

THE GENERAL FEDERATION  
OF WOMEN'S CLUBS

FIFTEENTH BIENNIAL CONVENTION  
JUNE 16-23, 1920, DES MOINES, IOWA

OFFICIAL REPORT

COMPILED AND EDITED BY THE RECORDING SECRETARY  
MRS. ADAM WEISS, DEL NORTE, COLORADO



PRICE, ONE DOLLAR

manufacturing each year art products, valued at a billion dollars, had few designers and has depended on foreigners for artistic art and skill. This is one of the startling things the war has made us realize.

It is said that we, the women of this country, buy nearly 90% of these art products, and, if this be true, then upon us rests the responsibility of making them good in quality and design. What we demand we will receive. If we refuse to buy wares which are inartistic they will cease to exist. Some people lack, we can call it esthetic consciousness, but, in order to make it plain the Chairman will say some people lack—good taste. They are not to blame for it; they were not born with it and it has not been a part of their education. What is needed is a regular campaign in artistic education. The Art Department should try by every means to cultivate the sense of beauty so that all of us will know and feel what is harmonious and desirable. Much will be accomplished by the Division of Art in the Home. What we want is art in *every* home.

What should be done by the Art Department in the future? It should get into closer touch with the State Art Departments so that all can unite in promoting the wonderful things of art. It should print the monthly bulletin which would be the tie to bind all altogether.

Our manufacturers are beginning to realize that if they intend to compete with other countries for industrial supremacy, they must produce goods, superior in design and workmanship. This can only be accomplished by having artists in every trade. Prof. Sargent of Chicago says that we need 50,000 more industrial designers. Where can they be obtained? Art should be taught in all of our schools, not to make artists, but to give the pupils art appreciation, which will raise the standard of taste and thus create a demand for better products. Our children will be more intelligent purchasers than we. Of the great army of school children, a small group have the rare talent, which, with proper training, will develop into the art of designing. The pupils endowed with this rare talent should be selected from our schools and their gifts developed at the expense of the government; they should be trained by the state. How enthusiastically we develop our mineral resources, our mines of iron and gold,

but fail to realize the riches that would result from developing the minds of our youth!

My appeal to the Art Department of the future, my appeal to you, is to assist in this work of education. Mobilize all of your forces; educate the artist who is the designer, the manufacturer who is the producer, and the public who is the consumer, and thus raise the standard of good taste in America.

1. It should work for the creation of Art Commissions for cities and states.
2. The abolishment of bill-boards.
3. The erection of worthy monuments.
4. The study of art in every school.
5. For Industrial Schools supported by government.
6. For better designed articles of both necessity and luxury.
7. For art in every home.
8. For an annual exhibition of art in every community.
9. For a community library of art books, and reproductions of great paintings.
10. For the establishment of State Museums.
11. For Americanization by showing and encouraging the art of other nations.
12. For thrift by buying fewer things of better quality.
13. For the establishment of a Federal Department of Art to foster native talent.
14. And for innumerable other things, the limitations of this convention will not allow me to enumerate.

For art is the wonder of the world! It is never completed; it is like our great mountain ranges piled one above another; each attainment gained is an incentive to something higher, and you can spend your life climbing up the heights but the mountains of achievement will always rise before you!

#### OVERSEAS UNIT REPORT

MISS HALLIE JAMIESON, Texas

When the President gave to you her report of your activities in the past two years, she told you that a Unit was sent overseas, composed of two young women from each state in the Union, to bear to the soldiers in France your messages of love and the ideals

of the womanhood of America and she called us the daughters of the Federation. We, indeed, felt as we sailed away from the home shores that we were the daughters of the Federation of Women's Clubs. We were going to serve the greatest soldiers in all the world. We bore on our collars the insignia of our country. We bore on our sleeves your insignia—the greatest organization of womanhood in all the world. Truly, we had a great heritage to live up to in France. You, as you sit before us now, your hearts full of interest in us, your faces full of tenderness toward us, your prayers reaching up to us, are but an image of that which each girl carried in her heart as she went overseas.

You had said to us clearly in spirit there is a great work to be done which I cannot go to do. I must stay at home with a less spectacular task of keeping the home fires burning, but I can send you out on this mission, the like of which no womanhood of all the world has ever dared to respond to. I can send you out in my name. I do not know what will be your message to me when you return. I can only say to you: Go. Remember first that you belong to your country, then that you are my missionary, and last, but not least, that you are an American woman, and so we went feeling that the spirit of you was with us, as we see you here before us now, and that spirit of youth followed us in all of our activities into Southern France where we carried memories of you to hundreds of thousands of American soldiers up into the empty dreary sectors just behind the lines where only thoughts of you made the endless days go by, and many a time these boys have gathered about us and have read on our arms your insignia: General Federation of Women's Clubs' Unit, and they said to us: What does that mean? And, we told them how we were sent and why, and they stood for a few moments in silence and then some fellow said: "You know, the women have certainly stood by us in this thing anyhow." And another fellow said: "My mother belongs to a Club, I bet she gave some money to send you over here."

