

## Women's VOTE Centennial

"Forward, out of error, Leave behind the night, Forward through the darkness, Forward into light!"

- Inez Milholland

INEZ MILHPLLAND BOISSEVAIN



## WHO DIED FOR THE FREEDOM OF WOMEN.

Celebrating the anniversary of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment and working toward a future of equity, respect, and justice for all.





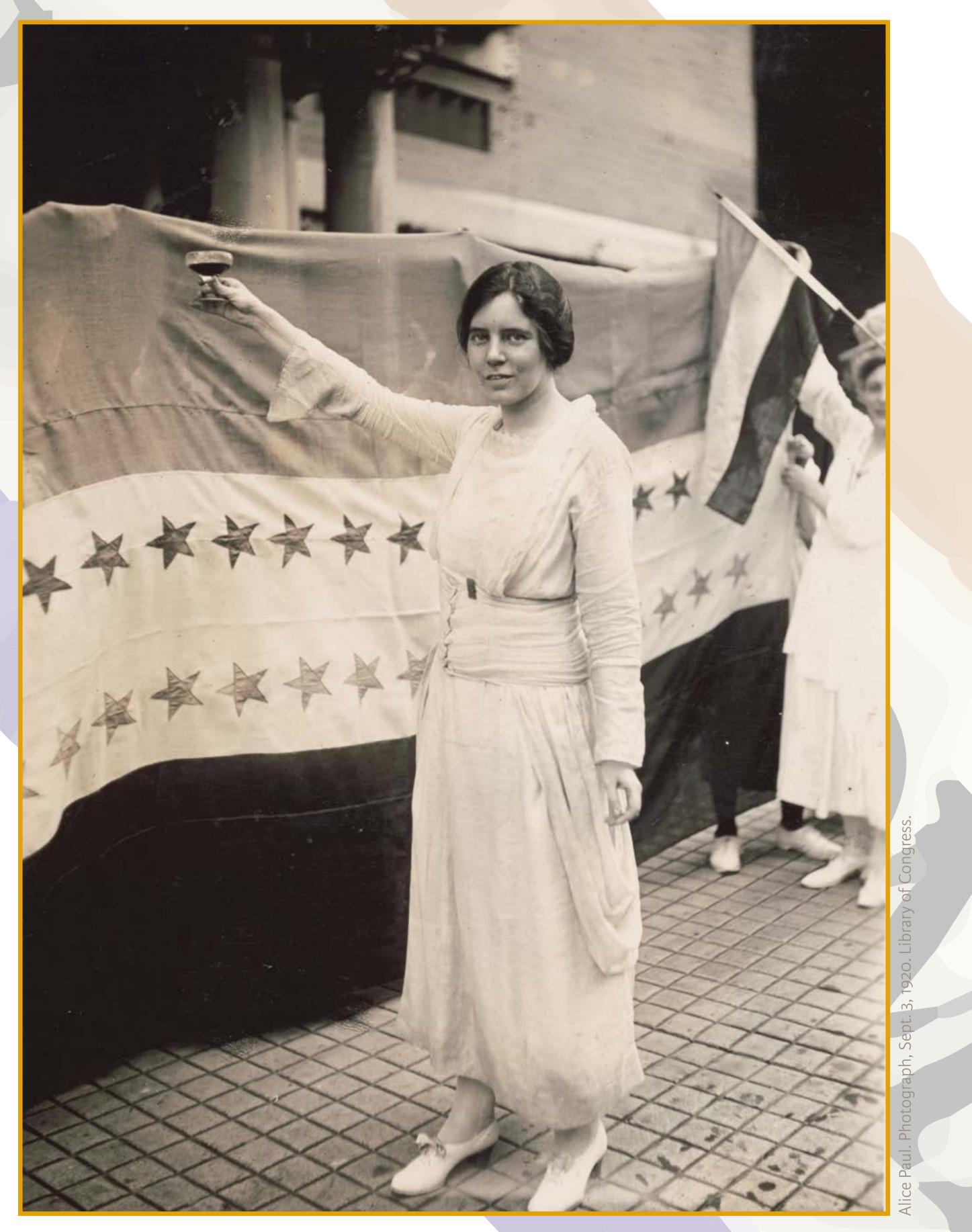
## Women's Suffrage in the Champlain Valley

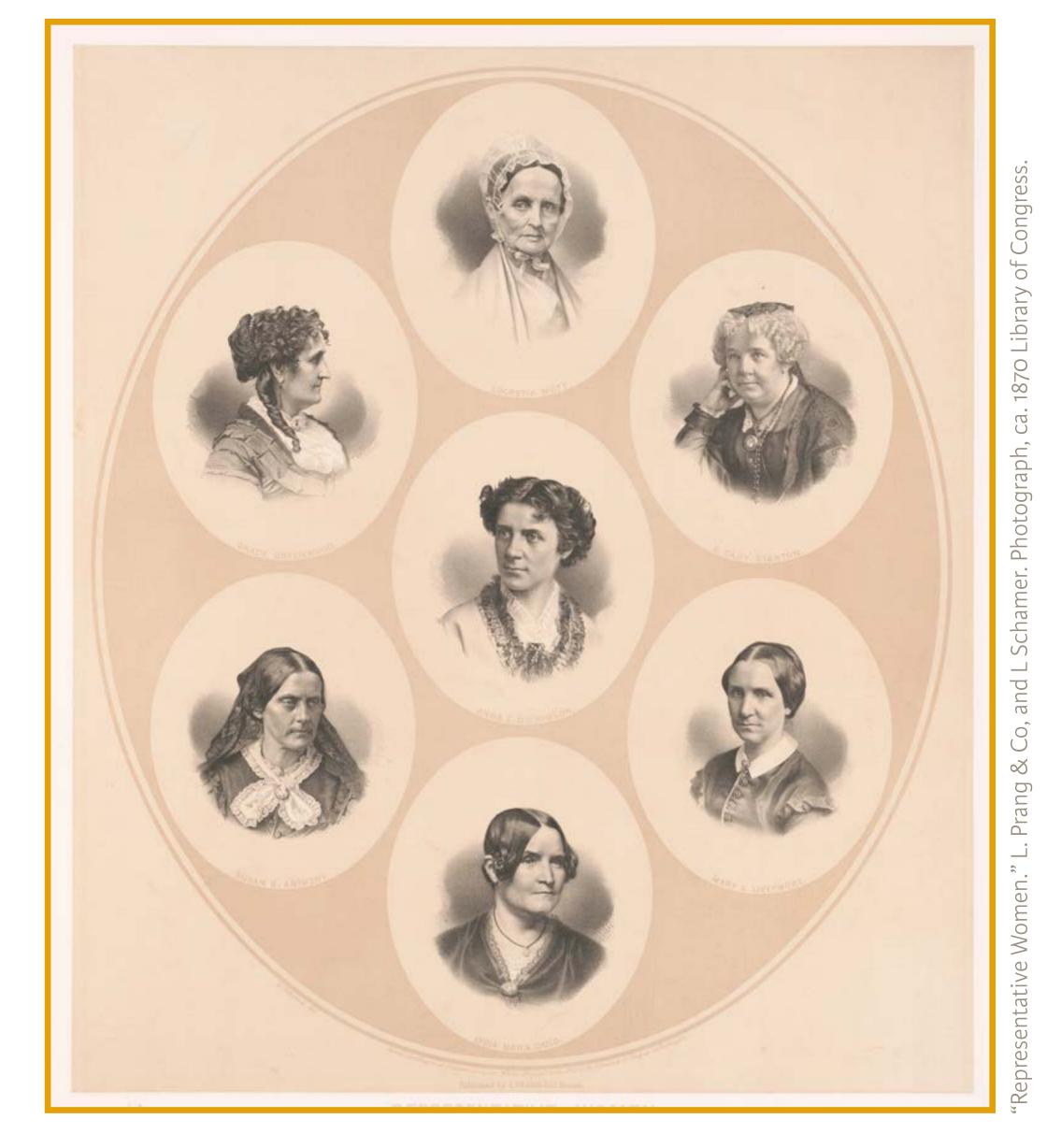
The legacy of women's rights and the fight for suffrage in the Champlain Valley is a complex story. It is a tale of countless known and unknown women and men who fought for fairness and equality, while sometimes falling into the traps of injustice themselves. Women's suffrage is not a story of linear progress that ended when women received the right to vote with the ratification of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment in 1920. It is a cycle of progress and pitfalls that continues to this day.

