

GRACE JULIAN CLARKE:  
THE EMERGENCE OF A POLITICAL ACTOR, 1915-1920

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Jacqueline Swihart

GRACE JULIAN CLARKE:

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The perspectives of unique suffragists and clubwomen in Indiana like Clarke reflect the typically overlooked narrative of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Far from a bystander, Clarke engaged in political wars at the state level long before having the right to vote. She demonstrated this ability early on when she acted as a campaign manager during the 1915 Indiana Federation of Clubs presidential election. By its end, club women around the state knew who Clarke was, trusted her word, and looked to her for critical information.

As World War I encroached and threatened the nationwide fight for suffrage, Clarke again remained loyal to suffrage by using war-related activities to promote and expand awareness of women's work and abilities in Indiana. Clarke strategically used these activities as a tool to advocate for enfranchisement by pressing leaders on her belief that women had earned their rightful place as equal partners. Although she stayed active in the suffrage movement throughout the war, it became clear toward its end that her assets as a political leader were demanded at a higher level. As such, she turned her attention toward international affairs, particularly the League of Nations, and away from suffrage.

Though the United States never joined the League of Nations, Clarke's advocacy of the covenant was critical in her formation as a true political influencer. By the time the covenant was being disputed at the national level, Clarke was corresponding with national leaders to coordinate speaking events around the state. She became more

exclusive in these speaking engagements, as there were very few women who actually understood the covenant well enough to speak on its behalf. Clarke was unique in her ability to speak out for her own values, in large part due to the influence of her father, former Congressman George W. Julian. Her story demonstrates that women's political influence did not begin nor end with the 19<sup>th</sup> amendment. Rather, women's political influence evolved over time, and is still evolving today.

Anita Morgan, Ph.D., Chair

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## Introduction

Grace Julian Clarke is most notably remembered locally for her advocacy as a clubwoman, journalist, and staunch supporter of suffrage. When it comes to her legacy at the national level, however, she goes largely unrecognized. Living and working primarily in Irvington, Indiana (annexed by Indianapolis in 1902), she attended Indianapolis public schools and graduated from Butler University (located in Irvington at the time). She earned her B.A. in 1884 and her M.A. in 1885 in philosophy.<sup>1</sup> She was the daughter of George Julian and granddaughter of Joshua Reed Giddings, both of whom were leading abolitionists and members of the United States Congress. Laura Giddings, Clarke's mother and the daughter of Joshua Reed Giddings, introduced Clarke to women's organizations when she, and others, organized the Indianapolis Woman's Club in 1875.<sup>2</sup> Clarke married attorney Charles B. Clarke on September 11, 1887. Prior to their marriage, Charles had worked closely with George Julian as a U.S. Deputy Surveyor in the New Mexico Territory. In addition to practicing law, Charles Clarke also served in the Indiana Senate in 1913 and 1915. Grace was a writer for the *Indianapolis Star* from 1911 to 1929 and authored three publications related to her father: *George W. Julian* (1923); *Later Speeches on Political Questions: With Select Controversial Papers* (1889); and "George W. Julian: Some Impressions," which appeared in the June 1906 issue of the *Indiana Magazine of History*.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, Clarke was a founder, president, and activist for numerous women's clubs in Indiana between 1892 and 1929.

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<sup>1</sup> Blanche Foster Boruff, *Women of Indiana* (Indianapolis: Matthew Farson, 1941), 134.

<sup>2</sup> Linda C. Gugin and James E. St. Clair, *Indiana's 200: The People Who Shaped the Hoosier State* (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society Press, 2015), 62-63.

<sup>3</sup> Boruff, *Women of Indiana*, 134.

Clarke was a fierce presence in her world throughout the first half of the twentieth century. Above all, she passionately fought for what she deemed as inherently right for the world and humanity. Although passionate and having a vigor that allowed her to separate herself from others (no doubt something she inherited from her father and his own vitality), she was not alone. Clarke campaigned, fought, and worked alongside both men and women throughout her career, not all of whom she always agreed with. Her journey, however, is too often absent from the historical narrative. This is true for Indiana, the Midwest, and the nation. As we approach the centennial of women's suffrage in Indiana in 2020, it is critical for historians to illuminate the untold stories of women, like Clarke, who adamantly strove for what they felt was right and paved the way for many of the rights women have today.

Although women obtained the right to vote in 1920 with the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment, Hoosier women acted politically through their own organizational battles before enfranchisement. With the onset of World War I, women in the state became more politically active on a national level as their work increasingly benefitted the war effort. Once women were enfranchised in 1920, women continued to engage in politics, including international relations. Evaluating Clarke's role in the campaign for presidency of the General Federation of Clubs in Indiana demonstrates the complex layers associated with suffragists and clubwomen during the years leading up to enfranchisement, while demonstrating how women were simultaneously loyal and rebellious to social norms of the time. Further examining how Clarke evolved as the country found itself immersed in World War I demonstrates that women were politically calculated in advancing their suffrage agendas through patriotism in an effort to prove their worthiness as citizens

deserving of the vote. As women gained traction with enfranchisement post World War I, Clarke turned her attention to international issues, primarily the League of Nations. President Wilson saw the League of Nations as an integral part of the WWI peace treaty that should be open to all nations to join, not just the war's victors.<sup>4</sup> At the heart of the League covenant was a "mutual guarantee by all members of each other's independence and territorial integrity," which was the root message that Clarke traveled around the state to advocate for. By using Clarke as a case study to examine how women were political before, during, and after the 19<sup>th</sup> amendment, activities of women at the individual and local levels can be understood more fully. It also creates a more accurate, inclusive narrative of the suffrage movement in the United States.

Clarke did not just believe in what she stood for. She, like any other leader and reformer, found personal gratification in being a public advocate and extending her platform. Clarke differentiated herself, however, from other women by becoming a politician rather than a reformer. Historians Flexner and Fitzpatrick note that "the suffragists in 1920 were not only, many of them, weary of campaigning; they were confused." As such, "'the ladies' were not really interested in politics—as politicians understood the term—but rather in 'reform,' which was quite another matter."<sup>5</sup> If they are correct, Clarke was atypical compared to other suffragists and club women in her political awareness and activity and used her unique perspective to campaign

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<sup>4</sup> Ellis W. Hawley, *The Great War and the Search for a Modern Order, A History of the American People and Their Institutions, 1917-1933* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1979), 41.

<sup>5</sup> Eleanor Flexner and Ellen Fitzpatrick, *Century of Struggle: The Woman's Rights Movement in the United States*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1996), 320.

aggressively for what she believed in. It is also likely that she felt pride in doing so as a way to honor her father's legacy. As researcher Sarah Kathryn Nathan explained, leadership requires "certain tact and skills to bring a group of women with varying levels of knowledge and experience to consensus," and Clarke had the experience from her club work, war work, and the influence of her father to fill such a role.<sup>6</sup>

Clarke began her outspokenness early in her career, particularly throughout the 1915 campaign for the Indiana Federation of Clubs presidency. She spoke out against Stella C. Stimson of Terre Haute for what Clarke viewed as unethical campaign practices and moral judgements, including the slandering of a fellow candidate, Lenore Hanna Cox. When Clarke officially declared her support for Cox's candidacy in August of 1915, she was immediately warned by fellow clubwomen that Cox had little chance of winning the election.<sup>7</sup> Stimson recognized the importance of recruiting what the *Rushville Republican* referred to as the "undefeatable" Grace Julian Clarke to her side, and wrote Clarke requesting they meet to discuss Stimson's personal evaluation of Cox.<sup>8</sup> Bound by loyalty to an ethical fight free from dishonesty, in addition to Cox's similar views regarding suffrage, Clarke refused to be entertained or deterred by Stimson. Clarke wrote that "I would rather be guilty of all the sins charged by you against Mrs. Cox than have to

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<sup>6</sup> Sarah Kathryn Nathan, "Women in Voluntary Service Associations: Values and Meanings" (M.A. thesis, Indiana University, 2013), 48.

<sup>7</sup> Mabel Dunlap Curry to Clarke, Aug. 19, 1915, Grace Julian Clarke Papers (hereafter GJC), Box 1, Folder 8, Indiana State Library (hereafter ISL), Indianapolis, Indiana.

<sup>8</sup> "Fight Seemed to be Brewing," *Rushville Republican* (Rushville, Indiana), Nov. 20, 1915, p. 7; Stella C. Stimson to Clarke, Aug. 20, 1915, GJC, Box 1, Folder 8, ISL.

reflect that I had deliberately sought to blast the reputation of one who for years had been honored by thousands.”<sup>9</sup>

Far from a bystander, Clarke engaged in political wars at the state level long before having the right to vote. Furthermore, she was inclined to support women’s clubs’ activities that favored suffrage—demonstrating her strategic political ability early on. Throughout the campaign, Clarke’s reputation grew as she remained a loyal campaigner and spoke both openly, and privately, against Stimson. At the end of the campaign Cox lost, but club women around the state knew who Clarke was, trusted her word, and looked to her for critical information. Her actions throughout this campaign further demonstrate her willingness to diverge from dominant cultural expectations to advocate aggressively for what she believed in, regardless if she was a part of the majority or not. This is a theme that would continue throughout her career.

As World War I encroached and threatened the nationwide fight for suffrage, Clarke again remained loyal to suffrage by using war-related activities to promote and expand awareness of women’s work and abilities in Indiana. Clarke strategically used these activities as a tool to advocate for enfranchisement by pressing leaders on her belief that women had earned their rightful place as equal partners. Furthermore, Clarke used war-related happenings and her newspaper column to increase her public persona. Her persona swelled when she began receiving requests to attend speaking engagements around the state as a “fourteen-minute woman.” This, among various other efforts Clarke advocated for during the war, allowed her to garner the attention of national leaders.

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<sup>9</sup> Clarke to Stella C. Stimson. Aug. 28, 1915, GJC, Box 1, Folder 8, ISL.

Although she stayed active in the suffrage movement throughout the war, it became clear toward its end that her assets as a political leader were demanded at a higher level. As such, she turned her attention toward international affairs and the League of Nations and away from suffrage.

Though the United States never joined the League of Nations, which established “the reign of law, based upon the consent of the governed and sustained by the organized opinion of mankind,” Clarke’s advocacy of the covenant was critical in her formation as a true political influencer. By the time the covenant was being debated at the national level, Clarke was corresponding with national leaders to coordinate speaking events around the state. She became more exclusive in these speaking engagements. Unlike during World War I, when there were other prominent women who possessed public speaking skills, there were very few women who actually understood the covenant well enough to speak on its behalf. These speaking events became so frequent for Clarke, who was in incredibly high demand, that John W. Holtzman feared she would not be “physically able to take care of the work” that had been laid out for her. He said to her, “I am unable to fill the demand for women speakers for the reason that there have not been enough women prepared for this kind of work.”<sup>10</sup> Clarke was more than prepared for this kind of work. In fact, she had trained her whole life for it, starting with observing her father and his political prominence. This foundation evolved tenfold throughout her own career as she advocated fearlessly and adamantly for what she understood to be true.

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<sup>10</sup> John W. Holtzman to Clarke, Sept. 22, 1920, GJC, Box 2, Folder 4, ISL.

Situating Clarke within the broader women's suffrage movement requires an extended analysis of secondary scholarship. Eleanor Flexner, the first historian to study the women's suffrage movement in a book-length project, recorded her research in *Century of Struggle: The Women's Rights Movement in the United States*.<sup>11</sup> Relying heavily on remnants of newspaper clippings, speeches, and letters left behind by Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, and Mathilda J. Gage in their first three volumes of the six-volume series, *The History of Woman Suffrage Movement*, Flexner's work remains a foundational piece on the history of women's suffrage spanning the colonial era, through the ratification of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment, and beyond. Although this broad narrative keeps midwestern states, like Indiana, hidden from the national narrative of women's suffrage, it allows me to situate Indiana's movement (and Clarke) within a larger context.

In 2017, Lynn Dumenil published another extensive evaluation of women during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, though focusing primarily on how women in America responded to the country's involvement in World War I. Using memoirs, papers, institutional records of women's organizations and government agencies, posters and film of women in wartime popular culture, and more, Dumenil argues that World War I offered new opportunities for all women (working women in particular). Clarke's efforts in Indiana throughout the war align with Dumenil's claim as seen in her correspondence and a newspaper column where Clarke urged club women to unanimously support the war effort. This patriotic unity would later be used when fighting for their right to vote.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Flexner and Fitzpatrick, *Century of Struggle*.

<sup>12</sup> Lynn Dumenil, *The Second Line of Defense: American Women and World War I* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017).

Dumenil notes that unfortunately these new opportunities were not long lasting. Intersections of race, region, ideology, and class kept women's work elevated throughout the war, but women did not gain true equality during that time. Few long-standing changes for women actually emerged from the war and women's efforts during it. Regardless of this fact, Dumenil contends that the war itself allowed for an increase in strategic patriotism by women who "viewed the war as a vehicle for agendas that often related only indirectly to the war itself."<sup>13</sup> Primarily analyzing African American women and educated middle-class women, she concludes that the confluence of "extensive civilian mobilization in voluntary associations ... allowed diverse groups of women ... to seize the opportunity to influence American policy and politics" through unladylike norms.<sup>14</sup>

Throughout the war, women across the country harnessed their patriotism to create change although it did not last for most women. This claim allows me to situate Indiana's activities throughout WWI as being relatively on par with activities at the national level, but also distinguishes Clarke herself as unique to the movement. Dumenil argues that historian Frederick Lewis Allen was incorrect in claiming that there was a "dramatic postwar change in the nature of women's economic opportunities and independence."<sup>15</sup> Rather, women who did find work were often limited to feminized fields like nursing, teaching, and social work. Clarke, however, continued to be a public advocate and acted as a politician in the years after the war on behalf of the National Democratic Party and as a journalist.

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<sup>13</sup> Dumenil, *The Second Line of Defense*, 15.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 274-275.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 269.



Where Flexner and Dumenil look at the suffrage movement holistically, Jean H. Baker exposes a gap in existing scholarship written about the nationally recognized women of the suffrage movement. In her 2005 book, *Sisters: The Lives of America's Suffragists*, Baker argues that individual complexity beyond notable accomplishments is often missing from historical research.<sup>16</sup> She evaluates the connection between women's private lives and public achievements through their correspondence, presenting them as not only three-dimensional, but exceptionally revolutionary given the time. Baker's work does not analyze the midwestern suffrage movement specifically but provides an example of how correspondence, which I rely heavily on in my research, allows for a deeper understanding of women's private and public experiences. At the turn of the millennium, Nancy Gabin similarly called for a closer examination of women at the local and state level in "Fallow Yet Fertile: The Field of Indiana Women's History," explaining that most of the existing research pertaining to Indiana and its women's clubs was written by members themselves.<sup>17</sup> However, these resources lack depth and context for the subject's life and serve better as primary evidence—further exemplifying the need for research on individual suffragists beyond their professional contributions.

More recent historians like Sara Egge are beginning to look closer at the Midwest and its distinctive role leading up to, and during, the suffrage movement. Where authors like Andrew R. L. Cayton and R. Douglas Hurt examine midwestern identity and

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<sup>16</sup> Jean H. Baker, *Sisters: The Lives of America's Suffragists* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2005).

<sup>17</sup> Nancy Gabin, "Fallow Yet Fertile: The Field of Indiana Women's History," *Indiana Magazine of History* 96, no. 3 (2000): 213-249.

distinctiveness more broadly,<sup>18</sup> Egge explores women's activism through local history archives in three small midwestern communities in Iowa, Minnesota, and South Dakota. She also utilizes personal archives of figures like Carrie Chapman Catt and Susan B. Anthony. In *Woman Suffrage and Citizenship in the Midwest: 1870-1920*, Egge argues that women worked in sophisticated ways and understood political participation as an obligation of citizenship, and that through their defeats women still managed to create change at the local, state, and national levels.<sup>19</sup> Using a comparative study of three communities across three states, Egge reveals how gender influenced their political cultures between 1870 and 1920 while identifying regional differences. The book, however, remains narrow in focus due to its sample size and ignores the story of suffrage in Indiana and other midwestern states that are historically older. It is helpful, though, when comparing the suffrage movement in Indiana and the roles of individual women, like Clarke, to those in other midwestern states.

Barbara A. Springer's "Ladylike Reformers: Indiana Women and Progressive Reform, 1900 to 1920" is currently the most comprehensive research regarding the suffrage movement in Indiana.<sup>20</sup> Her discussion of middle-class women, and the larger

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<sup>18</sup> Andrew R. L. Cayton, "The Anti-Region: Place and Identity in the History of the American Midwest," *The Identity of the American Midwest: Essays on Regional History* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001), 140-160; R. Douglas Hurt, "Midwestern Distinctiveness," *The Identity of the American Midwest: Essays on Regional History* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001), 160-180.

<sup>19</sup> Sara Egge, *Woman Suffrage and Citizenship in the Midwest: 1870-1920* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2018).

<sup>20</sup> Barbara A. Springer, "Ladylike Reformers: Indiana Women and Progressive Reform, 1900 to 1920" (Ph.D. diss., Indiana University, 1985). The Indiana Historical Society Press is set to publish Dr. Anita Morgan's book "'We Must Be Fearless': The Woman Suffrage Movement in Indiana" in 2020, which will provide contemporary research on the state's suffrage movement.

suffrage movement in the Hoosier state, exposes the contributions of all-female organizations in advancing social reforms prior to enfranchisement. According to Springer, their behavior aligned with traditionally maternal interests but did allow them to expand their influence. She notes, however, that they were largely unsuccessful in passing many of the reforms for which they advocated. Springer further analyzes the extent to which suffrage became a political “game” for women fighting for suffrage, explaining that female reformers skillfully used the resources available to them to ignite mobilization and unite women. By viewing suffrage as a personal means to reach a desired individual outcome, Springer’s work validates my argument that Clarke was heavily influenced by factors beyond enfranchisement. Furthermore, it illustrates that women were politically manipulative prior to obtaining the vote. This research provides insight into how Clarke’s network, background, and influences might have contributed to her work and advocacy.

Springer’s work, however, has been critiqued in recent years by authors Nancy Gabin and Anita Morgan. In “Taking Indiana Women’s History into the Twenty-First Century,” Gabin and Morgan note that the “ladylike” behavior posited by Springer conceals women who “engaged in social reform work, worked as wage-earners, and held professional employment.”<sup>21</sup> Although Springer’s work has been used in a more general way to describe Indiana women’s history during the early twentieth century, it is important to note that individual circumstances often diverged from “ladylike” norms. I will argue that Clarke, highly influenced by her father’s zest, chose not to remain ladylike

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<sup>21</sup> Nancy Gabin and Anita Morgan, “Taking Indiana Women’s History into the Twenty-First Century,” *Indiana Magazine of History* 112, no. 4 (2016): 283-288.

in all circumstances. This behavior is documented in her correspondence and outward appeals to reform other women she found immoral.

Narrower in scope than Springer's work, Peggy Seigel's 2006 article "Winning the Vote in Fort Wayne, Indiana" explores the decades bridging the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Through an examination of local newspapers, Seigel evaluates how club women in Fort Wayne forged new public roles that were later used to fight for suffrage.<sup>22</sup> Seigel ultimately argues that the connection of suffrage to the temperance agenda was highly detrimental to the growth of the suffrage movement in Fort Wayne and deterred their cause. Furthermore, Fort Wayne's male political leaders suppressed these women's efforts over concerns that the vote for women would mean a push for temperance. As a result, women in Fort Wayne trailed behind the suffrage movement elsewhere due to regional concerns surrounding temperance. In contrast to Springer's characterization of women remaining "ladylike," Seigel analyzes how traditional gender roles were challenged by social expectations as a result of mobilization. This behavior is reflected in Clarke's correspondence during the Indiana Federation of Clubs presidential election in 1915.

