Suffrage Amendment
High School
TN History for Kids Lesson 1

Back Story

Today in the United States, all people older than 18 years old and who have not been found guilty of committing a serious crime can vote.

People voting in Tennessee (THFK photo)

However, it hasn't always been like this. The story of how voting rights were earned by different Americans is far more complicated than many people realize.

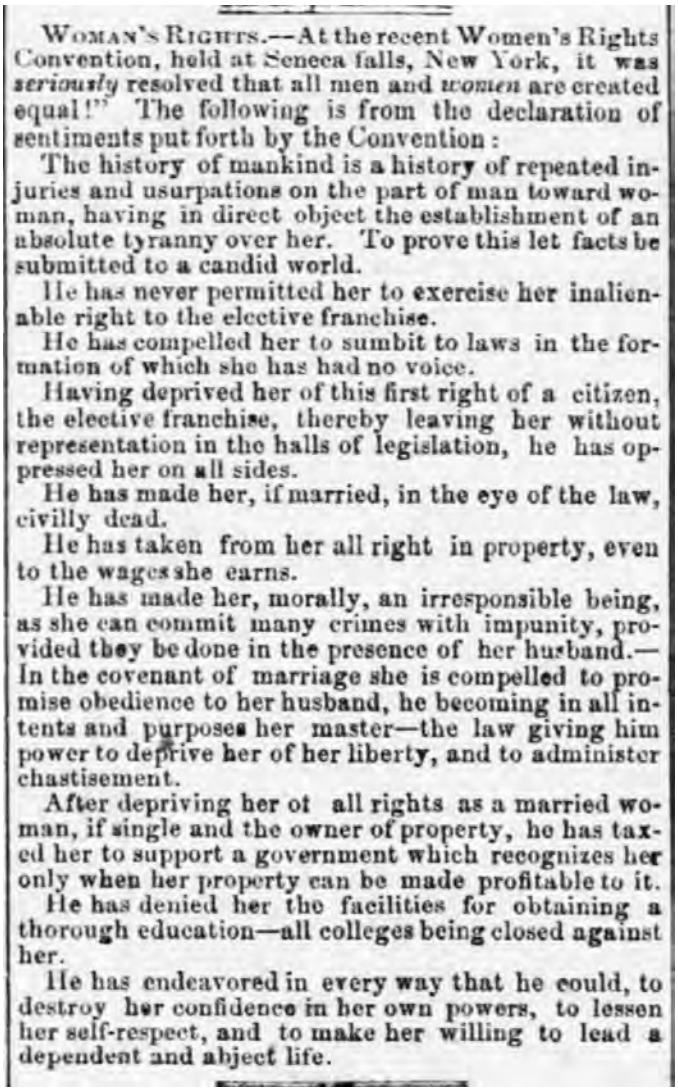
When Tennessee first became a state, only men who owned property were allowed to vote. The Tennessee Constitution of 1834 changed this law. Since that time, people haven't had to own property to vote.

After the American Civil War, the Thirteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution made slavery illegal, and the Fifteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution (theoretically) made it illegal to keep a man from voting because of his race or color.

However in many parts of the country, African Americans were actually not allowed to vote until the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s. A landmark piece of legislation called the Voting Rights Act of 1965 came out of the Civil Rights Movement. After this law passed, huge numbers of African Americans in the South who weren't voting before began voting.

What about voting rights for women?

The first convention in America at which women's rights were a focus of discussion was in July 1848 at Seneca Falls, New York. At the end of that conference, 68 women and 32 men signed a Declaration of Rights and Sentiments. Modeled on the Declaration of Independence, it called for men and women to be treated equally and have equal rights.



WOMAN'S RIGHTS.—At the recent Women's Rights Convention, held at Seneca falls, New York, it was *seriously* resolved that all men and *women* are created equal!" The following is from the declaration of sentiments put forth by the Convention:

The history of mankind is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations on the part of man toward woman, having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over her. To prove this let facts be submitted to a candid world.

He has never permitted her to exercise her inalienable right to the elective franchise.

He has compelled her to sumbit to laws in the formation of which she has had no voice.

Having deprived her of this first right of a citizen, the elective franchise, thereby leaving her without representation in the halls of legislation, he has oppressed her on all sides.

He has made her, if married, in the eye of the law, civilly dead.

He has taken from her all right in property, even to the wages she earns.

He has made her, morally, an irresponsible being, as she can commit many crimes with impunity, provided they be done in the presence of her husband.—In the covenant of marriage she is compelled to promise obedience to her husband, he becoming in all intents and purposes her master—the law giving him power to deprive her of her liberty, and to administer chastisement.

After depriving her of all rights as a married woman, if single and the owner of property, he has taxed her to support a government which recognizes her only when her property can be made profitable to it.

He has denied her the facilities for obtaining a thorough education—all colleges being closed against her.

