



Sarah Sophia Chase Platt-Decker (1856 – 1912) was an American suffragist and served as national president of the **General Federation of Women's Clubs** from 1904 to 1908.

Platt-Decker was born Sarah Sophia Chase in McIndoe Falls, Vermont, in 1856. Her father was a strong prohibitionist, and her mother was a descendant of the Adams political family. Her first husband died after two years of marriage; the loss of her own possessions when her husband's estate was given to other members of his family inspired her to become an activist for women's rights. In 1884, Platt-Decker moved to Queens, New York, where she worked in children and orphans' welfare.

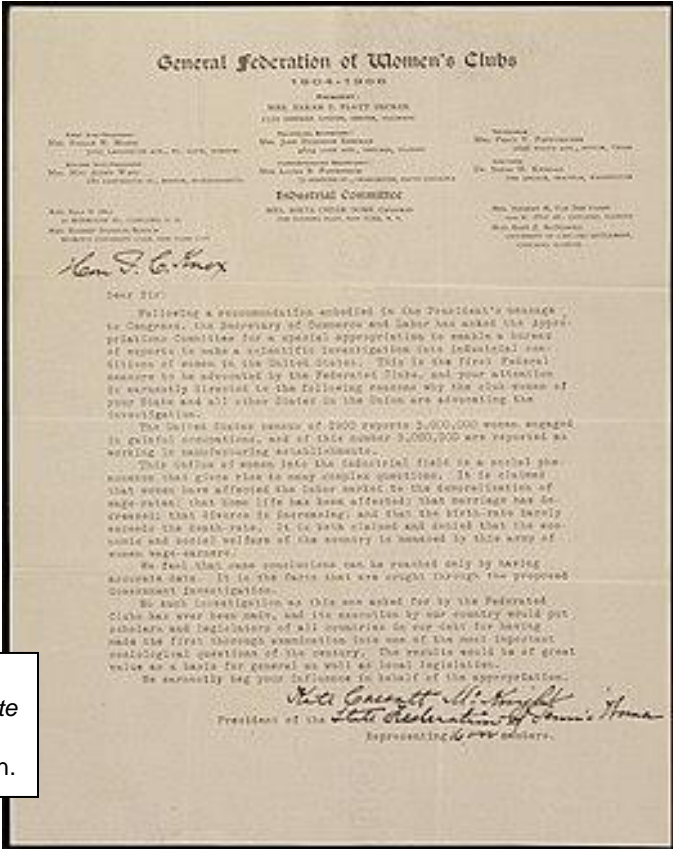
She married James H. Platt, Jr., a widower, physician, former U.S. Congressman and director of the Mineola Children's Home. The couple moved to Denver, Colorado in 1887 and were active in Denver politics. Sarah led a relief effort for unemployed silver miners and spoke at a political rally during the Denver Depression of 1893. After her husband's death in 1894, Platt-Decker became the first woman appointed to the Colorado Board of Pardons and

served on the Board of Charities and Corrections.

In 1888, Sarah was married a third time to Westbrook S. Decker, a Denver judge. Sarah was a founding member of the Denver Women's Club; serving as the club's first president. She also established the Denver Home for Dependent Children. In 1904, Sarah was elected as national president of the **General Federation of Women's Clubs**. During her 4-year term, she gave hundreds of speeches persuading members to take up the cause of women's suffrage.

Platt-Decker died in San Francisco in 1912 after a bout of kidney disease while attending the GFWC annual convention. An obituary in a Denver newspaper described her as "*Colorado's foremost woman citizen and the real leader of the suffrage movement in the United States*". Another wrote that she deserved "*a great share of the credit that Colorado became the first state in the Union to realize the political rights of women*".

Sarah Platt-Decker was inducted into the Colorado Women's Hall of Fame in 1990. The Decker Branch Library of Denver Public Libraries is named after her.



Petition to J. C. Knox, written on GFWC letterhead with Sarah Platt Decker as President, from the *State Federation of Pennsylvania Women* requesting an investigation into the industrial conditions of women.