

Issue # 48

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# THE CLARION



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

*A non profit organization dedicated to the preservation of political memorabilia*  
*[www.apic.us](http://www.apic.us)*

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## Editor's Notes

Wendy Chmielewski, one of the founders of the website *Her Hat Was in the Ring* [www.herhatwasinthering.org/](http://www.herhatwasinthering.org/), informs me that its database now includes the names of over 4,300 women who ran for office prior to the passage of the 1920 suffrage amendment. She recently found the name of a fourth African American woman who ran for the Boston School Board in the 1890's. This is an impressive site and I highly recommend it for anyone doing research or who simply wants to find out more about a particular woman candidate.

If you would like to see some of the many objects on suffrage that the National History Museum of the Smithsonian has in its collection, click on [https://americanhistory.si.edu/collections/search?edan\\_local=1&edan\\_q=Suffrage&edan\\_fq%5B0%5D=online\\_visual\\_material%3Atrue](https://americanhistory.si.edu/collections/search?edan_local=1&edan_q=Suffrage&edan_fq%5B0%5D=online_visual_material%3Atrue). I would like to thank John Olsen for providing us with this information.

The poster that is pictured on the front cover of this issue was made for the successful referendum in New York in 1917 that finally gave women in that state the right to vote. It pictures a traditional image of a mother, who has linked arms with her soldier husband and son, and requests on her part: "We give our work, our men, our lives—if need be—will you give us the vote?" It undermines the anti-suffrage picture of a suffragist as an ax-wielding, ugly, man-hating disruptive harri-dan, depicting her instead as a typical, self-sacrificing mother, and what red-blooded American male could possibly deny mom the vote? Note that while the mother figure stands tall and resolute, she is dwarfed by the two men beside her, an apparent attempt to calm male fears that suffrage will somehow turn the social order around with men and women switching roles. There are several variations

known of this very popular poster.

For those of you who will be attending the **National APIC Convention** at the end of the month, the WSAPIC chapter will be holding a Chapter meeting on **Thursday, July 29 at 1:00 P.M. at the McGavock Room at the Convention Hotel**. We are the only chapter to be scheduled in this room—other chapters will be meeting at the Two Rivers. Please plan to attend. We will have a program about suffrage memorabilia, the details of which we will be announcing next week. We also have some organizational matters that need to be decided upon by the membership, and we would also like your input on where you think the WSAPIC chapter should be heading. As an encouragement for attending, we will have available free chapter buttons for those who have not picked one up previously.

I would like to thank Bob Fratkin for providing us with photographs of some magnificent suffrage banners on display at the People's Museum in Manchester, England. If any of you have photographs of suffrage memorabilia or an article that you would like to share, please forward to me for possible inclusion in an upcoming issue of *The Clarion*. We always look forward to your contributions.

This issue will feature among other things, memorabilia related to the suffrage movement in Connecticut.

## Another Non-Suffrage Button



The button pictured above has appeared on several sales lists as a “suffrage” item, presumably based on its description as such in an auction published a number of years back. The problem is that the pin is not a suffrage item at all, but rather a promotional piece for a book written by Francis Trevelyan Miller (1877-1959) entitled *America, the Land We Love*. To increase distribution, the book had a major tie-in with a number of newspapers of the period including *The South Bend News-Times [Indiana]*, *The Passaic Daily Herald [New Jersey]* and *The Pittsburgh Gazette*, which may help to explain the *raison d’être* behind the button’s production.

The button itself is an attractive piece, printed in the patriotic colors of red, white, and blue, with bunting suggestive of the American flag. The title of the book, *America, the Land We Love*, is printed on the outer rim and is barely visible. On the inner rim appear the words “Liberty,” “Justice,” and “Equality.” The disclaimer on the curl reads “Mfg. by American Newspaper Syndicate for Search Light Book Corp.,” a rather unusual publisher if this indeed were a suffrage button, which it is not.

The three words in the inner rim of the pin allude to the core of the book’s patriotic message. Its featured essay by Theodore Roosevelt is entitled “American Ideals--Liberty, Justice, Equality.” The work also includes a “New Declaration of Independence.” Item number two of the three pledges listed states “I affirm my faith to the cardinal principles of *liberty, justice and equality* [italics mine] . . . subscribing to our Nation’s policy: ‘America, for Humanity’.”

Miller’s book was originally published in 1916 in New York by William Blaine and pictured in the newspaper ads referred to above. Another edition was published in

Philadelphia about the same time by Up Lift Publishing Company. It was distributed by Search Light Book Corporation, the firm whose name is printed on the curl of the button, a listing that gives us a final clue as to the pin’s ultimate purpose, that of book promotion. You could buy a copy of the book from various newspapers for 99 cents if you filled in a coupon located in their pages.

Miller was a prolific author and film writer. He served as editor of *The Connecticut Review* and wrote or edited a number of books on travel, exploration, and photography. He is, perhaps, most famous for his ten-volume photographic history of the American Civil War. Among his film credits is *Deliverance*, a story about Helen Keller. *America, the Land We Love* was promoted as “a new narrative of the history and development of the American people,” starting with Columbus and moving to the present. Its 514 pages contained 300 illustrations of historic engravings, famous paintings, and photographs.

Although not a suffrage item, the button still is an interesting piece. It certainly is one of the first of its kind used in the promotion of a book.



## 1876 Declaration of Women's Rights

In 1876, as the nation was preparing for its Centennial celebration in Philadelphia, women activists in the National Woman Suffrage Association were responding to a demand for a woman's declaration to be distributed there on July 4<sup>th</sup>. Some of the arguments ran: "Let us then protest against the Falsehood of the nation"; "If the old Declaration does not include women, let us have one that will"; and "Let our leaders be arraigned." At the May convention of the Association, Matilda Joslyn Gage announced that such a Declaration would be issued.

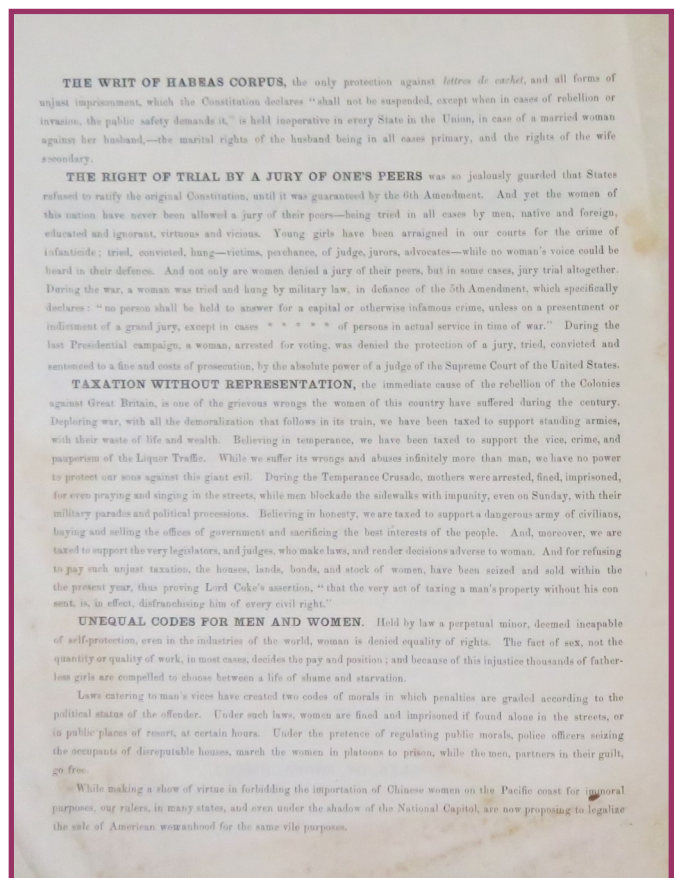
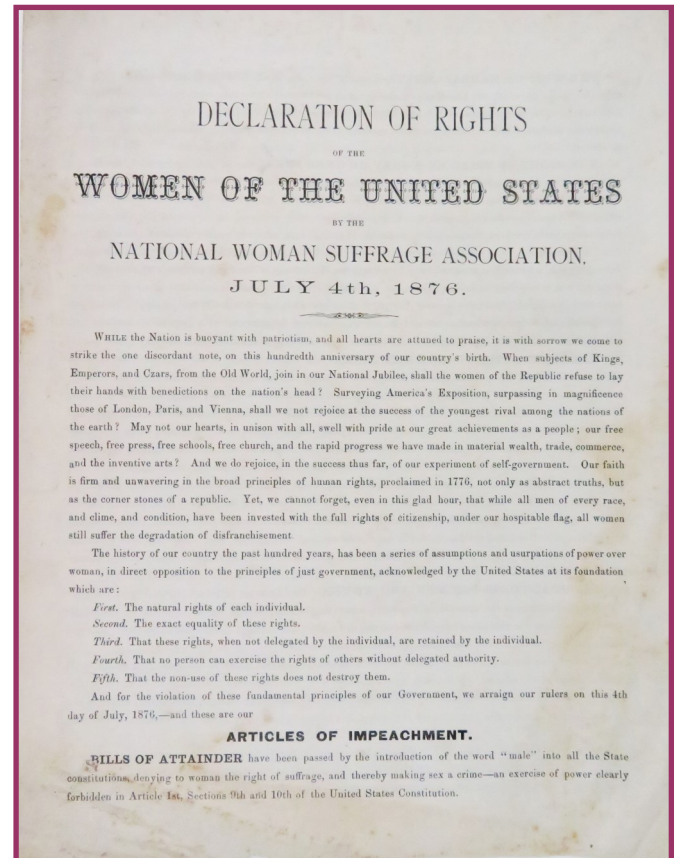
Susan B. Anthony, then secretary, wrote to General J. R. Hawley, President of the Centennial Commission, for fifty seats for officers of the Association to attend the celebration to be held at Independence Hall. The request was denied. Women were not allowed to take part in the celebration. What further angered women was the fact that the guest of honor for the occasion was to be the Emperor of Brazil, Dom Pedro, "representative of that form of government against which the United States is a perpetual defiance and protest."