He has endeavored in every way that he could, to destroy her confidence in her own powers, to lessen her self-respect, and to make her willing to lead a dependent and abject life.

The *New York Evening Post*, Aug. 12, 1848

"The history of mankind is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations on the part of many toward women, having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over her," the declaration began.

After the Civil War, Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton formed the National Woman Suffrage Association (NWSA). It focused its efforts on passing a national that would require states to allow women to vote.

Less militant female activists such as Lucy Stone formed the American Woman Suffrage Association (AWSA). It focused its efforts on a state by state strategy for achieving voting rights for women.

It was a long, hard fight, but in 1920, the Nineteenth Amendment was added to the U.S. Constitution. This amendment made it illegal for a state to deny the right to vote to women.

Tennessee played an important part in the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment. This year we will learn more about how this happened.

Questions:

1. What did men have to do in order to vote in Tennessee before 1834?

2. Which amendment to the U.S. Constitution made slavery illegal?

3. TRUE OR FALSE: Ever since the passage of the Fifteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, African American men all over the United States have been able to vote.

4. The Declaration of Rights and Sentiments was entirely modeled on what other document?

5. Who were the two most famous founders of the National Woman's Suffrage Association?

6. What is one way in which the NWSA and the AWSA differed?

7. Which U.S. Constitutional Amendment made it clear that women could vote?

Suffrage Amendment
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Crown of Martyrdom

On November 5, 1872, 16 women in Rochester, New York, showed up at the polls and cast paper ballots in the presidential election. Fifteen of them voted for the incumbent Ulysses S. Grant; one for Horace Greeley.

The actions of these 16 women made national news. Sure enough, their ringleader was arrested two weeks later. After all, women weren't allowed to vote in presidential elections.

The woman who was arrested, Susan B. Anthony, was accused of "illegal voting."

Susan B. Anthony
PHOTO: Gutenberg Project

After the Civil War, Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton were the among the suffrage activists who started the National Woman Suffrage Association (NWSA). It focused its efforts on passing a national law that would require all states to allow women to vote.

The leaders of the NWSA would eventually realize that a constitutional amendment was needed to do this. However, in the fall of 1872 they had a different strategy—for women all over the United States to show up at the polls and vote. If they did this, they hoped that the event would get a lot of publicity; that it would embarrass government officials; and that it would cause a test case.

During the months preceding her trial, Anthony made speeches and wrote an opinion piece that ran in newspapers all over the country. "Is It a Crime for a U.S. Citizen to Vote?" the article asked. By the time her case came to trial seven months later, people all over the country were following the case.

Her trial, however, was a sham. Judge Ward Hunt didn't even allow Anthony to testify, and instead allowed statements given by her at the time of her arrest to be used in court. He also directed the jury to return a guilty verdict rather than telling them to decide for themselves.

Before Hunt sentenced her for the crime, he asked Anthony if she had anything to say. Plenty, she said.

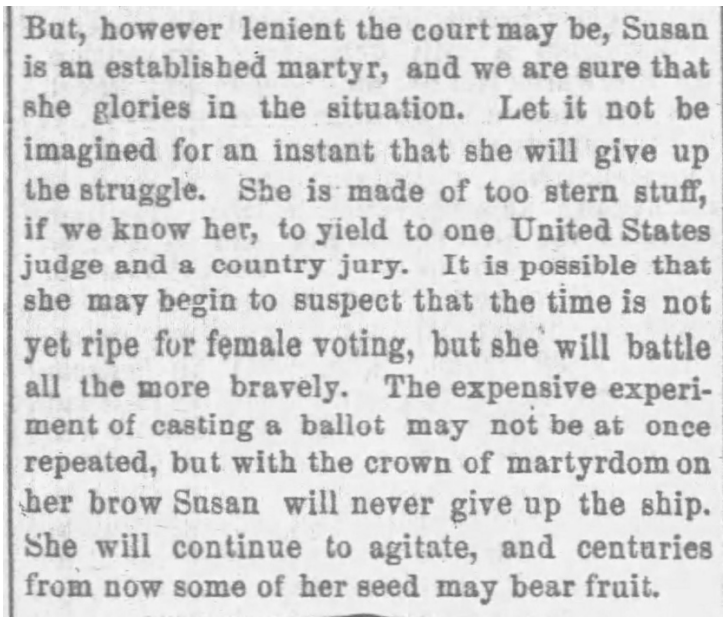
Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony
PHOTO: Library of Congress

"You have trampled under foot every vital principle of our government. My natural rights, my civil rights, my political rights, my judicial rights,

are all alike ignored. Robbed of the fundamental privilege of citizenship, I am degraded from the status of citizen to that of subject; and not only myself individually, but all of my sex, are by your honor's verdict, deemed to political subjection under this so-called republican form of government."

