

GRANGER PLACE SCHOOL

Graduates of Distinction



GRANGER PLACE SCHOOL

Brief History: 1876-1906

The Granger family occupied the Homestead from 1816 until late 1868 when a series of family tragedies occurred. Francis Granger died on August 28, 1868, and his son, Gideon, died six days later. No longer perceived as a safe haven for the family, Isaphine (Mrs. Francis Granger) refused to continue living in the mansion, and moved with her two daughters, Antoinette and Isaphine, to a nearby cottage. The mansion stood vacant for eight years until lawyer Walter Hubbell encouraged establishing a new school for girls to replace the defunct Ontario Female Seminary. The residence was a perfect, central location for a girls' school, and the Grangers sold the Homestead to Caroline Comstock, a leading educator, and her associates for \$7,500.

Opening in 1876, the **Granger Place School for Girls** prepared girls for entrance into leading colleges and universities or completion of a formal high school education. Typical courses of study included the languages of Latin, Greek, French and German; literature, writing, mathematics, science, Bible study, history, art and music. In addition to these intellectual pursuits, the school stressed the need for physical exercise by providing opportunities for tennis, basketball, fencing and other outdoor activities. Extra-curricular activities included plays, dances, parties, excursions, and receptions.

In order to create an exceptional place of learning, Miss Comstock dramatically changed the physical makeup of the Homestead. To the south of the central mansion, a three story annex was built housing classrooms, an assembly hall, and gymnasium, as well as chemical and physical science laboratories. The main floor of the mansion housed a library, rooms for art classes and music instruction, and was used to entertain guest lecturers and readers. The second floor housed the faculty, while the third floor was expanded to provide rooms for resident students. Day students living in Canandaigua also attended the school.

Miss Caroline Comstock, the school's founder and first principal, led the school from 1876-1896. She was well liked as a teacher as she took an interest in her pupils in and out of the classroom. In order to safeguard the "fair young womanhood" of the girls, she had built a large fence around the entire grounds and oversaw the addition of considerable amounts of foliage to keep away the Academy boys [down the street] and other "interested folk."

With Miss Comstock's retirement in 1896 and increasing financial problems, Mrs. Isaphine Granger repurchased the mansion and grounds, and Mr. Samuel Cole Fairley was appointed the new principal. Mr. Fairley made several improvements including removing the large fence surrounding the grounds and painting over the drab gray of the buildings with the original attractive yellow and white colors. He also oversaw renovations to the inside including new plumbing, lighting, wallpaper and paint.

When Isaphine Granger died in 1905, her daughters Antoinette and Isaphine announced that the school would close after the 1905-1906 school year. They planned to remodel the home and transform it back to a private residence. Also, financial problems plagued the school, especially with competition from free public secondary schools.

The female seminary movement of the 19th century played a significant role in the transformation of education in the US. It not only supported academic education for women, but it greatly contributed toward women's equality. It engaged women in social reform movements and the road to social justice for women.



EDITH HOUGHTON HOOKER

(1879-1948)

Suffragist, Women's Health Care

- . Born in Buffalo, NY to wealthy industrialist Alfred Houghton and Caroline Garlinghouse Houghton; her two sisters were active in the Suffrage Movement — Marion Houghton Mason and Katharine Houghton Hepburn (mother of actress Katharine Hepburn).
- . She and sisters were privately tutored; family followed the liberal ideas of noted free thinker and agnostic Robert Ingersoll.
- . Edith and Marion attended **Granger Place School** in 1894-1895.
- . Graduated from Bryn Mawr College Class of 1901, entered Johns Hopkins Medical School as one of the first women to attend.
- . While at Johns Hopkins, she developed interest in social work which became her career.
- . Edith and husband established Guild of St. George, which housed unwed mothers and their children in Baltimore; predecessor to Planned Parenthood in Baltimore.
- . 1909: founded Just Government League, part of the National American Woman Suffrage Association, believing that progressive social and economic reform would occur quickly if women achieved right to vote.
- . 1912-1917: established the Maryland Suffrage News, weekly newspaper of Just Government League, became the editor of The Suffragist, weekly newspaper of the National Woman's Party.
- . By 1919, was president of the Maryland Suffrage Party of Baltimore, led an intensive ratification campaign for the 19th Amendment.
- . Involved in many social reform groups - Hampden Woodberry Neighborhood Association, to further city recreation for adults and children, member of Executive Committee of the National Women's Party, Advisory Committee of the Maryland Social Hygiene Society; published booklets on social hygiene.
- . Spouse: Dr. Donald Hooker, five children.