Even narrower in scope, Ray E. Boomhower used a biographical format in 2007's *"But I do Clamor": May Wright Sewall, A Life, 1844-1920*, whose subject moved to Indiana in 1873, became a local woman's rights pioneer of the early twentieth century, and was a close confidant of Grace Julian Clarke.<sup>23</sup> While Boomhower connects Sewall's

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<sup>22</sup> Peggy Seigel, "Winning the Vote in Fort Wayne, Indiana: The Long, Cautious Journey in a German American City," *Indiana Magazine of History* 102, no. 3 (2006): 220-257.

<sup>23</sup> Ray Boomhower, *"But I do Clamor": May Wright Sewall, A Life, 1844-1920* (Zionsville: Guild Press of Indiana, 2001).

work to the national suffrage movement and her working relationships with women like Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, he also discusses how Sewall, a lesser-known suffragist, extended the national movement by her significant Indianapolis activities. This rare example of historical biography on a Hoosier suffragist highlights the potential for more in-depth evaluations of individual Hoosier women during the movement.

Along with Boomhower, Robert Barrows also shines light on another Indiana local in *Albion Fellows Bacon: Indiana's Municipal Housekeeper*.<sup>24</sup> Although not a suffragist by definition, Bacon is well regarded by Indiana historians as significant in regional women's history for her contributions to housing reform and its advancement of women's equality. Barrows analyzes Bacon's evolution from a "sheltered life" through reform efforts, articles, and pamphlets, while examining familial and peer influences on her professional development. Barrows further declares as widely ignored by historians the examination of "second-tier" cities like Evansville and their reformers. This concept of earnest biography is embodied in the works of Nancy Gabin, and later Anita Morgan, who suggest that biographers of women should pivot from the "uncritical examination of famous women" who focus their work "without regard for context."<sup>25</sup> By filling the gap of previously ignored second-tier cities and women within them, my narrow scope of research will complement the larger narrative and provide a more comprehensive understanding of women behind reform work. Clarke's work will advance what we know

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<sup>24</sup> Robert G. Barrows, *Albion Fellows Bacon: Indiana's Municipal Housekeeper* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000).

<sup>25</sup> Gabin, "Fallow Yet Fertile: The Field of Indiana Women's History," 213-249; Gabin and Morgan, "Taking Indiana Women's History into the Twenty-First Century," 283.

about suffragists and their positions within the history of the state, the Midwest, and the nation.

The clubs of well-educated women, like Clarke, were critical foundations for the suffrage movement. Karen J. Blair explored this precursor in 1980 in *The Clubwoman as Feminist: True Womanhood Redefined, 1868-1914*, arguing that clubs served as “the cultural enlightenment for masses of women ... [and] taught women the value of their own autonomy” and that club women were simultaneously able to pursue feminist agendas while retaining their domestic and maternal roles.<sup>26</sup> This concept is reflected in my research on Clarke when evaluating the controversy surrounding the temperance agenda’s (and its association with domestic values) alignment with suffrage agendas.

Clarke, who was heavily involved in women’s clubs within the state, helped women unite in sisterhood through club work that supported the advancement of suffrage and reform. Club activities like Clarke’s were documented by Mrs. Horace F. Campbell, Mrs. Frank J. Sheehan, and Grace Gates Courtney in *History: Indiana Federation of Clubs* in 1939.<sup>27</sup> This collection distinguishes four periods within the history of the state’s women’s clubs prior to its publication. Within each period, the associated officers, directors, federation history, and activities are presented and discussed, including those which occurred during Clarke’s time as president of the Indiana Federation of Clubs. Thus, this resource allows for a greater understanding of the club’s activities throughout Clarke’s time as a club woman and leader.

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<sup>26</sup> Karen J. Blair, *The Clubwoman as Feminist: True Womanhood Redefined, 1868-1914* (New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, 1980).

<sup>27</sup> Grace Gates Courtney, *History: Indiana Federation of Clubs* (Fort Wayne: Fort Wayne Printing Company, 1939).

Women's clubs at the local level were evaluated in Katherine Badertscher's 2017 article "Social Life and Social Services in Indianapolis: Networks during the Gilded Age and Progressive Era."<sup>28</sup> Here, Badertscher evaluates social involvement in Indiana's capital as presented in newspapers, journals, and committee and club reports. Focusing on the Charity Organization Society of Indianapolis, Badertscher illustrates the significance of social networks and entrepreneurs in advancing ideas. In her master's thesis, Jennifer Kalvaitis similarly utilized correspondence, newspapers, and legal documents to examine a group of conservative suffragists who fought for women to have the right to vote in 1917. Notably, she also explores the connections between suffrage and temperance movements.<sup>29</sup> Analyzing Clarke's work within these local interpretations will help me to contextualize the ways in which she utilized her unique entrepreneurial skills and Indiana's suffrage movement to propel her career and reputation forward.

Small, local mobilizing events led to Patricia Dawn Robinson's "From Pedestal to Platform: The American Women's Club Movement, 1800-1920."<sup>30</sup> Through an evaluation of magazines, journals, and books, she argues that the General Federation of Women's Clubs altered its support of suffrage not for enfranchisement, necessarily, but to protect and preserve all of the social programs that clubwomen had developed.

Preserving the collective unity previously established among clubwomen allowed them to

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<sup>28</sup> Katherine Badertscher, "Social Life and Social Services in Indianapolis: Networks during the Gilded Age and Progressive Era," *Indiana Magazine of History* 113, no. 4 (2017): 271-308.

<sup>29</sup> Jennifer M. Kalvaitis, "Indianapolis Women Working for the Right to Vote: The Forgotten Drama of 1917" (M.A. thesis, Indiana University, 2013).

<sup>30</sup> Patricia Dawn Robinson, "From Pedestal to Platform: The American Women's Club Movement, 1800-1920" (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Davis, 1993).

mobilize for suffrage, which is reflected in Clarke's repeated attempts to consolidate women's club and suffrage groups to better mobilize.

Similarly, Cheryl Logan Sparks examines networks that were created by suffragists to advocate non-political women's organizations.<sup>31</sup> Primarily analyzing the General Federation of Clubs, Sparks argues that advocating for non-political women's organizations allowed conservative women to slowly become accustomed to suffrage. Clarke utilized her club network to push for consolidation of club and suffrage agendas throughout her entire career but did so tactfully to convince skeptical women that suffrage would benefit all of their other personal priorities.

Within suffrage and club movements, women's individual backgrounds played a strong role in how and why they were motivated. Sarah Katheryn Nathan's 2013 dissertation "Women in Voluntary Service Associations: Values and Meanings" explores the ulterior motives women had for their activism using surveys, interviews, and other collected data.<sup>32</sup> She provides a theoretical framework for members' private motivations and a clearer insight into the complexities of joining, volunteering, and leading voluntary services. She concludes that women found two primary outlets through voluntary association: 1) Expression of personal ethics and 2) career advancement. As Clarke became more active in club work and other organizations, she perceived her membership and role as increasingly more significant and used this enhanced role to further emerge as a political actor and advance her career and personal values.

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<sup>31</sup> Cheryl Logan Sparks, "How Grandmother Won the War: Strategic and Organizational Lessons of the Struggle for Suffrage" (Ph.D. diss., University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1996).

<sup>32</sup> Sarah Katheryn Nathan, "Women in Voluntary Service Associations: Values and Meanings" (Ph.D. diss., Indiana University, 2013).



Furthermore, Nathan discusses how an individual's personal background plays a strong role in why and how people are socialized into voluntary behaviors. In particular, she posits how a father's membership in a group can be a motivating factor for an individual to further a similar cause. This is particularly relevant to my research when considering the influential role of Clarke's father, George Julian, who likely had a profound effect on her private life and public career. Her father became interested in women's rights around the same time he adopted his abolitionist philosophy in the 1840s. After helping to pass in Congress the Fifteenth Amendment, which granted African American men the right to vote, he was, according to Clarke, "prepared to enlist actively in the next grand movement on behalf of the sacredness and equality of human rights."<sup>33</sup> The strong alignment between her father's political career and her own is worth examining, even if minimally, and letters in Clarke's manuscript collection allow me to do so throughout my research.

Similar to Nathan's evaluation of personal motivation behind their voluntary associations, Elisabeth Israels Perry suggests in her work "Men Are from the Gilded Age, Women Are from the Progressive Era" that historians should deeply explore women's roles during this time.<sup>34</sup> Using the most current secondary scholarship as evidence, she declares a need to further explore what the vote meant for women at an individual level. It is critical to understand not only how women were political before the vote, but also why they felt such a strong inclination to be politically active. Nathan and Perry's works

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<sup>33</sup> George Julian, *Political Recollections: 1840-1872* (Chicago: Jansen McClurg & Company, 1884), 304.

<sup>34</sup> Elisabeth Israels Perry, "Men Are from the Gilded Age, Women Are from the Progressive Era," *Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era* 1, no. 1 (2002): 25-48.

allow me to conclude that in Clarke's position, suffrage meant more than enfranchisement. For Clarke, suffrage presented an avenue for advancement that simultaneously aligned with her personal values, as noted by her willingness to pivot from the suffrage cause prior to its fruition and legalization and focus her attention on more worldly legislation, like that related to the League of Nations at the end of World War I.

In order to examine how Grace Julian Clarke was motivated, influenced, and able to successfully advocate for suffrage and other political efforts, I will draw heavily from many of these secondary sources. In Chapter 1, I will explore how Clarke elevated her statewide status while acting as a campaign manager for Lenore Hanna Cox of Terre Haute during the Federation of Clubs 1915 presidential election. Evaluating how those involved in the campaign were individually driven by morality, ethical duty, and political gain, I will argue that women in Indiana were far from bystanders to the male-dominated political atmosphere and were actively engaging in their own political wars prior to suffrage. The campaign, and Clarke's role in particular, provides a glimpse into the everyday politics of suffrage advocates at the local and state levels, including resorts to slander that predate our divisive modern-day politics.

In Chapter 2, I describe the ways in which Clarke was immediately active beyond the typical Red Cross work at the onset of WWI. Notably, Clarke became a member of the "fourteen-minute women" who could be requested to speak publicly before clubs, church societies, and other organizations of women for about fourteen minutes on the subject of food conservation. This provided Clarke, and other prominent women, unique training and experience in public speaking, which elevated her own public facing career.

Clarke also became a valuable source of information for women as she continued to write her weekly column, “Women’s Clubs,” in the *Indianapolis Star* throughout the war. This column kept women around the state unified and up-to-date on war-related happenings, and further expanded Clarke’s name and political influence.

Chapter 3 illuminates Clarke’s early pivot from suffrage efforts to more worldly affairs as she began fiercely advocating for a League of Nations. Toward the end of the war, Clarke began receiving new requests to speak at clubs around the state on behalf of the League, as she was perceived to be one of the few women who had the wherewithal and necessary knowledge to do so. Soon after, Clarke acted as a representative of the National Democratic Party, even hosting national figures like Franklin D. Roosevelt, James M. Cox’s presidential running mate at the time. Clarke became a valuable commodity by the time the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment was ratified, and she was unique in this role when compared to the majority of women across the nation who remained in more traditional roles after the war and enfranchisement.

I will also evaluate Clarke’s relationship to and influence from her father, George Julian, and his work as a U.S. Congressman throughout each chapter. By doing so, I hope to provide an interesting perspective of an atypical suffragist in Indianapolis who reflects a more typical, yet overlooked, narrative of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In effect, my research will complement the larger narrative of suffrage we have become familiar with today.

## Chapter 1: State Influence

“When you get up and women who are new ask who it is ... they are at once impressed, because every last one of them knows who you are.”

Early in her career, Clarke was a founder and officer of the Indiana Federation of Clubs, a board member of the General Federation of Women’s Clubs, and an officer for the Woman’s Franchise League. During this time she acted as campaign manager for Terre Haute’s Lenore Hanna Cox, candidate for the presidency of the Indiana Federation of Clubs, in 1915. Although later soundly defeated by Caroline Fairbank of Fort Wayne, Cox’s candidacy gained widespread attention from clubwomen and men alike. Clarke detested Cox’s original opponent, Stella C. Stimson of Terre Haute, because of Stimson’s participation in what Clarke viewed as unethical campaign practices. Caught in a battle of circulating letters that made personal attacks against Cox, Stimson decided not to run for the Federation’s presidency, but continued to spread rumors about Cox and remained Cox’s foremost threat.<sup>35</sup> Cox and her supporters believed that Stimson used Fairbank as a fill-in candidate to further her own agenda.

The political conflict between Cox and Stimson, with movers and shakers like Grace Julian Clarke at the forefront, demonstrates Clarke developing political skills prior to enfranchisement. Furthermore, Clarke and Stimson held leadership positions in both the Federation of Clubs and the Woman’s Franchise League, and their conflict throughout the 1915 Federation campaign demonstrates that these groups were not immune to internal political battles. Rather, they engaged in their own political wars

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<sup>35</sup> “Club Women Carry Battle to Convention,” *Terre Haute Daily Tribune* (Vigo County), Oct. 25, 1915.

before they could legally vote in Indiana. Evaluating this campaign for the presidency of the Indiana Federation of Clubs provides a glimpse into the everyday politics of suffrage advocates at the local and state levels, including slanderous attacks. These women were also driven by their own moral agendas, as exemplified by Clarke's disapproval of Stimson's deceptions and slurs against Cox's personal habits. Women in Indiana were political actors before legally obtaining a constitutional voice through the 19th Amendment, and their political engagements reflect a passion founded not only on morality and ethical duty, but also on political gain. Clarke's allegiance to Cox is an example of Clarke's unsuccessful political support in an otherwise successful career. Allegiances during the campaign were based on loyalty to friendship and agenda, and women risked their own reputations to advance their politics. Stimson especially engaged in manipulative politics typically associated with male politicians. Thus, evaluating the campaign demonstrates the conflicts between suffragists and clubwomen during the years leading up to enfranchisement.

Disagreement among suffragists and club members was not a new phenomenon. Where some women sought cooperation between groups like the Congressional Union and the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA) so that the "cause of Woman Suffrage shall not suffer from internal warfare," others urged that the application by the Congressional Union be rejected due to its policy being "diametrically opposed to the political policy of the National Association."<sup>36</sup> The existing policy of NAWSA primarily focused on persuading women voters in the West to put pressure on national

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<sup>36</sup> Katharine Houghton Hepburn to Clarke, Jan. 27, 1914; Gertrude Halladay Leonard to Clarke, Feb. 2, 1914, GJC, Box 1, Folder 7, ISL.

political parties to create change for suffrage at the federal level. In contrast, the Congressional Union's approach to obtaining nationwide suffrage targeted individual politicians within each state, regardless of political party affiliation. A disagreement about how to best move forward in the fight for suffrage prevented suffrage groups from collectively unifying on some occasions, but it did not stop women from continuing to try to do so for the betterment of womanhood.

During the years leading up to the 1915 election, however, a shift occurred among national suffrage groups. They became more closely linked in an attempt to increase their power by numbers and to heal old scars. This shift is most notably illustrated by the National Woman Suffrage Association's (NWSA) merger with the American Woman Suffrage Association (AWSA) to form the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA) in 1890.<sup>37</sup> Steven M. Buechler discusses this merger in *The Transformation of the Woman Suffrage Movement*. The 1890 merger, he writes, marked the beginning of the "third phase" of the woman's suffrage movement, where suffragists hoped that "organizational unity and strategic coordination" would allow women to achieve their goals.<sup>38</sup> Elizabeth Cady Stanton became the immediate president of NAWSA, but her active leadership for the cause of suffrage ended by the time she withdrew from her position in 1892, as she became more interested in reaching religious believers than suffragists. Susan B. Anthony soon replaced Stanton as NAWSA's second president, but she, too, felt regret in the merger and saw the group in disagreement of

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<sup>37</sup> Steven M. Buechler, *The Transformation of the Woman Suffrage Movement: The Case of Illinois, 1850-1920* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1986), 7-13; Flexner and Fitzpatrick, *Century of Struggle*, 211.

<sup>38</sup> Buechler, *The Transformation of the Woman Suffrage Movement*, 12.

how to move forward in unity now more than ever. Although both Stanton and Anthony had undertaken extensive work for suffrage throughout their careers, they both faced conflict about the best approach to reform. Flexner adds that the issue was an old debate on whether state versus federal action was the best path forward.<sup>39</sup> This difference in ideology, which persisted for decades during the fight for suffrage, created “intraorganizational disputes” over how to best move forward.<sup>40</sup> These debates were not only present at the national levels, but also at the state level.

Club work and suffrage work in Indiana had traditionally operated separately before the General Federation’s 1915 election. Between 1896 and 1910, the controversial attitudes toward women becoming voting citizens kept suffrage membership low. In “New Paths to Power: 1890-1920,” Karen Manners Smith discusses the progression of women’s associations, clubs, and suffrage at the turn of the twentieth century. After the first Woman’s Rights Convention took place in 1848 at Seneca Falls, New York, associations grew rapidly and widened the scope of their work. The Woman’s Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) formed in 1874. This organization and other women’s clubs increasingly made civic concerns their priority. The General Federation of Women’s Clubs (GFWC) later formed in 1890, merging more than two hundred local clubs under one authority. Both the WCTU and the GFWC provided safe spaces for women to practice politics and they both were also places where members advocated for the creation of libraries, university extension courses, trade schools, home economics classes,

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<sup>39</sup> Flexner and Fitzpatrick, *Century of Struggle*, 213.

<sup>40</sup> Buechler, *The Transformation of the Woman Suffrage Movement*, 13.

and other services.<sup>41</sup> The WCTU became the largest organization for American women (with 150,000 members) by the turn of the century, as noted by historian Ruth Bordin.<sup>42</sup> Its emphasis on “women’s rights to participate in public affairs that affected the welfare of homes and families” attracted women from all regions of the country during the Progressive Era.<sup>43</sup> Bordin concludes that the WCTU allowed women to take “real control over a part of their lives and the society to which they belonged.”<sup>44</sup>

Although NAWSA gained popularity among women who already belonged to women’s clubs and other associations, it had declining membership and political success starting around 1896 through the first decade of the twentieth century. Men often associated suffrage with prohibition and feared legislation that would strip them of their liquor rights. While it is true that many suffragists were indeed prohibitionists, that was not true for all. Yet the demand of women obtaining the vote faced fiercer opposition than the formation of women’s clubs because it threatened men’s political dominance.<sup>45</sup> Karen J. Blair concludes in *The Clubwoman as Feminist* that suffrage “was incompatible with their [women’s clubs’] more cautious approach to obtaining influence through invocation of women’s traditional domestic qualities.”<sup>46</sup> Suffrage took a backseat to club

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<sup>41</sup> Karen Manners Smith, “New Paths to Power: 1890-1920,” *No Small Courage: A History of Women in the United States*, ed. by Nancy F. Cott (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 363.

<sup>42</sup> Ruth Bordin, *Woman and Temperance: The Quest for Power and Liberty, 1873-1900* (New Brunswick, London: Rutgers University Press, 1990).

<sup>43</sup> Quote from Smith, “New Paths to Power: 1890-1920,” 386. Progressive Era defined by John D. Buenker and Edward R. Kantowicz, *Historical Dictionary of the Progressive Era, 1890-1920* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, Inc., 1988), viii.

<sup>44</sup> Bordin, *Woman and Temperance*, 162.

