

S I X T Y - F I V E -----

G O I N G O N F I F T Y

A HISTORY OF THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF TEXAS

1903 ----- 1969

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FOREWORD -----

Members of the League of Women Voters of Texas have only recently begun to think of their past and the achievements of the League since its organization. Perhaps this is because busy women tend to forget what has been accomplished by the equally busy women of fifty, forty, or even ten, years past. Some of the women who helped compile the record of the League of Women Voters of Texas are still active today but many new members are joining the League to whom the early days are a mystery.

This book could not have been written were it not for the continuing dedication of many kinds of women to whom much credit is due. Therefore, to them, and to those who will continue to follow in their footsteps, without whose efforts there would be no story, is this book dedicated.

League members throughout the past 50 years have maintained their purpose and their beliefs and have been willing to make a personal effort to make self-government a reality. These women we salute as we tell their story.

GOVERNORS OF TEXAS
(From 1919)

William P. Hobby - 1917 - 1921
 Pat M. Neff - 1921 - 1925
 Mrs. Miriam A. Ferguson - 1925 - 1927
 Dan Moody - 1927 - 1931
 Ross S. Sterling - 1931 - 1933
 Mrs. Ferguson - 1933 - 1935
 James V. Allred - 1935 - 1939
 W. Lee O'Daniel - 1939 - 1941
 Coke Stevenson - 1941 - 1947
 Beauford H. Jester - 1947 - 1949
 Allan Shivers - 1949 - 1957
 Price Daniel - 1957 - 1963
 John B. Connally - 1963 -

STATE PRESIDENTS OF THE LEAGUE
(From 1919)

Mrs. Jessie Daniel Amos, 1920 - 1925³
Georgetown
 Mrs. Helen B. Moore - 1925 - 1925²⁵
Texas City
 Dr. Alice Merchant - ~~1925 - 1927~~
El Paso
 Miss Mary Jagoe - 1925 - 1927
Denton
 Mrs. D. W. Kempner - 1927 - 1929
Galveston
 Mrs. Harris Masterson - 1929 - 1931
Houston
 Mrs. Ella Sealy Newell - 1931 - 1934
Galveston
 Miss A. Louise Dietrich - 1934 - 1940
El Paso
 Mrs. Claude Hill - 1940 - 1942
Austin
 Mrs. D. Bailey Calvin - 1942 - 1944
LaMarque, Galveston
 Mrs. E. R. Brownscombe - 1944 - 1945
Dallas
 Mrs. G. H. Gill - 1945 - 1946
LaMarque
 Mrs. Martin A. Row - 1946 - 1950
Dallas
 Mrs. Ed. Kilman - 1950 - 1952
Houston
 Mrs. L. K. Richards - 1952 - 1956
Waco
 Mrs. Horton W. Smith - 1956 - 1960
Austin
 Mrs. George C. Boller - 1960 - 1962
Galveston
 Mrs. Maurice H. Brown - 1962 - 1966
Waco
 Mrs. William E. Joor - 1966 - 1970
Houston (RUTH)

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MRS. DARVIN WINICK 1970 - 1975
DICKINSON (VETA)
 MRS. JOHN ANDERSON 1975 - 1979
LUBBOCK (BETTY)
 MRS. WINTHROP A. CLARK 1979 - 1983
DALLAS (DIANA)
 MRS. KEN CARPENTER 1983 -
MIDLAND (LOIS)

TEXAS' LOCAL LEAGUES

PRESENTLY ACTIVE	Year Organized	NO LONGER ACTIVE
Abilene	1952	Arlington
Amarillo	1951	Bandera County
Austin	1919	Bay City
Bay Area	1965	Denison
Baytown	1954	Eagle Pass
Beaumont	1947	Henderson
Brazos County	1966	Kingsville
Brownsville	1949	Laredo
Corpus Christi	1945	Mission
Corsicana	1952	Nederland
Dallas	1938	Orange
Denton	1961	Pampa
Dickinson	1949	Robstown
Edinburg	1949	Snyder
El Paso	1965	Taylor
Fort Worth	1941	Weslaco
Freeport	1953	
Galveston	1919	
Harlingen	1952	
Houston	1919	
Irving	1959	
Lake Jackson	1954	
LaMarque	1941	
Longview	1945	
Lubbock	1952	
Midland	1941	
Odessa	1952	

San Antonio

NOTE: El Paso was one of the Leagues organizing the state League in 1919; became inactive in 1939 and was reorganized in 1965..

The date found in current records for the organization of San Antonio is 1940 but it was also one of the organizing Leagues in 1919.

Pasadena	1953
Richardson	1961
San Angelo	1953
San Antonio	1940 (?)
San Marcos	1962
South Jefferson Cy.	1942
Texas City	1943
Tyler	1951
Victoria	1955
Waco	1949
Wichita Falls	1950

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INTRODUCTION

Business, industry, the professions, and just plain people have made 65 the magic age of our generation. This is the story of an organization that was born in Texas in 1903 and which today is a strong, healthy adult not the least interested in retirement, at age 65 or any time soon. It would be beading the truth to say that the League of Women Voters of Texas was organized in 1903 - for it simply isn't so. The forerunner of the League was organized that year and called itself the Texas Woman's Suffrage Association. From these roots came the League of Women Voters of Texas, as we shall later see.

The idea of giving the vote to women was not a novel one in 1903 but the chances for success in achieving the goal were, at least, dim; at best, a good many years away. The seeds of discontent with a male-dominated electorate had been planted at the national level as early as 1872, had been nurtured by such stalwarts of woman suffrage as Lucretia Mott, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Susan B. Anthony. Their stories are told elsewhere by other authors and in the journals of the day. Our concern is with the Texas story.

THE EARLY YEARS

THE STRUGGLE FOR THE VOTE

The Texas story begins in early 1903 in Houston when Annette Finnigan and her sisters, Elizabeth Finnigan and Katherine Finnigan Anderson, organized a Woman's Suffrage League with Annette as its first president. Carrie Chapman Catt lectured in Houston to a meeting of the group in February of that year and in December a convention of local clubs was called to form a state organization with Annette Finnigan elected the first state president.

In 1904 attempts were made to organize Leagues in San Antonio, Beaumont and Austin, but "women, although interested, were not yet prepared to face the ridicule and contempt with which society was attempting to beat back the latest advance in democracy".

The Finnegan sisters called the second state convention in 1904. The organization prospered for a few years after that but when some of the leaders left the state, continuation of the movement was limited to a society organized with 25 members in Austin in 1908.

Eleanor Breckenridge of San Antonio, and Anna Maxwell Jones, a Texan residing in New York, organized suffrage clubs in San Antonio, Galveston, Waco, Dallas, Tyler, and San Marcos. When Miss Finnigan returned to Texas after a few years, she revived her club in Houston.

State headquarters for suffrage work were opened in Houston in 1914 and clubs increased from eight to twenty-one. Pearl Penfield was field secretary and was to a great degree responsible for organizing the state work.

Mrs. Minnie Fisher Cunningham was elected president of the Texas

Woman Suffrage Association at the state convention that met in Galveston in April, 1915, and served as president until the organization disbanded. The president and the new board worked vigorously. Throughout the United States at this period there was an upswing in woman suffrage sentiment and activity. Texas' share in the movement in 1914 was a 400% increase in the number of local organizations and the visits of several national leaders.

In 1916 the well-remembered state convention was held in Dallas. Judge Ocie Speer of Fort Worth here pledged his support to the women. The delegates instructed the executive committee to ask for suffrage planks in the state and national Democratic platforms. The name was changed from the "Woman Suffrage Association" to the "Equal Suffrage Association", and the senatorial plan of organization as a means of reaching all parts of the state with the suffrage message was adopted.

At the National Democratic Convention in St. Louis in 1916 a sufficient number of women from Texas were present to form a half block of the "golden lane" through which delegates passed to reach the convention hall. The convention included the suffrage plank in the party platform, but the Texas women exhibited black crepe bands -- for their governor, James E. Ferguson, who had served on the platform and resolutions committee, had made a speech against the suffrage plank.

When the legislature convened in January, 1917, the legislative committee of the Equal Suffrage Association had already shaped its plan of attack and it was on hand to begin its work. Various bills were introduced by the friends of the suffrage movement, but these could not be carried through to passage.

The woman suffrage movement was colored by the entrance of the United States into World War I, for the women were interested in war measures as well as in suffrage, and they took measures to help solve the food conservation problems and other questions of vital importance during the crisis.

But the women of Texas wished to speed up as much as possible action in Congress on suffrage, and to do this they decided to start a real fight to win the support of congressmen. The session of Congress in 1917 was one well studied by the suffragists and the state organization sent letters from headquarters to leading suffragists in the large cities to keep them well informed on congressional proceedings.