MARION HOUGHTON MASON

(1882-1968)

Suffragist, Women's Rights Advocate



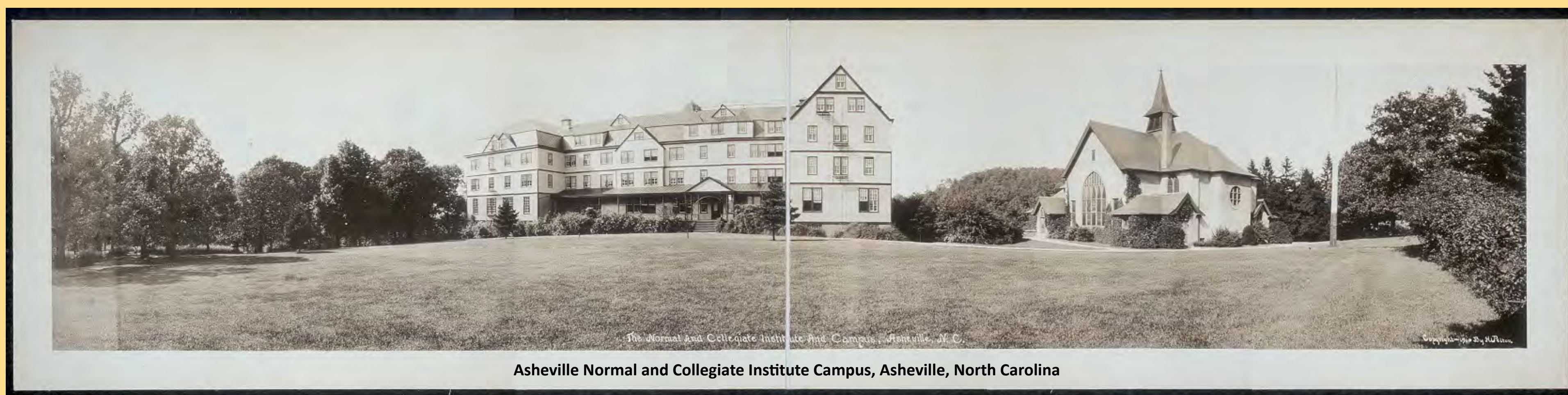
- . Sister of Edith Houghton Hooker—see above for family background.
- . Graduated from Bryn Mawr College Class of 1906; MA in Economics from Columbia University, and diploma from New York School of Social Work, 1911.
- . Worked with her sister at Guild of St. George, Baltimore; after moving to Detroit was volunteer worker under the Association of Charities.
- . 1918-1920: was Secretary, Vice-President, and President of the Detroit Equal Suffrage League, and President of the League of Women Voters, Detroit.
- . Agent of the Federal Labor Bureau, and teacher in Americanization work of the Detroit Board of Education; President of Wayne County League of Voters.
- . Supervisor and General Contractor for construction of fifty-seven houses in the Detroit area.
- . Spouse: Stevens T. Mason, three children.

