

# Rock Hill matron organized S.C.

&amp; LOCAL

THE CHARLOTTE OBSERVER

## women for Depression-era causes

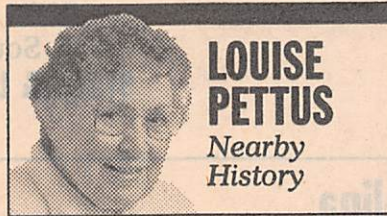
Jessie Huey Laurence (1886-1971) was the ultimate club woman.

Born in Union County, N.C., she was educated in the Rock Hill schools and graduated from Winthrop College in 1907. And she liked causes.

She mounted campaigns aimed at the betterment of society, served in numerous offices on the local and state levels, was a frequent delegate to conventions, wrote innumerable letters, pressured office holders and managed to do it all with a smile.

"Who's Who in South Carolina, 1934-1935" listed 11 organizations in which Laurence was active. Two of these illustrate her leadership and her passion for reform.

First, there was her involvement



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History*

in the S.C. Federation of Women's Clubs (she was state president 1934-1937 and was always active).

Then there was the Council for the Common Good. Laurence, a Winthrop home demonstration agent, took on the task of creating an organization that would take in most of the women's clubs in the state — a sort of superstructure not composed of individuals but of club membership only.

At the time, South Carolina was in the depths of the Great Depression. The presidents of seven women's clubs met in Columbia to determine which of the many pressing social needs they would work for. Top priority was given to:

- Adequate appropriations for libraries. Some towns with libraries but no money to pay a librarian to keep them open.

- The backing of free textbooks in high schools as well as elementary schools.

- State support for adult education.

Laurence, always working to reduce illiteracy, referred to it as "money for the over-grown and under-privileged."

In all these areas the council had some success, but there were fail-

ures. They backed a mandatory physical examination for couples planning to marry and a three-day waiting period. The legislature refused to pass such controls.

The women then turned to the task of trying to get women on county boards of health. There wasn't one in the state and, in spite of the council's efforts, not a single woman was appointed.

There were other crusades: student loan funds; state-supported kindergartens; the removal of taxes and restrictions on the South's margarine; compulsory school attendance laws; more money for parks (Laurence served on the National Park Service's advisory board), the right for women to serve on juries, etc.

She was compared to Eleanor

Roosevelt.

Laurence's personal life had more than its share of tragedy. In 1911 she married a lawyer, John Marion Cannon. The couple moved from Rock Hill to Laurens in 1912. Her husband defended a young schoolteacher who was charged with whipping a pupil and won the case. At trial's end he was shot and died, leaving her with an infant son to rear.

In 1916 she married Burton H. Massey of York County. Three years later, the couple was in their automobile with their 9-month-old daughter when the car was hit by a train. Her husband and daughter were killed, and she was badly injured.

In 1927 she married C. Fred Laurence, a farmer who lived 10

miles from Rock Hill on a farm they called "Catawba Acres." She became interested in her neighbors, the Catawba Indians, and through her work with the Catawba Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, did much to secure milk cows for the community and sports equipment for their school.

Laurence, who was described as "calm, good-natured, vivacious, enthusiastic and unspoiled," after 24 years of nonstop club work, announced she was setting aside her hobby (club work) and would retire to raise chickens.

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The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records. It emphasizes that proper record-keeping is essential for ensuring the integrity and reliability of the data collected. This section also outlines the various methods used to collect and analyze the data, highlighting the challenges faced during the process.

The second part of the document provides a detailed description of the experimental setup. It details the equipment used, the procedures followed, and the conditions under which the data was collected. This section is crucial for understanding the context and limitations of the study.

The third part of the document presents the results of the study. It includes a series of tables and graphs that illustrate the findings. The data shows a clear trend, indicating that the variables studied are significantly related. The analysis also identifies the factors that influence the results, providing valuable insights into the underlying mechanisms.

The final part of the document discusses the implications of the findings. It highlights the practical applications of the research and suggests areas for further study. The authors conclude that the results have important implications for the field and provide a solid foundation for future work.

In conclusion, this study has provided a comprehensive analysis of the relationship between the variables studied. The findings are both significant and informative, offering a clear understanding of the factors at play. The authors hope that this work will contribute to the advancement of the field and inspire further research.

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