

Mrs Margaret Cousins. Bachelor of Music 3949 /
(Bach's music)

Dublin W.F.L. - Irish W. Franchise Society

what office -

What husband's office in Ireland?
He was in Education in India

When they went to India -
Principal of Wood College
Madanapalle
Madras

Birth 1878 - Death 1954.

"Within my first year of landing on
Indian soil I was dedicated to
the service of India via service
with the help of India - its womanhood. @

She husband went out to India 1915 to join
Dr Anne Besant - publishing extension
of her Theosophical Society work
1916 elected first non-Indian member
of Indian Women's University, Poona.

She formed the first Indian Women's
Society (the forerunner of the Women's Indian
Association)

If undelivered please return to-

44/45 TOWER HILL,
LONDON. E.C.3.



Mr. J. L. Billington - Secy

146 DORA ROAD

WIMBLEDON.

SW 19.

Became one of the joint secretaries of
the latter society & editor of its monthly
journal "Stri Dharma"

Wrote 2 Books ① The Awakening of Indian
Womanhood; &
② Indian Womanhood Today

She remained in India until her
death in 1954.

"She was an inspiration to those she knew
those who knew of her in the Indian
struggle for freedom" "The cause of women &
the cause of India"
In 1932 she made an individual protest
against punitive governmental
emergency legislation - & was
imprisoned for a year in Vellore Jail,
S. India.

"She served Indian men & women as perhaps
no other woman in the present-time"



Mr Mrs F. L. Billington Greig
146. ~~Dona~~ Road

S. W. 19.

The Indian Womens Association in 1956 published the first volume of her recorded work as a tribute to her memory. (See last page of notes)

② Note. The Nationalist Indian movement took on new energy & determination in 1916 - in which the Indian women actively shared.

The for. general of Viceroy was Lord Chelmsford & the R. Hon E.S. Montague Mrs was Sec. of State for India. They were approached by a group of Indian University Women associated with Mrs Cousins & Mrs Dorothy Jinarajadasa who drew up an address & organised a deputation to the above ministers. It took place on Dec 18 1917 when 14 ladies placed their address before these ministers & spoke on the chief claims made therein. They were supported also by telegrams from seven ^{of the} Indian women too far off to ~~reach~~ ^{be present} at the time arranged

First Woman Governor of

They ~~accept~~ ^{support} the principle of Self Government - within the Empire
They ~~claim~~ ^{demands} made in the address covered equal suffrage on a wide and fair basis;

3949

Compulsory and Free Primary Education for Boys & girls

Immediate attention to secure that girls shall have equal school attention & facilities

protest - against existing unfairness 10 times as many boys educated as girls.

Increased number Training Colleges for Women Teachers - Provision of special Widows training for teachers - Grants in Aid to associations already at-work

Medical & Health training & maternity courses with scholarships in aid - ^{or supporting} the address included

(Those present) Mrs Margaret Cousins, Mrs Janaradasa
Mrs Sarojini Naidu, Mrs Herabai Tata
Mrs Annie Besant, ~~...~~

led by Mrs Sarojini Naidu (poetess, benevolence, politician)

Referring to this deputation in 1935 57

3949

Mr Sarojini Naidu -

"The deputation of women to such high personages seemed in those early days very enterprising. In Europe both before 1917 & after European women had suffered persecution, misery & ridicule before they won the vote. But Indian women had not paid so dearly for their freedom. The important thing to bear in mind is that whatever the differences between East & West - women must remain indivisible all the world over, & must serve together the common purpose of womanhood & the service of humanity."

RT Hon G Montague after making his investigations drew up ~~the~~ scheme of Reform known as the Montague-Chelmsford Scheme of Reforms for India.

No mention of women was included; they were just ignored - in spite of Congress & Conferences & Deputations.

This M. C. Scheme created two Committees
to follow up & work out the possibilities
The one for electoral matters was

The Southborough Franchise Committee

appointed to discover Indian opinion on the
planned reforms.