Hunt sentenced Susan B. Anthony to pay a fine of $100, which she said she would not pay (and never did pay). Neither her ballot nor any of the ballots submitted by women in the 1872 presidential election counted. However, the case got a huge amount of publicity, and it raised the profile of the woman's suffrage cause.

"However lenient the court may be," said the *Buffalo Weekly Courier*, "Susan is an established martyr, and we are sure that she glories in the situation."



But, however lenient the court may be, Susan is an established martyr, and we are sure that she glories in the situation. Let it not be imagined for an instant that she will give up the struggle. She is made of too stern stuff, if we know her, to yield to one United States judge and a country jury. It is possible that she may begin to suspect that the time is not yet ripe for female voting, but she will battle all the more bravely. The expensive experiment of casting a ballot may not be at once repeated, but with the crown of martyrdom on her brow Susan will never give up the ship. She will continue to agitate, and centuries from now some of her seed may bear fruit.

***Buffalo Weekly Courier*, June 25, 1873**

The editorial went on to speculate that Susan B. Anthony and her colleagues at the National Woman Suffrage Association would eventually succeed in their battle. "With the crown of martyrdom on her brow Susan will never give up the ship. She will continue to agitate, and centuries from now some of her seed may bear fruit."

It was, all in all, a remarkable editorial for the *Buffalo Weekly Courier*. The only way in which it was inaccurate was in the date. The seed planted by Susan B. Anthony and her suffrage activists would definitely bear fruit. But it would only be a matter of decades, not centuries.

Questions

1) What was the name of the organization co-founded by Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton?

2) Why was Susan B. Anthony the only woman arrested for voting in 1872?

3) In what way was the *Buffalo Weekly Courier* editorial accurate?

4) In what way was the *Buffalo Weekly Courier* editorial inaccurate?

Suffrage Amendment
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TN History for Kids Lesson 3

State by State

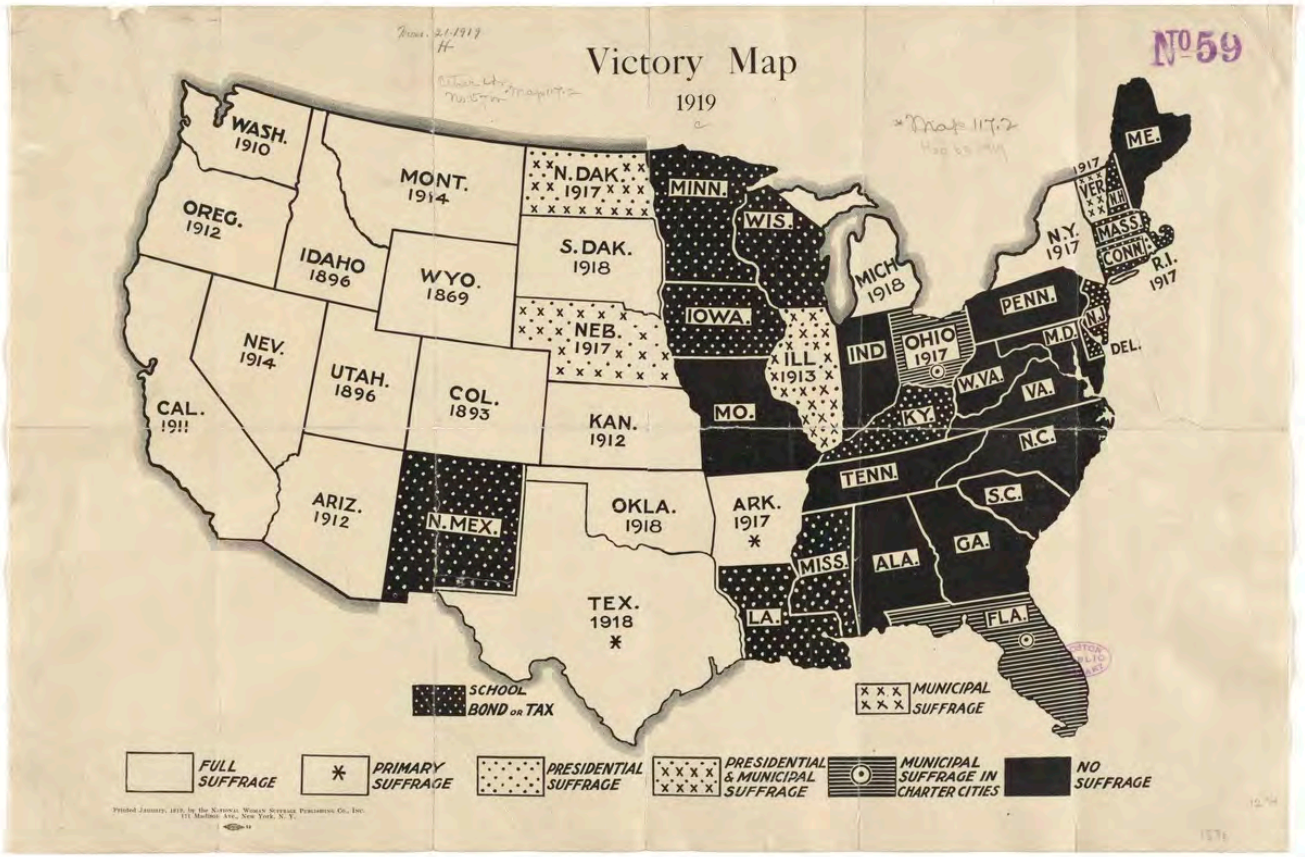
Many people think American women were not allowed to vote before the Nineteenth Amendment became part of the U.S. Constitution in 1920. However, that's not really true. By the time the suffrage amendment passed, women in 37 of the 48 states were already voting (at least in some elections).

