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THE HISTORY OF THE GAINESVILLE XLI CLUB AND ITS
RELATION TO THE GENERAL WOMAN'S
CLUB MOVEMENT

THESIS

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

During the rise of national democracy in the United States women asserted claims to rights and privileges denied them in law and custom. From the time of the American Revolution women had been active in public as well as private affairs. They had not only carried on domestic industries that fostered national independence; they had written and printed pamphlets, tracts, poems, and plays in support of the Revolution; they had organized boycotts against British goods and participated in essential work throughout the war against Britain. They had expressed opinions respecting the course of events at the conclusion of the war; and forceful women had objected to the way in which men proposed to monopolize voting and lawmaking in the nation whose interests women were promoting and defending.¹

At the turn of the nineteenth century, woman's interests and activities were bounded by her home. Mary Wollstonecraft had published Vindication of the Rights of Women

¹Charles A. Beard and Mary R. Beard, A Basic History of the United States, p. 216.

in 1792, but universal opinion continued to regard women as unfitted by nature for exercise of the higher mental processes. The first clear-cut and dramatic protest against such ideas came when Frances Wright of Scotland took up residence in the United States. Her championship of labor, of public education, and of gradual emancipation of the slave was no less ardent than her devotion to woman's rights.²

The years 1833 and 1834 mark a turning point for women. They crossed the threshold into the world's activities. In 1833, women were admitted to Oberlin College, the first institution of higher learning to accept them. The refusal to admit women to the existing antislavery societies or even to permit them to speak in public, led the women abolitionists to form a national organization of their own in 1834. It was on September 18, 1834, that there appeared the first permanent women's club, the Ladies' Educational Society of Jacksonville, Illinois. This club was organized for the purpose of educating girls to be teachers.³

There were a few women who were trail blazers in furthering the issues of antislavery, temperance, and woman's

²Merle Curti, The Growth of American Thought, pp. 384-385.

³"Oldest Club Has 100th Birthday," The Clubwoman, XIV (January, 1934).

rights. Angelina and Sarah Grimke, South Carolina aristocrats, had become converted to Quakerism and abolitionism. Angelina Grimke was the first woman to address a public meeting.⁴

Our idea of the early suffragists is somewhat patterned on a few leaders who were a bit angular and hard, not to say masculine, but Lucy Stone, an early suffragist, in no way resembles these. The mention of her name to most people only brings a smile, as she thought a married woman ought to keep her own name. But there were not so many smiles for women in those days not so very long ago, when they had no rights even in their own children; when a college education and the learned professions were closed to them; when a woman lecturer was a disgrace. Lucy Stone showed spirit when she refused to write a commencement essay because she would not be allowed to read it.⁵

Nowhere did conservative resistance to change display itself in a more ludicrous light than in the arguments against women's suffrage.⁶ The most profound treatise on women's rights was Margaret Fuller's Woman in the Nineteenth Century. In this book, Margaret Fuller brought

⁴Curti, op. cit., p. 385.

⁵Cornelia Spencer Love, Famous Woman of Yesterday and Today, p. 7.

⁶Ralph Volney Harlow, Story of America, p. 343.

together virtually all the arguments in behalf of the full development of women as individuals.⁷

The refusal of the World's Antislavery Convention in London, in 1841, to admit American women delegates caused two of them, Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, to launch a formal women's rights movement on their return to America. Their propaganda was set forth in the Declaration of Sentiments issued in 1848 at the Seneca Falls Convention. This declaration paraphrased the Declaration of Independence in indicting men for their tyrannies over women. Notwithstanding great opposition, the advocates of women's rights continued to hold conventions, to agitate for the revision of state laws affecting their rights over property, and in addition to demand full political, economic, and cultural rights.⁸ But in spite of the reasonableness of their cause, the women had to wait until after the Civil War to see it gain any real headway.⁹

In the meantime, women leaders had concentrated their efforts on winning equal rights for the Negro. Susan B. Anthony was one of these leaders. From 1852 she had been

⁷Curti, op. cit., p. 387.

⁸Ibid., p. 386.

⁹Harlow, op. cit., p. 343.

one of the leading spirits in every women's rights convention, and from 1857 to 1866, Miss Anthony was also an agent and faithful worker in the antislavery cause until the Negro was free.¹⁰ Frances E. Willard was another woman who left the world a legacy of accomplishment.¹¹ She was the founder of the World Women's Christian Temperance Union, organized in 1874, and became the first president of the National Council of Women which was organized in 1888. Frances Willard was a person with a broader outlook than the hatchet-swinger, Carrie Nation. Her recognition of the right to birth control and the need of woman suffrage swelled the ranks of her followers.¹²

Elizabeth and Emily Blackwell were the spiritual sisters of Mary Wollstonecraft. It was by sheer force of intellect and persistence that Elizabeth Blackwell gained recognition as a doctor. The Blackwell sisters found it necessary to establish their own hospital in order to obtain hospital opportunities.¹³

¹⁰Phebe A. Hanaford, Women of the Century, p. 367.

¹¹Gamaliel Bradford, Portraits of American Women, p. 225.

¹²Mary R. Beard, America through Women's Eyes, p. 304.

¹³Ibid., pp. 372-373.

Other pioneer women were: Ann Wilkins, first missionary; Sarah Josepha Hale, editor of Godey's Lady's Book; Elizabeth Cady Stanton, suffragist; Antoinette B. Blackwell, first woman ordained a minister; Anna Howard Shaw, physician, clergyman, suffragist; Linda Richards, first graduate trained nurse in the United States; Mary E. Kenney, first woman to organize trade unions among women; and Jennie June Croly, the founder of Sorosis.

There are contrary opinions as to the date of the formation of the first women's club in the United States, but the club movement, as it is understood today, took tangible shape about 1866.¹⁴ Early in the century there had appeared many organizations for charitable and missionary work, but these early organizations seem to have been auxiliaries to larger groups of men who were working toward the same end. Not until the formation of the Woman's Suffrage Association and the Woman's Christian Temperance Union was there any distinct group of women with a national or world-wide affiliation, working for a definite purpose along perfectly independent lines.¹⁵

At about the middle of the nineteenth century women's study clubs of various kinds sprang up like mushrooms all

¹⁴Mary I. Wood, The History of the General Federation of Women's Clubs, pp. 22-23.

¹⁵Ibid., pp. 30-31.

over the country.¹⁶ There were independent clubs; Brown-
ing clubs; Shakespeare clubs; clubs for art, literature,
and travel; and clubs for all kinds of culture, including
polite culture. As these club women gained culture and
knowledge they began to see the necessity of a higher edu-
cation. They turned their attention to practical needs,
such as better conditions, to aid the children, furthering
the interests of the home, cleaning and beautifying streets
and towns; in short, they became community conscious.¹⁷

Among the pioneer women's clubs was the Sorosis of New
York City, which was organized in 1868 by Jennie June Croly.
From year to year it attracted many women of experience and
ability. At a business meeting of this club in January,
1889, plans were discussed for a suitable celebration of
the date upon which Sorosis should reach its majority.¹⁸
At this meeting the members decided that the occasion be
marked by a convention of all the women's clubs known to be
in existence. The Sorosis club sent a call to ninety-seven
clubs to meet them in convention in March, 1890. There as-
sembled at that time, in Madison Square Theater, delegates

¹⁶Dwight L. Dumond, America in Our Time, p. 49.

¹⁷Bell Squire, The Woman Movement in America, p. 255.

¹⁸Wood, op. cit., p. 27.

from sixty-one of these clubs, while letters were received from six others.¹⁹ The reports from the individual clubs revealed great similarity. Starting almost invariably with a small band of congenial women who came together for self-culture and intellectual improvement, such organizations through the very exercise of these pursuits aroused a thirst for knowledge along broader lines. The thoughts of their members had turned from the old meaningless routine of social life into a wider, more stimulating interest and participation in educational and civic affairs. At this meeting a committee was appointed to make plans for a permanent organization of all these women's clubs.²⁰ When plans were completed, the Ratification Convention was held in April, 1890, at the Scottish Rite Hall, New York City, with Sorosis again acting as the hostess club. There were sixty-three delegates in all, representing seventeen states. These women banded themselves together to form The General Federation of Women's Clubs. The purpose as stated in the first biennial gathering was, that clubs should adhere to the purpose of intellectual development and recreation, and that the clubs should serve as a "resting place" from the regular absorbing activities of life.²¹

¹⁹Ibid., pp. 31-32.

²⁰Ibid., p. 44.

²¹Ibid., p. 50.

The Federation had 20,000 members by the end of its second year, and had increased its membership to 500,000 by 1905. It had its committees on education, pure food, forestry conservation, and a legislative committee pressing for juvenile court laws and general security legislation for women and children. From this timorous beginning, the General Federation has become a vast national and international organization, with its over-all membership of some 16,500 clubs and 11,000,000 women.²²

The organized woman's club movement spread into the State of Texas. Beginning as associations for self-culture and intellectual development, the clubs were soon laying the foundation for better conditions of living in their communities. Since Texas was largely in the pioneer stage of development with widely separated communities, the women's clubs in small centers became the nuclei for civic improvements.²³

One of these small centers was the town of Gainesville, Texas, with a population of about 6,000 in the year 1893. That year the first women's club in the town was organized and named the Gainesville XLI Club. This club helped form the State Council of Women of Texas, formerly called the

²²Sally McAdoo Clagett, Sixty Years of Achievement, p. 3.

²³Stella L. Christian, History of the Texas Federation of Women's Clubs, p. 4.

Women's Congress, in 1894, which was three years before the formation of the Texas Federation of Women's Clubs. The Gainesville club sent their president, Mrs. Ellen Krum, as a delegate to the first meeting of the Women's Council held in Dallas on October 31, 1894. Mrs. Krum read a paper on "Women's Clubs" at the Council meeting. The minutes of the Gainesville club contain the following:

The Pres. then called upon Mrs. Krum the delegate to the Woman's Council, for her report. Mrs. Krum gave an entirely satisfactory account of herself during her absence. She said, among other things, that she felt proud to represent a Club the membership of which created so much enthusiasm abroad. The XLI Club may well feel proud of their representative whose paper was published in full in the Dallas News of Nov. 2. Mrs. Krum gave some interesting facts concerning the workings of the Woman's Council.²⁴

The aim of the State Council was to bring the various associations of women of Texas into closer relation through an organization; the object was to serve as a medium of communication and a means of prosecuting any work of common interest. In the opinion of the pioneer club women of our state, credit must be given to the "Women's Congress" as the forerunner of the idea of federation among the women's clubs in the state.²⁵

In 1895, the Woman's Wednesday Club of Fort Worth endeavored to bring about a federation of literary clubs of

²⁴Minutes of XLI Club, November 2, 1895.

²⁵Christian, op. cit., p. 8.

the state. However, it was not until the Woman's Club of Waco issued a call to send representatives to a general convention in 1897 that interest was sufficiently stimulated to form a State Federation of Women's Literary Clubs. The Waco Woman's Club was hostess to eighteen clubs, which sent delegates; three other clubs sent letters of application.²⁶ The women stated that the object of federation was to advance and to encourage Texas women in literary work, to promote and encourage fraternal intercourse among literary clubs, and to secure the benefits resulting from organized effort.²⁷ In 1899, the word "Literary" was stricken from the official name and that of State Federation of Women's Clubs was adopted.²⁸

The Gainesville XLI Club was invited to the conference in Waco. The club voted not to send a delegate but to join the Federation should it be formed.²⁹ The Federation was formed and the XLI Club sent its dues in April, 1898.³⁰

It will, perhaps, be seen from the above survey that no transformation in modern society has been more striking

²⁶A Half-Century of Achievement, Texas Federation of Women's Clubs, pages not numbered.

²⁷Christian, op. cit., p. 13.

²⁸A Half-Century of Achievement, Texas Federation of Women's Clubs, pages not numbered.

²⁹Minutes of XLI Club, January 16, 1897.

³⁰Ibid., April, 1898.

or more fraught with significance than the change in the political, legal, economic, moral, and social status of women. Women's clubs were organized for discussion and study, with interests that varied according to location, surroundings, opportunities, and aspirations.³¹ The history of a pioneer club portrays the stages of development of clubs in general from institutions for self-improvement to institutions interested in national and international problems.

³¹Mrs. W. T. Lafferty, "Adult Education for Women's Clubs," The Clubwoman, XVII (January, 1937).

CHAPTER II

ORGANIZATION

The history of the Gainesville XLI Club, the oldest woman's organization in Gainesville, Texas,¹ begins in the fall of 1893 when Mrs. J. D. Leeper visited in Denison as a guest of the XXI Club. This club had been organized three years previously. Mrs. Leeper saw the need of a similar organization in Gainesville and invited a number of women interested in club work to her home for a Thanksgiving dinner in the fall of 1893.² With Mrs. C. C. Hemming presiding, the ladies discussed the possibility of organizing a literary club in Gainesville.³

On Saturday, January 20, 1894, a number of ladies of Gainesville met in the parlor of the Y. M. C. A. building for the purpose of organizing a literary club. Anna P. Stuart was chosen chairman pro tem and the organization proceeded. The following officers were elected: Mrs. Lucy

¹Minutes of XLI Club, May 11, 1907.

²"XLI Club Oldest Woman's Organization in Gainesville," Gainesville Daily Register, September 23, 1940.

