

In accordance with these wide interests she is a Fellow of The American Institute of Chemists, a member of the American Chemical Society, the Society of Medical Jurisprudence and this SOCIETY OF COSMETIC CHEMISTS.

And what has been the result to date of the functioning of this complex and effective reaction mixture?

At that time in the early twenties, after your Medalist turned to cosmetic chemistry, she resolved to bend her energies to putting this somewhat recondite, dope-book, cut-and-try field on a sound scientific basis. You know much better than I the phases of this effort, the work, the sweat and tears. But here is the end result—the first woman medalist of the SOCIETY OF COSMETIC CHEMISTS.

I give you Miss Florence Wall!

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## FLORENCE E. WALL: REBEL INTO PIONEER

BY HAZEL L. KOZLAY

FLORENCE E. WALL and I both entered the cosmetology field in the same year and met the following year, during 1925, when she already was working for Inecto, Inc., then the leading manufacturer of hair dyes, as director of technical advice.

She seemed to be exceptionally well-fitted for such a job. Dr. Ralph Evans had been looking for a woman chemist with teaching experience—someone who could use her hands. A requirement was a good background in organic chemistry, and Florence's experience in fur dyes probably had caught his eye.

Her job was to serve as liaison between the laboratory, where they were doing intensive research on dyes and other hair preparations, and the salon where these were tried out on models. She began in the most practical way; she dyed her first head of hair on her first afternoon with the company.

The laboratory work was soon sidetracked, however. Because she knew several languages, she was put on a special job of library research. Because she also could write effective letters, the officials had her establish a department of technical advice which involved handling all correspondence from cosmetologists and supervising all demonstrators on the road.

Then the directors decided to entrust her with the writing of a textbook on hair dyeing. This took her three months, and she completed it on her first anniversary with the company. It went to press bearing the title "Canitics," a word which she herself coined to designate "the art and science of hair dyeing."

She went to Europe for three months to recover from all this and when she returned the book was out. The company heads immediately put her to work to organize a school. This was called the Notox Institute which specialized in postgraduate training in everything relating to hair dyeing. Many schools of this kind have been established since, but this was the first—and was a success from the very first day.

Soon after the school was opened, Inecto, Inc., bought the Marinello Company and Florence was thrown into reorganizing the curriculum for the various schools. This gave her a chance to broaden out into the whole field of general beauty culture.

After listening to the peculiar brand of science the teachers seemed to be composing before her very eyes and ears, she was convinced that she should study the background of cosmetology herself to establish the facts. She decided that she should go to a medical school for this information, but she could not get into any of the local schools—an outcome which she now looks back on as a miraculous escape. She later found a better way to acquire what she wanted.

By this time her official title was Director of Trade Education and Technical Publicity. Through her interest in the publicity, she became very active in the Women's Advertising Club of New York. She lectured frequently, giving talks on cosmetics to schools, clubs and other organizations.

She continued to direct the Notox Institute, teaching hairdressers from all over the country and abroad, and also assist in the Marinello Schools until December of 1928. By then, the routine had become so well established that she was fed up with it and decided to go into the more stimulating activities of free-lance work. It was a great surprise to all of us when she made this move, because she seemed to be doing such a wonderful job. When I came to know her better, I realized why this had to come about. She is essentially a creative person. She loves nothing better than to create something out of nothing and get it going; but then she is willing to turn it over to someone else and start on something new.

She had never forgotten her frustration about the medical course and what she had wanted to achieve through it. So she set up a program whereby she could study everything that seemed to relate to the background of cosmetology which would contribute to a more scientific approach and greater accuracy.

The first item on her list was to learn just how much actual skin trouble there was from the use of cosmetics. She already had met Dr. Herman Goodman, who at that time was working with Dr. Curt Wimmer in his cosmetic class at the College of Pharmacy, and he very generously allowed her to visit his clinic in dermatology at the Skin and Cancer Hospital. Dressed in a white coat like an intern, she faithfully attended there twice a week for three months. She learned a lot about skin troubles, but was

happy to note that while there she observed nothing traceable to cosmetics.

