

FOUND IN THE ARCHIVES, no. 60 – February 2020

Women and 'The Vote'

Fairfax Circuit Court Historic Records Center



This August will mark the centennial of the ratification of the 19th Amendment to the United States Constitution, which gave American women the right to vote. In this month's *Found in the Archives*, we look at how women's suffrage brought new opportunities to Fairfax County's female citizens.

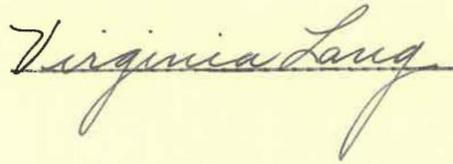
Sept. 22	"	Hine Alma de Lano	"	Aug. 18 1843	77	a Farmer and Householder
" "	"	Huntington Mary L.	"	June 11 1878	42	Gov. Clerk
" "	"	Huntington Louise	"	Sept. 21 1879	41	Gov. "
" "	"	Hutchingson Virginia	"	July 1, 1882	38	Housewife
Oct. 1	"	Hauhurst Marjorie L.	"	April 23, 1883	37	" "
" "	"	Hall Mary V.	"	June 1, 1857	69	" "
" 7	"	Hite Mary Elsie	"	Feb. 7, 1896	24	" "

List of Voters Registered 1902 – 1920, Last Names Beginning with H, 1920

Following the passing of the federal 19th Amendment in the summer of 1920, the Virginia General Assembly published an Act stating 'All the provisions of law in any way concerning elections.....shall be applicable to the registration and voting of women in like manner and to the same extent as they are now applicable to the registration and voting of men.' In Fairfax County, women embraced their new-found right and responsibility by registering to vote in large numbers. As can be seen from the entries in the List of Voters Registered extract above, women of all ages and differing occupations came to register. Alma De Lano Hine, the first name on the above list, was much more than 'a farmer and householder'. Alma's husband, Orrin E. Hine, had been a very successful real estate investor. Following his death in 1899, Alma took over his real estate interests and, according to our deed book indexes, matched Orrin's success with her own. Alma's own land transactions continued apace, well into the 1930s.

County of Fairfax,
State of Virginia to wit

I do solemnly swear that I will support the Constitution of the United States, and the Constitution of the State of Virginia ordained by the Convention which assembled in the City of Richmond, on the 12th day of June, Nineteen hundred and one, and that I will faithfully, impartially discharge and perform all the duties incumbent on me as registrar, according to the best of my ability, so help me God.



Virginia Lang Registrar's Oath, May 9, 1933

these registrars had to swear an Oath to 'faithfully, impartially discharge and perform all the duties incumbent on me as registrar, according to the best of my ability'. The 1933 registrar's Oath pictured above is for Virginia Lang, registrar for Herndon Precinct, located in the

Dranesville District.

Florence Jodzies' 'Statement to Electoral Board and Board of Supervisors' (at left) for Thompson's Precinct, outlines some of the duties of a poll-worker in 1936. In order to 'secure a correct list', Florence spent a considerable amount of her own time and money verifying legal voters recorded in previous registration books. She was only

I have registered on day other than official Reg. Day - 4 names (10¢) .40	
" " " on official Reg. Day - 5 "	
I have purged, after careful check and considerable field work 43 " (5¢) 2.15	
I have written in new Registration Book - 154 " (5¢) 7.70	
I sat on Oct. 3, 1936 - Official Reg. Day at Election booth from 9 A.M. to 5 P.M. - 2.00	
I posted notices throughout precinct concerning names to be purged - 1.00	
I advertised in local county papers concerning Registration -	
	\$ 13.25

Note: Not only the previous current Reg. book had to be checked but the entire set since there were voters whose names did not appear on current book, etc. The list was finally checked at county treasurer's office, checked with and by county commissioner of revenue, local residents, etc. and in every way possible to secure a correct list. Many hours were spent in this work, for which no compensation can be given. This service has been gladly given.

