

# WOMAN'S CENTENNIAL CONGRESS

1840-1940

CARRIE CHAPMAN CATT, Chairman

## HEADQUARTERS

1624 Grand Central Terminal Bldg.  
70 East 45th Street  
New York City

Telephone: MUrray Hill 6-8273

120 Paine Avenue,  
New Rochelle,  
New York

October 23, 1940

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Josephine Schain, Chairman  
Mrs. Halsey W. Wilson, Secretary  
Mrs. Bert Hanson, Treasurer  
Henrietta Roelofs, Program  
Mrs. Albin Johnson, Arrangements  
Alda H. Wilson, Budget

My dear Miss Eaves:

I come asking favors. At the Woman's Centennial Congress, which is to be held at the Hotel Commodore on November 25th, 26th and 27th, we are trying to present a feature which will illustrate in some degree the new positions which women are permitted to occupy today because of the organized work of the last century. I enclose a circular which will give you further information about the Congress.

We want to find one hundred women who are actually functioning in positions which no woman could possibly have occupied one hundred, or even fifty, years ago. One of these is engineering. I want you to tell me what you know about women engineers. I presume no woman has had the opportunity of taking a real master position, but how many women engineers are there in all the different departments. Has each variety of engineering women representatives; if so, can you give me the name and address of a woman who holds a reputable position in each one.

We do not expect to learn the woman who has actually climbed to the highest point in engineering, but we would like a civil engineer, mining engineer, electrical engineer, mechanical engineer, and any others you may know. I am not informed as to whether there are women engineers in all these departments.

Are you yourself an engineer? It is a great thing to be an assistant editor of an engineering newspaper, but perhaps you are not qualified by engineering knowledge. Tell me about yourself. I would very much like to have your name included on our list.

I have the name of Mary E. Webber, home lighting specialist in Cleveland, but I do not know what that means. *Do you?*

An early reply will be very much appreciated.

Cordially yours,

*Carrie Chapman Catt*

Carrie Chapman Catt  
Chairman

NOVEMBER 25—26—27, 1940 HOTEL COMMODORE  
NEW YORK CITY

American Society of Women Engineers and Architects Records, Box 1, Folder 5, Folder Part 3, Walter P. Reuther Library, Wayne State University

*Miss Catt  
St 9 5600*

330 West 42 St.,  
New York, N. Y.  
November 8, 1940

My dear Mrs. Catt:

My delay has been until I could get at some old files of women engineers which enable me to answer more specifically than if I relied on memory alone. I hope that this tardy reply will still be useful.

Miss Edith Clarke, electrical engineer with the General Electric Company, is probably doing the most outstanding work in electrical engineering, highly mathematical computations of power lines and distribution through various hookups. Her electrical engineering degree is from Massachusetts Institute of Technology. She is a close friend of Catherine Blodgett, inventor and physicist, who recently discovered or developed the process for taking glare out of glass.

Ethel Bailey was an automotive engineer who was with General Electric in Bloomfield N. J. the last I knew of her whereabouts. I have tried to check with the Society of Automotive Engineers to see what she is doing now but without success. They have three women members but the girl who promised to call me back with their names has not done so.

Miss Olive Dennis is a Civil Engineering graduate from Cornell who has done a distinguished job as assistant to the President of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. She worked out the terminal facilities plan and bus routings and stations when it was necessary for the B. & O to move out of the Pennsylvania Station and to Jersey City. She introduced air conditioning on railroad passenger cars for the first time. She has done research on anatomical construction which she applied to railroad car seats to achieve greater comfort for the passengers and she invented some kind of a window opener that mitigates passenger troubles.

Margaret Ingels I believe is the first air conditioning engineer among women. She has been doing a technical education job for Carrier and is with the Carrier Corp., Syracuse, N. Y. Miss Ingels received her Mechanical Engineering degree from the University of Kentucky

Nora Stanton Blatch deForrest Barney you no doubt have in mind. She has a civil engineering degree from Cornell and is much respected for her ability. According to my latest information she is engaged in designing residences and apartments and developing tracts of land in Connecticut.

