

J. Villiers 396.11 (06)

NATIONAL UNION OF
WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE
SOCIETIES

HITCHIN,
STEVENAGE and
District SOCIETY

ANNUAL
REPORT
1916

N.U.W.S.S.

HITCHIN, STEVENAGE & DISTRICT SOCIETY.

ANNUAL MEETING.

Held on Friday, February 16, 1917, at the Welcome Club,
Paynes Park, Hitchin. Rev. P. M. Wathen in the chair.

1.—The adoption of (a) Annual Report; (b) Financial
Report and Balance Sheet moved by Mrs. Taylor, seconded
by Mrs. Swinburne, carried unanimously.

2.—Election of Presidents and Vice-Presidents, moved by
Mrs. Wathen, seconded by Mrs. Clarke, carried unanimously.

3.—Election of officers. The Hon. Secretary Miss Plowden
and Hon. Treasurer Mrs. Smithson were declared elected by
the Chairman.

4.—Executive Committee. The number of nominations for
Committee not exceeding nine, the Executive Committee were
also declared elected from the Chair.

At the conclusion of the business, Mrs. Alys Russell, of the
N.U. Executive Committee gave an address on the Political
situation and the work of the Millicent Fawcett Hospital Unit
in Russia.

PRESIDENT :

THE RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF LYTTON.

VICE-PRESIDENTS.

THE DOWAGER COUNTESS OF LYTTON, C.I.
THE LADY BETTY BALFOUR. MISS TUKE,
THE LADY ROBERT CECIL. (Bedford College, London).

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

Hon. Secretary: MISS PLOWDEN,
The Brier-Patch, Knebworth.

Hon. Treasurer: MRS. EDWARD SMITHSON,
42, Tilehouse Street, Hitchin.

MRS. CLARKE.	MISS RUSSELL.
MRS. HOBBS.	MISS VILLIERS.
MRS. OWEN POWELL.	MISS A. VILLIERS.
MRS. REED.	MRS. WATHEN.

MISS VILLIERS,
Hon. Sec., Stevenage Local Committee.

THE OBJECT OF THE SOCIETY

Is to obtain the Parliamentary Franchise for Women on the same terms as it is or may be granted to Men. The Society seeks to achieve this object by holding meetings in the towns and villages of the district, and by acting as a centre for the collection and diffusion of information with regard to the progress of the movement in all parts of the Country.

Methods—Constitutional, Educational and Non-Party.

RULES.

- 1.—The title of the Society shall be the Hitchin, Stevenage and District Society.
 - 2.—Approval of the object and methods of the Society, and an annual subscription of not less than one shilling shall constitute membership.
 - 3.—The affairs of the Society shall be managed by an Executive Committee of not more than nine, and the Hon. Officers, five to form a quorum, with power to fill up casual vacancies during the year.
 - 4.—The Annual Meeting of the Society shall be held within two months of the close of the financial year, to receive the report and statement of accounts; to appoint the Executive Committee and Officers and to transact business for which urgency is voted.
- Nominations for the Executive and proposed alterations of Rules, shall be sent to the Hon. Secretary at least one fortnight before the date of the Annual Meeting. Members only shall have the right of voting. Subscriptions to become payable on January 1st.
- 5.—A Special General Meeting of the Society may be called at any time by the Committee, or at the written request of five members of the Society, by the Hon. Secretary, subject to eight days' notice to members. At such meeting no other business than that stated on the notice shall be discussed.

REPORT, 1917.

INTRODUCTORY.

This being the third report issued since the outbreak of the war and suspension of propaganda, it might be feared, that our Society drawn into the vortex of war-work, had almost forgotten the object of its being. This is not the case. Though our truce is unbroken, the necessity for a new Register has brought the question of Suffrage into the foreground and the Report of the Speaker's Conference on Electoral Reform fills us with hope that the turning of our long lane is in sight. The Conference consisted of an equal number of Suffragists and anti-Suffragists; we know at least that of this Conference a majority—one paper says a large majority—decided that some measure of Women's Suffrage should be conferred, and it was suggested that the enfranchised women should be those on the local Government Register and the wives of men on that Register; the age limits of 30 to 35 were most in favour. Should Government accept the Report of the Conference, Women's Suffrage in some form is an accomplished fact. We most earnestly hope the measure will be included in the Government Bill and not left for insertion later by an amendment. It will be difficult to please all parties, but the main thing is—the principle being accepted—that the door should be opened.

COUNCIL MEETINGS.