³Personal interview with Mrs. R. S. Rose, a charter member, who was a guest at the dinner.

Hemming, president; Mrs. Anna P. Stuart, secretary; Mrs. May Tyler, treasurer; and Mrs. Nannie G. Davis, critic. A second critic, Miss Eliza Edwards, was elected to alternate with Mrs. Davis. Before deciding upon a definite plan for work, the ladies present thought it advisable that an invitation be extended to Mrs. Sarah Acheson of the Denison club to meet with them and assist in their plans for permanent organization, and that the selection of a name for the literary club be postponed until the plan of work should have been chosen.⁴

The literary club met a week later to hear Mrs. Acheson of Denison,

who made a brief though very able address to the ladies in favor of club organization and gave the ladies much encouragement in the work that had been undertaken. At the close of her remarks a motion was made that a revision of the enrollment should be made and by this method, nine new members were enrolled making the total membership thirty-seven (37). A motion was then made, limiting the membership to forty-one for the first year and unanimously carried. After much discussion and numerous suggestions, the motion carried that it should be called the XLI Club. The name, XLI Club, was formally adopted by a unanimous vote.⁵

There is no available record of attendance for January, 1894. Evidently, the names of those who first signed the constitution were copied by the secretary; many of the

⁴Minutes of XLI Club, January 20, 1894.

⁵Ibid., January 27, 1894.

names of those listed do not appear on the first record of attendance on February 3, 1894. The time of meeting agreed upon was to be from three to five o'clock each Saturday afternoon.⁶ These weekly meetings continued until 1900, when the club voted to meet every other Saturday.⁷

There were several other details of organization that had to be worked out. The executive committee prepared a constitution and by-laws, which, after each article was read and discussed separately, with only a few changes, were unanimously adopted by the club for their government.⁸

It has been said that the XLI Club constitution was modeled after that of the Denison XXI Club. At the present time, there are articles in the XLI Club constitution that do resemble those of the XXI Club, but there are others that differ in many respects. The XLI Club stated that the members were associated for mutual improvement and that the object of the club should be the pursuit of study, as a means of intellectual culture and general improvement. Another committee presented a number of mottoes from which the club chose "Live to learn and learn to live." Heliotrope was selected both as the color and

⁶Ibid.

⁷Ibid., March, 1900.

⁸Ibid., February 3, 1894.

the flower, because of its meaning, "turning toward the light."⁹ After fifty-seven years these articles remain the same. The proper course of study was another matter that was discussed with enthusiasm and the first question to be discussed by the club was, "Do club duties interfere with home duties?" Calendars were printed in proper form for the convenience of the members.¹⁰

Before the end of the first year, the club accepted the invitation of C. C. Hemming to use one of his rooms in the Cherry building for a club room. The club moved to this location and met there for seven years. The room was furnished with a stove, matting, and window shades. The ladies of the club found it necessary to allow money for the purchase of a shovel, duster, and a "coal bucket," and a sum for cleaning out the stove; \$1.75 was appropriated for wood, and for a box for the storing of the wood.¹¹ The janitor service for this room was \$1.50 a month during the first year, but then some of the ladies were successful in securing a janitor for one dollar a month. The janitor worked for awhile for the stipulated sum and then gave notice that he could not work for that small amount. The

⁹Ibid., February 10, 1894.

¹⁰Ibid., April 28, 1894.

¹¹Ibid., November 10, 1894.

cost of janitorial service was a recurring problem throughout the years.

The members whose names appeared on the roll in 1894 were the following: Cora D. Blanton, Sarah A. Blanton, Mollie Cox, Nannie G. Davis, Annie U. Davis, Cynthia Dudley, Eliza Edwards, Ellen Krum, Nettie B. Leeper, Gertha Lockard, Augusta Malcom, Dixie Potter, Blanche G. Stevens, Minnie Stiles, Anna P. Stuart, Sarah Wasson, Maria Watt, Clemmie Wood, and Elsie Wilson. Also among the members during that year were Louise Belcher, Romania Davis, Annie Davis, Ella Dougherty, Helen Flippen, Cora Fairchild, Susie Garnett, Maggie Gates, Ora Gray, Alma Hemming, Mattie Hill, Callie Kennerly, Minnie Mangum, Allie Maupin, Dora Nichols, Fannie Painter, Mary A. Polk, Mrs. W. H. Purcell, Fay Riggins, Adelaide Ritchie, Nora H. Rose, Pearl Stafford, Mattie Stone, and May Tyler.

One of the last questions proposed for discussion during the first year was whether or not to keep the public informed of the doings and sayings of the club. The discussion was animated and interesting and opinions were too numerous and emphatic to quote, but it seemed best to the members "that they deprive the public, at least for the present, of so much learning as the club was capable of displaying." It was decided simply "to request the secretary to publish in the papers a notice of the time of the

meeting each week, the subject, and the name of the lady who had been appointed to read a paper at that meeting."¹² The ladies showed other evidence of self-consciousness, for the secretary recorded that "it should not be hinted by any specimen of suspicious masculinity that the election of officers was not done according to the strictest parliamentary usage even to the passing round of a hat to collect the ballots." She further stated that "the refreshments proved very effective in allaying the fever of excitement consequent upon the performance of the unwonted act of casting ballots."¹³

Guest days have always been a part of the club's activities. At first they were referred to as open sessions and were conducted on the plan of a regular meeting. The open session scheduled for November 30, 1895, caused a great deal of discussion as to the advisability of having an afternoon or an evening affair. It was decided to have the session in the afternoon and to allow each member to invite one guest. The program was to consist of an address of welcome by the president, an article on the Faery Queene, a paper on the "History and Aims of the XLI Club," and "Current Events." Refreshments were served at the open sessions

¹²Ibid., December 15, 1894.

¹³Ibid., April 13, 1895.

just as they were at the regular meetings. Another open meeting was held April 11, 1896, to present a program on Texas. Musical numbers were rendered at some of the sessions or incidental "sweet music" was played. These guest days were considered outstanding social events.¹⁴

The club has grown and matured and is now considered one of the fixed institutions of Gainesville. The club remained dear to the heart of its founder, Mrs. J. D. Leeper. She retained her membership until her death in 1940, at which time she willed to the club a substantial sum of money.

The social events of the club as well as other matters were of minor importance when compared to the work it accomplished along literary lines. A great many papers, together with literary exercises, constituted the programs and consumed practically all of the time of the meetings throughout the first decade of the club's existence.

¹⁴personal interview with Mrs. Perry Wilson, a member whose mother has been a member for fifty-seven years.

CHAPTER III

PROGRAMS

Formed for the purpose of mutual improvement and intellectual culture, the XLI Club was undecided as to the proper course of study to pursue. At the January 27, 1894, meeting the majority were in favor of a course of study on English literature, English history, and current topics.¹ At the following meeting, the executive committee requested a reconsideration of the course of study adopted at the previous meeting and the suggested change was warmly discussed by the club. Finally the motion was made and carried that, for the ensuing weeks, the club should study miscellaneous American writers of the nineteenth century and discuss a report each week on current topics. The authors for study were selected by the executive committee and were distributed to the members of the club, alphabetically. Two members were assigned to prepare papers and questions upon each author, the questions to be answered by the members of the club.² It evidently was a part of the plan to have quotations for roll call, as the minutes

¹Minutes of the XLI Club, January 27, 1894.

²Ibid., February 3, 1894.

of the second meeting in February, 1894, state that each member responded to her name with a quotation from George Bancroft. At this meeting Mrs. Sarah Blanton read a very fine paper on Bancroft as a writer and historian. Mrs. Nannie Davis read a biography of the same author, and this was followed by a general discussion of the author, consisting mainly of incidents in the life of this great historian.³ The programs for the remainder of the year followed this general plan except that the questions were assigned to the entire club instead of to individual members.

Club members prepared papers on the Carey sisters, Motley, Emerson, Longfellow, Bryant, Hawthorne, Prescott, Lowell, Whittier, Irving, and Holmes. This observation was made about the program on Oliver Wendell Holmes:

A fine sketch of the personality and professional career of Oliver Wendell Holmes, containing many interesting incidents in the life of this popular writer, was read to the Club by Mrs. Nettie B. Leeper. The club was also entertained by Mrs. Maupin reading selections from "Autocrat of the Breakfast Table," in which Holmes displays his keen observance of human nature and enlarges upon his knowledge in his own unique, original style. Many of the Club added amusing and interesting extracts from the pen of Holmes and a general feeling of good cheer pervaded the meeting, resulting from the study of this buoyant and cheerful writer.⁴

³Ibid., February 10, 1894.

⁴Ibid., March 31, 1894.

Before the opening of the regular literary exercises on the day of April 21, Mrs. Leeper directed the attention of the club to the reading of a letter from Oliver Wendell Holmes that had arrived too late for the date upon which Holmes had been the subject of special study. She also called the club's attention to the Autobiography, which Holmes had kindly sent for the inspection of the club.⁵

The course of study for the club year of 1894-1895 was early English history and early English authors, together with a study of the philosophy of the age of Chaucer. The usual comment on these programs was that they were interesting and instructive. The following was said of the program given by Mrs. Elsie Wilson:

Many curious opinions were given during the time allotted to the questions and answers. Discussion ran high, and we almost forgot that we were a club, so earnest were we to express our opinions. One remark made by Mrs. Wilson made us all beam with smiles. It was, that in her opinion, when ladies were very smart or brilliant, they excelled the smart and brilliant men. The discussion concerning the comparison of the ladies of the XVI century with those of the present day was very animated and the opinions quite emphatic. It would require a stenographer less rusty than the secretary to report these expressions. However, the majority decided that the ladies of the present day do not suffer by comparison.⁶

It was in this club year of 1894-1895 that the study

⁵Ibid., April 21, 1894.

⁶Ibid., February 16, 1895.

of Shakespeare was begun. Often one of his plays would constitute the work for one half of the year. On March 16, 1895, Mrs. Sarah Blanton read a paper on the tragedy of Hamlet, which caused the secretary to remark:

The erudite, sedate, and dignified XII Club almost lost its dignity in its anxiety to settle forever the long mooted and possibly never-to-be-settled question, "Was Hamlet insane?" It is to be regretted that we could not arrive at a satisfactory solution which might have been published to the world and thus saved future clubs from,7 having to struggle over the same old problem.

At the next meeting, the literary exercises were on Richard III, with Mrs. Robert Stevens in charge. It was remarked that the usual number of opinions was expressed, some extolling and some condemning the famous usurper. As usual, the opinions remained unchanged.

At this meeting, the ladies accepted an invitation from the Athenaeum Club to attend their next meeting and listen to a discussion on the subject: "Does credit for the authorship of the plays which bear his name belong to Shakespeare or to Bacon?"⁸ The Athenaeum Club, sponsored by the Y. M. C. A., was some kind of literary club that had miscellaneous programs that were often in the form of debates.⁹

⁷Ibid., March 16, 1895.

⁸Ibid., March 23, 1895.

⁹Statement by Mrs. C. B. Thayer, personal interview.

The presentation of the program on The Merchant of Venice called forth this comment:

The discussion was quite animated -- especially on the question as to Shylock's motive in the play -- Some thought "averice" -- Some thought that it was his desire to avenge the wrongs and indignities heaped upon his nation, while another advanced the opinion that it was desire for revenge upon Antonio, who had loaned money without interest. The majority of the club seemed to think that as Shylock had refused to accept the money after the time expired for the payment of the bond and, as he had said of Antonio: "I hate him for he is a Christian," Shylock wanted revenge upon his nation.¹⁰

There is an account of a most delightful and unique entertainment given by Mrs. C. N. Stevens on the twenty-fifth day of April, 1895:

. . . so nearly Shakespeare's accredited natal day that we may almost call it a birthday party. Certainly nothing could be more fitting than the contest which took place -- called "The War of the Roses" -- in which it seemed that Greek met Greek -- not with bayonets and clubs, and the tug of war came not with shot and shell, nor the noise of cannon or charge of musketry -- but the choice sentences of Shakespeare flew back and forth across the line until it seemed that neither side would fail. It was with the bravery of the Spartan that we determined to do or die. Did history repeat itself? We say -- in this case "nay" -- the victory was won by the "Red Rose."

The club members demonstrated originality in the preparation of their papers. Mrs. Leeper recited the story of Much Ado about Nothing in original rhyme and blank

¹⁰Minutes of XLI Club, April 27, 1895.

verse.¹¹ On another occasion Miss Watt prepared a paper on The Tempest which was described as an innovation:

Instead of the usual prose essay she had arranged her thoughts in the form of a dialogue between two imaginary personages -- a niece and an uncle. The niece is floundering helplessly in the Tempest where she can find no secure footing. She tells to her uncle the various impressions made upon her by the play and he corrects these impressions where faulty by giving her the views of the most renowned critics as well as his own. The paper was spicy as well as instructive.¹²

This trait of originality is further indicated by the following extract from the minutes of the club:

Then followed the literary part of the programme, conducted by Mrs. Wm. Blanton on the play of Julius Caesar. The questions and answers contained much valuable information. Great Caesar's ghost may have walked for nearly 1900 years, as some think, but it is safe to say, it will walk no more. The XLI Club has successfully "laid it." No well-bred ghost could have the face to take even a midnight stroll after the treatment this one received on last Saturday. The lean and hungry Cassius, the noble Brutus, and the polite Anthony, each came in for his share of blame and praise. Mrs. Blanton read a paper in which the gloomy and tragical events of the play were relieved by humorous allusions to XIV century events.¹³

The members even went so far as to don appropriate costumes and to act the plays, which was a source of amusement to the husbands of the members.¹⁴

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Ibid., October 26, 1895.