Through a technicality, five women were allowed to attend the celebration: Susan B. Anthony, Matilda Joslyn Gage, Sara Andrews Spencer, Phoebe W. Couzins, and Lillie Devereux Blake. However, they were not allowed to distribute their newly printed Declaration, even though they pledged that they would not make an attempt to read it aloud, only to pass it out.

When the day arrived however, Anthony and her contingent were not to be denied. When the audience rose to greet the Brazilian emperor, the suffragists got up from their seats in the distraction and headed towards the platform, expecting to be stopped along the way. To their surprise and delight, they were not, and Anthony went up to Senator Thomas W. Ferry, who was a suffrage supporter and also President Pro Tempore of the gathering, and handed him a copy of the Declaration. Despite the boldness of the women, no one attempted to take them into custody. Having accomplished their goal, they then turned around, walked out of the Hall, handing additional copies to the many outstretched hands that eagerly wanted one.

Anthony was not done. Outside the heat was intense. While a supporter held an umbrella over Anthony's head to protect her from the blazing sun, she read aloud the Declaration and passed out additional copies to the throng that had gathered about her.

The Declaration, measuring 8 ½" x 11", is a four page document that lists "Articles of Impeachment" against the American Government. Among other issues, it asks for the writ of habeas corpus and equal rights for husband and wife in legal disputes (divorce), the right of trial by jury by one's peers (women on juries), repeal of the word "male" in state constitutions and judicial codes, removal





### ... Declaration of Rights, cont'd.

of a double standard of morality for men and women, the "no taxation without representation" American ideal to apply to women also, and universal suffrage for both men and women. Less strident than the 1848 declaration that had been hammered out at Seneca Falls, its complaint consisted of charges against the state, and was not intended to be an overt denunciation of the actions of men.

A number of years ago, I was entertaining a rare book and manuscript dealer in my home. She began to talk about the Women's Declaration in reverent tones, suggesting that it was a Holy Grail type of item, with virtually no copies known to still exist. Actually, she was wrong. Several years earlier, a baseball card dealer had found three or four in an attic in Rochester, and sold them all through the APIC, including one at a national convention.

Currently, Whitmore Books has a copy for sale for \$45,000. The firm notes: "The Declaration exists in two nearly identical forms, printed under variant titles that are exceptionally rare in either form. This version [the one depicted above], bearing the now famed title Declaration of Rights of Women of the United States is the only known copy [recently] to have come onto the public market according to auction records, with the remaining 11 examples held at research institutions. The only known surviving copy of the variant Declaration and Protest of the Women of the United States is held at the Library of Congress. While priority between the titles is unknown, the Library of Congress copy's omission of the second postscript and its four additional printed signatures suggest that it is the later of the two."

**SPECIAL LEGISLATION FOR WOMAN** has placed us in a most anomalous position. Women invested with the rights of citizens in one section—voters, jurors, office-holders—crossing an imaginary line, are subjects in the next. In some states, a married woman may hold property and transact business in her own name; in others, her earnings belong to her husband. In some states, a woman may testify against her husband, one and be sued in the courts; in others, she has no redress in case of damage to person, property, or character. In case of divorce, on account of adultery in the husband, the innocent wife is held to possess no right to children, or property, unless by special decree of the court. But in no state of the Union has the wife the right to her own person, or to any part of the joint earnings of the co-partnership, during the life of her husband. In some States women may enter the law schools and practice in the courts; in others they are forbidden. In some universities, girls enjoy equal educational advantages with boys, while many of the proudest institutions in the land deny them admittance, though the sons of China, Japan and Africa are welcomed there.

But the privileges already granted in the several states are by no means secure. The right of suffrage once exercised by women in certain States and Territories, has been denied by subsequent legislation. A bill is now pending in Congress to disfranchise the women of Utah, thus interfering to deprive United States citizens of the same rights, which the Supreme Court has declared the National Government powerless to protect anywhere. Laws passed after years of untiring effort, guaranteeing married women certain rights of property, and mothers the custody of their children, have been repealed in States where we supposed all was safe. Thus have our most sacred rights been made the football of legislative caprice, proving that a power which grants, as a privilege, what by nature is a right, may withhold the same as a penalty, when deeming it necessary for its own perpetuation.

**REPRESENTATION FOR WOMAN** has had no place in the nation's thought. Since the incorporation of the thirteen original states, twenty four have been admitted to the Union, not one of which has recognized woman's right of self-government. On this birthday of our national liberties, July 4th, 1876, Colorado, like all her elder sisters, comes into the Union, with the invidious word "male" in her Constitution.

**UNIVERSAL MANHOOD SUFFRAGE**, by establishing an aristocracy of sex, imposes upon the women of this nation a more absolute and cruel despotism than monarchy; in that, woman finds a political master in her father, husband, brother, son. The aristocracies of the old world are based upon birth, wealth, refinement, education, nobility, brave deeds of chivalry; in this nation, on sex alone; exalting brute force above moral power, vice above virtue, ignorance above education, and the son above the mother who bore him.

**THE JUDICIARY OF THE NATION** has proved itself but the echo of the party in power, by upholding and enforcing laws that are opposed to the spirit and letter of the Constitution. When the slave power was dominant, the Supreme Court decided that a black man was not a citizen, because he had not the right to vote; and when the Constitution was so amended as to make all persons citizens, the same high tribunal decided that a woman, though a citizen, had not the right to vote. Such vacillating interpretations of constitutional law unsettle our faith in judicial authority, and undermine the liberties of the whole people.

**THESE ARTICLES OF IMPEACHMENT AGAINST OUR RULERS** we now submit to the impartial judgment of the people.

To all these wrongs and oppressions woman has not submitted in silence and resignation. From the beginning of the century, when Abigail Adams, the wife of one President and the mother of another, said, "We will not hold ourselves bound to obey laws in which we have no voice or representation," until now, woman's discontent has been steadily increasing, culminating nearly thirty years ago in a simultaneous movement among the

women of the nation, demanding the right of suffrage. In making our just demands, a higher motive than the pride of sex inspires us; we feel that national safety and stability depend on the complete recognition of the broad principles of our government. Woman's degraded, helpless position is the weak point in our institutions to-day; a disturbing force everywhere, severing family ties, filling our asylums with the deaf, the dumb, the blind, our prisons with criminals, our cities with drunkenness and prostitution, our homes with disease and death.

