

***The Long Road to Suffrage: Emma J. Woerner  
1884-1955***

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A long-time educator in Kentucky, Emma J. Woerner served as president of the Louisville Equal Rights Association and was a member of the Kentucky Equal Rights Association.



Sketch of Emma  
Woerner.

– By Jeremy Miller

She began her career teaching primary grades at the Straight Street Mining Company camp in Bell County, in southeastern Kentucky. Woerner was called back to Louisville, her hometown, in 1911 to join the first faculty of the new Broadway Elementary School. She later became the first and only principal of the J.M. Atherton High School for Girls, now Atherton High School, when it opened in 1924. One of the oldest public high schools in Louisville, Atherton became co-educational in 1950. Woerner remained at Atherton for 31 years, encouraging students to be active in social and cultural affairs beyond the school curriculum. She and junior high principal Samuel V. Noe, who became superintendent of Louisville Public Schools in the early 1960s, led their staffs in providing food and shelter to people left homeless by the historic 1937 flood.

During her summers, Woerner served as Dean of Women at the University of Kentucky, her alma mater, and taught classes at the University of Louisville and at Eastern Kentucky State Teachers College, now Eastern Kentucky University.

- Ms. Woerner is buried in Section 11 Lot 74