Three delegates attended the Annual Council Meeting of the National Union held in London in Feb. 1916. Your Society was also represented at the Meeting of the Eastern Counties Federation held in Cambridge last November.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

Your Committee has met 15 times, the Stevenage Local Committee 4 times. Mrs. Owen Powell having temporarily resigned her place on the Committee, Miss Muirhead was co-opted to represent Welwyn.

MEMBERSHIP.

There has been an increase in membership which stands at 192 as against 180 last year, though we have lost ten members—through death, removal and ill-health. The death of a valued member, Mrs. Parker of Knebworth, is recorded with regret. The number of Friends is 255.

Work of the Year.

The work for the Belgian Refugees in Knebworth has just been wound up—the two widows who shared the one cottage kept open, have found work, one at Letchworth and the other with her family at Twickenham.

A successful Meeting was held at Stevenage, arranged by the local Committee in April, when Miss Atkinson, Hon. Secretary of the National Union was the speaker. Three new members joined and 12 "Common Causes" were sold.

A Drawing-room Meeting of Knebworth members was held at Wych Elms on 10th May, 1916, when the Hon. Secretary read a paper on the War Work of the National Union since August 1914, and Miss A. Villiers kindly gave an address on the work of the Stevenage Maternity Centre. Six new members joined.

A very successful Rummage Sale at Knebworth took place in the Congregational Schoolroom, kindly lent by the Rev. C. F. Bryer for the day, on 10th November.

The sum of £14 12s. 3d. realised, was divided between the National Union General Service Fund, the Scottish Women's Hospitals and the Common Cause Hut for Munition Workers.

A second successful Meeting was arranged by the local Committee at Stevenage on November 30. Mrs. Renton from London, one of the N.U. organizers, was the Speaker. Sixty to seventy people were present and seven members joined.

"COMMON CAUSE."

In September a special number of the "Common Cause" (August 18th), dealing with the hopeful change in the attitude of prominent Anti-Suffragists towards our Cause, was sent to each member of our Society, with a covering letter from the Hon. Secretary, briefly explaining the changed situation created by the necessity for a new Register, and urging members to take in the paper and follow more carefully events connected with women's work and women's suffrage.

WOMEN'S WAR WORK.

The Central Executive sent your Committee question papers in November, asking each member of your Society to fill in details of war work done. Such records would be valuable reference more especially in cases where women had been able to set a man free.

The Secretary of the Central Bureau expressed her satisfaction at the replies sent in to her.

WAR SAVINGS ASSOCIATION.

On December 10th, a Drawing-room Meeting was held at the Brier Patch, Knebworth, when it was resolved that a War Savings Association should be formed in Knebworth.

OTHER ITEMS OF INTEREST.

In August, when the Special Register Bill, brought forward by the late Government, was before the House of Commons, our President kindly offered to give an interview to the Officers and Committee of the Society in order to advise them as to the best course to adopt at that critical time. Our best thanks are due to Lord Lytton, not only for his advice on this occasion when special guidance was felt to be necessary, but for his un-failing sympathy and help at all times.

We wish also to express our sincere appreciation of the valuable and continued support rendered to our cause by our member, Lord Robert Cecil, whose efforts on our behalf have been increasing, even during this last year of unprecedented anxiety caused by the War.

CONCLUSION.

Though during the past two years we have dropped Suffrage activity for War-work (where Suffragist and Anti-suffragist toil side by side), events have been working for us. The world-convulsion of a great war has relentlessly forced the "reluctant feet" of the inert and the indifferent forward into the new era. In this titanic struggle minor changes have been accepted as a matter of course. It no longer seems strange to see women replacing men in almost every department of life. To the unreflecting, even among some Suffragists who do not study the details of the Woman Question, this in itself seems almost victory, everything seems open to us, what more do we want? Hearing of the Suffrage Conference such Suffragists ask us not to break the truce, to remain silent for fear of causing fresh irritation. These timid souls must realise that we have not broken the truce, and shall not do so while the basis of the Franchise remains unaltered. But, if we sat silent and inactive while the Government brought in a Bill for a large extension of the franchise to men only, two things are certain: no Government, Liberal or Conservative, seeing us indifferent to the greatest opportunity of our day, will come forward and press us to accept the vote; and, secondly, we should lose all we have hitherto gained and betray, not only those who have worked for us, but the millions of women who look for our help in the work of re-construction when the war is over, to avert a still more terrible industrial war between the sexes.

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

FOR YEAR ENDING DEC. 31ST, 1916.