If you wish to go abroad, Miss Caroline Haslett has done a distinguished organization job. As Secretary of the Woman's Engineering Society, LTD she organized the Electrical Woman's Association which has educated English Women to use electricity in their homes, has taught them how to use it intelligently and make their own repairs and adjustments. This Association has published a handbook for women users of electricity and built a model electrical house. It does in England the demonstration and promotional work that our manufacturers individually and our magazines and newspapers do. It has a most interesting and successful record.

I have asked Miss Marie Reith and electrical engineer with the Consolidated Edison Company for further information on electrical engineers and I will

forward that when it comes.

She did confirm my understanding for me of Miss Mary E Webber's work. Many of the utilities have lighting experts who advise women how much light is needed for a properly lighted room, where it would be located. They have some technical training, some training in decoration. Miss Reith tells me that about 80 attended the last meeting that she attended. Miss Webber is one of the if not the pioneer in the field and technically very competent, Miss Reith tells me. I met several years ago a charming woman who had this type of job with the Westchester Lighting Co. I have not succeeded in finding a record of her name, though I believe I noted it at the time.

Finally you ask about me. I graduated in civil engineering in 1920 from the University of Colorado. I held engineering jobs with the Denver & Rio Grande Railroad, Colorado State Highway Department and was Office Engineer for Col. Herbert S. Crocker, Consulting Engineer and Contractor before I came to New York. Since I have been here I have been in the civil engineering publishing field as Director of Market Surveys for Engineering News Record and Construction Methods and more recently Manager of the Business News Department of Engineering News Record. The department has 125 field reporters sending in daily reports on construction jobs which we classify and publish to show where work is going on. We also develop the construction volume statistics from these which are the only national construction statistics available. We report cost data and prices which keep engineers and contractors informed of economic movements in the field and compute and publish cost indexes which warn them of trends and enable them to project valuations. I am a registered professional engineer in the State of New York and the first woman to be admitted to Corporate Membership in the American Society of Civil Engineers.

Miss Jane Rider is the second woman to be admitted to Corporate Membership (Associate Member in both cases) She was State Sanitary Engineer for Arizona at the time she was made a member of the Am. Soc. C. E. having come into this work through the bacteriology route. She did an excellent job. She is now State Youth Administrator, N. Y. A. at Phoenix Ariz.

I have some data on women in Germany, Russia, Turkey, France, England, Canada who are engineers as well as many in this country who have taken engineering at College or who are now doing some form of engineering work. I have given you here just the high spots. If you need more, say the word and I will sort out the collection of clippings I have accumulated over a number of years.

Before I close I remind you of course of Dr. Gilbreth of Montclair, N. J. who is personally distinguished as an industrial or motion study engineer. Technical engineers do not recognize this as a branch of technical engineering but for your purposes that should not make any difference. Dr. Gilbreth is teaching at Purdue in the Engineering College there and she has applied motion study principles to design of kitchens for housewives where she pioneered the modern scientific kitchen. This is in addition to the industrial work she has done.

My addresses for these people are old and I have not been able to verify some of them. With this qualification I send them along hoping they will be useful in their present form.

It is a great pleasure to hear from you, and I wish you the full measure

of pleasure I know you will take in the task you have set yourself on behalf of the Woman's Centennial Congress.

Sincerely yours,

Addresses:

Miss Edith Clarke, Central Station Department, General Electric Co.,  
Schenectady, N. Y.

Miss Ethel Bailey, c/o General Electric Co., Bloomfield, N. J. ?

Miss Olive Dennis, Asst. to Pres. B. & O. R.R., Baltimore, Md.

Miss Margaret Ingalls, c/o The Carrier Corp., 502 S. Geddes St., Syracuse, N. Y.

