

House Furnishing Leadership Project.

Specialist's Report.

Counties undertaking the study of House Furnishing on a leadership basis 11.

In 1927 three counties were visited three times each, three two times each, and five one time each.

Number of communities represented by leaders 103

Number of days of specialist's time devoted to these schools 23

Number of Meetings held 43. Attendance 768.

Results by counties

County	Leaders' Meetings	County Club Meetings	Results		Girls' Rooms
			Rooms	Homes	
Cabarrus	2	95	211	195	15
Caldwell	1(Floors)				
Cleveland	1	39	205	178	0
Currituck	1(Back- grounds)	48	180	181	21
Duplin	2	129		300	
Johnston	1(contin- uing '28)	14	14	16	4
Fender	1(contin- uing '28)	20	11	12	3
Robeson	3	85	136	300	0
Rockingham	2	61	77	161	0
Scotland	2	31	84	125	0
Vance	3	30	41	86	14
Wayne	<u>3</u>	<u>49</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>0</u>
Total:	22	641	993	1564	57

Currituck County decided on the improvement of backgrounds, all the rest used the improvement of one room as their goal. Vance, Cabarrus, Fender and Johnston counties continue House Furnishings for their project for 1928.

No. of counties reporting work in House Furnishings 43
No. of Clubs 321 Membership 6152
No. of women completing 2760 No. of girls completing 964
No. of homes adopting improved practices 3342
No. of rooms improved 2723
No. of club meetings held 632
No. of leadership schools held _____ No. of leaders assisting agents:
Women _____ Girls _____

House Furnishings was the major project in ten counties in 1927. The work consisted of a series of lecture demonstrations at club meetings and much follow-up work with individual club members in their own homes. In the majority of cases leaders' schools were held in the counties and leaders carried out in their own homes as community demonstrations the practices taught.

The following are some comments made by agents: "The greatest good from our study of House Furnishing has not come from the number of rooms, floors, or walls which have been improved; but from the realization of the possibility of having comfortable homes with a wiser use of things at hand."

"Women are so much interested they wish to continue the House Furnishing project another year."

"This is one project that interests women so greatly they will not give it up. While we have had no House Furnishing demonstrations this year, hardly a day passes without several calls for personal assistance."

An interesting report of the leadership activity comes from Pitt County. "The most active project leader I had was Mrs. N. O.

Hodges of Benston Club. She has just built a house and at every club meeting she has demonstrated some new practice at this home. She finished some of her floors with commercial wax and some with a homemade product, that her club mates might see that wax made at home was much cheaper and just as good. She even carried out the leadership idea in her refreshments, using sandwiches, cookies, or beverages suitable for a school lunch for a child. Both of these things she learned at the State Short Course for leaders."

Several counties conducted room improvement campaigns following club study the previous year. A few examples of good work are given below.

"The work Mrs. Grant did was worthy of a prize. She had a plastered room with cracks large enough to contain three fingers. These she filled herself. A negro school teacher came at night and painted the walls. Mrs. Grant painted the floors and woodwork. She made a small bookcase to put on the wall and under this she placed a console table made by splitting a round table in half. She upholstered one chair and refinished all her furniture; made a lamp shade for her reading lamp; selected and made new draperies; and took pictures from old magazines, framed and hung them correctly. These pictures were especially well chosen, in fact, her choice and selection of all the details showed she had some idea of what constituted beauty in furnishings."

"Mrs. W. P. Snipes of the Holly Grove club, who won first prize, was not given a first score as she had no living room to score. The daughter of eighteen had to entertain her friends in a bedroom. The room which was to have been the living room had no floor except planks laid across the sleepers which rattled when they were stepped

on. The walls were lathed but not plastered; the ceiling was the floor of a room upstairs; and planks were nailed over the windows. The furniture consisted of an abused piano, two broken-down chairs, and an unfinished table. The material for the floor, ceiling, and the windows had been stored upstairs for a couple of years but the husband had never 'found time' to do the carpentry. It took faith, perseverance, many washed fingers, and a few falls from the stepladder for Mrs. Sniped, but when Mrs. Smith, District Agent, went for the final scoring the floor was laid and finished, the ceiling and woodwork was done, and the room painted. The family had to exchange work with a neighbor to get the plastering done but it was finished, and in the place of the once planked-up windows there were glass panes nicely curtained. The piano had been refinished, as had the chairs, and the dilapidated walnut table took on new dignity in its pleasant setting. The pictures and flowers added even more hominess and cheer, and it is needless to say that the members of the family were pleased; the husband seemingly the happiest of them all."