It was the boast of the founders of the republic, that the rights for which they contended, were the rights of human nature. If these rights are ignored in the case of one half the people, the nation is surely preparing for its own downfall. Governments try themselves. The recognition of a governing and a governed class is incompatible with the first principles of freedom. Woman has not been a heedless spectator of the events of this century, nor a dull listener to the grand arguments for the equal rights of humanity. From the earliest history of our country, woman has shown equal devotion with man to the cause of freedom, and has stood firmly by his side in its defence. Together, they have made this country what it is. Woman's wealth, thought and labor have cemented the stones of every monument man has reared to liberty.

And now, at the close of a hundred years, as the hour hand of the great clock that marks the centuries points to 1876, we declare our faith in the principles of self-government; our full equality with man in natural rights; that woman was made first for her own happiness, with the absolute right to herself—to all the opportunities and advantages life affords, for her complete development; and we deny that dogma of the centuries, incorporated in the codes of all nations—that woman was made for man—her best interests, in all cases, to be sacrificed to his will.

We ask of our rulers, at this hour, no special favors, no special privileges, no special legislation. We ask justice, we ask equality, we ask that all the civil and political rights that belong to citizens of the United States, be guaranteed to us and our daughters forever.

LOCRETIA MOTT,  
ELIZABETH CADY STANTON,  
PATILIA WRIGHT DAVIS,  
ERNESTINE L. ROSE,  
CLARINDA I. H. NICHOLS,  
MARY ANN MCCLINTOCK,  
AMY POST,  
SARAH FUGH.

SUSAN B. ANTHONY,  
MATILDA JOSLYN GAGE,  
CLEMENCE S. LOZIER,  
OLYMPIA BROWN,  
MATILDE FRANCESKE ANNEKE,  
MATILDE F. WENDY,  
ADELAIDE THOMSON,  
LAURA DE FORCE GORDON.

ELLEN C. SARGENT,  
VIRGINIA L. MINOR,  
SARA ANDREWS SPENCER,  
LILLIE DEVEREUX BLAKE,  
FREDERICK W. COZINS,  
JANE GRAHAM JONES,  
A. JANE DENNEY,  
BELVA A. LOCKWOOD.

N. B. This Declaration is engrossed in the Centennial Books of the National Woman Suffrage Association. Friends wishing to sign it are invited to call; those at a distance will please send their signatures on a slip of thin paper, to be pasted in the book. Address NATIONAL WOMAN SUFFRAGE PARLORS, No. 1431 CHESTNUT STREET, PHILADELPHIA, PA.

N. B.—And with your name for the Declaration of Rights, please do not fail to send a Contribution, a Dollar, or at least enough to equal the cost of the paper, the printing and posting of the documents you so gladly receive from us.

Address

SUSAN B. ANTHONY,  
National Woman Suffrage Parlor,  
1431 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, Pa.

## Suffrage Memorabilia from The People's Museum in Manchester, England

Pictures by Bob Fratkin

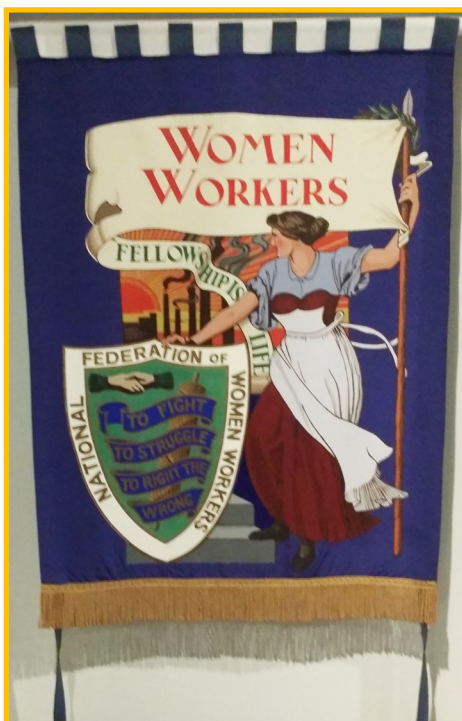
Bob Fratkin was kind enough to forward the photos below which he recently took on a trip to the People's Museum in Manchester, England. He describes the museum as "a remarkable treasure of history through objects that reflect history from the bottom up instead of the way museums see themselves from an upper-class perspective . . . which like museums in the United States cater their holdings to reflect the wealth of their donors." The People's Museum leans instead to the Left and serves as the archive for both the Communist Party of Britain and the Labour Party. Its collections contain many other pieces that reflect various Socialist and labor causes. "Anyone who reads *The Clarion* and goes to England will miss something wonderful if they don't visit the Museum. Along with suffrage items, they have 2,000 labor and issue banners, including those huge parade banners [pictured below] and 7,000 badges and pinbacks."



← As is the case with similar institutions today, the People's Museum originally lacked the resources to purchase this magnificent banner on the left. Bob, who is a member, became a donor to help the Museum acquire it.



Two additional suffrage banners.

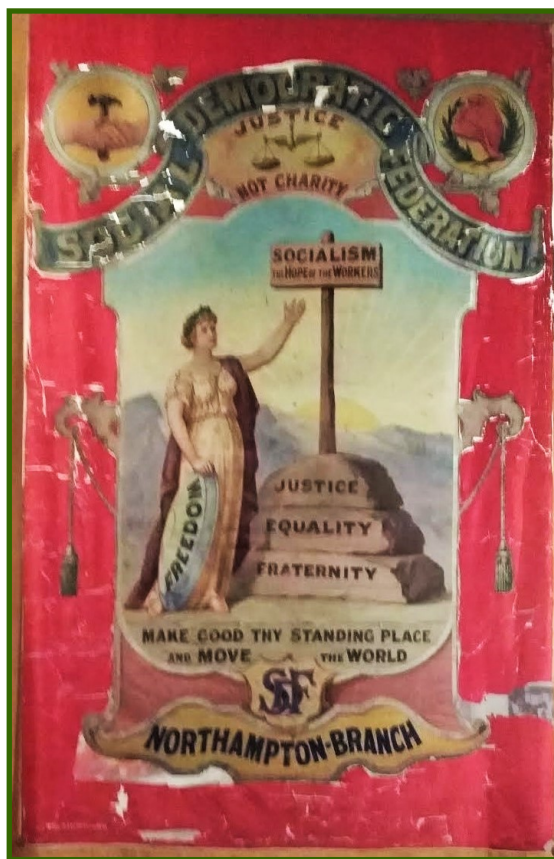


This banner was made for the National Federation of Women Workers, possibly in the 1960's-1970's. It is a replica of a banner originally displayed in 1914 and made by the firm Toye, who was also responsible for making a number of English suffrage badges. The image was taken from the front cover of *The Woman Worker* and was designed by Walter Crane. The bundle of sticks on the shield represents strength in unity and the handshake represents friendship and cooperation.

The National Federation of Women Workers (NFWW) was formed in 1906 by Scottish suffragist and trade unionist Mary Macarthur. The union campaigned for the rights of women workers most notably sweated labor workers who were often badly exploited. In 1920, the NFWW amalgamated with the National Union of General Workers.



... The People's Museum, cont'd.



A Socialist women workers' banner with suffrage undertones



The Museum also contains a number of rare and unusual suffrage badges, china, and ribbons as seen above.



Of the two badges pictured above, the orange button is probably unknown in the hobby.

