

The North Carolina Equal Suffrage League ^[1]

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Since the present administration came into office, the United States has become engaged in a World War. A period of unrest, of anxiety, and of [travail](#) ^[2] has possessed the heads of our Government in Washington, and a sense of responsibility for War Service has absorbed the people of these United States, which for intensity of purpose is unknown in our history. When the President came into office January 13, 1917, it was with one thought, and that was to further the organization of Equal [Suffrage](#) ^[3] that the succeeding Presidents might ever after have free course. Organization was to be the slogan of the administration. With this in view, a meeting of the Executive Committee was called and held at the home of the President in Durham early in March. The object of the meeting was to perfect an organization [scheme](#) ^[4] in North Carolina. This meeting was well attended, the Executive Committee pledging its strength to organization. The plan, as then proposed, was that each Suffrage county should [endeavor](#) ^[5] to place Suffrage Leagues in the [adjoining](#) ^[6] county where there was no League. The President was not in a position to do organizing for Suffrage, but pledged her every available resource and spare time to [furtherance](#) ^[7] of Suffrage which in her case must consist of educational propaganda, rather than formation of local leagues. Hearing nothing from the Executive on organization, the President went to Raleigh to meet with the Executive Committee again in April. We then agreed that we would do what we could towards establishing Leagues, but that since the last meeting in March our country had entered the World War. War in all the ages has stopped the wheels of time, and never more so than in this age, and in our State Suffrage organization. The Suffrage women of North Carolina, with true patriotism flocked to the country's call for all kinds of War Service. In many Suffrage localities of my visitation all over North Carolina, it has been difficult to even meet or talk with one time Suffrage workers, save at a Red Cross, Conservation, or Canning Club meeting. This spirit of war service has been immensely creditable to the Suffrage standards of patriotism and service, but it has meant entire stagnation to Suffrage organization. The women of North Carolina have laid down everything to stand by the flag. Be it everlastingly to their credit.

But to my mind there was a broader conception of Suffrage and patriotism and it is a matter of no small regret that our Suffrage women in the State could not catch the deeper meaning of this [cataclysm](#) ^[8] that envelops the whole world. The very foundation stone of our war is to make the world safe for democracy, and out of nothing could a real democracy spring more truly than in organized Suffrage, which would be able to extend and propagate the blessing and privileges of Democracy. The President thinks that the women of North Carolina, in their indifference to Suffrage during the war have missed the greatest opportunity to help save the world to Democracy. For what do we fight? For what do we spend our money, our time and sacrifice? That out of the World War democracies, Government recognition, political privilege and equal opportunity, may come to women as well as men. I steadfastly believe that the best means to this end is Suffrage service, Suffrage organization and Suffrage education....

The question that has been asked the President most often is, "Do you think North Carolina is ready for Suffrage?" To which I answer, "Yes." Every man and every woman in North Carolina who believe woman man's equal, his partner and co-worker in all conditions of life is for Suffrage.

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