Mrs. Nora Stanton Barney, 700 Steamboat Road, Greenwich, Conn.

Miss Marie Reith, Consolidated Edison Co., 4 Irving Place, N. Y.

Miss Jane Rider, 534 West Latham St., Phoenix, Ariz.

Dr. Lillian Gilbreth, 68 Eagle Rock Way, Montclair, N. J.

# Woman's Centennial Congress

WOMAN'S CENTURY

1840 - 1940

NOVEMBER 25-26-27, 1940  
HOTEL COMMODORE  
NEW YORK CITY

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Josephine Schain, *Chairman*  
Mrs. Halsey W. Wilson, *Secretary*  
Mrs. Bert Hanson, *Treasurer*  
Henrietta Roelofs, *Program Chairman*  
Mrs. Albin Johnson, *Arrangements Chairman*  
Alda H. Wilson, *Budget Chairman*

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## HEADQUARTERS

1624 Grand Central Terminal Building  
70 East 45th Street  
New York City

## Why the Congress is Held

TO COMMEMORATE THE WOMAN'S CENTURY, 1840-1940. TO PLAN WISELY  
AND WELL FOR THE PEOPLE'S CENTURY TO COME, 1940-2040

In 1840 eight American Women, duly elected and properly credentialed delegates, sailed across the Atlantic to attend the first Anti-Slavery Convention. Lucretia Mott was their leader and was one of the bravest women of her time. Elizabeth Cady Stanton was not a delegate, but accompanied her husband, who was a delegate, on their wedding trip. They found London much disturbed over the news that women were coming. After an unbelievably bitter debate, the Convention refused to seat the women as delegates, but gave them places in the balcony, behind a curtain, where they might listen.

Highly indignant, the women resolved to endure such insults no longer and planned to call a Convention when they returned to America and thereby to begin a campaign to remove all discriminations against them. This they did, in 1848 at Seneca Falls, New York, where they listed eighteen grievances as the most outstanding among those suffered.

No college or public high school was open to girls in this country, nor in the entire world. No married woman could control her own property, make a will, collect her own wages, nor have guardianship over her own children, who might be willed away by her husband, even a child unborn. It was contrary to custom for women to speak in public or to organize for any purpose whatever.

The movement thus begun went forward for a century, the program unchanged, the leaders continuous. However it required three long generations to accomplish the aim they set themselves. That movement made a new world for women and new women for the world. That is why we will look backward in review in order that the modern woman may learn her own history; and look forward because women of this day with their more advanced education and more varied experience can certainly formulate a dependable and helpful guide for the coming century.

# Call to the Congress

THE NATIONAL AMERICAN WOMAN SUFFRAGE ASSOCIATION, the lineal descendant of those women who a hundred years ago boldly resolved to organize women for the purpose of removing discriminations against them, now at the close of the century, with its task mainly achieved, hereby invites the thinking women of the Nation to attend this Congress in order that together we may:—

LOOK BACKWARD over the Woman's Century, 1840-1940, in commemoration of the rights, liberties, and opportunities it brought to women,

LOOK OUTWARD upon the Nation and the World to learn what the status of women and of men is today in our own country and elsewhere and what their consequential duties are,

LOOK FORWARD into the far future and fix the essential aims which in the new century must be attained if civilization is to evolve and the human race march onward.

The thought of the world today is confused, despondent and without aim. Any effort which can replace the confusion with resolution, the despondency with confidence, the lack of aim with definite purpose, will contribute vitally to the recovery of world stability.

A clear road unmistakably leading forward must be found and the feet of the human race set upon it. Women are half the race and must do their full share in finding that road. If you are brave enough to think things through, come to the Congress. Together let us strengthen each other's courage, clarify our united thinking, and resolutely insist that progress has merely paused. The world needs another milestone. Together we may lay the foundation.