Then she went to Europe again, this time on a definite search for information about what Europe had to offer in cosmetics and beauty culture. She spent six months traveling through ten countries and studied her subject from every angle. As a chemist (and she was also at that time editor of *The Chemist*), she reached all the professional people—other chemists, physicians (including many whose names are on our best books) and lawyers. As an active member of the Women's Advertising Club, she reached all the advertising and merchandising people. Also, as the former "big sister" in technical advice on cosmetology and cosmetics to salons all over the United States, she had *entrée* to all the fine salons in Europe. As is characteristic of her, she gave as well as took. She lectured here and there and wrote articles for the press in England and Germany.

One of the impressions she brought back with her was that we Americans should have no inferiority complex about our own cosmetic products and treatments. The way European prestige, especially French, was overplayed in our advertising used to make her very impatient. I remember her saying, "Let's have anything that is European, or that is French, if it's really better than what we have. . .but not just because it's European!"

She was barely settled at home when she received her first call in her free-lance work. This first job was to write a complete textbook for the Marinello Schools. As a title for this book, she coined the word, "Beautistry." She reasoned: "We have chemistry and dentistry. . .why not 'beautistry?'"

With this project she embarked on an intensive career of writing. It was here that she began to demonstrate her capacity to handle several different tasks while giving complete concentration to each. Her work at this time was very diversified. She was editor of *The Chemist*, writing articles for the trade magazines (including the one of which I was editor), giving some lectures and occasionally running an educational program for a trade show. During this time she also assisted the New York City Health Department in the revision of the Sanitary Code as it is related to cosmetics and worked with the Bureau of Investigation of the American Medical Association.

Her next phase was when she became filled with a burning zeal to make cosmetics and cosmetology better understood by professional people. She presented the first paper on cosmetics ever read before the American Chemical Society. About this time she was made an honorary member—and she was long the only woman member—of the Paint and Varnish Division of the Society—because there seemed to be no other place in the organization for someone of her rather unusual interests.

Another notable paper in this particular cause was the one she presented before the Society of Medical Jurisprudence. I remember the occasion very

well. The paper entitled, "Cosmetics—Outcast of Medical Science," was discussed by three distinguished dermatologists, a prominent lawyer and your own member, Maison G. deNavarre. It was delivered in the sacred halls of the Academy of Medicine and was something of a sensation. It is rather amusing to recall that Florence Wall, who addressed the final meeting of the Society's season, and Clarence Darrow, who had addressed the first one, were the only speakers who drew a full house that year.

Next came the revision of the Food and Drug Law. . .and for a while that was a major interest. She very much resented the influence and acceptance that the group of professional crusaders, which she humorously called the "Apostles to the Guinea Pigs," had in the first attempts at revision. She kept close watch over all developments, and appeared at all Senate hearings on the Copeland Bill as an independent witness on behalf of the cosmetic industry. She did this on her own responsibility and at her own expense, and until this bill was passed, she continued to work closely with Senator Copeland. Her particular delight was in baiting the professional reformers, and Senator Copeland often tipped her off when one of them was going to address a meeting somewhere so that she could manage to attend and do some ladylike heckling.

In the meantime although she continued writing and lecturing, she was mulling over what to do about advanced education. She wanted to find out where cosmetology belonged in the system of general education. After discouraging experiences at other institutions, she enrolled in the School of Education at New York University and took courses in anything that seemed to be appropriate. After two years plugging along as a student, she was given the opportunity to present the first college accredited course on cosmetics. This was in 1936 in the School of Education itself at New York University. Actually this course was introduced in answer to the demand from a group of teachers of cosmetology in public schools of the city.

And so started another phase of her career. That first course, called "Cosmetic Hygiene," was a great success. Instead of the minimum of fifteen students which was required, the first group numbered sixty-nine. I remember that class well because I was in it myself. I also remember how entertaining as well as profitable, we all found it. An interesting thing about it, in the light of history, was that it gave us an epitome of Florence Wall's idea that "Beauty is an Ensemble," involving not only makeup and hairstyling but also weight control and good posture. For a good figure as a basis for correct line and color in dress, she studied massage and investigated every reducing salon, health club and exercise place. She worked with everyone from Ned Wayburn to Mensendieck. I went with her for a few weeks to what was innocently called the "limbering and stretching" class at Wayburn's. You should have seen us in our cute blue rompers, cavorting around, tearing ourselves apart!