This story goes back to shortly after the Civil War. You see, in 1869, the women's suffrage movement split into two organizations.

Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cody Stanton were two of the founders of the **National Woman Suffrage Association** (NWSA). Anthony and Stanton worked hard to get the Fifteenth Amendment to apply to women as well as African-Americans, and they were disappointed when it did not. After the Fifteenth Amendment passed, the NWSA worked for a U.S. Constitutional Amendment that would guarantee women's suffrage.

Lucy Stone's **American Woman Suffrage Association** (AWSA) took more of a gradual view toward women's suffrage, believing that it would be best achieving on a state-by-state basis.

The NWSA and the AWSA would merge in 1890 to form the (are you ready for this?) National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA). But the early split between the two groups resulted in "dual strategies" within the suffrage movement. Some believed that the focus should be on a national suffrage amendment. Others believed that women's suffrage was more likely to be achieved one state at a time.

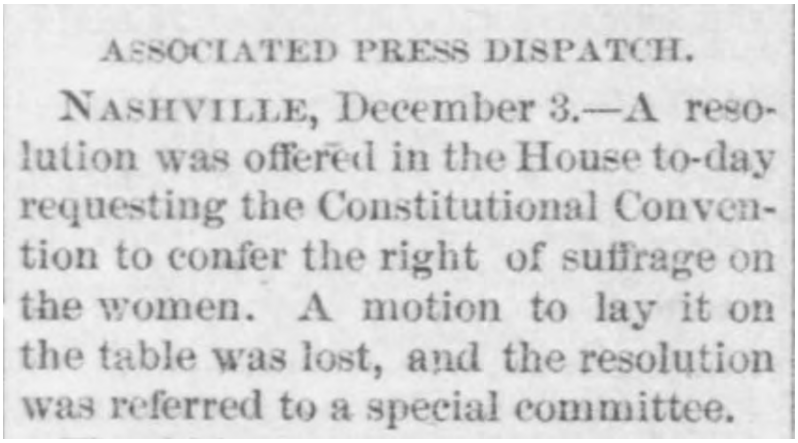


MAP: Boston Public Library

In 1869, Wyoming became the first state or territory in the United States to grant women the right to vote. Wyoming would not even become a state for another two decades, by which time it had America's first female jury member and first female justice of the peace.

Other western states and territories eventually followed Wyoming's lead. Women in some states could vote in all elections; women in others could only vote in some elections (such as local or primary elections); while women in others couldn't vote in *any* elections.

As early as the Tennessee Constitutional Convention of 1869, meanwhile, elected officials in the Volunteer State considered extending the right of suffrage to women. But such proposals didn't get very far.



ASSOCIATED PRESS DISPATCH.

NASHVILLE, December 3.—A resolution was offered in the House to-day requesting the Constitutional Convention to confer the right of suffrage on the women. A motion to lay it on the table was lost, and the resolution was referred to a special committee.

***Memphis Daily Appeal*, December 4, 1869**

In the years leading up to World War I, a number of large states such as California, New York and Texas voted to grant suffrage to women. By this time, however, it became obvious to many suffrage activists that southern states weren't going to grant suffrage to women, and that the universal right of suffrage had to be guaranteed nationally.

Focus then shifted to a suffrage amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

Questions (some of these require use of the map on the previous page)

1) **How did the strategies of the NWSA differ from those of the AWSA?**

2) **When did Colorado extend the right of suffrage to women?**

3) **What state that did NOT grant the right of suffrage to women surprises you?**

4) **What state that DID grant the right of suffrage to women surprises you?**

5) **Based on the content of this article, which state do you think was the first to elect a female governor?**

6) **Do you think that the organization that created this map was in favor of women's suffrage or against women's suffrage? How can you tell?**

Suffrage Amendment
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Half a Century

In 1878, Senator Aaron Sargent of California proposed an amendment to the Constitution stating that "the right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or **abridged** by the United States or by any State on account of sex."