Texas women started the year 1918 with their efforts bent toward the primary suffrage bill which they had seen defeated in the regular session of the 35th Texas Legislature. Many organizations were lined up to help make the movement successful: the Mothers' Congress, State Federation of Labor, State Federation of Women's Clubs, Texas Press Women, State Farmers' Congress, Texas Graduate Nurses' Association, Women's Christian Temperance Union, and the Texas Equal Suffrage Association, which at that time numbered more than twenty thousand members.

Representative Charles B. Metcalfe, to whom many women attribute the success of the suffrage movement in Texas, introduced the bill of 1918 which was to give women the right to vote in all primary elections and nomination conventions. This bill passed both houses and was signed by Governor Hobby (who had been very slow in giving the women help) on March 26, 1918, in the presence of Rep. Metcalfe, Captain Sackett, and members of the legislative committee, Mrs. Cunningham,

Mrs. Dave Doom, Mrs. Elizabeth Speer and Mrs. Jane Y. McCallum.

The suffrage leaders sponsored a citizenship school to instruct the new voters how to register and vote, and 360,000 women were estimated to have registered in the fifteen days allotted to registration. In Amarillo and Palestine more women registered than the number of men who had paid poll taxes to be able to vote.

Before the registration period was over, information came to the women that individuals opposing suffrage were making an effort to prevent the women from voting in the primary election. Injunctions from various district courts had ordered election judges not to furnish tickets to the women nor receive their ballots. It took only a short time, however, for the suffrage organization to have legal matters well in hand.

Primary suffrage, politically, was not the same as equal suffrage, and before long the women, aided by friends in the legislature, began to move toward securing the right to vote in general elections also. Many constitutional amendments were proposed during the regular session of the 36th Legislature. Four were finally passed on to the people - one of them for woman suffrage.

The women, meeting on February 12 in an Austin hotel, launched their active campaign for carrying the suffrage amendment to the state constitution. A complete campaign covering the activities of the Texas Equal Suffrage Association was outlined for the three months until the election. The women seemed sure of victory. They organized their campaign along the senatorial district plan, and the members were so well organized that they were to know, down to within a city block, who would vote favorably for suffrage.

This way of securing the right to vote in the general election failed but there was still the Federal Constitution which might be amended. The congressional chairmen of the suffrage association had begun early in 1918 a campaign to make certain the positive pledge of favorable congressmen toward a Federal amendment. Mrs. Elizabeth Herndon Potter was sent to Washington to line up Texas' 18 representatives and two senators. Women over the United States were disappointed when they learned that their efforts had been defeated - they had counted too much on the favorable action of President Wilson. They soon began, however, to push their cause for suffrage. At last their efforts were rewarded and a Federal amendment was offered to the states for ratification. Texas had the honor of being the first Southern state and the ninth state of the Union to ratify the Susan B. Anthony Amendment which became part of the United States Constitution on August 20, 1919 when the necessary number of states had ratified it.

This story of the battle for suffrage for women has been told in rather full detail to set the stage for what was to follow. Had the Equal Suffrage Association gone out of business completely when the Susan B. Anthony Amendment was ratified and the right to vote granted to women, there would be no need for retelling the story here. This was not to be the end, however. It was truly a beginning.

I

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS IS BORN

On October 19, 1919, at San Antonio, the Texas Equal Suffrage Association resolved itself into the Texas League of Women Voters. And thus began another story which is still being written.

EDUCATION FOR FULL CITIZENSHIP

After this first step for organization of a League of Women Voters was accomplished, the need for education in citizenship became apparent. Women now had the right to vote; how to use that right was something else entirely. A "Get Out The Vote" campaign was launched; schools of citizenship were conducted over the state; and a monthly paper, the "NEW CITIZEN", under the editorship of Mrs. John C. Granberry of Georgetown, was established. Later a "VOTER'S CALENDAR", edited by Miss Mary Jagoe of Denton, became an annual event. Still later a booklet, "KNOW YOUR COUNTY", was compiled and printed. This was sold not only to thousands of voters, but to high schools, which used it as a reference in civics classes.

A CONCERN FOR PEOPLE

In addition to a program of education for new voters, the League undertook a broad legislative program which included a bill to establish a minimum wage for working women, securing an appropriation to match Federal funds for Maternity-Infancy care, to reorganize the educational system of the state with special emphasis on the county unit system of school administration and to authorize an unpaid Board of Education to replace the political Board of three elective officials. Though the reorganization of the Prison System of Texas became the joint project of all women's organizations under the guidance of a Joint Legislative Committee, the actual work of launching the educational program, which resulted in the State Prison Board, was inaugurated by the League at its convention in Fort Worth in 1921.

Under Governor Hobby's administration (1917-1921), the compulsory school law was strengthened, free public schools provided, aid for

rural schools increased and the general scholastic apportionment raised from \$7.50 to \$14.50.

During the ten-year period from 1910 to 1920, the state's population had increased from 3,896,542 to 4,663, 228. Thus, the new League's concern for people became increasingly important.

For eighteen months beginning in August prior to the Fort Worth convention, the League of Women Voters financed the activities of its Committee on Prisons and Prison Labor, including a monthly honorarium to the chairman, as well as printed literature and travel expenses. In the Spring of 1923, during the administration of Governor Pat Neff, the Texas Committee on Prisons and Prison Labor was set up with the League chairman, Mrs. Elizabeth Speer, as executive secretary. Governor Neff is credited not only with the prison survey which led to the creation of the prison advisory council and reforms of the system but also with an educational survey and the creation of an industrial welfare commission.

Thus, with a balanced program of education of citizens in government and party machinery and of legislative activity to improve social conditions, the Texas League of Women Voters set its course for the years ahead - a course which some times paralleled, some times outdistanced the activity of the state government in demonstrating a concern for people.

GROWING PAINS

FINANCING THE LEAGUE

The transformation of the Equal Suffrage Association into the Texas League of Women Voters was not accomplished automatically and into the capable hands of Mrs. Helen B. Moore of Texas City fell a large share of the work of organizing the new League. This involved the raising of a budget sufficiently great to put the League on a firm financial foundation and the setting in motion of machinery to start the program of education of the new voters, to which the Leagues all over the country were committed.

Fortunately, Mrs. Moore had always had a large number of friends in the state and because of their personal interest in her, their response was generous. Although the great dramatic appeal of the fight for suffrage itself was no longer there to give an incentive, Mrs. Moore was able to begin a constructive piece of work that still endures. When she resigned after eighteen months of hard work that included traveling over the state in the interests of the League, Dr. Alice Merchant of El Paso who had been first vice-president, was able to build on the foundation already established.

At the suggestion of Mrs. Minnie Fisher Cunningham, statewide publicity, directed by Mrs. Jane McCallum of Austin was begun and the newspapers of Texas contributed space to the educational program of the League. This, too, established a pattern that continues today.

During the last years of the 1920s, the League was continuing its practice of concentrating efforts on getting out the vote, encouraging the payment of the poll tax, and conducting one-day citizenship

schools, all these being the means by which the education of the voter was emphasized. It also took an active part in a legislative program in the state and national legislatures.

A "Joint Legislative Council" was formed by the heads of six women's state organizations. It was financed by the member groups and kept in close touch with the Texas Legislature by a member residing in Austin. Women all over the country were learning to know their representatives in Congress as well as in the state legislatures, and the idea of "write your senator or congressman" to ask for support of measures that had been studied in the local Leagues was taking hold. Measures in support of maternal and child hygiene were of special interest to the Texas League of Women Voters and they followed the course of bills in this field with interest and concern.

Three important guests were present at the 1927 convention of the Texas League. They were Governor Dan Moody who had reversed the return to a liberal prison pardon policy of the previous administration and who favored educational improvements; Miss Belle Sherwin, president of the National League of Women Voters; and Mrs. Roscoe Anderson, regional director of the League. The speech by Governor Moody on "Our Business in Texas" and Miss Sherwin's and Mrs. Anderson's talks on "The Record of Seven Years", were highlights of the convention.

As in most organizations, the question of finance has been an important one. At times the League sponsored its bulletin by the sale of advertisements, each local League taking the responsibility in turn for securing an advertisement every month. Friends whose interest had been aroused by the program of the League made generous gifts from time to time and always the women who served as officers

or committee chairmen gave liberally of their time and money to support the work of the League.

GROWTH OF LOCAL LEAGUES

Mrs. D. W. Kempner of Galveston was an organizer of ability and during her term as state president, the National League sent an executive secretary to Texas who assisted in strengthening the ties between the local leagues and the state group. At various times in these years there were local leagues in San Antonio, Dallas, El Paso, Fort Worth, Houston, Austin and Galveston, as well as a college league at Rice Institute (now University). The state board also had representatives from Denton, Waco, and other Texas cities, even when there were no active leagues in the home towns of those members. Thus, a geographical distribution of representation was achieved at most times and many of the leagues which became inactive were gradually re-established.

Mrs. Harris Masterson succeeded Mrs. Kempner as president and gave great impetus to the support which the league was able to contribute to the other women's organizations working in the interests of better international relations. Her efforts for peace are so well known in the state that her value to all women's organizations in this field is fully recognized.