RECEIPTS.		EXPENDITURE.	
	£ s. d.		£ s. d.
Balance, 1915	17 11 9	Affiliation Fees	2 0 0
Subscriptions	178 12 4	Delegates Expenses	2 14 9
Donations (General)	17 3	Postage, Telegrams, etc.	1 19 10
Donations to Special Funds	11 0 6	Expenses of Meetings	3 16 6½
Proceeds of Rummage Sale (Knebworth)	14 13 9	Printing, Literature, Stationery, etc.	4 10 3
Collections	3 9 8	Special Grants—	
Sale of Literature	1 0	Knebworth Belgian Refugees	5 0 0
		Scottish Hospitals, N.U.W.S.S.	12 15 8
		Girl's School Fee	4 3 6
		N.U.W.S.S. Active Service	15 0 0
		"Common Cause"	2 2 0
		Y.W.C.A. Hut	3 7 0
			57 9 6½
		Balance in hand, Dec. 31	7 16 8½
			£65 6 3
			£65 6 3

Balance at Bank, £7 16s. 9d.

Examined and found correct,
EMILY PEPPER.

LIST OF MEMBERS & SUBSCRIPTIONS.

NOTE.—Subscriptions of members joining late in the financial year will appear in next year's Report.

HITCHIN.

£ s. d.	£ s. d.		
Anderson, Mrs.	2 6	Lindsall, Mrs.	1 0
Brown, Johnson, Miss	1 0	Lucas, Miss M.	1 0
Catford, Mrs. Sept	1 0	McKay, Miss.	1 0
Clarke, Mrs.	3 0	Moore, Mrs.	
Crawshay, Miss	1 0 0	Nicholson, Miss	2 0
Daintree, Miss	2 6	Parker, Miss	1 0
Dawson, Miss	2 0	Parker, Miss F.	1 0
Gatward, Miss	2 0	Payne, Mrs.	1 0
Gosnell, Miss	2 0	Payne, Miss	1 0
Hall, Miss J. (Offley)	1 0	Pepper, Miss	1 0
Hatch, Mr. H. F.	1 0	Slaney, Mrs.	1 0
Hatch, Mrs. H. F. ...	1 0	Smithson, Mr. E. ...	10 0
Harris, Miss A. M. ...		Smithson, Mrs. E. ...	1 0 0
Hobbs, Mrs.	1 0	Swaine, Miss.	1 0
Holland, Mrs.	1 0	Taylor, Mrs. Rowntree	2 6
Johnson, Miss K.	1 0	Webb, Miss	5 0
King, Miss	1 0	Webb, Miss Gertrude	5 0
Knight, Mrs.	2 6	Woods, Miss	
Latchmore, Miss	2 6		

KNEBWORTH.

£ s. d.	£ s. d.		
Bradford, Mrs.	1 0	Reed, Mr.	2 0
Bradley, Mrs.	1 0	Reed, Mrs.	2 0
Buchanan, Mrs.	10 0	Renwick, Miss	1 0
Butterfield, Mrs. Chas.		Robins, Mrs. Dec.	
Cole, Mrs. Sept	1 0	Russell, Mrs.	
Cooper, Mrs.		Russell, Miss	
Corke, Miss		Seaton, Mrs.	1 0
Corke, Miss E.		Todd, Mrs. Sept	1 0
Crouch, Mrs.	1 0	Todd, Miss	1 0
Kersey, Mrs.		Walker, Mrs.	1 0
Muirhead, Mrs.	2 0	Whitworth, Mrs.	1 0
Muirhead, Miss	2 0	Williams, Mrs.	1 0
Muirhead, Miss E. ...	2 0	Wilson, Mrs.	1 0
Parker, Mrs. Dec.	1 0	Wilson, Miss	1 0
Plowden, Miss	5 0	Wyatt, Mr.	
Quarm, Mrs.	1 0	Wyatt, Mrs.	

STEVENAGE.

£ s. d.	£ s. d.		
Abbott, Miss	1 0	Ashe, Miss	1 0
Abbott, Miss A.	1 0	Ashwood, Miss	1 0
Abram, Miss	1 0	Austin, Mr. H. H. ...	1 0
Apted, Mrs.	3 0	Austin, Mrs. H. H. ...	1 0
Arnold, Miss	1 0	Beaver, Miss	1 0

STEVENAGE—(Continued).