The first course at New York University was continued, and it always drew a wide variety of students. In my own class alone we had advertising people, chemists and pharmacists, beauty editors, nurses, practicing cosmetologists and teachers in several fields.

Three other courses were soon added. Two of these, "Advanced Cosmetology" and "Teaching of Cosmetology," were restricted to people in the field. The third addition on the "Teaching of Personal Grooming," was especially for people in home economics, personal hygiene and other fields, who teach high school and college students.

She always maintained friendly relations with the dermatology department at the College of Medicine, and gave a lecture to the postgraduates each year in exchange for a visit to her advanced class by one of the professors. A few of the doctors actually ventured over to the School of Education for her course in cosmetology, always *incognito* and scared for their lives (and reputations) that some of their colleagues would learn where they disappeared to on those evenings. And just a few years ago she gave a full summer course to the postgraduates in dermatology.

Florence regretfully terminated her work at New York University in 1943 when she had to move to Easton, Pa., for her war-time work as technical editor for General Aniline and Film Corporation. After two years she returned to New York to become technical editor for the consulting laboratories of Ralph L. Evans Associates. Since 1947, however, she has been back at her own consulting work.

The crowded G.I. program at New York University made it impossible for her to regain a foothold at the university, but this did not curtail her teaching activities. She has been engaged for educational programs by many schools, colleges and state departments of education throughout the country, principally "teaching teachers to teach" cosmetology.

It is easy to see how this came about. She really is an exceptionally good teacher because she has a knack of talking to students on their own educational level. She has been equally successful with physicians, teachers and sales people. And it must take something special to explain difficult and seemingly abstruse points in science and technology to the average mixed group in cosmetology—people with varied backgrounds and abilities—and make them understand it and like it.

She has also, as most of you know, continued her writing. Of the five books to her credit, the two best known now are her encyclopedic "Principles and Practice of Beauty Culture" (now in its third edition) and a comprehensive guidance manual called "Opportunities in Beauty Culture." In addition she has contributed chapters or sections on cosmetics to books by several other authors and to two encyclopedias. Many of you undoubtedly have seen the pieces in the "Encyclopedia of Chemical Technology" but you may not know about the set of articles in the "World Book Encyclo-

pedia" which is edited for secondary schools. Those articles which she started so long ago now number 235 on cosmetics and cosmetology alone, and they have appeared in a wide variety of publications.

So that brings us practically up to date. I really should say a few words about one phase of her work which has gone along almost continuously through the years. As a change from writing, she likes to use her hands. It is occasionally a surprise to clients to learn that she can actually perform all the beauty techniques herself. This dates from her practical experience in the beauty culture schools where she learned it all the hard way, and it bears out a remark I have often heard her make, "How can I teach anything correctly to anybody unless I can do it myself!" For tests she is often her own "guinea pig," but she has occasionally donned an operator's uniform and worked in a beauty salon or school. All this has served her in good stead. Because of it, she has established a reputation as an expert in the clinical testing of cosmetic products and treatments.

Those of us who really know Florence Wall, even if only through her work, know that enlightening both herself and others is a constant and dominating force with her. It would be impossible for her to stand still, and all of us who know her are completely aware of the fact that she will continue her unique contributions. She could do nothing else.

That completes all the highlights I intended to bring out about our Medalist's career in cosmetics and cosmetology. But with your permission, Mr. Chairman, I would like to indulge in a short encore.

Maybe you noticed, as I did, that there is nothing on the menu about the personal side of Florence Wall. Both Dr. Hamlin and I have contributed to a double feature on her career and professional life—but very little about her as a person.

This omission probably was intentional on Florence's part, but with or without her consent, I wish to give you now a brief summary which I think is both important and pertinent.

Our composite picture, it seems to me, makes her sound rather like a triple threat, and I believe that that is the impression she is too apt to give to her business associates. I do not mind confessing that when I first met her I was a little scared of her, and I have heard people who know her only casually, in a business way, remark that "she seems like such a formidable person." I think that impression needs a little correcting. It is only a facade she wears while at work.

Actually our Medalist is one of the warmest hearted people I know. And, although it may not be obvious enough, I personally believe that side of her has had considerable effect on some of the work she has chosen to do. I believe, for instance, that her great urge to teach is based mainly on her desire to serve others.

