

RICHMOND, KENTUCKY

"AMBERLEY"

Mrs. Margaret Clay Bennett,

Thank you,

Esther!

This is a very interesting letter of
the Civil War period etc. — R.P.C.,
Aug 22nd 1941.

189 N. Mill St., Lexington, Ky.
May 2nd, 1919.

My dear Esther,

When I saw you and Warfield last Thursday night I think I stated my objections to the Susan B. Anthony suffrage amendment so carelessly that I left a wrong impression upon your mind. So as the whole subject is now important to us suffragists I am enclosing a little article which I wrote for the Leader, which gives my point of view more carefully expressed.

In addition to what I say here in the paper, I think an objection to the Anthony amendment is that it groups women politically not with white men, but in the language of the Supreme Court in describing the effect of the 15th amendment, with those who have "the right of exemption from discrimination" on account of race, color or previous condition of servitude. This grouping apart from white men appears to have been felt by the negroes in Ohio, where you know the word "white" has never been struck from the election clause of the state constitution: therefore, a few years ago they secured a submission of an amendment to strike out the word "white". For some reason the white men also seemed to object to removing that racial grouping; at any rate, the proposed amendment was voted down by a large majority. Now I think it a serious matter that women should be placed in a position where they are not the peers of white men in the source of their political rights; or in their means of redressing through the courts any injustice they may think they have in the exercise of their right to vote. The political realignment of the new countries in Europe where so much stress is laid upon racial sympathies impresses upon us the fact that racial lines cannot be overridden without unexpected and unpleasant results. And I think it behooves both the men and the women of the United States to take careful thought before they pass a Federal Amendment for woman suffrage which will place white women in a political group apart from white men.

Will you please read the enclosed clipping to Sallie, and tell her it is the article I told her the Leader had not published?

Sallie says she is going to come over to the Republican State convention to be held here May 14th. I wish you would come with her and be my guest. I shall always be so glad to have you when you can come to Lexington.

Give my love to Warfield, and believe me
Affectionately yours,

Lexington, Ky. Sept. 29, 1913

Mrs. Warfield Bennett,
Richmond, Ky.
Dear Mrs. Bennett:-

Please send me checks for enclosed accounts: my traveling expenses, \$39.87 and supplies for Fair tents \$33.92

To Paducah for State Farmer's Institute and to organize league I had to pay railroad fare.

Supplies for fair tents will not look so big when returns from sales of supplies come in. Also literature ordered then has been used for teacher's institutes, etc. But it is impossible for me to exactly separate these amounts.

I am sending this from French Lick to be copied and mailed on to you. I can not complete my report until I reach home unfortunately; some data missing.

Cordially yours,

*Lexington took in \$8.20 only. Louisville about \$15.00 I believe - But they got over a
tions and membership cards signed. Considerable
stock of supplies is left + will be sold later. The
yellow badges we gave away at both fairs - Also at
Perry parade. They are most effective.*

June 13th 1911.

Mrs. Warfield Bennett,
Richmond, Ky.

Dear Esther:-

In compliance with your request of last night I have given some thought to the constitutional question bearing upon the right of womans suffrage , argued by Mr. Dohoney before the Texas House of Representatives. The contention made by him is not a new one and in my opinion is essentially unsound. The right of suffrage is a political right and has been so decided by the Supreme Court, and many of the States Courts of last resort. The Federal Constitution does not confer right of suffrage, this matter is left exclusively to the states , they grant or with hold the right of voting and determine the qualifications of those who shall possess the right.

See Minor VS. Happersett 21st Wallace page 162, and where the constitution of the State defines the qualification of those who shall be elected with the elective franchise , such qualifications cannot be altered by the Legislature. In the Exparte Yarbrough 110 U.S. page 651 , the Supreme Court fully responded to the argument of Mr. Dohoney, that the right of suffrage was conferred by the constitution upon all citizens of the United States , and therefore upon Woman as well as Man." Section 145 of the Kentucky Constitution provides every male citizen of the State of the age of twenty one years , who has resided in the State one year, the County six months and the precinct in which he offers to vote sixty days next proceeding the election , shall be a voter in the said precinct and not else where ", then follws certain exceptions in

Atchison vs. Lucas 83 rd Kentucky , page 451 , it was decided by the Kentucky Court of Appeals that the right to vote being denied woman the greater right to hold office created by the constitution was also denied.

It seems to me to explain for argument that the constitution limits suffrage to male Citizens, and that these qualifications can only be altered by a change in the constitution it self .

I enclose letter of Miss Laura. † .

Yours truly,

A. R. K...

[June 14, 1911]

pose upon you as acting president a duty of ~~taking~~ having the N.A.W.S. Asso. take some official action; for the time may not allow of that. But I think it may be an opportunity of such rare promise that I am unwilling not to speak to you of it officially, so that if any way of profiting by it does occur to you, it may not be neglected by oversight. If the question is not decided in this extra session there may yet be opportunity for the exercise of the utmost influence of the N.A.W.S.A. If that cannot now be called out, even in this called session of Congress, perhaps separate states may do something.

Please let me have a word from you about this, for I am becoming every day, under the influence of my sister, perhaps, more deeply impressed with its importance and the serious mistake the N.A.W.S.A. may be making not to utilize it.

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Mrs. Bennett asks me to ~~say to~~ you that in whatever you may think of doing you will take scrupulous care not in any way to ~~seem~~ to seem to Congress to demand that it shall interfere with the rights of the states to prescribe their own qualifications for voting for state officers, as our old 16th Amendment proposed to do; but that you will carefully define that what we may ask for under this new Resolution for Popular Election of Senators is that Congress will itself define the qualifications for voting for Senators, and that sex shall not be one of those qualifications.

Very cordially yours,

Laura Clay.

P.S. If you should think it might be profitable for you yourself to go to Washington to get a hearing on this subject, I will certainly support your action in doing so in our Official Board; and as funds are so difficult to find in our treasury, I will personally subscribe \$25 towards the expense of such a trip, if undertaken by yourself. Mrs. Bennett says she will add \$50 if necessary, for this purpose, as she is anxious the N.A.W.S.A. shall act.

Laura Clay.