

Specialist's Report

Counties undertaking Clothing study on a leadership basis 14

In 1927 one county was visited four times, eight counties three times each, two counties two times each and three counties one time each.

Number of communities represented by leaders 111

Number of days of specialist's time devoted to the project 43

Number of meetings held 94 Attendance 1918

Counties and the county results of project.

County	Leaders Meetings	Communities	Co. Club Meetings	Results		Dress Forms	Homes	
				K.S.	F.P.			
Alamance	3		92		60	149	12	400
Beaufort	2		69	123	65	176		199
Columbus	2		69		71	350		150
Davidson	4		279		148	1032		412
Durham	3		222			282		394
Guilford	2		62			202	1	123
Iredell	3		63			151		153
Caldwell	3		59		40	235		160
Northampton	3		163		67	271		362
Rockingham	-		-		35	-		-
Scotland	2		57		-	-		250
Stanly	3		163		176	878		462
Wake	3		58		37	750		-
Washington	1		38		-	-		101
Total:	34		1404	123	699	4476	13	3166

Only 3 counties carried the Clothing project further than the completion of the foundation pattern. Davidson did work in children's clothes; Guilford and Northampton in dress appreciation and remodeling; and Washington did only the kimono sleeve project. Scotland has not completed its project.

Counties reporting Clothing Work 39

No. Women's Clubs 291 Membership 5975 No. Girls' Clubs 331

Membership 7439

No. completing: Women 3556 Girls 5112

No homes adopting improved practices 2598

No. Clothing Meetings held 1404

No. Leadership schools held _____ No. women leaders _____ No. Girls _____

Clothing seems to lend itself very well to the use of local leaders. The report of this work from Davidson County is typical for the counties in which Clothing has been carried on.

"There were 380 women who enrolled but a good many have fallen by the wayside. Our work was carried on by the local leader method and in this county it has proven most successful. There were seven clubs and each selected two leaders. These leaders came into Lexington, the County Seat, for four meetings which were conducted by our clothing specialist, Miss Helen Estabrook, and in most cases these leaders went back to their own clubs and gave lessons as outlined. Our first meeting was held in the Hotel March dining room and the subject studied was "Kimono Sleeve Dress." This lesson was divided into three parts that the leaders might use it for three meetings. At the first meeting the leaders assisted by the home agent gave a demonstration in drafting a kimono sleeve pattern, and after the demonstration the women were put to work in groups of two and did their own drafting. At the next meeting each woman brought her dress which she had cut from her drafted pattern and after a demonstration was given in fitting a dress the women fitted each other. After these dresses were altered, home basted, and belt lines located club members were shown how to com-

plete their drafted patterns. The third lesson was collars. the women were taught how to cut a collar to fit any shape of the neckline and how to place the collar on the dress to make it lie flat or to roll. Many of the women expressed themselves as being delighted with this information. Collars had always been a problem to them and now they would have nothing to worry about along that line.

"Our next lesson was on children's clothes. The clothing specialist held the school at the Court House and displayed some very attractive dresses suitable for children from eighteen months old to ten years. These models were copied and displayed at all the club meetings. Attractive bonnets and aprons to match the dresses had a strong appeal to the women.

"We are indebted to a number of commercial firms for some excellent bulletins and leaflets on children's clothes which were distributed at these meetings. The outstanding features of lessons on children's clothing were the simplicity of design and construction and the suitability of materials. Parents are prone to begin dressing children in silks when they are quite young and all the children's clothes which we showed were made of cotton, simply trimmed, and easy to launder. The women seemed a great deal more interested in children's clothes than they were in their own. The hardest job I had was to get all my things together and get home when the meeting was supposed to be over, so eager were the women to cut patterns by the models.

"Our next set of lessons was on the Foundation Pattern. Miss Estabrook arranged for two lessons, one for each meeting. The first lesson included measurements of the women and instructions as to the amount of material to buy, the kind of patterns to use, and the equipment necessary for making a foundation pattern. The second lesson of this group was the actual fitting of the patterns. The women had cut

and basted a back and front and one sleeve, these were made to fit those who owned the pattern, and all the markings were made to aid the cutting and making of the dress. These lessons have extended over a period of time since some of the women could not come to the first demonstration and others were not efficient when it came to fitting. It was usually necessary for the leaders and for me to check on this type of work. All the women want a foundation pattern but getting them started off right is the biggest problem. A perfect forty-four will insist on using the pattern of a perfect thirty-six and then can't understand why it is such a job to make the pattern fit.

"Our last lesson was on variations of the foundation pattern. We showed the women how to make an epaulette sleeve; to add fullness at the arms-eye and how to make a dropped shoulder, using their foundation patterns. We also reviewed the lesson on collars and finishes which was given in connection with the kimono sleeve dress.

"At all of these meetings some club member would read an article which was related to the subject of clothing, and one important point that the leaders and I tried to stress was how to take away that home-made look. The women seem to be more interested than ever before in looking their best.

"Our leaders' schools were most interesting and I believe the women enjoyed the social feature as much as the instructional end of it. Each woman would bring some article of food and we would put it all together and serve our luncheon in this way. All of them said they were delighted to get a meal they had not planned and prepared.

"The project leader method is the only one by which we could put on a clothing program in this county. The women have been quite faithful about coming and taking the work back to their clubs and have

seemed to feel the responsibility of their office more than anything they have ever undertaken. Miss Estabrook had made them feel it was their duty to put the Clothing project over in their communities."

The agent from Northampton County makes these comments regarding her leaders' schools. "Eighty-seven leaders attended four schools. These leaders proved helpful by assisting at regular meetings and holding club meetings in the agent's absence. They also aided in advertizing each meeting and saw that the members carried proper material for work. Leaders' Schools were held in different communities each time and this helped to increase interest and keep up enthusiasm."