During the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, Lake Champlain was a transportation corridor for the international exchange of goods, news, and ideas among New York, Vermont, and Québec. Each place had unique experiences with suffrage that were shaped by their local cultures, politics, and society. Major events in New York State—including the 1848 Seneca Falls Convention often receive the most attention, but the hills and towns of New York's North Country also played important roles in the movement. Across the lake, Vermont in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was both a bastion of progressive social and religious thought, and a sheltered and traditionalist corner of New England. Even more conservative was Québec, which kept women from voting in provincial elections until 1940.

The suffrage movement was deeply linked to other progressive movements. It was part of a complex web of causes, ideas, and cultural values that shifted throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Women finally received the right to vote with the ratification of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment in 1920—132 years after the U.S. Constitution was ratified. Work to secure women's rights in the Champlain Valley and nationwide continues today.

> Alice Paul, leader of the National Women's Party, toasts the Suffrage Flag with grape juice after the passage of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment. Many suffragists were also in favor of prohibitions on alcohol.



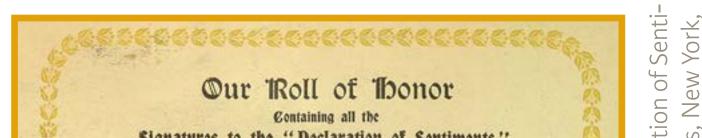


Countless people took part in the universal suffrage movement and women's rights over the past two centuries. This 1870 image features portraits of seven prominent figures in the movement, clockwise from top: top: Lucretia Mott, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Mary A. Livermore, Lydia Maria Child, Susan B. Anthony, Grace Greenwood, and, in the center, Anna Dickinson.



Lewis, New York's Inez Milholland is featured on the cover of the Official Program for the Woman Suffrage Procession on March 3, 1913—the day before Woodrow Wilson's presidential inauguration. Milholland famously embodied the iconic role of the "crusader" for suffrage until her death at age 30 while campaigning in California. She became the "martyr" for women's rights.



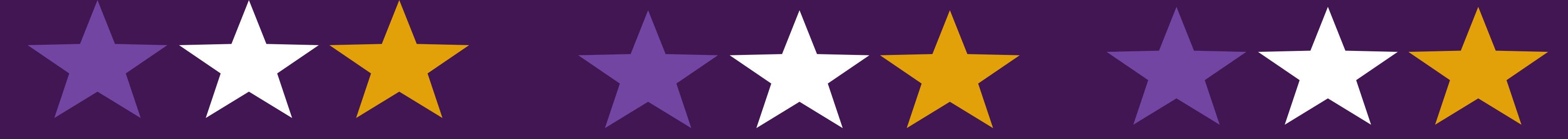


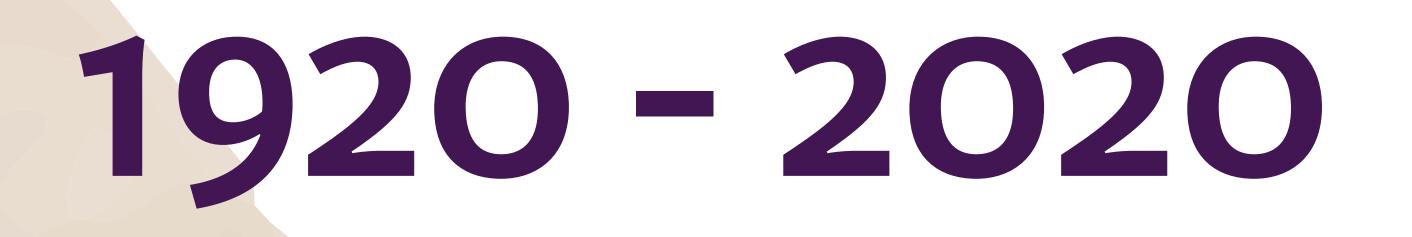
This image of a suffrage parade in Waterbury, Vermont, during the early 1900s shows the grassroots and local efforts that made up the suffrage movement in the Champlain Valley.

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10		July 19-20, 1848	X
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810 -	Margaret Pryor	Hannah Plant	Rhoda Palmer
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10	Martha C. Wright	Sally Pitcher	Susan R. Doty
87	Jane C. Hunt Amy Post	Mary Conklin Susan Quinn	Rebecca Race Sarah A. Mosher
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67	Richard P. Hunt	Willlam S. Dell	Nathan J. Milliken
67	Samuel D. Tillman	James Mott	S. E. Woodworth
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and a	Frederick Douglass Henry W. Seymour	Jacob Mathews Charles L. Hoskins	Joel Bunker
N.	Henry Seymour	Thomas M'Clintock	Isaac VanTassel
<b>W</b>	David Spalding	Saron Phillips	E. W. Capron
83	William G. Barker	Jacob P. Chamberlain	Stephen Shear
100	Elias J. Doty	Jonathan Metcalf	Henry Hatley

After an international abolitionist meeting in Britain failed to recognize its female contributors, a group of Americans organized the 1848 Seneca Falls Convention in Seneca, New York. The meeting ended with the "Declaration of Sentiments," which was signed by attendees, including Lucretia Mott, Frederick Douglass, and Elizabeth Cady Stanton. It was the first formal declaration for women's suffrage and equality of the sexes in the United States.