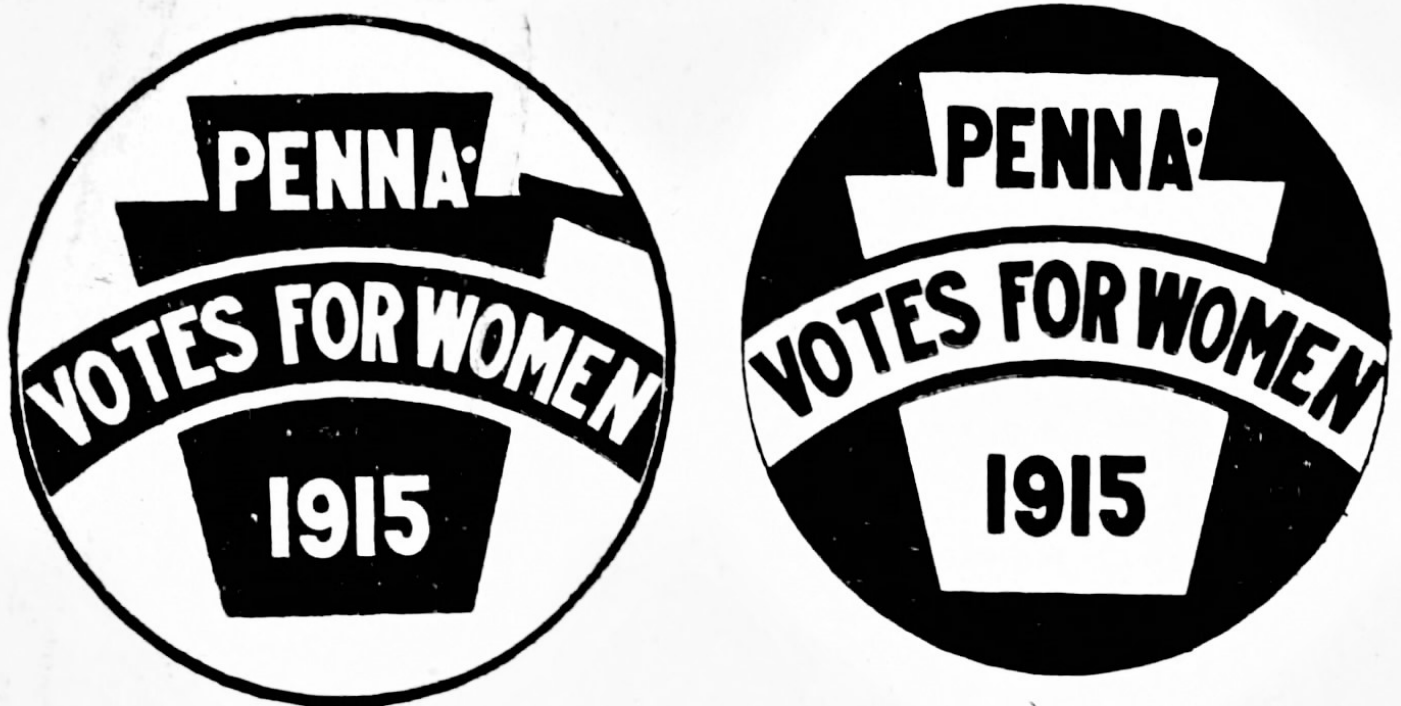
If you are interested in further information about the People's Museum and its collections, you can access its collections at <https://phm.org.uk/>. Once again, I would like to thank Bob Fratkin for introducing us to this wonderful source.



## **“Are You Wearing the Suffrage Button?”**

The short, illustrated story below appeared in the *Harrisburg Telegraph* on Monday, August 25, 1913. In addition to picturing two buttons familiar to collectors, it also gives some information about their distribution. They were intended to promote the referendum on suffrage that was to be held in Pennsylvania in November 1915, two years after their manufacture!

### **ARE YOU WEARING THE SUFFRAGE BUTTON?**



#### **DISTRIBUTION OF STATE SUFFRAGE BUTTONS BEGINS**

Fifty thousand pretty new suffrage buttons are being distributed all over the State from headquarters in the Arcade Building in this city, and will figure prominently in the coming campaign. The colors are blue and white, and many of them are already seen on the coats of both men and women here. Wednesday of this week will be "Suffrage Day" at the Grangers' Picnic, Williams Grove, where there will be a suffrage booth open all the week from which suffrage literature will be distributed. In the afternoon of Wednesday there will be pertinent talks on suffrage in the large auditorium by Miss Louise Hall, executive secretary of the Pennsylvania Woman Suffrage Association, and by Mrs. Mabel Cronise Jones, president of the Central Pennsylvania Woman Suffrage Association.

## Suffrage Buttons from Balloons & Pushcarts

The following story appeared in the May 11, 1912 edition of *The Indianapolis News*. It once again illustrates how activists in this period were inventive in their campaign of “visual rhetoric.”

### “Suffrage Up in the Air

#### Miss Elizabeth N. Barr Delegated to Distribute Buttons from Balloon”

“Suffrage buttons will be distributed from a suffrage balloon tomorrow afternoon if the weather is suitable for ascension. On the invitation of Albert Lieber and G. L. Bumbaugh, the balloon maker, the Equal Suffrage Association of Indiana, through Dr. Hannah Graham, its president, has delegated Miss Elizabeth N. Barr, of Topeka, Kas. to make the ascent in Duesseldorfer I. Mr. Bumbaugh will be the other passenger. Dr. Graham said the association encouraged the flight in order to show that woman was capable of entering any sphere of life, even a high one. The flight will be made at 2 o’clock from the plant of the Indianapolis Gas Company, Twenty-first street and Langsdale avenue.

“Miss Barr will relate her experiences at the regular meeting of the suffrage association in the Board of Trade Building next Monday afternoon. She will also make an address on the subject of ‘Active and Passive Opposition to Suffrage,’ and will invite debate.”

### Suffrage Buttons from a Pushcart

Balloons were not the only innovative method that suffragists used to distribute buttons. The following story from the *Star Phoenix* of Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada of June 24, 1913 shows how at least one New York City activist employed a pushcart to further the cause.

### “Seeks ‘Votes’ with Pushcart

#### Suffragette Peddles Buttons and Banners in Fish Market”

“Miss Eleanor Erving is exactly a fishwife, but she has become a pushcart peddler in a fish market. Her license is No. 512, for which she paid \$4, and she is behind her pushcart in Bathgate avenue [sic]. She is not selling fish, however, but Women’s Political union [sic] buttons, banners, parade postals, talcum powder, needles, pins, thimbles, and baskets. The W. P. U. automobile will visit the market this morning and the voiceless speech in Yiddish will be shown.”

## The Controversy Over Ohio Suffrage Buttons

When women in Washington were given the right to vote in 1910, suffragists throughout the country rejoiced. The state was only the fifth to grant women suffrage and the first since Idaho had become the fourth in 1896. The fourteen-year logjam was ended, and many women had renewed hope that their state would be the next to join in. Friendly rivalry started up between women in Kansas and women in Ohio to see which of the two states would become the sixth star in the suffrage flag.

*The Cincinnati Enquirer* on December 4, 1910 reported that Harriet Taylor Upton, the President of the Ohio Woman Suffrage Association, had sent a letter to Mrs. M. C. Sherwood of the state W.C.T.U. indicating that “state suffragists have now for distribution 5,000 enameled buttons, each inscribed, ‘Ohio, the Sixth’.” *The Leader-Tribune* of Englewood, Kansas noted on January 26, 1911 that Ohio women sent a friendly challenge to their Kansas counterparts by mailing them a number of these buttons. The Kansas women rejected the competition indicating that they were too busy in their campaign to “discuss the probabilities with their Ohio sisters.” *The Topeka Daily Capital* noted that the

### ... Controversy Ohio Suffrage Buttons, cont'd.

rivalry to become the next state extended to New York: "Ohio suffragists are wearing a button with the legend, 'Ohio, the Sixth State,' and this week in New York the same button is worn."

It was California, not Kansas, Ohio, or New York that became in 1911 the sixth state to give women the vote. Kansas did become the 7<sup>th</sup> state in 1912 and New York the 13<sup>th</sup> state in 1917. Ohio women had to wait their turn until the passage of the Federal Suffrage Amendment in 1920.

Despite period newspaper accounts, there is no known button in the hobby with the wording "Ohio, the Sixth." What they may have been alluding to is a 5/8" black on gold celluloid pin with the simple legend "Ohio Next" surrounded by six stars and produced by the R. A. Koch Company of Cleveland. It was distributed together with another six-star pin, from Koch as well, that demanded "Equal Suffrage." A version of the latter comes with Bastian Brothers back paper, indicating that this design may have also been distributed in other campaigns in the country.



Both of these pins became objects of controversy when anti-suffrage forces claimed that they were examples of false advertising, and they threatened to go to court unless Ohio suffragists ended their distribution. Their argument was that the legislature had already met that year without passing the issue and that these pins suggested otherwise. Several other states had already schedule referenda on suffrage, so it would be unlikely if not impossible that Ohio would be the sixth state. Harriet Taylor Upton angrily responded in the suffrage paper the *Woman's Journal* that

the "Ohio Next" (or Ohio, the Sixth") button seems to have stirred up the opposition forces "to a white heat," noting that action in the Legislature and action in an upcoming Constitutional Convention were not the same thing. In any event, the threatened lawsuit apparently failed to materialize.