¹³Ibid., November 2, 1895.

¹⁴Statement by Sara Davis Wilson, personal interview.

Often, one of Shakespeare's plays would constitute the work for one half of the year, and it was an unusual year when all reference to Shakespeare was omitted. This continued until 1911, after which no mention is made of him again.

For many years the club depended upon prepared courses of study furnished by colleges, universities, and individuals. These courses usually cost the club twenty or twenty-five dollars a year. Many yearbooks contained the questions supplied by the compilers of these courses. The yearbook for 1908-1909 was the first book with the questions listed. The entire year's study was on woman, with programs listed, "Woman Yesterday and To-day," "The Woman Wage Earner," "Woman in the Professional World," "Woman in the Fine Arts," "Women in the Educational World," "Women in the Home," "Legal Status of Texas Women," "Home Economics," "Women in Civics," "Famous Madonnas," "The Woman's Club Movement," "Woman in the Literary World," "Woman in Literature," "The Society Woman," and "Famous Women of To-day." Some of the questions asked on these subjects were:

Why are so few women eminent composers?

Is sex a bar to excellence in the sphere of creative music?

Did women play an important part in the making of our history prior to the Civil War?

Are we stronger mentally than the women of yesterday? Spiritually?

What effect has the tendency of women to usurp the place of man in the business world on the home?

Do girls who have been self-supporting make better or worse wives?

Is the mental capacity of the average woman sufficiently great to enable her to cope with the vast issues embraced in the practice of law?

Is there any modern fiction delineating the society woman in a full and noble life?

Scattered in yearbooks through the years are other programs on women. They bear such titles as: "Women Writers of the Early Part of the Nineteenth Century," "The Woman Citizen," "Status of Women and the War," "Woman in the Post-War World," "A Woman's Place in South America," also in various other countries, "Women Among Primitive Peoples," "The Man-made World and Its Influence on the Character and Ideals of Women," "Women in Music," and "The Club Woman's Civic Responsibility."

The role of the critic in the early days was an active one, in that she was expected to criticize the pronunciation of the members on the program. A blackboard was purchased for the use of the critic. The work of the critic is well described in the following:

One by one our cherished pronunciations are trodden beneath the foot of time and progress and we find it a little difficult sometimes at first to adapt our tongues to the new way but Noah Webster and our critic are combined against us, so we submit with what grace we can to the inevitable. At least we are in earnest, and there is hope where such is the case. Now if some of those dead and gone folk should suddenly appear at the literary club, where they themselves were the subjects of discussion, one cannot help wondering whether it would ever occur to them that there was

anything personal about the matter, or if their own names would not fall upon their ears like something new and strange. For instance, the delicate, aesthetic Anne Boleyn of our schooldays has become the harsh, uncouth Anne Bullen of today.¹⁵

Parliamentary law and current events appear year after year on the programs. In 1895 it was stated that

Miss Dudley closed the exercises with a compilation of the news items of the week, -- many bits of information of especial interest to the feminine world -- from the embroidering of a dainty doiley to the coming of the gold and silver of a great nation.¹⁶

Mrs. Annie U. Davis' paper on "Current Events" contained information on a variety of subjects -- the origin of colors, the superstition of the Prince of Wales, and above all, how to keep young and beautiful and how to grow fat or lean at one's pleasure. It is to be hoped that the how to grow beautiful process will not be taken up by the XLI Club. It would soon prove its deathblow. An hour in a hot bath every morning, an hour or two of anointing with cream and pasting with corn starch, a few hours of shampooing and polishing of a body that is mortal, would soon crush all literary aspirations of a soul that is immortal.¹⁷

One procedure in the presentation of current events has been to hold a general discussion, followed by questions and answers. Sometimes this method has been used also in the presentation of parliamentary law. Often these programs were in the form of drills.

¹⁵Minutes of XLI Club, October 12, 1895.

¹⁶Ibid., February 23, 1895.

¹⁷Ibid., November 2, 1895.

It appears that the members were very earnest and sincere in their efforts at self-culture. The effort expended for mutual improvement is shown by the reference to the programs as being the work of the day. A part of the annual report of 1895-1896 reads:

The XLI Club having become firmly established during the previous year, began the work of '95-'96 with bright prospects. Some of the work has been a little heavy, but as difficulty after difficulty has been overcome by perseverance and honest effort, we have learned to like these hard places. Instead of the flowery metaphors of Chaucer and the airy grace of Spenser, we have struggled with the sonorous blank verse of Milton and plodded through the intricate logic of Hobbes and of Locke. Last year's course of study embraced the Elizabethan period. During the year just passed we have lifted with reverent hands the curtain which time had dropped upon the drama of the seventeenth century and peered with eager eyes into the mysteries which were concealed behind the musty folds.¹⁸

Throughout the fifty-seven years of the club's existence, drama and poetry appear and reappear in the yearbooks.¹⁹ Lines of poetry dot the pages of many yearbooks and the ladies have enjoyed using poetry in their papers. A number of the members have been composers of poetry. This reference is made in 1946 to one of them:

Miss Doty introduced Mrs. J. L. Long, who was the speaker for the evening. Mrs. Long is quite an accomplished poetess, belonging to the

¹⁸Ibid., April 11, 1896.

¹⁹Yearbook of the XLI Club, 1888-1889, 1902-1905, 1906-1920, 1921-1951.

Texas Poetry Society. She read from her own book, "Sun Dial," which is dedicated to her mother. She very cleverly read poems of humor, sadness, and imagination, as well as many more.²⁰

Voncile Liddell recently entered one of her poems in a district contest.

Drama has occupied an important place on the programs. After the regular order of business was dispensed with on March 13, 1897,

Miss Fitzgerald took charge of the exercises. The subject for the day was the Comic Drama. The questions gave rise to lengthy discussion as to the effect of Comedy, Tragedy, and Farce upon the people of the present. Miss Fitzgerald's paper was an interesting and instructive discourse upon the Comic Drama and gave evidence of a close study of the writers under consideration.²¹

Fifty-three years later this account appeared in the Gainesville Daily Register:

Miss Layuna Hicks presented the program at the meeting Tuesday evening of the XLI Club. With "What's New in Drama" as her subject, Miss Hicks discussed what is available in drama. She reviewed briefly many of the dramas being presented in Dallas during the current season.²²

From year to year the club has made a study of the history of the nations of the world. Emphasis has gradually shifted from pure history to include a study of

²⁰Minutes of the Literary Department, XLI Club, March 19, 1946.

²¹Minutes of the XLI Club, March 13, 1897.

²²"What's New in Drama Topic for XLI Club," Gainesville Daily Register, January 12, 1949.

governments. An early account relates that

Miss Edwards took charge of the exercises. The subject for the day was Gibbon's Rome. The questions included the important events of Roman History from the reign of Trajan to the establishment of the Ottoman Empire. The paper contained an accurate account of Gibbon's great and lasting work. It was a beautifully written discourse, replete with facts of interest and instruction.²³

Twenty-three years later the club scheduled a program on "The Development of the New Social Consciousness in the United States." The leader for this program was Mrs. Midkiff, who discussed the "Social and Political Effects of the Geographical Position of the United States and Its Immigration Policy." Miss McClure contrasted our theory of government with that of the monarchical state. Dr. Carrie W. Smith told of "The Effect of Old World Traditions as to the Object and Purpose of the State, upon the United States, and the Foreign Policy of Washington, Jefferson, and Later Presidents."²⁴

Thirty years after the above program was given, the topic chosen for discussion by the Literary Department of the club was "International Relations." An account of this program reads:

"International Relations" was the topic discussed in a well prepared manner by Misses Voncile and Martha Liddell. Miss Martha Liddell read

²³Minutes of the XLI Club, March 27, 1897.

²⁴Ibid., January 24, 1920.

excerpts from "Looking into the Future in Korea," touching upon some of the danger spots in the international situation. She mentioned the serious military situation in Indo-China, and the importance of China in any scheme for defense of the Far East against further Communist penetration. Reading from "Germany Can't Be a Second Korea," she contrasted the condition of the people in the east and west Germany and mentioned the help Russia is giving to increase industry in her zone. The position of Tito in Yugoslavia was also discussed.

Miss Voncile Liddell gave a resume of several articles from "The Americas." She spoke on Point Four which is the fourth one in the international program enunciated by the President of the United States which is briefly giving technical assistance whereby those countries with technical resources and knowledge to share them with the countries requiring such techniques or knowledge, she explained.

At an international gathering, Miss Liddell mentioned a petition signed by ten million people asked the U. N. to give urgent consideration to the question of a universal language. She discussed the tourist business, showing more U. S. dollars are spent in foreign tours than on sugar, coffee, copper, rubber or tin.²⁵

The times are reflected in the programs listed during the two world wars. The First World War brought forth such subjects as "Status of Woman and the War," "Economies of the War," "War Poets," "Music and War," "Personalities of the War," and the last program in 1919, "After the War -- What?" was to be filled in by the leader in accordance with the events of the day. One of the notes on the year's work gave notice that due to the uncertainty of the times and the probability of later developments, these programs are

²⁵"International Relations Topic for Literary Club," Gainesville Daily Register, October 18, 1950.

subject to change or improvement by the leaders. Many of the subjects listed for study during World War II were the same as those in the First World War but there was an addition of such topics as "The Maintenance of Morale," "Health in War and Peace," "World Citizenship," "Our Army Camp," and "Women in the Post-War World."

Since World War II, the ladies have continued thinking in terms of the world, as shown by their choice of such topics as "International Relations," "Summary of UNO," "Building World Security," "Communism," and "Youth Conservation." The theme chosen for the yearbook of 1950-1951 was "Toward Balanced World Citizenship" and the subjects listed show a wide range of thought through discourses on "Federation," "England," "A Better Community through Traffic Safety," "Kahlil Gibran, Mystic, Poet, and International Personality," "Folk Music in Other Lands," "Civilization on Trial," "The American Home as the Reflection of the Best Form of Art, Education, and Religion," "England: A Travelogue," "Musical Festivals Around the World," and a book review for the usual Christmas program. The Texas program of the year, "Down to Scratch and Up to Fame," to be given by Dr. L. W. Newton, Director of the Department of History at North Texas State College, Denton, will be an account of the lives of men who came to Texas in adversity and rose to fame.

The club has shown diversity in the choice of programs. They have included talks on art, magazines, health, communications, radio, motion pictures, novels, racial questions, conservation, the business of homemaking, industrial and social problems, and conditions within the community, and the different phases of education. The programs became more varied after the club was departmentalized in 1924. The general club continued to function as a club within itself, with the members belonging to one department or to all departments as they chose. When the club became a departmental organization, the general meetings were limited to one a month, and the subjects to be presented for more than a decade thereafter were chosen by the Music, Literary, Nature Study, and American Home Departments. The Nature Study Department was in existence for two years and the American Home Department lasted about ten years.

The programs of the general club have retained a literary flavor, with the addition of musical numbers. Occasionally, an all-musical program will be offered at Christmas. A custom has developed to have either a musical or a Biblical program at the December meeting, and to have a Texas program at the March meeting.

The programs in the club departments show the same broadening influence as those of the general club. The

Literary Department has followed much the same course as has the general club. They do tend to have a number of panel discussions and forums. The Nature Study Department, during its brief existence of two years, delved into such subjects as perennials, annuals, shrubs, wild flowers, birds, and the wonders of nature.

The American Home Department, which functioned for ten years, interested itself in such subjects as home decoration, cooking, gardening, finance, "personality in dress," and health.

All phases of music have been studied by the Music Department. They have studied the history of music, musical composition, composers, performers, and musical instruments. All programs have included instrumental and vocal numbers. Several operettas have been given by the Music Department. This department more and more shows the stress of modern times, as the performers become fewer and fewer.

There has been a change in the method of presenting programs. Whereas in the first two or three decades, the entire membership studied the subjects to be presented at the next meeting and took part in the discussion, in the last three or four decades there has been very little discussion after an individual has presented her part on the program. The club constitution makes it obligatory that a member "accept any office to which she may be called by

the vote of the majority, and to perform to the best of her ability any work assigned her, or to provide a substitute."

Many members have availed themselves of substitutes. Many guest speakers and artists have given the club programs. North Texas State College and Texas State College for Women, both located in Denton, Texas, have furnished programs throughout the years. Dr. Mary Patchell from North Texas State College gave the program on November 14, 1950. Her subject was "England: A Travelogue." She was formerly a member of the XLI Club. Her program was reminiscent of one given November 5, 1898. At that time Mrs. Chilton, by request of Mrs. Hemming,

gave a description of her visit to Shakespeare's home -- and so vividly did she picture the scenes which her memory recalled, that we felt almost as though we, too, had traveled over the same ground, and had seen the same sights.²⁶

Speakers who were specialists in their work have broadened the horizons of the club members.

The influence of these presentations cannot be estimated. Some vital subjects, touching the civic, social, and moral life of the community, have been carried out of the club rooms to the various homes of the members, there to be discussed by the family. The family may use these

²⁶Minutes of the XLI Club, November 5, 1898.

presentations as subjects for discussion in other places. The education of public opinion is intangible and unrecorded.