## A Complex Movement

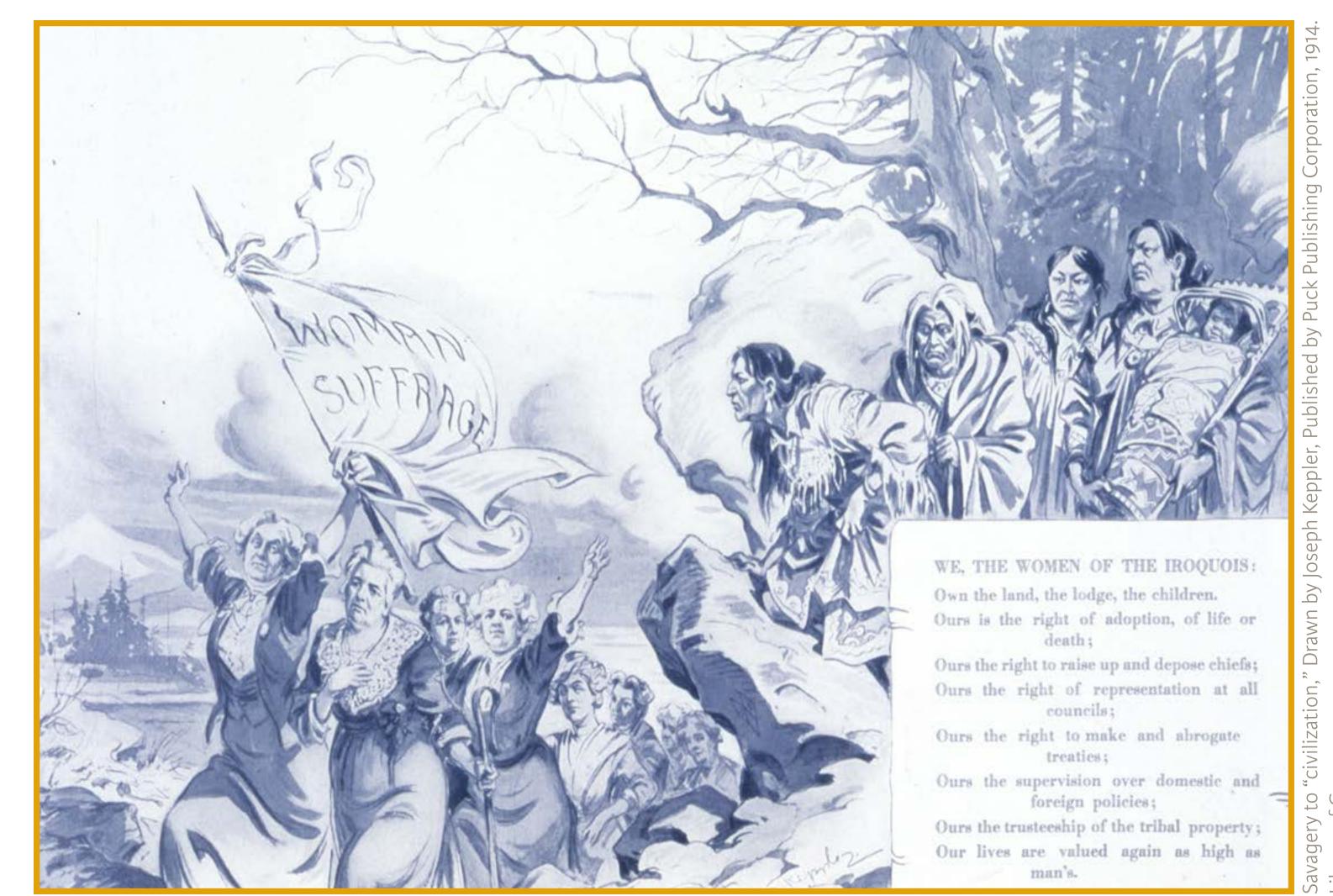
"Frederick Douglass. C.F. Conly Photographer. Photograph, ca. 1880. Reproduction of portrait by George Kendall Warren taken in 1876

Women entered a new political sphere in the mid-1800s by organizing to publicly advocate for social causes that were important to them, including abolition, temperance, and the fight for suffrage. These movements were linked with the opening of the Champlain, Erie and Chambly canals. The movements used these interconnected waterways of Lake Champlain as a conduit for new ideas about sex, gender, class, and race. While these movements often overlapped and often supported each other, there was some tension and disagreement among their proponents and leaders.

The 19<sup>th</sup> century was marked by debates on the role of women in society. Women living in Quaker communities in the Champlain Valley exercised their agency of thought, speech, and action. This went against the ideal of "republican motherhood," which elevated maternity as a butress of American democracy. Many saw women participating in politics as an improper activity by the "gentle sex," while others believed suffrage would "civilize" a corrupt political sphere.

Temperance societies—groups opposed to the sale and consumption of alcohol argued that heavy drinking was a threat to the Christian home. Women often led temperance efforts, which were characterized by the contemporary notions of family life. Freedom from abusive or neglectful fathers and husbands were major themes in both the suffrage and temperance movements.