Cleveland suffragists in August of 1912 found the anti-suffrage movement in turn of violating the law, in this case that of child labor. Several activists reported, "The Antis in Cleveland hire small barefoot boys to carry signs up and down the thoroughfares. They read: Eighty percent of Ohio women are opposed to voting." On their way to a market, several suffragists encountered such a "wan little barefoot fellow," and pinned both the aforementioned buttons, which were now out of date, on him." Sympathetic to their cause, the boy asked "Haven't youse a sign I could carry?"

After further questioning, the boy indicated that he was but eleven years old, but started work at seven in the morning until six at night for only a dollar, with a



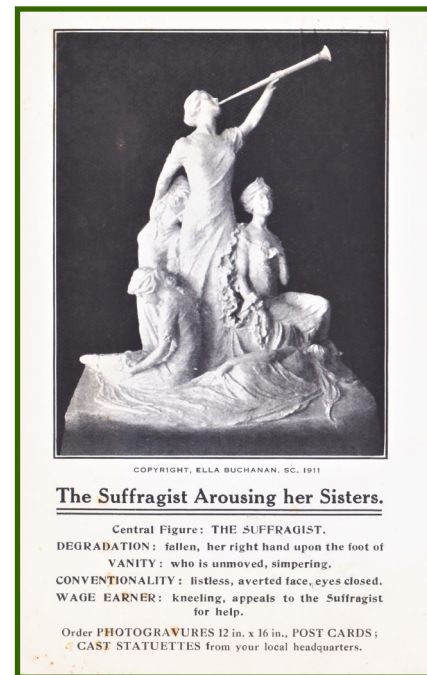
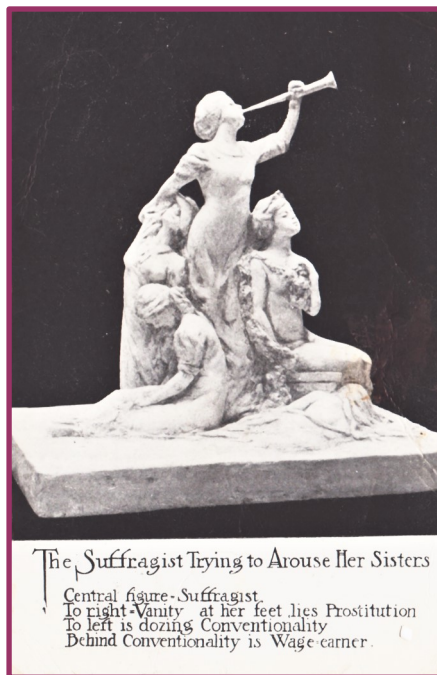
deduction made for the time he was home for dinner. That time was but a mere half an hour and the penalty was ten cents.

Newspaper accounts of these Ohio pins are another clear indication of how seriously buttons were noticed and the effects that they had on both pro and anti forces in general.



## The Suffrage Movement and Prostitution

The subject of white slavery was a serious issue for many suffragists, who viewed prostitutes not as criminals but as victims of unchecked male oppression. Still, they often spoke of prostitution in euphemistic rather than explicit terms, sometimes out of a concern for period delicacy, sometimes because of legal restraints, particularly with respect to the print media. This hesitancy can be seen in the two postcards below that feature Ella Buchanan's famous statue, "The Suffragist Arousing Her Sisters." In the first, one of the fallen allegorical women is openly named "Prostitution," but in the other she is labeled more generically as "Degradation."



In New York, one of the problems with respect to open speech was a man named Anthony Comstock, an anti-vice advocate, United States Postal Inspector, and Secretary of the New York Society for the Suppression of Vice. He was opposed to obscene literature, abortion, contraception, and prostitution. He used his position to censor materials he considered being in violation of his rigid standards, namely anything that even remotely discussed sex publicly, and he made numerous arrests for the delivery by mail of "obscene, lewd or lascivious" material. He had arrested Victoria Woodhull and her sister Tennessee Claflin in 1872 for merely reporting on the adulterous affair between Henry Ward Beecher and the wife of his friend Theodore Tilton. The issue was not one of libel or even of Beecher's behavior, it was that of mentioning openly in print the concept of adultery, an iteration that offended Comstock's moral standards.

In October of 1913, the English suffrage militant and founder of the Women's Social and Political Union, Emmeline Pankhurst, came to America to lecture and to raise funds for her association. She brought with her copies of the Union's paper *The Suffragette*, edited by her daughter, Christabel Pankhurst, and she intended to send them to the various parts of the country where she was scheduled to speak. The issue contained selections from Christabel's expose of white slavery in England, a book entitled *Plain*

*Effects About a Great Evil*, a topic that Mrs. Pankhurst had intended to bring up during her lecture tour. Before she embarked on her journey, however, Pankhurst visited Alva Belmont at her Political Equality Association's New York office, where workers, in an effort to assist, were bundling her papers to send on to her various lecture stops. The Society for Suppression of Vice, however, found out about the mailing, which its members felt contained "pretty frank things on sex problems and medical matters," and, with the police, took steps to suppress the sale of the paper and its mailing.

The paper also was on sale at the office of the Political Equality Association that morning where it had drawn considerable interest from "middle-age women, but some were young and some were men." When Mrs. Belmont learned that there were warrants out concerning *The Suffragette*, she closed up her headquarters, and suspended sales. Comstock, however, through his agents had purchased copies earlier in the day and said he did not propose to have "the Sewage of Europe" spread about New York. According to the more vengeful members of his Society, Mrs. Pankhurst faced up to five years in prison and a fine of \$5,000 for bringing "objectionable" materials into the country. Mrs. Belmont, for selling the paper, could have been imprisoned for up to a year and required to pay a \$500 fine.

## ... Suffrage Movement and Prostitution, cont'd.

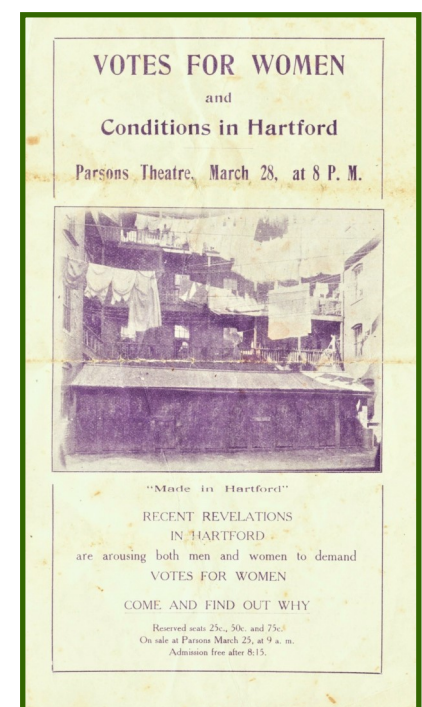
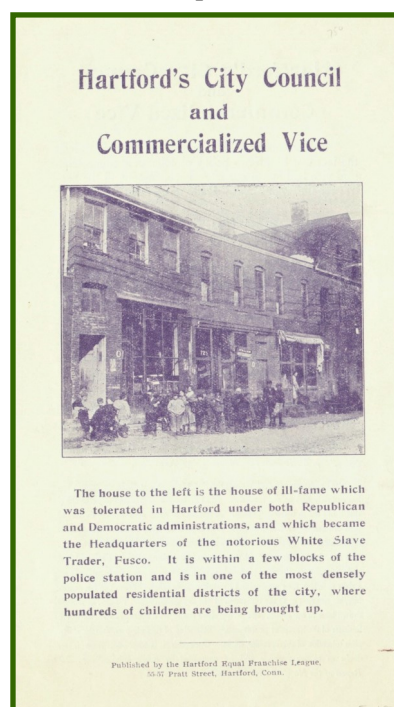
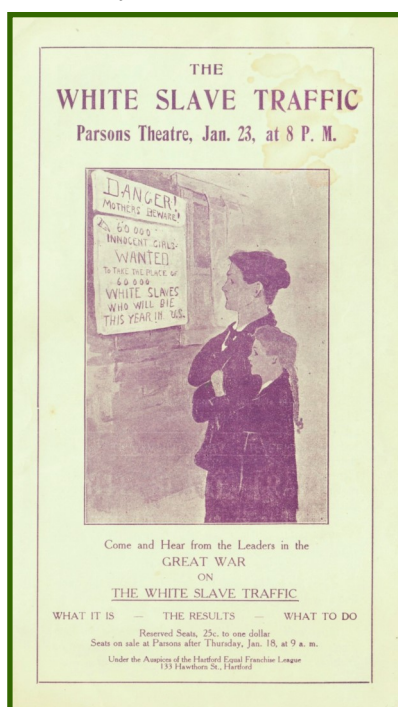


Comstock did meet with Mrs. Belmont personally, and the matter appears to have been dropped. He had originally intended to jail the assistants who sold the papers, but Alva Belmont took full responsibility for the sales, and Comstock told her "out of consideration for her social position," he would not think of arresting her. Mrs. Pankhurst traveled to Cleveland the following day, where she met with a triumphant reception and no legal ramifications. Still a defiant Belmont declared in November that she would place Christabel's "social evil literature" on sale when Mrs. Pankhurst returned. Because of the incident, *The Buffalo Enquirer* labeled Comstock "'Saint Anthony' Comstock, the everlastingly officious 'vice ferret,' who has made himself the laughing stock of the town so many times."