This measure, known as the woman suffrage amendment, would eventually pass, but it took 42 years. During most of those years, it sat in Congress, occasionally discussed by a committee which often allowed a suffrage activist to speak on its behalf. "[Elizabeth Cady] Stanton reported that during her testimony at one such hearing the presiding senator clipped his fingernails, sharpened his pencils, and read the newspaper rather than pay attention," Elaine Weiss wrote in *The Woman's Hour*. Afterwards, the amendment was rejected.

Meanwhile the state-by-state strategy (discussed in the previous lesson) made slow progress. By 1905, women could only vote in four sparsely-populated western states—Wyoming, Colorado, Utah and Idaho.

All the while, suffrage leaders met, made speeches, wrote letters and articles, and even staged protests.

So, for a long time, the American woman suffrage movement achieved very little. Why?

Here are four theories:

- Suffrage activists found that it could be very difficult to get a lawmaking body to pass a measure which they perceive as benefitting someone else—in this case, an all-male House and Senate granting voting rights to women.
- The abolition of slavery and the social changes brought on by it were a lot for the country to absorb in the late 1800s.
- There was a belief that woman suffrage would be "bad for business"—that women voters would lead the country to pass labor laws that would restrict the rights of business. However, the late 1800s were the "Era of the Robber Barons." U.S. presidents were pro-business and against laws that might restrict the power of big business.
- Many women were active in other political movements, such as improving conditions for the poor and the abolition of alcohol (known as **temperance**).

Elizabeth Cady Stanton died in 1902; Susan B. Anthony in 1906. Before her death, Anthony named **Carrie Catt** as her successor.

Carrie Catt
PHOTO: National Woman's Party Records

Woodrow Wilson was elected president in 1912. Throughout most of his life he had made it clear he was not a fan of the woman suffrage movement. "My personal judgement is strongly against it," he wrote in 1911. "I believe that the social changes it would involve would not justify the gains that would be accomplished by it."

However, national opinion towards woman suffrage was changing. California voted for woman suffrage in 1911; Arizona, Oregon and Kansas in 1912 and Illinois in 1913. In 1916, only two years after women were allowed to vote in that state, Nevada elected Jeannette Rankin to the U.S. House of Representatives—the first woman ever elected to Congress.

Alice Paul
Library of Congress

Meanwhile, there was a rift in the woman suffrage movement. In 1913, suffrage leader **Alice Paul** broke away from the National American Woman Suffrage Association and started a new group called the Congressional Union for Woman Suffrage. This was a more radical group, and on the day before Woodrow Wilson's inauguration, Paul helped organize a protest parade in Washington, D.C., with about 8,000 participants (and an estimated half a million onlookers.)

The official program of the 1913 suffrage protest
Library of Congress

Many of the suffrage leaders put their demands for a new amendment on hold during World War I, asking all activists to work hard toward the American war cause. After the war ended, they renewed their demand for the amendment's passage. The suffrage protests began again and got more radical. In one case, suffrage activists who were arrested in Washington D.C. went on a hunger strike in jail. Once freed, they then did a well-publicized speaker's tour across the country..

Finally, the suffrage amendment passed the House in May 1919, and the Senate a few weeks later, on June 4, 1919. Now all that was left was for two-thirds of the states to approve it.

Many states jumped in and approved the amendment quickly. By June 1920, 35 of the necessary 36 legislatures had approved the amendment, but the only former Confederate state that had approved it was Texas.

In July 1920, America waited to see if any of the remaining Southern states would approve the Nineteenth Amendment.

Questions:

1) What are some of the reasons that the suffrage amendment took so long to pass?

2) If you had to pick one main reason, what do you think it would be?

3) What do you think bothered President Wilson more: the number of women who marched in the 1913 parade, or the number of people who watched the 1913 parade? Why?

Note: This lesson was written by Bill Carey, with the help of Paula Casey, co-founder of the Tennessee Woman Suffrage Trail.

Suffrage Amendment
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TN History for Kids Lesson 5

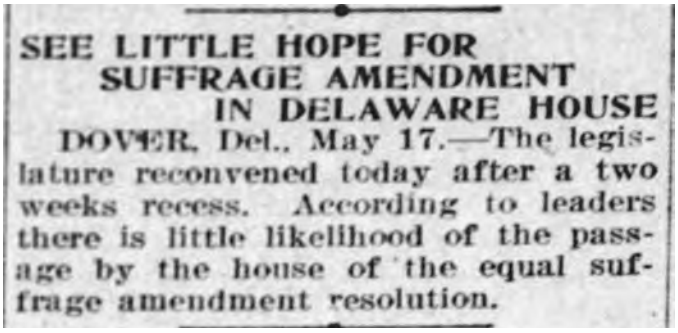
Volunteer State Showdown

If it hadn't been for Delaware, Tennessee would not have been the "Perfect 36."

Under the U.S. Constitution, an amendment must be passed by Congress and then by the legislatures of three-fourths of the states. Since there were 48 states in 1919, 36 state General Assemblies had to ratify the woman suffrage amendment for it to become law.