CHAPTER IV

EDUCATION

In the realm of education the XLI Club has been of great service not only to its own members but also to many others. Immediately after its organization, the club began the establishment of its own library in which to place the books to be utilized as sources for program material. Books were bought out of the club treasury or were donated by members and outsiders. The report of the librarian on September 26, 1896, shows a total of 126 books in the club library.

During the first four or five years the books in the club library were available to club members only, a club librarian keeping the library open at stated times. It was not long until the club thought of the public and stated in the minutes that the question of a public library had been agitated a little. Though no definite action had been taken, the members hoped to make a public library the future work of the club.¹

The club converted its own library into a public library, and the members of the club took turns in keeping

¹Minutes of the XLI Club, April, 1900.

it open to the public. The exact date of the conversion of the club library into a public library is in doubt, since the minutes of the club from 1900 to 1902 are not available. By 1902, the club found it necessary to elect both an assistant librarian and a regular librarian. The same year the treasurer of the Public Library, who was elected by and from the membership of the XLI Club, suggested the sending of postal cards for the purpose of enlarging the membership of the Public Library. This method was approved by the club.

Other measures were taken for increasing the membership, one of them being the distribution of membership tickets to the members for them to sell. At the same time, a circulating library for the benefit of those living in the country was considered and favorably discussed.²

Various money-making projects were launched to help finance the library. Days at charity sales brought in as much as nine dollars.³ Pencils and pictures were sold. Skating-rink benefits and book receptions were held. Tag days were most successful, the one held in 1914 bringing \$408. On two occasions book receptions brought in not only cash but hundreds of books for the library.⁴ From

²Ibid., February 28, 1902.

³Ibid., January 28, 1904.

⁴Ibid., January 28, 1904, and March, 1929.

time to time the club would make donations to the library fund.

After the club moved into the City Hall in the fall of 1905, preliminary steps were taken toward the establishment outside of the club of a Library Association to assist in broadening the scope of the Gainesville Public Library.⁵ It was decided to appoint a chairman with co-workers, for the south, north, west, and east sections of town, to solicit five-dollar memberships to the Gainesville Library Association, the association to remain under the auspices of the club for three years.⁶ A Gainesville newspaper posed this:

The plan is being perfected whereby the Gainesville Public Library may become so in fact as well as in name. The city government, by giving the use of four beautiful rooms, well lighted, heated and centrally located, has done its part. The clubs of the town are preparing to do their part and the co-operation of the spirited intelligent citizens of the town is all that is needed. Can we count on you?⁷

The president of the club, Miss Gertha Lockard, admonished the members to add to their hobbies the Public Library. The club assisted the Public Library in purchasing the Standard Encyclopedia. There were several occasions

⁵Ibid., March, 1906.

⁶Ibid., October 6, 1906.

⁷The Daily Hesperian, October 16, 1906.

when the club used all of its efforts to maintain the Public Library. Perhaps the fact that the librarian and the treasurer of the Public Library were elected by and from the XLI Club caused the club to feel that it should use all of its resources to back the project. All of the money in the library treasury, amounting to \$21.15, was used on May 11, 1907, to buy memberships in the Public Library which was soon to be opened.⁸ In October of the same year the club voted that the books which had been retained by the club the previous spring be added to the Public Library and that they also add their new reference books to the donation. Since all of the club books were thus placed in the Public Library, the club constitution was changed so as to eliminate the offices of librarian and assistant librarian and all articles pertaining to those officers.⁹

At the October 3, 1908, meeting the club discussed a report that the library treasury was empty, and that the librarian had been for more than two months without a salary. The ladies then began to work on ways and means of making a success of the Baer Recital, a recital that later contributed \$49.90 to the library fund.¹⁰ This profit,

⁸Minutes of the XLI Club, May 11, 1907.

⁹Ibid., October 12, 1907.

¹⁰Ibid., October 3, 1908.

together with \$235 collected for library memberships, enabled the treasurer to report that the librarian's back salary had been paid in full, except for the last ten dollars which the librarian had donated to the cause.¹¹

Resolutions had been prepared for the purpose of publicity, thanking the City Council for their action in granting the request of the club for twenty-five dollars monthly for the benefit of the library.¹²

In December, 1908, the club moved to the third floor of the City Hall so that their original library room could be used by the Library Association as a reading room. However, they retained control of the library and the reading room.¹³ The club voted to request the Library Board to require the new librarian to keep the rooms open at regular hours every day through the week, to solicit subscriptions, to receive all money, and to turn same over to the treasurer.¹⁴

Miss Gunter, the librarian, informed the club that Mr. Sheline wanted to turn over the library to the City Council, and had asked her to ascertain the club's views

¹¹Ibid., October 28, 1908.

¹²Ibid., October 10, 1908.

¹³Ibid., December, 1908.

¹⁴Ibid., November 20, 1909.

upon that matter. Mr. Sheline's remembrance was that in three years the library was to be given to the City Council, but Miss Gunter said that as she remembered it, the XLI Club after three years had proposed to turn over the books to the Library Association provided it was self-sustaining. She then read the yearly library report, which indicated that 298 new volumes had been added to the library and that 272 new people had taken out cards. In addition, \$272 had been spent for books and seventy-one volumes had been given to the library. At this point a motion carried that the XLI Club not turn over the books to the Library Association at that particular time.¹⁵ The club continued either to ratify the Library Association's election of a librarian or to elect her themselves.¹⁶

Through the years, the club was interested in securing a Carnegie library for Gainesville. The corresponding secretary in 1903 was instructed to send out notes to a number of ladies in different parts of the city requesting them to meet with the club on April 18, and to unite with them in an effort to secure a Carnegie library. At this latter meeting, a committee was appointed who, in conjunction with the business men of the city, were to write Mr.

¹⁵Ibid., February 11, 1911.

¹⁶Ibid., March 4 and December 2, 1911.

Carnegie, the object being the securing of a donation for a free library in Gainesville. The club further asked the library committee, previously appointed, to secure the interest of the City Council in the Carnegie project and suggested that pressure be brought to bear on the City Council to induce them to grant a maintenance fund for the Public Library. Such a guarantee of maintenance would be a necessary prerequisite to enable the city of Gainesville to accept a proposition for a Carnegie library.¹⁷

A committee which had been appointed to solicit subscriptions for a fund with which to buy a lot on which to build the Carnegie library was able to secure about a thousand dollars toward the purchase price. It was thought advisable to act at once in order to have something tangible to lay before the City Council.¹⁸

Several years elapsed before the Carnegie project was again mentioned. After the program on January 13, 1912, Mr. Roach talked to the club about a Carnegie library, and the club voted to aid in every way possible. The following year, the \$1,500 necessary to purchase the lot for the Carnegie library had been subscribed, and the building on the lot was completed in 1914.

¹⁷Ibid., April 18, 1903.

¹⁸Ibid., December 3, 1904.

The XLI Club, on March 18, 1914, voted to postpone their open session until the opening of the library and that it be in the nature of a housewarming.¹⁹ Later the club invited the councilmen, their wives, and a few outsiders to assist the club in receiving. Committees were appointed to take care of the details for the open house, which was held on October 10, 1914. Between 700 and 800 persons called during the evening.²⁰ The club allowed \$7.50 for the cost of the punch and thirty cents for candles. It thanked Mr. Turbeville for the use of his Edison diamond-disc phonograph for the library reception.²¹

Immediately upon the completion of the library building, the XLI Club moved into the basement of the building and furnished two rooms which are still retained by the club for a meeting place.

The accession list in the Carnegie Library includes over 1,300 books that have been donated by the XLI Club. The club continues to donate their study books to the library and from time to time discusses matters pertaining to it.

¹⁹Ibid., March 18, 1914.

²⁰"Cooke County Birthplace of County Library Movement in Texas," Gainesville Daily Register, August 30, 1948.

²¹Minutes of the XLI Club, October 31, 1914.

A further library interest of the club was in the county library movement in Texas. They endorsed the movement and wrote letters as individuals endorsing it.²² They drafted resolutions to be presented at the convention of Women's Clubs in Brownwood in 1915, calling attention to a comprehensive bill covering the county library which was to be introduced at the next session of the legislature.²³ The club pledged its co-operation to the city librarian in securing the first county library for Cooke County.²⁴

Hundreds of books and magazines have been given not only to the public library but also to public schools, to the Girls' Training School, to the prison system, and to the courthouse rest rooms. During the last war, hundreds of books were donated and taken out to Camp Howze. Three books were sent to the headquarters library in 1949, one to honor the past president, one to honor the president at that time, and the other an autographed copy of The History of Texas by Dr. L. W. Newton and Dr. Herbert P. Gambrell, given by Dr. Newton's daughter, Mrs. B. P. Hendley.

The XLI Club's contributions to education have been varied. As early as 1902, the club was serving coffee and

²²Ibid., April, 1915.

²³Ibid., November, 1915.

²⁴Ibid., March 31, 1917.

sandwiches at the Street Fair, as a means of making the twenty-five dollars promised by the club for educational purposes. They even maintained a schoolroom fund from which they furnished a schoolroom every year. Presumably, this was to furnish pictures for the rooms, as many pictures were bought by the club and given to the schools. Some of these pictures cost as much as seventy-five dollars for two pictures.²⁵ A committee was appointed to see after the pictures at the high school and ascertain that they were given a suitable place in the new high school building.²⁶

Committees from the club were instrumental in the organization of mothers' clubs for the South, East, and North Schools of Gainesville and for one in the town of Era.^{27, 28} It has been said that the Mothers' Club at Muenster was also formed by ladies from the XLI Club.²⁹

Pre-school-age books have been furnished for several of the Parent-Teacher Associations.³⁰ Other projects to

²⁵Ibid., 1907.

²⁶Ibid., May, 1922.

²⁷Ibid., March 13, 1909.

²⁸Ibid., 1913.

²⁹Statement by Carolyn McClure in personal interview.

³⁰Minutes of the XLI Club, May, 1928.

help the schools were: the planting of trees on the school-grounds, donations to interscholastic league funds, and the gift of money and trophies for literary and musical contests. Various programs and speakers have been furnished for school assemblies. These assembly programs have varied from lectures on thrift to an all-Spanish program given in costume by the members of the Music Department. The club went on record as being interested in the selection of every necessary convenience in the construction of the new school buildings.³¹

The club has been concerned in the observance of National Education Week. They co-operated with other clubs in the city to furnish material for posters to be used in making National Education Week and the Pioneer Life Show successes. The Literary Department of the club has usually made some observance of Educational Week. For this week in 1930, they sponsored a program for adult education and advocating the employment of a dean of girls in the high school; ministers were asked to speak on the subject of education; the American Legion was asked to furnish speakers for school chapel programs; and the Girls' Training School and the Negro school, for their part, would help with patriotic programs.³² The Literary Department

³¹Ibid.

³²Ibid., November 1, 1930.

presented Miss Lillian Womach of Sherman in a series of book reviews during the season of 1938-1939. They have had a number of guest speakers on educational subjects.

The club has been solicitous of the school teachers. In the spring of 1910 and again in 1913, receptions were held for the Teachers' Institute. Later these socials were held for teachers in the county, and the last one was held for city teachers. An account of the last one in 1930 reads as follows:

Members of the faculties of the public schools of Gainesville were honor guests at a tea given Friday evening by the XLI Club at the Carnegie Library in connection with the observance of Education Week.

The highlight was the tribute paid to Miss Mary J. Cox, head of the English department of Gainesville High School and Junior College, in recognition of her long period of service in the furtherance of education in local schools.

Miss Voncile Liddell spoke on "The Teacher," concluding her address with the tribute to Miss Cox, and a presentation of a bouquet of orchids and chrysanthemums, a gift of the club. Miss Cox responded with an expression of gratitude.

The rooms were decorated throughout with a profusion of autumn leaves and flowers, and the tea table in the club room was laid with a red scarf and centered with a large bouquet of American Beauty roses. Baskets of chrysanthemums were also used effectively. The club room was arranged as a living room, and guests were greeted and introduced by Miss Carolyn McClure. Others in the receiving line were Mmes. Harry Rosenstein, Ralph Long, Henry Bertram, John Culp, W. S. Potts, and Will Ross.

Miss Berrian Webb and John L. Koethe gave a group of piano and violin selections as the guests assembled.

Mrs. W. J. Price offered a most interesting and informative review of her recent visit to India, in connection with her world tour.

Mrs. Rufus Whiddon delightfully read a one-act play, "The Turquoise Ring." Miss Berrian Webb and Mrs. Yancy Culp played "The Romance of Pierrot and Pierrette," by J. Bergmain, an interpretive piano duet.

Mrs. Norman McArdle sang a group of vocal numbers, "Indian Summer" by Cadman and "June Will Come Again," by DeKoeven Thompson.

One hundred and twenty-five guests, including teachers, their wives and husbands and XLI Club members called during the evening. Refreshments of pumpkin tarts, spiced tea and raisin bon bons were served.³³

Gainesville Junior College scholarships are among the club's contributions to education. The first one, for seventy-five dollars, was offered in 1926 to a girl, a student in Junior College, to pay her tuition.³⁴ A second loan fund was created the following year. For the benefit of these loan funds, Daisy Polk was presented in recital and a silver tea was held. The third scholarship was offered in 1928 and the fourth in 1934. During the depression these scholarships were in demand by the girls of Gainesville Junior College.