The efforts to have the Texas Legislature ratify the Child Labor Amendment to the U. S. Constitution were doomed to defeat, but a good deal of valuable experience was gained in the hard work. Several trips to Austin were made by members from throughout the state in order to appear at legislative hearings and a great deal of information was prepared for use by the League and other women's organizations interested in the problem of child labor in Texas. Jury service for

women also occupied the attention and perennial interest of the League but success in the endeavor at the time of Mrs. Masterson's service to the Texas League of Women Voters was still at least 25 years away.

In 1933 Mrs. Ella Sealy Newell returned to Texas to make her home and was elected president of the Texas League. She had been living in Connecticut for a number of years and had devoted a great deal of time and effort as Finance Chairman of the Connecticut League, so she welcomed the opportunity to continue League work in her native state. She was in office for three and a half years and during her regime great strides were made in the educational program of the League.

With the election of an El Pasoan as president in 1938, the League, for the first time, had a president whose yearly travel schedule provided for her traveling all over the state, so that in addition to having an executive who understood organization from a professional point of view, the local League had the advantage of frequent visits from the state president. She helped with counsel at board meetings and kept in close touch with all program chairmen in the intervals between visits. The machinery of organization was strengthened by her leadership and the fact that she had known and been a member of the Texas League since its beginnings added greatly to her value as president.

COMMUNICATIONS VS. GEOGRAPHY

From 1937 to 1939 changes began to appear in the program adopted by the state league at the annual state conventions. The number of items chosen was smaller as the realization that small membership in so large a state made necessary a careful evaluation of the items on which the interests of those members could be focussed to avoid as far as possible a scattering of effort. For years the Texas League had

been concerned with a desire to see the local, state and federal welfare services more closely integrated and worked for this by supporting legislation that would bring it about. Members expressed satisfaction then when the State Department of Public Welfare was authorized in the late thirties. Then in the Fall of 1939 the new department was set up and the programs for child welfare, aid to the dependent blind, and old age assistance were brought under this one state department. Since some of the funds for these services were from Federal sources, a merit system came into practice and a long-desired aim of the Texas League was realized. There was still no civil service law in Texas but the League could hope that it might not be long in coming.

State convention delegates in March 1940 adopted a program of work that included support of measures to promote the use of voting machines in the state and an adequate appropriation for the public welfare department. In the area for new study were a civil service law for Texas, government financing, and collective bargaining. And so the League and its members who were perhaps scattered widely in what was still at that time the largest state in the Union continued their unified efforts in the twin fields of citizen education and concerns for people.

A PART OF THE WHOLE

A year following the organization of the Texas League of Women Voters, the National League of Women Voters came into existence. The Texas League immediately became a part of this new organization that would unite the women of the country in their legislative and citizen education efforts in the country as a whole.

By the mid-thirties, the National League had developed a technique of program building which included submission to its general membership at a biennial convention of items for study and support. This proved to be highly successful in providing channels for legislative endeavor that were in accord with the practice of democracy.

THE MAN FOR THE JOB

The campaign for "Better Personnel in Government Service" was undertaken by leagues all over the United States during this period. A contest for a campaign slogan produced the following: "Find the man for the job, not the job for the man", and effective use of this was made in nationwide publicity. Following a custom of long standing, the League sent representatives to the national convention of both major political parties and was successful in having a plank in the party platforms committing both the Democratic and Republican parties to the support of trained personnel/^{chosen} on a merit basis.

Late in the summer of 1941 the state president, Mrs. Claude R. Hill of Austin found occasion to reflect the concern of the national League that Congress had "reverted to nature and slipped back into the patronage puddle", by voting against the merit system versus the patronage system. As a footnote to the history being made by the League in 1941, Mrs. Hill further reported that her congressman, Rep. Lyndon B. Johnson, did not return to Washington in time to vote but she had written to him expressing her appreciation for his fine past record on the merit system, and urging him to undertake efforts that would lead to repeal of the patronage system.

RECIPROCAL TRADE

The Texas League of Women Voters took an active part in the Reciprocal Trade Agreements discussions from the beginning, giving close study as joint program projects of both the Departments of Government and Foreign Policy, and the Department of Government and Economic Welfare. The League felt that this was an important improvement in international relations and of especial interest to Texas because of the increase of foreign trade that resulted after the agreements were in force. League interest in Trade and Aid Agreements has continued unabated during all the years of its existence. So great have been the efforts of Texas League members coupled with those of the other state Leagues that make up the whole of the League of Women Voters of the United States that commendations and accolades for those efforts have come from local, state and national sources. Running the gamut from a local survey of the effects of international trade on each local League community in the country to testimony in favor of continuing the programs before Congressional committees, the League has never lost its fervor for this adventure in international cooperation.

WAR-TIME ACTIVITIES

The gathering war clouds on the horizons of Europe by late 1939 were beginning to make their shadows apparent in the League of Women Voters. Reflected primarily in the programs that were adopted by the National League, there nevertheless was emerging indication that war in Europe might well make a difference in the work of the League in Texas.

State Convention action was not necessary for the League to continue its work in support of such Federal measures as were selected by the National League. These latter included support for "measures which prove

necessary to secure Federal aid for education in emergency areas".

By the time the United States entered the war in late 1941, League members throughout the country were turning their attention to such national issues as taxation and defense, Inter-American cooperation, living costs and defense, school facilities and housing in defense areas, and relief, civil liberties and collective bargaining in relation to defense. At the same time, Texas League members retained their support for administrative organization of the state government to promote efficiency, responsibility and economy; a merit system; and increased attendance in public schools. They were still studying how government in the state could be financed; collective bargaining; and education, and undertook a new study of the abolition of the poll tax as a prerequisite for voting. Later chapters of this book will show that this latter issue was to occupy the attention of the Texas League for many years and was to be solved in a totally unexpected manner over 25 years later.

League interest in the war years in Texas continued to focus on election procedures in the state without abatement. A state board meeting in January, 1941 had set the stage for one of the most exciting campaigns the Texas League would undertake. Investigation had revealed that voting machines for the state would represent an expensive undertaking and one that the state would undoubtedly be unwilling to consider with the beginning pinch of wartime economies so the board went on record as recommending that a secret ballot be substituted for the voting machines. Thus was the first step taken in a campaign that would be at least eight years old before victory could be proclaimed. Its story will be told in detail in a later chapter for it vividly demonstrates the perseverance of League members when they believe an

issue merits full attention.

Writing to local league presidents following the state convention of 1941, Mrs. Claude R. Hill of Austin, suggested ways to do the best job of getting every voter to know "What Every Voter Should Know About Foreign Policy" and to aid in the understanding of the Battle of Production. Toward the end of that year, League members were establishing information booths in public places to sell quizzes on defense and to stimulate the sale of Defense Bonds and Savings Stamps. And so the Texas League moved into the war years.

A bulletin from the Dallas League for June, 1942, asked the questions, "Why should we live interationally at the present time? Why is it important in war time? Why will it be imperative for post-war peace?" And it, along with the eight other leagues in the state, through study groups and talking campaigns, played a part in furthering the efforts toward postwar cooperation while the war went on into 1943 and then 1944 and 1945.

The league was on a different basis during those years due to war-time regulations and restrictions as was the majority of civilian life. Despite the outside pressures, and under the guidance of the National League, interviews were conducted throughout the state in an attempt to encourage "good men" to do their duty on the home front in order to assure that the quality of officeholders would remain high.

Exciting events were taking shape by the latter part of 1945 on the national scene and the League divided its efforts between the secret ballot on the state program and the movements that were to lead to the founding of the United Nations. The Dallas League president, Mrs. Martin A. Row, was one of those who watched the signing of the

U. N. charter, signalling the hopes for peace at the conclusion of four frightful years and providing a measure of satisfaction to League members for their part in the public education campaign that preceded the signing.

STATE WORK GOES ON

Despite the Texas League's involvement in wartime activities both in and out of the League, work on state issues went on. The annual conventions of 1943 and 1944 drew a fair representation of the eight local leagues despite travel limitations and the 1944 convention added impetus to and pledged to carry on in earnest the campaign for a secret ballot. The delegates voted to continue their efforts and outlined a legislative program that was to be exciting, educational, historic, some times hysterical, and in the end, utterly frustrating. The legislative committee attended sessions, spoke to senators and representatives, wrote letters, made reports, talked to organizations and individuals, walked the halls of the Capitol, and lost another round when the Legislature failed to pass the secret ballot bill.

An example of the outside events that determined the actions of the League during these years is to be found in a letter to a local league announcing a regional meeting and expressing the hopeful wish that someone would have tires so that a group might be able to make the trip to the meeting.

AN EXPLANATION.....

It may seem to the reader who may be familiar with the work of the League of Women Voters of the United States that only passing notice has been paid to that organization in this little book. This has been a deliberate choice of the author of "Sixty-five, Going on Fifty" since

the national story will be published soon under the title, "Fifty Years of a Great Idea". Therefore, only during that period when state league activity was more or less under the direction of the National League has it been included in this narrative.