In the months following Congress's approval of the woman suffrage amendment, activists from both Carrie Catt's National American Woman Suffrage Association and Alice Paul's National Woman's Party worked hard to get states to ratify it. They knew that states in the Northeast and West were likely to approve the amendment. States of the former Confederacy were likely to reject it.

As expected, states such as Illinois, Wisconsin, New York and California rapidly approved the Nineteenth Amendment. In March 1920, Washington became the 35th state to ratify it, and at that point it looked like Delaware would be the 36th state. But in May 1920, Delaware rejected it. Suffrage activists began to fear they might lose.



SEE LITTLE HOPE FOR SUFFRAGE AMENDMENT IN DELAWARE HOUSE

DOVER, Del., May 17.—The legislature reconvened today after a two weeks recess. According to leaders there is little likelihood of the passage by the house of the equal suffrage amendment resolution.

***LaCross* [Wisconsin] *Tribune*, May 17, 1920**

Of the states that hadn't yet approved the amendment, Tennessee looked like the most likely state that might. One reason for this was Edward Crump of Memphis. Crump, who was so powerful in state politics that he was known as "Boss" Crump, was in favor of woman suffrage. Another important advocate of woman suffrage in Tennessee was Luke Lea, former U.S. Senator and the editor of the *Nashville Tennessean* newspaper.

On June 23, 1920, President Wilson sent a message to Tennessee Governor Albert Roberts suggesting he call the General Assembly into session and ask them to pass the amendment.

Tennessee had a gubernatorial primary election on August 5, and Roberts did nothing until after that election. Four days after receiving the Democratic nomination for his second term, Roberts called the legislature into special session.

As the members of the General Assembly arrived in Nashville, national attention focused on Tennessee. Supporters and opponents of woman suffrage greeted representatives as they got off trains, receiving promises of yes votes from some legislators, pledges of no votes from others, and indecision from others.

As the General Assembly met in special session, legislators in favor of the amendment put on yellow roses. Legislators against it wore red roses.

In those days, many legislators stayed at Nashville's Hermitage Hotel. During the special session in August 1920, much of the debate took place in the rooms, hallways and lobbies of the Hermitage Hotel.

The lobby of the Hermitage Hotel in 1920
PHOTO: Hermitage Hotel

Two of the most important industries that lobbied against the woman suffrage amendment were the railroads and the liquor industry (Tennessee was, and is, known for its whiskey distilleries.) During the special session, one of the rooms at the Hermitage Hotel became known as the

"Jack Daniel's Suite," and it was here that many of the "anti's," as they became known, met and drank.

Women were not allowed in the Jack Daniel's Suite, but that doesn't mean that there weren't women arguing against the suffrage amendment. Josephine Pearson was president of the Tennessee State Association Opposed to Woman Suffrage, and she and her colleagues were in full force as the legislators arrived in Nashville. Pearson argued that woman suffrage would be bad for motherhood; bad for the family; that it would hurt Southern whites at the expense of African Americans; and that it was an idea being imposed on Tennessee by "outsiders" such as Carrie Catt.

This photo was taken at the door of the Anti-Ratification forces at the Hermitage Hotel. Josephine Pearson is on the right. The man seated is a Confederate veteran who, like many Confederate veterans, opposed woman suffrage. PHOTO: TN State Library and Archives.

Speaking of Carrie Catt, she did make the trip to Nashville, and she was also in the Hermitage Hotel. But criticisms of her being an "outsider" kept her in her hotel room much of the time. Most face-to-face lobbying for the Nineteenth Amendment was being done by woman suffrage activists in Tennessee, led by a woman from Nashville named Anne Dallas Dudley and a woman from Chester County named Sue Shelton White.

More on these two women in a later lesson.

One of many political cartoons that made fun of the idea of the Tennessee legislature during the suffrage session.
Rochester Herald

Questions:

1) Why does an understanding of the passage of the suffrage amendment require a knowledge of fractions?

2) Why was it assumed that states in the Northeast and West were more likely to approve the Nineteenth Amendment than states in the Southeast? (Hint: Look at a previous lesson)

3) What were some of the reasons that anti-suffrage activists such as Josephine Pearson were opposed to passage of the Nineteenth Amendment?

4) Were you surprised to learn that some woman fought the Nineteenth Amendment? Why or why not?

Suffrage Amendment
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TN History for Kids Lesson 6

New Social Order

As we look back on Tennessee's passage of the suffrage amendment, we need to mention the matter of race—how the debate over the suffrage amendment was influenced by it.

To understand this topic, you have to realize that 1920 was a different time in Tennessee and the South. In 1920, racial segregation was required by law; the Ku Klux Klan was on the rise; and interracial marriages were illegal in all Southern states.

One of the main arguments used ***against*** the suffrage amendment was that its passage would empower African Americans and reduce the power of white Southerners.

One of the main arguments used ***in defense*** of the suffrage amendment was that its passage would do no such thing.

