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THE CLARION



The Woman's Suffrage and Political Issues Chapter of the American Political Items Conservators

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Editor's Notes

The 14" x 20" blue and yellow poster that appears on our cover page was issued for the October 19 suffrage referendum that was held in New Jersey in 1915 as part of the 4-state Eastern campaign that also involved New York, Pennsylvania, and Massachusetts. The hope among activists was that if at least one of these states voted for suffrage, it would make a powerful statement for the adoption of a national amendment. New Jersey held its referendum on the 19th because that was registration day. The other three states held their referenda on Nov. 2, election day. The franchise, unfortunately, was defeated in all four states, although New York did approve full suffrage for women two years later. One of the interesting sidelights to this poster is that although it was from the New Jersey campaign, it is in the colors of the neighboring state of New York. New York did issue a similar poster but with the Nov. 2 instead of the Oct. 19 date.

Last July, Emmy and I had the pleasure of seeing *Suffs*, the musical portrayal of Alice Paul and the final stages of the struggle to pass a suffrage amendment to the Constitution. Originally debuting off-Broadway at The Public Theater in April 2022, it was transferred to The Music Box on Broadway on April 18, 2024, with changes to both the book and songs. Created by Shaina Taub, it has won Tony Awards for Best Book and Best Musical Score. It has also been named Best Musical by the Outer Critics Circle and received two Drama Desk Awards including Best Score. It was produced by Jill Furman and Rachel Sussman with co-producers Hillary Clinton and Malala Yousafzai.

We both found the songs and the singing to be superb, even though Hawley Gould temporarily replaced Shaina Taub in the title role of Alice Paul for the performance that we saw. In short, we recommend it to anyone planning a trip to New York in the near future.

The Museum of the City of New York has announced a new exhibition entitled "Changing the Face of Democracy Shirley Chisholm at 100," which will be on view until July 20, 2025. The first major museum presentation dedicated to Chisholm, it will focus on the life and legacy of the former Congressperson and Presidential Candidate, whose name and legacy are reflected in the current candidacy of Kamala Harris. Chisholm, as most of you are aware, was the first African American Congressperson ever to be elected to that office and the first African American woman in 1972 to seek the office of the Presidency running as a hopeful in the Democratic primaries that year. The exhibition is on the museum's second floor North Gallery and encourages visitors to immerse themselves in a multi-dimensional story of this ground breaking woman. It is divided into three sections "Brooklyn Life," "Political Career," and "Legacy." It combines her life in context with the times using historical artifacts such as buttons, photographs, archival footage, and art. The exhibit is supported by an Honorary Committee that includes Hillary Clinton, Senator Chuck Schumer, Senator Kirsten Gillibrand, Congressperson Hakeem Jeffries, Gloria Steinem, and others.

The “Other” Victoria Woodhull Newspapers

As a newspaper publisher, Victoria Woodhull is best known for *Woodhull and Claflin's Weekly*, a paper that she edited with her sister, Tennie C. Claflin, from 1870-1876. The paper supported Woodhull's campaign for President in 1872 and published articles about feminism, free love, spiritualism (belief in the communication with dead spirits), and other progressive ideas. On December 30, 1871, it became the first American journal to reprint Karl Marx's *Communist Manifesto*. But serious problems occurred both for the publication and for the sisters in the November 2, 1872 issue when the *Weekly* exposed the adulterous affair that occurred between the famous preacher, Henry Ward Beecher, with Elizabeth Tilton, the wife of his friend, Theodore Tilton. In that same issue, Tennie C. Claflin also wrote article that detailed the seduction of two young girls by the Wall Street Trader, Luther Challis. The edition, which actually had appeared on October 28, achieved such instant notoriety that issues were scalped around the sisters' Broad Street Office in New York for \$40.00 each.

The celebration over the success of the issue was short-lived, however, as a warrant for Woodhull's arrest was quickly issued on November 1. The man behind the warrant was Anthony Comstock, who worked to create a Committee for the Suppression of Vice in conjunction with the YMCA. In June of 1872 a federal law had been passed that made it illegal to send obscene materials through the mails. Parts of that law have been cited today to prevent birth control drugs from being posted in the mails. Because the *Weekly* was mailed to some subscribers, Comstock was able to convince a federal court that Woodhull and Claflin had broken that law. The issue was not whether or not Woodhull had slandered Beecher but rather did the sisters publish a pornographic article by simply discussing adultery. Woodhull and Claflin were arrested, but, six months later, were acquitted of all charges. However, subsequent arrests on similar complaints and the legal fees involved with both defense and bail had their deleterious con-

sequences. Moreover, the failure of her “marriage” to Colonel Blood, whom she had divorced in 1876, the declining revenues from *The Weekly*, and the loss of friends from both the suffrage movement and from Wall Street because of her notoriety had significantly affected Woodhull's health.

Relief came, though, in January, 1877 when Cornelius Vanderbilt, who had been the sisters' patron on Wall Street and who had been rumored to have had an affair with Tennie, died. His will was contested by his children, who, fearing that any testimony by Woodhull and Claflin in a court case could hurt their position, offered to pay the sisters to leave the country, which they did.

When Woodhull and Claflin arrived in England, their fortunes began to change as they made an attempt to rehabilitate their images. Woodhull made her first public appearance at a lecture that she gave at St. James Hall in England entitled “The Human Body, the Temple of God.” One of these lectures was attended by the banker John Biddulph Martin, who fell in love with her and later married her on October 31, 1883, despite objections from his family. His wealth helped to enable Woodhull to run for President again in 1880 and later in 1892. For her part, Tennie C. married Francis Cook, Chair of Cook and Son, Drapers, on October 15, 1885. Queen Victoria created a Baronetcy for Cook soon thereafter and Tennie became known as Lady Cook.