*Signed:*

Carrie Chapman Catt, New York, *President*  
Mrs. Stanley McCormick, Chicago, *First Vice-President*  
Mrs. Herbert Knox Smith, Connecticut, *Second Vice-President*  
Mrs. Guilford Dudley, Tennessee, *Third Vice-President*  
Mrs. Raymond Brown, New York, *Fourth Vice-President*  
Maud Wood Park, Maine, *Fifth Vice-President*  
Mabel Russell, New York, *Treasurer*  
Mrs. Halsey W. Wilson, New York, *Recording Secretary*

## THE FOLLOWING ORGANIZATIONS HAVE AGREED TO COOPERATE

American Association of University Women: *Pres.*, Dean Margaret Morriss.  
General Federation of Women's Clubs: *Pres.*, Mrs. Saidie Orr Dunbar.  
National Board of the Young Women's Christian Association: *Pres.*, Mrs. Henry A. Ingraham.  
National Committee of Church Women: *Pres.*, Mrs. E. H. Silverthorn.  
National Council of Church Women: *Pres.*, Mrs. Maurice L. Goldman.  
National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs: *Pres.*, Dr. Minnie L. Maffet.  
National League of Women Voters: *Pres.*, Miss Marguerite M. Wells.  
National Woman's Christian Temperance Union: *Pres.*, Mrs. Ida B. Wise Smith.  
National Women's Trade Union League: *Pres.*, Miss Rose Schneiderman.

# Program

## MONDAY, NOVEMBER 25TH.

The Congress opens with a seven o'clock dinner, (\$2.50). Five women speakers, each from a different nation, who are distinguished in their own countries, France, Germany, Canada, China, Argentina, will compose the program.

*Subject: I Speak to American Women.*

## TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 26TH.

Morning, 10 o'clock. General Round-Table with discussion by delegates.

*Subject: Outstanding Problems Which Concern Women.*

Afternoon, 2-3:30 o'clock. Five simultaneous Round-Tables, for delegates only.

*Subjects: Women and Politics  
Women and Economics  
Women, Ethics and Morals  
Women and Education  
Women and War.*

*Leaders and members of these Round-Tables are being selected for their knowledge and interest in each particular subject and will be announced later.*

Evening, 8 o'clock. *Subject: Eighteen Grievances and What Became of Them.*

1st. Feature: Spectacle: Listing the Grievances in 1848. Produced by the Dramatic Department of Vassar College. Mrs. Henry Lyman, Director, associated with Mrs. Hallie Flanagan, Director of Federal Theatre Project.

2nd. Feature: Roll Call of Grievances, 1940.

3rd. Feature: Introduction Descendants of Pioneers.

4th. Feature: Careers for Women in 1840 and in 1940, and Presentation of Gift to Outstanding Career Women.

## WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 27TH.

Morning, 10 o'clock. Reports and discussions of recommendations from the five Round-Tables.

Afternoon, 2:30 o'clock. Discussion and adoption of Declaration of Intentions. Closing addresses by Chairmen.

# Delegates

Each State is entitled to five delegates who will be appointed by a Special State Committee. For information in regard to delegates apply to Headquarters.

Each regular delegate will register and pay a fee of \$2.00. In return, she will receive an admission ticket and a seat for all sessions of the Congress. Each registered delegate will receive with her registration ticket a copy of the book, VICTORY—HOW WOMEN WON IT. This is a brief history of the winning of the vote and has been prepared under the auspices of the National American Woman Suffrage Association, from the records of that Association. The Co-Chairmen of the book are Maude Wood Park of Maine, who was chairman of the Congressional Committee during the last years of the campaign with Congress for the Federal Amendment, and Mrs. Halsey W. Wilson, of New York, Secretary of the N.A.W.S.A. The chapters have been written by members of the N.A.W.S.A.: Mary Foulke Morrison, Maud Wood Park, Gertrude Foster Brown, Penelope Huse, Mary Gray Peck, Mildred Adams and Carrie Chapman Catt. A reader of the proof announced that the Appendix alone, with its abridged information, was worth a million dollars. The book will sell for \$1.25.