£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Bull, Mrs.	1	0	Mindenhall, Mrs.	1	0
Burke, Mrs.	1	0	Mindenhall, Mrs., jun.	1	0
Burke, Miss	2	6	Raisin, Mrs.	2	0
Burke, Miss N.	1	0	Reid, Mrs. Left		
Carling, Mrs. F.	2	0	Roden, Miss Left	1	0
<i>married</i> Carling, Miss	1	0	Rossiter, Mrs.		
Clarke, Miss	1	0	Scarborough, Miss D.	1	0
Craft, Mrs.	1	0	Scott, Miss	1	0
Downey, Mrs. Left	1	0	Simmons, Mrs.	1	0
Drayson, Mrs.	1	0	Snook, Mr. G.	2	6
Drayson, Miss	1	0	Snook, Mrs. G.	2	6
Dunn, Mrs. G. B.	1	0	Snow, Mr.	1	0
Dyson, Mrs.	1	0	Snow, Mrs.	1	0
Feesey, Mrs.	1	3	Spicer, Miss L.	1	0
Gare, Mr. G. C.	1	0	Staines, Miss	1	0
Gare, Mrs. G. C.	1	0	Swannell, Miss		
Goodenough, Mrs.	1	0	Thorne, Mrs.	1	0
Gray, Mrs.	1	0	Venables, Mrs.	1	0
Hammond, Mr. R. F. Left	1	0	Villiers, Miss	1	1
Hammond, Mrs. R. F.	1	0	Villiers, Miss A.	10	0
Harvey, Mrs.	2	0	Villiers, Miss S. A.	2	6
Hick, Miss	2	0	Wells, Mr.	1	0
Hunt, Mrs.	1	0	Wells, Mrs.	1	0
Jackson, Mrs.	1	0	Wells, Miss A.	1	0
Kebble, Mrs.	1	0	Wells, Miss S.	1	0
Kennish, Mrs.	2	6	Williams, Mrs. Left	1	0
Kito, Mrs. Left	2	6	Windsor, Miss		
Lake, Mrs.	1	0	Windsor, Miss		
Lampard, Miss	1	0	Woolston, Mr.	1	0
Le Broy, Miss Left			Woolston, Mrs.	1	0
Marsh, Miss	1	0	Wurr, Miss	1	0
Miller, Miss Left					

WELWYN.

£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Adams, Mrs. J. W.	1	0	Hulse, Mr.	1	3
Ames, Mrs.	1	0	Hulse, Mrs.	1	3
Ansell, Mr.	1	0	Kendall, Mrs.	1	3
Ansell, Mrs.	1	0	Lawrence, Mrs.	1	0
Ashby, Miss	1	0	Lawrence, Mrs. J. H.	1	0
Blow, Mrs. Harry	1	0	Muirhead, Miss	1	0
Bryant, Miss D.	1	0	Owen, Mr.	1	0
Lane-Clayton, Rev. E. W.	5	0	Pam, Miss	5	0
Lane-Clayton, Lieut. T. C.	5	0	Powell, Captain Owen	1	0
Colyer, Mr. Left	1	0	Powell, Mrs. Owen	5	0
Coulson, Mrs.	1	0	Powell, Miss Left	1	0
Deards, Mr. J. H.	1	0	Poulton, Mr.	1	0
Dodd, Mr.	1	0	Russell, Mrs.	5	0
Dodd, Mrs.	1	0	Snow, Miss	1	0
Downing, Mr.	1	0	Staveley, Mrs.	2	0
Dyer, Miss E.	1	3	Stocks, Mrs.	1	0
Filmore, Mr.	2	6	Twine, Miss	2	0
Filmore, Mrs.	2	6	Vickers, Mrs. Randall Left	2	0
Hassard, Mrs.	1	0	Waller, Mrs.	1	0
Hitchcock, Mr.	2	6	Wathen, Rev. P. M.	2	6
Hitchcock, Mrs.	2	6	Wathen, Mrs.	5	0
			Whitehouse, Rev. H. S. C.	2	0

Both Miss Henderson's
Bell
Deff
Dixon
Gilbert
Jawap
Wench
Crop

DONATIONS, (General) 1916.

£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Villiers, Miss	15	3	Anonymous	2	0

DONATIONS TO SPECIAL FUNDS.

£	s.	d.
Tuke, Miss (Girl's School Fee)	4	3
Villiers, The Misses (Y.W.C.A. Hut)	12	6
Hobbs, Mrs.	1	3

SCOTTISH HOSPITALS, N.U.W.S.S.

£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Abram, Miss	4	0	Snow, Miss	4	0
Anderson, Mrs.	5	0	Smithson, Mrs. Edw.	2	10
Crawshay, Miss	10	0	Wathen, The Rev. P. M. and Mrs.	1	0
Deards, Mr.	10	0	Whitehouse, The Rev. H. S. C.	10	0
Owen, Mr. G. C.	5	0			
Slaney, Mrs.	2	6			

