

## About the California Federation of Women's Clubs

Website: [cfwc.org](http://cfwc.org)

By Deborah Bushnell, State Chair, CFWC Women's History and Research Center, 2019

I was first contacted the by author in March 2019 as she was looking for research and information on the California Federated Women's Clubs (CFWC). Shirley Dickard was specifically looking for information on her Great Grandmother Emily Hoppin. Emily had been involved in CFWC and was elected President of the state federation in 1915.

The California Federation of Women's Clubs (CFWC) is affiliated with the General Federation of Women's Clubs (GFWC), an international women's organization dedicated to community improvement by enhancing the lives of others through volunteer service for more than 126 years. The Clubs of CFWC are located throughout California with the primary purposes of carrying out charitable service programs, providing leadership opportunities, and enriching the lives of its members through personal growth.<sup>1</sup>

Founded in 1890, GFWC's roots can be traced back to 1868 when Jane Cunningham Croly, a professional journalist, attempted to attend a dinner at an all-male press club honoring British novelist Charles Dickens. Croly was denied admittance based upon her gender, and in response, formed a woman's club—Soros. In celebration of Soros' 21<sup>st</sup> anniversary in 1889, Jane Croly invited women's clubs throughout the United States to pursue the cause of federation by attending a convention in New York City. On April 24, 1890, 63 clubs officially formed the General Federation of Women's Clubs by ratifying the GFWC constitution.<sup>2</sup>

Shirley sent me excerpts from her novel and I was struck by the similarities of women in the book with all the women involved in the CFWC from the beginning. Women like Emily Hoppin. They were and are the backbone of every part of our lives, be it home, business, social, or political. In the early days', women were considered 2<sup>nd</sup> class citizens, but Emily rose above the norm of her day and was a shining star.

Shirley has brought to life three strong women. It was a privilege to be involved with this book, even in a small way.

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<sup>1</sup> CFWC Website ([cfwc.org](http://cfwc.org))

<sup>2</sup> GFWC Website ([gfwc.org](http://gfwc.org))