#

THE STATE OF THE STATE

THE SANCTITY OF THE BALLOT

(The account of the League's work for a secret ballot for Texas voters which follows is being told in its entirety to demonstrate how the League goes about a campaign for an issue. Readers may question the need for the inclusion of so much minutiae in a history that otherwise lacks such complete detail. This is the reason: Every campaign bears marked similarities to this one; from it many lessons can be learned on both the rights and wrongs of citizen participation in government.)

No chronicle of the years of the League in Texas can be considered complete without a fairly detailed account of the League's work throughout the 1940's for a secret ballot for Texas. Final adoption of a more secret ballot in 1949 was the result and the culmination of 8 1/2 years of hard work during which the League learned new techniques, experienced bitter frustrations, and made friends as well as possible enemies. We have already seen the beginning of the efforts although the idea of the secret ballot may have first appeared on the state program of work in 1936, when it was one of nine items. In 1938 it was one of five and in 1939 became part of the program for special

emphasis, under the wording, "Elimination of ballot numbering". Earlier sections of this book have shown the really first positive suggestions for achieving the secret ballot through the adoption in 1940 of a program which included promotion of the use of voting machines.

In beginning its work in January, 1941 to write a bill to secure a secret ballot for Texas, the League started on more than eight years of continuous activity, in and out of the Legislature.

League experience heretofore had been confined to support of bills already written and presented by other groups. By 1944-45 it had become imperative that the League quickly learn how to go about writing a bill, securing support for it, and getting it through the Legislature.

Work began with research into the ballot laws of nine other states, with responses noted from six state officials. The writers also asked for sample ballots from as many states as possible. Replies indicated that every other state provided a secret ballot for voters. Fact sheets were then prepared for distribution in the hope of answering the most often asked questions and the most often repeated misstatements of facts.

In March, 1945 a report to the national office of the League described the past year's efforts on behalf of the secret ballot bill. The report says in part, "The campaign has included everything we could think of to get the bill passed". The campaign had begun 18 months prior to the convening of the Legislature in January, 1945 with local leagues conducting interviews around the state. All members of the previous Legislature were polled for suggestions for changes in the previous secret ballot bill that would make it acceptable to the Legislature.

The campaign was introduced to the local leagues during the winter of 1944 and hundreds of names of people in non-league sections of Texas were collected to be used in publicizing the bill. Each local league personally interviewed its own legislators and after the Legislature went into session all members of the House and Senate were interviewed at least once more and were given ratings of A, B, or C, depending upon their attitudes toward the secret ballot bill. All state board and legislative committee meetings were held in Austin while the Session was in progress with lobbying one of the main objectives. Publicity releases were sent to every newspaper in the state; a clipping service at the University of Texas was employed; house organs of business and industry received press releases as did church womens', PTA and AAUW groups. Radio programs were presented by one local League.

The bill was not passed during the 1945 Session of the Legislature even though "we really have done everything which ingenuity and experience could suggest and a legislative budget of a few hundred dollars finance".

In submitting her resignation as state president to the state board in April, 1945, Mrs. E. R. Brownscombe of Dallas reported that the "situation now, briefly is this...all except five Senators and five Representatives have been interviewed, some of them more than once, through the efforts of Miss Margaret Phillips and her committee in Austin, the state legislative committee, the state board members, and the Presidents' Council". The problem at that time was to get the bill to the floor of the House and Senate...the Speaker seemed rather unfavorable....clippings received from the University clipping service included editorials in the Temple Telegram, Galveston News, Weslaco

paper, Big Spring paper, Austin Daily Texan, Lufkin News, Bryan Eagle, and Houston Post and news articles in Fort Worth and Houston papers.

By late May it was becoming apparent that the bill was not likely to pass, having been sent to an unfavorable conference committee. The Senators on the conference committee were men who had voted against the bill despite the fact that the majority of the Senate had voted for it. And it did not pass in 1945.

Efforts by the League continued through 1946 to alert the public to the need for another legislative effort in 1947. A flyer was prepared that asked for help from the public to the end that Texas would no longer be one of the only two states which did not provide a secret ballot and protection of the citizen's right to vote. The 1947 effort met the same fate as the 1945 effort. The following verbatim "Final Report of the Legislative Committee to Local League Boards and the State Board" made on June 25, 1947 is reprinted here, with the names changed because some of those mentioned are still active in state politics.

"After the Senate Committee Hearing on April 7th, at which Senate Bill #67 was amended with the Jones amendment providing for the gummed label, and H.B. #97 was set down for public hearing on April 14th, at the request of Senator Long, there was a period of watchful waiting. April 14th came and went and we were informed that the hearing had been postponed at the request of the entire committee on privileges and elections. We then wrote letters to each member and the Lt. Governor requesting that another date be set so that the House Bill could be passed out, with the gummed label amendment and we would thus be able to get it on the Senate

Calendar. The Lt. Governor replied that he would see that this was done immediately. Most committee members replied that they were ready to meet on the bill on the call of the chairman. Nothing happened and in the meantime came the Texas City disaster.

"On the 28th of April the legislative chairman drove to Austin. As soon as she was spied in the gallery, the Lt. Governor and Senator Fellow conferred. Senator Fellow conferred with Senator Long and Senator Fellow sent word the hearing had been set for the following Monday, May 5th. After talking with as many senators as possible, we returned home to wait for May 5. We were on tap for the committee hearing on May 5 and Mr. Masters, God bless him, offered to appear also. Mr. Mann was in the Senate Chamber just prior to the meeting. We went in to the hearing and found that Senator Fellow was out of town and Senator Datson, vice-chairman, was presiding. Senator Jones, Senaotr Brown and Senator Charles were present, but Senator Long was not. Others present whom we felt were more or less on our side were, Bull, Datson, Ford and Tarrant. We felt all right about it as even with Charles voting with Long and Brown, it looked all right, but lo and behold! When it came time to consider the bill, the Clerk who was an employe of Senator Fellow reported she could not find the bill anywhere. Senator Ford insisted she search Senator Fellow's office, desk, etc., but the bill couldn't be found. Senator Long then talked long and loud about how he wanted to offer the gummed label amendment but he couldn't do it without the original bill to see just where he wanted to amend it. It was finally agreed that they couldn't work without the bill as a point of order could be raised on the Senate floor. The meeting then adjourned until the next morning when Senator Fellow was due back in town.

Within ten minutes Senator Ford sent a note saying the Clerk had reported the bill had been found.

"The committee met at 9:30 the next morning with Senator Fellow still absent, with Roy Datson presiding, but with Senators Long, Jones, Charles and Brown all on one side of the table. Mr. Masters was again present as were members of the Austin League. Senators Ford, Bull and Datson were the ones we could count on. Senator Ford stalled for time while I scurried up the back stairs to Senator Tarrant's office and asked him to please come immediately as we needed him terribly. He was busy and didn't get there until after the vote was taken. As a matter of fact he wouldn't have done any good as the Chairman would probably not have voted except in the event of a tie. After some discussion but no mention of the Jones amendment about which he had been so vocal on the previous day, the bill was referred to a subcommittee for study! Senator Datson appointed the subcommittee, composed of Ford, Charles and Long.

"I talked with Senator Charles before I left the Capitol Building, asking him if he would help get the bill out of the subcommittee, but he offered no encouragement.

"After lobbying with Senators and talking with friendly Senators about the chances of getting the Senate bill up and talking with the Lt. Governor who assured us that he would recognize Senator Ford for a motion to bring the bill up at any time, we came home.

"We then had much conferring with members of the legislative committee, and with great misgivings, we decided to try the thing that had been suggested by some leagues of having a demonstration with as many women present as we could rake up. The call for action

was sent to you on May 12, setting the time for the meeting for May 19. Dallas, Fort Worth, Taylor, San Angelo and Austin sent delegations. Austin, bless their hearts, gathered up the AAUW and PTA with banners from their organizations, so that with Mrs. Adkins, Mrs. Trammell and myself, there were about 75 of us. We had banners saying, "The voters of Texas want a secret ballot". We did attract some attention when we took our place in the gallery. Sen. George from Fort Worth introduced a resolution in the Senate welcoming us and extending the privileges of the floor. We conferred with many Senators and the Lt. Governor who again told us he would recognize Sen. Ford any time for a motion to bring the bill up. It was agreed it would be tried the following day. We circulated a poem, written by an Austin member, on "Who Killed the Bill?", not "Who Killed Cock-Robin?"

"Mrs. Adkins and I came on home and Austin promised to be present on the next day and report to us. They reported no headway was made as at the time Sen. Ford was due to be recognized, he was out using the long-distance telephone, and thus lost his place.

