

NATIONAL UNION OF WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE SOCIETIES.

OFFICE HOURS 10 TILL 5.  
SATURDAYS - 10 TILL 12.

President :  
MRS. HENRY FAWCETT, LL.D.

Secretary :  
MISS MARGERY I. CORBETT, B.A.,  
25, VICTORIA STREET, WESTMINSTER,  
LONDON, S.W.

Treasurer :  
MISS BERTHA MASON.

21st. July, 1909.

Dear Madam,

At the Quarterly Council Meeting of the N.U. at Nottingham the following resolution was passed.--

"That the Council requests the Women's Suffrage Societies in every county division in the United Kingdom to urge the qualified women of their division (women occupiers or lodgers) to put in their claim to the vote (handing in their names for the Parliamentary register) on or before August 20th this year, through the local Parliamentary agents."

At Pontypridd on October 1908 five ladies claimed to be put upon the parliamentary register and the cases were argued by the Conservative and Liberal Agents before the revising barrister.

Mr. Tittlejohn the Conservative agent said "We then come to the case of Chorlton v Lings and Chorlton v Kessler which turned on the point whether the word man in the Representation of the People's act 1867 included women. The Court held that women were not entitled to the Parliamentary vote in boroughs, or, as free holders, were not empowered to exercise it in counties. But the ladies who claim the Parliamentary vote here to-day are not free holders. They are occupiers. The case of Chorlton v Kessler does not therefore affect their claims."

As the case of women occupiers and lodgers in the counties is not covered by the decision in Chorlton v Lings, the Council considered it advisable to give this novel proof of the fact that many women wish to exercise the right of voting.

**OCCUPIERS.** Every person is an occupier who occupies a dwelling-house, or part of a house as a separate dwelling (even only one room) provided the landlord does not, as landlord, reside in the house: this qualification is irrespective of the amount of the rent.

Also, by "the Devonport judgment" (16 Nov., 1905, Kent v. Fittall) the Occupier of an unfurnished room over which the landlord has no control, even if the landlord does not reside in the house, is qualified to be put on the Register, whatever the rent of the room: but it is absolutely essential to prove that the landlord has no control.

Every person is an occupier who occupies land or business premises of the clear yearly value of not less than £10, and who resides within the County or within 15 miles of its boundary, or, in the case of the Municipal Borough, within 7 miles.

Persons sharing the same dwelling, or the same land or business premises may claim as joint-occupiers, provided the tenancy is joint and that the clear yearly value, when divided, amounts to £10 for each person claiming. There is, however, no such limit to the clear yearly value in the case of a person claiming to be registered as a Burgess for the election of a Town Council.

Husband and wife cannot claim as joint-occupiers, but, by the Local Government Act, 1894, section 43, they may both be registered, provided they are not qualified in respect of the same property: such registration will entitle married women to vote in the election of District Councils, Rural and Urban, Parish Councils, Boards of Guardians, London Borough Councils and the London County Councils.

The period of qualification is one year, i.e. twelve months immediately preceding the 15th July in any year. Occupiers who remove during the twelve months do not lose their qualification, provided they successively occupy qualifying premises during the whole period within the boundary of the Administrative County or the area of election.

ON THE FIRST DAY OF AUGUST, the Overseers of every Parish will place the Occupiers' List for the coming year on the door of each Church Chapel, Post Office, and every other Public Building in the Parish.



LODGERS. This qualification belongs to anyone in the United Kingdom who has resided in the same lodgings for 12 months next preceding July 15th, such lodgings being of the clear yearly value unfurnished of £10. reckoned as 4/- per week. The lodger is not disqualified because he has occupied different lodgings of the requisite value in the same house, nor because he occupies them jointly with another lodger, if the aggregate value is sufficient.

The lodger voter has to claim afresh every year.

The lodger wishing to claim must in the presence of a witness, fill up a statutory declaration of her claim upon the prescribed form. In the case of members of the W.S.S. being abroad or on holiday the registration form can be sent to the claimant to be signed by her in the presence of a witness and returned either to some friend or to the party agent to send in to the overseer.

You are earnestly requested to call a meeting of members to invite those who have the necessary qualifications to put forward their claims through the agent of the political party to which they belong or to obtain a form direct from the overseer.

The secretary or other member of committee might offer to take the names and go to the party agent or the overseer with them.

Anyone sending in claims should notify the W.S.S. secretary of this fact.

Leaflets giving qualifications of occupiers and lodgers can be had on application to the Office. It will help the Union if you will kindly send a stamped envelope.

Yours faithfully,

(signed) MARGERY I. CORRETT .