<sup>45</sup> Smith, “New Paths to Power,” 353-412.

<sup>46</sup> Karen J. Blair, *The Clubwoman as Feminist: True Womanhood Redefined, 1868-1914* (New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, Inc., 1980), 111.



work at the end of the nineteenth century. As it became clear to suffragists that they needed to win the support of the General Federation to be truly successful and they began to court the club women at their meetings. NAWSA and the suffrage movement finally began to gain more popularity in 1912 after years of drought once leaders like Alice Paul and Carrie Chapman Catt gained prominence with zeal to revamp the cause.<sup>47</sup> By 1914 the majority of clubwomen were generally convinced that suffrage would help their reform efforts, but there was still work to be done in Indiana.

The trend in aligning club goals with suffrage was adopted at the local level by women, like Clarke, who worked to unify the Woman's Franchise League and the Equal Suffrage Association within the state in 1910. In 1914, Clarke expressed concern about what the role of the GFWC should be in relation to suffrage legislation, arguing that clubs should endorse suffrage.<sup>48</sup> For Clarke, unity among the General Federation and NAWSA meant further progress for women's suffrage overall, and it was perplexing for her when other women did not agree. She believed that clubs existed to provide women an opportunity to grow their minds, and by doing so, one should easily be able to see how women's club work would be empowered by voting.<sup>49</sup> Clarke was adamant in her belief that the vote would benefit the overall condition of women. Nevertheless, some women did not agree with Clarke about aligning club work with suffrage for fear of muddying the independent goals of each group.<sup>50</sup> Still, Clarke was determined to bring the two objectives together and went so far as to independently fight on behalf of politically

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<sup>47</sup> Smith, "New Paths to Power: 1890-1920," 399.

<sup>48</sup> Clarke to Miss Boswell, May 8, 1914, GJC, Box 1, Folder 7, ISL.

<sup>49</sup> Clarke to Mrs. Smith, July 5, 1913, GJC, Box 1, Folder 6, ISL.

<sup>50</sup> Mrs. Henry B. Fall to Clarke, May 13, 1914, GJC, Box 1, Folder 7, ISL.

inclined leagues that were, from her perspective, wrongfully denied membership in the GFWC as auxiliary units, as noted in a letter where Clarke questioned the denial of the Anderson Franchise League's admittance to the GFWC.<sup>51</sup>

During the campaign in 1915, Cox and her loyal supporters did not hesitate to publicly retaliate after Stimson began circulating "scandalous rumors" including allegations that Cox smoked cigarettes, supported a saloon, perpetually cursed, and was an atheist.<sup>52</sup> Clarke spearheaded the campaign against Stimson, stating both publicly and privately that Stimson was a liar, cheater, and a morally corrupt woman as shown by her deceitful assault on Cox. Clarke further attacked Stimson for engaging in what the *Indianapolis Star* referred to on November 9, 1915, as "machine politics" during the campaign, including allegations that she actively tampered with votes at the Federation convention. This contention ultimately led to a formal request for Stimson's resignation as a Woman's Franchise League board member. Although Stimson claimed that she had not tampered with the votes, it is undeniable that she had aggressively campaigned throughout the state to guard the Federation from Cox's leadership.

Helen C. Benbridge of Terre Haute first contacted Clarke about assisting with Cox's election in July 1915.<sup>53</sup> Clarke identified Cox as a suffragist, judged her to be a good person, and declared her support for Cox even with advance warning of Cox's poor reputation.<sup>54</sup> Prior to Benbridge's request, fellow club woman Harriet Henton described Cox in a letter to Clarke as being opposed by anti-suffragists and noted that there were

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<sup>51</sup> Clarke to Mrs. Frank White, May 10, 1914, GJC, Box 1, Folder 7, ISL.

<sup>52</sup> "Club Women Carry Battle to Convention," *Terre Haute Daily Tribune* (Vigo County), Oct. 25, 1915.

<sup>53</sup> Helen C. Benbridge to Clarke, July 7, 1915, GJC, Box 1, Folder 8, ISL.

<sup>54</sup> Clarke to Mrs. McWhirter, Aug. 14, 1915, GJC, Box 1, Folder 8.

“other things that would surely be brought up against her” in a campaign.<sup>55</sup> These “other things” that would be used against her would haunt Cox throughout the duration of her campaign. Yet even with the early warning, Clarke naively believed that the “malicious stories... being circulated widely, [were] far more to the damage of their author than Mrs. Cox.”<sup>56</sup> Rather than villainizing Cox for her private behavior, Clarke viewed Stimson as the true criminal in this saga.

The rumors surrounding Cox carried significant weight during the early twentieth century. Her son had been known to drink heavily and own property in a Terre Haute red-light district, and her husband allegedly owned a Terre Haute building where prostitution flourished and the “worst saloon goers dined and gathered.”<sup>57</sup> But perhaps the allegations that hurt Cox the most were the ones that attacked her personal habits. Rumor had it that Cox swore and drank in her home and therefore she was considered to be a dishonorable Christian woman by some women across the state.<sup>58</sup> These allegations spoke to the norms of the time. Many Hoosier women reformers expected other reformers to maintain strict moral codes.<sup>59</sup> Cursing, drinking, and prostitution by association deviated from societal norms, and Cox had all three allegations against her. Letters circulated among clubwomen and articles appearing in newspapers around the state warned clubwomen of Cox’s supposedly flawed moral character. Cox, a “Sunday golf player” as one article

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<sup>55</sup> Harriet Henton to Madonna, copy sent to Clarke, May 17, 1913, GJC, Box 1, Folder 5, ISL.

<sup>56</sup> Clarke to Mrs. McWhirter, Aug. 14, 1915, GJC, Box 1, Folder 8, ISL.

<sup>57</sup> Helen C. Benbridge to Clarke, Aug. 13, 1915, M. Josephine Donahue to Clarke, Oct. 5, 1915, GJC, Box 1, Folder 8, ISL.

<sup>58</sup> Helen C. Benbridge to Clarke, Aug. 13, 1915, Clarke to Mrs. Meredith, Aug. 30, 1915, GJC, Box 1, Folder 8, ISL.

<sup>59</sup> Springer, “Ladylike Reformers,” 3.

described her, did not attend church every Sunday as a true Christian woman should do.<sup>60</sup> Additional remarks regarding the consumption of alcohol and cigarettes may seem insignificant today but the accusations made against Cox stirred controversy among women throughout the state in 1915.

Stimson sent her concerns regarding Cox directly to Clarke which must have surprised Clarke. She had known Stimson for some time prior to the 1915 Federation election and on at least one occasion had vouched for her even-keeled demeanor. In a letter to Governor Samuel M. Ralston two years prior, Clarke went out of her way to nominate Stimson, along with two other women, to serve on a state commission on the grounds that “they are level-headed women who will not go off on a tangent, however alluring.”<sup>61</sup> Stimson appears to have used this established amity to sway Clarke to her side early in the election. She wrote to Clarke on multiple occasions, warning her in one letter that, “I could tell you much that you do not know, but it would only make both of us unhappy” in relation to Cox’s behavior.<sup>62</sup> Stimson also had members of her network write Clarke on her behalf. In August 1915, Albion Fellows Bacon (a well-known social reformer and writer from Evansville, Indiana) wrote to Clarke, “Here we are, Mrs. Stimson and I ... There are some very important things that need to be discussed ... and some things we don’t want to write. I’m crazy to see you.”<sup>63</sup> Clarke’s high stature among women in the state is evidenced by Stimson’s attempted persuasion. It was important to Stimson to gain Clarke’s support early in the campaign because it would make defeating

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<sup>60</sup> “Mrs. Cox Gets In,” *Fort Wayne Daily News*, Oct. 28, 1915, p. 6.

<sup>61</sup> Clarke to Samuel M. Ralston, Mar. 14, 1913, GJC, Box 1, Folder 5, ISL.

<sup>62</sup> Stella C. Stimson to Clarke, Aug. 14, 1915, GJC, Box 1, Folder 8, ISL.

<sup>63</sup> Mrs. Albion Bacon to Clarke, Aug. 14, 1915, GJC, Box 1, Folder 8, ISL.

Cox simpler. This urgency illuminates a level of status and influence that Clarke held on the state level, one that was mirrored in sentiments elsewhere.<sup>64</sup>

Nonetheless, Clarke could not be swayed and loyally backed Cox.<sup>65</sup> She held her ground even when the president of the Indiana Federation of Clubs, Vida Newsom, wrote Clarke to warn her that she was on the wrong side of this debate.<sup>66</sup> For Clarke, however, a true woman was defined less by her private behavior and more by her public work.

Clarke and other women around the state viewed Cox as a woman of good reputation who had been honored by thousands of other club women, at least, that is, until Stimson began circulating her “awful secrets” about Cox.<sup>67</sup> From Clarke’s perspective, Stimson’s gossip regarding a well-respected townswoman was Stimson’s true crime. If Stimson genuinely meant well for the Federation and its goals, she would have simply retired to Terre Haute, leaving others in their ignorance. Stimson, however, felt a pressing need to save the Federation from Cox’s character and thus supported her opponent, Fairbank, in the election. Or, perhaps Stimson had an ulterior motive and hoped to use Fairbank’s presidency to push her own agenda.

The debate surrounding alcohol consumption reflects what was considered normative behavior by a woman during the time period, as well as the increasing disdain for such norms. While Stimson’s supporters condemned Cox’s private behaviors, others looked past them, choosing to support her. These women had worried that Stimson was

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<sup>64</sup> Jessie Markland wrote to Clarke on May 12, 1913, describing his appreciation for a talk that Clarke gave. This type of appreciation illustrates Clarke’s influential presence around the state. GJC, Box 1, Folder 5, ISL.

<sup>65</sup> Clarke to Stella C. Stimson, Aug. 20, 1915, GJC, Box 1, Folder 8, ISL.

<sup>66</sup> Vida Newsom to Clarke, Oct. 8, 1915, GJC, Box 1, Folder 8, ISL.

<sup>67</sup> Clarke to Stella C. Stimson, Aug. 28, 1915, GJC, Box 1, Folder 8, ISL.

“an antiliquor enthusiast” whose devotion to the cause “colors and dominates everything with which she is connected.”<sup>68</sup> Stimson’s work with the Woman’s Christian Temperance Union was thought to detract from the Federation’s work.<sup>69</sup> According to at least one of Clarke’s peers, divided views regarding temperance could be evaluated through the lens of conservative versus progressive values, with “church people” espousing the former and “liberal people” the latter.<sup>70</sup> Temperance work during the early twentieth century focused on preserving the homes of wives and mothers and the traditionally domestic role of women, and served as a “major vehicle through which women developed a changing role for themselves in American society.”<sup>71</sup> While the WCTU hoped to end liquor sales in an effort to protect women’s and children’s physical safety from drunken husbands, other women’s groups chose to make suffrage their top priority. Clarke saw female autonomy and independence as the preferred goal over immediate protection from liquor’s social consequences. This goal, she believed, allowed women to achieve whatever desires they might have post-enfranchisement, including temperance.

The discrepancy between temperance and suffrage motivations, regardless of underlying incentive, was occasionally sidelined for a common cause. It was difficult for reform groups to find the right woman who could both delegate authority and inspire loyalty across multiple factions. This challenge was true for Clarke, too, who worked with both women’s club and suffrage groups. Despite the “efficiency, dedication, and

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<sup>68</sup> Alma L. Sickler to Clarke, Aug. 29, 1915, Clarke to Mrs. Meredith, Aug. 30, 1915, GJC, Box 1, Folder 8, ISL.

<sup>69</sup> Helen M. Baumgartner to Clarke, July 22, 1915, GJC, Box 1, Folder 8, ISL.

<sup>70</sup> Hester Alverson Moffett to Clarke, Sept. 20, 1915, GJC, Box 1, Folder 8, ISL.

<sup>71</sup> Bordin, *Woman and Temperance*, xxvi.

zeal” of leaders like Clarke, they were also on many occasions to blame for the failure of early enfranchisement.<sup>72</sup> Seeing a factional fight as a potential limitation in 1915, Clarke wrote in the *Indianapolis Star* that the liquor interests were not taking a hand in the contest for presidency. She stated that an earlier newspaper article sought to “connect the Indiana Federation of Clubs with sinister political influences, a proposition so absurd on its face as to need no contradiction.”<sup>73</sup> It is clear through correspondence that the issue of temperance was at the forefront of this campaign and polarized women within the Federation. Women were either unaware of, or indifferent to, the reality that their division weakened womanhood. As such, they continued to remain individually monolithic for personal ambition and were motivated by their own experiences. This ambition illustrates a degree of tunnel vision for women reformers during the period, likely due to the personal motivations underlying their initial calls to action.

It is also worth analyzing Clarke’s possible ulterior motivations due to her father’s work toward suffrage. Clarke explained her personal roots:

My father had the honor of introducing the very first suffrage amendment in the Congress shortly after the Civil War, which owing to the exigencies of reconstruction politics, was not pressed at that time. This is to show you why I cannot be a trimmer. I need not assure you that the thing I want above all others is that which will be best for the great Woman Movement.<sup>74</sup>

Her father, U.S. Congressman George Washington Julian, became interested in women’s rights around the same time he adopted his abolitionist philosophy in the 1840s. After helping to enact the 15<sup>th</sup> Amendment, which enfranchised African American men, he was

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<sup>72</sup> Springer, “Ladylike Reformers,” 18.

<sup>73</sup> “Club Champion Flays Critics,” *Indianapolis Star*, Sept. 28, 1915, p. 1.

<sup>74</sup> Clarke to Miss Boswell, May 8, 1914, GJC, Box 1, Folder 7, ISL.

“prepared to enlist actively in the next grand movement on behalf of the sacredness and equality of human rights.”<sup>75</sup> According to the *House Journal* and *Congressional Globe*, Julian proposed a constitutional amendment to Congress on December 8, 1868 (H.R. 317.)<sup>76</sup> The amendment stated that “the right of suffrage in the United States shall be based upon citizenship, and shall be regulated by Congress; and all citizens of the United States whether native or naturalized shall enjoy this right equally, without any distinction or discrimination whatever founded on race, color or sex.”<sup>77</sup>

Clarke recounts in her study of her father, *George W. Julian*, that the proposed suffrage amendment was read a first and second time, referred to the Committee on the Judiciary, and was ordered to be printed. It was the first woman’s suffrage amendment proposed in Congress and was brought forward by his own initiative, something Clarke saw as “another illustration of the prophetic quality of his mind and of his public efforts.”<sup>78</sup> Several years later on January 20, 1871, the House took the proposal under consideration. Julian declared to Congress (in what is thought to be the first suffrage speech delivered in the House) that “I desire that the District of Columbia shall first enjoy the further and full extension of the democratic principle by giving the ballot to all the people here, irrespective of sex. I know of no reason why this should not be done. I

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<sup>75</sup> Julian, *Political Recollections*, 304.

<sup>76</sup> “A Century of Lawmaking for a New Nation: U.S. Congressional Documents and Debates, 1774-1875,” *Congressional Globe*, House of Representatives, 40<sup>th</sup> Congress, 3<sup>rd</sup> Session and *Journal of the House of Representatives of the United States*, p. 67. Both accessed at: <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/amlaw/lawhome.html> See <https://blog.history.in.gov/george-washington-julian-radical-representative-of-moral-conviction/> for more information on Julian’s work.

<sup>77</sup> Grace Julian Clarke, *George W. Julian* (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Commission, 1923), 315.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*



believe the question of woman's rights necessarily involves the question of human rights."<sup>79</sup> Julian insisted on a ye or nay vote, which resulted in 55 yeas, 117 nays, 65 not voting.<sup>80</sup> Although unsuccessful, the magnitude of his actions compelled Clarke to follow in her father's political footsteps by mobilizing support from women's clubs in her quest for suffrage. This conclusion aligns with Nathan's analysis that an individual's personal background plays a strong role in why and how people are socialized into voluntary behaviors. Nathan further posits how a father's membership in a group can be a motivating factor for an individual to further a similar cause.<sup>81</sup> Clarke felt so strongly about the cause that she was willing to risk her reputation by supporting Cox in her campaign and speaking out against anyone opposing Cox, including Stimson.

The high stakes implications of the election for the state Federation president were noted only weeks after Clarke declared her support for Cox. In a letter to her, Benbridge, who was already "laid out" over the whole affair, noted that "this has come to be a much more important matter than just the election of one woman." According to Benbridge, the election "turned into a struggle between the progressive and the reactionary elements ... and may mean a great deal for the future of the federation in Indiana."<sup>82</sup> Within a very short time the election had become critical to the future of women's clubs, suffrage, and a new standard for what would qualify a woman for leadership. For Clarke and Stimson, the election was also significant in defining whether temperance or suffrage would become the Federation's legislative priority. As things

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<sup>79</sup> Clarke, *George W. Julian*, 316.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, 317.

<sup>81</sup> Nathan, "Women in Voluntary Service Associations," 17, 69.

<sup>82</sup> Hortense Moore to Clarke, Aug. 29, 1915, Helen C. Benbridge to Clarke, Aug. 17, 1915, GJC, Box 1, Folder 8, ISL.

quickly became heated among women throughout the state, so did the circulating threats. In a letter to Clarke, Mae B. Helmer of Terre Haute explained that she and Benbridge were called by an anonymous man who threatened to have The Woman's Club of Terre Haute remove Cox from its finance committee or he and his friends would refuse the \$1 donation that was requested (likely in an effort to fundraise on behalf of the club.) The threat shook the women who perceived it as aggression against their support for Cox. Helmer was confident that the man was not a "friend" of either woman and that Stimson had put him up to intimidating them.<sup>83</sup>

After this attempted political manipulation allegedly at the hands of Stimson, Benbridge decided it was time to publicly discredit her.<sup>84</sup> Stimson was going too far, and the Federation had to be saved from such an unethical woman. Clarke agreed and urged her and Cox to "not fight the devil with fire exactly," but to revert to personal principles and values of the Federation so as not to "meekly [allow] the women of the State to be bamboozled as has been attempted."<sup>85</sup> Shortly after this declaration of war by Benbridge and Clarke, Albion Fellows Bacon wrote to Clarke about an anonymous "black hand threat" that had come to her. Bacon had been warned that she would injure herself if she befriended Stimson, that Clarke was angry with her, and that she (Bacon) was suspected of plotting with Stimson against Cox.<sup>86</sup> Clarke was taken aback by Bacon's statements, and either in innocence or with manipulative intent, commented on the margin of the letter "Who could have sent this?—I regret it" before responding to Bacon with the

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<sup>83</sup> Mae B. Helmer to Clarke, Sept. 3, 1915, GJC, Box 1, Folder 8, ISL.

<sup>84</sup> Helen C. Benbridge to Clarke, Sept. 3, 1915, GJC, Box 1, Folder 8, ISL.

<sup>85</sup> Clarke to Lenore Hanna Cox, Sept. 3, 1915, GJC, Box 1, Folder 8, ISL.

<sup>86</sup> Mrs. Albion Bacon to Clarke, Sept. 27, 1915, GJC, Box 1, Folder 8, ISL.

reminder that “we are mature women ... let us not forget to be kind.”<sup>87</sup> The campaign had become something no woman had expected, as local newspapers noted (see: Figures 1 and 2). No longer did ladylike behavior suppress unjust manipulation, as historian Springer had suggested was customary. Rather, actions diverged from ladylike behavior and reveal the complex history of reformers on the journey to suffrage.<sup>88</sup>



Figure 1: “The Entente Cordiale,” *Fort Wayne Daily News*, Oct. 30, 1915, p. 16.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid.; Clarke to Mrs. Albion Bacon, Sept. 29, 1915, GJC, Box 1, Folder 8, ISL.