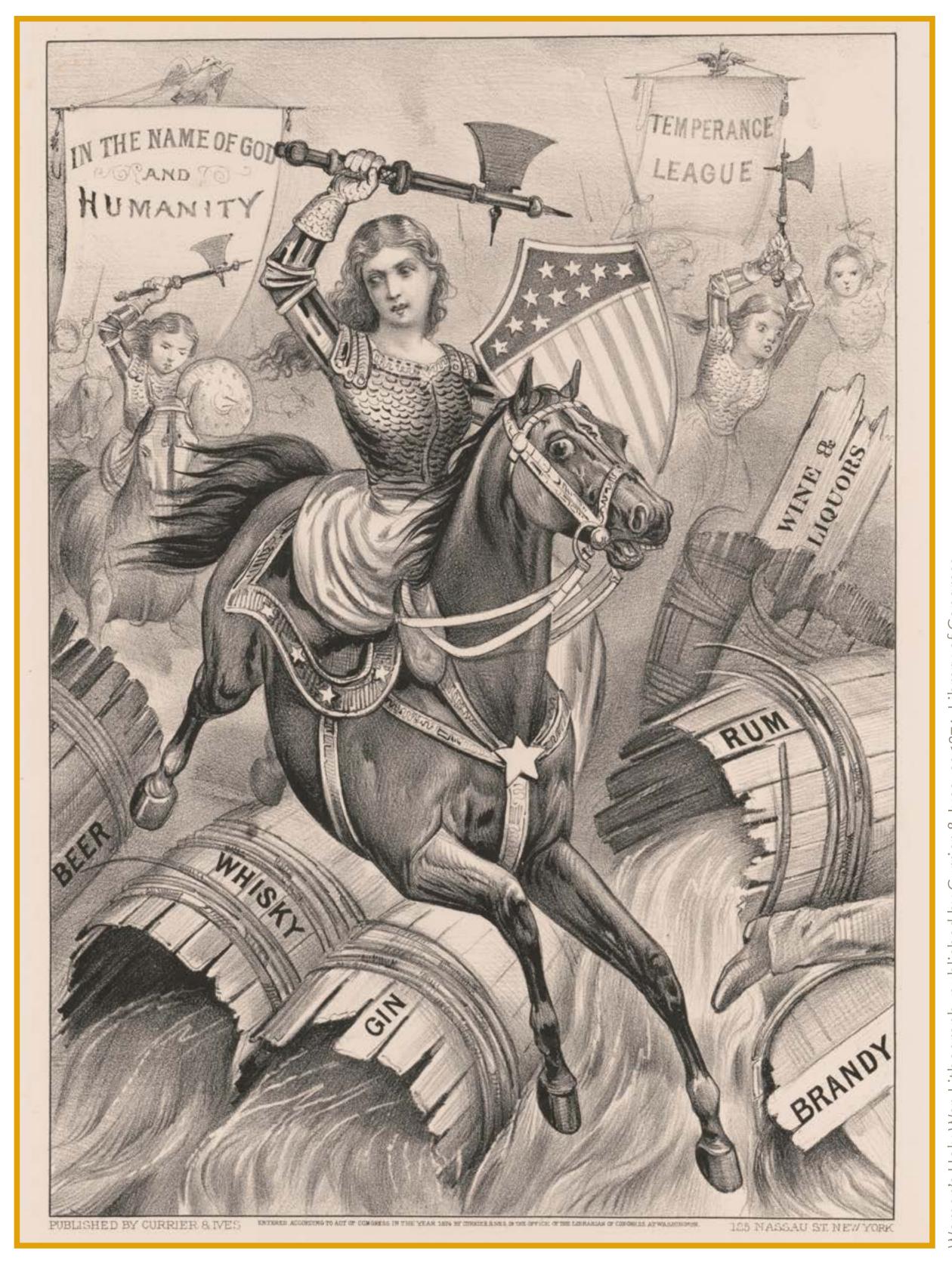
The communities of the Champlain Valley overwhelmingly opposed slavery. The perception of racial equality in the north, however, was challenged after the Civil War when the 15<sup>th</sup> Amendment granted only African American men the right to vote. This created a rift between the amendment's supporters and some very prominent suffragists, who employed overt racism to make their case for inclusion. Apart from some very rare exceptions, women of color were mostly left out of the northern movement.

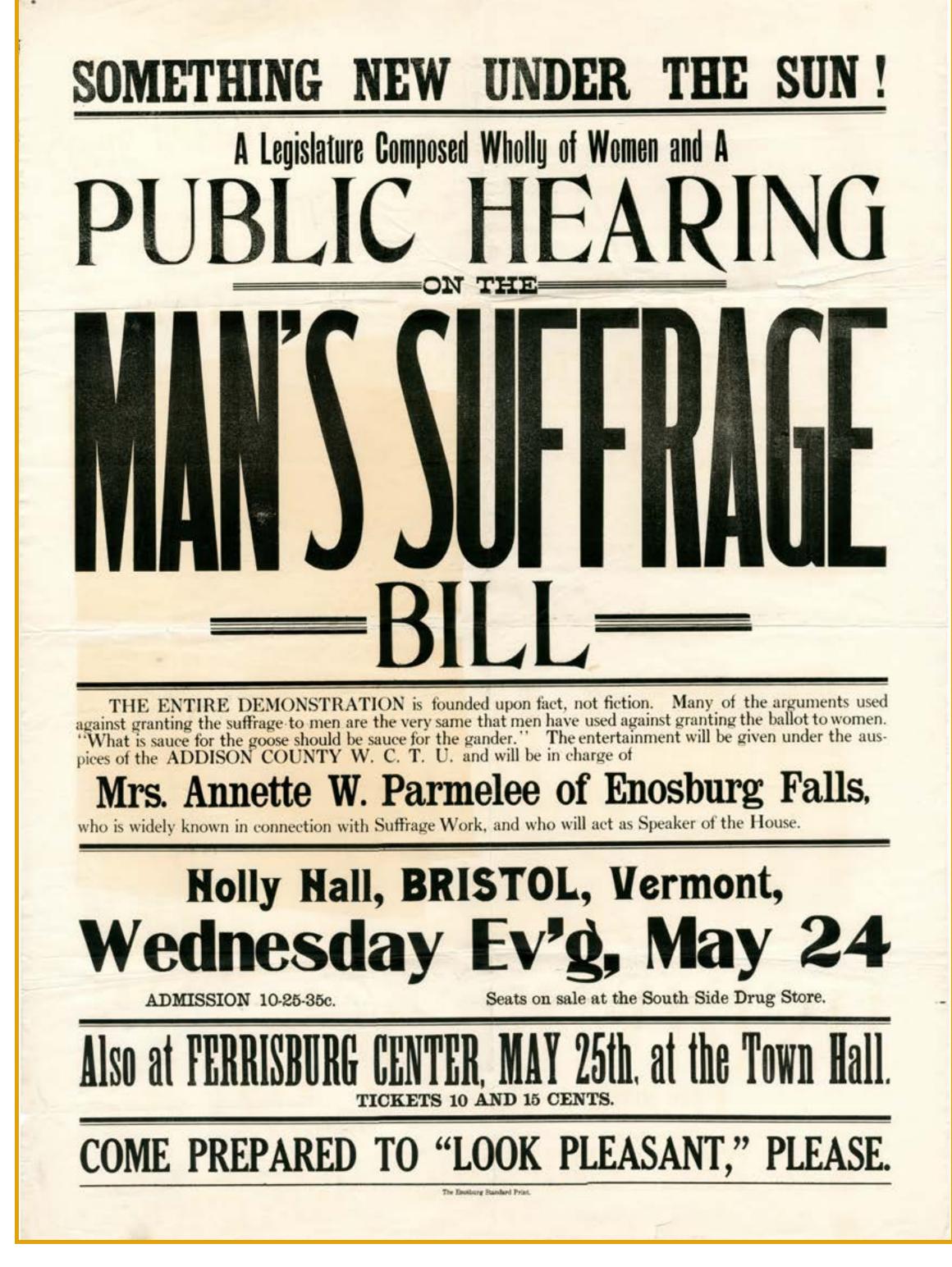




Well-known abolitionist speaker Frederick Douglass was the only African American present at the 1848 Seneca Falls Convention. He encouraged leaders like Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton to not only press for women's rights, but also for suffrage. He advocated the ideal: "Right is of no sex—Truth is of no color—God is the Father of us all, and we are brethren." After the Civil War, the suffrage movement split over the issue of racial equality and voting, leading to conflicts that continued into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Douglass remained an important leader for both racial and gender equality throughout his life. He felt, however, that the suffrage movement should be led by women themselves, which was unusual for the time.