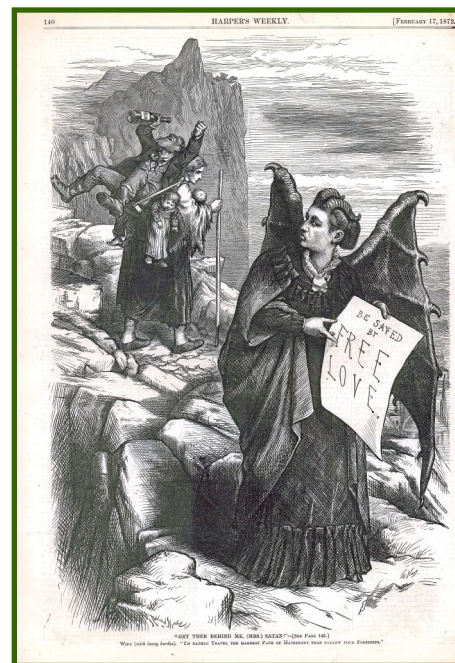
For Woodhull, her rehabilitation meant denial of involvement in many of the controversies that had originally made her famous, including her espousal of “free love.” Other problems involved her “divorce” from Colonel Blood, her second husband, and her involvement in the Henry Ward Beecher scandal. Her solution in part was to publish her first paper in England on January 29, 1881 entitled *Woodhull and Claflin's Journal*, changing the title slightly from her American publication and modifying the spelling of her name from “Woodhull” to

... The Other Victoria Woodhull Papers, cont'd.

“Woodhall” to claim what she felt to be her English heritage (the name, of course, no matter how she spelled it, was that of her first husband, not hers, her birth name being “Claflin”). In addition, the first name of her daughter “Zulu” was changed to the arguably less exotic “Zula.” Listed on the masthead as Vol. XII, No. 3 to give it a sense of continuity and history, this edition of *The Journal*, nonetheless, was apparently the only issue of the publication that ever appeared.



Weekly and is pictured below, a downtrodden woman, carrying three children along with a besotted husband on her back, is seen making her way to a mountain top. She looks back at Victoria Woodhull, identified here as (Mrs.) Satan, who is holding up a sign that proclaims: “Be Saved by Free Love.” The woman comments: “I’d Rather Travel the Hardest Path of Matrimony Than Follow Your Footsteps.” Woodhull later attempted to clarify, indicating that the term meant that women should be allowed to enter into a relationship that was based on love and not necessity and that she should have the right to divorce her husband should his behavior become intolerable.



In her one issue of *Woodhall and Claflin's Journal*, Woodhull went even further, denying any association with the term whatsoever. She complained about all the “vile rumors” that she was subject to in the United States, particularly with regard to “free love.” She claimed now that comments attributed to her about “free love” were made without her knowledge and assent and in no way ever represented her views. Woodhull asserted: “I now openly avow, with all of the earnestness of righteous indignation, that during no part of my life did I favour Free Love even tacitly.” She protested that she was made “morally responsible for utterances and doctrines which I loathe and abhor from the depths of my inmost being.”

Woodhull had in the past attempted to clarify what she meant by free love. In an age where marriage was often utilitarian and where divorce, no matter what the circumstances leading up to it were, was heavily frowned upon, the term “free love” was associated by the public with all sorts of scandalous behavior. In Thomas Nast’s famous cartoon, for example, that was published in the February 17, 1872 issue of *Harper's*

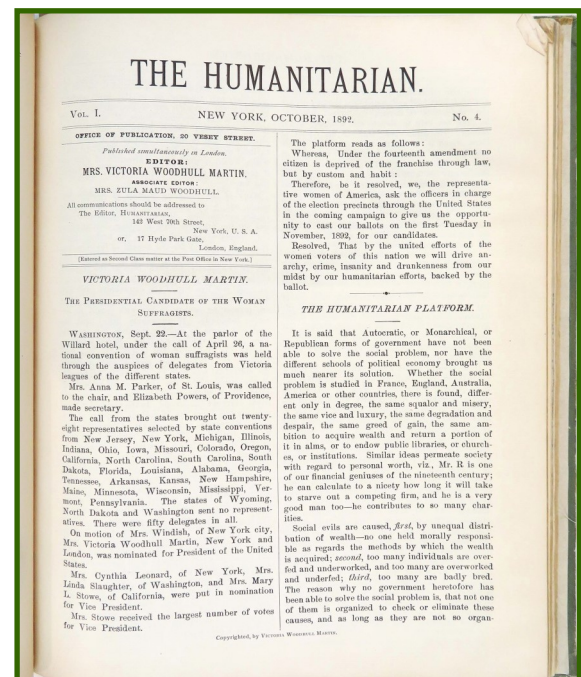
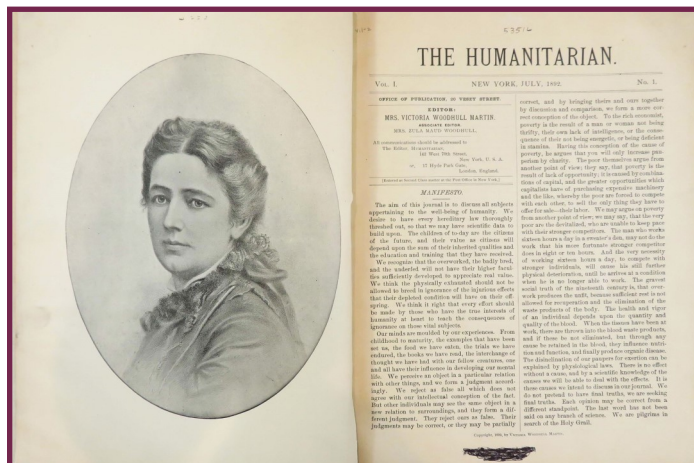
... The Other Victoria Woodhull Papers, cont'd.

With respect to her divorce from Colonel Blood, Woodhull attempted in *The Journal* to blacken his character as much as possible, asserting that, when she was slandered and vilified, he did nothing whatsoever to defend her honor. She recounted that in 1875 when she was seriously ill (having, as she asserts, been “poisoned”) she followed him one evening to a house on Lexington Avenue where “having entered a private apartment, she found her husband in the embraces of a woman.” To justify leaving him in an age where the possibility of divorce for women was particularly difficult, she noted that she waited a year-and-a half after this incident to file for permanent separation and only after “accumulative evidence came to her knowledge respecting his treachery and bad conduct in diverse ways.”