History has been an educational interest of the club. It paid a fee of two dollars in 1912 to join the Texas Historical Association and remained a member for a number of years. In 1913, the old settlers of the county were invited to a club meeting to tell of the old times in the

³³"Teachers Are Guests of XLI Club at a Tea," Gainesville Daily Register, November 15, 1930.

³⁴Minutes of the XLI Club, April 13, 1926.

county. This meeting proved very interesting and helpful. The club voted to buy the paper for the use of the history committee in printing a history book for the club's own use and also a copy for the state library. Previously, five dollars had been allowed the committee for mailing purposes.³⁵ The club gave five dollars to each Cooke County boy or girl winning a prize for the best local history as awarded by the Dallas Morning News Contest Department.

Several of the members have prepared and presented brief histories of the XII Club. In 1907, Mrs. R. S. Rose reviewed the accomplishments of the club. On October 22, 1921, Mrs. J. D. Leeper was scheduled to give "History of Forty-One Club -- What It Means to Me as an Individual, and to the Community." The minutes for that meeting stated that Mrs. Leeper assisted in the program. Mrs. W. O. Davis on October 4, 1924, gave a delightful and interesting sketch of the trials and joys of the club from the time of its organization.³⁶

Mrs. W. O. Davis in January, 1941, gave an account of the projects undertaken by the club and gave a number of humorous happenings among the members. Mrs. John W. Culp, at the same meeting, read excerpts from some of the old

³⁵Ibid., January 26, 1918.

³⁶Ibid., October 4, 1924.

minutes of the club. Mrs. J. R. Whaly sang "Memories," accompanied by Virginia Mosley. The entire club joined in singing "Auld Lang Syne."³⁷

Mrs. John W. Culp gave a review on October 10, 1950, of the achievements of the club. The Gainesville newspaper had this to say:

Mrs. Culp briefly outlined women's club work in general before turning her attention to the founding of the XLI Club and its activities.

The XLI Club was organized in 1893. Mrs. Culp outlined a full schedule for the organization since that time. . . . The outstanding project of the club has been the sponsorship of the public library.

Before the conclusion of her interesting discussion, Mrs. Culp recognized Mrs. W. O. Davis, charter member of the XLI [she was mentioned as one of those on the roll in 1894 but not as a charter member], Miss Carolyn McClure, member for more than forty years, and Mes. W. L. Blanton and W. H. Campbell [and Voncile Liddell], members for more than thirty years.³⁸

The past of the XLI Club indicates a path of progress in education. Self-education was the first goal of the members. They soon broadened their endeavors to include the entire community. The mothers or grandmothers of the present club members did service in establishing a small library and financing it until local authorities could be convinced that it warranted public appropriations. They

³⁷"Mrs. W. O. Davis Given Life Membership by XLI Club," Gainesville Daily Register, January 6, 1941.

³⁸"Mrs. John Culp Gives History of XLI Club," Gainesville Daily Register, October 13, 1950.

sought to equalize educational opportunities through the library. Many other educational projects have been accomplished. The present membership is actively interested in education. This interest may be due, in part, to the fact that over half of the members are school teachers by profession. All advancement is education, and the club has a record of progressive action in the field of public affairs.

CHAPTER V

PUBLIC AFFAIRS

At the turn of the century the ladies of the XLI Club began to interest themselves in civic affairs. Women were beginning to have leisure time which they could spend for the improvement of municipal government instead of confining themselves altogether in reading circles.¹ The president in her address on October 6, 1906, especially emphasized "civic beauty as best carrying out the true spirit of the most good to the greatest number."

The club, in 1908, wished to hold the first flower show in the town, but decided against it because of lack of interest in the project on the part of the community at large.² When it was announced that the South School Mothers' Club would have a flower show in the fall of 1909, the club decided to purchase plants from the sister club and to take part in the exhibit.³

The response to roll call for the October 2, 1909, meeting was to tell what each hoped to do for the city's

¹James T. Adams, The March of Democracy, Vol. IV, p. 120.

²Minutes of the XLI Club, 1908.

³Ibid., April 17, 1909.

good that year. In 1914, the club began the yearly custom of conducting a flower and seed exchange. These exchanges were usually held on a day in early spring. Members would bring all of their surplus plants and seeds to the courthouse steps, where they would give them to anyone who desired them. This custom was continued until May of 1939, the club discontinuing the practice due to the fact that a number of garden clubs had been organized in the town.

The club has shown a love for the trees of the town. A committee was appointed, in 1910, to appear before the City Council and ask for the protection of the trees in the city, especially those on sidewalks. A donation of trees by club members and others was solicited for planting on the north side of West California Street. At the same time prizes of five dollars and of two dollars, fifty cents were offered to high-school pupils for the best essays on planting to beautify. A committee from the club saw about spraying and pruning the defective and diseased trees of the city.⁴ They protested against the severe trimming of trees. Ice storms in the past five years have broken, disfigured, and destroyed many of the trees in Gainesville, a town that is noted for its trees. The club felt so distressed

⁴ Ibid., December, 1920.

about the situation that they decided, in 1949, to do something about it. They made arrangements to hold a tree-selling contest through the schools and offer prizes to the rooms selling the largest number of pecan trees. A total of 307 pecan trees were sold and the club spent \$19.20 for nine other pecan trees given as prizes. Mrs. John Gray, who was in charge of the contest, gave each member of the club three pine seedlings.⁵

There have been long discussions about the beautification of the courthouse lawn and about other civic improvements in which the club was interested.⁶ The club voted in November, 1920, to use its own money for beautifying the courthouse square if the commissioners court could not be influenced to do the work. The commissioners did agree to plant and care for the hedge which the club should buy.⁷ Later, in February, 1924, the club trimmed these shrubs.⁸ They placed a flower bed in the city park at a cost of eight dollars and saw that there were no more cans or refuse dumped in the park.⁹

In January, 1919, school flower gardens were sponsored

⁵Ibid., May, 1949.

⁶Ibid., May 7, 1910.

⁷Ibid., November, 1920.

⁸Ibid., February 1924.

⁹Ibid., April 18, 1903.

at each school and one garden was sponsored at the ice plant.¹⁰ Five dollars was donated to the veterans to help beautify their "square" as a memorial to the soldier dead. The club, by 1920, had conducted a number of yard beautification contests, and offered prizes for the most attractive yards.¹¹ In 1930, the club asked for cheaper water rates to encourage entrants into a yard beautification contest which they were sponsoring. The following year a yard contest was held for children.

The XLI Club played a major role in the establishment of clean-up campaigns in Gainesville. A committee was appointed to ask the City Council to make April 11, 1908, clean-up day for Gainesville. Funds were raised for prizes in the campaign, which was postponed until May 1. Another plea was made for a clean-up day before the Second District Federation should meet with the club in 1909. The firemen were having a convention in the city at approximately the same time as the Federation meeting. The club made a donation of five dollars for the purpose of assisting the firemen in cleaning up at that time and appointed a committee to confer with the firemen and lodges in regard to a clean-up.¹² A motion carried to ask the City Council to see that

¹⁰Ibid., January, 1919.

¹¹Ibid., April, 1920.

¹²Ibid., February 13, 1909.

California Street, in front of the Lindsay House, was not littered with papers during the District Convention.¹³ The club was then asked by the firemen to assist in the work of getting stores and residences decorated in honor of the two conventions. Articles were published in the newspapers requesting all to decorate homes and business places in honor of the visitors.¹⁴ The city ordinance with regard to expectorating in public places was read.¹⁵

These efforts at cleaning up the city continued each year, but the first real clean-up was instituted by the club in 1912. A committee, that had been appointed to write a letter to the Missouri, Kansas, and Texas Railroad officials concerning the conditions around the railroad station, reported that the work was progressing nicely and that the club had the privilege of selecting the color for the depot.¹⁶

Application was made to Holland's Magazine for membership in the race for the cleanest city. A committee appointed to interest the town in the matter reported that they had visited schools, city officials, county commissioners,

¹³Ibid., April 17, 1909.

¹⁴Ibid., May 19, 1909.

¹⁵Ibid., October 9, 1909.

¹⁶Ibid., February, 1912.

and others who were all enthusiastic.¹⁷ Funds donated to the clean-up work amounted to \$278.40, of which \$230.93 was spent.¹⁸ The club donated five dollars to this fund and in addition gave the proceeds from the sale of five hundred pencils. The ladies of the club got in their buggies and followed the trash wagons to make sure that they drove down all the alleys.¹⁹ The corresponding secretary was instructed to write a general note of thanks to everybody who had in any way given assistance in the clean-up work.²⁰ The Young Men's Business Association was tendered a separate vote of thanks for their help in the crusade.

For the next clean-up, in 1913, \$617.75 was collected for the work, of which \$576.78 was spent, leaving a balance of \$47.97. That year, prizes were offered for civic improvement and trash cans were bought. A formal request was sent to the City Council asking them to enforce the stock law.²¹ The ladies were so in earnest about sanitation that they even accompanied the sanitary officer on his visits to meat markets, slaughter houses, dairies,

¹⁷Ibid., March 12, 1912.

¹⁸Ibid., October 19, 1912.

¹⁹Statement by Mrs. J. H. Midkiff and Mrs. R. H. Bailey, members of the clean-up committee.

²⁰Minutes of the XLI Club, January 4, 1913.

²¹Ibid., March, 1913.

stores, and other such places.²² In the fall the ladies complained about the difficulty in getting California Street oiled. At the same time they joined the American Civic Improvement Association.²³ Through the years the club has continued its interest in sanitation.

Woman-like, the members scouted about town noting matters that needed attention. The committee, appointed to appear before the park commissioners on behalf of the animals at the City Park Zoo, which were said to be suffering for the want of food and water, reported that the commissioners had promised to do away with the animals.²⁴ The drinking fountains on the public square and at the city well were checked for sanitary conditions.²⁵ Members of the club attended to the drinking water and rest-tents for the Chatauqua in the summer of 1913. Sprinkling of the main thoroughfares of the town, elimination of dumping grounds along Elm Creek, the oiling of breeding places for mosquitoes, and the condition of various unsightly places were discussed with the proper authorities.

At an early date, the XLI Club members interested themselves in the life of rural women. A committee was

²²Ibid., February, 1913.

²³Ibid., October, 1913.

²⁴Ibid., November 21, 1908.

²⁵Ibid., November 4, 1911.

appointed by the club president, October 9, 1909, to bring before the county commissioners the matter of having a ladies' rest room in the new courthouse.²⁶ This room was the concern of the club for a number of years. They provided a committee to look after the rooms and see that they were kept clean. They painted signs to be put up in the rooms, and provided a magazine rack for the club members to place collections of magazines for the benefit of the rural women. The county commissioners were asked in 1916 to provide a woman assistant for the courthouse rest rooms.²⁷ Thirteen years later the club was still worrying about the same thing. The American Home Department of the club worked on this project in 1929, and by October of that year was able to report that the rest room in the courthouse, furnished by the club for the benefit of rural women, was in good shape and reasonably clean.²⁸

The Rural Life Committee cared for the rural children during the afternoons of first Mondays, and provided play and story hours in the kindergarten room. Dr. Carrie Smith offered the use of the Girls' Training School stereopticon

²⁶Ibid., October 9, 1909.

²⁷Ibid., November 18, 1916.

²⁸Minutes of the American Home Department, 1929.

lantern for this work. Entertainment was provided for the county women on Trades Day.²⁹ On February 6, 1917, the club held an open meeting for everyone to hear a visiting lecturer speak on rural life. The club took an active part in the movement to employ a county home demonstration agent and a full-time county health nurse. In 1922 the club presented the Girls' Canning Club with a pressure cooker.³⁰ Over a period of years the club has co-operated with the Chamber of Commerce in rural social work.

Suggestions and recommendations were made on a number of other problems of the day. A motion carried on November 24, 1906, that the club assist the church societies in requesting the merchants to send their clerks home at six o'clock. The ladies were requested to order groceries early for dinner, as it would be more humane to the horses.³¹ Co-operation was given in the investigation of industrial conditions in Gainesville.³² The club held a discussion in October, 1919, on the law that working girls shall be furnished seats and voted that local employers be approached on this subject and reminded of the law.³³

²⁹Minutes of the XLI Club, February 20, 1920.

³⁰Ibid., October 19, 1922.

³¹Ibid., October 23, 1909.

³²Ibid., November, 1922.

³³Ibid., October, 1919.

During the depression, the club voted to adopt a resolution pledging support to Texas producers and to local manufacturers in a campaign to solve the unemployment problem and to create jobs through increased consumption of Texas-made products. The text of the resolution was as follows:

Whereas, we believe that Texas, today, with her many God-given resources, properly developed, can lead the way to recovery;

Whereas, in the past few years, many of our products have been raised, produced, and sold at below production cost;

Whereas, industry is centralizing and moving toward the source of raw materials and cheap power;

Whereas, where local support is given, new industries can be brought in that do not compete with those we already have, thereby increasing the consumption of raw material and giving employment to our friends;

Whereas, we believe the only solution to the unemployment problem is to create permanent jobs through the consumption of Texas products;

Whereas, we believe that the women who control the greatest proportion of the purchasing income can be of great service;

Whereas, we believe that the proper control and direction of our dollar in the purchase of our own products, will create new buying power, relieve unemployment, and increase the price received to the farmers, stockmen, woolgrowers, and producers;

Be it resolved, that we pledge ourselves to purchase, all things being equal, as to price and quality, First: The products of our local manufacturers; Second: Texas manufactured products; Third: Those made in the Southwest;

Be it resolved, that we ask our merchants to put in stocks of Texas-made products; that we ask them to carry these lines in a separate display, that we may easily familiarize ourselves with the various brands.

