

# LITITIA (CREIGHTON) YOUNG MANS

TEACHER, TEMPERANCE  
REFORMER AND CHAMPION  
OF WOMEN'S RIGHTS



Letitia in 1867

## EARLY YEARS

Letitia Creighton was born January 3, 1827 in a **tiny log house near Baltimore** Upper Canada, to John Creighton (Irish born) and Annie Bishop (American born). Shortly after Letitia's arrival, John purchased a 200 acre property at Lot 11, Concession 2 Hamilton Township, an area now known as Creighton Heights.

Letitia began her formal schooling at age 4 in a log school house then, at age 6, travelled a mile and a half to Hulls Corners (at the north edge of Cobourg) for classes. **Besides the basics in reading, writing and arithmetic she was taught various interpretations of Christianity** from a succession of Catholic, Anglican and Methodist aligned teachers. Her teacher in 1837, when she was just 11, railed against the evils of alcohol and **persuaded her and the rest of his class to pledge abstinence from alcohol**. Such teaching was reinforced as Letitia witnessed the pain, caused by alcohol abuse within her community. Although her home was alcohol free and happy, **she saw children her age, suffering**.

At age 16, Letitia boarded at Mrs. Van Norman's Cobourg Ladies Seminary, Victoria College being all male. Both the Ladies Seminary and Victoria College placed heavy emphasis on Methodist values and observances. When Professor Van Norman opened the Burlington Ladies Academy in Hamilton, Letitia went there, completing her formal education in 1847. After recovering from cholera, she was offered a teaching position at the Burlington Academy, and two years later **accepted a teaching position at the Picton Ladies Academy**.

It was there that she met Arthur Youmans, a widower, sixteen years her elder. **Arthur owned a farm and mills and already had eight children**. His eldest son was just 4 years younger than Letitia. The couple were married on 29 Aug. 1850 and moved to the countryside, where they remained for the next 18 years. She became the step-mother for the brood.

**Letitia's commitment to temperance, grounded so many years earlier, grew as she became involved in the Christian education program at her Methodist church**. Deciding that children in families suffering from intemperance needed greater support, she organized a **Band of Hope temperance group**, following a practice begun in Britain in 1847.