"One club member has made a most attractive breakfast room out of her pantry. She painted her table and chairs ivory and trimmed them with green bands. Since she had no place except the breakfast room in which to place her flour barrel she painted it ivory with a green top and it makes a nice serving table."

In several cases House Furnishing work was carried on by the agent in mill districts, sometimes through the Better Homes movement and sometimes through club women.

"Mrs. Mary B. Sanford, the president of the East Laurinburg Club, attended one of the County Council meetings and heard the county women reporting on the work that they had done in their homes. She became

Interested and asked for some assistance in improving hers. I suggested that Mrs. Sanford let me help her do over her home as a Demonstration House that we might invite all the other women in the mill village to observe the work done.

"Mr. A. M. Fairley, superintendent of the mill, agreed to paint the interior of the house, and the other changes she agreed to make herself.

"The walls in her home were blue with red woodwork, the hearth was painted green, and the ceilings were a deeper blue than the walls. at my suggestion all the walls and woodwork were painted ivory. This made the rooms seem lighter and larger.

"Mrs. Sanford reduced the size of the frame of her pictures and hung them on a level with the eyes, which made a big improvement.

"A new suit of wicker furniture was purchased for the living room, curtains were made of unbleached voile, valances made of cretonne, and a new rug was bought for the floor.

"Mrs. Sanford is so fortunate as to have a sleeping porch which is large enough for two beds. The walls and beds were repainted and curtains of unbleached voile placed at the windows. The high golden oak bed was cut down and painted a deep ivory. All the trimmings were removed from the dresser and washstand and they were painted the same color.

"The improvements made in the whole house, with the exception of the rug and new furniture, cost Mrs. Sanford only \$18.75."

"Four demonstration houses in Scotland County were opened during Better Homes Week. The Maydan house was one lent and painted by the mill people and the home demonstration women took the furnishings in hand. It is a typical three-room mill and everything was secured from the local dealers or borrowed from local women and there were a number of homemade furnishings, also.

The house was made attractive, convenient, and comfortable at a cost of \$200.00, which would be easily within the reach of any of these people. A large number of the people in the village visited the house and the mill authorities say they are now all clamoring for paint."

ROOM IMPROVEMENT FOR GIRLS

No. girls' rooms improved 953

The room improvement project for girls has proven popular in counties having home economics teachers in the schools, who assist the Home Demonstration Agent. In one county eighteen completed a room improvement project during the summer months. The following stories tell of the practical nature of club instruction. In Currituck County:

"Sarah Williams and her sister did over her room and then got the family interested in refurnishing the whole house. When the judges went to score her room we found the family industriously tearing off the paper from the walls of the preparatory to repapering, as follow-up to the bedroom project.

"Mary Doxey's mother has been dead three years and Mary kept house for her father and brothers. This is her senior year in high school and she became interested in club work and decided to take up the girls' bedroom project as the other club girls were doing. Afterwards she told me she could not enter the contest this year as she had decided she could get along with her room as it was for another year, but the family did need a pleasant place in which to sit and she would 'tackle' the living room if I would help her.

"She lived in a little weather beaten house at the end of the lane. It had never been painted outside or in and nothing had ever been done to the floors.

"In her work she completely changed the looks of the place by painting all the woodwork a deep cream; selecting an all over design in lighter cream for her paper and painting the ceiling a creamy white. She used a plain matting on the floor and hung pretty curtains at the windows, waiting for these until her father could sell his crops and furnish the money for the purchase. Both father and daughter were proud of the job when they had completed it."

The agent says, "When I went back the next time I did not know the place. Instead of the tumbled down porch there was a neat porch with a railing and the whole house had been painted white."

"Mary not only did the work in renovating the house but she had made all of her own clothing and had a complete outfit for school."

The agent from Pasquotank County says: "The first prize in room improvement was won by one of our senior girls. She finished the walls, floor, and woodwork, painted a suit of furniture, made a screen to go around the wash stand, made a window seat, made new curtains, rugs, chair covers, and a bed spread all for the surprising sum of \$6.90. She saved expense by doing the work herself. Her rugs were made of old rags, the curtains and bed spread out of feed sacks, and the window seat from old lumber."

Davidson County reports two rooms improved in a club community while the other club members made a note book study of girls' bed rooms.