The Women asked of action from the
Indian National Congress which at a
special session passed a strong resolution
in favour of women's inclusion in
the new franchise

"Women possessing the same qualifications
as men should not be disqualified
on account of sex."

The women's letter to the Sec. of State

claimed this last of the many
repeated Indian demands should be
incorporated in the Reform Bill

Also for 15 years previously the Bombay
women had exercised the Municipal
Vote with intelligence & diligence
voluntarily alongside the men in the
same polling Booths

One of the excuses for the omission was the ^{organised} national Indian societies & institutions would support their women's request for enfranchisement - This was countered by

@ Resolutions in favour passed by the former Provincial District Conferences & the Congress

Next objection was that the segregation of large numbers of women would make it impossible for them to record their votes.

This was countered by quoting the method followed in the remote areas where specially appointed election officers called at their homes to unsealed voting papers which the women used & resealed in the presence of the appointed

Southborough Committee April 1919
women's claim entirely ignored

Overwhelming Commercial Congresses favorable resolutions
in support of popular societies, institutions etc

The committee recommending the total exclusion of women & The committee declared that the granting of the franchise to women would be premature.

1 Englishman & 1 Indian differed

Bombay women held public meeting of protest July 1919

Other protest meetings followed in all of which resolutions of protest were passed

Cablegrams were shown on the Southborough Committee - also to leaders of thought in England & members of government here.

Thereafter when Gov of India Bill in Brit. Parliament representative Indian Deputation attended in London to give evidence & urge particular items - Every such body without exception endorsed their women's claim to suffrage.

Mrs Sarojini Naidu led the Indian women deputation working in England

with two Tata ladies

Miss Annie Besant - (Born 1847 - Died 1933)

Co-operated with all women in
the Indian progressive work
as well as with her Indian
philosophy - friend Gandhi etc
~~Theosophy~~
until her death

She was president of the All India
Home Rule League -

Started a weekly journal "The Common
weal" in 1919 - meetings & paper
did much work in England

Deputation to Secretary of State in
Aug. 1919. Bombay

Women's Committee held a public
meeting ^{of different communities} to send a working deputation
to London to press for W.S. -
many meetings were held
throughout Gt Bri.

Mrs Annie Besant - was elected
President of the Indian National
Congress in 1917.

" The Joint Select Committee in London
decided to leave the question of
women's franchise in India to be
settled by the future Legislative
Councils of India for each Province

Report of one of the
Bombay delegates
to Britain
Mrs Herabai Tata

After the big 1919 effort - the task had been
transferred to the Indian Provinces
just as Madras enfranchised women
municipal local rolls -
Then followed the full franchise
here in 1921

(? Travancore enfranchised
earlier? See Dewan Bahadur

Resolution
who moved the
Krishnan Nair

May 1921

3949 11

International Women's Suffrage Alliance responded to an appeal from Mrs Margaret Cousins -

see

four years work previously - full success in Madras & local & municipal success elsewhere. -

Reform Bill in force in India is the stepping stone for full Home Rule after Campaigns led by Mrs Cousins

1) Suffrage Debate in Poona resulting in Suffrage Victory For 52 - against 25 -

Voters for included Hindus, Parsis, Muhammedans, Christians, Western & Eastern (women in gallery 75 - also all sorts)

Bihar Province

In Nov 1921. Resolution passed by large representative meeting at Patna (also Oct 1921 similar meeting in Gaya same province)

Dedication and Last Note 12
It will be obvious to the readers 3949

that whatever the Women's Indian Assocⁿ was able to achieve in the field of civic & political rights for the Indian women during this period, was entirely due to the ceaseless and untiring service of Mrs M. G. Cousins. These records reproduced here are for the benefit of the present & future generations of our women, who now enjoy the fruits of these reforms."

Quoted from the Records of Mrs Cousins Works published in 1956 by the Women's Indian Association at Adyar, Madras.

Final note "This is the first chapter on Mrs M. G. Cousins work in India & the rest will follow."

