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The Women's Election Committee

OBJECT: To assist or run Women Parliamentary Candidates of all the recognised Political Parties in Parliament and suitable women standing independently, provided that all candidates thus assisted (a) Pledge themselves to complete legislative equality of men and women in the State. (b) Have a reasonable amount of support in the constituencies they desire to represent.

SIXTH ANNUAL REPORT 1926.

FANCETT COLLECTION

PAMPHLET

36, Gordon Square
London, W.C.1.
Phone: Museum 7203.

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324.941006
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MEMBERS OF COMMITTEE

At date of Annual Meeting
24th March, 1927.

<i>President:</i>	DR. CHRISTINE M. MURRELL.
<i>Founders & Vice-Presidents:</i>	{ Miss C. NINA BOYLE. Mrs. E. HOW MARTYN, M.Sc. Miss MARIE LAWSON.
<i>Hon. Treasurer:</i>	Miss CICELY HAMILTON.
<i>Hon. Financial Secretary:</i>	Miss M. E. ALLWORK.
	Mrs. HELEN ARCHDALE.
	Mrs. F. EARENCEY, J.P.
	Mrs. GASK.
	Miss CICELY B. HALE.
	Mrs. WHITTAM.
	Miss CATHERINE JACK.
	Miss BARRY.

Associates:

Miss MARY S. ALLEN, O.B.E.,
Commandant, Women's Auxiliary Service.
Miss LILIAN BARKER, C.B.E., J.P.
Professor WINIFRED CULLIS, O.B.E., D.Sc.
Miss A. GERTRUDE HEWITT, LL.A.,
Ex. President National Union of Women Teachers.

CONSTITUTION.

The Committee.

The Committee shall consist of not more than 15 members. One-third of the Committee, or the number nearest to one-third, shall retire at each General Meeting and be eligible for re-election. The members shall retire in order of seniority, but, as between persons who become members on the same day, those to retire shall (unless they otherwise agree among themselves) be determined by lot.

Officers.

The Officers of the Committee shall be appointed annually by the Committee; namely: a Chairman and a Treasurer, who shall be unpaid, and a Secretary, who may be paid.

The Committee may also appoint such other Officers as may be deemed necessary for carrying on its work.

General Meetings.

A General Meeting of Subscribers will be convened at least once in each year:

- (a) To consider the report of the Committee on the previous year's work;
- (b) To consider the audited accounts to be submitted by the Committee; and
- (c) To elect members of the Committee in place of those retiring by rotation.

Every person who has subscribed 10s. or more during the preceding twelve months shall be entitled to be present and vote.

SIXTH ANNUAL REPORT.

This Report covers the year ending 31st December, 1926.

The Committee holding office since the last Annual General Meeting, held in February, 1926, includes the following members:—

Dr. Christine Murrell, *President*.

Miss C. Nina Boyle,

Mrs. E. How Martyn, M.Sc. } *Founders and*
Miss Marie Lawson. } *Vice-Presidents.*

Miss Cicely Hamilton, *Hon. Treasurer.*

Miss M. E. Allwork, *Hon. Financial Secretary.*

Mrs. Helen Archdale.

Mrs. F. Earengy, J.P.

Mrs. Gask.

Miss Cicely B. Hale.

Mrs. Whittam.

Miss Stella Wolfe Murray.

Appointments to the Committee.

Miss Catherine Jack, who had been devoting a considerable amount of time to the work of the Committee, was elected to the Committee in March, 1926, and in June undertook to further the sale of the poster stamps. Her work has resulted in the initial cost of the scheme being covered. The Committee hopes the members will steadily support the sale of this advertisement stamp.

Miss Barry was elected to the Committee in December, 1926, and has kindly undertaken the charge of the poster stamps and the literature.

Resignation.

The Committee records with regret the resignation of Miss Stella Wolfe Murray.

Officers.

Dr. Christine Murrell continues to hold office as President, Miss Cicely Hamilton as Hon. Treasurer, and Miss Mabel Allwork as Hon. Financial Secretary.

Mrs. Whittam kindly undertook the office of Honorary Secretary in February and the warmest thanks of the Committee are accorded her for her strenuous work. Unfortunately she found herself unable to continue after December. The Committee has been fortunate in securing for six months the services of Miss H. R. Kerr, as Secretary, who is able to devote most afternoons to the work of the Committee and this is an inestimable advantage. The Committee hopes that fresh support will be forthcoming to allow this valuable arrangement to continue and invites special subscriptions to the Secretarial Fund.

Meetings for office work have been held on Tuesday afternoons, and without their valuable help the Committee could not have carried through its work.

Miss Cicely Hamilton, Miss M. A. Allwork and Miss Cicely Hale retire in accordance with the constitution and are eligible for re-election.

Parliamentary Elections.

The present Parliament, as elected in October, 1924, had four women members out of a total membership of 615.

Fortunately this number has during the year been increased to six by the successes of Miss Susan Lawrence and Miss Margaret Bondfield at bye-elections. Miss Lawrence stood as a Labour candidate for East Ham (North) in April, 1926 and polled 10,798 votes, her majority being 1,627. Miss Lawrence stated: "I have always stood for the complete equality of women with men," and on this ground the Women's Election Committee supported Miss Lawrence and invited help for her.

