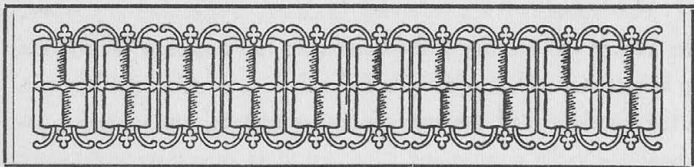




[Ruth Cutler and family papers.](#)

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The Maids' Club House

Vassar College



FOR OVER twenty-five years there has been a growing effort of the students at Vassar to share some of their pleasures and opportunities with those who carry on the domestic labor of the college halls. They have appreciated how cramped the life of the maids has been and how little opportunity there was for them to rest or amuse themselves after working hours in their rooms, which are small and on account of necessary conditions, none too pleasant. As a result the girls preferred to spend their evenings down-town or on the streets. Interest in and concern for these facts gradually increased until in 1908 the students built a house for the use of the college maids. This was done only after several years of careful planning and strenuous effort to raise sufficient money, and although the house is all paid for, it is necessary to have an endowment fund.

The house itself is a little grey stuccoed, red-roofed bungalow. The kitchen and laundry in the basement; the homelike library, the big living-room with the piano and fireplace and comfortable chairs on the first floor; and the sunny infirmary upstairs, are becoming indispensable to the comfort and happiness of an increasing number of girls who welcome the Club House as a place where they can go when they are tired and need a good change from their small sleeping rooms and places where they work during the day. Here they can rest or read if they like, or drop in to use the sewing machine or laundry. They come here in the evenings instead of going downtown or spending the time in their rooms, and they chat and play games and have a general sociable time. Those who desire it can take lessons in English, Geometry, French, German or Music, and there are also classes in Cooking, Sewing and Handicrafts. Every Sunday evening services are held, with an occasional address by one of the college professors or local clergymen. Often informal parties are given, with more elaborate ones at Thanksgiving, Christmas and Washington's Birthday; and there are usually one or two minstrel shows and plays or operettas during the year.

Those who use the house—a small majority of all the maids employed—are organized into the Goodfellowship Club which is self-governing. The club dues, which are voted upon by the members, are twenty-five cents a semester, and are, of course, at the disposal

of the club. The members, with a growing sense of responsibility and ownership, use these to buy such articles of furnishing for the house as are needed from time to time, and also for the entertainments. Last year the club raised, in addition, \$100 which it gave toward the endowment fund.

The Club House is not only of value to the maids, but it is of increasing value to the students as well, who acquire training here which may later prove of use to them in other social activities. The work is directed and carried on by a committee of students as a part of the Students' Association, and this committee and the chairmen of the various branch committees meet with the Supervisor, who lives at the house, and co-operate with her. There are altogether about sixty students actively interested including those who serve on the various committees and those who teach.

Thus the Club House is for the students a training centre, and for the maids it is a homelike place where they can go to enjoy themselves after working hours. It is a centre of influence outside the college as well, for many of these girls live on farms nearby, and they carry the influence of the Club House to the home communities.

An endowment is absolutely necessary to maintain this work which is proving of more benefit each year. The expenses in keeping the house open, with a professional Supervisor, are heavy—\$1,100 a year. Annual canvassing has proved not only difficult but un-

certain and therefore experience has shown an endowment fund to be necessary. This has been started, but after doing our utmost to raise \$26,000, we are still lacking \$6,000. This it is necessary to raise by June 1912, since a part of the \$20,000 has been promised on condition that the full sum be completed by that date. Moreover it is most desirable that the entire endowment be finished as soon as possible since the interest on it is important for the work of the Club House. We are sure that there are people who are not only willing but able to help, and we are doing our best to find them, for gifts of any size are most acceptable.

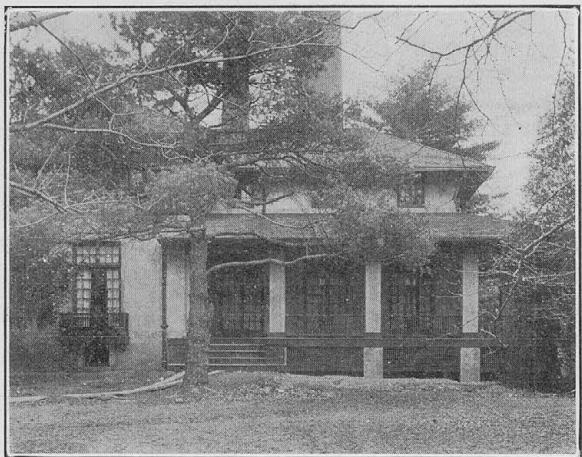
If you know of anyone who would be interested from any point of view—as alumna, friend or student of economics—will you let us know, for the need is immediate and urgent. We should be very glad indeed to give further information of any sort.

RUTH CUTLER,

Chairman of Student Committee.

March, 1911

Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, N. Y.



MAIDS' CLUB HOUSE
Vassar College

The Maids' Club House

Vassar College

For over twenty-five years the idea of some sort of a club which would furnish for the maids of the college an opportunity for rest and study and play has been growing here at Vassar. In 1908 the Club House was built by the students for the use of the maids. In order to carry on the work satisfactorily an endowment was found necessary. The endowment fund of \$26,000 was completed by promise June, 1912, and will be in hand June, 1913.