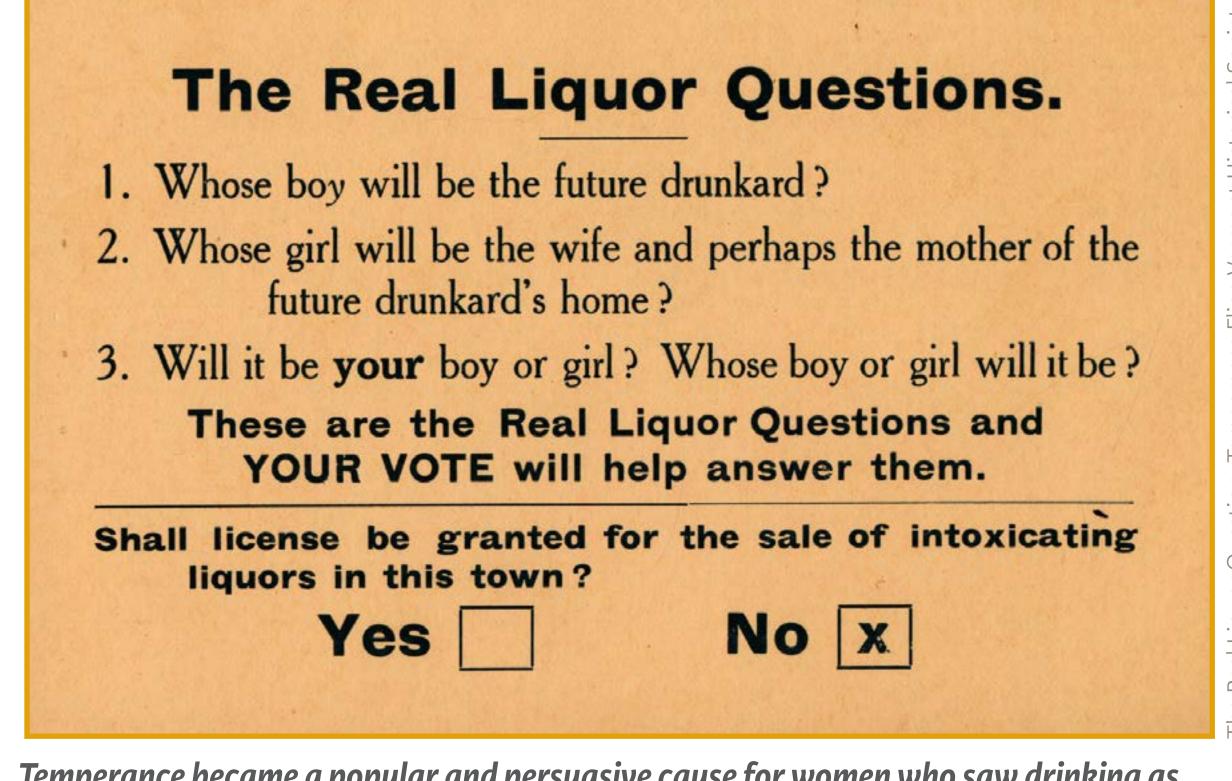
Like African Americans, Native Americans in the movement were often marginalized. This cartoon, which contrasts the powerful, centuries-old rights and responsibilities of Iroquois women with the struggle of American women to achieve suffrage, was drawn by Udo Keppler (Joseph Keppler, Jr.), a second-generation political satirist and co-owner of Puck Magazine. Keppler was an adopted member and honorary chief of the Seneca nation.





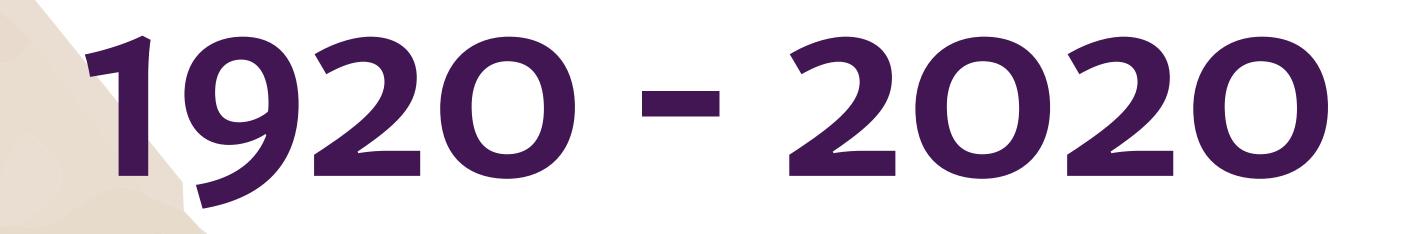
The suffrage movement across the nation used novel strategies to argue for the enfranchisement of women. The "Mock Parliament" was a public spectacle in which a panel of women acted out granting men the right to vote, demonstrating

Many efforts led by women in the 19<sup>th</sup> century were touted as "crusades," a term framed in Christian religiosity. There was the "Crusade for Women's Education," "the Temperance Crusade," and the crusading iconography of Inez Milholland and Alice Paul's 1913 procession in Washington, DC. the contradictions in the arguments against suffrage. This poster advertized an Addison County show organized by Vermont suffragists.



Temperance became a popular and persuasive cause for women who saw drinking as a threat to the domestic life. At first, the temperance movement aimed to persuade citizens to limit their alcohol consumption, but later turned to legislative efforts to halt the production and sale of "intoxicating liquors."





## Vermont: Progress Versus Tradition

Clarina Nichols (1810-1885) was an early Vermont advocate for abolition, temperance, and women's rights. In the 1840s and 1850s, Nichols helped remove restrictions on a woman's right to divorce and to bequeath or inherit property. She was the first woman to speak in the Vermont Statehouse Chambers and was honored by Vermont's first female governor, Madeleine Kunin, in her 1985 Inaugural Address.

NUGRAPHS

We protest against the continued disfranchisement of women For which the Republican party is now responsible. The Republican party defeated ratification in Deloware. The Republican party is blocking ratification in Vermont. The Republican party is blocking ratification in Connecticut. When will the Republican party stop blocking suffrage?



The issues of temperance and suffrage were intimately related in Vermont, with fears about alcohol prohibition stymying suffrage efforts at the state level right up to the passage of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment. As this poster demonstrates, Republicans in Vermont were blocking ratification of the amendment, but it would ultimately be a Democratic governor, Percival Clement, who would block the effort. Vermont did not ratify until February of 1921, missing its chance to be the deciding 36<sup>th</sup> state to ratify.

Ithough a small, rural state, Vermont contributed to the suffrage movement in significant ways. In the early 1800s, the Champlain Valley was home to a vibrant community of Quakers who practiced a religious tradition that granted women increased agency, including formal learning beyond domestic training. Emma Willard—although not a Quaker herself opened a school in Middlebury in 1814 to teach girls about geography and history, which kickstarted a cultural shift toward better education for women.

Temperance was the first issue to politically empower women in Vermont. Although it began through a strategy of "moral suasion"—encouraging neighbors and relatives to change their behavior through social pressure—the temperance efforts eventually led to an 1853 statewide prohibition that lasted until 1902. Many pro-liquor groups associated suffrage activists with temperance and assumed that women would vote for increased prohibition of alcohol. This remained a wedge-issue right up to the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment and the Prohibition Era itself.