JENNIE S. FULLER

(1864-1954)

Educator, Asheville Normal and Collegiate Institute, North Carolina

- . Born Jean Stewart Fuller in East Bloomfield, NY to Milton and Gertrude Lansing Fuller.
- . Attended **Granger Place School** in the early 1880s.
- . By about 1906, she was teaching at the Asheville Normal and Collegiate Institute, a Presbyterian mission school for girls and young women from rural Appalachia.
- . After 1908: Head of Pease House on the Institute's campus, for girls under twelve needing academic and home skills training.
- . 1920s: Member of Asheville, NC Business and Professional Women, advocating vocational training for girls and women.
- . Lived the remainder of her life in Asheville, NC; buried in New Jersey with her sister's family.



MARY PARMELE HAMLIN

(1871-1964)

Playwright



- . Born in West Bloomfield to Hiram and Mary Ann Gates Parmele, Mary grew up in Canandaigua.
- . Graduated from **Granger Place School** in 1892.
- . Attended Vassar College from 1892 to 1895.
- . In 1902 she married George Wright Hamlin, a banker.
- . While raising her four children in Canandaigua, she began her writing career with a special interest in writing plays.

. In 1916, she sent a script of a historical drama on the life of Alexander Hamilton to actor George Arliss. He agreed to collaborate with her on rewriting it and acted the lead in the Broadway production of *Hamilton* in 1917, and in 1918, when the play was on tour.

- . Arliss wrote: *Mrs. Hamlin is probably the only woman alive who is a good wife, a good mother, a good housekeeper, a good friend, and a good playwright all in one.*
- . She also wrote and published numerous plays on other historical figures and religious themes.
- . In 1931, she went to Hollywood to work on a talking film version of *Hamilton*, starring George Arliss.
- . She was active in the First Congregational Church, led a Bible class begun by her mother-in-law for 25 years.



On the set of *Hamlin* (May 1931); standing left to right, Maude Howell, Evelyn Hall, George Arliss, Frank Hamlin (Mrs. Hamlin's son), George Hamlin (Mrs. Hamlin's husband); seated left to right, Mrs. Littlejohn, unidentified, Mrs. Hamlin.

DR. CAROLINE F. J. RICKARDS

(1873-1954)

Physician

- . Born in Wilmington, Delaware to Jonathan and Rosalie Rickards; her father was a policeman.
- . Graduated from **Granger Place School** about 1890.
- . Graduate of Women's Medical College of Pennsylvania, Class of 1894 (later part of Drexel University, Philadelphia.) Was the first school established to train women as physicians.
- . 1895: physician, practicing and living in Wilmington, Delaware.
- . In 1912, she became head physician at Crestmount Health Resort, Mt. Kisco, NY.
- . Beginning in the 1920s, she had a practice and private residence on West 56th Street, New York City.
- . Wrote scholarly publications on a wide variety of medical and psychological subjects from curative properties of mineral waters to the psychology of women's clothing.
- . Upon her death in 1954 at age 81 in New York City, she was one of the oldest practicing female physicians in the U.S. She is buried in Old Swedes Cemetery, Wilmington, Delaware.



Crestmount, Mount Kisco, N. Y. (South side of house)



Living Room, Crestmount, Mount Kisco, N. Y.

DR. MARY GILBERT KNOWLES

(1873-1958)

Physician

- . Born in Albany, NY to Charles and Elizabeth Gilbert Knowles; her father was an insurance agent.
- . Graduated from **Granger Place School** in about 1890.
- . Following her graduation, she returned to her family home in Albany; after her parents died in 1901 and 1907, it appears that she was able to pursue her training as a physician. She may have been encouraged by her older brother who was a medical doctor.



Medical Students in class at Women's Medical College of Pennsylvania, 1911

- . Graduate of Women's Medical College of Pennsylvania, Class of 1912 (later part of Drexel University, Philadelphia.) Was the first school established to train women as physicians.
- . Practiced general medicine in Philadelphia for over 25 years.
- . Active in the Medical Society of Woman's Hospital, Philadelphia.
- . Traveled and lived in Switzerland, France and San Francisco.
- . Died in San Raphael, California at age 84.