<sup>88</sup> This concept is illuminated by Nancy Gabin and Anita Morgan in “Taking Indiana Women’s History into the Twenty-First Century,” 283-288.

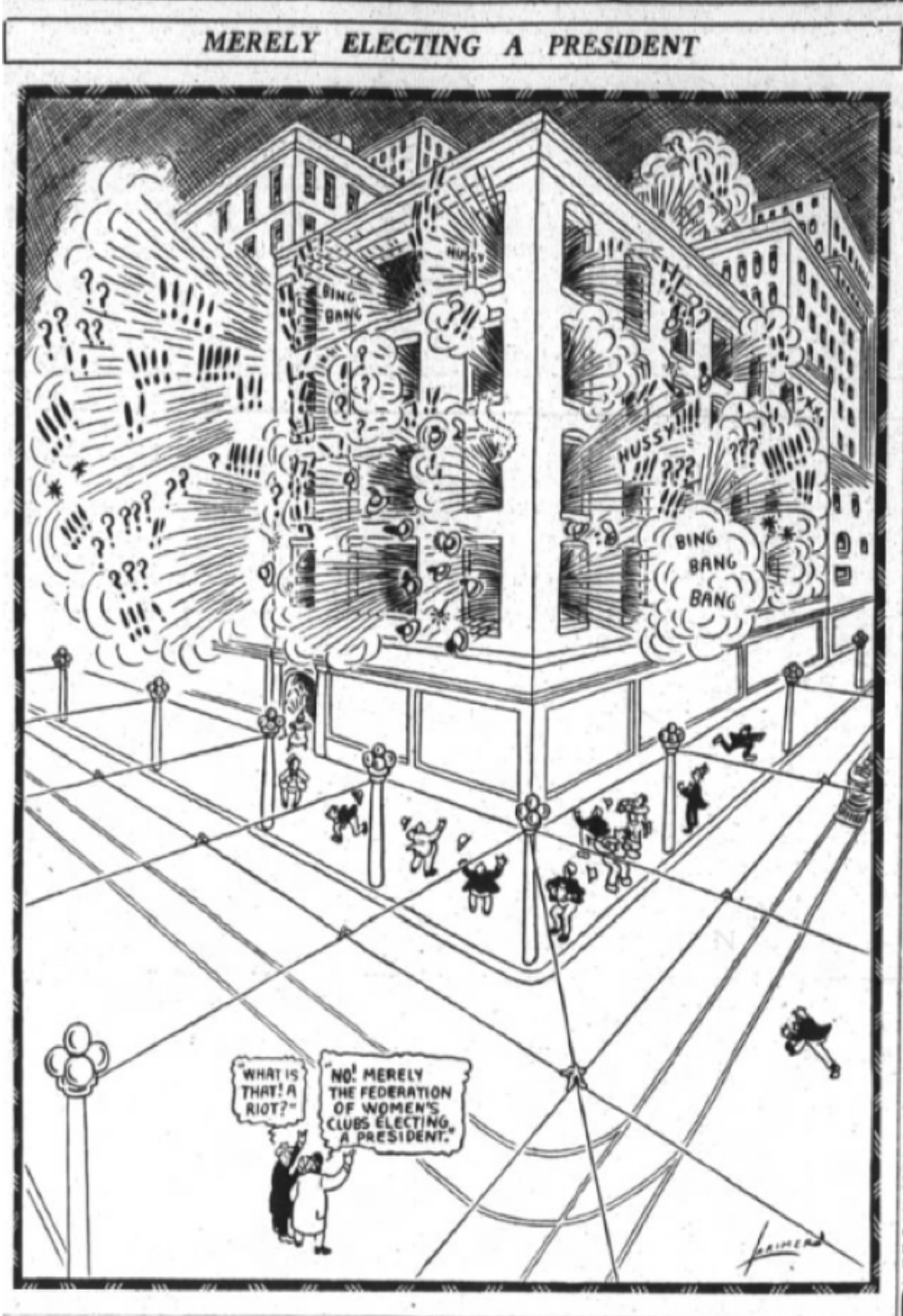


Figure 2: "Merely Electing a President," Fort Wayne Daily News, Oct. 27, 1915, p. 18.

By September of 1915 Benbridge felt unqualified to campaign in an election that had divided women all over the state. She wrote to Clarke on September 3 that “I am having a bad time with the clubs here” and that “so many women are afraid to take sides.”<sup>89</sup> Her struggle centered around club women who were difficult to read and influence. Suffragists, she argued, were more easily decipherable.<sup>90</sup> Benbridge believed that the only chance Cox had to win the election was to continue to discredit Stimson, but Cox refused to wage a slandering campaign against her opponent, as it had never been done before and would be unbecoming of the Federation. Clarke similarly felt inclined to stay away from such tactics and condemned Stimson on the same principles, unable to bear seeing “such tactics get a footing in our Federation, because no one would be safe if they should succeed this time.”<sup>91</sup> The slandering had gotten so out of hand by September that women who once supported Stimson began to see her as manipulative and dishonest, in large part from listening to Clarke’s (and others’) speeches at meetings around the state.<sup>92</sup> Clarke’s influence swayed women to rethink their support and reasoning, but was not enough to change the vote in Cox’s favor. Nonetheless, her role as loyal campaign manager earned her respect, with one woman calling her a “perfectly splendid fighter.”<sup>93</sup>

On October 5, 1915, Cox addressed the members of the Indiana Federation of Clubs in a letter where she formally outlined her proposed policies if elected president of the group. She highlighted goals that included education, the separation of liquor interests from politics, and the wish for “the Federation to stand for personal character; to stand

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<sup>89</sup> Helen C. Benbridge to Clarke, Sept. 3, 1915, GJC, Box 1, Folder 8, ISL.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid.

<sup>91</sup> Clarke to Mrs. Albion Bacon, Sept. 29, 1915, GJC, Box 1, Folder 8, ISL.

<sup>92</sup> Ada Elizabeth Bush to Clarke, Sept. 29, 1915, GJC, Box 1, Folder 8, ISL.

<sup>93</sup> Hortense Moore to Clarke, Sept. 30, 1915, GJC, Box 1, Folder 8, ISL.

upon the sentiments in our collect, absolute speaking of the truth, courtesy and kindness in all relations [and] to judge people and issues broadly and generously and, above all, with sanity.”<sup>94</sup> Clarke also noted in a letter that she believed Stimson was psychologically troubled, using the term “mentally unbalanced.”<sup>95</sup> Connecting Stimson’s behavior to a state of sanity (or lack of) reflects just how deviant Stimson’s behavior was during the campaign. The allegations and tactics used by women set the election apart from anything that the Indiana Federation had ever seen and threatened the greater cause of suffrage.

By late September 1915 the campaign risked eclipsing the woman’s cause with petty distractions. Acquaintances of Clarke wrote to warn her that choosing a different candidate for Federation president—someone who had no questionable personal habits or “attitude of mind”—would be in the best interest of suffrage.<sup>96</sup> Some women wanted to revert to a safer candidate, worried that rocking the boat would erase progress that had been made for women up to this point. Clarke rejected suggestions that Cox withdraw from the ballot but admitted that she might not win the election. Even so, Clarke felt that “the baseness of certain methods will be aired, and the women may be trusted to receive the right impression.”<sup>97</sup> Not only did Clarke support Cox as a friend and fellow suffragist, but she also wanted to preserve ethical practices within the Federation.

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<sup>94</sup> Lenore Hanna Cox to Members of the Indiana Federation of Clubs, Oct. 5, 1915, GJC, Box 1, Folder 9, ISL.

<sup>95</sup> Clarke to Lenore Hanna Cox, Sept. 22, 1915, GJC, Box 1, Folder 8, ISL.

<sup>96</sup> Hester Alverson Moffett to Clarke, Sept. 20, 1915, GJC, Box 1, Folder 8, ISL.

<sup>97</sup> Sarah P. Kinsey to Clarke, Sept. 18, 1915, Clarke to Mrs. Albion Bacon, Sept. 29, 1915, GJC, Box 1, Folder 8, ISL.

According to Benbridge, the election would ultimately be decided by scattered votes from women in small towns who knew little or nothing of the controversy between Stimson and Cox, and who were swayed by the impressions they received locally. Club women may not have known of the controversy surrounding the election, but they knew who Clarke was, according to Benbridge. In a last-ditch effort to influence voters, Benbridge wrote to Clarke about the possibility of hosting an event to show Terre Haute how Cox felt about her hometown, and suggesting Cox utilize her not-so-secret weapon—Clarke. Benbridge wrote to Clarke regarding her significance, stating “You must know how you stand in the Federation. Your position reminds me of that of Jane Addams in the National Suffrage organization. Whatever she says carries great weight, and whatever she champions wins all the state votes at once.” Benbridge explained to her that “when you get up and women who are new ask who it is and are told it is Mrs. Grace Julian Clarke they are at once impressed, because every last one of them knows who you are.”<sup>98</sup> This level of respect and enormous presence Clarke carried in Indiana was the final hope for Cox’s campaign.

With such stature among women (or at least the flattery of Benbridge) and a reputation for success up to this point, it is important to question how and why Clarke failed to elect Cox as president. Perhaps Clarke felt overly confident going into the campaign because of her standing. Even if this hypothesis were true, the troubles she faced throughout the campaign surely humbled her and illuminated her blind spots. Fellow clubwoman May Sheridan wrote Clarke during the campaign, accusing Clarke of having lived a sheltered life where many of the ugly, repulsive things had been swept

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<sup>98</sup> Helen C. Benbridge to Clarke, Oct. 25, 1915, GJC, Box 1, Folder 9, ISL.

away from her. Sheridan further wrote that where friends had once put her upon a pedestal and looked to her for guidance and inspiration, Clarke was now approaching a Federation crisis.<sup>99</sup> Stimson, too, accused Clarke of obliviousness since she had lived in a small circle of fortunate, well-provided-for women and a few successful men.<sup>100</sup>

With Clarke's reputation at stake, it was becoming clear that the campaign had moved beyond any one woman's control. Those closest to Clarke defended her character, including her niece, Jeanette Clarke, in response to hate mail Clarke received. Jeanette proclaimed that "Mrs. Clarke is one of the most innocent women in the world—that I know."<sup>101</sup> Clarke did innocently try to back a cause and candidate she genuinely believed in, but as some women noted, might have been blinded by her privileged role in society. The election was marked by loyal friendships and relationships that mirrored the sentiments and beliefs of the women whose characters were at stake.

By the end of October, the credibility of women as political beings as a whole was also at risk. Stimson had begun to send out affidavits from club presidents and district chairmen who stated that Cox had been seen smoking.<sup>102</sup> Maud E. Elbel warned Clarke that "these [type of] occurrences are the things which make us doubt the purifying influences of women in politics."<sup>103</sup> Stimson made a statement to the *Hunting Herald* (Huntington, Indiana) accusing Clarke of injuring the suffrage cause by using the "executive machinery of the franchise board" to her advantage.<sup>104</sup> On the eve of voting

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<sup>99</sup> May Sheridan to Clarke, Oct. 24, 1915, GJC, Box 1, Folder 9, ISL.

<sup>100</sup> Stella C. Stimson to Clarke, Aug. 20, 1915, GJC, Box 1, Folder 8, ISL.

<sup>101</sup> Jeanette E. H. Clarke to Mrs. Shaley, Oct. 19, 1915, GJC, Box 1, Folder 9, ISL.

<sup>102</sup> Maud E. Elbel to Clarke, Oct. 20, 1915, GJC, Box 1, Folder 9, ISL.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>104</sup> "Mrs. Stimson Gives Answer To Charge; Can Prove Anything She Said," *Fort Wayne Journal-Gazette*, Nov. 24, 1915, p. 14.



day, the United Press reported that the fight had gotten so nasty that a number of women would not be voting.<sup>105</sup> On October 29, 1915, the day after the election, newspapers formally announced the successful candidate. Fairbank was elected president of the Federation of Clubs over Mrs. L. H. Cox, the “liberal candidate” of Terre Haute. The same article referenced the loss as Clarke’s “Waterloo” and her first real political defeat.<sup>106</sup> When Stimson was later asked to resign from the executive board of the Woman’s Franchise League of Indiana due to accusations of disloyalty, she publicly announced that it was because the board was annoyed that she would not join their Federation election plans.<sup>107</sup>

The 1915 election for president of the Indiana Federation of Clubs demonstrates that women during the early twentieth century were political beings who were driven by their own personal agendas. Clarke was heavily influenced by her father’s advocacy of women’s suffrage at the peak of his political career, and she may not have felt such a strong connection to the goals of suffrage without this stimulus. This narrative reflects the dominant cultural expectations of women during the time to retain a ladylike persona, especially within a political capacity. It simultaneously demonstrates an increasing divergence from such expectations as seen through slanderous and manipulative politics. Contests over issues that emerged from differences in personal circumstances demonstrate that women disagreed over many issues. This fact would be true continuing

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<sup>105</sup> “Club Women’s Fight Too Hot For Delegates,” *Evansville Press*, Oct. 28, 1915, p. 8.

<sup>106</sup> “Club Officers are Announced,” *Republic* (Columbus, Indiana.) Oct. 29, 1915, p. 1.

<sup>107</sup> “Mrs. Stimson Makes Reply,” *Hunting Herald* (Huntington, Indiana), Nov. 24, 1915, p. 1.

into World War I, where women had to choose whether to focus on war-related work or to continue advancing the cause for suffrage.

## Chapter 2: National Work

“There is one issue that overshadows and dwarfs every other, and that is THE WAR.”

During the Indiana General Federation of Clubs’ campaign for the organization’s presidency in 1915, much of the world found itself immersed in war. Not until the United States formally entered World War I on April 6, 1917, did Americans shift their priorities and daily affairs. This was true for all suffragists and clubwomen in both Indiana and the nation. As the war began affecting Americans directly, suffragists stood at a crossroads. Should women continue fighting for the vote or should they pause their efforts to focus attention on assisting the homefront? They chose to continue their fight by aligning club efforts with patriotic duties. Furthermore, they simultaneously advanced their agenda through patriotism in an effort to prove their worthiness as citizens deserving of the vote.

Club women in Indiana, however, were initially torn on how to respond to the war. On August 3, 1917, a letter to the editor of the Indianapolis *Indiana Times* stated, “To make any aggressive fight for suffrage... is inopportune and calculated to hurt rather than forward the issue involved.” The writer explained that “our women can not possibly help the cause of women’s enfranchisement more efficiently at this juncture than by bending every effort towards war-relief and kindred efforts.” Some believed, like this writer, that “one result of a successful prosecution of the war, in which women must do their full share, will undoubtedly be their full enfranchisement, granted grudgingly and gratefully.” In simpler terms, “the duty of the women is to help with the war.” This individual believed that suffrage organizations should maintain their networks, but that they should prioritize “their bit in the great emergency that confronts them” and focus

their activities on the war effort. Believing that there was no time to spend on issues that now seemed inferior, and that every issue was inferior to the momentous and overshadowing issue that was the war, some Hoosier women encouraged their local clubs to reorient their missions and respond to the formidable threat at hand. The fate of the issue that all suffragists held dearest hung on the result of “THE WAR.”<sup>108</sup>

At a crossroads of splitting their time and efforts between the war and suffrage, the war greatly affected women. In a letter to Clarke, one woman expressed her desire to assist in the war effort and her frustration at not being able to do so. She stated, “poor women, most of us—not you and Mrs. [Albion Fellows] Bacon!—can do so little.” Through her column in the *Indianapolis Star*, along with many other leadership opportunities that she seized in an effort to assist with suffrage and war work, Clarke acquired a unique position among Hoosier women during the war and served as an important source of information for them. Her influence on women and their access to information was reflected in a letter to Clarke: “you are such a wholly worth-while sort of person that everything you say and do is of value to me to know.” Women around Indianapolis and across Indiana read Clarke’s Sunday column, not just because they were particularly interested in clubs, but because Clarke wrote them. Clarke’s spirit inspired other women to want to read her words and respond to her calls to action, particularly those in regard to wartime conservation of food and resources.<sup>109</sup>

With the onset of war, Clarke quickly assumed a leadership role in her community and volunteered to lead a sign-up station for the Red Cross at the Irvington post office.

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<sup>108</sup> TL to Editor of the *Indiana Times*, Aug. 3, 1917, GJC, Box 2, Folder 1, ISL.

<sup>109</sup> Letter to Clarke, name illegible, 1918, GJC, Box 2, Folder 2, ISL.

Other prominent club women around Indianapolis did the same.<sup>110</sup> She additionally introduced a resolution at a “patriotic meeting” held at the Y.W.C.A. in Indianapolis that urged local women to “pledge ... to do our bit in war emergency relief work, and to induce others to do the same.”<sup>111</sup> About 400 women registered their intent to take part in war relief work after Clarke’s address. By May 1917, Clarke had been appointed by Marie (Mrs. Richard E.) Edwards, the president of the Woman’s Franchise League of Indiana, to supervise WFL war work. This position required Clarke to obtain all the records from the war work registration drive.<sup>112</sup> Registrars asked women to complete registration cards promising to help with some type of government service if called upon during the war. The survey was in response to a request from the National American Woman’s Suffrage Association, with which the WFL was affiliated.<sup>113</sup>

Furthermore, Clarke spoke out on behalf of club women regarding the Library War Fund during the conflict. The Library War Fund was a “a massive volunteer effort to raise funds, collect books, magazines, and other reading materials for American soldiers in camp libraries at home and abroad.”<sup>114</sup> She wrote in her column “perhaps no part of the United War Work campaign that is now under way appeals more strongly to club women than the Second Library War Fund.”<sup>115</sup> For the first time, various relief

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<sup>110</sup> “Gaining Members Rapidly,” *Indianapolis Star*, April 7, 1917, p. 11.

<sup>111</sup> “Many Women Enroll For War Relief Work,” *Indianapolis News*, April 12, 1917, p. 7.

<sup>112</sup> “Supervisor of War Work,” *Indianapolis News*, May 9, 1917, p. 9.

<sup>113</sup> “Census of Women Will Learn Qualifications for Aiding Government,” *The Call-Leader* (Elwood, Indiana), May 12, 1917, p. 1.

<sup>114</sup> Introduction, “A Book for Every Man: The ALA Library War Service,” University of Illinois, <https://archives.library.illinois.edu/ala/ala-library-war-service/>.

<sup>115</sup> “Libraries’ War Work Indorsed by Club Women” by Grace Julian Clarke, *Indianapolis Star*, Nov. 10, 1918, p. 36.

agencies under the Y.M.C.A. came together as united workers for the Library War Fund of the American Library Association to serve the army and navy. Books were welcomed and necessary for troop transports and in camps. Even scrapbooks were sent overseas to military hospitals, although they could only weigh about an ounce since ill men were not able to handle a heavier book. The scrapbooks were filled with humor, adventure, sea stories, pictures, and more. Clarke detailed an account of a soldier who “when one of these bright-colored picture books was given to him he kept it for days, turning the leaves over and over, forgetting his lost leg and his bewildered state of mind.”<sup>116</sup> Women like Clarke saw value in maintaining normalcy for victims of war and organized to provide American soldier with an escape.