During the latter part of the 1800s, Vermont evolved into a socially conservative state, but the nuanced politics of the time meant that many reforms originated within women's organizations. Suffrage leaders were both progressive and conservative, seeing themselves as moving American culture forward while sheltering it from outside influences. The movements for strong anti-liquor laws and for women's municipal suffrage waxed and waned. Eventually, temperance and suffrage efforts in Vermont converged with the national suffrage movement by the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Vermont governor Percival Clement—an anti-prohibitionist—refused to call the legislature into session to ratify the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment in 1919,





When Abby Hemenway (1828-1890) began writing a social history of Vermont in the mid-1800s, she encountered resistance from Middlebury College faculty who claimed it was not women's work. Nonetheless, Hemenway traveled to surrounding towns and used tact and peer pressure to convince them, one by one, to support her project. Hemenway separated herself from the budding notion of women's rights, which was too extreme even for the progressive abolitionists.

fearing that enfranchising women would lead to a return to temperance in Vermont. Vermont did not ratify it until February 8, 1921.



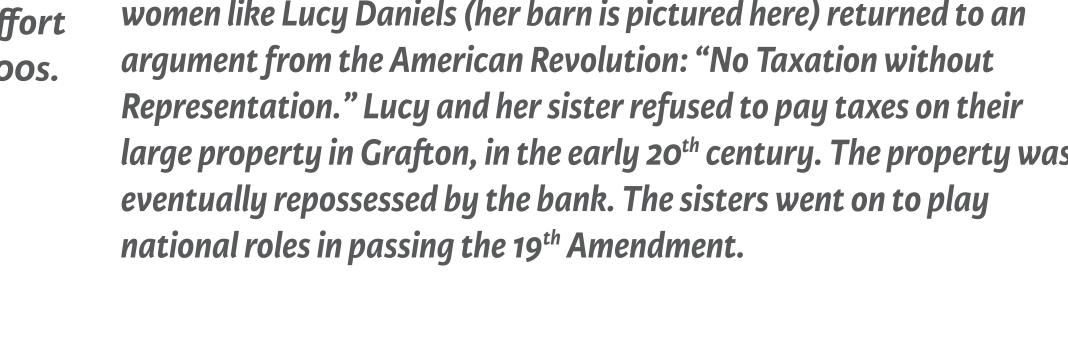
The Vermont Woman's Christian Temperance Union (seen here in Newfane, VT) was founded to advocate against alcohol. They quickly embraced the suffrage movement partially in the belief that most women would vote for further prohibition of intoxicating liquors.

During the late 1800s, an older generation of suffrage leaders found their efforts flagging. Annette Parmelee (1865-1924), one of Vermont's leading suffrage organizers, worked to regain momentum for the movement until a younger generation reinvigorated the effort during the early 1900s.

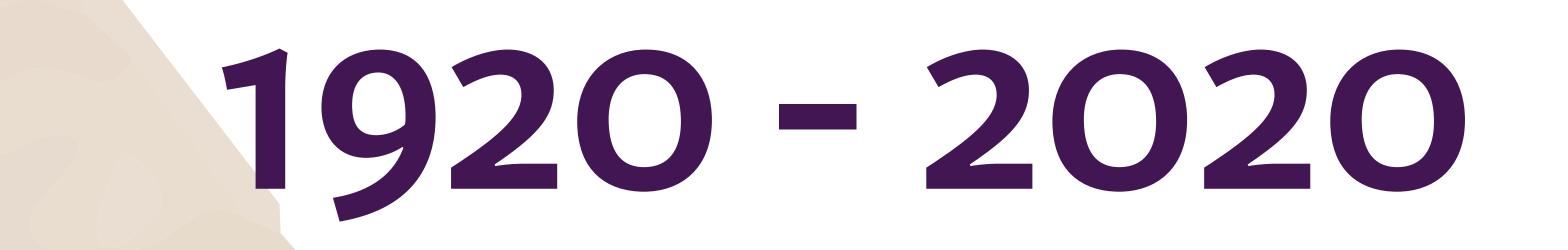
When she denied any radical motives to Rowland T. Robinson of Ferrisburgh, he replied to her: "thee knows too much to admit it; but thee does what is better than to say it, thee acts it."



After earlier strategies for enfranchisement wore thin, some Vermont women like Lucy Daniels (her barn is pictured here) returned to an large property in Grafton, in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The property was







# **New York: The Empire State Leads the Way**

New York was home to an all-star cast of suffragists. Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Frances Willard, and Sojourner Truth were born and lived there. Alva Belmont, Carrie Catt, and Mary Burnett Talbert were residents of the Empire State. While most of the women's rights efforts were centered in New York City and the state's major metropolitan areas, the North Country produced many notable suffrage leaders. Helen Hinsdale Rich, the "Poet of the Adirondacks," was credited by Francis Willard as "the first woman in Northern New York to embrace woman suffrage."

Susan B. Anthony—who grew up in Battenville, located in Washington County evangelized the suffrage movement in Champlain Valley towns so extensively in winter of 1855 that she nearly collapsed. The sweltering heat of the cities made the Adirondacks and Lake Champlain a summertime destination in the late 1800s, and with the vacationers, came the suffrage movement. "Suffrage clubs" were established. Newspapers, like the *Plattsburgh Sentinel*, published in the 1890s by Hannah Straight Lansing, the "Mother of Suffrage in Clinton County," spread the word. That word must have reached Inez Milholland, who spent her summers on her family's property in Lewis, New York.

Milholland (seen below on horseback) was part of a new group of educated women that took the lead of the suffrage movement in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Alice Paul, Lucy Burns, Chrystal Eastman, and others separated from the conservative National American Woman Suffrage Association in 1914. They formed the Congressional Union for Woman Suffrage, which later became the National Women's Party, to aggressively push for a constitutional amendment. Their efforts were successful. Women won the right to vote in New York on November 6, 1917. New York became the first east coast state to ratify the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment on June 16, 1919.



The most important suffragists of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Elizabeth Cady



Charismatic, smart, and driven, Inez Milholland was the face of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment. Her mother nurtured Inez's independence and gender equality beliefs. As an adult, Vassar-educated Inez was an accomplished labor lawyer and led the 1913 Suffrage March in Washington along with other events. Her distinct persona: the "crusader for suffrage" clad in armor astride a white charger was iconic and used throughout the movement's history. Milholland died at 30 in 1916 while campaigning for suffrage in California.



Stanton and Susan B. Anthony, centered their efforts in New York, beginning with the 1848 Seneca Falls Convention. They held the stage for decades before a new generation of advocates took the reins in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.