CRYSTAL EASTMAN

(1881-1928)

Suffragist, Civic Leader

Quote: *What is the problem of women's freedom? It seems to me to be this: how to arrange the world so that women can be human beings, with a chance to exercise their infinitely varied gifts in infinitely varied ways, instead of being destined by the accident of their sex to one field of activity—housework and child-raising. And second, if and when they choose housework and child-raising to have their occupation recognized as work, requiring economic reward and not merely entitling the performer to be dependent on some man.*

- Lawyer, antimilitarist, feminist, socialist, journalist, leader in fight for woman suffrage.
- Born in Massachusetts, both parents, Samuel and Annis Ford Eastman, became ordained Congregational ministers serving churches in Ontario County and Western New York.
- Attended the **Granger Place School**, Vassar College, Columbia University, New York University of Law—graduated second in Class of 1907.
- Sister of socialist Max Eastman.
- In 1913 joined Alice Paul and others in founding the Congressional Union which became the National Woman's Party.
- During WWI was one of founders of Woman's Peace Party, also National Civil Liberties Bureau which became the ACLU.
- Delivered the speech, "Now We Can Begin" following the ratification of the 19th Amendment, outlining the work needed to be done in the political and economic spheres to achieve gender equality.
- After passage of the 19th Amendment, Eastman and others wrote the Equal Rights Amendment, introduced in 1923.
- Spouses: Wallace Benedict, Walter Fuller; two children.



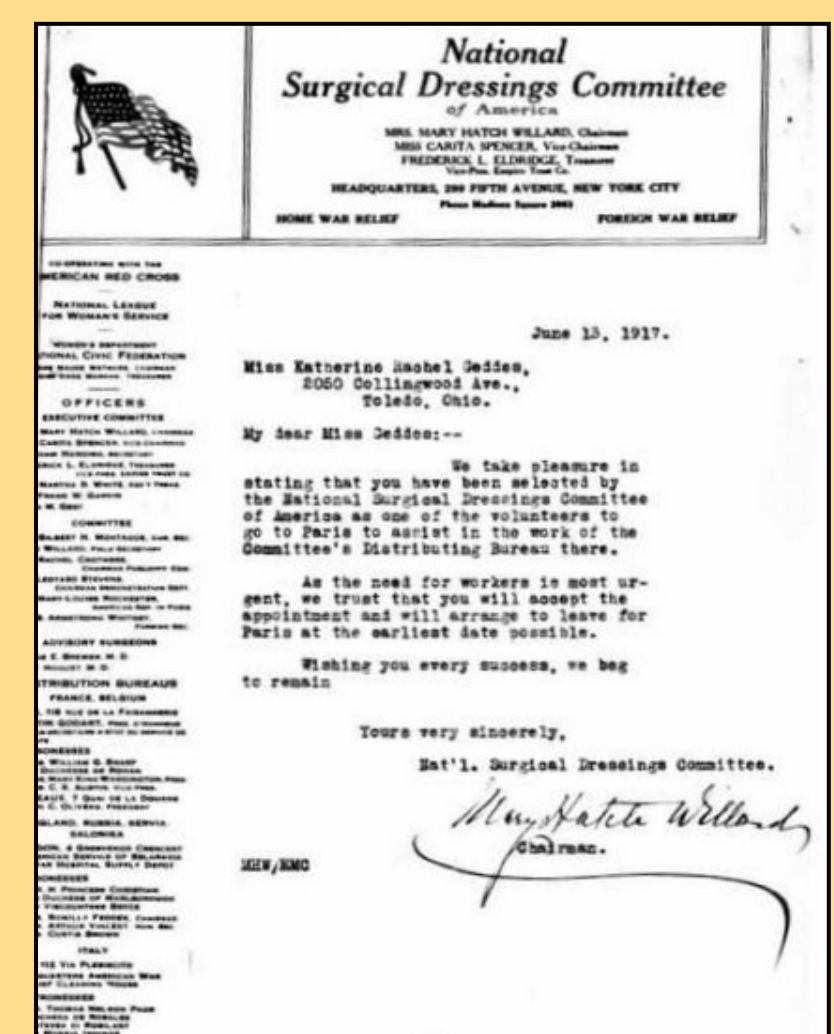
KATHARINE GEDDES

(1887—1955)