Clarke also urged the immediate consolidation of the Indiana Woman’s Franchise League, which began as the Women’s School Commission in 1909 but later affiliated with NAWSA, and the Indianapolis Equal Suffrage Association, where members gathered to discuss a more progressive suffrage society in Indianapolis. The idea to make one suffrage association in the state, although never actually coming to fruition, was in accordance with the United States Council of National Defense.<sup>117</sup> The Indiana League for Woman’s Service later became the Indiana branch of the National League for Woman’s Service, which temporarily took the place of the Woman’s Committee of the Indiana Council of Defense.<sup>118</sup> This organization grew out of an appeal made by Grace

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<sup>116</sup> Ibid.

<sup>117</sup> Emily Newell Blair, “The Woman’s Committee, United States Council of National Defense: An Interpretative Report, April 21, 1917, to February 27, 1919” (Washington, D.C., 1920), p. 13.

<sup>118</sup> Report of Julia E. Landers, 1923, World War I and the Hoosier Experience, ISL, <http://cdm16066.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/ref/collection/p16066coll47/id/1987>.

Parker, commandant of the National League for Woman's Service, at the Congress of the Daughters of the American Revolution in Washington in April 1917.<sup>119</sup> Clarke's efforts reflected those of other women, with one explaining that "ever since the war began I have been wishing that a regular campaign could be started to organize all the women into clubs or whatever you choose to call it; especially the wives of the better and more intelligent class of workmen."<sup>120</sup> Club women, including Clarke, believed in power behind numbers and that consolidation of women both locally and nationally had a greater impact for the general cause of womanhood. In comparison, Clarke noted that other states had up to four or five separate bodies operating at one time.<sup>121</sup>

Most importantly, Clarke continued to write her weekly column, "Women's Clubs," in the *Indianapolis Star* throughout the war in an effort to keep women around the state unified and aware of war-related happenings. Many of her articles included additional calls to action regarding conservation efforts. On May 27, 1917, she reported that H. E. Barnard, state food and drug commissioner, had sent a letter to every local president of the Indiana Federation of Clubs. The letter declared that Indiana was at the forefront of all of the states in its patriotic efforts, including increasing the production of staple foods so that "our people may be abundantly fed and our allies provided from our surplus stores." Barnard wanted club women to know that "the thrift of the housewife who buys food intelligently, prepares it properly and prevents waste, is just as truly patriotic service as the labor of the farmer who plants more corn." The food committee

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<sup>119</sup> Ibid.

<sup>120</sup> Letter to Clarke, name illegible, 1918, GJC, Box 2, Folder 2, ISL.

<sup>121</sup> "Consolidation Urged by Women Club Leader," *The Republic* (Columbus, Indiana) April 18, 1917, p. 7.

felt that the most important work to be done was to secure the “patriotic co-operation of the housekeepers of Indiana in preventing food wastage, in intelligent buying and in economic feeding of the family.”<sup>122</sup> During the war, women were in large part responsible for food conservation. Club leaders executed these calls to action, and Clarke helped to spread the word through her column.

In October of 1917, Clarke expanded her statewide influence by joining an Indianapolis organization of “fourteen-minute women” who spoke before clubs, church societies, and other organizations of women for about fourteen minutes on the subject of food conservation. This organization was “one wing of the army of talkers, pledgers, advertisers and boosters” that the local branch of the United States food administration, led by future U.S. president Herbert Hoover, expected to disseminate important facts regarding food conservation. The “fourteen-minute women,” organized by suffragist and former WFL secretary Julia C. Henderson as part of the speakers’ bureau for the Seventh district for food conservation work, worked with “four-minute men” who also talked about food conservation among other issues.<sup>123</sup> Members of the “fourteen-minute women” included other locally prominent women and their speaking tours developed their public speaking skills at hundreds of gatherings throughout the war.<sup>124</sup> In January of 1918, the “fourteen-minute women” were enlisted in state service after their effort had been found to be “so effective that it was deemed advisable to enlarge and extend it beyond the 7<sup>th</sup> District.”<sup>125</sup> This expansion included training speakers to speak on

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<sup>122</sup> “Women’s Clubs” by Grace Julian Clarke. *Indianapolis Star*, May 27, 1917, p. 35.

<sup>123</sup> “Hoover Luncheon and Dinner,” *Indianapolis News*, October 19, 1917, p. 18.

<sup>124</sup> “Will Talk Wherever They Get the Chance,” *Indianapolis News*, October 16, 1917, p. 1.

<sup>125</sup> “To Organize Speakers,” *South Bend Tribune*, January 18, 1918, p. 5.



activities that were expected of women in the General Federation of Clubs as an aid in prosecuting the war, with an emphasis on food conservation. Clarke, among others, received unique training and experience in public speaking as a result. This experience further elevated her public persona as she became increasingly recognized throughout the state.

Nationwide, women grew victory gardens and focused on conservation efforts. All women conserved food. Bacon explained the struggle: “I never thought I would give so much thought to what I eat... [I am] just trying to live each day out, as best I can. It has come to that now.”<sup>126</sup> Conservation efforts were not limited, however, to just food. Women also began wearing shorter skirts to save cloth. Women’s clubs focused on war bond drives to help fund the war. Club women volunteered for the Red Cross where they rolled bandages, prepped war supplies, and completed a myriad of other activities.<sup>127</sup> While the Red Cross recruited more than twenty thousand professional nurses for the war effort, most women did not go abroad and instead served their country through volunteer activities at home.

On April 7, 1917, the day after the United States formally entered World War I, the *Indianapolis Star* reported that the local Red Cross added a record-breaking 812 names to its member list in a single day.<sup>128</sup> A majority of women during the war assisted with such Red Cross efforts as making convalescent robes from blankets and smaller articles. Other Hoosier women found themselves working in Community Kitchens putting up fruit, soup, and other items to be sent to soldiers. Helen M. Baumgartner wrote

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<sup>126</sup> Mrs. Albion Bacon to Clarke, Nov. 13, 1917, GJC, Box 2, Folder 1, ISL.

<sup>127</sup> Dumenil, *The Second Line of Defense*, 94-104.

<sup>128</sup> “Gaining Members Rapidly,” *Indianapolis Star*, April 7, 1917, p. 11.

to Clarke describing women's war efforts, explaining that "we know that quite a good many of them have been working in the fields this summer to help raise larger crops and for that reason they told us they could not sew for the Red Cross just now. Not that they would not sew but that they could not until the work of the crops was done and they had finished putting away things for winter." As Baumgartner stated, it may not sound like much—yet "it is a lot."<sup>129</sup> Other women, however, wished that they could do more.<sup>130</sup>

As club work increasingly benefitted the war effort, the federal government eventually turned to club women for assistance by seeking unified cooperation with the United States Council of National Defense.<sup>131</sup> This, as Clarke noted, was "a gratifying indication of the esteem in which the federated club movement is held."<sup>132</sup> In April 1917, state governments began appointing Councils of Defense, which looked to Washington to tell them what resources the United States Council of National Defense called for and how to mobilize. These state councils mirrored federal councils in that they were required to be representative of women. As such, many asked women to organize women's war work committees, called Woman's Divisions or Woman's Auxiliaries, which would report to the Executive Board of the Council.<sup>133</sup> In Indiana, Governor Goodrich had appointed Carolyn Fairbank, president of the Indiana Federation, as one of the eighteen members of Indiana Council of Defense.<sup>134</sup>

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<sup>129</sup> Helen M. Baumgartner to Clarke, Oct. 8, 1917, GJC, Box 2, Folder 1, ISL.

<sup>130</sup> Letter to Clarke, name illegible, 1918, GJC, Box 2, Folder 2, ISL.

<sup>131</sup> Emily Newell Blair, "The Woman's Committee, United States Council of National Defense: An Interpretative Report, April 21, 1917, to February 27, 1919" (Washington, D.C., 1920), p. 15.

<sup>132</sup> "Women's Clubs" by Grace Julian Clarke, *Indianapolis Star*, May 27, 1917, p. 35.

<sup>133</sup> Dumenil, *The Second Line of Defense*, 60-76.

<sup>134</sup> Clifton J. Phillips, *Indiana in Transition: The Emergence of an Industrial Commonwealth, 1880-1920* (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Bureau and Indiana

The state council cooperated with the United States Council of National Defense in “organizing and directing the resources of the state in men and materials to make them effective for national use.”<sup>135</sup> Around the same time, the Woman’s Committee of the Council of National Defense organized state divisions representative of the women of the state.<sup>136</sup> By acceding to national requests for women to conserve, consolidate, and advocate, Clarke saw the opportunity to demonstrate “patriotic spirit” that she felt would serve the women’s clubs’ reputation well.<sup>137</sup> Clarke, among others, saw this as a calculated move to garner trust from the federal government and earn credit. This credit, they believed, would later become politically useful when demanding the vote from Congress.

At the onset of war, Clarke and other NAWSA women quickly supported President Woodrow Wilson and his war-related policies. Clarke, in particular, supported his initiatives, although it garnered concern from her confidantes. A Mrs. Craigie Mitchell wrote Clarke, “I want you to be careful. You are young yet and I would love to see you where your father sat—in the House.”<sup>138</sup> Although she never publicly expressed interest in elective office, Clarke eagerly participated in and supported the war effort where and when she could, so much so that it may have been done without sufficient forethought about her future. Women’s actions during this time would mean a great deal for the future of women in politics, and women in leadership roles had to remain

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Historical Society, 1968), 597. See also “Women’s Clubs” by Grace Julian Clarke, *Indianapolis Star*, May 27, 1917, p. 35.

<sup>135</sup> “Women’s Clubs” by Grace Julian Clarke. *Indianapolis Star*, May 27, 1917, p. 35. See also Dumenil, *The Second Line of Defense*, 34-35.

<sup>136</sup> Dumenil, *The Second Line of Defense*, 60-64.

<sup>137</sup> “Women’s Clubs” by Grace Julian Clarke, *Indianapolis Star*, May 27, 1917, p. 35.

<sup>138</sup> Mrs. Craigie Dunn Mitchell to Clarke, 1917, GJC, Box 2, Folder 1, ISL.

calculated and one step ahead on such matters in order to retain their respected positions. Mitchell further warned Clarke that “women take politics by tradition—the great mass of them—and are woefully content, at present, just so—minus information.”<sup>139</sup> Mitchell recognized the significance of women like Clarke being strategically well informed.

Clarke’s position as a valuable source of political information was not only a result of her direct engagement in politics, but also reflects her ongoing dedication to fulfilling her father’s political legacy. Throughout World War I, Clarke processed her father’s political papers in an effort to document his work and influence.<sup>140</sup> She was particularly interested in her father’s role during the Civil War, having inquired of an acquaintance of her father’s regarding President Buchanan and his responsibility in starting the war.<sup>141</sup> Her father, whose name was described by Clarke’s brother as “a synonym for loyalty,” continually inspired her to advocate for what she believed in and to remain faithful to women’s causes.<sup>142</sup> In order to do so effectively, Clarke kept herself informed about political happenings, both historic and new, and worked tirelessly to educate women so that they could be equally informed. Rather than blindly following the masses during a time when women were eager to jump feet first into supporting the war effort, Clarke and other women’s leaders had to remain on top of the ever-changing political arena. The stakes for doing so were high as their enfranchisement rested on it.

As such, women became increasingly busy during the country’s short stint in the war. Albion Fellows Bacon told Clarke that “before I went away I was very busy with

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<sup>139</sup> Ibid.

<sup>140</sup> Worthington C. Ford to Clarke, July 5, 1918, GJC, Box 2, Folder 2, ISL.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid.

<sup>142</sup> Paul Julian to Mayor Zimmerman, Aug. 7, 1918, GJC, Box 2, Folder 2, ISL.

food conservation, that being my special ‘bit,’ rather than Red Cross bandages, etc. . . . Although I am still engaged in my life work, which I never expect to lay down—housing.”<sup>143</sup> Women picked up where they could, based on the skills and knowledge they had. Doing so, however, did not always come easily for women and they were required to give up or postpone their other work. Springer explained that “women did not abandon their own interests” during the war, but “the war further complicated women’s lives since they had to decide how much time and effort they should put into war work, and how much to spend on reform activities.”<sup>144</sup> Dumenil notes, however, that World War I “intersected with well-organized women’s movements and ongoing changes in the nature of women’s work.”<sup>145</sup> Women pivoted their main efforts towards war-related pursuits, but never lost sight of their ultimate goals.<sup>146</sup> As Clarke reported in the *Indianapolis Star*, “more depends upon us in this matter than many persons realize, and it is a work that only women can perform.”<sup>147</sup>

On a national level, various groups maintained their suffrage efforts during the war.<sup>148</sup> In 1915, two years prior to the United States entering World War I, NAWSA had adopted president Carrie Chapman Catt’s “Winning Plan.” Under this plan, suffragists applied pressure on Congress to pass a federal amendment and campaigned in individual states for state suffrage laws. By 1917, the year the United States formally entered the war, no one could ignore woman suffrage any longer, including president Woodrow

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<sup>143</sup> Mrs. Albion Bacon to Clarke, Aug. 27, 1917, GJC, Box 2, Folder 1, ISL.

<sup>144</sup> Springer, “Ladylike Reformers,” 208.

<sup>145</sup> Dumenil, *The Second Line of Defense*, 274.

<sup>146</sup> Springer, “Ladylike Reformers,” 199.

<sup>147</sup> “Making Study of League to Enforce Peace” by Grace Julian Clarke, *Indianapolis Star*, Oct. 27, 1918, p. 38.

<sup>148</sup> Smith, “New Paths to Power,” 409.

Wilson. Newspapers and popular magazines all over the country had brought the issue of suffrage to the forefront of society. The only thing that could have hindered the momentum of the movement was, in fact, something as momentous as World War I. Yet, as historian Anita Morgan notes, “suffragists did not drop their pursuit of the vote to focus on war work as they had during the Civil War. Then, women had dropped suffrage campaigning in exchange for tackling war work and thought, erroneously, that war work would win them suffrage. That disappointment yet festered, and this time, they would not make the same mistake.”<sup>149</sup> Dumenil and Flexner also discuss how labor opportunities offered women the chance to break barriers and campaign for equality.<sup>150</sup> Leaders like Catt believed that their best response to the United States entering the war would be to support its efforts entirely while simultaneously continuing the fight for suffrage. Doing so would put President Wilson in their debt and earn NAWSA valuable supporters.<sup>151</sup>

Working together as an organization through war work, rather than as individuals, gave the suffrage cause increased strength. Springer noted that “the war brought out females’ national sense of patriotism and duty.”<sup>152</sup> Increasing patriotism, in alignment with a united outward appearance by suffragists, was a calculated political strategy used by women during the war. Morgan further explains that “what the war managed to do was to finally focus the energies of all these suffragists and club women so they acted in concert for one goal—win the war and in the process win suffrage for themselves.”<sup>153</sup> In

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<sup>149</sup> Anita Morgan, “‘We Must Be Fearless’: The Woman Suffrage Movement in Indiana” (unpublished manuscript), ch. 7, p. 1.

<sup>150</sup> Flexner and Fitzpatrick, *Century of Struggle*, 255-268.

<sup>151</sup> Dumenil, *The Second Line of Defense*, 274-275.

<sup>152</sup> Springer, “Ladylike Reformers,” 209.

<sup>153</sup> Morgan, “‘We Must Be Fearless’” (unpublished manuscript), ch. 7, p. 1.

fliers sent to women across the state, President Marie Edwards of the Woman's Franchise League of Indiana, declared "never again will suffrage be decried or ignored in Indiana," signifying her urgency in the matter. Edwards also wrote to club women around the state declaring that suffragists were staying strong and increasing their suffrage efforts, regardless of the war, writing: "plans are being made to carry the fight and you will hear about them." She encouraged Hoosier women to "emphasize the relations between suffrage and patriotism" to enhance their credibility as voters. Women in Indiana and across the country actively supported the U.S. throughout World War I and expected to be rewarded for it with full suffrage. By combining the war effort with suffragist efforts, women could now band together and show the country and government why they were worthy of the vote. Edwards went on to say that "real patriotism demands that we serve the Government no matter how out of patience we get with state authorities. If possible, make a showing as a LEAGUE."<sup>154</sup>

Following Edwards' suggestion, women prioritized war related efforts in their suffrage meetings to foster patriotic demonstrations. Reports from the Woman's Franchise League of Indiana show that Lenore Hannah Cox (she of the 1915 Federation club fight, who had since transitioned into the position of Congressional Chairman of the Woman's Franchise League) requested names of prominent women from across the state. These women, Cox hoped, would telegraph congressmen in regard to the passage of the federal suffrage amendment when called upon to do so.<sup>155</sup> Financial reports of the

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<sup>154</sup> Copy of flier attached to Mrs. Richard E. Edwards to Clarke, Nov. 3, 1917, GJC, Box 2, Folder 1, ISL.

<sup>155</sup> Printed board letter and reports, Woman's Franchise League of Indiana, Nov. 3, 1917, GJC, Box 2, Folder 1, ISL.

Woman's Franchise League of Indiana similarly show that the league was now collecting Liberty Bond donations as part of its budget, although not very aggressively. In 1917, the Liberty Bond donations from the WFL office totaled \$1.93 out of their \$751.73 total budget.<sup>156</sup> However, the WFL pushed the drive through their newspaper, *The Hoosier Suffragist*, and individual branches raised funds.<sup>157</sup>

The Indiana Federation of Clubs also unified to collectively respond to the requests for contributions from the General Federation of Clubs fund for sending women over to furlough houses and leave areas in France (provided by the U.S. government) to be used by American soldiers.<sup>158</sup> Clarke reported that club women across the nation had undertaken to send one hundred women as "hostesses, mothers, and heads" and that club women had raised more than \$150,000 toward this cause nationally.<sup>159</sup> The Indiana Federation of Clubs campaigned to raise their quota of \$27,000.<sup>160</sup> This nationwide movement, under the general supervision of the Y.M.C.A., benefitted American soldiers in France by keeping them "properly entertained" within a space where "American life can be secured."<sup>161</sup> Clarke saw potential for Indiana women to step up to the plate in supporting their country and troops, stating "Indiana is not a slacker state, and Indiana

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<sup>156</sup> Financial report of Woman's Franchise League of Indiana, November 1-December 1, 1917, GJC, Box 2, Folder 1, ISL.

<sup>157</sup> "Mrs. Fred M'Collough Head of Loan Drive," *The Hoosier Suffragist*, October 26, 1917, p. 1.

<sup>158</sup> "Public Opinion Much Changed as to Suffrage" by Grace Julian Clarke, *Indianapolis Star*, Aug. 11, 1918, p. 37.

<sup>159</sup> "Making Study of League to Enforce Peace" by Grace Julian Clarke, *Indianapolis Star*, Oct. 27, 1918, p. 29, 38.

<sup>160</sup> "Leave Areas Provided for Yankees in France," *Indianapolis News*, October 26, 1918, p. 19.

<sup>161</sup> *Ibid.*



women especially are not slackers, so we are sure that as soon as the clubs again come together our quota of the prescribed amount will speedily be sent in.”<sup>162</sup>

The increasing activity of club women, like events to help the war effort, made the groups more interesting to other clubs and the public.<sup>163</sup> Women supported the war through club efforts beyond raising funds, however, and local newspapers promoted their efforts. One example of this is demonstrated by Susan McWhirter Ostrom, who reported on activities of the Indiana Federation of Clubs for the *Indianapolis News* until retiring in 1963, who wrote to Clarke in March of 1918 requesting a statement of what her Irvington club was doing and whether “it has adopted a French orphan.”<sup>164</sup> During the war, Americans were asked to play the role of a “fairy godfather or godmother” to a child in France.<sup>165</sup> The war had made France “a nation of mourning [where] 300,000 fatherless children look with all the eagerness of desperation toward America.”<sup>166</sup> Ten cents a day supported one of the children and a donation of \$36.50 supported a child for a full year. Local newspapers encouraged groups to organize and pledge themselves as a body to “adopt” a fatherless French child for a two-year period, which required a donation of \$73.00. It was common for women’s clubs to contribute to a child in France and then garner media publicity. Publicity like this, among other club activities, assisted women in keeping their patriotic activities in the public eye.

