

When Are We US?

A Gathering of Voices Voting Rights



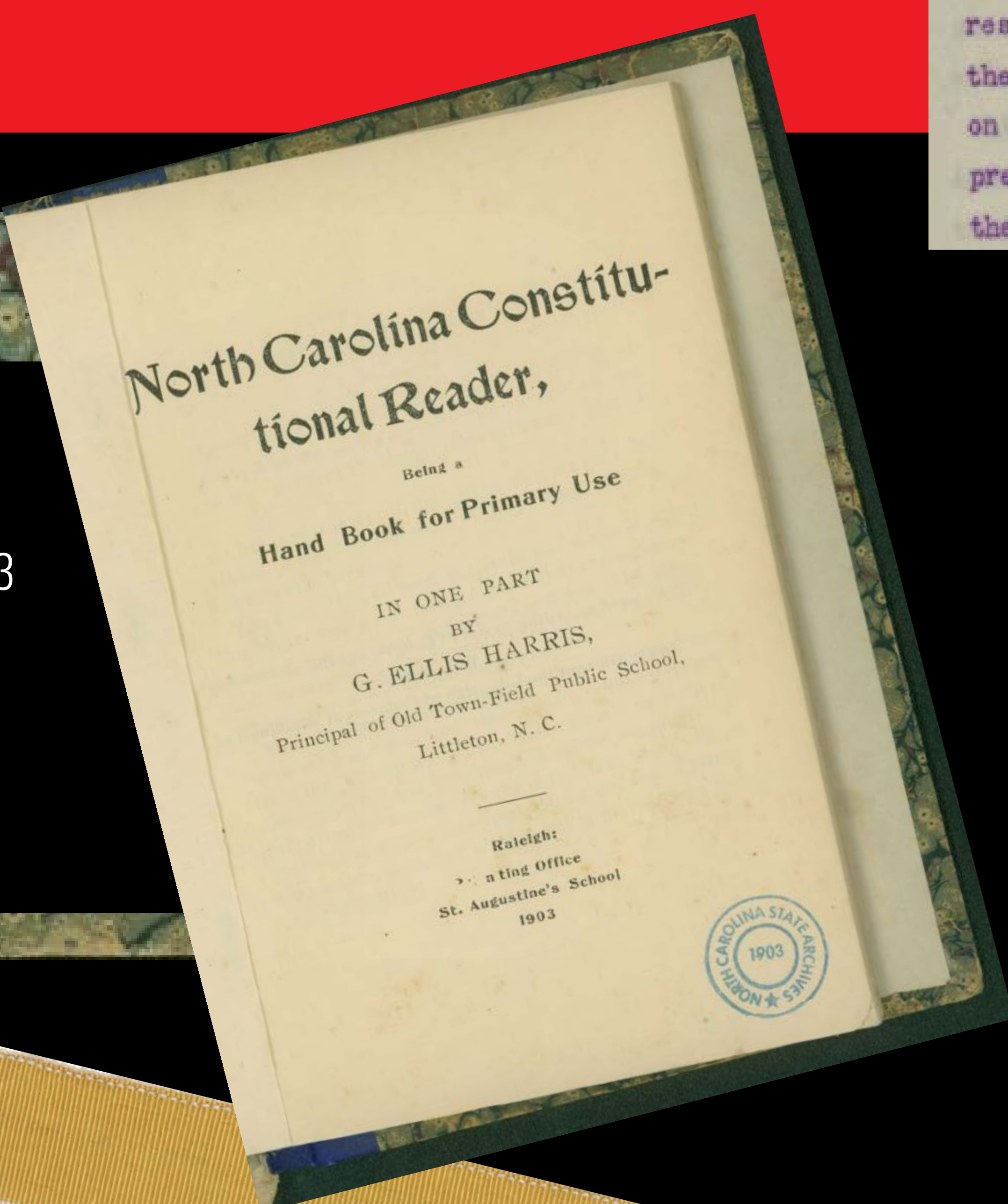
EARLY VOTERS IN NORTH CAROLINA WERE LAND-OWNING MEN.

A new state constitution in 1868 granted all men suffrage, or the right to vote. Despite setbacks, voting rights continued to expand. Women joined the ranks of voters in 1920 with the passage of the 19th Amendment. The Voting Rights Act of 1964 guaranteed suffrage for all adult citizens, regardless of race or sex, and the 26th Amendment extended the vote to citizens 18 years of age and older.

In 1901 the Suffrage Amendment to the North Carolina Constitution established literacy tests, poll taxes, and registration rules to limit the men who could vote, while the "grandfather clause" protected voting rights for many White men.

(Sec. 4.) Every person presenting himself for registration shall be able to read and write any section of the Constitution in the English language; and before he shall be entitled to vote, he shall have paid on or before the first day of May, of the year in which he proposes to vote, his poll tax for the previous year, as prescribed by Article V, Section I, of the Constitution. But no male person, who was, on January 1, 1867, or at any time prior thereto, entitled to vote under the laws of any State in the United States wherein he then resided, and no lineal descendant of any such person shall be denied the right to register and vote at any election in this State by reason of his failure to possess the educational qualifications herein prescribed; Provided, he shall have registered in accordance with the terms of this section prior to December 1, 1906.

