

**Vigo County: The New Highland Christian Church  
Ladies Aid Society's Rutherford Quilt, 1898**

*Caroline G. Emenaker and Natalie Burriss*

The Rutherford Quilt made by the Ladies Aid Society of the New Highland Christian Church in 1898 is featured in the “Quilts: Stitches, Scraps and Stories,” exhibit at the Vigo County History Center in Terre Haute, Indiana. The quilt is white on the front, with red church appliques surrounded by eighty-three embroidered names of influential members of North Terre Haute. The quilt was gifted to Eliza Rutherford by the man who won it after it was raffled off by the church. Rutherford’s grandsons, Vernon Washburn and Vane Rutherford, donated the quilt to the Vigo County Historical Museum in 1974.<sup>1</sup>

Eliza was born in Clarke Township, Ontario, Canada, around 1850 and married Thomas Rutherford, also born in Ontario, in 1864. The couple had eight living children, including Jerusha (Rutherford) Washburn, mother of Vernon Washburn, and Thomas E. Rutherford, father of Vane Rutherford. The family moved to Terre Haute, Indiana, in 1892, living there until moving to Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, around 1907. Eliza died there in 1920 at the age of seventy.<sup>2</sup>

Eliza was an avid quilter both in Indiana and Canada and was one of the women in the Ladies Aid Society who helped make the quilt. Women’s charity organizations, often through churches, have been using quilts to promote social reform since the early 1800s. Organizations such as aid societies, sewing clubs, and even the sanitation commission used quilts to support soldiers and the poor, raise money for churches and the community, and protest slavery. The signature quilt is a common example of a design used for these purposes. Below is a list of the eighty-three names embroidered on the quilt. The names appear below in alphabetical order. Each name cost ten cents to be added, meaning the church raised about \$8.30 before raffling off the quilt. The names of Eliza Rutherford and three of her children are featured on the quilt.<sup>3</sup>

**Notes**

1. Rutherford family portrait caption in “Quilts: Stitches, Scraps and Stories,” exhibit; accession record in “Index of Quilt Collection,” Quilt 39; and “Vigo County Historical

- Society Weekly News,” *Terre Haute Tribune* (Terre Haute, Indiana), June 9, 1974, quilting folders, all at Vigo County History Center, Terre Haute, Indiana.
2. Eliza Rutherford, U.S. Census Year: 1900; Place: Harrison, Vigo, Indiana; Roll: 408; Page: 15; Enumeration District: 0098; Jerusha Washburn, Canada, Census Year: 1916; Place: Alberta, Edmonton East, 091; Roll: T-21950; Page: 64; Family No: 779; Vane R. Rutherford, U.S. Census Year: 1920; Place: Terre Haute Ward 5, Vigo, Indiana; Roll: T625\_468; Page: 5B; Enumeration District: 147, all in Ancestry; “Thomas Rutherford,” Beechmount Cemetery, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada; Eliza Barbara Carscadden Rutherford,” Beechmount Cemetery, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada; “Thomas Eli Rutherford,” Roselawn Memorial Park, Vigo, Indiana, all in Find A Grave; “Rutherford Quilt,” Quilt 39; Index of Names to Rutherford Quilt, quilting folders, both in Vigo County History Center.
  3. “Vigo County Historical Society Weekly News,” *Terre Haute Tribune*, June 9, 1974; Indiana Quilt Registry Project, ed., *Quilts of Indiana: Crossroads of Memories* (Indiana University Press: Bloomington, 1991), 55; Pat Ferrero, Elaine Hedges, and Julie Silber, *Hearts and Hands: The Influence of Women and Quilts on American Society*, 1st ed. (San Francisco: Quilt Digest Press, 1987), 66, 68–69, 72–73; Index of Names to Rutherford Quilt and accompanying information, quilting folders; Rutherford Family portrait caption in “Quilts: Stitches, Scraps and Stories,” exhibit.

### **Names Embroidered on Rutherford Quilt**

<b>Last Name</b>	<b>First Name</b>
Adams,	Mrs
Alison,	Mrs A
Arnold,	Mr C
“	Mrs
“	Nellie

Beal,	Mrs Margrette
Bevis,	Miss Ethel
“	R
Bowman,	J H
Bridgewater,	T S
Burgan,	Albert
“	Mr W
Burkhart,	Miss Stella
Burnett,	J
Daniels,	Mrs O
“	Mr S
Dean,	Bessie
Egelson,	Judge
Fidler,	Rev C L
“	Clara M
Green,	Betha
Hall,	Mrs
Harris,	Lorna
“	Mr
“	Mrs
HaselBurger,	Mrs E J
Hawkins,	D
“	Mrs
“	S D

Hineing,	R
Hogland,	Grace
Holloway,	Mrs Flora
Kenedy,	Mrs H
Lashbrook,	Miss Ella
“	Rula
Martin,	Mr
McCarthy,	EW
McQuaid,	Mrs.
Montrary,	S
Moores,	May
Myers,	Will
Neece,	Elizabeth
Noble,	Mrs Oliver
Nuss,	Effie
Osborne,	Mr T
Owens,	Mrs
Palmer,	Mr and Mrs
“	Mrs
“	R B
Pearce,	Mrs
Pierce,	Rev L D Pastor

Robins,	Mrs
Ross,	Cynthia A
Rutherford,	Eli
“	Jacob
“	Jerusha
“	Mrs
Shassere,	Kate
“	Mrs
Smith,	D V
“	J A
Snyder,	Eddie
Stevens,	Sonia
Stotts,	Fred
“	Jessie
“	John
“	Leyda
“	Sam
“	Mrs
“	Mrs Fred
Swinford,	Chas R
Tetrick,	Miss A
Thorpe,	Allen
Vandlandingham,	Chas

Wagoner,	Miss Anna
Wales,	Jenny S
Walker,	A G
Washburn,	B
Watkins,	S
Weaver,	Mrs
Westfall,	Herbert
White,	Mrs
Willis,	Dr J R