The women's movement held memorial events—some drawing 10,000 people—for Inez Milholland at her gravesite in Lewis, New York. A New York Times account of one gravesite event noted that Alice Paul failed to invite African American speakers to a memorial in Lewis in 1924: a reminder that racial disparities continued to play a role at both the l

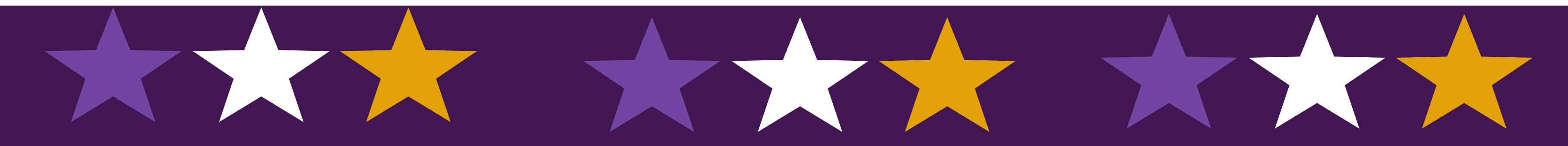
A master of publicity, noted art collector and socialite Louisine Havemeyer, used her talents for the suffrage movement. Utilizing new technology and symbolism, Mrs. Havemeyer would hold aloft the "Ship of State," a replica of the Mayflower adorned with electric lights during her popular public speeches. This image shows Louisine (in black), the "lady with the torch," passing another powerful symbol to a New Jersey suffragist in a 1915 multi-state event supporting the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment. Louisine allowed paintings from her remarkable collection to be displayed to raise money for the movement. A significant portion of that art now hangs in the National Gallery of Art, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the Shelburne Museum, which was established by her daughter, Electra Havemeyer Webb.

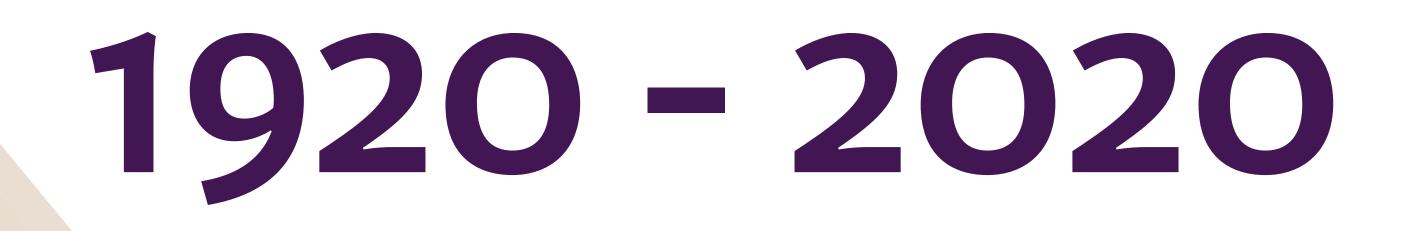
ocal and national level. Here, Alice Paul and friends stand at her grave in front of Mount Discovery, renamed Mount Inez in her honor in 2019.



The Suffrage movement along the New York shore of Lake Champlain heated up around the turn of the century. Advocates gave speeches, rallies, and even held auto "invasions" like this one, photographed outside the Hotel Wetherill in Plattsburgh to a "large and enthusiastic crowd."







## Québec: An Extended Fight



During the "Great War" Canada took the first step toward women's suffrage, allowing women serving in the military or women who had close relatives at the front to participate in federal elections. Here, nurses vote near the frontlines in France in 1917.

Québec was one of the more progressive territories for women under British colonial rule. The Constitutional Act of 1791 allowed propertied women to vote. This "constitutional oversight" granting limited suffrage to women was removed in 1849. Some historians believe this was in response to the 1848 Seneca Falls Convention that started the women's rights movement in the United States.

Canadian women were part of a global movement toward suffrage in the early 1900s. They used their important roles in World War I field hospitals and on the home front as leverage to attain federal suffrage in 1918. In Québec, however, while women could vote for members of the Canadian parliament, they couldn't participate in provincial or local elections until 1940.

The vast majority of the public, most politicians, and the powerful Catholic Church opposed municipal and provincial suffrage for women. Leaders like Thérèse Casgrain and Idola Saint-Jean persevered against this opposition. They led annual marches on the Québec Parliament Building. Idola Saint-Jean ran in the 1930 federal election to promote the cause. In 1935, activists collected 10,000 signatures in favor of Québec suffrage and sent the petition to King George V. From 1922 to 1939, 13 suffrage bills were rejected in the Québec legislature.

On April 25, 1940, the activists' persistence paid off: Québec passed the *act* granting women the right to vote and to be eligible as candidates. It was the last



hérèse Casgrain at Radio Canada. Photograph, Conrad Poirier, March 19, rchives Québec, Public Domain of Canada. Courtesy of the Bibliothèque rchives nationales du Québec.

Suffrage leader Thérèse Casgrain (in black) attends a radio program about women's rights in the early 1940s. Casgrain founded the Provincial Franchise Committee in 1921 and was the leader of Ligue des Droits de la Femme until 1942. She was elected head of the Parti social démocratique du Québec in 1961, making her the first female leader of a political party in Canada.

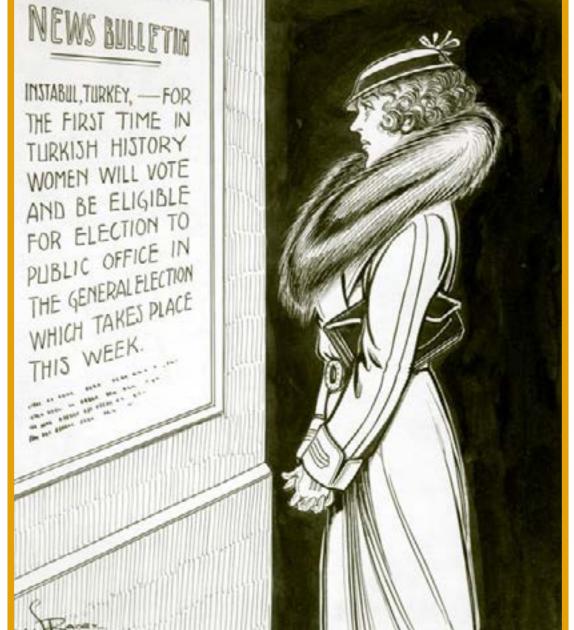
As this American map shows, suffrage was an international issue that varied across the world. Note: women got the right to vote in Mexico in 1953.