Miss Margaret Bondfield stood as a Labour candidate at Wallsend in July, 1926, and polled 18,868 votes, securing a majority of 9,027. Miss Margaret Bondfield wrote to the Committee: "I am a life-long advocate of Citizenship rights for women," and the Women's Election Committee rejoiced at her return to the House of Commons.

Suffrage Procession.

The Women's Election Committee took part in the Equal Political Rights Demonstration on July 3rd, 1926.

The Procession from the Embankment and the great Mass Meeting in Hyde Park recalled the old triumphs of Suffrage organisation. The section arranged by the Committee especially featured the Women Members of Parliament and Women Parliamentary Candidates. Miss Ellen Wilkinson, M.P., walking between the President, Dr. Christine Murrell, and the Chairman of the Committee, Mrs. Archdale, headed the section.

To Miss Nina Boyle, who organised the section, and to the other helpers great credit was due for the attractive banners demanding MORE WOMEN M.P.s, for the fluttering pennons and the charmingly decorated platform in Hyde Park.

At this meeting the Chairman was Mrs. How Martyn, a candidate at the parliamentary election of 1918. The

speakers included Miss Nina Boyle, Miss Marie Lawson, Mrs. Ann Corner, Mrs. Ayrton Gould and Dr. Ethel Bentham.

Miss C. Jack sold and organised most successfully the sale of the poster stamps during the afternoon.

The following resolutions were put from all platforms simultaneously:—

- (1) "THAT this Mass Demonstration demands an immediate Government measure, giving votes to women at 21, on the same terms as men."
- (2) "THAT this Mass Demonstration demands for Peeresses in their own right a seat, voice and vote in the House of Lords."

Dinners.

On April 16th a dinner was held, which was followed by a discussion on the best methods for obtaining the vote for women under thirty. Mrs. Archdale presided and the guests, representing the under thirties of the following Societies:

- The Association of Women Clerks and Secretaries,
- The Women's International League,
- The Federation of Women Civil Servants,
- The National Union of Women Teachers,

The Federation of University Women, responded to the Chairman's speech.

The President, Dr. Christine Murrell, proposed a vote of thanks to the speakers.

Other Organisations.

A Conference, called by the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship, on the subject of Women Police, was attended by Miss Nina Boyle, as the representative of the Women's Election Committee.

The Conference dealt with many matters and drafted a scheme to be forwarded to the Home Secretary, which advocated equal conditions of pay and prospects of promotion for women with men.

Miss Boyle also attended the meetings of the Training Committee, and her colleagues much appreciate the time and thought she gave to this important subject.

Consultative Committee of Women's Organisations.

Miss Nina Boyle attended the Consultative Committee, on behalf of the Women's Election Committee, resigning in November, when Mrs. Archdale kindly undertook to act as the Committee's representative.

The Committee thanks Miss Boyle for her strenuous work on the Consultative Committee, where she always upheld the principle of equality for which the Women's Election Committee stands.

The chief resolution supported by the Women's Election Committee was:—

“THAT the constituent Societies formulate and press a definite demand for equal political rights and equal citizenship rights for women and men and that all artificial limitations, exceptions and disabilities be removed.”

Future.

The Women's Election Committee has got into touch with the prospective candidates and endeavoured to find out if they accept the Committee's test, viz:—To pledge themselves to complete legislative equality of men and women in the State.

The Committee only supports those candidates who have a reasonable amount of support in the constituencies they desire to represent.

So far as the Committee can ascertain, there are, at the moment of going to press, 30 adopted women candidates, which number will undoubtedly be considerably augmented as the date of the General Election approaches.

In spite of the spade work which has been done by this and other feminist organisations, it is clear that women voters have not yet realised the tremendous importance of getting an adequate number of women representatives in Parliament. The Committee confidently hopes that at the next general election the resources, both in money and workers available for the women candidates, will exceed all the previous records.

W.E.C. Poster Stamps (Special Issue)



This illustration shows the design adopted for the W.E.C. PROPAGANDA STAMPS, which are now on sale. These Stamps are printed in an attractive shade of brown and are reproduced from the finest "Nickeloid" Half-tone Blocks; they are gummed and perforated ready for use. Please send 1s. 6d. for a book of 24 Stamps, and help to disseminate our demand for

"MORE WOMEN M.P.'s."

The proceeds will be devoted to the MILLION SHILLING FUND for the support of Women Parliamentary Candidates.

Obtainable from—

THE LITERATURE SECRETARY,
THE WOMEN'S ELECTION COMMITTEE,
36, GORDON SQUARE, LONDON, W.C.1.

FAWCETT COLLECTION

See How They Grow!

FOUR General Elections have occurred since women become legally qualified to stand as Parliamentary Candidates. In these elections 124 women appealed to the electorate and received in all

1,457,175 VOTES

The Women Candidates Polled

	an average of	3462	in 1918
"	"	6934	in 1922
"	"	8345	in 1923
"	"	9750	in 1924

Success at the Polls depends largely on Organisation. Organisation depends upon Money.

The Women's Election Committee depends on Your Donations.

Address:- The Secretary
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36, Gordon Square, London, W.C.1.

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