
Chapter 3

The Early Years

During the early 1920's the Extension Service emphasized the "Live At Home" program, including the production and conservation of as much as possible of the food and feed of the farm family — home gardens, home orchards, family cows, home poultry flocks, hogs and beef animals for meat, and others. This program was based upon the realization that unless farm families produced these items, in most cases there would not be enough income to buy them in quantities for an adequate diet. Nutrition was poor among the lower income farm families and pellagra and other nutritional ailments were widespread. (Morgan, 1970)

It should be remembered that in this period there was no electricity on farms, no radios, except a few battery-operated sets in the homes of those who could afford them. Food was cooked on wood ranges and farm homes were heated by open fireplaces, with wood cut and hauled from the farm woodlands. There were no electric lights, washing machines, or refrigerators; no electric sewing machines, electric irons, or vacuum cleaners. On most farms, man and mule power did the work. Less than one farm in 500 had a tractor, and these had little equipment to do more than prepare land. Those farms having running water pumped it with gasoline engines, windmills, or hydraulic rams. Windmills were also used to power old Ford generators to charge radio batteries.

Few farmers had cars and these were Model-T Fords. Rural roads in the Piedmont section of the state were such that they could be used only when the weather was good. County agents, in the red clay counties, generally carried a shovel and a tow line in their Model-T to help get them and others out of the mud.

Life was not easy during this time, but the attitude of agents and clientele may be most accurately described by the following poem by Frank L. Stanton.

*"This world that we're a-living in
Is mighty hard to beat;
You git a thorn with every rose,
But ain't the roses sweet!"*

Up until the late 1920's all specialists and other Extension workers at Clemson traveled by train. Practically a whole day was required to go from Clemson to Columbia, and two days were required to go to some counties in the Pee Dee section; and, as many more to return from there to Clemson. Travel by personally owned cars and Extension owned cars was not generally done by members of the state staff until about 1928 and later. (Morgan, 1970)

1919 wasn't an easy year to come to the helm of a work that was growing so rapidly. These were years of adjustments following the great war, but Miss Christine South, a lady of great courage and stature, was not afraid to go ahead, and she became the second to have the title of State Home Demonstration Agent. The period of the 1920's was one of trying to expand and establish stability to the Extension home demonstration program and staff. The major obstacle was the lack of home demonstration agents.

District Supervisors were added to the state staff to do area work and to lead in this uphill effort to raise living standards of farm people to more nearly reach their city cousins and county financing was solicited to help support the work in the counties. The earliest records found indicate the following: Central District, Mrs. Frances Cline, later replaced by Miss Mary Martin, located in Orangeburg; Eastern District, Miss Amanda Edwards located in Latta; Piedmont District, Mrs. Ruth Berry, located in Seneca. By 1923, the District Home Demonstration Agents were: Eastern, Mrs. Theo Plowden; Piedmont, Miss Edith Tarrant; and Central, Miss Bessie Harper. (Woodall, 1992)

During this period, the work was done in groups. The attending homemakers were taught, and in this learning experience they were real leaders, for one of their objectives was to take this information on to others who had not gotten it. Clubs were organized in the various communities, and Home Agents in two counties in 1918 had organized their clubs into advisory councils. One of these was Miss Jane Ketchen, in Calhoun, and the other, Miss Mary Martin, in Abbeville. Miss Ketchen said that the council idea developed as she felt the need of strengthening home demonstration club work in the county and that she definitely needed help from rural women all over the county in the 4-H club program. The state staff organized home demonstration committees in each county not having an agent. To some extent, volunteers in these counties conducted club lessons and organized workshops taught by specialists to keep the program going.

In July 1919, the first group of negro women met at South Carolina State College to receive instruction in home demonstration work. These women were selected by the white home demonstration agent in their county to attend the meeting. At that time, the negro workers were supervised by the white home demonstration agent. The week-long training was conducted by Mrs. Dora Dee Walker, Miss Bessie Hayes, Miss Juanita Neely, and several other specialists from Winthrop College.