"We saw no need to spend money for an additional trip to Austin, so outside of writing a few letters and calling Sen. Ford urging him to again try for recognition, we did nothing. Mrs. Row felt we should again go to Austin, so after much conferring, it was decided that Mrs. Row and Mrs. Marcus would go, as much to establish friendly relations as anything else and get suggestions for a state legislative program. They went down on June 3rd, and the Lt. Governor saw them in the gallery and immediately announced that Sen. Ford would be recognized for a motion to bring up the secret ballot bill immediately after lunch.

"The motion was made by Sen Ford and much debate was had and much fun apparently on the part of the Senators, who were shouting, "Who Killed Cock-Robin?" When the vote was taken on the motion to bring up the bill out of its regular order, the vote, as recorded in the Senate Journal, was as follows:

Yeas - 10	Nays - 11
Absent - 3	

(Names not listed for this account.)

"Some of these gentlemen shown as absent, had been present just a few minutes before and had joined in the discussion. Mrs. Row mentioned Fellow, Tarrant, and George.

"Mrs. Row and Mrs. Marcus talked with many people, including lobbyists, legislators, the Governor and others and suggestions were made by many as to what sort of legislation the League should have on its program and all seemed to be unanimous in the opinion that we should continue with the secret ballot bill and add other things too. The consensus seemed to be that a good job had been done in calling the attention of the public to the need for election law revision and the lack of a secret ballot.

"We have made these reports to you very intimate and have probably told you too many gory details, but we wanted you to get a picture of the true situation and this is our need for building up respect for ourselves in our own communities and the need for more Leagues. When we consider that we have Leagues in only 11 Senatorial districts, it is surprising that we did as well as we did, on a bill that became so highly controversial.

"If you care for recommendations, we suggest a thorough public relations job with our Senators and Representatives. Begin now and

and work on that until the Session meets again. Work for prestige in your community through your local projects. Do a constructive local project in a League-like manner, so that you can ask for support of the citizens of your community and get it. We can be as big in the eyes of the public as we will make ourselves. It is up to all of us."

The Bulletin of the LWV of Texas for Fall 1948 named November "Secret Ballot Month" and much of its space was devoted to the issue. The first biennial state convention of the League again placed the secret ballot item on the Current Agenda with profound determination for complete success. The bill was introduced again on February 10, 1949 by Senator Keith Kelly (fort Worth) and Rep. Doyle Willis (Fort Worth). Representatives of other state women's organizations had met in Dallas in November 1948 to join forces with the League. Resolutions were prepared and introduced at all political party conventions which stimulated wide interest throughout the state. Both state political parties adopted the resolution in their state conventions and made it an item in their platforms.

On March 24, 1949, Mr. Willis succeeded in getting the bill out of committee favorably; on April 25 the bill passed the House by a vote of 106 - 5.

Lt. Governor Allan Shivers was asked by the League to refer the bill to the Senate State Affairs Committee. He not only agreed to do this but later assisted in the appointment of a favorable conference committee. On April 28, 1949 the Senate Committee voted the bill out favorably. After heated argument and delay the bill was amended and passed by the Senate on May 17, 1949 by a vote of 24 - 5. The Conference Committee put in long hours of hard work before the bill was

THE BATTLE FOR BETTER COURTS

While the campaign for the secret ballot drew major interest and attention by its length and inherent drama, the League had not concentrated its legislative efforts solely on that issue. The June 1947 state convention had undertaken a study of family courts for Texas and by the following summer had presented a resolution at the party conventions calling for the establishment of Family Relations Courts, following the adoption by the convention of an item called, "Laws to Facilitate the Establishment of a Family Relations Court for Texas" for action.

The League's immediate purpose was the enactment of laws which would enable proper local authorities to

- 1) aid wards of the court - dependent, neglected, or delinquent juveniles;
- 2) rehabilitate delinquents where possible.

Thus would be accomplished the ultimate purpose - to make it possible for all children to become independent, responsible citizens.

Upon the initiation of the League, two statewide meetings were held, attended by a large number of friends from many fields. A committee of five was appointed to write a bill which would answer the needs of children who were the responsibility of the state. It was the opinion of the legal profession that a constitutional amendment would be required to establish a family court system in Texas, and the committee was directed to write a bill amending the 1943 Juvenile Court Act so that it might better accomplish its purpose. The League had this bill introduced in the 51st Legislature and assumed the responsibility for creating citizen interest in it. It was signed into law in June, 1949.

The 1949 legislation was significant primarily in that it made mandatory a juvenile court in each county in Texas. This court must be a district court in all counties having two or more district courts and either the district or county court in counties having only one district court.

In 1950, the item was moved to continuing responsibilities by the League and called simply, "Family Courts for Texas". The League felt that community education throughout Texas was the necessary next step for the proper use and interpretation of the amended law - and for the realization of the League's ultimate goal: a system of family courts in Texas. In 1952, the League issued a memo titled A BETTER COURT FOR CHILDREN. This booklet, which came to be known as the ABCs, tells in brief and non-technical language exactly what the major provisions of Texas law are concerning the juvenile court and explains how such a court should function. At least nine local leagues in Texas worked on community education in this field between 1953 and 1956, as part of their local programs.

Since there was no state system of family courts in Texas, the Legislature created local courts of domestic relations, at the request of local citizens. Seven such courts were authorized in the years after 1949, but not all were activated by the counties that requested them.

Believing that codification of all laws pertaining to children is basic to any legislation leading to a statewide system of family courts, the League supported in 1951 and again in 1953 a resolution requesting the Texas Legislative Council to prepare such a codification. Neither resolution was passed by the Legislature, but in 1953 the Legislative Council did undertake this study of juvenile laws. A bill containing the new Juvenile Code was introduced in the 1955 Legislature, but failed

to pass. It was introduced again in 1957, strongly supported by the League, and passed -- only to be vetoed by the Governor because it conflicted with the Youth Council bill, passed in the same session, signed earlier.

The Juvenile judges of Texas organized into a separate section of the Judicial Section of the State Bar of Texas in October 1958. The 1960 White House Conference on Children and Youth set up a statewide organization for observation and study of the very problems that make a family court a modern necessity.

By the time of the 1962 state convention of the League, member ⁱⁿ interest/and awareness of the League's involvement in this issue had dissipated and the state Board did not propose that it be continued on the League's program without further study and renewed efforts. The League's ability to act on the legislation that was being introduced was limited by this lack of member understanding. Any updating of the members would have been a major undertaking in which there seemed to be little interest.

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EQUAL/LEGAL RIGHTS FOR WOMEN

Other issues were also claiming attention. It is well to summarize briefly here the early background of the League's efforts in behalf of the status of women. The first equal rights amendment was drafted in 1875 by Susan B. Anthony: "The right of the citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any State on account of sex." This is the exact wording of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, adopted in 1920, the year the League was born.

On a national level, the League has a long history of sustained support of Federal legislation to remove political, legal and economic discrimination against women. The policy has been to treat each discrimination separately.

In 1921, the League, in its national program, began a study of the possibility of amending the Federal Constitution to establish equality of men and women under the law. It soon became evident, however, that such an equal rights amendment would be unwise, because it would not solve the old, and might create new, problems. Society has always considered the differences between the sexes in the making and application of laws. To treat them identically is not necessarily to treat them equally. For this reason, from 1923 until 1954 opposition to the so-called "Equal Rights Amendment" appeared on the League's national program. Since 1954 the League nationally has had no position on this issue.

The League has acted to eliminate specific discriminations in the statutes. As Federal legislation progressed in this field, the matter became more and more a state problem, and on this level the League of Women Voters of Texas has worked consistently.

Jury service for women was a goal of the Texas League from 1936 until 1954. Beginning in 1935, resolutions calling for the constitutional amendment were introduced in every legislative session. In 1949 a resolution succeeded in passing both Houses. Referred to the people, it lost in a close vote of 158,121 to 131,341. The League worked five more years to change the attitude of men and legislators and to overcome the apathy of some women and the antipathy of others. The Jury Service for Women Amendment Resolution finally passed the 53rd Legislature; ~~was~~ was adopted by the people in November 1954.

In 1956 the Continuing Responsibility item "Equal Status of Women" was changed by the state convention to read "Legal Status of Women", thus clarifying the purpose of the item and bringing it into conformity with the national League position. With the passage of the jury service amendment and legislation, political equality between men and women in Texas was completed. All that remained were the legal discriminations.

Attempts in Texas to remove the legal discriminations have been made many times but the attempts have seemed half-hearted, chiefly due to the women themselves who had made no concerted effort.

The Texas Legislative Council was instructed to make a thorough study of the Constitution and Laws of Texas to determine what civil disabilities arose from a woman's marital status and to report to the 1957 Legislature. The League and other women's organizations met with the Council and assisted in the consideration of proposed legislation. The League agreed to act as coordinator of the efforts and prepared kits, furnished speakers, wrote letters and conducted personal interviews to prove that it was no longer true that, "The Women do not care!"

Results of that 1957 campaign were: one bill passed, one bill to be worked on once again. The separate acknowledgement bill, which had seemed fairly certain of passage, was killed in action. The control of separate property bill, on which a harder fight had been expected, passed and was signed by the Governor.