Relief Worker, American Red Cross WWI



- Born in Toledo, Ohio to Frederick and Kate Rosebrugh Geddes; her father was an attorney.
- Graduated from **Granger Place School** in 1906; her sister Laura graduated in 1903. Later attended Burnham School, Northampton, MA.
- 1908: her family traveled through France and parts of Europe.
- 1917: during World War I, she was selected to volunteer in Paris for the National Surgical Dressings Committee, then transferred to the American Red Cross.
- 1919: she spoke at the Fifth Liberty Campaign in Toledo, Ohio about her experiences in France with US soldiers and her visits to prisoner-of-war camps in occupied Germany.
- In 1921, Katharine was the first of two women hired as a policewoman in Toledo. Assigned to the Women's Bureau, policewomen enforced ordinances for street trade, dance halls and fortune telling, as well as all cases involving a child or woman.
- In the 1920s and 30s, she was a pioneer in the advancement of Girl Scouts in Toledo and northwest Ohio.
- She also served on Toledo hospital committees and was a member of the Toledo Woman's Club.



JEAN HOYT SMITH

(1877-1957)

Bellevue Hospital Nurse, Interior Decorator



- . Born in Canandaigua, NY to Dr. Charles S. and Dora Barnum Hoyt; father was a medical doctor in Yates and Ontario Counties.
- . Graduated from **Granger Place School** in 1895 and from Vassar College in 1899.
- . Member of the Class of 1901 Bellevue Training School for Nurses, New York City.
- . Following graduation she worked as a nurse at Bellevue Hospital.
- . In 1918, she and husband Frederick B. Smith moved to Utica, NY for his business.
- . While in Utica, she owned and operated a studio for interior decoration and a book shop.
- . By 1940, was living in Clinton, NY, continuing her interior decoration business.



Constable Hall

- . In the late 1940s, she was hired as the interior decorating consultant for Constable Hall, a Federal style mansion in Lewis County. In 1949 the mansion opened as a house museum.
- . Jean and her husband are buried in Woodlawn Cemetery, Canandaigua.

ELSIE CLARK NUTT

(1883-1956)

Social Worker, Settlement House in Maine

- . Born in Eastport, Maine in 1883 to Noel B. and Jennie Draper Nutt. Her father's family were bankers and merchants. Her mother was born in Canandaigua in 1849 to John C. and Caroline Parrish Cobb Draper, He was a banker and dry goods merchant.
- . As a child, Elsie's family lived in Maine, Kansas and Boston, Massachusetts, places where her father worked for family businesses.
- . 1899, she received a diploma from West Roxbury High School.
- . She attended **Granger Place School** from about 1899 to 1901.
- . Graduate of Miss Wheelock's Kindergarten School, Boston, later Wheelock College, in 1903, where she trained as a social worker. School was part of the Settlement Movement which advocated bringing the rich and poor together to improve education, health and welfare of the poor. Settlement houses were established to provide such services.
- . 1903: Elsie was chosen to head the Lewiston, Maine Settlement House.
- . 1909-1928: head social worker at settlement house, known as *Fraternity House*, Portland, Maine.
- . Was a speaker and organizer at Maine State Conferences of Charities and Corrections in the early 1900s fighting against "poverty and vice."
- . In early 1920s, she served on Portland, Maine City Council.
- . In the 1930s and 1940s, she worked as a social worker at Maine General Hospital, Portland, Maine.
- . In the late 1940s and 1950s, Elsie was Proprietor of *The Country House* in Falmouth, Maine, where club, society meetings and other gatherings were held.



Fraternity House, Portland, Maine
c. 1910 and today