After the training, these women returned to the counties of Allendale, Barnwell, Beaufort, Charleston, Colleton, Georgetown, Greenville, Hampton, Horry, Marion, Orangeburg, Richland, and Sumter where they met many obstacles. None had an automobile; there were no paved



Miss Christine Smith Gee State Home Demonstration Agent 1919-1923

roads. They traveled by horse and buggy or by train, and most of their waking hours were spent doing their job. Much of their instruction for farm women was approached through a girl in the family and was done at the local school. (Johnson)

Negro clientele were being reached in a few counties by negro home demonstration agents, supervised at first by Miss Mattie Mae Fitzgerald, headquartered at South Carolina State College, and then by Miss Dora E. Boston. They were responsible, through the State Home Demonstration Agent, to the Director of the Clemson College Cooperative Extension Service. Miss Fitzgerald was appointed as



Early home demonstration work with black clientele

the first negro supervisor of extension work in 1919 followed in 1923 by Miss Boston who had served as a home demonstration agent in Greenville County. Through much hard work, Miss Boston was able to get appropriations for extension work from several counties. This helped give the workers some feeling of stability in their work. (Johnson)

The beginnings of council work probably began in South Carolina as a result of the work of two county agents, Miss Jane Ketchen in Calhoun County and Miss Mary Martin in Abbeville, who formed advisory councils composed of women in their clubs. In 1919, Miss Christine South and Miss Roberts, Greenwood County Agent, attended a meeting of the American Home Economics Association. They heard about the various organizations of farm women around the country, especially in the mid-western states. On their return to South Carolina, Miss South suggested that Miss Roberts form an advisory council of the officers of the Home Demonstration Clubs in Greenwood County. This was done and sometime later in 1919, Miss South attended a meeting of this group which could be construed as being the first meeting of a County Council of



Early home demonstration work with black clientele

Farm Women in South Carolina. In October 1919, Miss South became State Leader of Home Demonstration Work in South Carolina and chose for one of her main objectives an advisory council in every county.

Subjects studied by the women and girls were those of the greatest importance in meeting the needs of rural homes. Nutrition and ways in which the rural farm could produce necessary foodstuffs for the family, and the importance of having an adequate supply of fresh milk, and how to care for it to provide a variety of dairy products for the table, were included. There was a need for improving and enlarging flocks for better egg production, not only for the table, but to sell and give the farm women another source of needed income.

Through Extension training, women learned the need for use of selected seed for their garden plots. Better cultivation methods and actual training in food preservation was conducted at the Winthrop Short Courses, so that women and girls might learn safe methods of food preservation. Contests were held to see who could produce and can the largest number of jars of tomatoes — an important source of vitamin C — for rural winter diets. Surplus jars were sold through markets developed by and for the use of rural women.

At the 1920 Short Course, the women, realizing the benefits of cooperative efforts for home improvement, discussed the possibility of forming a statewide organization of farm women. During their annual conference, Home Demonstration Agents explored this possibility, and plans were formulated for the presentation of the plan at the 1921 Winthrop Short Course.

Miss Jane Ketchen, home demonstration agent in Calhoun County, organized a County Council for Farm Women in 1920. That year three other counties also organized councils. The councils were seen as a means through which farm women could cooperate to give leadership to the home demonstration club program and to pursue community objectives.

Farm Women Organize

On June 7, 1921, while the state home demonstration short course was in session at Winthrop College, home demonstration club members, representing 33 counties, organized the South Carolina Council of Farm Women with three organized county councils and 200 members (Woodall, 1992). The 33 counties attending this first meeting were: Abbeville, Allendale, Anderson, Bamberg, Barnwell, Beaufort, Calhoun, Cherokee, Chesterfield, Clarendon, Colleton, Darlington, Dillon, Fairfield, Florence, Georgetown, Greenwood, Hampton, Kershaw, Lancaster, Lee, Lexington, Marion, Marlboro, McCormick, Newberry, Oconee, Spartanburg, Sumter, Union, Williamsburg, and York (Carson, 1946). South Carolina was the third state to orga-

nize such a state council having been preceded by Indiana (1913) and North Carolina (1920) (Warren, 1991).