The same state convention that in 1962 removed the continuing efforts for family courts for Texas from the state program also removed the legal rights item from the program for many of the same reasons. The League may not have been entirely satisfied with results of its long campaign for legal rights but found that it could not continue its

efforts without much renewed study. Other women's groups were continuing the effort and the League preferred not to duplicate their activity.

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THE REVISION HIGHWAY

The first real indication of the value of a Know Your State Survey that Leagues had begun compiling in 1948, in an effort to learn more about the functioning of their state government, appeared in the program adopted by the delegates to the 1952 convention. Clearly evident throughout the survey had run the thread of the need for constitutional changes that would permit the state to meet its problems. Delegates proposed then to complete the survey as a basis for the study of constitutional revision. Operating with a state constitution adopted in the "carpet-bagger" days of Reconstruction following the Civil War, it was evident that state government was unduly restricted in carrying on the business of the state. Whether this was merely a symptom or the root cause and how and whether anything could be done about it was what the delegates in 1952 proposed to find out.

While several other issues were to receive and hold members' attention during the remainder of the 50s and on into the late 60s, none was to replace constitutional revision as an ultimate goal to be reached. Many hours of work were to go into the preparation of materials; many League members were to speak, to dramatize, to write letters, to publicize the League's work for revision. As this is being written in late 1967, no concrete results can be reported but the League remains the expert in the field and can proudly proclaim that interest has been generated and that a Constitutional Revision Commission is at work, albeit the League would have preferred a Constitutional Convention.

But this gets ahead of the story of the League's journey down the Revision Highway. 1948 was a milestone year for the League in Texas in many ways. In later chapters the story of changes in the operating procedure of the League will be shown to have taken place then along with the action building toward a climax in the battles for election law revisions and better courts. Delegates at the state convention adopted a Know Your State Study and plunged into a survey of statewide affairs that would provide impetus for state program work for years to come. The plan for conducting the survey was one that placed the interest, the responsibility and the credit directly in the hands of the local leagues. Each league was assigned a topic in the handbook called "Know Your State" and was given the responsibility for completing the necessary research that would produce a report for the statewide effort.

In 1955 the first edition of what was to become a best seller in program publications made its debut. Twenty thousand copies of "Texas Constitutional Review" rolled off the presses to become the textbook on the Constitution that would be used by high school and college civis classes and by all citizens interested in their state government. So great was the demand that, within a few years, the supply had run so low that reissue became a matter of importance. Events moved so slowly, however, that the League delayed republication for a more opportune time. The climate for revision had reached a peak in 1957 with the passage of a resolution by the Legislature to institute a research program on the Texas Constitution. Results of that program were so mixed that the idea of revision seemed to have been shelved by all but League members and a few other interested individuals. Thus it was not until 1966 that the League reissued its "Texas Constitutional Review" in quantity. 63,500 copies were printed and distributed.

The 1955 Legislature passed a concurrent resolution calling for research on the Constitution but it was not until August 1960 that the Legislature, in Special Session, appropriated money for the research to be undertaken by the Texas Legislative Council. Two League members, Mrs. Horton Wayne Smith of Austin and Mrs. George C. Boller of Galveston, had been appointed to the Citizens Advisory Commission called for in the resolution and this Commission began its own independent study of the Constitution. Reports from neither the Texas Legislative Council nor the Citizens Advisory Commission were available for League use until 1961 so the members plunged into revision activity on other fronts. Ten principles by which to judge any new state constitution were adopted; a study of the constitutional provisions for an effective judicial structure for Texas was undertaken and completed; hundreds of League publications on the constitutional revision issue were distributed; the attempt to come to any clear-cut consensus on the role of the citizen in the Texas jury system failed. Instead, a sample booklet to be used by local leagues for the distribution of jury service information was published, to become another tool for public education and information in the League's continuing voter service program.

With the exception of two years (1950-52 when the item was on the League Platform), Texas constitutional revision was from 1948 until 1962 a Current Agenda item with varied and numerous activities on the issue. Action was added to the issue in 1956 and the League's efforts on its behalf were continuing. In 1962, however, the state board proposed (and Convention delegates agreed) to move revision to continuing responsibilities. Continuing responsibilities, defined in the Bylaws as "positions on state governmental issues to which the League had given sustained attention and on which it may continue to act", provided a perfect opportunity for the League to continue to act for revision

without the necessity for further specific study of the issue of the need for revision itself.

And continue to act it did. Each legislative session found the League in the forefront of any effort to promote revision. Bills calling for revision by Convention, for the necessary research leading to revision through a Constitutional Commission, and for measures that would lead to revision (such as an amendment to make it possible to remove the deadwood provisions from the Constitution) were introduced and supported. Events in September 1966 seemed to promise results in the 60th Session, convening in January 1967. Governor Connally, in his speech to the state Democratic Convention, called for making revision the number one issue of the party; it was included in the party platform. The governor again called on the Legislature in his address to a joint session at the opening of the Session to make revision the priority measure. A bill was introduced that would call a Constitutional Convention; it failed to pass. Instead, a simple resolution was passed by the House on which the Senate failed to act. There was no appropriation of money to operate the commission or provide research personnel. The Lt. Governor refused to appoint any senators as members of the Commission but five senators accepted appointment by the Commission itself. The Commission has until December 1968 to complete its work and recommend an entirely new state constitution, or failing to reach agreement on a new constitution, to make suggestions for changing the existing basic law of the state. Mrs. Francis B. May, a member of the state Board of the League, is the only woman on the Commission, appointed by the Governor.

To complete the Texas story of the bits and pieces being added to the League's revision consensus, it is necessary to look briefly to 1964. Again as in 1960, the delegates to the convention picked up a not-recommended item suggested by only two Leagues (Austin and Denton) and exercised their right to make it part of the new program adopted at that convention. As originally submitted by the Austin League, the League undertook a study of the constitutional provisions governing the selection and tenure of appellate judges in Texas. In 1959, as a pilot project under the revision study, League members had added to their basic knowledge on revision a specific study of the judicial provisions in the Texas Constitution but had not included the selection and tenure of judges. Recommended as a one-year study, consensus on the new item was reached in December 1964 and the 1965 Presidents' Council delegates approved making the item a continuing responsibility. Although the League support position applied only to appellate judges, the decision was made to support in principle a constitutional amendment proposed in the 1965 Legislature to provide for involuntary retirement and new removal procedures for all district and appellate judges. League members were encouraged to serve on statewide committees organized by the Texas Bar Association to promote passage of this amendment in the November 1965 election. They also worked with the Bar Association in their local communities. League energies were well-spent; the amendment passed. Then at the 1966 convention the position was incorporated into the support for constitutional revision.

Readers are referred to current League publications for a more detailed account of League work for revision.

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"REPEAL THE POLL TAX"

Some of the delegates at the 1956 convention in San Antonio tried, unsuccessfully, to add the abolition of the poll tax as a prerequisite for voting to the continuing study and action on election law reforms. The League had published a history of the Texas poll tax at the direction of the 1954 convention delegates and interest in removing what was considered a barrier to full participation in voting was beginning to stir. Study and action on the poll tax had been included in the proposed program for 1956-58 as a second item but the majority of delegates felt that League efforts could be better spent in concentrated effort on constitutional revision and refused to adopt the second item.

The 1958 convention in Houston adopted the proposed state program as presented but efforts were made again to add the study of the poll tax and various methods of registration to the Current Agenda, again unsuccessfully.

The program of the League at the beginning of the 1960s retained much from the past but it was at the convention in Dallas in 1960 that delegates added a not-recommended item to the Current Agenda that was to share the spotlight and garner headlines for the League through one of the more exciting periods of the state's history. Buried deep in a wording that would continue the League's work for revision of the Texas Constitution and suggested by only one local league, "emphasis on possible methods of registration of voters", seemed at the beginning of the Convention to promise little hope for its inclusion in the program. Although the state board had assumed that there was only minimum interest in the subject, it was picked up by other leagues and became the topic for much caucussing, corridor conversation and delegate discussion. A groundswell of sentiment to put the League of Women Voters of Texas on

record as being in favor of some form of voter registration, instead of the poll tax system, developed that carried through to adoption by the required 2/3 majority and the League's campaign for the 60s was launched.

As it developed, this issue was paramount among those in which League members believed and for which they were willing to work. BY the time of the 1962 convention in Edinburg, League members throughout the state were ready to say loud and clear that the poll tax as a requirement for voting must be abolished and a permanent voter registration system established. This touched off another continuing effort, reminiscent of the League's earlier campaign for a secret ballot, whose final chapter is not yet written. The poll tax has been repealed; the method, without the \$1.75 payment, remains.

At the 1962 convention, voter registration was moved to the continuing responsibilities since delegates understood that study was complete and only action in the community and in the Legislature would be required. League members had studied and reached agreement on a position in the previous biennium and determined to devote their energies to gaining citizen support for the necessary legislation.