The delegates will also receive three photostats of contemporaneous newspaper accounts of happenings in the movement before any delegate to this Congress was born.

The *New York Herald Tribune* contributes a photostat of its report of the Seneca Falls Convention in 1848, the first convention ever called and held by women in the entire world.

The *New York Evening Post* contributes from its issue, May 19th., 1838, a photostat of the account of the burning of Pennsylvania Hall in Philadelphia, a hall dedicated to free speech, where Angelina Grimke, at a woman's meeting, spoke for two hours while stones were thrown through the windows and hostile voices were shouting their derision. The Mayor dismissed the meeting, after which the mob poured kerosene over the building and burned it to the ground. This episode represents the most disgraceful attack upon Democracy in the history of our country.

The *New York Times* contributes from its columns, July 1867, the first speech ever made before a Parliamentary body in behalf of Woman Suffrage, which was delivered by John Stuart Mill.

The photostatic process itself is a new invention and the three copies provide a unique souvenir of the Woman's Century.

## National Committee

Carrie Chapman Catt, *Chairman*

Louise Bache  
Mrs. Fred S. Bennett  
Mrs. Raymond Brown  
Dr. Gertrude C. Bussey  
Mrs. Boughton Cobb  
Olive A. Colton  
Mrs. Frederick L. Cranford  
Mrs. Edward H. Dreier  
Mrs. Saidie Orr Dunbar  
Mrs. L. H. Fradkin  
Dean Virginia C. Gildersleeve  
Dr. Emily Hickman

Mrs. Donald Hutchinson  
Dorothy Kenyon  
Mrs. James Lees Laidlaw  
Katharine Ludington  
Dr. Minnie Maffett  
Mrs. Alice Duer Miller  
Mrs. Harold Milligan  
Esther Ogden  
Mrs. Ruth Haller Ottaway  
Mrs. Maud Wood Park  
Mrs. Edgerton Parsons  
Mary Gray Peck  
Mrs. George A. Piersol

Mrs. E. P. Roberts  
Mabel Russell  
Rose Schneiderman  
Mrs. Mary M. Simkhovitch  
Mrs. F. Louis Slade  
Mrs. Philip E. Smith  
Mrs. William Dick Sporborg  
Dorothy Straus  
Mrs. Norman deR. Whitehouse  
Mrs. Caspar Whitney  
Frances Williams  
Theresa Wolfson

and Executive Committee

## Do You Know?

1. *Do you know* what were the eighteen grievances from which women suffered in 1840?
2. *Do you know* how many years were consumed in removing one grievance, denial of the vote to women?
3. *Do you know* what became of the other seventeen grievances?
4. *Do you know* what woman circulated the first petition in the United States, and why?
5. *Do you know* what organized women were threatened by a mob of 10,000 men?
6. *Do you know* why women in 1872 voted illegally in the United States?
7. *Do you know* what college was the first in the world to admit women?

Come and learn the answers to these and many other questions.



I have found water supply  
and sewerage interesting.

Which of these offers the  
best opportunity for women?

Hoping you find this  
letter worthy of your attention,  
I will greatly appreciate  
an answer and will be  
looking forward to it.

yours sincerely  
Jane Hall

208 Rolla  
Rolla, Mo.  
Oct. 25, 1940

Dear Miss Eaves,

As you might remember I  
wrote to you two years ago and  
asked a few questions concerning  
your career for an article in  
the "Missouri Miner". The article  
was not published due to a mis-  
understanding; but the informa-  
tion I gathered for it was of  
value to me, personally.

I am now in my senior  
year here at Missouri School of  
Mines and during the past two  
years I certainly have learned  
more fully the value of some  
of the statements you made  
in your letter of Nov. 10, 1938.