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<sup>162</sup> “Making Study of League to Enforce Peace” by Grace Julian Clarke, *Indianapolis Star*, Oct. 27, 1918, p. 29, 38.

<sup>163</sup> Susan McWhirter Ostrom to Clarke, Mar. 18, 1918, GJC, Box 2, Folder 2, ISL.

<sup>164</sup> “Mrs. Susan Ostrom,” *Indianapolis Star*, July 29, 1980, p. 23; Susan McWhirter Ostrom to Clarke, Mar. 18, 1918, GJC, Box 2, Folder 2, ISL.

<sup>165</sup> “Appeal to Citizens to Adopt French Orphan,” *Indianapolis Star*, May 31, 1917, p. 13.

<sup>166</sup> *Ibid.*

Clarke's department in the *Indianapolis Star* began publicizing such club efforts, with similar steps taken soon after by the *Indianapolis News*.<sup>167</sup> A column for the Indiana Federation of Clubs that ran every Saturday from September to June (clubs adjourned during the summer) reported activities and allowed clubs to serve as inspiration to other clubs—both federated and non-federated. Ostrom empathized with Clarke stating, "I know that you, too, are anxious to maintain a high standard for our federation publicity and that you realize that proper publicity for your club increases its influence in the state as well as in your own community."<sup>168</sup> In the name of patriotism, media outlets increasingly publicized the Federation and its activities, but emphasized activities relevant to the war effort and considered by the media as politically neutral. Clarke used the war as a mechanism to further spread information about suffrage and club happenings around the state in her column, making the groups more approachable and interesting to outsiders.

As the Federation and its activities gained traction in the media, more prominent individuals on the national level began looking toward Indiana and Clarke. William H. Short, former secretary to President Taft and correspondent for the League to Enforce Peace, wrote to Clarke in April of 1918. The League to Enforce Peace, a precursor to the League of Nations, was an organization of college presidents, professors, international lawyers, and "public-spirited citizens" that formed in 1915. Founded later in 1920, the League of Nations was an international organization whose primary mission was to maintain world peace after WWI. President Woodrow Wilson included the covenant as

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<sup>167</sup> Clarke to Mrs. Hermann, Mar. 22, 1918, GJC, Box 2, Folder 2, ISL.

<sup>168</sup> Susan McWhirter Ostrom to Clarke, Mar. 18, 1918, GJC, Box 2, Folder 2, ISL.

part of his Fourteen Points proposal for ending World War I, although the United States Senate ultimately voted not to join the League. Members of the League to Enforce Peace began sending letters to club leaders in 1918, including to Clarke, seeking program suggestions to help stimulate attendance at a Win-the-War Convention.<sup>169</sup> Conventions like this one tried to energize public morale, which, according to historian William J. Breen, was one of the state council's and women's division's major functions.<sup>170</sup> Seeking support of women's clubs in national programming demonstrates the increasing alliances formed between women's groups and the federal government during the war.<sup>171</sup>

Clarke herself was prominent enough to receive an invitation to attend the "Win the War For Permanent Peace" convention, which "defined the high mission of the League to Enforce Peace, and outlined its work and its aspirations." In addition she garnered an invitation to the Allied War Dinner that concluded the convention.<sup>172</sup> This dinner, "at which representatives of the allied nations associated with us in the war will speak," included representatives of the United States, France, Canada, and Great Britain, and represented the "complete and lasting international partnership with which the

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<sup>169</sup> For League to Enforce Peace, see Robert H. Ferrell's *Woodrow Wilson and World War I, 1917-1921*, 162. William H. Short to Clarke, Apr. 22, 1918, GJC, Box 2, Folder 2, ISL.

<sup>170</sup> William J. Breen, *Uncle Sam at Home: Civilian Mobilization, Wartime Federalism, and the Council of National Defense, 1917-1919* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1984), 199.

<sup>171</sup> *Ibid.*, 200.

<sup>172</sup> League to Enforce Peace, "Win the War for Permanent Peace: Addresses Made at the National Convention of the League to Enforce Peace, in the City of Philadelphia, May 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>, 1918; Convention Platform and Governors' Declaration," League to Enforce Peace, New York, 1918, p. 7.

League to Enforce Peace was organized to promote and establish.”<sup>173</sup> Clarke now found herself on the national stage giving war-related appearances and speeches.

Although some locally prominent women, like Clarke, gained publicity and national attention for their war-related work, women’s clubs across the state struggled with decreased membership.<sup>174</sup> Clarke reported in the *Indianapolis Star* that “the interest in clubs as cultural agencies, or as places where women congregate for a pleasant social time, has been greatly curtailed by the war and its necessary activities in which women have had so large a share.” Some clubs withdrew from the Indiana Federation while others suspended meetings for a time. Clarke, however, opposed abandoning meetings entirely. Her concern rested on the notion that disbanded clubs might not reconvene at the end of the war, and that resuming regular meetings would rest entirely on those who once held authority in the disbanded clubs. Clarke feared that these former leaders might become indifferent and that “the club, that has meant a great deal in [women’s] lives and ought to mean still more with the years, will have become a thing of the past.” As such, Clarke encouraged women to continue their meetings during the war, even if they prioritized war topics over other matters pertaining to women. She admitted that “the war has of necessity crept in, as it has into every other feature and function of life, and institutions as well as individuals must reflect it and be modified thereby.”<sup>175</sup> Life had been interrupted and completely altered by the war, but the clubs had to find ways to continue their work for the greater good.

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<sup>173</sup> Ibid.

<sup>174</sup> William H. Short to Clarke, Apr. 22, 1918; Margaret Young to Clarke, May 23, 1918, GJC, Box 2, Folder 2, ISL.

<sup>175</sup> “Libraries’ War Work Indorsed by Club Women” by Grace Julian Clarke. *Indianapolis Star*, Nov. 10, 1918, p. 36.

Clarke continued to monitor what was happening at the leadership level of the Indiana Federation of Clubs. In May of 1919, Clarke spoke out against state Federation presidential candidate Anne Studebaker Carlisle, who had chaired the Woman's Committee of the Indiana Council of Defense during 1917 and 1918. Clarke spoke against her for two reasons—emphasizing that she was not a club woman and that she had only identified herself with club work since her appointment as head of the Woman's Committee. She also rejected Carlisle because Clarke had given another woman her word that she would support another candidate. Clarke still found honesty and integrity to be strong factors in who should lead the state federation, and Carlisle did not meet Clarke's standards of qualified leadership. Clarke reminded a correspondent that "it is important always for the Federation to have wise leadership."<sup>176</sup>

Also transpiring in 1919, the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment giving women the vote passed the U.S. Senate and was then sent to the states for ratification, although it did not come easily. Historians Eleanor Flexner and Ellen Fitzpatrick note that it "took all of 1918 and half of 1919 and the election of a new Congress to get the suffrage amendment through the United States Senate. Its ratification took fourteen months more. The end did not come until August 1920."<sup>177</sup> In July 1918, Ida Husted Harper wrote to Clarke demonstrating this struggle when she said that "we share your disgust at the treatment of the Federal Amendment... it was defeated by a 'filibuster' after we thought it would be safe to have the vote taken. The opponents evidently feared that we had enough and that was why they used the 'filibuster.'"<sup>178</sup> Although the opponents of woman's suffrage put

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<sup>176</sup> Clarke to E. C. Earl, May 1, 1919, GJC, Box 2, Folder 2, ISL.

<sup>177</sup> Flexner and Fitzpatrick, *Century of Struggle*, 301.

<sup>178</sup> Ida Husted Harper to Clarke, July 16, 1918, GJC, Box 2, Folder 2, ISL.

up a desperate fight against the vote for much of 1918 and 1919, suffragists maintained their hopes. Harper noted that “we will be sure to succeed after the recess and will not have to go over into another session.” She reassured Clarke that “nothing can prevent this thing in the Senate, you know.”<sup>179</sup>

Becoming restless, Clarke wanted women to “demand the vote” to get a federal amendment.<sup>180</sup> Yet forcing a vote in Congress risked the chance of being defeated and having to wait until the new session in 1919 to try again in the House of Representatives. The amendment barely made it through the House the first time, and Harper felt it was “much better to temporize with the Senate, while the present session lasts, until there is a chance of a favorable vote” than to push too aggressively.<sup>181</sup>

Women like Harper believed suffragists were already demanding the vote by organizing, petitioning, and by sending letters and telegrams. Clarke, however, seemed to align her calls for action more closely to the Congressional Union’s efforts than NAWSA, although Clarke herself was a member of NAWSA.<sup>182</sup> The CU, which became the National Woman’s Party in 1916, had gained immense newspaper publicity for their militant demonstrations and activities like bonfires, hunger strikes, and picketing the White House, yet NAWSA women, like Harper, felt that the Congressional Union claimed all the credit even though NAWSA had women organizing across the country to

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<sup>179</sup> Ibid. and Ida Husted Harper to Clarke, July 2, 1918, GJC, Box 2, Folder 2, ISL.

<sup>180</sup> Ida Husted Harper to Clarke, July 16, 1918, GJC, Box 2, Folder 2, ISL.

<sup>181</sup> Ibid.

<sup>182</sup> Flexner and Fitzpatrick, *Century of Struggle*, 258-269. According to the authors, the Congressional Union group demanded an all-out campaign for immediate passage of the federal suffrage amendment when it formed in April 1913. NAWSA more cautiously advocated within individual states to persuade legislators to grant women the right to vote.

advance suffrage. NAWSA believed that their work was best done without publicity and instead by winning over another senator to pass the amendment.<sup>183</sup>

Clarke defined the distinction between NAWSA and the CU, explaining that members of NAWSA, whose president was Catt, were “suffragists” while members of the CU (or Woman’s Party, as it was then called) were “suffragettes.” The suffragettes of the CU performed “spectacular and extravagant stunts in the hope of thus compelling attention.” These stunts did earn the CU much attention, but it was attention that NAWSA members felt set back indefinitely the overall cause for which they advocated. Women belonging to NAWSA held a more “staid and decorous demeanor” as described by Clarke.<sup>184</sup> Harper exemplified NAWSA’s attitude in her letter to Clarke by insisting that “there is absolutely nothing for us but patience and diplomacy.”<sup>185</sup> Although two very distinct major groups fought for suffrage during the war, their strategies and tactics varied drastically.

Women across the nation and in Indiana, regardless of affiliation, urged Congress to grant suffrage as a war measure. Marie Edwards of Peru (and president of the Woman’s Franchise League in 1918) argued that winning the war was the League’s immediate necessity, and that winning it in “the quickest, biggest, most enduring way” should “advance the cause of humanity and progress.” This cause of humanity and progress, for Edwards, included suffrage. She continued, “the cause of suffrage is closely linked with democracy, with every idea of real progress... It is time to make false the

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<sup>183</sup> Ida Husted Harper to Clarke, July 16, 1918, GJC, Box 2, Folder 2, ISL.

<sup>184</sup> Public Opinion Much Changed as to Suffrage” by Grace Julian Clarke. *Indianapolis Star*, Aug. 11, 1918, p. 37.

<sup>185</sup> Ida Husted Harper to Clarke, July 16, 1918, GJC, Box 2, Folder 2, ISL.

statement, now true, that ‘the United States is the only English-speaking nation in the world whose women are not enfranchised.’”<sup>186</sup> Clarke, supporting Edwards’ commentary, argued that:

Another reason for consideration of suffrage as a war measure is found in the fact that while we are sending millions of our young men across the water to fight for democracy and civilization, being thereby deprived of their votes in important elections here at home, we yet permit millions of pro-Germans to exercise this function. We are too suspicious of the latter to allow them to work in munition plants, yet we calmly behold them voting for mayors, governors, judges and members of Congress, actually decided the elections in many places, while American women, wives and mothers of those splendid young men over in France, sit bound, but thank heaven, not dumb, witnesses of this infamy.<sup>187</sup>

While the National American Woman’s Suffrage Association was not always successful in its goals, midwestern women generally supported the organization. Historian Sara Egge, who examined the woman suffrage movement in three small midwestern communities in Iowa, Minnesota, and South Dakota, argues that women worked in sophisticated ways and understood political participation as an obligation of citizenship.<sup>188</sup> Furthermore, historian Lynn Dumenil explains that “the war did not create these women’s commitment to activism, but because it focused attention on questions of citizenship, patriotic service, and democratic rights, it did offer them a particularly auspicious time to make a claim for an enlarged sense of citizenship.”<sup>189</sup> Women viewed the war as an opportunity to demonstrate their civic duties as citizens of the United States for the entire country to bear witness to.

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<sup>186</sup> “Public Opinion Much Changed as to Suffrage” by Grace Julian Clarke, *Indianapolis Star*, Aug. 11, 1918, p. 37.

<sup>187</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>188</sup> Egge, *Woman Suffrage and Citizenship in the Midwest*, 2018.

<sup>189</sup> Dumenil, *The Second Line of Defense*, 15.



Women had given themselves to war work and now urged congressmen to give their time and energies to push the Federal suffrage amendment. In an effort to make this happen in Indiana, a suffrage campaign drive was established with a goal of 100,000 members of the general committee for the campaign and 700,000 petition signatures. Mrs. Fred H. McCulloch of Fort Wayne served as the chairman of the general committee for the campaign and believed that women around the state needed to be awakened, and that “this suffrage membership campaign will be the instrument by which we can do it.”<sup>190</sup>

The 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment itself would ultimately be bogged down in the Senate for another year and a half before women could ensure sufficient votes for a two-thirds majority in 1920.<sup>191</sup> In Indiana, Governor James P. Goodrich refused to call a special session of the General Assembly “without assurances from the legislature that it would not take up any additional piece of business.”<sup>192</sup> On January 16, 1920, the Indiana General Assembly ratified the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment almost unanimously. Flexner and Fitzpatrick note that nationally, however, the saga of state ratification, which peaked at the Tennessee legislative session on August 9, 1920, “reads today like fiction.”<sup>193</sup> Representative Harry Burn, a twenty-four-year-old from a rural district in east Tennessee, “promised only that he would vote in favor if his vote was necessary for ratification.”<sup>194</sup> On the day of Tennessee’s legislative vote, Burn’s mother left him a note reminding him

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<sup>190</sup> “Public Opinion Much Changed as to Suffrage” by Grace Julian Clarke, *Indianapolis Star*, Aug. 11, 1918, p. 37.

<sup>191</sup> Smith, “New Paths to Power: 1890-1920,” 411.

<sup>192</sup> Phillips, *Indiana in Transition*, 502.

<sup>193</sup> Flexner and Fitzpatrick, *Century of Struggle*, 314.

<sup>194</sup> *Ibid.*, 316.

to not “forget to be a good boy and help Mrs. Catt put ‘Rat’ in Ratification.”<sup>195</sup> Under pressure from his own mother, a staunch suffragist, Burn voted “yes” with Representative Banks Turner voting “yes” moments after. With these votes making a final vote of 49-47, the woman suffrage amendment had been ratified.<sup>196</sup>

The impact women like Clarke had during World War I reflects their political efforts and their “devotion, strength, and resilience in spite of internal conflicts and external setbacks.”<sup>197</sup> The war had illuminated women’s ability to use genuine patriotism as a political tactic to achieve the vote through club and suffrage work. The war also brought about increased involvement in public activity, although it was at the expense of suffrage work. During the war, women were forced to devote more of their time to war-related efforts, which resulted in less time spent on advancing womanhood through suffrage. Yet, women did not always put their life work on pause completely, as noted by Clarke’s continued political leadership, journalistic efforts, and emerging influence. Angela Moler praised Clarke in regard to her weekly column when she said “it...reviews the efforts of the forward looking women of Indiana... and so ably makes clear that the great achievement of to-day was made possible by the unfailing courage of the pioneer who blazed the trail... I know how earnestly... you have aided this great cause and how you have dignified its promotion.”<sup>198</sup>

Clarke’s actions regarding suffrage and war-related activities further demonstrate that, although women were challenged during a time when they were so close to

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<sup>195</sup> Ibid.

<sup>196</sup> Ibid. Elaine Weiss further discusses this in her book *The Woman’s Hour: The Great Fight to Win the Vote*, 235-256.

<sup>197</sup> Springer, “Ladylike Reformers,” 200.

<sup>198</sup> Angela Moler to Clarke, June 29, 1918, GJC, Box 2, Folder 2, ISL.

achieving the goal that they had been working on for nearly a century, they simultaneously stayed loyal to their country and their womanhood. As Clarke herself explained, “we [women] are truly patriotic, not only by knitting and doing the conventional kinds of war work, but by the utmost exertions to secure for the women of our country their rightful place as equal partners in the tremendously important enterprise of government . . . Women of all religious denominations, club women, women who work whether in the home or in the many fields outside, young women and old, colored women and white, all women with sufficient wit to discern right from wrong, daylight from night, should enlist in the present suffrage drive.”<sup>199</sup> This demonstration of equality finally allowed women to garner the vote in 1920. Although women had obtained enfranchisement, it would only be the beginning of political careers for leaders of the suffrage movement like Clarke. Clarke’s enterprise of government would soon expand beyond national politics. After the war, Clarke’s confidence as a political influencer grew as she set her eyes on international affairs and Woodrow Wilson’s League of Nations.

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<sup>199</sup> Scrapbook regarding World War I, League of Nations, and suffrage, GJC, Volume 422-11, ISL.

### Chapter 3: International Effort

“Madam, You are a damned fool!”

Prior to World War I, Clarke primarily focused on her political efforts at the state level. These efforts included campaigning for Cox’s presidency of the Indiana Federation of Clubs and local politics that affected the family, like the Indianapolis school board elections, and her work with the Woman’s Franchise League. But during World War I, she turned her political efforts to focus primarily on political influence at the national level through patriotic activities. By war’s end, through her newspaper column and her own war work, she had helped convince many people that women were worthy of being included in national political conversations. Then, at the end of the war, Clarke turned her eyes to even bigger issues. She worked in international political affairs, especially the League of Nations.

With the end of the war in sight, Clarke received new requests to speak at clubs around the state regarding the internationally contested League of Nations.<sup>200</sup> Other women who were asked to travel for this kind of work often faced a choice of family or work. Clarke, married to an established attorney and without children of her own, had more freedom to pursue speaking opportunities when they arose. Albion Bacon wrote to Clarke about the demanding experiences she had faced as a housing lecturer, expressing that “I simply could not go for six months, and leave my family at loose ends. So I did not go. It would have been a wonderful opportunity, and I would have met the people I

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<sup>200</sup> Mrs. Wylie to Clarke, May 23, 1919, GJC, Box 2, Folder 2, ISL.

would most enjoy meeting, but that counts for nothing beside my family.”<sup>201</sup> Women like Clarke and Bacon, who traveled on behalf of causes they believed in, faced “a hard, drudging, driving trip, seeing almost a million people,” and talked till their “throats ached” and their “brain was numb.”<sup>202</sup> Such women who made speaking tours during the war to the extent that they individually could, acted as teachers to other women by demonstrating qualities that made for a strong speaker.