Be it further resolved, that we will do all in our power to encourage our neighbors and friends to support this movement.³⁴

The problems of safety and their solution have been another undertaking. In 1912, some of the members visited the managers of the Majestic and the Opera House and discussed with them the desirability of having fire escapes placed in those buildings.³⁵ Resolutions were adopted and published, for the prevention of fires.³⁶ A statement was sent in 1917 to the state fire marshal about the condition of the fire escapes of the opera house and of the high school.³⁷

The club entered the General Federation of Women's Clubs' "Build a Better Community" contest in 1949. The club chose traffic safety as one of their projects. The rules of the contest specified that the project must be one on which the club had not previously worked. For this reason, and the additional conviction that traffic safety needed continued attention, the ladies began to work on the project. A number of committees were appointed to take care of the different phases of the problem. One committee distributed stickers for car windshields, which bear the

³⁴Ibid., December 7, 1935.

³⁵Ibid., December, 1912.

³⁶Ibid., May 16, 1914.

³⁷Ibid., March, 1917.

admonition, "Your life is in your hands." In the spring of 1951, there is to be a forum on "A Better Community through Traffic Safety." A great deal of material was secured from the Texas Safety Association and from cities that have worked on the same problem.

Many philanthropic activities of the community were initiated by the XLI Club. At Christmas time they thought of the noble work of filling the poor children's stockings.³⁸ The Empty Stocking Fund was accumulated by donations. The Empty Stocking Committee reported on January 24, 1914, that,

\$168.85 was received and \$56.75 spent. Four dollars was left from last year and there is now on hand \$116.10. Fifty-four families were helped, 173 children given toys, ribbons and fruit and dinners sent to twelve families.³⁹

For several years, the club dressed dolls for Christmas giving. In 1915, they secured the aid of other organizations in the Christmas work and began the custom of having a community Christmas tree. A committee from the club, who made a visit to the jail the Christmas Eve after the Armistice of 1918, when everyone was feeling especially cheerful, reported a cordial welcome and an apparent appreciation from the inmates. Each man was left, on Christmas day, a

³⁸Ibid., December, 1912.

³⁹Ibid., January 24, 1914.

hot turkey dinner and also post cards, stamps, and a copy of his favorite magazine.⁴⁰ The Empty Stocking Crusade was extended to include the girls in the Training School, and a committee was appointed to secure books and magazines for the girls.⁴¹

Among the ways of making extra money for the Empty Stocking Fund were: a doll raffle which brought in \$223.88, a silver tea, a benefit musical, and a light opera. Any money remaining in the fund was turned over to the local charities.⁴² The club was in charge of the Red Cross Christmas seal sales campaigns from 1914 to 1924.

The XLI Club has spent a great deal of time in war service. During the First World War they had a day every two weeks in the Red Cross rooms. They held a Red Cross bazaar, bought yarn for knitting for the soldiers at Camp Bowie, and signed up for duty on the exemption board. A War Savings Society was organized in the club that aided in the sale of Thrift Stamps. Club refreshments were dispensed with and the money was used in the war effort.⁴³

A representative of the Howard Clock Company presented

⁴⁰Ibid., December, 1918.

⁴¹Ibid., November, 1916.

⁴²Ibid., December, 1919.

⁴³Ibid., January, 1919.

the idea of having the XLI Club take charge of a movement to place a clock in the tower of the Cooke County Court-house as a memorial to the soldier boys of Cooke County. A committee was appointed on January 24, 1920, to investigate the matter and make recommendations as to the advisability and means of securing money for such a memorial. This committee was to confer with the city and county officials.⁴⁴

A meeting was called for the purpose of conferring with representatives from the churches and various other organizations in the town and county concerning the proposed memorial. Pauline Dougherty, now Mrs. Norman McArdle, was chairman of the memorial committee. She stated that she had interviewed a number of men of the county and town and was assured of their co-operation in this undertaking. She said that twenty-one boys of Cooke County had given their lives in the recent war, and spoke of the spirit in which such a memorial should be erected, expressing the hope that everyone in the county should contribute even the smallest amount, so that it would be representative of the feeling of gratitude in the hearts of the people at large to those who made the "supreme sacrifice."⁴⁵

⁴⁴Ibid., January 24, 1920.

⁴⁵Ibid., February 1, 1920.

By the end of the first week, \$1,500 had been collected. Many business men gave as much as \$100 each.⁴⁶ Devices used to collect money were tag sales, house-to-house canvasses, solicitations in rural schools, and letters to former residents giving them an opportunity to contribute.⁴⁷ More than \$3,000 was contributed, of which amount \$142 was left after getting the clock and the memorial bronze plate in place. This last amount was given to the veterans' monument in the cemetery.

Again, during World War II, the hostesses bought defense stamps rather than refreshments. The club invested in twelve \$100 bonds and two \$25 bonds. This money was drawn from the building fund which had been accumulating since 1923 from initiation fees. Guest privileges were granted to ladies connected with the army or defense work in Gainesville. Many of the ladies became regular attendants at club meeting, took part on the programs, and enriched the life of the club. Club members served as hostesses in the U. S. O. Building.

The sum of \$100 was given to furnish a dayroom at Camp Howze.⁴⁸ The War Service Committee bought three musical

⁴⁶Statement in personal interview with Mrs. Norman McArdle.

⁴⁷Minutes of the XLI Club, March, 1920.

⁴⁸Ibid., December, 1943.

instruments and collected \$200 more for instruments for the soldiers at Camp Howze.⁴⁹ The club furnished Christmas decorations for the camp and sang Christmas carols throughout the camp hospital.

The Music Department presented several soldiers in recital and invited them to appear on various programs. These soldiers were good musicians. The Music Department also collected four hundred copies of sheet music, both popular and classical, and gave them to the service clubs at the camp. Records were bought and given to both of the service clubs. The chairman of the Music Department, Miss Virginia Mosley, joined the "Waves." The members of this Department taxed themselves \$1.20 a year per member to give to the instrument drive for wounded soldiers in hospitals.⁵⁰

The Music Department has been outstanding in its contribution to the musical life of the community. It has been for many years the only music club in town. It has sponsored choir festivals and vesper services since its organization in 1924. In the beginning, one service was given each month, but now the Department has difficulty in presenting only one a year.

⁴⁹Ibid., March 13, 1945.

⁵⁰Minutes of the Music Department, October 5, 1943.

The Music Department has cause to remember the final rehearsal for the vesper service on December 15, 1941. During the rehearsal word was brought that the Japanese had attacked Pearl Harbor. This musicale, which was representative of most of the presentations, was given the following write-up in the Gainesville newspaper:

The playing of the chimes at Whaley Memorial Methodist Church by Mrs. Cecil H. Tinsley . . . welcomed guests for the lovely service of Christmas music given by members of the Music Department of the XLI Club as the annual program for this season of the year. . . . A large assemblage of music lovers was present.

The program featured choruses, vocal duets, vocal solos, organ and piano duets and a violin selection. The reading of the scriptures was given by Miss Carolyn McClure. . . .

The chorus was composed of Mmes. Floyd Jones, John W. Culp, Kenneth Stice, Frank Savage, Edward Pulte, Tinsley, J. R. Whaley, Dottie Dickson, Walton Wilfong, G. W. Dodd and Warren Cox, and Misses Mosley, Virginia Kimbriel, Blanche Brooks, Ruth Bonner, Margaret Bradley, Emma Gallagher, Voncile Liddell, Minnie Mae Voelkel, Marie Sykes and Leta Walters.⁵¹

Others appearing on the program were Mrs. J. C. O'Brien and Mrs. Yancy Culp.

The Music Department has always observed music week with a number of musical events. The schools and churches have often been asked to feature music throughout that week. The girls in the Training School have been included in these plans. Young musicians, both white and colored, have

⁵¹"Annual XLI Club Musicale Is Given Sunday Afternoon," Gainesville Daily Register, December 15, 1941.

been encouraged by being presented in recital by the Department. The general club is generous in its help when asked to give it for these events. The music members try to use as many local young musicians as they can on their programs. They have been active in their encouragement of the Community Concert Association.

Diversity of interest is shown by club donations to the following causes not previously mentioned: cemetery association; little theater building fund; Young Women's Christian Association; new Chamber of Commerce headquarters; landscaping of Leonard Park; associated charities; health parade; circus queen contest; Texas Highway Association; Community House; cancer fund; March of Dimes; tuberculosis fund; U. S. O.; the fund to aid in bringing the State Training School for Girls to Gainesville; Ecuador relief; music scholarships; and other musical projects.

Club activities in fields other than those already named include: voting to interest itself in conservation; urging the organization of a band; furnishing chaperons for the rehearsals of an American Legion play; giving a reception for the child welfare convention; advocating prison reform; sponsoring a number of art exhibits and observing Constitution Week and Baby Week. In fact, the club dislikes to refuse requests for its assistance, since it has earned the reputation of being a club that can be depended upon.

The club had a representative on the civic planning committee and on the Chamber of Commerce Commission during 1948. This was the year Cooke County celebrated its one hundredth birthday. Several club ladies, dressed in the styles of 1858, rode in a wagon as their contribution to the centennial parade. A part of the account of Guest Day reads as follows:

A background of antiques and pioneer costumes was the delightful setting for the annual XLI Club guest day tea given Saturday afternoon. . . . The house party was dressed in pioneer costumes. . . .

A musical program was given by a chorus from the music department of the club who sang a medley of old-fashioned songs.⁵²

In this same spirit, a member of the club gave a radio program over the local station, recounting some of the early history of the club together with the reminiscences contributed by club members.

The Gainesville Centennial Celebration, held in 1950, was without anyone to serve as chairman of hospitality until the XLI Club agreed to do it. For three days, the ladies registered out-of-town guests at the Turner Hotel and on the courthouse lawn. Earlier in the year, the club had charge of hospitality for the Circus Round-up.

The club has taken an active interest in the affairs of the day and supported men who have worked for good

⁵²"XLI Club Guest Day Tea Is Delightful Event Saturday," Gainesville Daily Register, May 3, 1948.

government. Hundreds of letters have been written to men serving in the different branches of our government. On November 19, 1949, the following letter was sent to Ed Gossett, representative from the Thirteenth Congressional District of Texas, which includes Cooke County:

Dear Congressman:

We, the members of the XLI Club of Gainesville, want you to know that we fully appreciate and support your continuous and vigorous efforts in combating the encroachment of Communism and its great danger to our way of life. Its insidious actions and propaganda are now a real threat to our free institutions and it is only through alert minds and vigorous action such as you have displayed can this menace be defeated. Your work of enlightening the people of this threat from within is not only highly commendable but may awaken us to our perilous situation before it is too late.

The conviction of the eleven Communist leaders in New York recently after a riotous nine months trial was fully justified and according to the law covering treachery. Their vicious and leering open defiance of our court would not have been tolerated in any other country in the world. We cannot forget that Cardinal Mindszenty's trial lasted only three days.

While we know that these eleven traitors, upon their release from jail would again pursue their nefarious activities, we feel that through their liberation we have done a great injustice, especially after the escape of Gerheart Eisler whose bail was set in the same amount as that accorded some of the eleven traitors. We believe a much higher bond should have been demanded -- bonds in sufficient amount to insure their presence and to take their punishment if their conviction is upheld by the higher court.

We believe our laws to meet this Communistic threat are inadequate. However, it is a comfort to know that you will continue to do everything in your power to enact laws that will fully protect us from this very apparent danger and make us feel more secure.⁵³

⁵³Minutes of the XLI Club, February 1, 1928.

The club sent a letter to the Texas Legislature in 1929, suggesting "Friendship" as the state motto. The legislature adopted "Friendship" for the motto of Texas.

The XLI Club had been instrumental in instituting many public improvements. It has been interested in remedying the glaring defects in our country's social structure. It has been concerned about all phases of living conditions. When women faced new and difficult problems, they realized the need of conferring with friends who were similarly situated. They carried these problems to the XLI Club which helped in their solution. The club has been instrumental in laying the foundations for many of the civic and cultural improvements of today. To know the past of the XLI Club is to appreciate the present. Men of the town whose mothers were members of the XLI Club think kindly of the club and are easily approached in support of club projects. Participation in the affairs of the State and General Federations has been an incentive and an inspiration to the club.

CHAPTER VI

PARTICIPATION IN STATE AND NATIONAL AFFAIRS

Many of the endeavors of the local federated club have been inspired by the Texas Federation of Women's Clubs and by the General Federation of Women's Clubs. During the first year of its organization the XLI Club discussed the advisability of joining the General Federation of Women's Clubs, and on February 9, 1895, it voted to send the ten-dollar fee required for membership. It remained a member until March, 1898, at which time it withdrew and did not again apply for membership until 1908. Club affiliation was renewed in 1908 and has been kept ever since.

After withdrawal from the General Federation, the club sent its dues of \$3.05 for entrance into the Texas Federation of Literary Clubs. It retained its membership in the State Council of Women of Texas, to which since 1894 it had regularly sent a delegate. The president of the club had served on the executive committee of the Council. The club later dropped its membership in the Council but has retained its membership in the State Federation for the past fifty-two years. It has a pioneer certificate.