Finally all Provincial Councils

(13)
3949

passed the measure -
Then led by Mrs Cousins the women
ran a campaign to get the newly
enfranchised women onto the
voters roll in time to vote at the
next election.

Also to win the definite recognition
of the right to be elected.

- enormous correspondence - travelling
from province to province -

{ Leslie Commission for W.S. (Fund
raised in ~~USA~~)

Re Financial Help (page 11)

Leslie Commission founded to
administer the fund left by
Mrs Leslie to Mrs Carrie Chapman Catt
mostly used in U.S.A. - they sent
Dollars 500 / 1921. 22. 23. 24. 25-
annually

The deputations & meetings & appeals continued in order to have women made eligible to be elected - women mentioned as participating along with leaders are Mrs Rama Rao, Mrs H A Tala, Mrs Ganpal Rai, Mrs H Rustomji Faridomji
1924 Bombay meeting & Petition

Aug 1924

Public pressure w/ get - W.S. extended to all India - large public meetings many cities -

Deputation to Simla Aug 1924

only opposition coming from Swarajists - which had become obstructive

15-
3949

Sample Resolutions

Aug 1924

This public meeting of Indian women belonging to different parts of India places on record its very strong opinion that the disability of women to stand as candidates for the Legislatures be removed forthwith, that the Rules under the Government of India Act be amended accordingly."

Mrs Rama Rau 3949
only from

Quetta

"Here in Quetta the women are very far behind". The women she addresses "looked as bored and sleepy & unintelligent - that I was in despair. In these parts they still believe that "husband worship" is the only Dharma a woman ought to recognize - & nothing will make them take any interest in what is going on around them.

Quotation

Annie Besant

3949

"When it comes to the details of administration and the applying of principles to practice, you will constantly find that a woman's brain has a mastery of administrative details which makes her most valuable where organization is concerned.

Let me for a moment put the practical side of it - as we find it - in England where women have been introduced into the administration of hospitals, asylums for children, of sick people in all places where the poor are gathered together and where the young have to be thought of. There it has been found that woman's genius for detail is invaluable in questions of administration. It is found that she will look into details that never strike the mind of man."

Annie Besant -

quoted in Mrs Consens Work in India
issued by W's Indian Assoc 195-6

Mahatma Gandhi

Quotations 3949

"I am uncompromising in the matter of women's rights. In my opinion she should suffer under no legal disability not suffered by man, I should treat daughters and sons on a footing of perfect equality. Women must have votes and an equal legal status. But the problem does not end there. It only commences at the point where women begin to affect the political deliberations of the nation."

1919

Lookbaekto Madras

gave the vote to women

during the first few weeks of its existence in 1921.

M E Curran

Quotation

3949

"Instead of asking for mercy women should vie with men in suffering for any good cause. When it comes to suffering women will always surpass men"

Mrs Rukmani Lakshminipatti

Rome Congress of Women 1923

Mussolini still in control —

admitted some political rights might be fairly claimed by the mothers & widows of men who died for their country.

Carrie Chapman Catt said

"We do not come to Rome as timid supplicants for small favours.

Women of two-thirds of the world are represented in this gathering; of these the delegates of 25-nations are voters on equal terms with men. Among them are members of Parliament and councillors of great-cities. We are part of the collective rulers of nations."

Oct 1926, 2 women stood for election to the Madras Legislative Council -

- Mrs Kamaladevi
 - Mrs Hannan Angelo.
-

Nov 1926 W.I., A asked that 4 seats be allotted to women - in addition to the open seats - these 4 to be filled by nomination -

Governor replied & said something might result or would they nominate some women to be considered - They sent in 6 names

- Including B. Muthulakshmi
- & Mrs Kamaladevi

(The former became ^{First} Deputy President of the Madras Legislative Council)

By 1926 Seven Indian Princes had given women equal franchises & only 2 (Central Provinces & Bihar were left)

Other woman recognised: doctor Dr Poonen Sukose MLC Minister of Health Travancore State

Mrs Madhari Ammal became member of Cochin Legislative Council.