Mrs. Theo Plowden, president of the State Federation of Women's Clubs, presided at this organizational meeting and President Johnson, of Winthrop College, and Dr. O.B. Martin, from USDA, spoke to the group. President Johnson called attention to the fact that great consideration was due the woman on the farm. He said that the home is the unit out of which grows communities, states, and nations and an organization of farm women was especially necessary in this state where between 80 and 90 per cent of the women live on the farm. Dr. Martin complimented the representative body of women present, and called on them as a whole to do something worth while. He said that a wonderful opportunity awaits the farm girl and woman. He paid a high tribute to home demonstration work, the objective of which is the saving of civilization. (Minutes, 1921)

Mrs. Bradley Morrah from McCormick County was elected president, Mrs. Paul Brown from Kershaw County became vice-president, and Mrs. Truman Tinsley from Charleston County was elected secretary-treasurer. At the close of this meeting the State Council sent a petition to Governor Cooper asking for more appropriations for the Extension Service (Minutes, 1921). This was the beginning of the long history of public issue involvement that could be called "the quiet revolution". "Never underestimate the power of women", particularly when their interests and concerns center around the home and community in which they live.

The council established statewide goals early-on based on social and economic movements. These goals related to:

- (1) a compulsory school attendance law;
- (2) adult education cooperating with Miss Wil Lou Gray
- (3) building a children's tubercular ward at State Park;
- (4) an agent in every county;
- (5) a marriage health certificate;
- (6) sponsoring health clinics;
- (7) a law requiring a fine for handling liquor;
- (8) the planting of trees along the highway;
- (9) the promotion of county and community fairs;
- (10) the addition of bathrooms to schools;
- (11) a balanced diet through a year-round garden (to serve two vegetables a day), fruit trees, a cow, and 50 hens; and
- (12) beautifying home grounds. These goals were ambitious but they were sorely needed in many areas of the state.

Beginning in 1920 with a market in Kershaw County, farm markets were gradually established in 24 counties. The Extension staff organized a marketing system for cream and

eggs as one of its early efforts. Additional farm income was a pressing need and the logical step was to produce and sell vegetables, fruits, eggs, chickens, pork, baked products in excess of family needs, in a clean, safe market in the county seat. The Home Demonstration Councils included the establishment of "club markets" in their goals. The markets were a joint effort with the county government providing the building and the Extension Service giving the supervision. These markets filled a need until the 1960's although a few very successful ones operated beyond that date. (Woodall, 1992)

It is interesting to note that the South Carolina Council of Farm Women, as it was then called, was organized during a period when women were emerging from their positions as housewives and taking their places as voting, participating citizens of our state. (Cochran, 1971)

Before such an organization was formed, the groundwork was developed over a period of several years when short courses were held at Winthrop College. These courses were conducted by Home Demonstration Agents, first for the training of 4-H girls, and about 1915 or 1916, women were included in this training opportunity.

At the 1922 meeting of the South Carolina Council of Farm Women, Mrs. Bradley Morrah, President from Greenville County, gave an account of the organization of the council and how South Carolina had blazed the trail in the movement to organize farm women. The state, in one year, made a phenomenal growth from three organized county councils with 200 members to 36 county councils with 6,000 members. Mrs. L.C. Chappell from Richland County was elected president at this meeting. (Minutes, 1922)

Dr. Ruby Green Smith, Associate Leader of Home Demonstration Work in New York State, told the council, "All the states are looking to South Carolina for leadership in the marketing work which is being carried on through the South Carolina Home Producers' Association." Dr. D.B. Johnson called women the balance wheel for the safety of the state, expressing pleasure at their entry into the affairs of government and belief in the soundness of their judgment. G.W. Humphrey, live stock development agent of the Southern Railroad, said, "No project or enterprise on the farm could be carried to a successful completion without the backing of the farmer's wife." (Minutes, 1922)

From the annual short course beginning, an organization quickly emerged with its membership aware of and working actively for: (1) compulsory education with appropriation for enforcement; (2) A home and farm demonstration agent in every county; (3) A public health unit in each county; (4) a law providing for publishing of marriage bans five days before a license is granted; and (5) appropriation for Extension work at Winthrop College be restored. State chairmanships were formed in areas of Education, Citizenship, Agriculture, and Home Beautification. (Cochran, 1971)

Membership of the council remained at 6,000 in 1923. The interests of the council during this time are best reflected through the following excerpts from the council minutes, 1923.