She also denied having written the “Henry Ward Beecher” article that had resulted in such notoriety and caused her to be imprisoned. Now praising Beecher’s character, Woodhull claimed that the article to which her name had been signed was written and published while she was away on a lecture tour. She also criticized her then husband, Colonel Blood, who, in her absence was in charge of the paper, for not setting the record straight.

It is not known how much of an effect her defense of herself in *The Journal* had on her public image, but it certainly helped to fortify her relationship with John Biddulf Martin, whom she was to marry two years later.

Woodhull’s next English publication, *The Humanitarian: The Philosophy of Sociology*, was launched in July 1892 and appeared in both London and New York City. It was meant to coincide with Woodhull’s third run for the Presidency in that year. To pick up support, she and her husband travelled to New York, and then, on September 22, she met in Washington with 28 delegates of the National Equal Rights Committee, where she was nominated by J. Lindon Knight of Kansas to be the Party’s standard bearer. Marietta Stow, who was on the ticket with Belva Lockwood in 1884, was chosen to be the party’s Vice-Presidential candidate. In a story about her nominating convention that appeared in the October 1892 issue, Woodhull claimed that the 28 representatives to the event were chosen at their respective state conventions. She noted that Mr. Cynthia Leonard of New York and Mrs. Linda Slaughter of Washington were also nominated for the Vice-Presidential slot that Stow won. Because Woodhull was frequently subject to exaggeration, it is difficult to verify the statistics and accuracy of her account.



... The Other Victoria Woodhull Papers, cont'd.

The Humanitarian ran monthly from its initial issue until 1901 when Woodhull, who had changed her name back to its original spelling, retired to the country, where in Norton Park, Bredon's Norton, she built a village school with Tennie C. and Zula. Beyond the journal's attempt to publicize her campaign and promote suffrage, it was also a mixture of commentary on current literature and culture, science and spirituality, feminism, political insight, but most of all on her interest in eugenics. In her opening Manifesto in issue 1, Woodhull declared that the children of today "and all their value as citizens will depend on the sum of their inherited qualities and the education and training that they have received."

Furthermore: "We recognize that the overworked, the badly bred, and the underfed will not have their higher faculties sufficiently developed to appreciate real value. We think the physically exhausted should not be allowed to breed in ignorance of the injurious effects that their depleted condition will have on their offspring. We think it right that every effort should be made by those who have the true interests of humanity at heart to teach the consequences of ignorance on those vital subjects." Her platform consisted of planks on various issues including: Aristocracy of Blood (eugenics), Tribunals of Health, Improved Dwellings for the Poor, Physicians to Examine Children in Schools, Labor Tribunals for Arbitration, Revenue and Tariff reform, Financial Reform, Scientific Re-

organization of the Criminal Code, Women's Suffrage, etc.

Her support of eugenics involved advocating in *The Humanitarian* and elsewhere such ideas as changes in the marriage laws to prevent "undesirables" from marrying, encouraging, sometimes through special allowances, suitable marriages, state custody of the developmentally or physically "defective," and compulsory sterilization of those deemed "unfit to breed." As abhorrent as these ideas are today, they were regarded by some of the time period as "progressive" and in line with women's advancement in society. Moreover, Woodhull's fascination with eugenics did not deter such writers, politicians, suffragists, and doctors as Sir Richard Burton, George Bernard Shaw, Florence Nightingale, Millicent Garrett Fawcett Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Ida B. Wells, and Ramsay Macdonald from contributing to the journal.

Perhaps *The Humanitarian* is overlooked today, even with an American presence through its offices in New York, because of its focus on eugenics; but, despite a lack of circulation figures, it appears to have been popular enough at the time. It also gives us evidence that Woodhull, after her expatriation to England, continued to be a dynamic and active personality and thinker, even though her positions sometimes now conflicted with those that were dynamically associated with her in the past.

1892 Woodhull for President Campaign Flier

Victoria Woodhull ran for President three times, in 1872, 1880, and 1892. It was only her 1872 campaign, however, that generated much publicity, in part, but not limited, to her self-promotion, her controversial stance on "free love"—which was later modified and then repudiated altogether—the fact that she was the first woman ever to run for President, and her exposure of the sexual relationship between Henry Ward Beecher and Elizabeth Tilton, the wife of his friend,

Theodore Tilton. Her later two campaigns were complicated by the fact that she was now living in England and in 1883 had married statistician and banker John Biddulph Martin, which deprived her of both her American citizenship and her legal right to run for president even if women could vote.

While there was a significant amount of ridicule of her 1872 campaign in the American press, Woodhull

... Victoria Woodhull for President, cont'd.

herself produced little in the way of presidential memorabilia. Her newspaper *Woodhull and Claflin's Weekly*, which she co-produced with her sister Tennie C., did run a banner announcement for four months beginning in 1871 that she was the nominee of the Cosmo-Political Party. Her then husband, Colonel James Harvey Blood, also proposed issuing non-interest-bearing bonds that would be redeemed once the Equal Rights Party (the more familiar name of the Cosmo Party) came into power. Despite period evidence that such bonds were actually printed and that \$1,600 was raised as a result to finance the campaign, no surviving bonds have surfaced. What also have not surfaced are any presidential fliers, tickets to campaign rallies, or any other presidential items issued on her behalf. The numerous photographs and stereo views that have surfaced picturing Woodhull appear to have been issued because of her general notoriety and were not campaign items.

Very little documentation about Woodhull's 1880 campaign exists. She was not publishing a newspaper at the time that could have promoted her second run and her biographers have little to say about her candidacy. The situation changed slightly in 1892. She had

married the wealthy banker John Biddulph Martin in 1883, and had the resources to run again. She and her husband spent April through June in 1892 in New York City, where she reached out to former supporters of both her and Belva Lockwood. In September 22, she met with 28 delegates of "the National Equal Rights Committee" in the parlor of the Willard Hotel in Washington, D.C., where once again she was nominated for President. In July of that year, she published her last paper *The Humanitarian*, which described both the convention and the party's platform, and was discussed in the previous story in this issue.