After the war, Clarke continued to receive requests to speak on behalf of ongoing political issues because of her ability to remain available for the work. Dove C. Meredith, chairman of the Program Committee for the Business Women’s Section of the Woman’s Department Club of Indianapolis, wrote Clarke stating, “I am ambitious to have only the best talent... I know of no one so well informed on these events of the day.”<sup>203</sup> Clarke’s reputation had grown tremendously throughout the war thanks in large part to her column in the *Indianapolis Star* that kept women well informed about war-related suffrage or club work, including Red-Cross and food conservation efforts. Women all over the state trusted Clarke to know about the current political landscape.

Men at the forefront of the League of Nations movement saw value in women, like Clarke, supporting the League. Prior to enfranchisement, Clarke corresponded with Helen C. Benbridge in 1919 and explained how supporters of the League hoped to hold conventions (called by male representatives) that included women throughout Indiana. These meetings would take place locally and relied on women’s clubs and networks to organize them. Benbridge reported that this level of engagement was simply not realistic

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<sup>201</sup> Mrs. Albion Bacon to Clarke, May 29, 1919, GJC, Box 2, Folder 2, ISL.

<sup>202</sup> Mrs. Albion Bacon to Clarke, Apr. 16, 1918, GJC, Box 2, Folder 2, ISL.

<sup>203</sup> Dove C. Meredith to Clarke, July 24, 1919, GJC, Box 2, Folder 2, ISL.

considering the current demands of the Woman's Franchise League.<sup>204</sup> Votes for women was so close to becoming a reality that Benbridge did not dare move WFL resources toward other issues. Despite Benbridge's plea to maintain her focus on enfranchisement, Clarke pressed the importance of calling conventions related to the League of Nations and further urged women to take steps beyond local conventions in support of it. Clarke saw a larger opportunity for speakers from the League to Enforce Peace, which was formed to promote the creation of this international body for world peace, to attend meetings all over the state to advocate the League of Nations. Clarke pivoted to issues larger than woman's suffrage, which illustrates her growth as a politician. Although the suffrage movement had yet to see full success, Clarke had steadily outgrown it for international affairs like the League of Nations.

In October 1918, Clarke had issued a statement in the *Indianapolis Star* regarding the League to Enforce Peace. This group, organized more than two years prior, included prominent individuals from nations who desired international justice and made common cause against any future disturber of the world's peace. Winning the war was the first step in realizing this mission. With the realization that the war was coming to an end and that the Allied powers would be victorious, attention largely turned to Woodrow Wilson's League of Nations idea. According to historian David M. Kennedy, the idea of the League of Nations was discussed extensively prior to 1918 when it was made part of the Fourteen Points, a proposal advanced by Wilson as the basis for negotiating peace at the end of the war.<sup>205</sup> Progressives often endorsed the League idea, but some saw the

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<sup>204</sup> Helen C. Benbridge to Clarke, July 10, 1919, GJC, Box 2, Folder 2, ISL.

<sup>205</sup> David M. Kennedy, *Over Here: The First World War and American Society* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), 358-60, 360-62.

covenant as a controversial expansion into international politics. The League of Nations was attached to the Treaty of Versailles (formally ending World War I) and presented to the U.S. Senate by Woodrow Wilson in 1919.<sup>206</sup> The League and its advocacy, Clarke noted, would be discussed by many Indiana clubs.<sup>207</sup> Clarke received praise for successfully introducing the clubwomen of Indiana to the League to Enforce Peace, a precursor to the League of Nations.<sup>208</sup> Clarke felt that informing organizations about the League would provoke clubwomen to study components of the League of Nations and then actively support such movements.<sup>209</sup>

The covenant, however, was not easily understood by most people. Historian Ellis W. Hawley describes the final version of the League as “an organization that would function through two major organs, an Assembly made up of all members, and a Council consisting of the major powers as permanent members and four smaller nations chosen by the Assembly.... And at the heart of the organization ... would be a mutual guarantee by all members of each other’s independence and territorial integrity.”<sup>210</sup> The League, as Hawley explained, would not have an army nor a police force of its own, but countries belonging to the League might be called upon to take militaristic action in cases of

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<sup>206</sup> Ibid. See also Ferrell, *Woodrow Wilson and World War I*, 156-177.

<sup>207</sup> “Public Opinion Much Changed as to Suffrage” by Grace Julian Clarke, *Indianapolis Star*, Aug. 11, 1918, p. 37.

<sup>208</sup> The League to Enforce Peace was, according to Robert Ferrell, an organization of college presidents and professors and international lawyers and public-spirited citizens that formed in 1915. The group was known to advocate for the limited use of force during and after World War I to accomplish arbitration. This stance represented a minority of Americans, most of whom supported the use of force. See Ferrell, *Woodrow Wilson and World War I*, 162, 172-71.

<sup>209</sup> Helen Varic Boswell to Clarke, Nov. 7, 1918, GJC, Box 2, Folder 2, ISL.

<sup>210</sup> Hawley, *The Great War and the Search for a Modern Order*, 41-42.

aggressions by any foreign country that threatened world peace.<sup>211</sup> For this particular reason, Wilson's League could not come without controversy.

Historian David M. Kennedy further discusses the controversy surrounding the League, explaining that the Versailles Treaty ignited debate from the moment of its first publication in America, with some Americans calling the treaty too liberal or too internationalist. Article X of the League covenant was particularly controversial, with its pledge to preserve "the territorial integrity and existing political independence of all Members" backed with a commitment to provide military force in war. Many Americans saw Article X as constituting a "blank check" to use American military power, and viewed it as a surrender of sovereignty and contradicting the U.S. Constitution, which states that only Congress can declare war. While many Americans saw the League as too generous, Irish-Americans argued that the peace treaty of which it was a part did not do enough to protect their ancestral homelands from English oppression. German-Americans also complained that the treaty "had been brutally and cynically forced on the vanquished at gunpoint."<sup>212</sup> In Indiana, both the *Indianapolis News* and the *Indianapolis Star* gave moderate support to the idea of preserving peace with Allied forces.<sup>213</sup> Yet Republican Indiana Senators Henry New and James Watson strongly opposed Wilson's propositions for peace for fear of compromising the nation's sovereignty.<sup>214</sup> The covenant was viewed as either doing too little or too much, both in the state and across the country, with little willingness on the part of President Wilson to reframe the League.

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<sup>211</sup> Ibid., 42.

<sup>212</sup> Kennedy, *Over Here*, 360.

<sup>213</sup> Phillips, *Indiana in Transition*, 613-614.

<sup>214</sup> Ibid.



One of Clarke's male correspondents also recognized the correlations between women supporting humanity at home and supporting global humanity through the League of Nations, although the Senate had failed to ratify the WWI peace treaty with the League of Nations in it by the time of his letter. He expressed to Clarke that "men, from youth, are trained to contest and strife. They enjoyed no sport or game unless it embodied contending tests of skill. This training and education prepares and leads too much for Wars. At their hands, the League of Nations will have a poor show ... Unless you women with your intuitive reasoning—your first training and experience, come to the rescue: 'God pity the League.'" Although the League of Nations was generally supported in large part due to the general concept behind it, still, Americans worried it would weaken the United States' authority in international affairs. He reminded Clarke that "Of course America should be 'First.' It cannot be prevented. She won the 'First Place' in the war, was the 'first' to remove [the] Kaiser, was the 'first' to get the armistice. Is first in the hearts of the world, and should be the 'First' and not the last in the Peace." The writer concluded, "it is sweet to touch elbows with party friends, but sweeter and less selfish to touch elbows with humanity throughout the world."<sup>215</sup> Although Clarke did receive her fair share of pushback for supporting the League of Nations, her work also garnered empathetic support from individuals such as this gentleman.

This letter came to Clarke after women had obtained the vote, so the author additionally expressed the significance of women's newfound power more generally. Women, upon receiving the vote, were seen by some as entering the political arena to perform the same duties that they had done for decades. By this time, women had

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<sup>215</sup> Warwick H. Ripley to Clarke, Aug. 26, 1920, GJC, Box 2, Folder 3, ISL.

organized and raised millions of dollars to elevate humanity through their war work, all while meeting the sneers and arguments of their opponents. Women like Clarke reflected the notion that those who believed in humanity for the home and for one's own country would also have a similar desire to see humanity flourish internationally.

While the Treaty of Versailles and the League of Nations were pending before the U.S. Senate shortly after the war's end, many Hoosier women were convinced that its core message was worth defending. According to Clarke, women felt that approving the League would move society toward a "world understanding and world peace that [had] been the dream and the desire of the most enlightened men of all generations." Women wanted the covenant adopted because they believed in "democracy, in the home, and in all the sanctities of life." They wanted women in Poland and Yugoslavia and other countries directly affected by the war to sleep peacefully at night knowing their families were safe. Above all, however, Clarke wanted Indiana's place in the matter to be "in the sun" when the final record was made up.<sup>216</sup>

In order for this to happen, Clarke recognized that even a small step forward in a world peace covenant required a "tremendous" vote in the Senate.<sup>217</sup> She wrote one of the state's U.S. senators, Harry S. New, encouraging him to support the League of Nations. She pled "in the name of the women of Indiana, who constitute one half its citizenship, and in the name of that patriotism which knows no party when questions of humanities are involved, I respectfully beg that you will give the League of Nations covenant your

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<sup>216</sup> Clarke to James E. Watson, May 29, 1919, GJC, Box 2, Folder 2, ISL.

<sup>217</sup> Ibid.

hearty support.”<sup>218</sup> The Senate, Clarke believed, should represent the enlightened public opinion of the state.

Other prominent women like May Louise Shipp, Albion Fellows Bacon, and Helen C. Benbridge, however, wrote to Clarke admitting that they did not know much about the League of Nations, or the League to Enforce Peace, but supported their general ideas. In response to a request for Bacon to speak alongside Clarke on behalf of the League of Nations, Bacon was embarrassed to admit that “I couldn’t make a speech on the League of Nations to save my life.”<sup>219</sup> She added, “I swallowed it whole, when it was first born, and have always put off studying the separate points, because of weariness and sickness and over-work. I never dreamed I should be called into the limelight about it.”<sup>220</sup> Clarke, on the other hand, felt confident in her research on the League and sought to adamantly, and publicly, advance its cause.

Although women tried to keep up to date with global politics, it was often difficult to stay informed of changes in a timely manner. In an era when instant communication was nonexistent and it often took days—if not weeks—to correspond or receive news, women found themselves lacking enough information to confidently support national political affairs. Shipp perfectly illustrated this mix of confusion and earnest desire to stay well-informed when she signed her letter to Clarke, “I am yours somewhat chaotically but affectionately.” Women often corresponded about foreign affairs using uncertain language, with references to “the European question” or the “Russian situation.” Ignorance of what was actually happening in the world made it

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<sup>218</sup> Clarke to Harry S. New, May 29, 1919, GJC, Box 2, Folder 2, ISL.

<sup>219</sup> Mrs. Albion Bacon to Clarke, Sept. 28, 1920, GJC, Box 2, Folder 3, ISL.

<sup>220</sup> Ibid.

difficult to form educated opinions and prevented women from supporting the League of Nations wholeheartedly.<sup>221</sup> It is true that women found themselves not only interested in politics at the local and state levels, but also at the global level as a result of the aftermath of the war. Yet it was difficult for women (and likely men, too) to make sense of the fast-changing world around them. It could also be true that some women actually opposed the League but did not want to disagree with or upset Clarke.

As news regarding the League of Nations became increasingly complex and difficult for anyone to fully understand, Clarke increasingly spoke on its behalf and advocated its content. She was unwilling to accept women's assertions that they were not well-informed enough to support it. The director of the speakers bureau from the League to Enforce Peace in New York began corresponding with Clarke in July 1919 to schedule speaking engagements for her at various meetings.<sup>222</sup> Speakers from the League to Enforce Peace were one of the strongest factors in the fight for the ratification of the League of Nations, and the "ability, devotion and self-sacrificing work" of the speakers was deeply appreciated by the national director of the organization.<sup>223</sup> Clarke won high praise for the addresses she delivered, and received an official emblem honoring her status as a speaker from the League to Enforce Peace.<sup>224</sup>

By 1920, Clarke's name had been printed in newspapers across the state and her face was prominently publicized, too. John W. Holtzman of the Democratic State Central Committee in Indianapolis requested Clarke bring him a picture of herself so that he

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<sup>221</sup> May Louise Shipp to Clarke, July 26, 1919, GJC, Box 2, Folder 2, ISL.

<sup>222</sup> R.E. Cavanaugh to Clarke, July 29 and 31, 1919, GJC, Box 2, Folder 2, ISL.

<sup>223</sup> Tom Jones Meek to Clarke, Sept. 9, 1919, GJC, Box 2, Folder 2, ISL.

<sup>224</sup> Ibid.

could begin proper publicity for her in various counties. It had become an “every day matter” to have demands for Clarke’s picture, and he wanted to have distributable photos (similar to a contemporary professional headshot or business card) made to circulate wherever she spoke.<sup>225</sup> Not only did her face become recognizable from circulating news reports and photos in the paper, but also because of the vast number of people she spoke to in person. One such speaking occasion was the Democratic County Tour, which the *Palladium-Item* referred to as “the novelty of a political ‘drive’ conducted solely by women... [with] three squadrons of automobiles, four cars each, carrying Democratic women workers” around the county.<sup>226</sup> The tour was conducted by Ruth James, woman chairman of Wayne County Democrats, with “headliners” Clarke, Olive Belden Lewis, and Elizabeth Stanley publicly urging the importance of voter registration.<sup>227</sup> By the end of the tour, Clarke had spoken in front of about 800 people.<sup>228</sup>

Once women obtained the vote it became a political tactic for parties to claim responsibility for its ratification. Women who had fought so long and hard for the vote, however, would not stand to see their success become a partisan issue. Clarke noted in the *Indianapolis Star* that “[N]either political party can justly claim the credit of having enfranchised the women.” Women alone should be credited with obtaining enfranchisement by their persistence, “never-intermitted and often extremely uphill efforts—not one generation of them, but generation after generation, in all parts of the country.” Clarke and other suffragists knew they had worked hard and that both parties

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<sup>225</sup> John W. Holtzman to Clarke, Sept. 25, 1920, GJC, Box 2, Folder 3, ISL.

<sup>226</sup> “Democratic Women Will Tour County for Party Ticket,” *Palladium-Item* (Richmond, Indiana), Aug. 31, 1920, p. 10.

<sup>227</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>228</sup> “Dems. Close County Tour,” *Richmond Item* (Richmond, Indiana), Sept. 2, 1920, p. 2.

had contained “warm friends and bitter foes.” Women had undergone “labor and travail, hunger and thirst, perils in the city, perils among false brethren, perils from their countrymen and sundry other perils and persecutions” before victory had finally crowned their actions. It was women who deserved the credit for the 19th Amendment, not any singular political party or male politicians. Clarke reminded women that they should refrain from flattering “whichever political party is most to be praised for its service to suffrage.”<sup>229</sup> Women had now come into their own and Clarke urged them to own their efforts and individuality, separate from political parties.

While rightly claiming the suffrage victory as theirs alone, women nonetheless began aligning themselves with political parties based on their personal political views rather than strategic partnership. Although Morgan notes that “most women left no record of their reasons for following a particular party,” it can be inferred that their support aligned more closely with personal beliefs, as demonstrated by their inability to vote as a bloc.<sup>230</sup> In the early days of suffrage, many women aligned themselves closely with the Republican Party, as it was more inclined to support women’s rights.<sup>231</sup> This, however, changed after the war had ended and suffrage was ratified. According to Ida Husted Harper, the 19th Amendment would have likely gone through the Senate a year sooner had one more Republican voted, and ratification would have been completed even longer ago “would one more Republican State have acted.”<sup>232</sup>

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<sup>229</sup> “Enfranchisement Comes as Hard-Earned Victory” by Grace Julian Clarke, *Indianapolis Star*, Sept. 5, 1920, p. 36.

<sup>230</sup> Morgan, ““We Must Be Fearless”” (unpublished manuscript) ch. 7, p. 43.

<sup>231</sup> Ida Husted Harper to Clarke, May 20, 1920, GJC, Box 2, Folder 3, ISL.

<sup>232</sup> *Ibid.*

As such, women by 1920 began to feel frustrated with Republicans and their inability to move women's interests forward, particularly after all of their political work to demonstrate "patriotic spirit" during the war.<sup>233</sup> Harper admitted herself that "in my present mood I feel tempted to vote the straight Democratic ticket this fall."<sup>234</sup> Clarke, too, was beginning to favor Democratic legislation, as noted by Harper when she commented to Clarke that "for a Republican woman you throw a good many bouquets at the Democrats."<sup>235</sup> Even men looked back with regret that the Republican Party had not kept its "solemn obligation and pledges" made in "every corner drug store" across the country during the campaign of 1918 to stand by and patriotically support the President in his foreign policies.<sup>236</sup> Clarke publicly said that the League of Nations should not be made a party issue. Morgan further notes that it was apparent that "the League of Nations was an important issue to women in both parties."<sup>237</sup>

Springer emphasizes that Hoosier women did not vote as a bloc once they obtained the ballot, stating that "they had never been completely united during the progressive years so it was unrealistic to expect them to close ranks once they gained the vote. Like men they were divided by class, race, religion, and personal ideology."<sup>238</sup> Flexner also notes that "politicians relaxed after the passage of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment when they found that women could not deliver a bloc vote."<sup>239</sup> Some women remained closely aligned with the Republican Party and condemned women like Clarke who claimed to be

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<sup>233</sup> "Women's Clubs" by Grace Julian Clarke, *Indianapolis Star*, May 27, 1917, p. 35.

<sup>234</sup> Ida Husted Harper to Clarke, May 20, 1920, GJC, Box 2, Folder 3, ISL.

<sup>235</sup> Ibid.

<sup>236</sup> Warwick H. Ripley to Clarke, Aug. 26, 1920, GJC, Box 2, Folder 3, ISL.

<sup>237</sup> Morgan, "'We Must Be Fearless'" (unpublished manuscript), ch. 7, p. 43.

<sup>238</sup> Springer, "Ladylike Reformers," 253.

<sup>239</sup> Flexner and Fitzpatrick, *Century of Struggle*, 319.

Republican, but declared themselves in support of Democratic policy. Elizabeth Wolfe of Washington, D.C., criticized Clarke, stating “you are a traitor not only to the Republican Party but also to your country when you declare yourself for a League of Nations. I am convinced you have not studied the situation carefully. You have merely accepted these men’s views.”<sup>240</sup> Wolfe adamantly believed that England was doing all it could to secure the League of Nations in an effort to regain power over the United States, explaining that England “still rankles under the fact that Washington and Madison wrested that abused right from her.”<sup>241</sup>

The fear among Republicans that the League of Nations would leave the United States in a position of weakened international power led to division among American voters, which now included women, and added pressure to end up on the right side of history. Wolfe threatened Clarke that she henceforth would not deserve her new privilege to vote as a self-proclaimed Republican should she not vote for Harding in the upcoming presidential election.<sup>242</sup> Given the continuing disparities among women even post-enfranchisement, Clarke felt especially compelled to speak on behalf of what she advocated in an effort to garner new supporters.

Her efforts were, however, challenged at times. In a letter written to the editor of the *Indianapolis Star*, a male Republican queried where Clarke received her information regarding the covenant and questioned her insights regarding the League of Nations.<sup>243</sup>

The writer noted that Clarke used Article X to argue that the United States would not

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<sup>240</sup> Elizabeth Wolfe to Clarke, Sept. 12, 1920, GJC, Box 2, Folder 4, ISL.

<sup>241</sup> Ibid.

<sup>242</sup> Ibid.