The club has taken an active part in State Federation and General Federation affairs, contributing to various

projects of the Federations. The first contribution recorded in the minutes of the club was to the endowment fund for placing the name of a club member, Mrs. Darwin, on the honor roll. Contributions have been made to state, national, and international scholarship funds. The club has been a regular contributor to the "Penny Art Fund" and to the "Musical Penny Art Fund."

The hospitality of the club has been extended five times to district conventions held in Gainesville. The First District convention was entertained by the XLI Club in May, 1905.¹ Mrs. F. A. Tyler opened her home for an evening reception given in honor of the guests of the club. The club held a reception and served punch to all delegates in its own rooms. The XLI Club requested that it be transferred into the Second District, giving as the reason that Dallas was closer to Gainesville than Fort Worth.² This request was granted in 1908.

The Second District held its seventh annual convention in Gainesville, May 13-15, 1909. The following account of the convention was given:

Miss Gertha Lockard [of Gainesville], press reporter for this district, furnished the newspapers of that day a most complete "write-up" of this district meeting, from which these facts are gleaned:

¹Minutes of the XLI Club, May, 1905.

²Ibid., April, 1905.

"The meetings were held in the Elks' clubrooms. The keynote of the convention -- modern education -- was sounded in the opening program, President's Evening, May 13. Welcome addresses were responded to by Mrs. Walton Bass of Whitesboro. In reporting the work done by the clubs of the district in the past year, the president, Mrs. Harry L. Obanchain, of Dallas, laid special stress upon the work accomplished on all educational lines: civics, mothers' clubs, industrial education, music and art and kindergartens. Mrs. Dibrell, state president, laid special stress upon the efforts being made in behalf of good laws. The history of Gainesville by Mrs. R. S. Rose added another record of value to the future history of Texas. Friday morning, May 14, the reports of the various officers and committees showed an increase of interest in all lines of federation work. . . . The election of officers resulted as follows: Miss Gertha E. Lockard, Gainesville, President; Mrs. R. Ewing Thomason, Gainesville, Secretary. . . . The social features of the meeting included a reception in the Elks' parlors immediately after the program of President's Evening; a reception at the charming home of Mr. and Mrs. F. H. Sherwood on Friday afternoon from 4 to 6 by the XLI Club; Mrs. Edlar Blanton's dinner in honor of the state and district officers and Mrs. Threadgill, and a number of individual dinner parties, luncheons and drives."³

The club was not anxious to entertain the Second District Convention in the spring of 1918. The minutes of November 10, 1917, stated:

Dr. Smith [superintendent of the State Training School for Girls] addressed the Club asking that the Club women inform themselves and get together on plans for social morality in connection with the army cantonments of our state. Since this question had direct bearing upon our Training School and since the Club women are to work along this line for the year, Dr. Smith asked that the XLI Club reconsider its vote of the previous meeting and invite the District Convention to meet in Gainesville in order that the attention of the club women of the state might be directed toward the Training School.

³Christian, op. cit., pp. 235-237.

It was moved by Mrs. Sherwood that our Club invite the District Convention to meet in Gainesville and that we instruct Dr. Smith to take our invitation to Waco with her. The motion carried unanimously.⁴

The convention met in Gainesville in April, 1918, and the Gainesville Daily Register had this to say:

The Second District Federation of Women's Clubs begins its annual session in this city this evening, the meeting being held in the First Presbyterian Church. The first session will be presidents' evening, and the public generally is cordially invited to attend this evening and during all the meeting. The men as well as the women of the city are urged to attend and hear what the club women of Texas are doing.⁵

Later another news comment said:

A resolution was adopted calling upon the women of Texas to avail themselves of the opportunity given for partial suffrage and citizenship, thereby manifesting their desire for full suffrage and citizenship through a constitutional amendment.

Mrs. Connery, state president, made a short address, and after reading and adopting minutes, the federation sang, "Blest Be the Tie That Binds" and stood adjourned.

The visitors were invited to the tea rooms of the church before dispersing, and were served a delicious luncheon by the XLI Club, pupils from the Training School serving in a very capable and gracious manner.⁶

During their stay in the city, the visitors were taken to the Girls' Training School by members of the Cooke County Automobile Club, where they enjoyed a short program rendered

⁴Minutes of the XLI Club, November 10, 1917.

⁵"Second District Federation Begins Meeting Tonight," Gainesville Daily Register, April 18, 1918.

⁶"Federation Meeting Closed Here Today," Gainesville Daily Register, April 19, 1918.

by the girls of that institution.⁷

The greatest problem in connection with the entertainment of the Second District convention in 1930 was to find lodging for the delegates. It was the custom that delegates be furnished room and breakfast during the convention. A great many women of Gainesville, in addition to club members, opened their homes for the delegates. This is no longer the custom.

Mrs. Harry Rosenstein was general chairman for this convention. Some of the events of the 1930 convention are described in the following account:

With marked enthusiasm, delegates to the Second District Federation of Women's Clubs meeting entered into their first business session this morning, when reports of district officers, chairmen and club delegates were heard. Mrs. F. R. Pettengell of Cleburne, district president, conducted the session in the Turner Hotel roof garden.

Additional arrivals late Wednesday and Thursday morning swelled the total of visitors to more than 150, and many more were expected during the afternoon.

Adjourning shortly before noon, the delegates motored to the State Training School for Girls, east of the city where they were guests of Mrs. Agnes Stevens, superintendent, at a luncheon, and enjoyed a musical program given by the students of the school.

Principal speakers at the afternoon session were Mrs. R. F. Lindsay, state president, who discussed "Federation Facts," and Dr. J. O. Leath of Kidd-Key College at Sherman. The program was interspersed by musical selections by visiting artists and Gainesville talent.

"Presidents' Evening" was observed when the convention opened Wednesday evening at the hotel and Mrs. Pettengell delivered her annual address.

⁷Ibid.

Characterizing members of the Federation as treasure seekers in search of health, the ideal home, better law enforcement, education, safety, and the opportunity for service, Mrs. Pettengell urged her hearers to avoid the greatest menace to their "treasure chests," fear and indifference.

Lee Simmons, recently named superintendent of the state prison system, spoke on "Our Prison System."

The visitors were welcomed to Gainesville in behalf of the city by Mayor Frank Morris, Jr., and for the club women of the city by Mrs. J. T. Morrow, president of the XLI Club.⁸

The next day's comment read, in part:

The report of the credentials committee showed a total of 174 visitors, including two national officers, three state officers, eight state chairmen, seven district officers, thirty-nine district chairmen, 73 club delegates and 42 visitors.⁹

The tea given by the XLI Club was described as follows:

Among the unusual social affairs of the week in Gainesville and a high point in the Second District Federation of Women's Clubs Convention, was a tea given by Mrs. J. D. Leeper Wednesday afternoon at her home on East Church Street, when she honored the convention visitors. . . .

Among those who assisted Mrs. Leeper in receiving were Mmes. J. H. Midkiff, J. T. Morrow, Harry Rosenstein, Louis D. Mann, William H. Rue, Hill Campbell, and Misses Carolyn McClure, Ruth Garvey, Ruth Loftus, Rebecca Thayer, Gertrude Adams, Miriam Mahan and Voncile Liddell.

Mrs. Yancy Culp, Mrs. Ray Winder and Miss Berrian Webb offered a group of piano selections and Miss Leota Bosley and John Louis Koethe gave several violin numbers. Mrs. Louis A. House sang several numbers.

⁸"Club Women Begin Business Sessions Here on Thursday," Gainesville Daily Register, April 3, 1930.

⁹"Hillsboro Winner of 1931 Meeting of Women's Clubs," Gainesville Daily Register, April 4, 1930.

One hundred and twenty-five guests attended the event.

Mrs. Leeper organized the XLI Club and it is one of the thirteen original clubs in the state.¹⁰

Another highlight of this convention was the honor bestowed upon a XLI Club member, Mrs. J. T. Morrow, who became a member of the club in 1921 and whose service was thus described:

Mrs. J. T. Morrow, for four years president of the XLI Club, who retires from office this spring, was presented with a past president's pin Friday, by Mrs. Frank Marshall of Hillsboro.

The pin was presented during the Federation of Women's Clubs Convention and was the first given since the emblem was adopted by the district, and was given in recognition of her service to the Club, by the Club members.¹¹

Front-page publicity was accorded the Second District Convention, in 1940, by the local newspaper. The convention of 1918 had been accorded an inside column or two. Greetings from the XLI Club were brought to the 1940 convention by the XLI Club president, Mrs. Word Payne. Mrs. John W. Culp was general chairman for this convention. This was said of the convention:

Club women of Second District gathered in Gainesville Tuesday morning to participate in the 38th annual convention of Texas Federation of Women's Clubs as the two-day session was formally opened at 10 A. M. at the Turner Hotel, headquarters for the meeting. One-hundred and fifty women had registered up to noon, with a large number expected to arrive

¹⁰"Visitors' Tea Is Highlight of Convention," Gainesville Daily Register, April 5, 1930.

¹¹"Mrs. J. T. Morrow Is Honored at Convention," Gainesville Daily Register, April 5, 1930.

during the afternoon. Junior club women will come Wednesday for their part in the convention. . . .

National and state officials were recognized at the opening session: Mrs. Joseph M. Perkins, Eastland, president of the state organization; Mrs. J. W. Walker, Plainview; Mrs. R. J. Turrentine, Denton; Mrs. O. H. Carlisle, Houston; Mrs. W. S. Douglas, San Angelo; and Miss Ruth Douglas, Denton; and Mrs. Geo. A. Ripley, Dallas.

Mrs. J. M. Wilfong, Gainesville, president, presided for the opening formalities. . . .

On behalf of the City of Gainesville, Cecil Murphy, mayor, welcomed the visiting women. Mrs. Word H. Payne, president of the hostess organization, the XLI Club, expressed the welcome from the members. . . . 12

Celebration of the 50th anniversary of the General Federation of Women's Clubs was impressively observed Tuesday evening at the president's banquet given on the roof garden of the Turner Hotel. Elaborate decorations in gold and white for the tables carried out the golden jubilee theme. The federation was founded April 24, 1890, and this year many birthday parties are being given in observance of the anniversary.

Pioneer club women of the district were honored on this occasion as a part of the golden jubilee celebration. . . . Mrs. J. D. Leeper, founder of the XLI Club, was among the pioneer women introduced at the dinner. She has continuously been in service of the club since 1893.

A huge beautifully decorated cake in white was placed in front of the speaker's table and the ceremony of cutting the cake was done by Mrs. Perkins, after a birthday wish was given by Mrs. Turrentine. Mrs. Walton Wilfong played as a violin number, "Happy Birthday," accompanied by Mrs. Yancy Culp. 13

The following editorial appeared on the front page of the Gainesville Daily Register:

12 "District Clubs in Session," Gainesville Daily Register, April 23, 1940.

13 "Anniversary Dinner Is Given for Club Women," Gainesville Daily Register, April 24, 1940.

Somewhat earlier than ordinarily, there was unusual bustling in a number of Gainesville homes Tuesday morning. . . .

The reason? Yes, you guessed it: Gainesville is host today and Wednesday to several hundred charming ladies attending the annual spring convention of the Second District, Texas Federation of Women's Clubs.

It has been ten years since the organization last favored Gainesville with its presence. . . .

"What Is Worth While" is the convention theme, the success of which is vouchsafed by the subjects to be discussed and the sterling characters of those selected to lead the discussions.

Gainesville is elated, Ladies, that you are here. We appreciate the excellent judgment and the confidence in her ability that you manifested, when you chose Mrs. J. M. Wilfong, of this city, as your president. She has worked zealously and successfully for your cause, which is but characteristic of her every-day life.

The homes and the hearts of our citizens are open wide to you. Avail yourself of them. May you return often and linger with us so that we may be more helpful in the great work to which you have dedicated your energies.¹⁴

Besides being affiliated with the Texas Federation of Women's Clubs, the Music Department is also affiliated with the Texas Federation of Music Clubs. The Music Department first assessed themselves thirty cents each to pay state dues.¹⁵ It is now necessary to make a one-dollar assessment per member in order to pay state dues. The Music Department entertained the Second District Federation of Music Clubs in 1934 and again in 1939.

¹⁴"Welcome, Federated Clubs," Gainesville Daily Register, April 23, 1940.

¹⁵Minutes of the Music Department, November 22, 1924.

The convention delegates of 1934 were welcomed to Gainesville by Ruth Garvey, chairman of the Music Department of the XLI Club; by John W. Culp, Mayor of Gainesville; by H. O. McCain, Superintendent of Schools; and by Joe Leonard, President of the Gainesville Chamber of Commerce. The Gainesville Daily Register devoted a special section of the paper, November 9, 1934, to this convention. It stated that

The convention will be honored with the presence of Mrs. I. D. Cole of Amarillo, state president, and Mrs. Grace Godard of Houston, state corresponding secretary.

A business session will be held Friday afternoon. The meeting will adjourn at 4:30 o'clock for a tea in the home of Mrs. W. J. Price, where a special musical program will be given by Gainesville, Dallas, and Sherman artists.¹⁶

Mrs. Yancy Culp was the local program chairman and was the district chairman for American music. Mrs. Cecil Tinsley served as chairman of credentials and as district education chairman. Mrs. Yancy Culp is the only member of the local club to serve as president of the Second District Federation of Music Clubs.