One other piece of memorabilia from the 1892 campaign has recently surfaced. It is a large 10" x 27 1/2" flier that is headlined "Victoria C. Woodhull, Candidate for the Presidency of the United States—1893." There is no information on the flier about who printed it, where it was printed, or who produced it. In all likelihood, it was ordered by Woodhull herself and circulated in America, where its immediacy would have been relevant. But despite its campaign headline, the flier consisted primarily of a series of endorsements, not of her latest presidential run but of the character of Woodhull herself. It may have served

VICTORIA C. WOODHULL, ⁷⁻²⁶⁻¹⁸⁸⁹

CANDIDAT FOR THE

PRESIDENCY OF THE UNITED STATES—1893.

VICTORIA C. WOODHULL AND TENNESSEE CLAFLIN.

ONE of the London gossips of the day is certainly the great cause undertaken by the celebrated woman reformer Victoria Claflin Woodhull (now Mrs. John Biddulph Martin):—"Women's emancipation" and "the improvement of the human race."

women to advocate any cause, no matter how high or holy, before the public, but in the present century, the old order of things changes with a wonderful rapidity. Now, women of culture and intellect are seen in the pulpit, are heard at the bar, are greeted on the rostrum, and the public are naturally interested in knowing something of the private lives of those who have displayed the nerve and bravery required to put themselves forward as the advocates of the rights of their sex in defiance of old prejudices.

"The ladies have selected a peculiarly quaint and appropriate portion of the city for their residence. The neighbourhood is quiet and aristocratic.

"Your correspondent had some difficulty in obtaining an

always associated with the most learned *savans* of both hemispheres, and enjoyed to a wonderful degree their esteem and admiration. No ordinary woman could have sustained herself under the circumstances which have surrounded Mrs. Woodhull. Adverse fate at times seemed to have almost buried her out of sight. But she has come through all her perils unscathed.

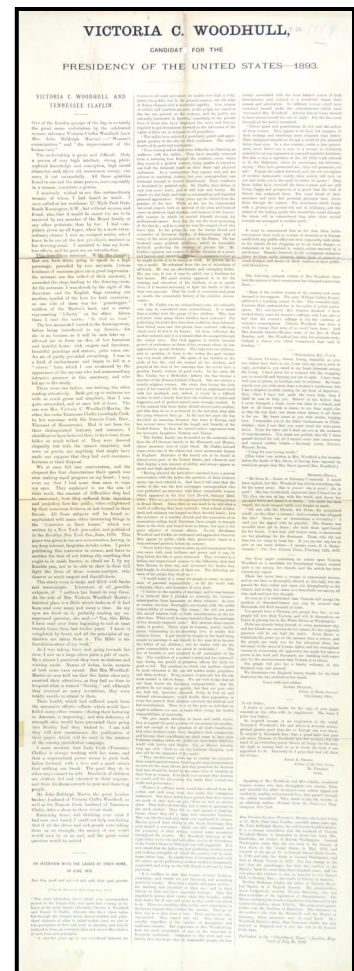
"Prison gates and persecutions do not cool the ardour of these women. They appear to be dead, but reappear in their writings and teachings more eloquent than before. Their maligners tremble as though a sword of fire gleamed before their eyes. In a free country, under a free government, never before was

... Victoria Woodhull for President, cont'd.

in part as one of her last attempts to rehabilitate her character that had been the subject of such notoriety in America.

The introductory piece that takes up most of the first column of the three-column flier is an anonymous account of a visit to Woodhull's residence at 17, Hyde Park Gate, South Kensington, S.W. where the interviewer finds her to be "a person of very high intellect, strong philosophical knowledge and conception high moral character, and, above all, uncommon energy." Very little is said about Woodhull's presidential aspirations apart from an oblique reference to her upcoming paper that will be used in the campaign. Given the anonymity of the piece, it very well could have been written by Woodhull herself.

The remainder of the flier consists of an interview that appeared in 1876 in the *Brooklyn New York Sun* that focused on the nobility of character of Woodhull's parents as well as on her own accomplishments. Other brief endorsements stress her ability to overcome the enmity and bitterness to which she had been exposed in America and a piece by Alfred Burnett of the *Home Journal* of Cincinnati assuring England that Woodhull will be given a hearty welcome on her return to America to accept the nomination for President. While the flier may be a simple enough affair, it does give us a general idea of how Woodhull wanted to be perceived at this point in her career.



Suffrage Memorabilia from California

There were two major ballot initiatives in California designed to give women the right to vote. The first occurred in 1896 when, despite an eight-month active campaign on the part of the under-funded suffragists, the proposition failed at the polls. Undaunted, activists persisted, and the success of Washington women in 1910 to obtain the franchise gave their California counterparts renewed expectations. It was in that year, encouraged by what they hoped would be a supportive new administration of Governor James Norris Gillett, that they made their second formal attempt and persuaded the state legislature to include the issue the following year on the 1911 ballot.

Again, supporters had but a brief eight months to organize and persuade a public that suffrage leader Louise Wall characterized as "amused, indifferent and

incredulous" rather than hostile. Accordingly, suffragists decided to "put forth arguments of a hopeful, constructive sort rather than arguments that ended in criticism or irony." For purposes of the campaign, the State was essentially divided into two parts. Elizabeth Lowe Watson, a former pastor, spearheaded the California Equal Suffrage Association in the north, while two organizations worked together in the less populated southern portion of the state: The Political Equality League, founded by John Hyde Braly, and the Votes for Women Club, led by attorney Clara Shortridge Foltz. They were joined in their efforts by various other groups along with approximately 10,000 volunteers.