Florence Jodzies, REGISTRAR.

Florence Jodzies Registrar's Statement, October 1936

paid 5 cents per name removed from the register, and 10 cents per name added outside the official registration day. Extremely diligent, Florence paid to advertise in the local papers to encourage residents to check their registration status. As Florence reported to the Electoral Board of Fairfax County: 'Many hours were spent in this work, for which no compensation can be given. This service has been gladly given.'

CERTIFICATE OF REGISTRATION

VIRGINIA: COUNTY OF Fairfax

The undersigned Registrar for Burke Precinct,
in Lee Magisterial District, in the said County,
hereby certifies that the person herein named is duly registered on THE PERMANENT ROLL OF VOTERS in said
precinct, in said Magisterial District, under the Constitution of Virginia, as follows, viz: Date of Registration
October 8th 1922 Color white No. 80 Name Edward Newcomb
Date of Birth Aug 29, 1892 Age 30 years, Occupation Farmer
Place of Residence Lee Length of Residence in State 30 years,
County 30 Precinct 30; if naturalized, Date of Papers
Issued by _____ Court of _____, and is
enrolled as* _____ exempt from payment of poll tax as a prerequisite to the right to vote. This certificate is given
to enable the person named to change his place of voting to Arlington Precinct, in
_____ Ward, of the _____ City of Arlington
District, of the _____ County of _____
and to entitle him to register in the said precinct on the PERMANENT ROLL OF VOTERS.

This transfer has been noted on the roll in my possession.
Dated this Aug 4th, 1923

Edna Davis
Registrar.

* Note.—If NOT exempt, insert the word "not" in this blank.

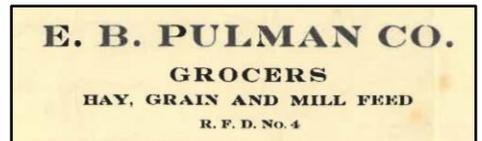
Though the work was modestly compensated, court records show that women registrars had staying power. The certificate of registration at left was signed by Edna Force Davis, registrar of Burke Precinct in Lee District for at least ten years. A native of New Jersey, Edna was a schoolteacher and had supported America's

Edward Newcomb Registration, August 4, 1923

troops during World War I working for the Federal War Risk Insurance program (the forerunner of the Veterans Administration). According to local historians Nan Netherton and Ruth Preston Rose, Edna's commitment to serving her community extended to volunteering for The Red Cross, the Fairfax County Sunday School Association and the Home Demonstration Club. Edna passed her passion for education onto her daughter, Hazel, who received a PhD in Education and rose to be the Director of Research at the National Education Association.

List of persons who registered Oct. 2, 1920
Pulman's Precinct

<u>White (Female)</u>	<u>White Male</u>
1 Bayliss Jennie J.	1 Florence Warren M.
2 Bayliss Catherine	2 Henry W. B. (Temporary)
3 Eaton Nellie J.	3 Johnson Thos. G.
4 Davies Edna	4 Marsteller Asa J.
5 Florence Sue A.	5 Pyles Frank V.
6 Moore Rebecca L.	6 Pyles Jas. E.
7 Pulman Edith B.	7 Thompson Thomas
8 Pulman Irene M.	
9 Pulman Irene F.	
10 Pickett Mary Lewis	<u>Colored (Female)</u>
11 Roat Lena W.	
12 Roberts Coliza W.	1 Quander Elizabeth J.
13 Roberts Bertha M.	2 Quander Woodie V.
14 Reid Sallie K.	
15 Shaffer Annie C.	<u>Signed</u>
16 St. Clair Mary C.	<u>Edith B. Pulman</u>
17 St. Clair Ruth C.	<u>Registrar</u>
18 St. Clair Grace M.	



