

Mother Of Women's Clubs In Maryland Finds Rest After An Eventful Life

Mrs. John T. Graham Was A Woman Whose Public Activities In Baltimore Span As A Rainbow The Years Between The Civil War And The Great War Overseas—Beloved By All, Her Recent Death Caused Much Sorrow.

By EMILY EMERSON LANTZ.

Look up and not down.
Look forward and not backward,
Look out and not in
And lend a hand.
—Lend A Hand Motto.

THE death, within the past week, of Mrs. John T. Graham, of Baltimore and Mount Washington, brings to quiet close upon earth a life of most unusual helpfulness and beauty.

Mrs. Graham was a woman whose life has left indelible impression upon the development of women in this State, and to her initiative and instruction is due the fact that Maryland now boasts a federation of women's clubs that links all of Maryland in one golden chain of co-operative endeavor. Mrs. Graham was one of the most exceptional women Maryland has ever known, a woman who, as long as she had strength to give, gave it freely and helpfully for humanity, a woman in advance of her time who sought to educate her sisters to wider vision and who nearly half a century ago organized the first woman's club in this State. Her eyes were ever on the "visioned future bent." She showed women what they can do, pointed out to them opportunities for doing it and instructed them how to work collectively and efficiently.

She was to the club women and club work of Maryland what Susan B. Anthony was to the members and work of the equal suffrage cause—a tower of strength and an object of veneration and love. She possessed the active mentality, progressive force and executive ability of a man and the gracious womanliness of one to whom home is a sacred and beautiful place and hospitality a joy. Her sense of justice, her impartial reasoning, her wisdom and exceptional intelligence, inclined all to submit gladly to her executive leading, while her sensitive intuitions of the needs of each heart, her loving personal interest in individuals, her warm and helpful charity, endeared her beyond words to those who came in personal relations with her. Her heart and her purse were alike open to any pleading help, either spiritual or material. Her sympathy was like an Aeolian harp, responsive to the faintest stirring of emotional winds; and in her own character she embodied the Lend-a-Hand motto, which served as the guiding principle of the club of which she was so long the inspirational head.

Mrs. Graham was, before her marriage, Miss Elizabeth Turner, eldest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John C. Turner, of Kent county, whose Quaker ancestors came to the colonies with William Penn. She was married on April 29, 1858, to Mr. John T. Graham, of Maryland, at the residence of her uncle, the late William B. Webb, of Philadelphia, the wedding taking place in that city because the rigid discipline of Orthodox Friends in Maryland would not permit a daughter of the Quaker fold to marry outside her own faith. So, a little Quaker maid and a bride, Mrs. Graham came to Baltimore, but to the day of her death she clung to the soft grays of the Friends' attire and retained in speaking to those near and dear to her the quaint "thee" and "thou" of the Friends' speech.

Mrs. Graham was a woman of deep spirituality and simple and abiding faith, and that rare combination, a woman of wide range of outside activities who yet remained the home-loving woman and found the center and source of her inspiration at her own fireside. A tenderly cherished wife, she found in her husband a companion who entered sympathetically into all her aspirations and efforts. Their home at Mount Washington was a place of welcome to young and old, and those who entered found benediction beneath its hospitable roof.

Coming from among Federal sympathizers, Mrs. Graham's interests were naturally with the Union side during the Civil War and her husband, although descendant from a Southern family of Confederate views, also advocated the Union cause. The young couple immediately became identified in this city as prominent Republicans and as antislave and temperance advocates.

Organized Diet Kitchens.
In 1861 Mr. and Mrs. Graham organized, in a two-story house on Sharp street, between Pratt and Camden streets, the Union Relief Association,

the first hospital for sick soldiers to be established in Baltimore. Mr. Graham was afterwards employed by the United States Government to rent the National Hotel and there open the National Hospital, which was the first Government hospital to be opened in the city, while after the establishment of the latter, the Union Relief Association was employed to care for and feed, at Government expense, sick soldiers passing through the city. In this work Mrs. Graham was unceasingly active. She organized diet kitchens during 1861, 1862 and 1863 in all hospitals around Baltimore and in soldiers' camps until she was herself stricken with camp fever and, being a woman of brilliant social genius, as well as a woman of practical domestic experience, she organized the Union Assemblies for the entertainment of local and visiting officers. After the Battle of Gettysburg she assisted her husband in sending, on the afternoon of the first day of battle, a train carrying medical supplies, ice, blankets and necessities for the relief of the wounded. Following the supplies Mrs. Graham went in person to Hanover Junction, where she supervised the distribution of milk and ice-cream among sick men ordered from the seat of war. Finding that the wounded Union soldiers stationed at overcrowded Fort McHenry lacked proper housing, Mrs. Graham went in person to President Lincoln, pleading that temporary shacks might be erected and received permission to convey immediate orders to those in authority to carry out her wishes in regard to emergency buildings.