Suffragists anticipated strong opposition in urban areas from saloon keepers and business interests, so they focused their efforts on rural areas. Their campaign

... California, cont'd.

relied in part on the extensive use of memorabilia, including lapel material. They created and distributed postcards, shopping bags, ribbons, pennants, three million pieces of literature, and over 90,000 "Votes for Women" buttons in Southern California alone. In this connection, Selina Solomons wrote:

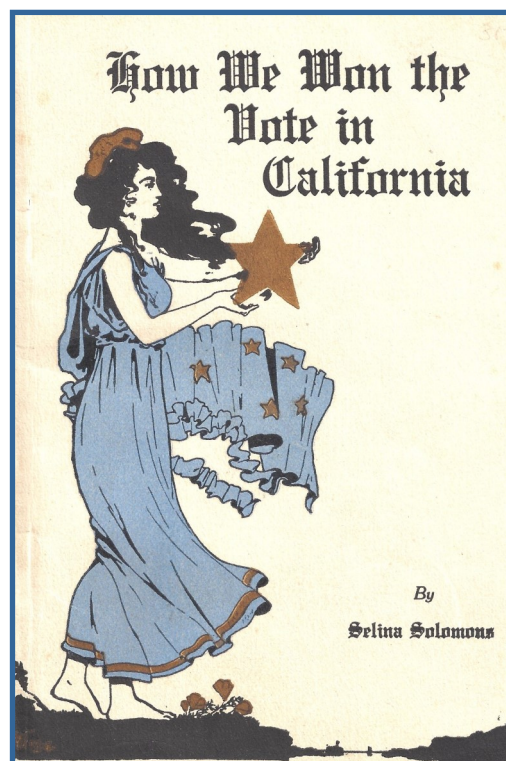
"Decorations and emblems held by no means a petty place in our publicity work. The Votes for Women Club had 'made in California' with a special original design in poppies, a very dainty pin similar in style and design for the popular fraternity pins. This sold for twenty-five cents to the young business girls and men, who did not care to be 'conspicuous' by wearing a larger pin."

"A very neat button in white and gold was manufactured for the 'State,' of which nearly fifty thousand were disposed of, being sold at five cents each to individuals, and to organizations at cost, one cent each. We had previously worn the English flag pin, and all the different buttons we could get hold of. Towards the end the glad-to-be-martyrs to the cause even adorned their dressy corsages with the white Votes for Women 'dinner plate!'."

The returns that came in on Election Day, October 10, 1911, were initially disappointing and very discouraging. The initiative was soundly defeated in the San Francisco area and just barely passed in Los Angeles, where suffragists had hoped for more support. Some suffragists began to plan for yet another referendum when late returns began to come in from the rural areas and swung the vote in their favor. When the final vote was tabulated, the measure barely passed by 3,587 votes (125,037 to 121,450), making California the sixth state in the Union to give women full voting rights.

After the vote, Selina Solomons wrote up her impressions of the campaign in the booklet shown to the right, entitled *How We Won the Vote in California*. Copies were ordered and distributed by the National American Woman Suffrage Association to aid sup-

porters in other states to obtain what California women had just won.



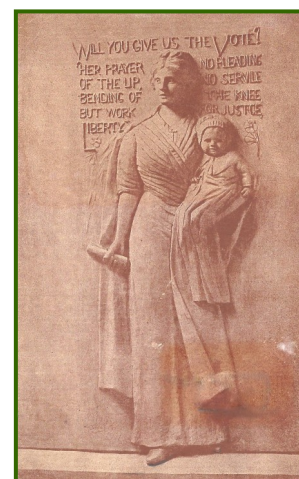
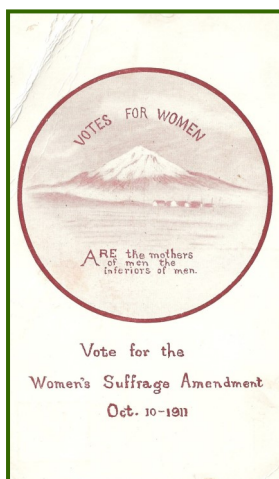
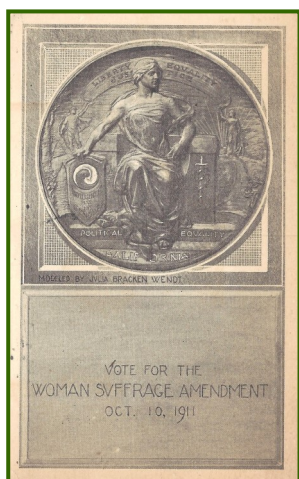
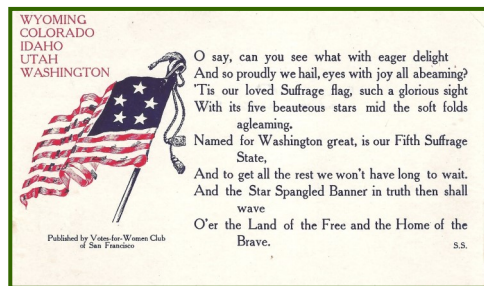
Solomon's 71-page book on how the vote was won in California, printed in 1912 one year after the referendum had passed, has, in itself, become a suffrage collectible. Published by the New Woman Publishing Co. of San Francisco, it features a cover design by Elmer S. Wise. Wise first came to the attention of California suffragists when, at the age of 15, he contributed an entry in a suffrage poster contest that was described by Solomon as "full of spirit and spirituality." The back of Solomon's book features two pages of ads for suffrage paraphernalia, including "beautiful hand-made pennants" for 75 cents, specially designed pennant pins with gold lettering on blue enamel for 25 cents, various postcards, including one designed by Wise, and a printed script for a suffrage play, *The Girl from Colorado, or the Conversion of Aunty Suffrage*."

Not all items pictured on the following page are from the 1911 campaign, but they do give a general idea of what type of memorabilia had at one time circulated in the State.

... California, cont'd.

			
1 1/2" x 5" Silk Ribbon	2 1/4" x 6" Silk Ribbon	3" x 7" Silk Ribbon	2 1/4" x 5 3/4" Silk Ribbon

When it organized in 1892 the Women's Parliament of Southern California was not a woman's rights society. However, suffragists quickly dominated the group, and sessions were subsequently called "woman's rights meetings." Thereafter, the Parliament asked the California State Legislature for an amendment to the State Constitution to enfranchise women. There were several ribbons created especially for Precinct Workers in 1911, an indication of California suffragists' reliance on memorabilia in their campaign.



... California, cont'd.