E. B. Pulman Co. Letterhead, 1920

Small precincts lacking municipal buildings often had their registration and voting locations within the local store. In Mount Vernon's eponymous Pulman's Precinct, this was E. B. Pulman & Co.'s store, on Telegraph Road. Built, owned and operated by Charles Oliver Pulman and his daughter, Edith Braden Pulman, the store provided general supplies and farm animal feed to a rural population. The Pulmans opened their store in 1910, when Edith was just 17, and Edith's entry in the 1910

Voter Registration List Pulman's Precinct, Mt. Vernon District, October 2, 1920

United States census states that she described herself as a 'self-employed' merchant. In 1920, Edith went on to become the registrar for Pulman's Precinct, and registered herself and her sister, Irene F. Pulman, to vote, as set out in the above-pictured list of registered voters. A close inspection of the court record shows that Edith wrote the registration list on the back of her company writing paper. At this time, the Commonwealth paid registrars \$3 per day for their services on registration day. In addition to this, Edith was paid \$2 for 'room rent' of her store for elections, a sum she received every year until she lost the store during the Depression, in late 1929.

I hereby give, bequesth and devise unto my faithful daughter Edith B.Pulman the store, land, stock of goods, personal property used in connection therewith and appurtenances located between the Telegraph Road and the Ballenger Road, Mt,Vernon District , Fairfax COUNTY, Virginia, at a valuation of Two Thousand Dollars (\$2,000.00) and a charge thereon of \$75.00 per month to be paid by her as hereinafter set forth . The said \$2,000.00 is to be charged against her share of my estate, but the \$75.00 per month is not to be considered for nor against her, and is merely
(End of page two)
rent paid by her while she occupies said premises during the period I hereinafter stipulate and for the support of my widow for such period.

Charles O. Pulman Will, Will Book 10, p. 434, probated January 15, 1925

Edith’s father, Charles O. Pulman, died at the beginning of 1925. In his will, seen at left, he left the store and the stock to his ‘faithful daughter,’ naming her Executrix, and stipulating that she

pay his widow (her stepmother) \$75 per month, as long as she remained unmarried and maintained the family home for the ‘present users and occupiers.’

Commonwealth of Virginia:
.....vs.....: Upon an indictment of the Grand Jury for unlawfully operating a mercantile business without a license,
Edith B. Pulman.....:
It is ordered by the Court that upon the defendant taking out the necessary license and paying the costs of these proceedings, that she be discharged from custody and the indictment will then be dismissed.

Fairfax Minute Book 1927, p. 133, Judge's Order, May 24, 1928

Executing her father’s estate and defending the ensuing chancery suit mounted by her stepmother took a toll on

Edith’s business and health. In November 1927 and January 1928, she was called to court to testify on her cousin’s behalf for his ‘Violation of Prohibition Law’ case, but she did not attend court due to illness. In March 1928, Edith was due to attend court to be indicted for failing to renew her business license, but again her illness kept her from coming to court. She failed to appear a second time in May of that year; nonetheless, the presiding judge ordered that her indictment would be dismissed, as soon as Edith got her business license filed and she paid the attendant court costs (see Minute Book extract above). There is no further entry for Edith in the Minute Books, and 1928 is the last year that Edith paid personal property tax on ‘merchants’ capital.’ In 1933, the store property was sold by Edith’s Trustees, following her default on her mortgage; the buyers tore the store down.

The 1940 United States Census shows that Edith moved to Washington, D. C., and lived with her sister, Blanche McCuen, who was a clerk at the Veteran’s Bureau. Edith Braden Pulman died in 1975 and is buried in the Ivy Hill Cemetery, in her hometown of Alexandria. The Court’s

records recount the paradigm shift ushered in by women's suffrage, but they also reveal the complex lives of 20th Century Fairfax women.

For more information on these and other records held at the Fairfax Circuit Court Historic Records Center, please call 703-246-4168 or email CCRHistoricRecords@fairfaxcounty.gov.

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<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/circuit/historic-records-center>