This comes out in many facets of her life, and sometimes ties her per-

sonal life to her work. Her former students, I have noticed, all seem to become her friends. She keeps in touch with them and they with her. She is forever glad to help them with their problems—gives them ideas for papers, lends them books and other materials. That sort of generosity, extending beyond the call of duty, comes only from the heart.

She may not like my telling you some of these things, but I have learned of so many ways in which she is generous almost to a fault. I know, just by chance, something of the trouble she took in selecting just the right contents for packages she sent abroad to people she met while in Europe. And if she has friends in the hospital, she goes to a great deal of trouble to make their life more bearable and pleasant. She does not just take flowers or a package and chit chat; she *does* things. She will give a woman patient a dry shampoo, or apply refreshing cologne she brought with her or fix her friend's nails. In other words, she gives of herself; as she does in her work, too.

Another phase of her generosity is her fairness toward people. She always gives everyone the benefit of the doubt. And she invariably has a kind word to say—or a word of credit to give—even to people who have not always been kind to her. I do not remember ever hearing Florence gossip or say an unkind word. Nor would she ever compromise principle for expediency—in either business or personal affairs.

Now, if all that still sounds formidable, as though she might not have much spice in her life, you just have never had the privilege of talking with her when her guard is down. She has a keen wit and the most delightful sense of humor you can imagine; even enjoys a joke on herself. Perhaps this is an inheritance from that Irish ancestry we have heard about.

She likes to cook and sew and knit, and as she often puts it, she “has a lot of fun in her own way.” She enjoys dancing, concerts, the theater and the movies—especially the foreign ones which give her practice in languages. She nearly got a degree in music in college but dropped that for one in education. She still plays the piano for her friends and her clubs. On one occasion, several years after leaving college, she and her talented sister—who, as Stephanie Wall was then singing professionally—returned to St. Elizabeth's and gave a joint recital. It was the first time any two alumnae—let alone two sisters—had ever done so.

I have often wished that she would take time to write stories and make use in that way of her unusual understanding of people. Actually she has accumulated reams of material for stories on incidents in her interesting travels. She says, however, that these can wait until she is too old to talk and write convincingly about cosmetology.

People often ask Florence what first interested her in cosmetics. Just recently I saw it—a clipping from *The Atlanta Journal*, dating from years ago when she first visited that city as a college girl. It still makes good

reading—and I saw an angle to it which must have appealed to her inner nature. The article emphasized what cosmetics can do for a woman even beyond making her prettier or more glamorous or correcting her surface faults. They can contribute to her personality and react on her mind and character. If she knows she looks well, this makes her feel more cheerful and contented, giving her self-assurance. That is the sort of thing which interests Florence.

There is an extreme sensitiveness there—almost hypersensitiveness—but she tries to conceal it. She rarely discusses her own troubles; yet she is a well of discretion when others wish to discuss their troubles with her.

Yes, Florence Wall can think and work like a man. I have heard her say that she was the only woman on those early chemical jobs that she had. But a womanly sympathy and understanding—call it sentiment, if you like—is behind so much that she does. She seems to like to conceal this from business associates. That is why I wanted the privilege of bringing it out in the open for I think it transcends even her great accomplishments as a professional person.

It is just because she *is* that sort of person that I feel confident I am speaking for a host of others when I hope that this happy occasion will bring her enough good cheer to last for a long, long time to come.

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## THE MEDALIST'S ADDRESS

Mr. President, Mr. Toastmaster, Fellow Members and Guests:

AFTER THIS triple exposure of my life and work, I feel appropriately overwhelmed, but I am also sincerely and humbly grateful that the Medal Award Committee was willing to choose one of my peculiar assortment of accomplishments for this highest honor.

As you may have gathered, much of my work, although it has been related to cosmetics, has taken me far from the chemistry of cosmetics, to which our SOCIETY is nominally dedicated.

Only those of you who were also working in it in those early days can appreciate the changes that have evolved during my half-a-lifetime of labor in one corner or another of our vast industry. Nor can you imagine how difficult it is to try to inject a new branch of study into established educational centers. All of this has made a career which has always been interesting but never easy.

Again, my thanks for this token of your esteem. I shall always treasure this beautiful medal, and it should serve me as an inspiration to do more, and even better, in the future.