The following account will help explain why the delegates to the 1939 Second District Federation of Music Clubs convention thought it was an unusually good convention:

¹⁶"Gainesville Is Host to Second District Group," Gainesville Daily Register, November 9, 1934.

One hundred and fifty club women will arrive in Gainesville Thursday to attend the two-day meeting of the Second District, Texas Federation of Music Clubs which will be held at the Turner hotel.

Delegates for the convention are to be entertained in a splendid manner during their stay in Gainesville. Luncheons, a formal dinner, a breakfast, a circus party, a fine arts program one evening, followed by a dance, have been arranged to entertain the women when they are not in business session.

Mrs. Yancy L. Culp is general chairman of entertainment, and is being assisted by members of the local club.

.....
 Mrs. Bard W. Paul of Dallas, second district president, is to preside during the convention. Other district officers include Mrs. Cecil H. Tinsley, Gainesville, vice president.¹⁷

The most unusual feature of this convention was thus described by the Gainesville Daily Register:

An innovation in entertainment for delegates to the Second District Federation of Music Clubs convention will be offered in Gainesville Friday afternoon from 4 to 6 o'clock in Fair Park Auditorium.

Instead of the customary formal tea which is an afternoon feature on the second day of the convention, the local entertainment committee has gone to the other extreme and will present a circus party in a very informal manner for entertainment of the visitors.

The circus party will give the delegates a sample of the features which are presented each year by the Gainesville Community Circus.

Fair Park Auditorium will be transformed into a one-ring circus arena, and the visitors will be seated circus style on the benches along the east wall of the auditorium.

The program will begin with a calliope number by Mrs. Yancy Culp, recording secretary of the State Federation of Music Clubs, and one of the original members of the community circus.

¹⁷"Second District Federation of Music Clubs Opens Convention Here Thursday," Gainesville Daily Register, November 1, 1939.

Then the circus band will strike up and an hour's program will be presented. . . . The only difference from this program and the regular circus performance is that it will be a one-ring show instead of three rings, and the animal acts are omitted.¹⁸

The local club has made other contributions to federation work. A few club members have served in district and state offices, and many have served as chairmen of various committees. The club has extended many invitations to federation officers to visit the club and speak before it. On several occasions these guest speakers have been asked for the first meeting of each year, which is president's evening.

Those who have served as president of the XLI Club from the beginning are: Mrs. C. C. Hemming, 1894-1899; Mary J. Cox, 1899-1900; Mrs. W. O. Davis, 1900-1903; Gertha E. Lockard, 1903-1908; Mrs. F. A. Tyler, 1908-1909; Lillian Gunter, 1909-1910; Mrs. R. E. Thomason, 1910-1911; Mrs. H. S. Holman, 1911-1912; Mrs. N. C. Snider, 1912-1913; Mrs. J. H. Midkiff, 1913-1915; Mrs. Charles F. Rice, 1915-1916; Mrs. T. Fred Robbins, 1916-1917; Valentine Maupin, 1917-1918; Mrs. Newsom Dougherty, 1918-1919; Mrs. C. Sebastian, 1919-1920; Mrs. W. L. Blanton, 1920-1921; Sara Davis, 1921-1922; Mrs. Lew Allen, 1922-1923; Voncile Liddell, 1923-1926; Mrs. J. T. Morrow, 1926-1930; Mrs. Harry Rosenstein,

¹⁸"Circus Party to Be Innovation for Delegates," Gainesville Daily Register, November 1, 1939.

1930-1932; Mrs. John W. Culp, 1932-1933; Mrs. J. T. Morrow, 1933-1934; Voncile Liddell, 1934-1936; Mrs. J. M. Wilfong, 1936-1938; Mrs. Word Payne, 1938-1940; Carolyn McClure, 1940-1944; Mrs. John Gray, 1944-1946; Mrs. Hubert Moss, 1946-1948; Mrs. Cecil H. Tinsley, 1948-1950; and Mrs. John W. Culp, 1950-.

The number of vice-presidents, in any one year, has varied according to the number of departments in the club. The club voted on January 5, 1924, to become departmental. The necessary changes were made in the constitution and by-laws.¹⁹ A vote was taken from each member specifying the department of the club which she wished to join. This account was given of the organization of the Nature Study Department:

At a special meeting held Saturday afternoon, the Gardening and Nature Department of the XLI Club was organized with Douglas Bomar as chairman and Mrs. W. T. Lewis, secretary. . . . This department will meet the first Wednesday in each month and will confine its work to the study of nature in its various aspects.²⁰

Douglas Bomar as chairman of the Nature Department became second vice-president of the club. She held this office for two years, after which the department ceased to exist.

¹⁹Minutes of the XLI Club, January 5, 1924.

²⁰"Organization of Gardening and Nature Department of XLI Club," Gainesville Daily Register, May 14, 1924.

The Literary Department was organized with a larger membership.²¹ Mrs. J. N. McArdle was the first chairman of this department and became the first vice-president of the club. Others who have served as first vice-presidents are Mrs. Hill Campbell, Carolyn McClure, Mrs. J. T. Morrow, Mrs. R. C. Whiddon, Mrs. Harry Rosenstein, Mrs. Word Payne, Mrs. A. Baker, Mrs. John Gray, Mrs. Al Blohm, Mrs. Roy Brazelton, Mrs. G. O. Breeding, and Mrs. L. H. McLaughlin. The Literary Department now holds afternoon meetings on the third Tuesday of each month. The department held two meetings each month when it was first organized.

The minutes of the general club fail to mention the organization of the Music Department. It was organized in the spring of 1924, and the department programs appear in the yearbook. Mrs. Yancy Culp and Voncile Liddell were present at the organizational meeting and are still members of the Music Department. Mildred Dickerman, now Mrs. Yancy Culp, was elected chairman of the department, which made her the third vice-president of the general club.²² At present, this office has the rank of second vice-president. Others who have served in this capacity are Voncile

²¹Minutes of the XLI Club, May 10, 1924.

²²Statements by Mrs. Yancy Culp and Voncile Liddell in personal interviews, October, 1950.

Liddell, Berrian Webb, Emma Eubank, Ruth Garvey, Blanche Brooks, Lois Snoddy, Mrs. Walton Wilfong, Virginia Moseley, Mrs. Cecil Tinsley, Mrs. John W. Culp, Mrs. Hans Cook, and Mrs. G. H. Holland. The Music Department held two meetings each month during the first year of its existence, but since then has met only once a month on the first Tuesday evening.

The club minutes also fail to record the organization of the American Home Department. The minutes record on October 3, 1925, the election of a member for the American Home Department. It was probably organized the previous spring. As the names of women who were elected to membership in the spring appear on the American Home Department roll in the yearbook for 1925-1926, the organization must have occurred during the early months of 1925. The chairman of this department became the fourth vice-president of the club. Those who served in this capacity were Mrs. E. N. Blackburn, Mrs. William Rue, Mrs. Henry Bertram, Mrs. L. L. Johnson, and Mrs. B. F. Mitchell. The American Home Department voted, February 3, 1934, to unite with the Literary Department.

The departmentalization of the club is shown by the following report:

With the majority of the members of the three departments of the XLI Club present Saturday afternoon, an inspiring and enjoyable meeting was held.

Business before the club consisted of final plans for Art Week and arrangements for the lectures by Stella Hope Shurtleff, noted art critic of Houston, who will come to this city to conduct a course, beginning October 13 to 18 inclusive in the auditorium of the Library. The club is sponsoring these lectures which will be given at 4 and 8 P. M. for five consecutive days.

The program for the afternoon opened with the singing of "America the Beautiful" in union after which Mrs. W. O. Davis spoke to the new members explaining the functioning of the club which was organized 31 years ago and has steadily been growing with never a thought of disbanding. She also gave a brief and interesting history of the organization and its accomplishments.

Miss Mildred Dickerman, who is chairman of the Music Department, outlined the courses of study arranged for this group for the next four years and in an enthusiastic manner spoke of a brilliant future for this band of music lovers.

From the chairman of the Nature Study Department, Miss Douglas Bomar, the general assembly heard of a comprehensive program which has been planned for those interested along this line.

The Literary Department of which Mrs. J. N. McArdle is chairman, also heard inspiring remarks from her. This department is carrying on the original studies of the club and contains the largest membership.

Miss Voncile Liddell, president of the club, expressed her appreciation for the cooperation she has received from the members of the club and in her address spoke of a woman's place in the home, concluding her remarks with the recitation of a poem entitled "Roofs."

In her rich, dramatic contralto voice, Miss Maurine Liles sang "E'en as the Flower" at the close of the program. She was accompanied at the piano by Mrs. A. N. Mahaffey.²³

A Junior XLI Club, composed of high-school and junior-college-age girls, was organized in the fall of 1929. It

²³"XLI Club Holds Splendid Meeting," Gainesville Daily Register, October 6, 1924.

was patterned after the senior club, with music and literary departments.²⁴ Each department sent representatives to the meetings of the XLI Club. Elizabeth Graham was the first president of the Junior XLI Club. This club functioned until the last of the club year of 1932-1933.

The Sweet Sixteen Club is mentioned in the minutes of the XLI Club. On February 3, 1906, the club voted to invite their younger sisters, the Sweet Sixteen Club, to meet with them on Guest Day. A vote of thanks was tendered on March 23, 1912, to the Sweet Sixteen Club for the gift of a piano to the XLI Club. A letter from the Sweet Sixteen Club said:

Our Sweet Sixteen Club having disbanded some time ago and their [there] being no hope of reorganizing, we the old members desire that our piano be given to the XLI Club, in recognition of the fact that the ladies of that club assisted us in obtaining this piano. Also because it is the only ladies club in Gainesville and several of our former members now belong to it.²⁵

The piano is now in the club rooms.

It seems that the club has followed the advice of Mrs. Percy V. Pennybacker when she said that all knowledge is futile that is not used for the good of others and that no club has a right to be content unless it is doing something

²⁴Minutes of the Junior XLI Club, 1929-1933.

²⁵Minutes of the XLI Club, February 3, 1906.

for its community.²⁶ The club has followed a pattern of self-improvement which it made for itself fifty-seven years ago. Service has been added to this pattern.

The club has taken from and added to its constitution and committees. The committees have increased from three to seventeen. However, there has been no set number, and they have varied from year to year as needs arose. The greatest change was shown in the yearbook of 1914-1915, when seven committees were listed instead of only four that had been listed in the yearbooks for several years. During and after World War I additional committees were appointed. Some of these additions were made because of suggestions from the State and General Federations. The dues have been tripled since the organization of the club, but fines and initiation fees remain the same.

Another change was made in the constitution whereby more members might be admitted. At present there are forty-six active members, two honorary, and three life members in the club. The club roster includes Mmes. A. Baker, R. E. Bandy, Walter Blandford, W. L. Blanton, Al Blohm, Roy Brazelton, G. O. Breeding, H. M. Butler, W. H. Campbell, Ruby Carroll, Hans Cook, John W. Culp, Yancy Culp, W. O. Davis, L. C. Dennis, John Gray, Arie Gudgell, B. P. Hendley,

²⁶Christian, *op. cit.*, p. ix.

G. H. Holland, Jack Howeth, J. L. Leazer, E. V. Lesley, Lois Lucas, L. H. McLaughlin, E. C. Mead, J. T. Morrow, Hubert Moss, W. S. Potts, Charles Priddy, C. B. Thayer, Cecil Tinsley, and E. L. Townsley; Misses Theo Bagwell, Margaret Bradley, Marie Cannon, Lillian Doty, Elizabeth Graham, Layuna Hicks, Virginia Lauderdale, Martha Liddell, Voncile Liddell, Carolyn McClure, Betty Sellars, Ethel Taylor, Ruth Young, and Ruth Garvey. Honorary members are Mrs. Perry Wilson and Mrs. J. M. Wilfong. Life members are Mmes. W. O. Davis, W. L. Blanton, and Miss Carolyn McClure.

In this brief history there are some women whose prominence is made possible through the help furnished by the members of the club. Each woman who has served as a member of the club might be given recognition. The women of the club have begun many of the services now carried on by other organizations of the city. The XLI Club is the only club in Gainesville that is now affiliated with the State and General Federations. The history of the XLI Club has significance for the citizens of Gainesville and Cooke County. Many people are enjoying the benefits that were instigated by the club.

The accomplishments of the XLI Club during its fifty-seven years of existence have been so many, so far-reaching, so comprehensive in their implications, and so diversified

that in this thesis it has been possible only to touch a few of the highlights.

"A Collect for Club Women," which hangs on a wall of the club rooms and has been printed regularly in the year-books for thirty years, typifies the women of the XLI Club. It reads:

Keep us, oh God, from pettiness; let us be large in thought, in word, in deed.

Let us be done with fault-finding and leave off self-seeking.

May we put away all pretense and meet each other face to face, without self-pity and without prejudice.

May we never be hasty in judgment and always generous.

Let us take time for all things; make us to grow calm, serene, gentle. Teach us to put into action our better impulses, straightforward and unafraid.

Grant that we may realize it is the little things that create differences, that in the big things of life we are as one.

And may we strive to touch and to know the great common human heart of us all, and, oh Lord God, let us not forget to be kind!

-- Mary Stewart.

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