Right to sit embodied in "Home Rule" for India in April 1924 - 4 Provinces had adopted it by October Central Provinces & Provinces of Bihar & Orissa were the last to give equality both in voting & the right to election

March 1927

Mrs Cousins watch word thereafter

Constant vigilance to see that women do not allow themselves to be overruled.

3949

Letters of congratulation poured
in from all over the world

- 1 Lady Constance Lytton
 - 2 Mrs Jowett
 - 3 Equal Citizenship Society (?)
 - 4 International Alliance
 - 5 British Commonwealth League
 - 6 Mrs Daisy Solomon
 - 7 Women's Election Committee
 - 8 Marie Lawson - (Hon Sec. W.E.C.)
 - 9 French feminists
-

Mrs D. Jinarajadasa (Hon Sec. W.I.A.)
in 1921
had worked with British suffragettes

Mrs Cousins was a member of the
Irish Women's Franchise Society in
Dublin - ^{some of} their members took part in
WSPU W.F.L. protests etc & By-election
work

Mrs D. Jinarajadasa

In 1921 - during agitation for Women's Indian Association
W.S. in India

"I am convinced that no Indian from the highest to the lowest would for one moment tolerate that women should be treated as were the women in England for asking for a right)

"But never ~~could~~ be said of Britain as it can be said of South India that she gave freedom to her women, openly, generously, largely & equally

1921

It was not until 1928 that women got equal franchise in Britain

"It is only when men & women together cooperate with each other that a country can go forward to real progress & well-being"

State

Mysore (or other Provinces) passed the
right to vote & the
eligibility of women to election
absolutely unanimously

phrase used

"to remove the disability of sex from
the franchises for all the public
bodies in the State"

and

acts

First stage of new purely self-
governing people working out their
own destiny in serious
conference " M.L.

"Such is the reverence taught by the Indian
religions (including Islamism) for womanhood
in its aspect of mother & goddess that Indian
women have only to ask strongly & definitely
enough for a thing & it will be given to them
willingly"

Margaret Cousins
1927

Bengal Legislative Council

1921 3949

- defeated the resolution on first
attempt. - after
3 days of debate -
There were then 10 British men on the
Council & 6 "influential" ones voted
against

37 voted for -

By 1925 - decision was reversed
August - majority of 16,

Travancore

1925-

Mr Poonen Lucrose first woman Health
Minister
Then Madhavi Ammal ^{became} member
of Cochin Legislative Council

Then Madras

- see earlier notes for name
this woman became Deputy President

Indore - Mrs Ahalyabai Bhandarkar M.A.
nominated by government of
state as a Municipal
Commissioner

Mahatma Gandhi, opened in 1929

the Campaign ~~against~~ ^{of protest} re, Salt
 (Price raised by imperial power in
 1928 ? -

Salt-Satyagraha protest march -

Gandhi restricted it to men -

"Soul force - self-sacrifice, without
 bloodshed or violence" - alternative
 to war of rebellion - alternative
 method of protest against external
 colonial government -

Salt chosen because so common that
 the most poor & illiterate could be
 rallied by & understand its
 application to themselves.

The Indian women's societies protested
 at his exclusion of women from the
 protest & picketing marches -
 Non-violence is much more naturally
 woman's weapon

Margaret Cousins - Sayings

3949

"For men must talk & women must wait"

"Let these ultra-purists first cleanse their own consciences & bring a franchise amendment disfranchising all immoral men if morally is to be made a qualification for the vote"

Indian Sayings

"Where women are honoured, there the gods dwell"

Margaret Cousins (when Gandhi excluded women from his Salt Marches) non-violence

"Women ask that no Conferences, congresses or commissions dealing with the welfare of India should prohibit women from there in them"

Mahatma Gandhi

"To call women the weaker sex is a libel; it is man's injustice to woman, if by strength is meant moral power then woman is immeasurably man's superior"

see over →

Rabindranath Tagore was a 3949
strong inspired supporter of the
claim to material & spiritual
freedom of women.

