

= Edith Rogers ( Alberta politician ) =

Edith Blanche Rogers ( née Edith Blanche Cox ) ( September 20 , 1894 ? July 17 , 1985 ) was a Canadian politician who served as a member of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta from 1935 until 1940 . Born in Nova Scotia , she came west to Alberta to accept a job as a teacher . She later moved to Calgary where she encountered evangelist William Aberhart and became a convert to his social credit economic theories . After advocating these theories across the province , she was elected in the 1935 provincial election as a candidate of Aberhart 's newly formed Social Credit League .

Left out of cabinet despite her loyalty to Aberhart , she sided with the insurgents during the 1937 Social Credit backbenchers ' revolt , rejoining Aberhart 's followers once a settlement was reached . She was defeated in the 1940 election . After her defeat , she abandoned Social Credit for the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation , moved to Edmonton , and served for fifteen years as a school trustee . Edith Rogers died in 1985 .

= = Early life = =

Born in Eastville , Nova Scotia to Samuel G. and Mahala ( née Graham ) Cox , Rogers was raised on a farm and attended Eastville High School and Normal School . She worked as a teacher in Nova Scotia until 1913 , when she visited her aunt , Margaret Redmond , in Edgerton , Alberta . While there , she accepted an offer to teach at Bloomington School . She attended Camrose Normal School in 1914 , after which she taught in Edgerton and near Tofield until 1918 . Disillusioned with teaching in rural schoolhouses , she took a business course and began work as a bank teller for the Merchants Bank of Canada , which later merged with the Bank of Montreal , in Edgerton ; this was an unusual career choice for a woman at the time . In 1922 she moved to Tofield , where she continued to work as a teller . The next year she moved to Killam , where she married William Rogers , the local high school principal , October 12 , 1923 .

In 1929 , the couple moved to Calgary , where they became friends with William Aberhart and his family . Rogers ' first foray into politics took place during the 1930 federal election , when she assisted with R. B. Bennett 's successful Calgary West campaign . Governments ' inability to end or alleviate the effects of the Great Depression soon disillusioned her with conventional politics . Upon hearing that Aberhart was beginning to incorporate politics and economics into his weekly gospel radio addresses , she began to listen and soon became a convert to his version of social credit .

= = Early involvement in social credit = =

In 1932 Rogers convinced Aberhart to hold public meetings on social credit in Calgary ; she subsequently organized neighbourhood study groups on the theory . In 1933 the Central Council of Social Credit in Calgary , which coordinated the city 's sixty social credit study groups , named her women 's organizer , in which capacity she held mass meetings designed to recruit women to social credit . In 1934 she embarked on a sixteen @-@ month speaking tour of Alberta . At the same time , she organized social credit study groups around the province , including seventy @-@ two in Edmonton . She concluded her tour by organizing a mass meeting there in the spring of 1935 , where Aberhart spoke before 9 @,@ 000 people .

When fissures appeared between Aberhart and people who supported the more orthodox version of social credit proposed by C. H. Douglas , the movement 's British founder , Rogers remained steadfastly loyal to Aberhart . In the assessment of T. C. Byrne , her loyalty to Aberhart was second only to that of Ernest Manning , Aberhart 's young protégé .

When Aberhart decided to run Social Credit candidates in the 1935 provincial election , he adopted an unusual system of candidate nomination : each constituency would nominate three or four candidates , with a committee headed by Aberhart deciding which one would actually run . Six different constituencies nominated Rogers as one of their candidates , and Aberhart decided that she should run in Ponoka . Her opponent from the governing United Farmers of Alberta ( UFA ) was

former Premier John Edward Brownlee , who had resigned the previous year in the wake of a sex scandal in which he was sued for the seduction of a young woman . Brownlee biographer Franklin Foster speculates that the selection of a female candidate to run against the so @-@ called " sober faced seducer " was a deliberate strategic decision by Aberhart , and noted further that " aside from Aberhart himself , [ Social Credit ] could not have fielded a stronger candidate " in Ponoka .

= = Member of the Legislative Assembly = =

Rogers won the riding with 2 @, @ 295 votes , more than 1 @, @ 400 ahead of Brownlee . In fact , the UFA lost every seat it contested , and Social Credit candidates won 56 of Alberta 's 63 seats . Aberhart became premier . He did not appoint Rogers ( or any other woman ) to his cabinet , and Athabasca University historian Alvin Finkel has suggested that her gender cost her such an appointment . Female cabinet ministers were not unprecedented in Alberta ( Irene Parlby was a cabinet minister throughout the UFA 's time in office ) and Finkel argues , given that Rogers was " recognized as sharp , articulate , and hard @-@ working " , that she could reasonably have expected a cabinet portfolio .

Despite her loyalty to Aberhart , Rogers became frustrated with his delay in implementing the social credit economic reforms he had promised . During the 1937 Social Credit backbenchers ' revolt she sided with the insurgents who threatened to bring down the government unless it took concrete steps to implement social credit . Once the insurgents reached a settlement with Aberhart , she returned to her former position of loyalty , and sought re @-@ election as a Social Crediter in the 1940 election . Prior to this election , Social Credit 's opponents , including Liberals , Conservatives , and those elements of the UFA that had not moved to Social Credit , formed the People 's League , which ran nominally independent candidates . One of these candidates , Percy McKelvey , led Rogers by 13 votes on the first count . The Cooperative Commonwealth Federation ( CCF ) 's C. A. Johnson was in a distant third . When Johnson 's votes were redistributed , in accordance with Alberta 's electoral laws at the time , McKelvey 's margin increased to nearly two hundred votes , and he was declared the victor .

= = Later life = =

After her defeat , Rogers and her husband moved to Edmonton . She disapproved of the Social Credit government 's move to the right under new premier Ernest Manning , and joined the socialist CCF . Finkel considers this surprising , in light of her long @-@ time devotion to the ideals of social credit , the role the CCF played in her 1940 election defeat , and his assessment that she " seemed more interested in monetary reform than in the general social critique put forward by the CCF . " She served as a member of the CCF 's Edmonton membership and organization committee .

Rogers was elected to the board of Edmonton Public Schools in the 1959 Edmonton election as a candidate of the left @-@ leaning Civic Reform Association ( CRA ) . She was re @-@ elected in 1961 , 1963 , 1964 , 1966 , 1968 , and 1971 . When the CRA dissolved in advance of the 1961 election , she joined the newly formed Quality Education Council ; when that too dissolved , she ran as an independent in the 1971 election . She did not seek re @-@ election in the 1974 election . The next year , Edith Rogers Junior High School in Edmonton was named in her honour .

William Rogers died November 7 , 1968 . Edith Rogers died July 17 , 1985 .

= = Electoral record = =