Members began work in their own local communities to acquaint voters with a referendum on poll tax repeal that appeared on the Primary ballots of both parties in May, 1962. More than one million voters in both parties cast ballots on the issue, which was purely advisory to the Legislature, and the majority favored repeal. Resolutions favoring repeal were introduced in the precinct conventions of both parties by League members. Testimony was presented to the Administrative Subcommittee of the Texas Election Law Study Committee and later to the full committee in a public hearing. Statements were

made to the State Platform Committees of both parties and both included a plank calling for repeal and the necessity of a good registration system.

When the 58th Legislature convened in 1963, Senate Joint Resolution # 1, an amendment to repeal the poll tax as a requirement for voting, was introduced by Senator Abraham Kazen of Laredo. Identical bills to substitute a permanent registration system were introduced in both Houses. The bill that finally passed both Houses set up a system that duplicated the existing system except for payment of the poll tax but with a 25¢ fee. The Amendment was approved for submission to the voters in November 1963.

statewide

Plans for an all-out/campaign for repeal were set in motion by the state board. An advisory committee was formed to assist the League. Senator Kazen accepted the honorary chairmanship of the committee and a newspaperman agreed to be executive chairman. The bipartisan advisory committee was not entirely successful when the Republicans failed to name a representative to the committee but the Democrats, AFL-CIO, and business were represented.

Governor John B. Connally keyed the statewide meeting of all interested organizations. Approximately 200 people attended the kickoff meeting. Couching his call for repeal in somewhat ambiguous terms and decrying the possibility of bloc voting as a result of repeal, the Governor helped launch the campaign and, perhaps unwittingly, contributed to its later defeat at the polls.

Finding that citizen understanding of the issues and problems involved was lacking in some areas and deliberately misleading in others, the state president of the League, Mrs. Maurice H. Brown, made a flying

press conference tour of Dallas, Fort Worth, Houston, San Antonio and Austin in the week prior to the election in an attempt to answer the major questions raised. Local league members answered many questions, distributed campaign literature and bumper stickers, and made a generally herculean effort for repeal. Repeal failed, however, due in no small part to a whispering campaign designed to pit liberals against conservatives, race against race, and rural against urban interests. Only one-half million voters went to the polls.

From November 1963 to March 1964 when the League would again assemble in convention to plot its work for the biennium ahead, preparations were underway to continue the fight for a permanent registration system for Texas.

In the meantime, events outside the state were making the question of repeal by Texas citizens a moot question. An amendment to the Federal Constitution, ratified by the necessary number of states in 1964, exempted all qualified voters from payment of the poll tax as a requirement for voting in Federal elections. In a suit filed in 1965 by the Federal government the use of a poll tax as a requirement for voting in any Texas election was declared unconstitutional. The U. S. Supreme Court upheld the lower court decision in May 1966, thus outlawing the use of the poll tax as a prerequisite for voting.

The 59th Legislature, however, passed another resolution setting a Constitutional Amendment election on the question of repeal for November 1966. This resolution also substituted an annual registration system and made it a constitutional requirement. The League was thus handed the incongruous task of asking the voters three years after an all-out statewide campaign for repeal to vote against it this time.

Court decisions had taken repeal out of the hands of Texas voters; thus, the League asked voters to say "no" to an annual registration system. The ballot did not carry a wording that clarified the substitution and annual registration was written into the Constitution to replace the poll tax system. A court appeal on the wording on the ballot has been turned down by the Texas Supreme Court; further appeals are in the planning stages. The League again worked in the 60th Legislature for a better registration system and the bill that finally passed did contain several sections considered improvements by the League. Thus, while, for the most part, the League cannot describe its repeal campaigns and its efforts for a permanent voter registration system as successful, nevertheless important improvements have been accomplished and this was the goal of the League when the item was adopted in 1960. The poll tax has been repealed.

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THE STATE AND/OR VERSUS THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The clear-cut categorical separation of program items offered in 1962 when members decided to make the revision item a continuing responsibility while beginning a new study that might lead eventually to specific areas of the Constitution needing revision, provided opportunities for both old and new members to begin together the process of decision-making for which the League had gained a national reputation. Choosing to study an item broadly labeled "a study of state-local relations", the League plunged into the subject of the interrelationships between state and local governments. Finding little material available for study in Texas, League members looked beyond state lines to where other states were beginning to meet the crises developed through the

years of inattention to state government while local governments relied more and more on Federal programs for solutions to the problems of an increasingly urban society. By the mid-60s the League had developed an understanding and awareness of solutions that led it to legislative action to modernize and strengthen state government. Not incidentally, this modernization pointed out that the League's stand in favor of constitutional revision was a valid one.

The League's study of the relationships between state and local governments developed into a study that could well have been part of the daily newspaper headlines. A growing awareness throughout the state, and particularly in the upper echelons of state government, underlined the fact that the League had indeed chosen wisely and had recognized the trend of the times in its 1962 choice of the subject for attention. Recognizing that crisis was imminent unless state and local governments moved to solve the problems of rapidly expanding urban growth, the League looked at possible solutions and determined that solutions were possible. Among the possible solutions recommended by the League were: strengthen existing local governments rather than create single purpose special districts; provide a flexible structure for local governments and incorporate all its provisions into a single constitutional article on local government; initiate metropolitan regional and state planning in Texas.

The League was one step ahead of Texas government in its study and support of regional planning but outside events quickly served to prove the League was on the right track, and to move state government into consideration of the possibilities. Federal programs that required regional planning in order to be eligible for Federal grants provided the catalyst that turned the tide. The League was in the forefront of fast-moving developments and was able to make a sizeable contribution

by virtue of the research and knowledge it had acquired from the study.

The Texas Legislature passed two important new planning measures in 1965 - one authorized regional planning by local governments for the first time and the other authorized comprehensive state planning and created a state planning council. And during that same year, the Texas Research League, upon the request of Governor Connally, began a long-range research project into the governmental problems of the state's metropolitan areas. When its report was made to the Texas Legislature in 1967, its recommendations, in many instances, paralleled those made by the League of Women Voters and the League supported the Texas Research League efforts in the 60th Session. No success can be reported but the changing character of the Texas Legislature brought about by reapportionment and more urban representation promises full attention to such questions in the future.

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A LOOK AHEAD AT THE STATE OF THE STATE

1966 convention delegates chose a new study of the organization and functioning of the Texas Legislature in the hope of adding still more specifics to their basic knowledge of what a new constitution should contain. Planned on a two-year basis, the study is directed to such topics as: the role of the Legislature in state government and constitutional provisions on organization, powers and limitations; the operation, workload and tools of the Legislature; leadership; committee system; staffing; lobbying. Members are expected to consider unicameralism, annual sessions, selection of the Speaker and the use of computers and other modern devices as they progress through the study.

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ORGANIZING FOR EFFECTIVENESS

THE STATE AND THE LOCAL LEAGUES

Throughout its history, the state League has been concerned with organizational procedures and techniques that would provide it with the effectiveness necessary to be a truly representative statewide organization. At the time of its organization in 1919, only five cities were represented in the state organization. Strength and numbers have varied in the years since then. The strength of the state League and the local Leagues is a prime responsibility of the state board; how this has been achieved is also part of the history of the League of Women Voters of Texas.

As it was at its beginning in 1919, the League has remained an organization which has as its primary purpose the promotion of full participation in political activity by every citizen. To accomplish this purpose, the League, then as now, provided nonpartisan factual information on candidates and issues and studied and took action on issues in the public interest which the members chose. It does not now and has never supported any political party or any candidate.

But, as it was not in 1919, the League today is a member-dominated organization. The greatest achievement of the League in the years 1948-50 was the completion of the move in that direction. Members enrolled in local leagues in communities large and small decide the direction the League shall take. To provide unified direction for all the individual members, Boards of Directors are elected at local, state and national levels. These boards are answerable to the member but are delegated the authority and the responsibility for carrying out the members' wishes. During the last years of the 40s and the first years

of the 50s, this method of operation came to full bloom in the League of Women Voters of Texas.

The proposed state program for 1950-52 was limited to one item - a continuation of the Know Your State Survey-in order to concentrate on organization throughout the state, since the League had learned (the hard way) that attempts to pass legislation often fail because of the districts where it is not organized. It was felt that placing items on the program was ineffective without a medium, the local League, for educating the electorate. The program of the League during these years was divided into Current Agenda and Platform. Platform items were those items which had been studied by the League and on which action was still likely and were the issues also most likely to need widespread support.. Nineteen local Leagues and four campus leagues began the 1950-52 bi-ennium and worked toward another legislative milestone in 1951. After the secret ballot victory of 1949, election laws reforms had been only partially achieved and League members continued to work for measures that would guarantee clean elections, free of the threat of fraud; and for reforms that would simplify and modernize the election process. Perhaps a demonstration of the value of wider league coverage of the state can be drawn from the fact that this election law reform campaign culminated in June 1951 when Governor Allan Shivers signed a Clean Elections bill again in the presence of its League and legislative sponsors.

