



Exploring Diversity in Pennsylvania History

Pennsylvania Women and the Quest for Woman Suffrage

Excerpt from Dora Lewis letter to her daughter, Louise Lewis, Apr. 14, 1920, Dover, Delaware

Dear Daughter,

. . . There is a suffrage meeting in a place ten miles from here tonight, at Smyrna. Mrs. Hilles and Mrs. Victor duPont Sr. speaking—meeting gotten up by Miss Dubrow and Miss Riegel—at the New Century Club—Mrs. Hilles made the mistake of speaking to a colored audience in Wilmington the other night, passed resolutions and invited them as a club to join the NWP. I tried to tell her how we have always (with great difficulty) kept ourselves clear of the negro question, but she didn't like my saying anything that implied the least criticism of the action. I wouldn't have, only I was very anxious lest she do it again. We have just heard that the antis have gone all about in Smyrna seeing the negroes (and there are a great many they say) and telling them that Mrs. Hilles wants them all to come tonight. There is a rule of the Club, which we have just rented for the meeting, that negroes are not allowed—I have just seen two anti organizers and several anti ladies going off in the train to Smyrna, evidently for the purpose of carrying out their evil plan. The . . . negro question could easily ruin all our hopes. . . .

Source: Dora Kelly Lewis Collection