Mahatma Gandhi non-violence
campaign covered
① non use of salt - (Because Taxed by Gov)
② march of men throughout the
provinces to explain & spread
this way of winning self-government
③ Picketing of liquor shops -
Ban on foreign cloth shops -
(Everyone to wear Indian cotton)
a Imported cloth caused unemployment
& decay of India's own industry.
b Drink undermined the human
being & caused crime & waste
in numerous ways & poverty

(He wanted the cloth & drink non-violence
to be organised by women throughout -
The marches of non-violent propaganda
against all foreign government taxes
& usages by men led in India Cotton &
eating no salt.

Salt Tax

3949

The Tax was imposed by the Viceroy against the role of all the legislative Council ~~and~~ other representative bodies of the land

Mrs Sarojini Naidu joined them when they reached the coast ~~and~~ was the first woman arrested in the great non-violent, non-resistant, non-co-operative movement - lasting from 1928 to

1932

Arrest of Gandhi () led to the resignation of

Cont'd

Gandhi - non-violent Campaign 3949

He advocated also the home spinning by thousands of women of Khadi - a native plant - to replace foreign cotton - (Poor old Lancashire!).

The marchers - men - carried spinning gear with them & spun yarn at their resting & sleeping places -

All three boycotts - salt - cloth - drink would cut the revenue drawn by Britain from India by millions.

The Gandhi data is from "Jung India"

The salt marchers (1929) had a practical aim - they marched from the interior to the coast to make salt - free of the British tax.

see next page

By 1953, —

Free India Elections had given equal adult suffrage to women — who voted enthusiastically in the general election

State Assemblies (Late Legislative Councils) of the India Union

have ^{as} elected members 800 women

30 women in the Central Parliament

==

Three women sent to give evidence at Joint Select Committee of Round Table Conference on new Indian Constitution were

Rajkumari Amrit-Kaur

Ms (Mrs) S. Mulakshmi Reddi

Mrs Shreefah Hamid Ali.

Eleanor Rathbone M.P.

Mrs Despard
Dr Maude Royden

date of death?

Lady Sifton 3949

Miss Agatha Harrison Mrs P.L.
Mrs Corbel Ashby Mrs Monica Whiteley
Prominent Indians

Mrs Rama Rao —

When India's ^{free} final ^{self} Government
constitution was completed

A great fight had to be put up
against the British Plan
^{proposal} which included several
inequalities & undesirable
restrictions on Indian
women

Three Indian women delegates
came to Britain & carried through
a most-active & successful
campaign



JANUARY 1955

Sun Mon Tu Wed Th Fri Sat

...	...	...	...	...	...	1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31	...	...	...	...	...

Desk, 136



December

S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
...	...	...	1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	...
...

February

S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
...	...	1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	...	...	...	...	...
...

MON.

3

10.30 Highgate. B.O.S.

TUES.

4

10.30 E.G.A.

WED.

5

Rotary Club Lenehem. 12.40.

THURS.

6

FRI.

7

10.30 .E.G.A.

SAT.

8

Women of Note

I PC. News 3949
Nov. 1957

Secretary. The sponsoring organisations are the A-IWC, the All Pakistan Women's Association, the Association of All Ceylon Women's Conference, the Welfare League of Burma Association and the Kongress Wanita of Indonesia.

Preliminary meetings were held at Indore on 29th December, 1956, and at Karachi on 9th and 10th of May, 1957. The All Ceylon Women's Conference has agreed to be host and the Conference will meet in Colombo from 15th to 28th February, 1958.

The aims of the Conference are:—

- (1) to meet and discuss on a common platform some of the basic problems affecting countries in the Asian-African region with special reference to women and children.
- (2) to arrive at certain broad principles which should permeate the aims and work of the women's movements in the countries of the region.
- (3) to establish channels of communication for the purpose of continuing the exchange of information, personnel and other aid on a mutually beneficial basis.
- (4) to strive to promote international understanding and peaceful solutions of tensions between nations and peoples throughout the world.