In fact, suffrage leaders reminded people in speeches, letters, articles and flyers that most African Americans were not allowed to vote because of local prejudices, poll taxes and other restrictions and that the Nineteenth Amendment would do nothing to change that.

The relationship between race and the woman suffrage movement dated back to Reconstruction. Early suffrage activists such as Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton wanted the Fourteenth Amendment to be written in a way that guaranteed voting rights for women. It didn't, however, which is why they helped form the National Woman Suffrage Association in 1869.

There were black women in the suffrage movement. One of the best known was Ida B. Wells, who left Memphis and moved to Chicago in the 1890s because of racial lynchings that were occurring in the South. In 1913, Wells was one of about 60 black women from Illinois who went to Washington, D.C., to take part in the suffrage parade the day before Woodrow Wilson's inauguration.

The leaders of the parade asked these black women to march in the back of the parade so that it wouldn't upset the Southern women. Wells and her colleagues marched with the rest of the Illinois delegation anyway.

Ida B. Wells and other black women march in the suffrage parade in Washington in March 1913.
PHOTO: *Chicago Tribune*

The best known African-American activist in the Tennessee suffrage movement was Juno Frankie Pierce, a Nashville native and founder of the Nashville Federation of Colored Women's Clubs. Pierce's father had been born into slavery, and in 1919, when the Tennessee League of Women Voters had its first convention, she was asked to make a speech in the Tennessee State Capitol.

"What will the Negro woman do with the vote?" she asked that day. "We will stand by the white women. We are optimistic because we have faith in the best white women of the country, of Nashville. We are going to make you proud of us, because we are going to help you help us and ourselves."

J. Frankie Pierce
Photo: TN State Library and Archives

However, the very idea that the suffrage amendment would help any member of the black race was repeatedly used by opponents of the woman's suffrage movement. On August 18, the forces opposed to the amendment published a large

newspaper advertisement headlined with the words "The Truth about the Negro Problem." It began:

"For the sake of Southern civilization, for the sake of womanhood and for the sake of the welfare of the negro race as well as the white race, the Susan B. Anthony amendment should be defeated," stated the ad. "The better class of NEGROES THEMSELVES know that they are better represented by able white men than they would be by designing politicians of their own race, just as the majority of the women themselves feel they are better represented by the fathers of their children than they would be by politically ambitious officeseekers of their own sex."

Suffragist activists such as Carrie Chapman Catt, Anne Dallas Dudley and Sue Shelton White often dismissed this race-baiting tactic. But sometimes they felt compelled to respond to personal attacks.

Perhaps the best example of this was when Hershel Candler of McMinn County denounced Catt as an "anarchist" during a speech on the floor of the state senate. "[Catt] would be glad to see the day when negro men could marry white women without being socially ostracized," he said.

"This is the kind of woman who is trying to dictate to us. They would drag the womanhood of Tennessee down to the level of the negro woman."

BEWARE!

MEN OF THE SOUTH: Heed not the song of the suffrage siren! Seal your ears against her vocal wiles. For, no matter how sweetly she may proclaim the advantages of female franchise,—

REMEMBER, that *Woman Suffrage* means a reopening of the entire *Negro Suffrage* question; loss of State rights; and another period of reconstruction horrors, which will introduce a set of female carpet-baggers as bad as their male prototypes of the sixties.

DO NOT JEOPARDIZE the present prosperity of your sovereign States, which was so dearly bought by the blood of your fathers and the tears of your mothers, by again raising an issue which has already been adjusted at so great a cost.

NOTHING can be gained by woman suffrage and much may be lost MS. AC. 74-99

(*Extracts from The Messenger*)

THE NEGRO

AND THE

NEW SOCIAL ORDER

A Reconstruction Program, Prepared by Chandler Owen and A. Philip Randolph (negroes), Editors of *The Messenger*, March 10th, 1919

THE MESSENGER PUBLISHING CO.

2305 SEVENTH AVENUE NEW YORK CITY

A flyer warning Southern men about how the suffrage amendment would help African Americans
Tennessee Virtual Archives; TN State Library

A few hours later, Catt responded to the accusations. "It is an absolute fabrication that I have at any time advocated intermarriage between the white and negro races," she wrote. "Furthermore, I believe it to be an absolute crime against nature."

The specter of race-baiting by those opposed to the suffrage amendment explains why there were no African-American women at the state Capitol during the special session. J. Frankie Pierce, who had made a speech in the State House Chamber only a few months earlier, was asked not to come to the Capitol, and she was nowhere to be found during the proceedings. Even if she had been, black women weren't allowed in the House chamber anyway.

Questions:

1) Why did opponents of the Nineteenth Amendment in the South claim that passage of the amendment would help African Americans?

2) Do their arguments make sense to you? Why or why not?

3) Why were Ida B. Wells and the other African-American suffrage activists asked to march in the back of the Washington, D.C., parade in 1913?