Mother Of Maryland Clubs.

But it is through her association with the women's clubs of Maryland that Mrs. Graham is best known to the present generation and it is pleasant to realize that the starting point of the first woman's club in this State was a thank offering. In the spring of 1865 Mrs. Graham, then in extremely ill health, was carried from Baltimore to the green hills of Mount Washington. On Thanksgiving day, 1866, she commemorated her restoration to health by inviting the whole neighborhood to share with her in a social reunion.

The acorn thus planted developed into the Nucleus Club of Mount Washington, organized by Mrs. Graham in 1871, the officers being Mrs. John T. Graham, president; Miss Alice E. Sauerwein (Mrs. Charles W. Lord), vice-president; Miss Woollen (Mrs. Francis Sanderson), secretary. The Nucleus by degrees merged with King's Daughters Ten and finally expanded into the still-existent Lend a Hand Club of Maryland. The Nucleus, as its name signifies, a nut or egg, took as its motto the line "In essentials unity, in nonessentials liberty, in all things charity," which motto has since been adopted by the Women's Club of Denver.

A Community Center.

The Nucleus was a mere handful of women who met informally each Monday and arranged a program diverting or educational, to be presented the following Friday night in some public place in Mount Washington. To this entertainment all the residents of the village were invited free of charge and the community center, as well as the woman's club movement in Maryland, had birth at one and the same time. These entertainments, while delightfully social, were also always literary and progressive, and once a year the club celebrated the anniversary of its organization, February 28, 1871, by a luncheon in honor of some distinguished author.

The chief objects of the club were village improvements, neighborly sociability and literary culture. In 1876 the club adopted the King's Daughter methods, with the Harry Wordsworth motto, "In His Name," at which time Mrs. Alice T. Yardly, a sister of Mrs. Graham, became for one year the president. In 1877, Mrs. Graham was again elected president, which office she continued to fill until failing health obliged her to resign club duties and she was made president emeritus. She lived to see the woman's club seed she had planted expand into the Maryland State Federation of Women's Clubs, with its membership of 10,000 women. At the time of her death she was honorary vice-president of the State federation, of which, strange to say, Mrs. Francis Sanderson, who 49 years ago assisted Mrs. Graham to organize the Nucleus, is now president.

Mrs. Graham was also one of the founders, in 1890, of the Woman's Literary Club of Baltimore.

Organized Flower Mission.

The Maryland Fruit and Flower Guild, which began in June, 1894, at Mount Washington, under the modest name of Flower Mission, was one of the first works established by the Nucleus Club and the first meeting of those engaged in what proved to be a very beautiful charity of Baltimore, was held on the veranda of Mrs. Graham's residence at Mount Washington. Flowers were collected throughout the neighborhood and members of the mission carried them in large baskets by train to Baltimore. Since there were no street cars at that date, city members of the Mission met the flower-bearers at the railway station with carriages and the flowers were distributed by them among the sick of Calvert Street Hospital, the Church Home, the University Hospital, the Little Sisters of the Poor, to the poor along lanes and alleys of the city, to workers in factories and to prisoners in jail and penitentiary. A plot was dedicated in

Mrs. Graham's own garden to raising flowers for this work. "Never," said one of the original members of the Mission, speaking of those by-gone days, "was there such profuse flowering, such wealth of loveliness as bloomed in that garden bed, which seemed tended by angel as well as mortal hands. To this day roses clamber all over it, though it has passed into disuse and into other hands long ago and only retains in its name, "Flower Mission Terrace," its association with the charity.

Author And Artist.

The eldest sister of the late C. Y. Turner, distinguished mural decorator, Mrs. Graham was herself an author and artist, having written several books of verse which she illustrated herself. One of the most distinctive features of the Lend-a-Hand Club during her presidency was the annual artists' fete given on May Day when the artists of Baltimore were invited to sketch and paint pictures in the vicinity of Mount Washington, being entertained afterward with a luncheon served at the Casino, Mount