

# A War-Widow Remembers Her Husband's Eagerness to Volunteer (Retrospective account, 1931)

## Abstract

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After the war, a war-widow whose husband had died in combat reflects on the outbreak of hostilities in 1914, and her feelings about her husband's desire to volunteer for military service.

## Source

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We had come home from a walk when the news reached us that war had broken out. My husband was not likely to be called up anytime soon, since he was a member of the 2nd Landsturm, and I was glad that I didn't have to let him go so quickly. Who can blame me, he was my dearest, my everything! One fine day, eight days after the declaration of war, my husband asked me to allow him to volunteer for military service. I begged, pleaded, and broke down in a crying fit that shook my husband, who had never seen me cry before, so deeply that he promised me he would not volunteer. He went on with his work. But soon I noticed that no food tasted good to him, that sleep eluded him at night. One night as I noticed that he was lying awake, I took his hand and said to him: "L., I allow you to volunteer, I want to be strong like other women. But come back home." With a cry of joy, he pulled me into his arms and my heart was so heavy.

Source: H. Hurwitz-Stranz, ed., *Kriegerwitwen gestalten ihr Schicksal. Lebenskämpfe deutscher Kriegerwitwen nach eigenen Darstellungen*. Berlin, 1931, p. 22. Excerpted/reprinted in Bernd Ulrich and Benjamin Ziemann, *Frontalltag im Ersten Weltkrieg. Wahn und Wirklichkeit*. Berlin, 1995, p. 38.

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Recommended Citation: A War-Widow Remembers Her Husband's Eagerness to Volunteer (Retrospective account, 1931), published in: German History in Documents and Images, <<https://germanhistorydocs.org/en/wilhelmine-germany-and-the-first-world-war-1890-1918/ghdi:document-5486>> [September 26, 2025].