<sup>243</sup> “Republican Takes Issue With Women Advocates Over League Covenant” *Indianapolis Star* (Indianapolis, Indiana) September 12, 1920, p. 60.



send soldiers to Europe to take part in disputes arising as part of the League of Nations. This writer suggested that Republicans were deliberately misleading people, particularly women, on the subject and that President Wilson, among other Democrats, disagreed with Clarke's assertion regarding Article X that soldiers would not be sent to Europe to wage war against international aggressors. Questioning her credibility, the author wrote: "I would sure like to know how [Grace], away out here in the woods of Indiana, happens to know more about this question, which is a mighty big one, than the persons themselves who invented it, and how does it happen that their position on that specific part of the covenant is exactly contrary to the position of the sole leader of their party."<sup>244</sup> Clarke garnered further criticism for her support of the League of Nations as found in "one letter with the simple one-line message, 'Madam, You are a damned fool!'"<sup>245</sup> Regardless, Clarke continued to promote the League "as a body that would promote better working conditions for all" and remained focused on her mission.<sup>246</sup>

By 1920, women had achieved the vote, but had yet to attain full autonomy as political beings. Their political stances continued to be analyzed publicly and privately, although the same could have likely been said for men of different political parties. Women (as new members of the political arena) were often put under different scrutiny. The writer illuminates this unique criticism when he lumps all voting women under one category, stating "but here is where you ladies and many others make their mistake. You have never yet been able to see or understand it."<sup>247</sup> Historian David M. Kennedy

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<sup>244</sup> Ibid.

<sup>245</sup> Morgan, "'We Must Be Fearless'" (unpublished manuscript), ch. 7, p. 43.

<sup>246</sup> Ibid.

<sup>247</sup> "Republican Takes Issue With Women Advocates Over League Covenant," *Indianapolis Star*, September 12, 1920, p. 60.

confirms that even as the war ended and women had obtained enfranchisement, that gain would prove “far less consequential in women’s lives than its proponents had long believed.”<sup>248</sup> Women, regardless of their ability to vote and how informed they might or might not be, were not trusted by men to fully comprehend the details of the high-stakes covenant. Clarke, however, knew her own worth, and continued to advocate for her personal beliefs.

Whether or not Clarke believed the League of Nations to be a nonpartisan issue, the topic became a major factor in political platforms. Correspondent Dora F. Layne noted that in the past it seemed there was “little to choose between the Democratic and Republican parties,” but in 1920 there seemed to be a “wide difference between policies and candidates.”<sup>249</sup> Much of this difference was rooted in the League of Nations and the future of world peace. Senator Warren Harding, who was campaigning for the presidency, declared himself most decidedly against the League of Nations and voted against accepting the covenant as it stood. As representatives of political parties took sides on the matter, it increasingly became a partisan issue. Clarke continued to insist that the issue should remain nonpartisan.<sup>250</sup> Preventing a second world war was an ethical, moral, humanistic obligation—not a political one. She explained why she considered herself neither a Democrat nor a Republican in front of a crowd in Richmond, Indiana, stating that it was because “I see the tremendous power over the individual blinding him to conscience and to duty... I am for the League of Nations because I believe in a

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<sup>248</sup> Kennedy, *Over Here*, 286.

<sup>249</sup> Dora F. Layne to Clarke, Sept. 13, 1920, GJC, Box 2, Folder 4, ISL.

<sup>250</sup> Margaret Tobin to Clarke, Sept. 4, 1920, GJC, Box 2, Folder 4, ISL.

democracy for the whole world... [and] I believe that God, not Satan, rules the universe.”<sup>251</sup>

Clarke’s support for a nonpartisan stance for the League was also a reflection of character. Dora F. Layne wrote to Clarke, “character is so vital a matter it seems ... the people ought to know some facts that reveal character.”<sup>252</sup> Presidential candidates at the time, Harding and James M. Cox, were rumored to have wives involved in romantic affairs outside of their marriages, and this gossip contributed to women’s unwillingness to support the character of either man.<sup>253</sup> As such, women like Clarke chose to support policies over candidates, with their primary concern being policy regarding the League of Nations. In response to Harding’s request to have Clarke hear him present his conviction on matters of particular interest to women, she responded with the following:

[L]et me say that I have little interest in anything Senator Harding may say at any time on any subject. His wobbling position on the [League] of Nations, the overshadowing and all-important issue in the present campaign; his cowardly attitude on woman suffrage during the presidency of that question in congress; the fact that his name has never been connected with any great constructive government measures, added to the further fact that he was nominated at the bidding of the most reactionary and dangerous leaders in political life today, whose wishes he is absolutely bound to execute if elected, these are sufficient reasons for my opposition to him. I am enthusiastically for the League of Nations and for Cox and Roosevelt, who unhesitatingly, unequivocally and emphatically declare for its ratification. I should be for these candidates even were the League of Nations not involved because they are upstanding, forward-looking men who know their own minds and possess the courage of their convictions.<sup>254</sup>

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<sup>251</sup> “Dems. Close County Tour” *Richmond Item* (Richmond, Indiana), Sept. 2, 1920, p. 2.

<sup>252</sup> Dora F. Layne to Clarke, Sept. 13, 1920, GJC, Box 2, Folder 4, ISL.

<sup>253</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>254</sup> “Mrs. Clarke Answers G.O.P. Invitation,” *The Fort Wayne Journal-Gazette*, Sept. 30, 1920, p. 2. See also, “It Looks as If Mrs. Clarke Will Not Go To Marion, O.” *Indianapolis News*, Sept. 28, 1920, p. 1.

Clarke, as she did in the 1915 election for the Indiana Federation of Clubs, believed in the character of candidates and held them to a standard of how they stood by their principles. Rather than identifying with a particular political party, Clarke, too, stood by her principles and advocated for whatever she believed would make the world a better place, rather than permanently aligning herself with a singular party.

Clarke's switch to favor Democratic policies was strongly correlated with Democratic efforts to support the League. Clarke spent much of her time post-suffrage traveling to speak on behalf of the League of Nations.<sup>255</sup> In 1920, she gave six speeches scheduled between September 20 and October 2, including stops in Warsaw, South Bend, Tipton, Fowler, Frankfort, and Shelbyville.<sup>256</sup> Clarke also received invitations to speak at large Democratic meetings, and was asked to be one of four women to join a men's committee of five to meet the party's vice presidential candidate, Franklin D. Roosevelt, for dinner in August 1920.<sup>257</sup> Clarke was later asked to go to the Indiana Democratic Club to meet Roosevelt at the station and pick him up upon arrival.<sup>258</sup> The Democratic Party recognized Clarke's value as she publicly advocated on behalf of their policies. They also depended on her to host national players, like Roosevelt, when they came into town.

Testimonials of Clarke's work regarding the League of Nations were well received as seen in letters written to Indiana Democratic National Committeewoman, Julia E. Landers. Elmore Barce of the Marion County Central Committee wrote that "the

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<sup>255</sup> Benjamin Bosse to Clarke, Aug. 13, 1920, GJC, Box 2, Folder 3, ISL.

<sup>256</sup> Julia E. Landers to Clarke, Sept. 15, 1920, GJC, Box 2, Folder 4, ISL.

<sup>257</sup> Julia E. Landers to Clarke, Aug. 21, 1920, GJC, Box 2, Folder 3, ISL.

<sup>258</sup> Letter to Clarke, author unknown, Aug. 24, 1920, GJC, Box 2, Folder 3, ISL.

work of Mrs. Grace Julian Clarke in this county has produced fine results. She has a very pleasing manner, and discusses the subject of the League of Nations without too much warmth, and in such a manner as to make her points tell. She has set most of the women here to thinking.”<sup>259</sup> Landers even asked Clarke to sum up the main points of the League of Nations for use as publicity and wholeheartedly thanked Clarke for the assistance that she had given the Democratic National Committee in the fight to advance their political agenda.<sup>260</sup> Clarke was also recruited for rebuttal as needed when opponents publicly spoke against the League. When Republican Eleanor Barker spoke at Montezuma and “ripped the League of Nations all to pieces,” Clarke was specially requested to come and “paste it back together for them.”<sup>261</sup> According to correspondence, she was also trusted with anonymous information that would help defeat Harding and used this information in her speeches, although the details of that scandal were not stated.<sup>262</sup> Correspondent J. C. Webb wrote to Clarke, mentioning that “I have thought of a few other things which may be suggestive to one in your position ... [but] do not use my name.”<sup>263</sup> By this time, Clarke was perceived as having public influence and was trusted with select insider information.

After ratification of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment, Clarke began co-authoring “Women in Politics” column that ran every Sunday in the *Indianapolis Star*. The *Star* announced that “men as well as women will enjoy this interesting and informative presentation of the

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<sup>259</sup> Elmore Barce to Julia E. Landers, Aug. 21, 1920, GJC, Box 2, Folder 3, ISL.

<sup>260</sup> Julia E. Landers to Clarke, Aug. 23, 1920, GJC, Box 2, Folder 3, ISL.

<sup>261</sup> John W. Holtzman to Clarke, Sept. 9, 1920, GJC, Box 2, Folder 4, ISL.

<sup>262</sup> J. C. Webb to Clarke, Sept. 17, 1920, GJC, Box 2, Folder 4, ISL.

<sup>263</sup> Ibid.

salient points of the [presidential] campaign.”<sup>264</sup> The column was intended to set out the activities of women as new voters from both the Democratic and Republican perspective, with Clarke presenting the weekly Democratic viewpoint and Mrs. Joseph B. Kealing presenting the Republican.

Clarke received numerous letters from fans of her father as she became increasingly known. “Women in Politics” helped to convince readers like William O. Bates that the Republic was, in fact, *not* in despair, by drawing comparisons to her father, a credible politician, stating: “it seems to me I can hear your father speaking through your pen—his wide-eyed vision of the main issue, his blazing devotion to the right firmly choked down to a moderation of statement emphasizing rather than weakening the force of the conviction behind it.”<sup>265</sup> Clarke channeled her father’s passion and was unwavering in her political stance, regardless of party affiliation. Friends of Clarke’s, Andrew and Mary Nicholson, further reminded Clarke that “you know what a bold daring unflinching man your father was.”<sup>266</sup> Clarke learned from her father boldness and strength, and saw the League of Nations as a truly humane policy that needed to be defended because of its core goodness. This belief could not be shaken, regardless of any external pressures Clarke faced from the public or her boss, Ernest Brass, who wrote Clarke that “it will be impossible for us to continue these long campaign documents in the department ... which was designed to set out the activities of the new voters and not as a vehicle for partisan propaganda.”<sup>267</sup>

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<sup>264</sup> “Women in Politics.” *Indianapolis Star*, August 27, 1920, p. 1.

<sup>265</sup> William O. Bates to Clarke, Sept. 19, 1920, GJC, Box 2, Folder 4, ISL.

<sup>266</sup> Andrew and Mary Nicholson to Clarke, Apr. 11, 1920, GJC, Box 2, Folder 3, ISL.

<sup>267</sup> Earnest Brass to Clarke, Sept. 18, 1920, GJC, Box 2, Folder 4, ISL.

Throughout her career, there were always comparisons between the work Clarke did and that of her father. Francis M. Trissal, an acquaintance of her father's, wrote Clarke to say "I beg the privilege and liberty of sincerely complimenting you on the great ability you are showing in your work of educating voters to an understanding of their duties and responsibilities under the 19<sup>th</sup> amendment." He continued, "It is a historic fact and an interesting coincidence that half a century ago, consistent with his course as the opponent of human slavery, he proposed and introduced in Congress an amendment [regarding women's suffrage] substantially the same in its language and purposes as the one that was finally passed." Clarke had been passed down the "halo of inheritance" from her father, and both her and her father's generations noted the similarities between their work.<sup>268</sup>

In reflecting on her father's work for woman's equality, Clarke noted that "a man's relations to woman, how he regards her and how he acts toward her, are the most significant things about him."<sup>269</sup> She continued, "his ideal of womanhood was the highest yet it was not sentimentally rose-colored. He was fortunate in being all his life associated with high-minded, self-reliant, gentle woman, and it was this association, reinforcing his own best judgement, that early convinced him of the right and duty of woman to share equally with man in the civil and political life of society."<sup>270</sup> Without the significant and national scope of her father's work and his strong influence on his daughter, Clarke likely would not have been instilled with the knowledge, confidence, and humanitarianism that

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<sup>268</sup> Francis M. Trissal to Clarke, Sept. 27, 1920, GJC, Box 2, Folder 4, ISL.

<sup>269</sup> Grace Julian Clarke, "George W. Julian: Some Impressions." *Indiana Magazine of History* 2, no. 2. (June 1906): 65.

<sup>270</sup> *Ibid.*

advanced her own work and reputation. Although her father was a true Republican, the values which he bestowed upon her continued through her work, regardless of political party affiliation.

As for the League of Nations covenant that Clarke had spent much of her post-suffrage career advocating, President Wilson faced an opposed Congress back home eager to defy him. The public either strongly accused him of serving the interests of Germans and Bolsheviks or of helping greedy Allied imperialists to hatch an “inhuman monster.”<sup>271</sup> Fearful that the country’s autonomy and military resources were at stake, the Senate warned that they would not approve a peace treaty containing the covenant of the League without revisions to Article X. Wilson believed, however, that one could not simply separate the covenant from the treaty without destroying its entire structure.<sup>272</sup> Although he negotiated amendments to the League covenant in an effort to appease Congress, it was not enough. The Senate chose not to ratify the Treaty of Versailles and decided that the United States would not join the League of Nations.<sup>273</sup>

Nonetheless, Clarke’s determination, passion, and belief in the League of Nations granted her new opportunities to assist the Democratic Party. In September 1920, Clarke helped organize Indiana’s division of a nationwide campaign for presidential candidate James M. Cox and running mate Franklin D. Roosevelt in addition to pro-League senators. The plan allowed leading women to give intensive effort and time necessary in their own states to carry the effort through.<sup>274</sup> When Richard Smith of the *Indianapolis*

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<sup>271</sup> Hawley, *The Great War and the Search for a Modern Order*, 42.

<sup>272</sup> *New York Times*, March 5, 1919, p. 1.

<sup>273</sup> Kennedy, *Over Here*, 87, 348, 360-62.

<sup>274</sup> Irving Fisher to Clarke, Sept. 21, 1920, GJC, Box 2, Folder 4, ISL.



*News* heard about Clarke's participation in this endeavor and of the discontinuation of her Sunday articles (which had begun to be perceived by Ernest Brass of the *Indianapolis Star* as "long campaign documents") he at once answered and said "[T]ell Mrs. Clarke to send her contributions to the News and they will receive a proper place in the paper."<sup>275</sup> In a letter to Clarke describing this series of events, John W. Holtzman elaborated that "I was talking with Mr. and Mrs. Smith last night and they were talking about the superiority of your articles and that you were doing splendid work, so I know that [the articles will] receive proper consideration."<sup>276</sup> It appears, however, that the *Star* continued to publish Clarke's articles.

It was well understood that Clarke's articles were superior and that she was doing "splendid" work throughout the state. As such, male allies like Smith were willing to look past the partisanship of the League of Nations and continue printing her column. Furthermore, there simply were not enough women, yet, who had a keen awareness of political happenings and the ability to speak publicly around the state and nation. This made Clarke even more of a valuable commodity.<sup>277</sup> Although Springer notes that all reformers—women included—were "never of one mind," they were largely motivated by humanitarian ethics, personal fulfillment, and personal advancement.<sup>278</sup> Clarke's leadership position within the state gave her a platform for creating connections to more people outside of her original clubs and networks. As Nathan further noted, this "long

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<sup>275</sup> Ernest Brass to Clarke, Sept. 18, 1920, John W. Holtzman to Clarke, Sept. 22, 1920, GJC, Box 2, Folder 4, ISL.

<sup>276</sup> John W. Holtzman to Clarke, Sept. 22, 1920, GJC, Box 2, Folder 4, ISL.

<sup>277</sup> Ibid.

<sup>278</sup> Springer, "Ladylike Reformers," 253.

term involvement ... becomes much more than just a source of networking, it [becomes] a source of great personal fulfillment.”<sup>279</sup>

After women gained enfranchisement in 1920, many women’s organizations dissolved. Although Clarke continued to work with the newly organized League of Women Voters of Indiana, formerly the Woman’s Franchise League, she primarily focused her efforts on the ratification of the League of Nations. Beyond 1920, Clarke continued to devote her efforts to the people and things she cared deeply about, focusing primarily on her community of Irvington. She also went on to serve as a member of the old Marion County Board of Charities and the City Plan Commission.<sup>280</sup> Furthermore, she headed Indianapolis’ first employment office under the appointment of President Woodrow Wilson. Clarke was also part of a commission that chose the names of authors to be engraved on the outer frieze of the Indianapolis-Marion County Public Library.<sup>281</sup> After years of poor health, Clarke died in her Irvington home in 1938 at seventy-two years of age. At a meeting of the Indianapolis Woman’s Club, she was memorialized for her role in shaping women into political beings.<sup>282</sup> Newspapers across the state also mourned, with the Indianapolis Star noting that “a torch bearer has fallen by the wayside.”<sup>283</sup> See Figure 3 for a portrait of Clarke in 1938.

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<sup>279</sup> Nathan, “Women in Voluntary Service Associations,” 75.

<sup>280</sup> Martha Wright, “Clarke, Grace Giddings Julian” *The Encyclopedia of Indianapolis*, Edited by David J. Bodenhamer and Robert G. Barrows (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1994), 445-446.

<sup>281</sup> Ibid.

<sup>282</sup> Gugin and St. Clair, *Indiana’s 200*, 62-63.

<sup>283</sup> “Tribute Paid to Grace Julian Clarke As Pioneer in Federation of Clubs,” *Indianapolis Star*, June 21, 1938, p. 6.



Figure 3: Portrait of Grace Julian Clarke by Indianapolis artist Simon P. Baus, *Indianapolis Star*, Oct. 30, 1938, p. 72.

Examining activities of women, like Clarke, at the individual and local levels provides a more accurate, inclusive narrative of the suffrage movement and women's political prowess in the United States. By specifically examining how women like Grace Julian Clarke were motivated, influenced, and able to both successfully and unsuccessfully advocate for suffrage, war work, and the League of Nations on multiple platforms and levels over time, a more cohesive narrative of women's political influence can be formed. The perspectives of unique suffragists and clubwomen in Indiana like Clarke reflect the typically overlooked narrative of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Illuminating disagreements over issues that emerged from differences in personal circumstances and political ideology demonstrates that women did not exist in a vacuum and disagreed over many issues. Clarke was unique in her ability to speak out for her own values, in large part due to the influence of her father. Although many women post-suffrage disengaged from being too active in politics, adding women like Clarke to the traditional suffrage narrative is critical for future research. Her story demonstrates that women's political influence did not begin nor end with the 19<sup>th</sup> amendment. Rather, women's political influence evolved over time, and is still evolving today. By incorporating stories of locally female-dominated politics, we can complement the larger narrative of suffrage and women's history—one that so desperately calls for a three-dimensional evaluation of private and public achievements beyond versions of women as “dehumanized saints.”<sup>284</sup>

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<sup>284</sup> Baker, *Sisters*, 4.

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IUPUI. Indianapolis, Indiana. November 2019.

- Master of Arts from Indiana University in Public History.

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## Professional Experience

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## Presentations

May 2019, Midwestern History Conference. Grand Rapids, Michigan.

- “‘A Struggle Between the Progressive and the Reactionary Elements’: Evaluating the Indiana Federation of Women’s Clubs’ 1915 Presidential Campaign”

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- “Repair Work in Women’s History: Commemorating Women’s Suffrage in Indiana”

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## Honors

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