There were a number of postcards issued for the California campaign of which the six pictured on the preceding page represent only a representative sample. The America flag card pictured at the upper left was issued by the aforementioned Votes for Women Club of San Francisco. It celebrates the recent victory of Washington State suffragists, a win that gave hope and encouragement to supporters throughout the country who had become disheartened by a series of losses in the early part of the 20th century. The map card, pictured next to it, has some historical significance. It was published by Alice Park, a major activist in the successful 1911 campaign, and sent to her Eastern friend, Sarah Algeo, Rhode Island Suffrage Leader and author of *The Story of a Sub-Pioneer*. In that book Algeo pictured the suffrage button collection of

Park, which at the time was the largest such collection ever accumulated.

The next card is post referendum and was produced by Barker Brothers, "America's Greatest Home Furnishing House" in Los Angeles. It is apparent that mercantile interests recognized the emerging buying power of women and were quick to establish themselves on the right side of the issue. The following card, issued in at least two different colors, features a medal modelled by Julia Bracken Wendt and urges the recipient to "Vote for the Suffrage Amendment October 10, 1911." It is followed by two cards that feature a popular motif urging men to vote for the franchise on behalf of their mothers, hoping that red-blooded males could not resist such an appeal.



Both Solomon's observations and Alice Park's wonderful badge collection, pictured in our previous issue, are indications of the strong appreciation many California suffragists had for buttons. Some varieties were issued, though, in limited quantities, and several of the pieces mentioned by Solomon have not as yet turned up in collector's circles. One piece that she appreciated particularly was the "dinner plate pin" cited above, a 2 ¼" celluloid whose outer rim gives the button the appearance of a dish. The copy shown here in the upper left is black on brown and tan. Another variety is in white.

The ¾" black on gold "California Votes for Women October 10, 1911" pin is actually made of metal, not celluloid, and features a clasp back. It is extremely rare and only one or two have turned up so far in the hobby. The W. E. S. L. (Wage Earners' Suffrage League) button was issued by a group founded by Louise LaRue, a waitress who felt that the middle-class activists in the suffrage movement did not understand or appreciate the situation of working-class women. A fuller account of this pin can be found in issue # 45 of *The Clarion*.

... California, cont'd.

The “8” on the 5/8” badge refers to the fact that the suffrage proposition was the eighth amendment on the ballot in 1911. It was manufactured by the Walter N. Brunt Company of San Francisco, a major button producing firm on the West Coast. Although not verified, the 5/8” black on green celluloid was probably issued by the anti-suffragists as a response pin. Brunt also made the black on gold ¾” celluloid, copying the very popular design that was issued back East by the National American Woman Suffrage Association. The two black on yellow “Votes for Women” buttons came from the William H. Hoegee Company of Los Angeles, presumably for use in that part of the state. The final 5/8” pin, made of metal, shows a standing allegorical figure surround by the words “Votes for Women—California.” There were, undoubtedly, other buttons and ribbons issued in California, but, as is the case with Solomon’s “poppy” button, they are very rare and undiscovered so far.

NAWSA National Conventions and Ribbons

It is difficult to say when the first ribbons for any suffrage convention first appeared. The use of yellow as a color for many suffrage ribbons, though, probably goes back to 1887 when Kansas suffragists, borrowing their state color, chose a “yellow ribbon” as their distinct sign. The practice caught on, and by 1894 Mary Livermore was urging her Massachusetts counterparts to wear yellow ribbons.

The earliest convention ribbons were probably hand made. It is not clear when the first National American Woman Suffrage Association (N.A.W.S.A.) *printed* ribbons were produced, but one was manufactured for the 1895 convention in Atlanta. From the mid-1890’s on, delegate ribbons were probably printed for each N.A.W.S.A. convention held, although examples from many conventions have not as yet been uncovered by collectors. Ribbons were distributed to both attendees and delegates, but special ribbons were also given out to those who had a role in the convention such as committee members or platform presenters. It is highly likely then that multiple ribbons were made for most conventions, although committee ribbons are especially hard to find because of their limited production. Many of these special ribbons probably have not survived.

N.A.W.S.A. was officially established in 1890 when two competing organizations, both formed in 1869, the American Woman Suffrage Association and the National Woman Suffrage Association, resolved their differences and merged. Because each of these earlier associations had continuing conventions beginning from 1869, N.A.W.S.A. labelled its combined convention in 1890 as number 22 and not number 1, honoring the history of both of its predecessors.

This list here begins, not with the first National Suffrage Conventions held in 1869, but with those conventions beginning in the mid-1880’s, when ribbons might have been produced although no actual N.A.W.S.A. convention ribbon with a date prior to 1895 is actually known to collectors.

A star * appears below in front of any convention for which there is a known ribbon. Conventions are double-starred ** if an example from that meeting is pictured at the end of this article. If anyone has a national suffrage ribbon from any convention that is not noted here, please contact me.

... NAWSA Conventions, Ribbons, cont'd.

1884 16th Convention, Washington, D.C., March 4-7. Lincoln Hall.

1885 17th Convention, Washington, D.C., January 20-22, Lincoln Hall.

1886 18th Convention, Washington, D.C., February 17-19, Church of Our Father.

1887 19th Convention, Washington, D.C., January 25-27, Metropolitan Church

1888 20th Convention, Washington, D.C., April 3-4, Church of Our Father

1889 21st Convention, Washington, D.C., January 21-13, Congregational Church

1890 22nd Convention, Washington, D.C., February 18-21, Metzerott's Music Hall. First Formal union of National and American Woman Suffrage Associations under their joint name.

1891 23rd Convention, Washington, D.C., February 26-March 1, Albaugh Opera House. NAWSA's Convention followed immediately after the 1st triennial meeting of the International Council of Women, which was held in the same opera house.

1892 24th Convention, Washington, D.C., January 17-21, Church of Our Father.

1893 25th Convention, Washington, D.C., January 16-19, Metzerott's Music Hall.

1894 26th Convention, Washington, D.C., February 15-20, Metzerott's Music Hall.

*1895 27th Convention, Atlanta, Georgia, January 31-February 5, De Give's Opera House. This was the first time the National Association had met outside of Washington.