A committee of six students, under the Students' Association is responsible for the work of the house. A member of the faculty acts as advisory member of the committee. The work is directed by the Supervisor, a trained social worker, who lives at the Club House. The Club House Committee and the various committees of volunteer workers meet with the supervisor and co-operate with her.

The maids have a self-governing club, the Good-Fellowship club, besides one or two small special clubs like the Mandolin Club and the Polish Club. The girls take more and more responsibility in initiating and managing their own activities, parties, plays, etc. The money they make at their entertainments they use to buy such articles of furnishing as are needed from time to time or to advance some branch of the work. This year the club used \$50 to buy books for the club library.

The work this year has been especially encouraging in some respects, although of course there are many problems. Miss Lauder has been in charge as supervisor. Her experience as a social worker

in other places and her connection with the college as an alumna have given her an understanding of the needs and possibilities of this work. Almost all the maids employed in the college, have used the Club House in some way. About one hundred have joined the Good Fellowship Club and paid dues—and many girls use the house who do not belong to this club. The study classes and the music lessons have continued as usual. About thirty-five have studied at least one subject. There have been about twenty music pupils through the whole year. The sewing has been taught by helping the girls individually to cut and make their own clothes, instead of having an organized class. The work in cooking has been put on a much more scientific basis. A gift of \$100 enabled us to have a table built and equipped so that each girl can do her own cooking during the lesson. Miss Smith, a graduate of Pratt, gives a lesson one evening every week. The Tuesday evening parties and lectures have been very popular. The girls especially enjoyed the concert given in the chapel May 1st for the maids and their friends. There have been one or two informal parties Friday nights, when girls could entertain their men friends. Stunt parties and shows and plays are always a favorite sort of fun, and this year besides the parties given for fun, the club gave a minstrel show to raise money for the library.

Our effort is to make the Club a place of recreation and a place of opportunity for all the maids. If any of them care to take up any sort of study, we make every effort to make it possible for them. If any condition that is wrong in their surrounding comes to our attention, we report it to those who are responsible. But the chief emphasis is laid on recreation. The house is a social center, a place where they can meet each other, and play or read, or work together, or where they can rest; a place where they can entertain their friends from out of college. We want to make the house theirs to do with as they wish, with the help and guidance of the supervisor, and the help of the students when they want it.

TREASURER'S REPORT FOR 1912-1913

On hand, Sept. 28, 1912 \$1,097.09

RECEIPTS

From interest on endowment	\$988.54	
“ sales	418.55	
“ personal gifts	136.87	1,543.96
		<hr/>
		\$2,641.05

EXPENDITURES

To salary, wages and board for supervisor and maid for household expenses	\$1,063.05	
“ Penny Provident Bank Fund	50.00	
“ expenses for sales	64.44	
“ equipment for cooking class	38.50	
	<hr/>	
Total expenditures	\$1,215.99	\$1,215.99
Balance on hand May 12		1,425.06
		<hr/>
		\$2,641.05

The income from the full endowment will be sufficient for the present to pay the salary and wages and board of the Supervisor and maid. What surplus there is together with what can be raised at the Christmas fair is just sufficient to cover the general running expenses. We will have to look to enlarging the work before long. It is already very large for our present provision, and we must meet this growth.

EVELYN A. NOBLE,

Chairman of Student Committee
for the Maids' Club House.

May, 1913.

Vassar College,
Poughkeepsie, N. Y.

ST. PAUL GIRL IS AT THE HEAD OF MAIDS' CLUB HOUSE AT VASSAR

Special to the Dispatch.

POUGHKEEPSIE, N. Y., Oct. 27.—A few years ago the Students' association of Vassar college built a club house for the use of the college maids. It is designed to be a homelike gathering place for the maids, where they may rest and avail themselves of wholesome amusements and instruction.

The club house is a small artistic building of concrete, with a wide ve-

Durand Hall, Milwaukee, Wis.; Lucy Coultas Lovell, Scranton, Pa., and Mary Agnes Wilson, Zabriz, Persia.

Classes in music, English, dancing, handicrafts, travel, cooking and sewing are conducted by various students. During the year the Goodfellowship club, which has been organized among the maids, gives various parties and also dramatic performances in which they are trained by the students. Teas are given frequently to raise money for the club house. Every Sunday evening a re-



THE MAIDS' CLUB HOUSE, VASSAR COLLEGE.

landa. On the first floor there are large rooms for recreation and classes, and a cozy library; upstairs there is an infirmary, and in the basement a kitchen and a laundry, which are at the disposal of the maids.

An experienced settlement worker is in charge as supervisor, and all the work, social and educational, is under her direction. A committee of students, which represents the Students' association, co-operates with the supervisor in social and educational work, and manages the finances. This committee consists of Miss Ruth Cutler, St. Paul, Minn., chairman; Misses Elizabeth Heroy, New York city; Caroline

ligious meeting is held.

In undertaking the building and the management of the club house, the students assumed a great financial responsibility. Every effort is being made toward raising the necessary endowment fund of \$26,000. At present \$8,000 is still lacking.

Not only is the club house of great benefit to the maids, but it also offers an excellent opportunity to the students for training in social work.

Miss Cutler of St. Paul is a most enthusiastic worker. Through her efforts the Maids' club house has been made a matter of personal interest to every member of the college.