

# Charlotte Reeve Conover

[mlaschweickart](#)

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<https://womensuffragemovementindayton.files.wordpress.com/2014/09/charlotte-reeve-conover.jpg>

## Literary Figure and Suffragette

Conover was one of the leaders of the Woman's Suffrage Party of Montgomery County. Her daughter Charlotte Mary Conover was also a member, and was voted in as the field secretary for the organization (MS-004 Finding Aid, 12). Conover contributed in large part through her writing on behalf of the cause, providing literature and information in articles such as *Thoughts of the Pax Meeting* (n.d.) (MS-004, 56). Conover, like many of her peers, attended lectures and spoke or presented her literature at lectures and meetings (MS-004 Finding Aid). In the *Importance for Women to Have Suffrage: An Address Before the Woman Suffrage Association* (n.d.), she wrote about her personal beliefs and convictions, that suffrage was important not only to the women to whom it was being denied, but as a fundamental right for the equality of the sexes and their interaction in the future of the country (MS-004, 45). Conover, is listed as a "worker for suffrage" in *Woman's Who's Who of America: A Biographical Dictionary of Contemporary Women of the United State and Canada, 1914-1915*, and is the only one of the seven women profiled to have been included in this comprehensive listing (Leonard, 200).

## The Story of Mrs. Conover

### Early Life

**Charlotte Reeve Conover** was a prominent literary figure in Dayton as well as a political activist. Born in Dayton, Ohio to Dr. John Charles Reeve and Emma Barlow Reeve (Leonard, 200), she was educated in the Dayton Public School system, graduated from Central High School, and later attended the Universite de Geneve in Geneva, Switzerland (Leonard, 200). She married Frank Conover a prominent lawyer in Dayton on October 4, 1879 (Leonard, 200). He briefly served as the assistant city solicitor (F. Conover, 434). They had four children together: Elizabeth Dickson, John Charles Reeve, Wilbur and Charlotte Mary (F. Conover, 434).

### Educator and Writer

Conover, a teacher by trade, taught literature, history, current events, French, music and drawing. She specialized in French lectures on Molière (Leonard, 200). She was also well known for her writings on local history. The other half of her career was her writing career. Her work was published in *Ladies Home Journal*, *Atlantic Monthly* and *Harper's*. She was also on the editorial staff of the *Dayton Journal* as a writer and editor of special articles (MS-004 Finding Aid).

Conover belonged to multiple clubs in the area including the Woman's Literary Club (the first woman's club in Dayton, formed in 1889), Dayton Woman's Club: Dayton Branch, League to Enforce Peace, Y.W.C.A., Greater Dayton Association and the Young Women's League of Dayton (MS-004 Finding Aid). These clubs were important to Conover and the other women of Dayton. In her book *Dayton, Ohio – An Intimate History* (1932) she says, "Those who assailed it [Women's Club Movement] at the time as a "fad" now know it as the lever that lifted Dayton women into a new life." [Click on the link below to read more on the importance of women's clubs in Dayton.]

### Women's Club Movement in Dayton, Ohio

<https://womenssuffragemovementindayton.files.wordpress.com/2014/09/appendix-b-womens-club-movement-in-dayton.pdf>

### The End of a Literary Life

In her later years, she continued to write, and also taught current event classes up until her death in Monterey County, California in 1940, she wrote her article *On Being Eighty*, in 1935 after she had gone blind (*Monterey Peninsula Herald*). She is buried at Woodland Cemetery in Dayton (MS-004 Finding Aid). Upon her death, local newspapers paid tribute to Conover. A *Dayton Journal* editorial said, "Hers was a powerful life, a life stimulating to all with whom she came in contact. The candle

of her learning shone strongly in Dayton and her death does not extinguish the candle (*Monterey Peninsula Herald*). The *Dayton Daily News* praised Conover as, “A remarkable galaxy of outstanding women have through a long past shed luster upon this community. No list of these would exclude Mrs. Charlotte Reeve Conover, whose death at a ripe old age has just occurred. The name and fame of this energetic, able and courageous woman spread long ago beyond the bounds of her home community or even her home state. Mrs. Conover was Dayton’s outstanding historian. Her manifold writings about Dayton and its people have place on bookshelves far and wide ... She lived bravely, not easily, her pioneer mind always ahead of her time – an outstanding example of brilliant American womanhood,” *Monterey Peninsula Herald*).



<https://womenssuffragemovementindayton.files.wordpress.com/2014/09/some-dayton-saints-and-prophets-charlotte-reeve-conover.jpg>

**Photo 1 Citation:** Charlotte Reeve Conover, n.d.

**Photo 2 Citation:** Charlotte Reeve Conover’s *Some Dayton Saints and Prophets* book, 1907.

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