Known Ribbon—A pictorial ribbon was issued in black on yellow with the words "XXVII Annual Convention of the National American Woman Suffrage Association Atlanta, GA. Jan 31st-Feb. 5th 1895." The ribbon pictures columns at the top with streamers bearing the inscription "Freedom is Moderation" and a circular hand bearing the words "Constitution/Justice."

1896 28th Convention, Washington, D.C., January 23-28, Church of Our Father.

1897 29th Convention, Des Moines, Iowa, January 26-29, the Christian Church. N.A.W.S.A.'s leadership, but not the general membership, met again later in the year in Minneapolis at an event that coincided with the annual convention of the Minneapolis Political Equality Club. There was a joint 2" x 6" black on yellow ribbon for this event that read "Equal Suffrage National Conference and Minnesota State Convention/ No. 15 and 16, 1897 First Baptist Church Minneapolis." Susan B. Anthony, who attended this event, is known to have autographed several copies of this ribbon on the rear side.

*1898 30th Convention, Washington, D.C., February 13-19, Columbia Theater.

Known Button—There is a small delegate celluloid button that contains the initials and words: "N.A.W.S.A. Delegate 1898."

*1899 31st Convention, Grand Rapids, Michigan, April 27-May 3, 1899, St. Cecilia Club House.

Known Ribbon—A black on dark yellow ribbon hanging from a black and white celluloid button picturing a woman. The words on the button say "Delegate N.A.W.S.A. 31st Annual Convention April 27 to May 3, '99 Grand Rapids, Mich.

1900 32nd Convention, Washington, D.C., February 8-14, Church of Our Father.

This was the last convention at which Susan B. Anthony presided as president of N.A.W.S.A. She was succeeded by Carrie Chapman Catt.

... NAWSA Conventions, Ribbons, cont'd.

**1901 33rd Convention, Minneapolis, Minnesota, May 30-June 4. First Baptist Church of Minneapolis.

Known Ribbon—The basic ribbon for this convention was a 2" x 6" black on yellow ribbon with yellow ties at the top. The wording on the ribbon was "Delegate N.A.W.S.A. Minneapolis, 1901."

*1902 34th Convention, Washington, D. C., February 12-18. First Presbyterian Church.

Known Ribbon—A thin black on yellow ribbon was issued for this convention that came with a black and white button picturing the Capitol Building. The wording on the ribbon was "N.A.W.S.A. Delegate Washington, D.C. Feb. 12-17, The day of the convention was actually the 18th."

**1903 35th Convention, New Orleans, Louisiana, March 15-25. Athenaeum Hall.

Known Ribbon—The annual delegate ribbon was inscribed in black on yellow letters "Delegate/N.A.W.S.A./ New Orleans, 1903."

1904 36th Convention, Washington, D.C., February 11-17. National Rifles' Armory Hall

*1905 37th Convention, Portland, Oregon, June 28 -- July 5. First Congregational Church. This was the first convention held further west than Des Moines, Iowa, and it came about as the result of an invitation from the managers of the Lewis and Clark Exposition held in the same year.

Known Ribbon and Badge—There was a celluloid button encased in an ornate metal rim attached directly to a hanger that pictured the Native American woman Sacajawea. The hanger contained an insert on which the words "N.A.W.S.A. June 28 to July 5, 1905" were inscribed. During their convention, the delegates honored Sacajawea, who had been of instrumental help to Lewis and Clark. Also known is a medal that is attached to a hanger and contains the convention dates,

*1906 38th Convention, Baltimore, Maryland, February 7-13. Lyric Theater. **Known Ribbon**—The only known ribbon is non-descript and can be found on a Maryland history website. It says "Delegate Feb. 7-13, 1906, Baltimore" without mentioning N.A.W.S.A. or suffrage in any way.

*1907 39th Convention, Chicago, Illinois, February 14-19. Music Hall, Fine Arts Building. **Known Ribbon**—The standard delegate ribbon, resembling those of the previous few years, was worded "N.A.W.S.A. [with the initials once again inscribed vertically] Chicago, 1907."

*1908 40th Convention, Buffalo, New York, October 15-21. Morning session held at the YMCA, which proved to be too small so the evening sessions were moved to the Central Presbyterian Church. Because this was the 60th anniversary of Seneca Falls, a combined convention was held with the New York State Woman Suffrage Association.

Known Ribbon or Badge—A 1 3/4" sepia celluloid button picturing Elizabeth Cady Stanton was issued. The button was attached to a 1" x 3" black on yellow ribbon that came from a celluloid hanger picturing Lucretia Mott. The wording on the ribbon was "60th Anniversary 1848-1908/ Annual Convention of State and National Woman Suffrage Ass'n Oct. 13-21, 1909 Buffalo, N.Y."

**1909 41st Convention, Seattle, Washington, July 1-16. Plymouth Congregational Church. The date in July was designed to coincide with that of the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exhibition so that delegates could take advantage of reduced rail rates.

Known Ribbon—A black on yellow ribbon was given to delegates with the words "N.A.W.S.A., Seattle, 1909/Delegate Votes for Women."

**1910 42nd Convention, Washington, D.C., April 14-19. Arlington, Hotel

Known Ribbon—There is a simple folded ribbon that on the front of the first side says "DELEGATE," while the front of the second says "42nd Convention, N.A.W.S.A. Washington, D.C. April 14-19, 1910."

... NAWSA Conventions, Ribbons, cont'd.

1911 43rd Convention, Louisville, Kentucky, October 19-25. De Molay Commandery Hall. **Known Ribbon—A 2" x 7 ½" delegate was distributed that was unusual in the fact that N.A.W.S.A.'s initials were not included in the wording of the piece, which reads "Suffrage Convention Louisville, KY. 1911." It was attached to the wearer's clothing by means of a safety pin.

1912 44th Convention, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, November 21-26. Witherspoon Building. N.A.W.S.A. began the practice for several years of holding their conventions after the Presidential elections, giving delegates time to work for the cause within the political theatre. **Known Item—There is a round metal disk that was meant to be attached to a hanger. The disk is dated 1912 and indicates that it is from the National Convention for that year.