Mrs. B.L. Parkinson of Columbia in her speech stressed the importance of the "Homemaker". She said that better homes are not possible until men recognize the fact that homemaking is a profession and should receive its share of the expense budget as well as any other business enterprise.

Mrs. Daisy M.O. Robinson gave a very interesting talk on social hygiene. Mrs. Minorick, a member from McCormick County, protested the fact that her county does not have a home demonstration agent. It was explained why there was no money for placing agents in new counties. After discussion, a motion was made and approved that the president appoint a committee to confer with Dr. Johnson of Winthrop and Dr. Riggs of Clemson as to a re-apportionment of the federal appropriation.

Miss Jessie M. Hoover of the Dairy Division of the United States Government gave a talk on malnutrition and its remedies. She urged the council as leaders in their communities to interest themselves in the proper growth and development of children.

The objectives of the organization were established during this year as follows: "The object shall be to raise the standards of home and community life; to develop leadership and initiative among rural women in the promotion of those movements which are for the upbuilding of rural life; to bring together members of home demonstration clubs for those ends; and act as advisors to county and state home demonstration agents." (Minutes, 1923)

In 1923, Cupid struck and Miss South and Dr. N. Gist Gee were married and went to China, where Dr. Gee taught in one of the Chinese Universities. Miss Lonnie I. Landrum, a native of Florida, had moved to South Carolina, and was named the third State Home Demonstration Agent. Miss Landrum, a math major, taught in public schools in Florida. Observing rural living conditions and being fed an unbalanced diet, led to her decision to earn a degree in home economics at Columbia University in order to have a part in helping change rural family living. She worked for a short period on the state staff prior to her appointment as State Home Demonstration Agent. She served in this role through the difficult



Miss Lonnie I. Landrum State Home Demonstration Agent 1923 - 1947

years of the Depression and World War II. Soon after her appointment, she appointed Harriet Layton as Assistant State Home Demonstration Agent.

Miss Landrum served through a time when health and education were a great need. Pellagra was much too prevalent and, through her leadership, programs were developed in some counties in cooperation with the State Board of Health, the Federal Extension Service, and commercial concerns to study and eliminate this disease.

The Council established the Johnson-Walker Scholarship for home economics students at Winthrop College. Each council paid a regular assessment, along with their annual dues. It was a loan fund until 1966 when the money was turned over to Winthrop with the interest to be used as a scholarship.

Changes and additions were made in the specialist staff to reflect emphasis in programs but financial conditions affected the plan. In 1923, the dairying specialist was discontinued and a home management specialist, Annie J. Campbell (Assistant State Leader with responsibility for management), was appointed for one year. (Woodall, 1992)

In 1923, the Council adopted a creed written by Dr. Ruby Greene Smith, New York, which was:

- 1) To maintain the highest ideals of home life.
- 2) To count children the most important of crops.
- 3) To so mother them that their bodies may be sound, their minds clear, their spirits happy and their character generous.
- 4) To place service above comfort.
- 5) To let loyalty to high purposes silence discordant notes.
- 6) To let neighborliness supplant hatred.
- 7) To be discouraged—Never.
- 8) To lose self in generous enthusiasms.
- 9) To extend to the less fortunate a helping hand.
- 10) To believe one's community may become the best of communities.
- 11) To co-operate with others for the common ends of a more abundant home and community life.

Mrs. L.C. Chappell continued as president of the State Council in 1924. It is interesting to note from the minutes of the Council what the dues structure was at this time.