#### Canadian province to grant full voting rights to women.

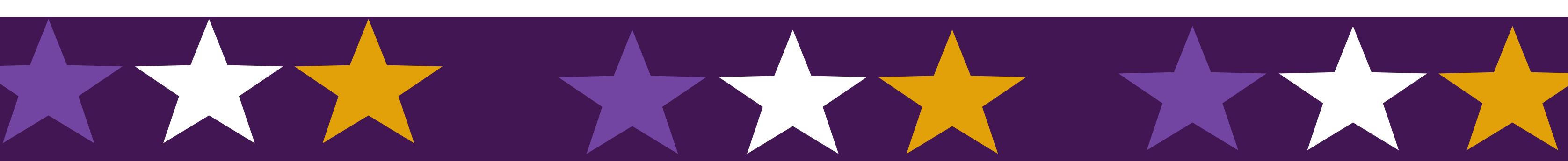


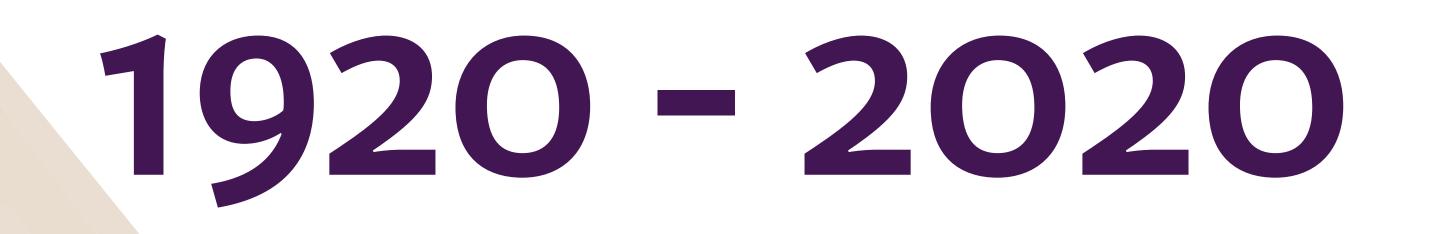
Conscription during the first World War was a controversial issue in Canada, as shown in this 1917 Montreal protest. By granting federal suffrage to women, the Canadian government hoped that more wives and mothers might support the war effort.



This 1930 Montreal cartoon illustrates disenfranchisement in Québec.







## Her Work Continues





Some of the largest protests in American history were part of the Women's March movement. Since 2017, these events have brought together millions in cities across the globe. The first Women's March, pictured here in Washington, DC, on January 21, 2017, has since been criticized for omitting the voices of non-white women, demonstrating that racial inequality continues to plague the fight for women's rights.

Dy 1918, public opinion was swinging toward suffrage. When the ratification process Dbegan in 1919, New York—which granted women state-wide suffrage in 1917 approved the measure with only a single abstaining vote. Vermont failed to become the deciding vote because the anti-prohibition governor, Percival Clements, refused to call the legislature into session. Instead, Tennessee holds the honor of being the 36<sup>th</sup> state required to ratify the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment on August 18, 1920.

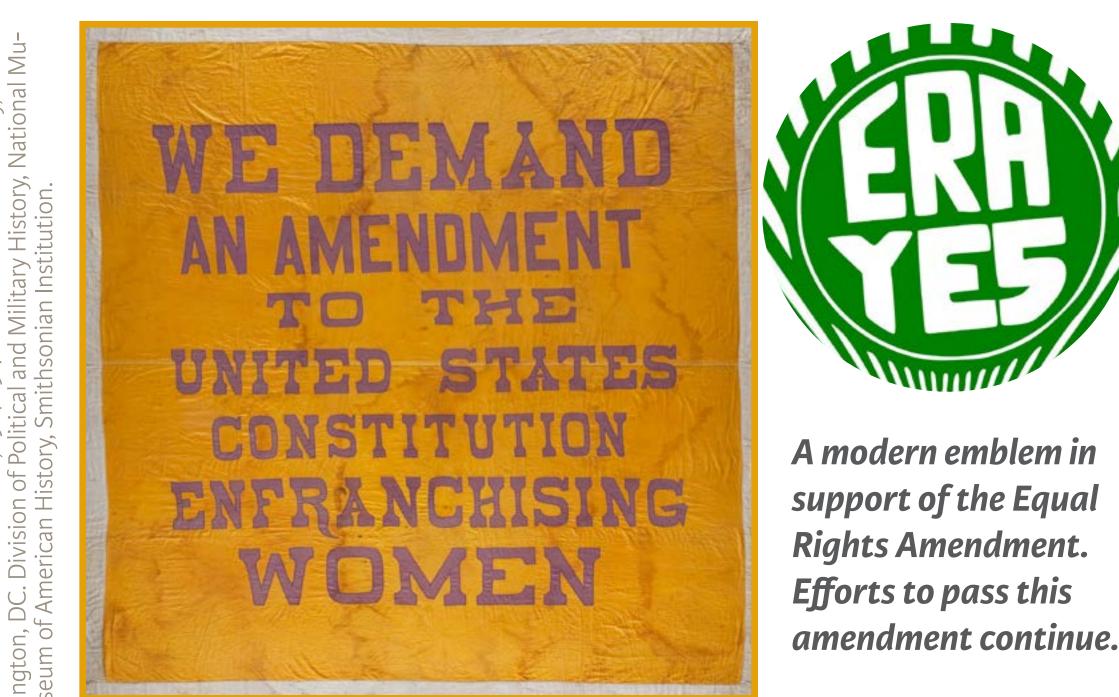
The struggle for women's rights didn't end with suffrage. Women could vote, but many felt that stronger protections of women's rights should be embedded in the constitution. The Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) was written by Alice Paul and Crystal Eastman and submitted to congress in 1923. It guaranteed equal rights for all Americans regardless of sex. New York passed the amendment in 1972 and Vermont in 1973. While approaching the required 38 states needed to ratify the amendment, a national anti-ERA movement arose against it in the mid-1970s. Led by Phyllis Schlafly, the "STOP ERA" campaign effectively blocked passage of the ERA.

While the 1979 deadline for the ERAs passage is passed, several states have recently approved the amendment: Nevada (2018), Illinois (2019) and Virginia (2020). The future of the ERA remains uncertain, but modern movements continue the fight. The gender pay gap (women receive 80 percent of a man's salary for the same job), the glass ceiling (women and minorities are not able to rise to positions of power in the workplace), and sexual harassment and violence (best known by the #MeToo movement) are just some of the issues facing modern society.

The Women's March has brought together some of the largest protest crowds in American history. Today, women and men across the globe connect women's rights to modern causes, just as suffrage was tied to a patchwork of other ideas in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The continued importance of these issues is a reminder that women's suffrage was a key step toward social equality, but that work continues in the Champlain Valley, North America, and across the globe.



Differing opinions about the role of women in society remain. The 1970s ratification of the ERA was prevented by the STOP-ERA movement led by Phyllis Schlafly, who believed women were better served by their traditional family roles. Note: STOP was an acronym for "Stop Taking Our Privileges."







After the passage of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment, Alice Paul and the National Women's Party continued their efforts. After helping to initiate the Equal Rights Amendment, Alice Paul lived for a time in Vermont while working for the United Nations to advance women's rights worldwide.

amendment continue.

The National Women's Party created banners like this prior to the ratification of 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment that were used in suffrage rallies and parades across the country in the early 1900s.



Many western states had already granted women the right to vote long before the passage of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment. As with most American movements, individual communities and states often lead the way to change at the national level.