The actual work in engineering  
as far as I have learned is not  
as hard as the working with

2.  
men. Some of the boys just can't understand that a girl might be serious about studying engineering.

Since you asked me to write to you and let you know of my progress, I shall take the liberty of asking you some questions from time to time closely relating to steps I might take in the future, if it is agreeable with you. I feel as though, in this case, that advice from a woman to a woman is best.

I have often given thought to engineering journalism and have tried to get as much background <sup>for this work</sup> as I could here at the college. On the other hand, right from the beginning my aim has been and still is structural design; but lately

March 7, 1929

Prof. H. E. Phelps,  
State College of Washington,  
Pullman, Washington.

Dear Professor Phelps:

I certainly was astonished to see your name on the envelope which reached my desk yesterday. I recognized it at once and read your letter with a great deal of interest. It is good to hear from you.

I hardly know what to write you about an opening for Miss Adams. A recent graduate of Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Miss Soroko was successful in obtaining work here with structural engineers which, I believe, consisted of working out frame diagrams for multiple-story buildings. Her special interest, however, was in hydraulics, and as soon as she had an opportunity she went into that kind of work. She is now on a research assistantship at the University of Wisconsin. Her address is

Mary O. Soroko,  
2300 Kendall Avenue,  
Madison, Wisconsin.

She knows a great deal more about the ways and means of obtaining jobs for recent graduates than I do. I believe that Miss Adams could get some very sound information by writing to Miss Soroko, and I am sure that Miss Soroko would be glad to hear from her and will help her if she can.

The last I heard, Edna Bretal, of Boulder, was doing drafting for the Public Service Company at Newark. She was not entirely satisfied with the work but I believe had difficulty getting into anything else.

I also know of a civil engineering graduate from Cornell who is in the statistical or rather traffic engineering department of the American Telephone and Telegraph Company, but who also is waiting to get into a more strictly civil engineering opening.

If it will help Miss Adams, I shall be glad to send you or to send her the names of some structural engineers and architects on the Pacific Coast with whom she can get in touch. If she

Prof. H. E. Phelps— 2

is comfortably established financially, I hope that she will work into engineering through the drafting and computing channels. However, if she is entirely dependent upon her salary and upon regular employment, I would recommend that she reinforce her accomplishments with shorthand and stenography and use that as a wedge to open up the field for her. I will surely keep her in mind and let you know if I have any good ideas.

I send my very best regards to you and Mrs. Phelps.

Sincerely yours,

Director of Market Surveys.

E. Eaves  
EMR-ER

March 28, 1929

Miss Habel Adams,  
523 College Station,  
Pullman, Wash.

Dear Miss Adams:

I am sending you some names picked at random from names of architects and engineers on the Pacific Coast. Apparently there are none on this list from Seattle, Wash., but if you are particularly interested in Seattle, I can find some names there for you.

Most architects now either employ civil engineers on their staffs to handle the structural design and other features of the larger structures, or they employ consulting structural engineers to handle this work for them.

I hope that you will find some leads among the names I am sending. You will find that both engineers and architects will be very helpful and if they have no openings in their own organizations, they will be glad to tell you of possible openings in the organizations of friends and acquaintances.

You will probably find that it will be extremely difficult to locate a position by correspondence. You may be able to find some leads as to where openings are, but you will probably have to plan on a personal interview.

I have just talked to a friend in the American Society of Civil Engineers who tells me that Mr. E. H. Chandler, 501 Security Bank Building, Olympia, Washington, who was formerly secretary of the American Society of Civil Engineers, has a wide acquaintance on the Pacific Coast and is himself a structural engineer. I would suggest that you write him and tell him briefly what you want to do and ask him for suggestions on the most practical way to get started in structural engineering.

I shall be very interested in hearing how you get along and will appreciate hearing from you occasionally. I certainly wish you all success.

Sincerely yours,

Elsie Eaves

Director of Market Surveys

Women Engineers