The annual dues to the State Council shall be based on the membership of clubs. Clubs of 10 members or under shall pay \$1.00. Clubs of more than 10 or as many as 16, shall pay \$1.50. Clubs of more than 16 or as many as 25 members, shall pay \$2.50. Dues for any individual demonstrator not a member of a club shall be 10 cents per year. (Minutes, 1924)

Minutes of the 1925 State Council Meeting show Mrs. Chappell continuing as president until 1926. At the state meeting, Mrs. Richard Williams, President of the League of Women Voters from Greenwood, told of some legislative measures needing support such as forest preservation, compulsory education, child and woman labor law, and child health law. Mrs. James Cain from Columbia spoke on the Children's Tubercular Ward at State Park, and urged the Council to enlist the aid of their community organizations in this work.

In 1926, Miss Will Lou Gray, of the Illiteracy Commission, reported some of the facts concerning educational bills now pending in the legislature. She then made a plea for the illiterates and urged the council to do all in their power to help the opportunity schools. She, as adult education supervisor, conducted an opportunity school in various locations during the summer to help eradicate illiteracy. The Extension Service and the Home Demonstration Council supported and assisted with the conducting of these schools. Many were held on the Clemson campus. Each county Home Demonstration Council financed one to two opportunity scholarships. (Woodall, 1992)

In 1926, after 4 years of progress, the State Council established within the organization three districts to correspond with the districts of the Extension Service with a Director for each district. The District Extension Home Demonstration Agents served as advisors to these directors in their respective districts. (Cochran, 1989)

The Council of Farm Women, through participation, concentrated on building the individual woman to exercise effectively her own thinking, judgment, and leadership; to solve her own problems; and, in cooperation with others, to solve group problems. Early in the life of the council, it became necessary for farm women to learn all they could about parliamentary procedure. The first district officer training program was organized and conducted by Mrs. S.O. Plowden at Statesburg in 1926. (Carson, 1946)

Mrs. E.W. McElmurray from Beech Island in Aiken County was elected State President at the 1926 State Meeting. It is interesting to note that Mrs. McElmurray's mailing address at that time was actually Route 3, Augusta, Georgia. Two of the talks given at the 1926 State Meeting were "Wear A Cotton Dress Campaign" and "Inter-racial Relationships" which give some indication of the concerns of the council at this time. (Minutes, 1926)

The Council went on record at their State Meeting in 1926 as endorsing:

- 1) Seven months compulsory school law and ap-



Mrs. L. C. Chappell, Richland County State President, 1922 - 1926

- appropriation of adequate funds for the enforcement of the same.
- 2) Home and Farm Demonstration Agents in every county.
 - 3) A Health Unit for each county.
 - 4) A law requiring a Marriage Health Certificate.
 - 5) Sixty days or more hard labor with no alternative for making, selling, transporting or having in possession, aiding or abetting the sale of intoxicating liquors.

In addition at this meeting, the Council unanimously endorsed Mrs. Dora Dee Walker as the most outstanding woman teacher in South Carolina and recommended that she be sent to Philadelphia to attend the Sesqui-Centennial Celebration. The Council also pledged themselves to register and vote for candidates who supported their legislative measures and to buy only cotton clothing for themselves or their families. (Minutes, 1926)

It was reported that since the first club market was established by the Council of Farm Women in Kershaw County, there are now 14 such markets, the sales of which last year amounted to \$61,918.49. Most of this money is spent on home improvements and higher education for the children.

In 1924, Miss Ketchen was appointed Home Demonstration Marketing Specialist with headquarters at Winthrop College and served in this capacity until 1947. Her work was outstanding during all this period. She was instrumental in helping to raise the income among hundreds of farm families. The work was hard but proved most satisfying to her as women told her the sales made on these markets helped to pay off the indebtedness of farm homes and was the means of a college education for many of the daughters and sons of home demonstration club market members.