In 1914 when Mrs. Belmont sent in a brief review of *Plain Facts* to the *New York Sun*, she avoided any specific words that might cause a problem, calling Christabel Pankhurst's book "a fund of knowledge long hidden from men and women responsible for their generation," and for "wisely revealing existing evil," without indicating what that "evil" might be.

The same Federal laws against mailing "obscene" materials were also in force in Connecticut, but Comstock had no offices in that state, and the definition there of pornography did not appear to cover exposes of "white slavery" and "prostitution." Still, the situation was tense in Hartford during the period of 1911-1914.

A detective named Pigniuolo (no first name given) had been hired by the U. S. Government to hunt out white slavers. He found that one of the greatest traders in the east was a man named Fusco (again, no first name), who conducted business within "a stone's throw" of a Hartford police station. It was not Fusco, however, who found himself in legal trouble; it was the detective whom the brothel owner accused of bribery and extortion. Pigniuolo was found innocent, although on the first day of his trial women were refused admission as spectators.





### ... Suffrage Movement and Prostitution, cont'd.

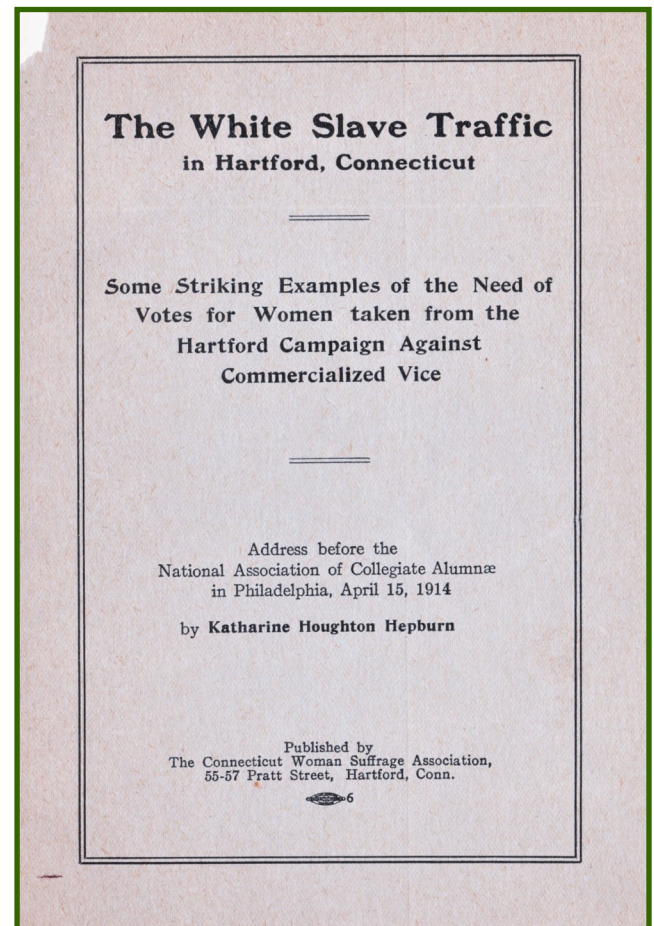
At that time Hartford had a policy of allowing brothels to exist as long as they could be segregated and under police regulation. Suffragists were furious about this policy, pointing out that these houses were placed in tenement sections where children lived and played. In one of three pamphlets on the subject, the Hartford Equal Franchise League published a photo showing a "house of ill fame," owned by Fusco, at the front of which children had gathered. Most of the Hartford newspapers were appalled by these pamphlets because they presented a scene "where women could see them." The suffragists' response was "what more glaring proof is needed that women must be among the voters?"

Connecticut suffragists held several meetings on the subject at Parson's Theatre in Hartford, then the largest such meeting place in the state. The Mayor, having heard that they "were to show indecent pictures," threatened to "revoke the license of the theatre." Because one of the speakers was William S. Bennet, who had been appointed at one time by Theodore Roosevelt to investigate the international white slave traffic, the meeting was allowed to proceed.

The Mayor did form a Vice Commission to investigate the situation, but the Town Council refused to authorize any money for its final report. The Commission members then raised the funds to print 500 copies of their findings, which quickly became exhausted. The Equal Franchise League then reprinted the report on its own, although some suffragists feared that police might try to stop it "on the ground that it was indecent literature," even though it originally had been authorized by the Mayor. The local postmaster thought that, because of the nature of its subject matter, the report was not mailable, even though the League had orders from Julia Lathrop of the National Children's Bureau and Abraham Flexner of the Bureau of Social Hygiene. The pamphlet was finally cleared when a copy of it was sent to the Postmaster in Washington, who concluded that it was acceptable.

A synopsis of these events appeared in 1914 in a booklet by Katharine Houghton Hepburn, President of the Con-

necticut Woman Suffrage Association. Hepburn was the mother of the actress of the same name. So, eyebrows were raised in Connecticut when suffragists dared to speak and write so openly about prostitution, but they presented a strong case arguing that men were doing little to protect women from this type of exploitation. Hepburn had been so incensed at the lack of concern about white slavery from many of the local legislators, some of whom had ties to Fusco, the brothel owner, that she urged action on the part of women to end the problem even before they had the legal power to vote.



## 1920 Connecticut Suffrage Memorabilia Auction

This excerpt from the November 5, 1920 [Bridgeport] *Times* was provided to *The Clarion* by Kathie Bennewitz, Connecticut suffrage scholar, who has designed several fascinating exhibits on women and voting in the State. Unfortunately, there is no time machine available that could take us back to this event.

### "Souvenir Auction a Feature of Convention"

"A 'Souvenir Auction' will be one of the attractive and unusual features of the fifty-first and last annual convention of



### ... 1920 Connecticut Suffrage Memorabilia Auction, cont'd.

the Connecticut Woman Suffrage Association which will be held in Unity Hall, Hartford, next Monday and Tuesday, November 8 and 9.

"The auction will take place at the close of the discussion concerning the formation of a League of Women Voters, which will be the chief business of the Tuesday session of the convention.

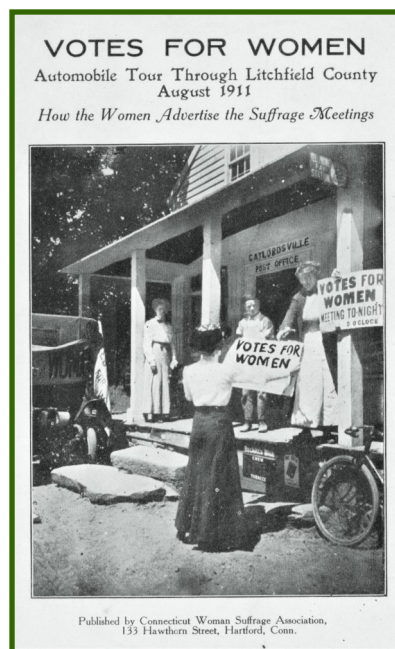
"All kinds of 'votes for women' paraphernalia, which has been used during the may suffrage campaigns will be collected and sold to the women who have had a part in the long struggle for political enfranchisement. Silk banners, some of which were carried in the suffrage parade of 1914, representing various professions open to women and those representing local and county organizations, books, posters, pictures, votes for women china, and other equipment of suffrage headquarters in Hartford, which has been particularly associated with the suffrage battle, will be placed on sale.

"Miss Julia M. Hinaman, of Hartford, publicity director of the association, will act as auctioneer."

