margaret	Margaret Konantz, (1899-1967) was the first woman elected to be a Federal MP from Manitoba. She served in the Canadian House of Commons from 1963 to 1965. She was the daughter of Edith Rogers, the first woman elected to the Manitoba Legislature.
Macphail, Agnes	The Canadian Federal election of 1921 was the first federal election in which women could vote. In that election, Agnes Macphail (1890 – 1954) from Ontario became the first woman to be elected to the Canadian House of Commons. She was returned to office in the 1925, 1926, 1930, and 1935 federal elections. Throughout her career, she was an advocate for human rights and fought for, among other things, old-age pensions and better conditions for prisoners. See a one-minute Historica movie about her at http://www.histori.ca/minutes/minute.do?id=10212
McKinney, Louise	Louise McKinney (1868 -1931) from Alberta, one of "The Famous Five", was elected to the Alberta Legislature in 1917 becoming the first female legislator in Canada and in the British Empire as well. McKinney was active in the Woman's Christian Temperance Union and a strong supporter of woman's rights. As a Legislator, she spoke for better social programs for

	immigrants and better protection for widows and women who were separated from their husbands. McKinney and Emily Murphy were leading forces in the passing of the Dower Act in the Alberta in 1917. (An Act allowing women property rights in marriage.)
McClung, Annie	Annie McClung was married to the Methodist Minister in Manitou when Nellie met her. Soon, according to Nellie, she had decided that Mrs. McClung would be an excellent mother-in-law. In 1896, Nellie and Wes McClung were married. Nellie credits Annie McClung for encouraging her to begin her writing career and for arranging for her to speak about Sowing Seeds in Danny for the first time. Annie McClung was an early champion of women's rights, and the suffrage movement. She was president of the Manitou chapter of the Women's Christian Temperance Union and a provincial leader of the organization.
McClung, Nellie	Nellie McClung (1873-1951), was a member of both the Political Equality League in Manitoba and of "The Famous Five". She moved to Manitoba when she was 7 years old and began teaching when she was 16. She was a leader in the suffrage movement in Manitoba as a member of the Political Equality League and of the Mock Parliament. Later, while living in Alberta, she was a member of the Famous Five who successfully had women declared Persons under Canadian law in 1928. She was a renowned author and a lifelong advocate for people who did not have a voice of their own. See Nellie McClung's 'mock parliament', a short video in the C.B.C. Digital Archives Website. http://archives.C.B.C..ca/politics/rights_freedoms/clips/9553/ . Also, see a Historical Minute, a one-minute movie about Nellie McClung. http://www.histori.ca/minutes/minute.do?id=10643 Radio Minutes: Listen to Nellie McClung speaking to Roblin and then addressing the Mock Parliament. http://www.histori.ca/minutes/minute.do?id=13558 Nellie McClung's 'mock parliament'

Muir Edwards, Henrietta	Henrietta Muir Edwards (1849 – 1931), a member of the "The Famous Five", was a life-long activist and reformer who wanted better conditions for women and children as well as for working women. In 1875, she founded a Working Girls' Association to provide vocational training for women. Later, she helped found the National Council of Women of Canada as well as the Victorian Order of Nurses. She was known for her understanding of legal matters and, in 1921, wrote <i>The Legal Status of Women in Alberta</i> .
Murphy, Emily	Emily Murphy, (1868 - 1933) a leader of "The Famous Five", was a Canadian women's rights activist, jurist, and author. Murphy moved from Ontario to Manitoba and then to Alberta. She was an active member of a number of organizations such as the Canadian Women's Press Club and a prominent member of the suffrage movement. In 1927, she invited 4 women to meet with her to find a way to challenge the idea that, in Canada, women were not "persons" under Canadian Law. The group became known as the Famous Five and the case, the "Persons Case". See a one-minute Historical movie about Murphy at: http://www.histori.ca/minutes/minute.do?id=10205
Norris, T.C.	The Liberal Premier of Manitoba (1915 – 1922) whose government, in 1916, passed the law that allowed women in Manitoba to vote in Provincial Elections and to hold public office.
Pankhurst, Emmeline	Emmeline Pankhurst (1858 – 1928), was an English political activist and leader of the British suffragette movement, which won women the right to vote in England.

Parlby, Irene	Irene Parlby (1868 - 1965) was one of "The Famous Five" and a Canadian women's farm leader, activist and politician. In 1916, Parlby was elected president of the newly formed United Farm Women of Alberta. In 1921, she was elected to the Alberta Legislature and was re-elected in 1926 and 1930. She was appointed Minister without Portfolio—the first female Cabinet Minister in Alberta history and only the second in the British Empire. In 1930, she was appointed to the Canadian delegation to the League of Nations. In 1927, she joined the group that would become known as the Famous Five.
Roblin, Sir Rodmond	The Premier of Manitoba from October 29, 1900 to May 12, 1915. He did not believe that women should have the vote.
Rogers, Edith	Edith Rogers (1876-1947) was the first woman to be elected to the Manitoba Legislature. A member of the Liberal Party serving from 1920 to 1932, she was the only woman MLA during the period. She was a women's advocate, social reformer, humanitarian, and philanthropist. Margaret Konantz, Rogers's daughter, followed her mother's example to become the first woman to be elected as a federal MP from Manitoba. She served in the Canadian House of Commons from 1963 to 1965.
Thomas, Lillian Beynon	Lillian Beynon Thomas (1874-1951) was a founding member of the Political Equality League of Winnipeg and a member of the Canadian Women's Press Club. She was a reporter and an editor for the Women's Page of the Manitoba Weekly Free Press. Through letters written to her and her own writing, she was able to bring attention to issues such as the women having no legal right to their farms or for the custody of their children. She lobbied for new divorce laws, property rights and protection for women and children.
Wilson, Cairine	Cairine Wilson (1885-1962) from Ontario was the first woman to be appointed to the Canadian Senate. In 1930, just four months after the Persons Case declared women to be persons under Canadian Law, she was appointed to the Senate by the Government of PM Mackenzie King. She served in the Senate for 30 years supporting women's and children's issues and speaking for the causes of refugees.

Yeomans, Amelia 1842-1913	Dr. Amelia Yeomans (1842-1913) was a prominent figure in the early struggles for temperance and for women gaining the right to vote in Manitoba. She began practicing medicine in the 1880's in impoverished (poor) areas of Winnipeg. She spoke for better health care, housing reform (better access to decent homes) and better working conditions. She believed that alcohol was a cause of many problems in society and joined the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) becoming president in 1896-97.
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