Working together at county, district, and state levels made women more conscious of problems existing at state and national levels. Literacy among rural people was a grave concern of members, and working through the State Library Board, they supported legislation to make the library movement a statewide issue. In 1926, there were but 56 libraries in the state that served only 25 percent of the rural people. Thus the Council supported a movement that established libraries in every county and brought bookmobiles within the reach of all rural families in the state. (Cochran, 1971)

The first work undertaken by the Health Committee in 1926 was in cooperation with the State Board of Health in an effort to get a county health unit in every county in the state that did not have one (Carson, 1946). In addition, the Health Chairman, Mrs. K.W. Littlejohn, reported that 500 school children were supplied with brushes and paste and were given tooth brush drill practice under the direct supervision

of the Health Committee in one county. She further said, "We are becoming more educated to the fact that it is far more shameful to have a patched body than to wear a patched dress." (Minutes, 1926)

Excerpts from several county reports illustrate the kinds of programs and community service projects being conducted locally.

Berkeley County: Carried out a splendid health program, gave \$125 to the children's tuberculosis ward, and about \$200 to other worthy causes, among them \$100 for a Marie Cromer Scholarship fund, and giving their agent a trip to Chicago with her winning girl in a state contest. Two hundred midwives were trained, 600 school children were examined and many treated.

Jasper County: Fifty-three very successful tonsil-adenoid operations were performed as the result of a health clinic held by the Farm Women's Council. **Lexington County:** County rest-room was completed at a cost of \$200. Work was sponsored by the County Farm Women's Council. **Cherokee County:** Is furnishing its fourth room at State Park Sanitarium.

Greenwood County: Conducted several money making projects. Contributed \$32 to the tuberculosis ward at State Park. Used other monies to establish a scholarship for a club girl from the county to attend Winthrop College and purchased a portable Singer sewing machine for the agent to use in girls club work.

During 1927 (Minutes, 1927), the council stressed four objectives for farm families:

- 1) At least a pint of milk each day for each family member.
- 2) A year-round garden with two vegetables served each day.
- 3) Fifty pure bred hens in every yard.
- 4) Beautification of homes and grounds in every way possible.

In 1927 (Minutes, 1927), the council endorsed the following legislative recommendations:

- 1) Compulsory education with appropriation for enforcing.
- 2) A Home and Farm Demonstration Agent in every county in South Carolina.
- 3) A public health unit in each county.
- 4) A law providing for publishing of marriage bans five days before a license is granted.
- 5) Appropriation for extension work at Winthrop College be restored.

In many counties, the council women supported the Club Markets and found them to be a source of income from surplus garden and other products. Where there was no Club Market, the women would sell their produce in other ways. It was reported that one woman supported her family plus having \$200 for her daughter's college expenses from the sale of surplus produce. (Minutes, 1927)

The Council was solidly behind the educational work with boys and girls and believed that it was the most important work of all. At one point, the minutes stated, "These girls are our future council women and the council of the future must be a great improvement over ours of today."

The continued interest of the Council in public affairs and the political arena is demonstrated by the following quote from their 1927 minutes.

"We should see that men or women qualified for office and in sympathy with the legislative program of our council be elected. The president of Marlboro County says, 'The Council of Farm Women used their influence in putting three strong men in the Legislature.'"

No record can be found of the state council membership for the years 1924 through 1927; however, in 1928, the membership was recorded at 4,871.

Mrs. J. Whitman Smith from Lee County was elected State President in 1928 and served until 1934, thus serving a longer period of time than any other president. She not only contributed her time, but financed her travel over the state in the interest of home demonstration work.

Miss Wil Lou Gray, Adult Education Supervisor, conducted opportunity schools in various locations during the summers to help eradicate illiteracy. The Extension Service and the Home Demonstration Council supported and assisted with the conducting of these schools. Many were held on the Clemson campus. Each county Home Demonstration Council financed one or two opportunity school scholarships. (Minutes, 1928)

In 1928, the Home Demonstration Council began a Master Farm Homemaker program and organization. Homemakers were encouraged to reach and maintain a high standard of family living in respect to the home, family members, and community participation. Homemakers nominated by the Home Demonstration Council every three years were judged by a committee of homemakers and those considered worthy were inducted into the Guild at the State Meeting of the Home Demonstration Council. They became members of the South Carolina Guild of Master Farm Homemakers which was affiliated with the national organization (the National Guild now has only seven affiliated state chapters including the South Carolina chapter). (Woodall, 1992)