By 1952, the state president was able to report that the League in Texas had grown to 25 local leagues, 6 provisional and 3 campus, and was still growing in response to requests for organization from various local areas.

The 1954 convention, held in Galveston, can be noted here for

several unusual achievements. In League growth: 40 active leagues with a membership of 5,000; the largest attendance until then at a state convention. In program activity: the completion of the Know Your State Survey; balloting on a myriad of election law reforms that resulted in League positions on 44 separate issues; the use of the Know Your State Survey as a basis for work for state constitutional revision. In internal league affairs: the choice of a new name for the Bulletin -- "THE TEXAS VOTER" was born.

Little fanfare had been generated by a major change in the structure and operation of the league that took place during the last years of the 1940s. But in June 1947 the last annual state convention was held; in June 1948 the first biennial state convention met in Fort Worth. Major reasons for the change seem to be lost in history but it was probably brought about by the growing maturity of the League and the fact that the national League also operated on the biennial convention plan. Yearly meetings continued to be held but the mid-biennium meeting was limited to the adoption of a budget, reporting, and direction on the program action that the League might wish to undertake. Officers were elected at conventions and new program adopted (or continued) at that time. The mid-biennium meeting was called Presidents' Council and its delegates were presidents and one delegate from each local league.

The year between the last annual and the first biennial convention was spent in strengthening the organization of the League in Texas with chief priority given to organizing new leagues. The state board was organized into four geographic sections to carry the work of the League into each section of the state. More localities were asking for speakers and organization work than there were funds to pay for.

If the Bulletin for the Summer of 1949 is accurate, the state board of the League had begun to work in earnest at its responsibilities to the members of the League. From one day meetings every month or so, the board had moved to a meeting that was scheduled to be held in Galveston from July 29 to August 15! Air conditioning being less than universal at the time, we can only hope that some of the sessions at least were held on the beach.

Additional minor structural changes in the organization of the League were made at the 1960 convention as the organization moved into the 1960s. Addition of a third vice-president to the state board was one of the first. Placed in charge of public relations for the state League, this new vice-presidential position was designed to lighten the load on the state president and to provide a broader base of service for the local leagues. Increasing the size of the board to 18 members would, hopefully, lead to better coordination of the activities of the board through a reduction in the overall responsibility until then borne by the state president. At that same convention, a local-leagues-proposed Bylaws amendment to change the biennial convention from even-numbered to odd-numbered years was narrowly defeated. The issue was to come before the next two conventions but, at this writing, the change has not yet been made.

In accordance with the state board's responsibility to provide for "more and better leagues to further with increasing effectiveness the purpose of the League", arrangements were made with the national office to provide this increasing effectiveness through a visit to Texas by a national staff member, Miss Christine Urban. Miss Urban assisted state board members to a better understanding of their jobs and local League members to inspiration through observing her skillful approach to the techniques acquired by experience throughout the country.

As the League of Women Voters of Texas ended four decades of service to the citizens of Texas, decades that had seen increased and increasing activity, Mrs. Horton W. Smith, writing to the delegates to the 1960 convention, summed up the first forty years this way:

"The past is prologue."

"Who we are today --- what we are --- must surely be a reflection of the events during these past forty years of our lives.

"The League moves, and we who join must constantly remind ourselves that we are a part of that on-going movement. Because our history has been an important force in Texas, League members deserve to know more about that history. To fill this need, Mrs. William Ruggles of Dallas has, for the past several years, been gathering together the bits and pieces of our history which have been preserved on paper -- a slim record it is, for always we've said, "But we're too busy doing to report what we're doing!" However, there's a real excitement in those 90 pounds of historical records which have so far been collected. It is my hope that our history can be written now for present and future members to look at with an appraising eye as they work today and tomorrow to carry out the unique purpose of the League of Women Voters.

"In 1927, the national president, Miss Belle Sherwin, in a statement of unusual brevity for the League, described the organization as "an experiment in political education to promote the participation of women in government." By 1939, another national president, Miss Marguerite Wells, reflecting the expanding definition of the League's purpose, said, "Not to amass more knowledge of government, not even to spread it to a greater number of people, but to cause more people to use effectively what knowledge they possess seems today to be the unique aim of the League of Women Voters." And in 1944, Miss Anna

Lord Strauss, national president, wrote, "It seems to me that we have not yet found the key to unlock the door that shuts off millions of citizens from participating in their government.....When I realize that democratic government around the world is almost in eclipse and that various forms of totalitarianism are in the ascendancy, and then realize that we stand alone as a national organization devoted to making democracy work, I am overwhelmed with the responsibility." How the hundreds of thousands of League members through these years of growth worked to carry out the emerging facets of our League purpose makes a story more exciting than any historical novel....and this is the story that needs to be written for the League members of today.

"You at this state convention are adding your chapter to the dynamic movement which we call 'education for democracy'. Your decisions in these three days will reflect your considered opinions of the kind of action you believe the League can most profitably take during the next two years. For you have joined an on-going organization!"

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THE LEAGUE AND ITS MEMBERS

The story of the League in Texas has always closely paralleled and reflected the story of women in Texas. Never was this much more evident than during the early years of the 1960s. Reflecting and continuing the trend that had begun in the previous decade, League members came from diverse backgrounds and varying cultures. The '50s had seen Negro women become part of the League along with women who were naturalized citizens of the country, having come from such different nations as India, England, Germany, France, and Japan. The move to an urban state from the dominantly rural state that Texas had been historically intensified and, at the same time, brought new residents to the state who were to make their mark on the League. The women joined the League of Women Voters, not because they felt a compulsion to reform their new environment, but because of a recognized and recognizable need to identify themselves with their new homes.

Both good and not so good were the results of this transfusion of new blood. The League's legislative activity was somewhat questioned by members of the Legislature who doubted the sincerity of these new Texans. Nominating committees in the League began to wonder where they could find some native Texans to balance the non-natives and then quickly recognized that this was not the solution. Despite the fact that even the state board was overwhelmingly non-native, the League recognized that this was secondary to its purpose. It became apparent that the job to be done was the important factor, not by whom it was done.

The influx of new residents in some areas of the state took on the proportions of the worldwide population explosion. League membership did not keep pace but League boards everywhere began to put more emph-

asis on ways to use the talents and keep the interest of the slowly growing membership. Having hit a peak of 5,000 members in the mid-50s, a constant of around 4,000 became the pattern of the mid-60s. Part of the reason for this, of course, was the fact that business and industry were transferring their people out of the state as well as in and the League lost many members to other states.

A growing awareness that service to a local community, rather than to a limited number of interested women, should be the deciding factor in organizing or continuing organization became the criteria for creating new leagues and served to slow down the growth of the League over the state. Following patterns established and adopted by League members nationally, the League in Texas (and particularly the state board which bears the sole responsibility for helping to maintain local leagues) applied more stringent standards for the development of new leagues and the maintenance of older ones. Thus, moving into the last half of the 60s, the League in Texas could not match membership growth with population growth but it had become a strong statewide organization. So strong, in fact, that in the 1967 Legislature an attack on it by a State Senator drew a reprimand for the Senator from his own local newspaper. Editorially, the newspaper suggested that the Senator had a right to disagree with the League but not to be disagreeable.

Another factor of life in the League in Texas in the '60s was the changing character of its members. No longer dominated by women who happened to have time to spend on it, its membership was made up more and more of women who worked in offices and industry, taught in classrooms, attended school themselves part and full time, and who had many and varied interests outside their homes. To meet the needs of this kind of membership became the challenge for the 60s. Small groups met in the evenings, over lunch during regular working hours, and on Satur-

days and were equally recognized along with those with less rigid demands on their time.

From such strengths as these has the League in Texas continued to prosper. Its state and local presidents have of necessity not been full-time employed women but such employment has not been a deterrent to other members of state and local boards. Women concerned with the issues have found time to help work for the things in which they believed.

Nationally, suggestions were being made for the complete elimination of the separate categories for all League program. This was, in part, being suggested in order to make it easier for the new member and the general public to understand what the League was trying to do. Some of the proponents of the change suggested that outsiders were being confused by terminology and that mere words should never be allowed to hamper an understanding of League efforts. Others were concerned that League action was often hampered by unnatural restrictions imposed by this separation. An ad hoc committee had been appointed following the 1962 National Convention to investigate the question and make recommendations. Composed of state presidents and national board members, the whole spectrum of League program was discussed and analyzed. In the end, however, the committee made no definite recommendation. Having served on the committee, the Texas state president reported to the state board and the local leagues and discussion of a single list for program, doing away with the Current Agenda and Continuing Responsibilities, began in Texas. The National Convention in 1964 adopted an experimental modified program, giving different emphasis to different subjects on the Current Agenda and placing only those subjects which the delegates wished to continue to watch on the Continuing Responsibilities. Nationally, in 1966 the experiment was continued but at the