## Postcard of Litchfield County, Connecticut Suffrage Tour

The postcard pictured here depicts one of the advance couriers whose role was to promote and advertise a suffrage automobile tour of Litchfield County, Connecticut that took place in August 1911. The leader of the tour was Emily Pierson, the state organizer of the Connecticut Woman Suffrage Association. She was accompanied by Clara and Elsie Hill of Norwalk and Jean Kerr of Seymour. The Hill sisters were the daughters of Ebenezer J. Hill, who was a U. S. Congressman from Connecticut's 4<sup>th</sup> district from 1895-1913 and 1915-17, dying in office.

The four began their excursion in Watertown in early August and finished up in Torrington at the end of the month. Dur-



ing the course of their journey, they covered 35 towns and villages, drawing "large audiences and hundreds of new Suffragists" along the way. As all four were described by local papers as young "collegians," their events were reinforced by "older speakers." These included Katharine Hepburn, President of the Connecticut Woman Suffrage Association (CWSA) and mother of the actress, and Caroline Ruutz-Rees, Head Mistress of Rosemary Choate Hall and founder of the National Junior Suffrage Corps, a group similar to the Girl Scouts. Even prominent men such as famous muckraking author, Lincoln Stephens, and a local political boss, Archibald McNeil, helped in the suffragists' effort.

## The Donkey Plank Pin

On September 5 and 19, 1916, two massive and spectacular suffrage parades were held in New Haven to coincide with the State Republican and Democratic conventions scheduled there. The purpose of these demonstrations was to urge both parties to include a pro-suffrage position or "plank" in their respective platforms.

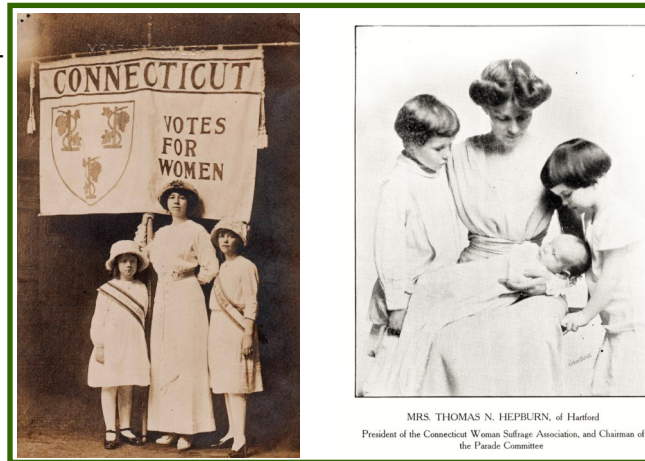
On a national level, both Democrats and Republicans had expressed strong support at their conventions for voting rights for women to be granted primarily on a state-by-state



basis. They were joined in their support for "Votes for Women" by the Progressive (Bull Moose), Prohibition, and Socialist parties, but who rejected the state-by-state approach and urged instead that women be given immediate access to the ballot through a Federal Constitutional Amendment.

## ... The donkey Plank Pin, cont'd.

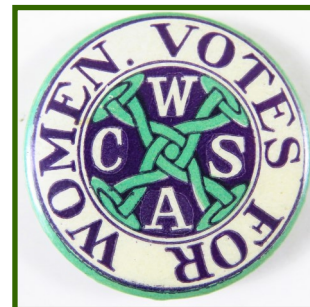
The effort to persuade Connecticut Republicans and Democrats to add a suffrage plank to their platforms was spearheaded by the Connecticut Woman Suffrage Association. The CWSA had been founded in 1869 by Isabella Beecher Hooker, sister to both noted preacher Henry Ward Beecher and author Harriet Beecher



Stowe. Over the years, however, the organization had become tired and ineffectual, until it was taken over in 1910 by several "young Turks," including Katharine Houghton Hepburn, the mother of the actress, and her Hartford friend and neighbor, Josephine Toscan Bennett.

While President of the CWSA, Hepburn became friends with the militant Alice Paul, founder of the National Woman's Party. Paul, who had lived in England for four years, became involved with the British militants and was arrested seven times for her suffrage activities, served three prison sentences, and engaged in several hunger strikes. When she returned to America in 1910, she brought with her an appreciation for the desire of English suffragists to participate in marches, demonstrations, and other forms of street theater to convey their demands, actions now termed by some as "visual rhetoric."

Hepburn was also heavily influenced by the passion and dedication of the English militants. Under her direction, the CWSA even adopted the official colors of purple, green, and white of the Women's Social and Political Union, founded by Emmeline Pankhurst, the British equivalent of Susan B. Anthony. They also modified a WSPU design for their basic membership pin.



These colors, when incorporated into dresses, banners, buttons, and sashes, added a powerful and assertive element to the suffragists' message. Accordingly, in a letter to supporters, Emily Pierson, Press Secretary to the CWSA, urged women "to show your colors for suffrage" at the New Haven demonstrations.

**Connecticut Woman Suffrage Parades**

TO BE HELD AT NEW HAVEN AT THE TIME OF THE  
REPUBLICAN CONVENTION, TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 5TH AT 5 P. M. AND THE  
DEMOCRATIC CONVENTION, TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 19TH AT 7 P. M.

Organized by  
CONNECTICUT WOMAN SUFFRAGE ASSOCIATION  
HEADQUARTERS, 102 MEADOW STREET, NEW HAVEN, CONN.  
TELEPHONE CHARTER 1017

September 2, 1916.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
Mrs. Thomas N. Hepburn, President  
Miss Grace Thompson Byron, Vice President  
Mrs. Edward Purvitt, Recording Secretary  
Miss M. T. Bennett, Treasurer  
Miss Mary J. Rogers, Auditor  
Miss Elizabeth D. Bader, Corresponding Secretary  
Miss Ellen T. Rogers, Corresponding Secretary  
Miss Charles P. Standard, Corresponding Secretary  
Miss Mary J. Rogers, Corresponding Secretary  
Miss Charles P. Standard, Corresponding Secretary  
Miss Mary J. Rogers, Corresponding Secretary  
Miss Charles P. Standard, Corresponding Secretary

My dear Miss Sisson:  
I am so glad to hear that things are going so well in Moodus. You are certainly an energetic person. Now, won't you plan to be in New Haven Tuesday morning as early as possible, in order to help at Headquarters with distributing, selling, etc.? Headquarters, as you know, is at 102 Meadow St.

Sincerely yours,  
Emily Pierson

Miss Agnes P. Sisson,  
Moodus, Conn.

Both parades were replete with pageantry and spectacle. The march of September 5<sup>th</sup> began at 5 p.m. at the corner of Union and Meadow Streets, near the railroad station. There was a profusion of banners for various suffrage leagues throughout the State, along with markers for Senatorial districts and towns. Over 1,200 women took part in the demonstration, which also featured 100 automobiles bedecked in the official colors of the CWSA.

**COME AND MARCH  
VOTES FOR WOMEN  
PARADE**

AT TIME OF THE  
REPUBLICAN CONVENTION  
NEW HAVEN, SEPT. 5, 1916  
5 P. M. RAIN OR SHINE

Meet near R. R. Station at corner Meadow Street  
and Union Avenue at 3:30 P. M.

Connecticut Delegation in New York Parade,  
May 3rd, 1913

This is the first of two parades to be held at the time of the Republican and Democratic Conventions in honor of the suffrage planks in the national platforms and to ask the Connecticut political parties to ratify the endorsements.