St. Augustine's School published the *North Carolina Constitutional Reader* in 1903 to help African Americans study for literacy tests they might encounter at the polls.

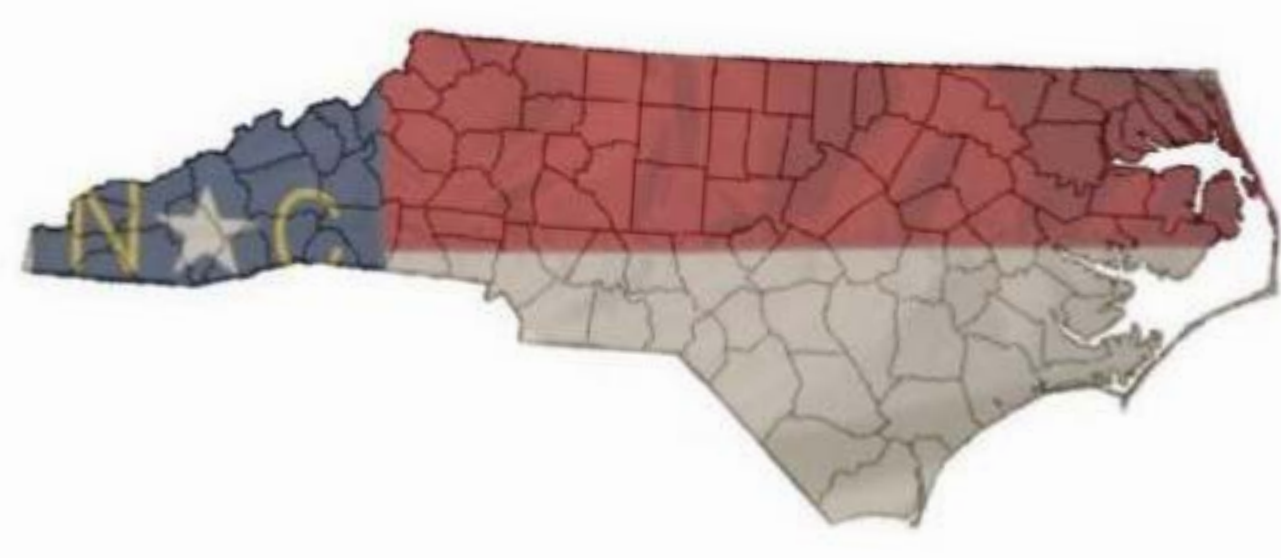


North Carolina Women DO Want The Vote

These Women Have Said So:
 NORTH CAROLINA FEDERATION OF WOMEN'S CLUBS.
 NORTH CAROLINA FEDERATION OF BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL WOMEN'S CLUBS.
 NORTH CAROLINA BRANCH OF WOMAN'S CHRISTIAN TEMPERANCE UNION.
 EQUAL SUFFRAGE ASSOCIATION OF NORTH CAROLINA.
 These organizations comprise THOUSANDS of thinking, intelligent North Carolina women in all parts of the State.

VOTES FOR WOMEN

A Quick Guide: How to Preregister/ Register to Vote



Guía De Cómo Preinscribirse/ Inscribirse para Votar

A voteless people is a hopeless people.

Henry Frye, 2016



North Carolina's first African American Chief Justice of the state supreme court, Henry Frye, attempted to register to vote in 1956 in his hometown of Ellerbe, after returning from Air Force service during the Korean War. Poll workers used a literacy test to deny his right to vote. That injustice inspired him to become a lawyer, and he became one of the first students to integrate the law school at the University of North Carolina.

Pride and dignity comes with the right to vote; it gives you a voice in this society.

Ann Young, 2023

Oberlin Village resident, voter registration volunteer and labor organizer in Raleigh

Source Notes

- Counting votes in Harnett County courthouse, 1950s, by Talbott McNeill Stewart, Harnett County Public Library collection, Digital NC
- Suffrage Amendment, 1901, General Statute 132, vault collection 48.7, State Archives
- North Carolina Constitutional Reader, vault collection 25, State Archives.
- Equal Suffrage Association of North Carolina broadside, 1915, Minnie Stowe Puett papers, Murrey Atkins Library, UNC Charlotte
- Sash, private collections 1618, State Archives
- Henry Frye interview, 2016, Duke University. Frye quoted the title of a campaign the fraternity Alpha Phi Alpha began as a national program to promote African American voting in the 1930s.
- Portrait of the Hon. Henry E. Frye, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of N.C., by John Siebels Walker, 2014, UNC School of Law collection
- Ann Young, Historic Turner House Foundation newsletter, vol. 3, June 2023
- A bilingual voting guide reflects new populations in North Carolina's ever-changing demographics, 2010, State Library of North Carolina.