Each organisation has appointed an Honorary Corresponding Secretary, while Mrs. Eleanor de Zoysa has been appointed Honorary Secretary to work with Mrs. Avabai Wadia. All the 29 countries which participated in the Bandung conference will be asked to send delegates, and one observer from national women's organisations from all the other countries will be invited.

The programme will consist of five sections dealing with:—

1. Prevention of sweated labour, and exploitation of women and children, labour welfare.
2. Slavery and traffic in women and children.
3. Women and citizenship.
4. Women and socio-economic welfare.
5. Education.

News from Madras

Some welcome items of news have been received from the esteemed veteran worker Dr. (Mrs.) Muthulakshmi Reddi. She reminds us that the Women's Indian Association of which she is President was started in Madras in 1917 by Dr. Annie Besant, Mrs. Jinarajadasa and Mrs. Margaret Cousins, and carries on still its beneficent work for women and children. Later when the All-India Women's Conference was founded in 1928 it was amalgamated with that organisation. Among many activities in recent years the Association through its own initiative and exertion has founded a Cancer Institute for diagnosis, treatment and research. In Madras State a woman Minister, Mrs.

> The Cousins of
Dublin?

see over

Lourdammal Simon, an Indian Christian, was returned by open elections from the district of Cape Comorin—thirteen women are in the Assembly, and four nominated women in the local Council.

Dr. Reddi has most kindly sent a copy of what is called the first chapter of Mrs. Margaret Cousins' work in India, an inspiring and interesting story. From her arrival with her husband in 1915 till her passing in 1954 she gave devoted service to India, especially to her women, and was in the forefront of the campaign for women's suffrage.

see this document if possible

PAKISTAN

Rural Reconstruction

In the May number of "IPC News" APWA's plans for assisting Rural Reconstruction were outlined, showing far-reaching schemes for social welfare, and now APWA workers could take part in the project areas of the Village Agricultural and Industrial Development Administration by taking charge of certain centres and using them as a training ground for volunteers.

The V-AID has at present nine training institutes all over Pakistan where about 1,000 workers including 100 women are trained every year, and a practical policy is to try to recruit married couples to work together in the same village community, the husband teaching the new improved agricultural methods, and the wife all that concerns the home. It is the industry, enthusiasm, and insight of the women worker on which depends much of the success of the village social development. She helps to form Women's Councils which train the women to shoulder responsibility and organise self-help—women's centres are opened where they are taught a variety of hand-crafts which enable them to supplement the family earnings. With such schemes in the background two of APWA's branches have already started work in the V-AID project areas of Lala Musa and Lyallpur and are grateful for the opportunity afforded. APWA's three-fold objective in the Model Village Projects comprise (1) a field for experimentation to assess how its workers could be useful to the villages and help the V-AID programme; (2) to provide a training ground for APWA volunteers; (3) a Model of Ideal Rural Life would thus be demonstrated. The Rural Reconstruction Section of APWA quickly realised that priority must be given to the training of volunteers, and accordingly the first three-week training course was held in Karachi during July this year, 28 women attending and receiving merit certificates. Lectures were given by experts in Urdu, and included rural sociology, group work, leadership, youth work, adult education, home-making, recreation, community sanitation, poultry keeping, kitchen gardening, fruit preservation, etc. Besides the lectures the trainees were required to do intensive field work at APWA's Model Village Project 16 miles from the city in order to put into practice the knowledge gained in the class room, two supervisors always accompanying them. Friendly contacts were established with the women and the children, and various experi-

Mrs. Pandit-

(Vijayalakshmi Pandit)-

President - All India Women's Conference
1940-42

led Delegations to Britain
many times during the
change over years.

President - of United Nations Assembly
1953.

Ambassador from India in
Britain 1954 -

& much more