1913 45th Convention, Washington, D.C., November 29-December 5. Columbia Theatre.

1914 46th Convention, Nashville, Tennessee, November 12-17. Representatives Hall at the State Capitol. **Known Ribbon—The main delegate ribbon was a 2" x 4 ½" piece that was attached to a metal hanger upon which could write her name. The gold on yellow orange letters read "National Suffrage Convention—Delegate—Nashville 1914."

1915 47th Convention, Washington, D.C., December 14-19. New Willard Hotel. **Known Ribbons—The main delegate ribbon was a 2" x 4 ½" piece that was attached to a metal hanger upon which the attendee could write her name. The gold on yellow orange letters read "National Suffrage Convention—Delegate—Washington 1915." It was similar to the 1914 Nashville ribbon of the previous year. There was also a special ribbon for the Finance Committee, a 1 ½" x 4 ½" item that featured gold lettering imprinted on white with the lettering "Finance Committee National American Woman Suffrage Association 1915". At the top of the ribbon was a white bow. There were probably different ribbons printed for other committees as well, but so far none has surfaced.

**1916 48th Convention, Atlantic City, New Jersey, September 4-10. St. Paul's Methodist Episcopal Church.

Known Ribbons—There were several ribbons issued for this convention. The design of the main delegate badge was used later in 1917 and 1919. The black on yellow ribbon measured 2 ½" x 4" and was attached to a metal hanger into which the delegate could slip in a piece of paper on which she had written her name. The second ribbon was a small piece of black on white silk that measured a mere 1" x 5" on which was written "National Suffrage Convention Atlantic City, 1916.

**1917 49th Convention, Washington, D.C., December 12-15. Poli's Theater.

Known Ribbon—This convention used the same size and design ribbon with hanger that had been employed at the 1916 convention, with the words and date "Washington, D.C. 1917" replacing the city name and date of the Atlantic City convention.

1918 No Convention because of the War.

1919 50th Convention, St. Louis, Missouri, March 24-29. Hotel Statler. Two mass evening meetings were also held at the Odeon Theater. Called the "Jubilee Convention" because it was the 50th anniversary of the first. **Known Ribbon—As was the case in 1917, this convention once again used the same size and design ribbon that had been employed at the 1916 convention, with the words and date "St. Louis 1919" replacing the city name and date of the Atlantic City convention. There was a change to the hanger, however, with the inclusion at the top of a die-cut St. Louis riding a horse. The same design was also used in the same year by the Missouri State woman suffrage organization for their annual convention.

**1920 51st Convention, Chicago, Illinois, February 13- 20. Sessions held at the Auditorium and the Morrison and La Salle Hotels. The event was called the Victory Convention of the National Woman Suffrage As-

... NAWSA Conventions, Ribbons, cont'd.

sociation and the First Congress of the League of Women Voters. **Known Ribbon**—A 4" long purple ribbon with hanger and gold medallion. The ribbon indicates "Woman Citizen," and the medal contains the "Jus Suffragii" symbol of the International Woman Suffrage Alliance. The reverse of the medal contains the words "Jubilee Convention N.A.W.S.A. 1869-1920 Chicago." This convention was actually the "Victory Convention," the "Jubilee Convention" having taken place the preceding year.

At this point, there are at least 19 different National Conventions at which printed ribbons or a metal badge are known. So far, nothing has shown up from any American Woman Suffrage Association meeting. There are several N.A.W.S.A. delegate ribbons extant that are undated and lack the name of the city for whose conventions they were issued.



Wage Earners' Suffrage League Ribbon—Socialist Connection



Wage Earners' Suffrage League was a Socialist Party offshoot that existed for a very limited time. It had its inception at a Socialist conference in December 1909 when members in a heated debate argued what path the party should take regarding a campaign for suffrage. At the conference, Rose Schneiderman and Leonora O'Reilly, disappointed by the National Woman Suffrage Association's goals that seemed uncongenial to working women, proposed a policy that would allow working women to choose, if need be, supporters from outside the Socialist Party to achieve the franchise. Other Socialists, however, called for a suffrage campaign that existed entirely within the framework of the party.

The approach advocated by Schneiderman and O'Reilly was defeated, and the pair, with the assistance of Mary Ritter Beard withdrew to form a separate suffrage organization that would focus on factory women and would allow them to seek whatever resources were available to help them win the franchise. They founded the Wage Earners' Suffrage League on March 22, 1911 in New York City, an organization that was unaffiliated with a West Coast group founded in 1908 by Louise LaRue that had a similar name.

Schneiderman and O'Reilly were pragmatists who were willing to work with mainstream suffrage organizations to help win the vote. They were joined in their efforts by Margaret Hinchey, a laundry worker, and Mollie Schepps and Clara Lemlich, shirtwaist makers, the latter of whom had organized the New York shirtwaist strike of 1909.

From the start the League prioritized giving political voice to wage-earning women, although it did reach out to immigrants and to non-working women. However, only working women were allowed to vote and shape the League's campaigns, literature, and speeches. Financial support, however, came primarily from the small cadre of non-working women, who, while not allowed to vote, could attend meetings. The League considered itself to be the labor wing of the National American Woman Suffrage Association.

Because they lacked funds, the League printed only a small number of leaflets and pamphlets and conducted their speeches and rallies not in rented halls but outside of factories when the shifts of workers were changing.

The League's largest public rally took place at Cooper Union in 1912 when it staged a protest about the New York Legislature's failure to endorse woman suffrage during a major debate on the subject. A number of speakers from the League emphasized the intent of anti-suffragists to manipulate both class and gender to oppress women, and that the only way to combat this control was to extend suffrage to women to give them full independence and allow access to political power.

There are no records about any League activities following the Cooper Union rally and it appears simply to have dissipated without any formal act. Funding appeared to have dried up and Clara Lemlich apparently was fired. Rose Schneiderman went on to work for another suffrage organization. Despite its brief existence, the League did attempt to bring working women into a cause that was becoming more and more of a middle and upper-class movement.