And now we come to tell you in just a few, brief words something of what we did overseas. We, as you know, were supposed to be only on leave area duty—a leave area unit—we were scattered as we were needed, and we, so far as we can

determine, were engaged in every activity with the Y. M. C. A. except one, and it was through no fault of ours or theirs that we escaped this. Most of us had two assignments. Many of us went down into the leave areas in the southern part of France, where there were beautiful camps and theatres, and the biggest public buildings that were taken over by the "Y" and converted into leave areas; and the boys were sent from the northern area down there for two brief weeks of sunshine and beauty of France, where there were, best of all, "beaucoup" American girls. They came back up into the leave areas and spoke of Southern France and Heaven as being synonymous.

The work of these girls began early in the morning by a hike with fifty or sixty men along the roads and up the sides of the mountains. Then they came back to serve breakfast to the men. Then an informal dance, then dinner served by the girls again, then another dance or a hike or a picnic, and the girls served them refreshments. They danced until 11:30, and they never missed a dance.

In contrast to this leave area were the huts up in Northern France where some of the girls were sent in proportion of one girl to three or four thousand men. You can imagine her popularity. The dances up there were quite different in the leave area. For a dance floor they had four squares of readymade flooring put down in the mud, and as the fellows danced, the flooring oozed and gave as the dance proceeded. There were four or five girls often to several hundred men. Many times when these parties were given the men walked for kilometers to see a real American girl, and especially if she had come from anywhere close from home, and a thousand miles was quite close in France. Although the rain poured and poured, we were told that wherever news of an American girl's having arrived in the area was brought, the commissaries promptly sold out of shoe polish that day.

We won the confidence of those men, we entered into their lives, we realized we stood as you to them. There was never anything personal. We were always representative of the women back home, and this confidence of yourself and others struck and kept burning the spark of the divine.

Another important part of the work was done up in Germany. These girls had the hardest of all the work to do. There was

much that they meant in the way of spreading the spirit of America to those men when all the propaganda of a nation's machinery was attempting to tear down the morale of the men.

Then there were the girls who did the rolling canteen work, canteens loaded with chocolate which they dispensed to soldiers who could not come to them.

Other activities were the hut mother; girls were sent to the international and Belgian camps where the nation's politics were attacked, and in this very great crisis, these girls were used to show that America stood for the ideals of womanhood and I think that they stood for that for them.

I wish we could tell you how fine your American boys were. We feel that we, more than anybody else, could tell you of the splendid manhood that was there. We should like to thank you for the privilege of sending us over, and we appreciate your confidence in us.

#### REPORT OF DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC

Mrs. FREDERICK W. ABBOTT, Chairman

Gathering data from the secretary of our late departed Chairman, Mrs. William D. Steele, I find that she went to the Asheville (N. C.) Conference meeting and attended state meetings in Ohio, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, Florida and Georgia. She had special circulars prepared by the Chairman of War Service on "Americanization Through Music" which proved extremely valuable and much in demand by State Chairmen. The plate was lost and Mrs. Oberndorfer had a new one made and more pamphlets printed for the biennial meeting.

Terese Armitage, acting in an advisory capacity to Mrs. Tunnell, prepared a series of programs of "American Folk Music" which also proved a great practical help to the music clubs of the Federation.

Henrietta Baker Low prepared many pamphlets and wrote hundreds of letters regarding the development of Community Music. Her song sheet of ten high-grade songs, prepared for the Music Conference of this convention, is a splendid contribution, and if it could have been placed in the hands of all delegates planning to attend this biennial months ahead of the meet-

ing, think what singing we would have had. Not a stereotyped, bored effort to repeat the old, worn songs, but a stimulating lifting of the human voice in fresh and lovely songs. This would have added an element of beauty not possible without preparation.

In 1920, when I was forced to take up the work of the Music Department, I sent out questionnaires to all forty-eight Music Chairmen. I received twenty-eight replies, and find that twelve of the State Chairmen expect to attend.

The reports received, stressed Community Singing and learning the words of patriotic songs. In many states the Chairmen are coöperating with the Music Teachers' Associations for obtaining credits in the public schools for the study of music. Iowa is making a research of its own creative state talent. North Dakota and Wyoming are working toward making a State Music Teachers' Association. New Jersey is proudly showing a beautiful water color picture of the studio for musicians the Music Department of that progressive state has undertaken to build at the MacDowell Art Colony, at Peterborough, N. H. New York gives a prize for the best composition written by a club woman in the state. Idaho and Alabama have outstanding reports.

I sent out invitations to all the leading publishing houses in the country to send table displays to Des Moines for observation and study by those needing material for home, school, community or church work.

At the Music Conference the following subjects are to be discussed:

"The Future of Community Singing," paper prepared by Mrs. Low, presented and interpreted by Mrs. Abbott. Illustrated by Miss Latta, of Philadelphia.

"Music in Education," presented by Mrs. Frances Elliott Clark, with song illustrations by Geoffrey O'Hara.

"Making America a Musical Nation," by Mrs. F. A. Seiberling, President National Federation of Music Clubs.

"Music in Industry," by Frank E. Morton, Director Music Industries, Chamber of Commerce Building, Chicago, Ill.

"Americanization Through Music," by Mrs. Marx Oberndorfer, with illustrations by Mr. Oberndorfer and Bergliot Tillish.