The outstanding comments regarding the pattern lessons were of the joy resulting from a pattern which is an exact fit; then comes the emphasis on time and expense saved by having such a pattern; third but equally important is the expression of the value of these demonstrations to the women in selecting ready-made things. "I was struck with the number of women in this group who did not sew but bought most of their things. They seemed to feel that they had no interest in the clothing lessons until they saw and heard the demonstration. I believe they went away with almost as much as the women who do sew."

Best results were obtained in the counties where the pattern work was followed with some type of dress appreciation. One woman said, "It has made me really see the dresses in the fashion books. Before I just looked through and did not see the things I should have at all."

Stanly County agent says of the leadership schools in Clothing: "In addition to some direct results in clothing it sold the leader ideas to the clubs and has helped me to select leaders for our next project."

The counties having had leaders in 1925 and 1926 report an appreciable amount of help still being extended by these leaders to the other women of the community. One county having devoted last year to clothing has the following report from leaders, 160 women being represented:

"Dresses made.....2074
Undergarments.....2114
Hats made..... 56"

Six additional counties reported a program of three or four months devoted to clothing. Instruction was chiefly in appreciation and construction. Some of the counties are teaching appreciation through an annual talk on seasonal fashions. Two counties, Gaston and Northampton, had 100% of the women taking the clothing project completing the work.

One county reports garments made by the club members valued at \$1,137.50.

The first prize in the Peter Pan contest was won by a club woman in Durham County. About nine counties held Cotton Contests and many club women participated in the contest conducted at the State Meeting of Federated Women's Clubs.

The Clothing Rally days or Fashion Shows of some kind are becoming a general finale to the year's program in clothing. One interesting feature put on at the County Fair in addition to the fashion show and contest on another day is reported as follows:

"At the suggestion of the Home Agent the home makers assisted by Elderment Club gave an enjoyable and entertaining Dress Review at the Mebane Fair as a climax to their clothing project for the year. Costumes representative of each decade from quaint Martha Washington to the present day's chic lassie with her sanely, sensible hygienic

garments were exhibited. Members of the two clubs acted as models, while appropriate music was rendered. The model gracefully strolled across the improvised stage, made the stage bow of her period, and casually disappeared behind the tastefully decorated booth. Between the musical selections one member gave historical and descriptive readings of each costume, clearly showing the complete emancipation of woman's garments. The program closed with the ensemble of the entire troupe with appropriate chorus. Everybody voted it a howling success. It was valuable to everyone concerned from the tiny train bearer of the bride of 1840 to the various persons who lent the costumes, for it promoted civic pride, a healthy cooperative community spirit, and served both as an educational stimulant and a social tonic."

Clothing Work for Girls

Clothing work for girls consists largely in instruction in sewing. In the older clubs the work has progressed to the point where it is really clothing instruction including selection, study of the suitable clothing for occasion, and making garments to fill the needs of individuals as revealed by a wardrobe study.

Forsyth, Columbus, and Stanly Counties are finding it possible to get day school teachers to hold meetings with the girls between the monthly meetings with the agent. This nearly doubles the amount that might be accomplished but it pays to go slowly and be thorough especially at the beginning. Several of the agents have local women who are club leaders and who attend the meetings multiplying the supervision of the agent in this way. It has proven very satisfactory.

The girls in Columbus County have saved money to buy two sewing machines for club work.

The following report from Davidson County is typical:

"All girls' clubs in the county have studied clothing (except

half the members of the Denton Club and those girls have studied room improvement).

"In taking up clothing with the girls I have tried to follow the outline sent out by the State office as nearly as possible. The smaller girls are all able to make aprons and are delighted to have something they can wear soon after they join the clothing club.

"Care and repair of clothing is the second project taken up. In the beginning it is necessary to overthrow the idea that patching and darning are pure drudgery and to instill in them the idea that it is one of the finest of fine arts. Some of the girls have become quite proficient in the art of darning and take a pride in their work. Matching the pattern in patching has been one of the hardest jobs the little girls have in the care and repair of clothing.

"The simple kimono sleeve night gown gives the girls an idea about drafting patterns and helps them to develop initiative in the manipulation of pattern and materials. It gives them more independence in the construction of simple one piece dresses and the girls have enjoyed making them. It has also given me an opportunity to teach them the proper decoration for underwear and to discourage cheap looking finishes.

"In making the fourth project I have given the girls a little wider range of choice than the bulletin suggests. I have allowed the larger girls the privilege of making teddies or stepins. All the little girls have made either the combination suit or bloomers and waist.

"Some of the dresses the girls have made are a credit to any grown person. No girl is allowed to use anything except a wash material and the simplest lines are chosen. We tried to consider the suitability of the design and material to the wearer and especially

the importance of the personality of the wearer.

"To stimulate interest in club work I have allowed girls to embroider dresser sets and scarfs and to make handmade handkerchiefs and simple little Christmas gifts.

"Mr. Sheffield, the Agricultural Agent, and I have conducted our club meetings jointly and when we divide our groups for project work we try to make good use of the time allotted us. At the first of the year I found that I had so many beginners it was going to be impossible for me to do justice to all of them so I asked the club members of previous years to adopt a 'little sister' and help her with her project. This has proven beneficial to these club leaders as well as to me. It has helped them review what they had learned before and has been a means of getting the newer girls along more rapidly than they could otherwise. In all of the clubs local leaders were selected to assist the boys and girls with their work and in seven clubs the leaders for the girls have functioned but in the other clubs they have taken no interest whatsoever.

"The girls have made 116 dresses, 385 aprons and caps, 294 pairs of bloomers and teddies, 204 slips, and 141 nightgowns. Other articles as handkerchiefs, dresses, scarfs, vanity sets, etc., were also made."