In 1929, state council membership had increased to 6,194. At the State Meeting in 1929, Miss Bess Rowe brought greetings from the Farmer's Wife Magazine and said that it was her dream that some time there would be a National Council of Farm Women. A York County member read a request that more cotton sacks be used since the prosperity of the South was determined by the price of cotton. It was further suggested that all of those attending the State Meeting the next year wear cotton dresses. (Minutes, 1929)

The State Council went on record as continuing to endorse and support education on maternity and infancy, compulsory school attendance, public health units in every county, and a five-day waiting period before marriage. (Minutes, 1929)

Programs on family health continued to receive attention throughout the 1920's. The Home Demonstration Staff cooperated with an intensive study on pellagra in Lee County by the Bureau of Home Economics in 1929-30. Home demonstration programs were developed to assist with the study and to provide educational work on the cause and prevention of pellagra through cooperation of county health units. County health and nutrition camps were conducted for two-week periods by Home Demonstration Agents and county nurses.

Gradually, as leadership qualities were recognized and developed, the Home Demonstration Clubs designated certain members to be local volunteer leaders who would receive training to teach a certain number of lessons per year. Some counties had more success than others, but the volunteer leaders were recognized as the basis for a successful club program with both adults and 4-H.

One of the greatest tributes to be paid to Extension work in South Carolina was the 1929 enactment of the bill commonly referred to as the "County Agent Law". The South Carolina Council of Farm Women worked very hard for the passage of this law.

During the early days of Extension in South Carolina, county agents and county home demonstration agents were placed in only those counties that would appropriate funds to match state and federal funds available from Clemson. The job of a county agent or home agent in a county could be terminated at the end of any fiscal year by the failure of the county legislative delegation to make the necessary county appropriation.

Since Extension work was still comparatively new, not always accepted, and money tight, county agent work often became a political football in county politics. As a result, in many counties, the work was alternately cut out and re-



*Mrs. J. Whitman Smith, Lee County,
President, South Carolina Council of
Farm Women 1928 - 1934*

County Agent Law

stored according to the way the political winds blew. Because of these uncertainties and the pressure of the work under these conditions, many capable men and women agents left Extension work for more stable and less nerve-racking jobs.

In the post-World War I years, county agents were employed in from two-thirds to three-fourths of the counties in South Carolina, and home demonstration agents in still fewer counties. Usually the larger, richer counties, with cities and industry as a tax base, made the necessary appropriations on a fairly continuous basis, while the smaller rural counties with a limited tax base made county agent appropriations irregularly, or not at all.

With drastic cuts being made in appropriations at both state and federal levels, the Extension Service was also included for curtailment of funds that would have meant the end of the support and reason for existence as a council. Through a "siege by information", the Council President and Legislative Chairman, in cooperation with other women's organizations in the state, met with the Ways and Means Committee in Columbia to explain the service that the Extension Service was rendering to rural people. Every county delegation was contacted within a weekend by council presidents to plead for the Extension appropriation to be retained. Appeals in the form of letters and telegrams were sent to Mr. Douglas, Budget Commissioner; the President, Mr. Roosevelt; and South Carolina Senators and Congressmen. Follow-up letters were mailed, and Mrs. Roosevelt was also asked to lend her influence to retain this appropriation. (Cochran, 1971)

"The County Agent Law", Bill No. 600, was introduced in the South Carolina House of Representatives by Representative W.W. Smoak of Colleton County, and in the State Senate by Senator Olin Sawyer of Georgetown County, and was passed by both houses and approved by the Governor on March 16, 1929. This act stated, "A bill authorizing and directing the employment of at least one home and one farm demonstration agent in each county providing compensation for their services." This act authorized and directed the Clemson Extension Service to maintain a county farm agent and county home demonstration agent in each county of the state with the salary of each to be paid from state and federal funds. Sufficient funds were appropriated by the state to be used with federal funds to pay these salaries. (Morgan, 1970)