### ... The donkey Plank Pin, cont'd.

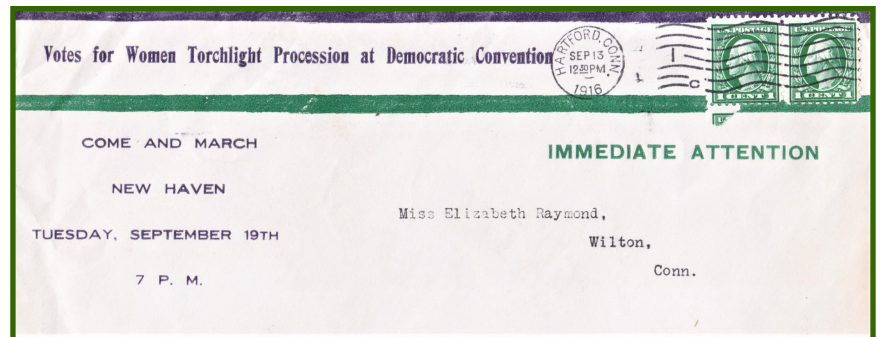
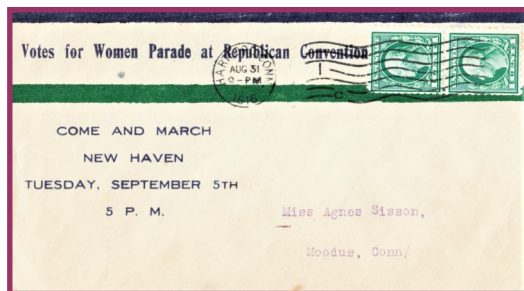
There were no floats as such, but the marchers carried two pasteboard elephants that symbolized the Republican Party. One bore the Suffrage Plank that had been embodied in the National Platform, while the other contained a request that the State Republicans develop their own plank. Originally Emily Pierson, one of the organizers of the parade, had arranged for two live elephants to be sent from New Jersey, but at the last moment the New Jersey Board of Health, fearing the possible spread of infantile paralysis, refused to issue them clearance papers.

The publishers of the *Woman's Journal*, the mainstream suffrage newspaper, printed a special Connecticut edition for the event, which was sold along the parade route. At the front of the parade was a band, one of six to perform in the demonstration, which was followed by Grace Thompson Seton of Greenwich, Vice President of the CWSA, Josephine Toscan Bennett carrying the State banner, then Hepburn and other members of the governing Board.

Torchlight parades had been popular in Connecticut at political rallies ever since the campaigns of Abraham Lincoln when members of the Hartford Wide-Awakes, a paramilitary organization, marched through the streets of the City dressed in appropriate regalia. They carried with them six-foot long poles, often carved in the shape of rifles, at the end of which flaming whale oil containers were suspended.

The Democratic procession proceeded to the New Haven Green where four lecture stands had been set up. For the next two hours, speakers explained the principles of woman suffrage and appealed for support. Other suffragists mingled with the crowd, selling a special button created for the event featuring an image of the Democratic Donkey and the words "Votes for Women Plank." So far no comparable Republican elephant equivalent has turned up, and it is possible that one was never issued.

The two demonstrations achieved moderate success. The Democrats did add a suffrage plank to their platform, but this was expected as the Party had gone on record at their previous convention as supporting the right of women to vote. The *Woman's*



Both the events of September 5 and 19 were funded through donations and 1,000 parade banks that the CWSA had ordered. Each bank when filled could hold \$2.50 for the cause, and they cost volunteers 10 cents each to purchase.

The Democratic version of the parade, scheduled for the 19<sup>th</sup>, was intended to be larger than its Republican counterpart as the organizers felt that nothing less would "satisfy the press and the public." It was held at 7 p.m. as a torchlight procession with marchers carrying large paper lanterns suspended at the end of sticks.

*Journal* reported that Connecticut Republicans did not add a plank, even though their counterparts in Maine and New Hampshire had.

Despite the obvious spectacle and energy involved in both parades, Hepburn and Toscan Bennett resigned from the CWSA the following year, explaining that too many of its members were "old-fashioned and supine," refusing to engage in more militant actions. Hepburn, however, was still active in the suffrage movement and went on to assist her old friend Alice Paul with her National Woman's Party.

## Connecticut Suffrage Buttons and Other Memorabilia

For a small state, Connecticut has seen its fair share of suffrage memorabilia, including a number of buttons or badges, a small celluloid calendar, several poster or Cinderella stamps, a number of pamphlets and brochures specific to state issues and events, and several oil-cloth sashes and pennants. In addition, many local suffrage groups made their own parade banners featuring the names of their associations. Fortunately, many of these banners were preserved and now are located in various museums, historical societies, and libraries throughout the state.

Most Connecticut woman suffrage items were produced when Katharine Houghton Hepburn, the mother of the actress, was President of the Connecticut Woman Suffrage Association. Hepburn's sister, Edith Houghton Hooker, was founder of another suffrage organization called the Just Government League of Maryland, and the two often shared ideas for button designs, official colors, and other matters pertaining to memorabilia.






## ...Connecticut Suffrage Buttons &amp; Other Memorabilia... cont'd.



## MRS. PANKHURST

TO SPEAK ON  
**VOTES FOR WOMEN**

The Hartford Equal Franchise League has been fortunate in securing Mrs. Pankhurst for an engagement at Parsons' Theatre, Monday evening November 27th. Mrs. Pankhurst is the leader of the Women's Social and Political Union, that suffrage society in England, the miraculous growth of which has been due entirely to the ability of its leader and the militant tactics which she inaugurated. It is justly said of them that "they have changed woman suffrage in England from a stale joke to a question of practical politics, and have given new life to the movement throughout the world."




The militant methods began October 13th, 1905, with the questioning of Sir Edward Grey by Christabel Pankhurst and Annie Kenne-  
ssee then, for insisting on the right of petition and for refusing to be put off, no less than seven hundred women have been imprisoned, hundreds have suffered the tortures of forcible feeding, and two have died. When many of the most distinguished women in England have exposed themselves to these dangers, they have passed beyond petty criticism, above all from the uninformed.

Mrs. Pankhurst has herself been to prison three times. She will go down in history as one of the great leaders of the world.

Whether you believe in Votes for Women or not, come and hear the thrilling story which Mrs. Pankhurst has to tell.

**HARTFORD, PARSONS' THEATRE, MONDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 1911, 8 P. M.**


Reserved seats 50c. and 25c. Admission free. Sale of seats opens at Parsons' Theatre, November 22nd, at 9 a. m.


## VOTES FOR WOMEN

Joint HEARING before the Committee on Constitutional Amendments and the Committee on Woman Suffrage,  
State Capitol, Hartford, Hall of the House of Representatives, March 3rd and 4th, at 2 P. M.

### DUPLICATE OF SUFFRAGE HEARING AT HOTEL GARDE, HARTFORD (dining room, second floor) MARCH 3rd, at 2:15 P. M.



Members of the General Assembly and all others who are unable to secure seats at the Hearing at the Capitol are invited to go immediately to Hotel Garde. As soon as each speaker has finished at the Capitol she will go at once to the Hotel Garde to speak.

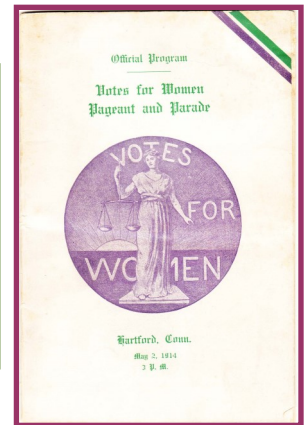
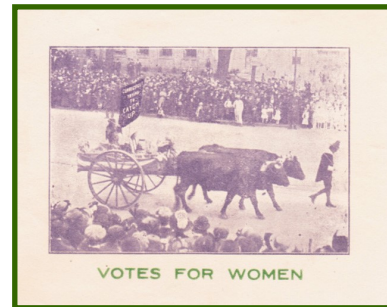
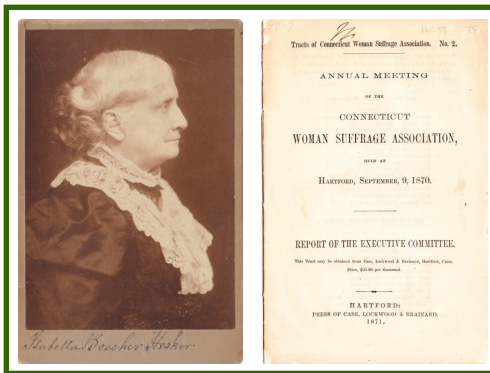


MISS EMILY PIERSON      MISS ROSE WINSLOW





## ...Connecticut Suffrage Buttons &amp; Other Memorabilia... cont'd.



Perhaps the most spectacular piece of Connecticut woman suffrage memorabilia was a “talking blackboard” that was composed of 38 individual oil cloth panels, 19 of which included an “argument” against suffrage and the other 19 consisting of a response. The panels were done in the Connecticut Woman Suffrage Association’s official colors of purple, green, and white, and the entire piece was printed by the Calhoun Company of Hartford, which had produced other suffrage materials for the state. Individual panels from the blackboard are currently on display at the Smithsonian in Washington. The National American Woman Suffrage Association also published its own version of a “talking blackboard,” but theirs was smaller and made of paper.