4) Why did J. Frankie Pierce not go to the State Capitol when the suffrage amendment was being debated by the General Assembly?

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TN History for Kids Lesson 7

Two Women, One Amendment

Two of the women whose statues appear beside each other on statues honoring Tennessee's suffrage movement didn't get along with each other.

Anne Dallas Dudley was from a prominent family; one of her descendants was vice president of the United States under James K. Polk. In 1911 she co-founded a suffrage organization in Nashville that was associated with the nation's largest voting rights organization—Carrie Catt's National American Woman's Suffrage Association (NAWSA). In May 1914, after Dudley led the first suffrage parade in the South, she spoke at Nashville's Centennial Park, becoming the first woman in Tennessee to make an open-air speech.

This photo of Ann Dudley and her two children was circulated by proponents of the suffrage amendment.
PHOTO: TN State Library and Archives

Dudley's actions shocked many Nashville people, in part because she was wealthy. During her lifetime, she was more commonly referred to in print as Mrs. Guilford Dudley—wife of one of the founders of the Life & Casualty Insurance Company. At a time when many people of both sexes criticized suffragists for being "anti-feminine," Dudley proved that one could be a genteel lady, a mother and an activist.

In comparison, **Sue Shelton White** was born in the west Tennessee community of Henderson and was orphaned by the time she was 14. White chose career over marriage. She went to West Tennessee Business College, became Tennessee's first female court reporter, and eventually moved to Washington, D.C.

White was, at first, active in the NAWSA. However, in 1918 she joined Alice Paul's more radical National Women's Party and became the editor of the party's newspaper, *The Suffragist*. In spite of her petite size, "Miss Sue," as she was known, became one of the most famous militants in the cause for suffrage. "An amazon she is not," the *Chattanooga News* once said. "Her frail fingers will never lift anything heavier than a ballot to obtain her rights."

Sue White
PHOTO: Harris & Ewing

In February 1919, Miss Sue lifted a three-foot paper effigy of President Woodrow Wilson over a bonfire that she and other members of the National Women's Party had lit in front of the White House. White was arrested, dragged across an icy sidewalk, and thrown in jail for five days, where she and her colleagues went on a hunger strike. After released, White and her colleagues

donned prison garb and chartered a railroad car called the "Prison Special." It toured the U.S., embarrassing Wilson and generating publicity for the women's suffrage cause.

The actions and words of National Women's Party leaders such as Alice Paul and Sue White raised pressure on Congress to pass the Nineteenth Amendment. However, when White and her fellow National Women's Party colleagues were arrested, suffrage activists associated with Carrie Catt's NAWSA were horrified. "Their banners should be called 'banners of shame,'" Anne Dudley wrote, calling them "half-crazed fanatics."

After Congress passed the Nineteenth Amendment in June 1919 and sent it to the states for ratification, Carrie Catt's NAWSA and Alice Paul's National Woman's Party worked separately for the cause. As one state legislature after another considered the amendment, Catt and Paul sent different people to each state to lobby for women's suffrage. As states approved the amendment, each organization claimed credit.

Before Governor Roberts even called a special session, Paul sent Sue White to Nashville to coordinate the National Woman's Party's lobbying efforts in Tennessee. In anticipation of the special session, she picked other National Woman's Party members and sent them across the state to speak to Tennessee legislators. After the special session was called, she saw to it that they were greeted at the train station when they arrived; spoke to many of them herself; and addressed many of the arguments that were being put forward against the suffrage amendment.

Anne Dudley did much of the same thing for the National American Woman's Suffrage Association. She helped coordinate the efforts of NAWSA women who greeted lawmakers at the train station and talked to them in the hall of the state Capitol. She, too, tried to counteract the arguments against the suffrage amendment put forward by the liquor industry and the railroads. She, too, kept running tabs on how each of them intended to vote.

Although it may be logical to assume that the affluent Dudley was less persistent than the radical Sue White, at least one anecdote suggests otherwise. On August 16, when legislators were exhausted from the bickering and long meetings, Dudley approached Wilson County Lon McFarland, an opponent of the amendment. While straightening his tie, Dudley told McFarland that if he really wanted to honor the wishes of Tennessee women, he would vote in favor of the amendment. Rather than answer her, McFarland pulled out a pocket knife, cut his tie just below the knot, and left Dudley holding the rest of it. "Just keep it," he said, walking away.

During the special session, Dudley and White talked to hundreds of state legislators at the state Capitol and the Hermitage Hotel (where most state legislators stayed, and where the NAWSA had its Tennessee headquarters). However, a recent book about the passage of the suffrage movement in Tennessee maintains that Dudley and White don't appear to have spoken to each other, at all, during the critical 10 days in which the session lasted.

One thing we know for certain: Both Dudley and White knew that things didn't look good on the morning of August 18, 1920. By that time, the Senate had approved the amendment, but the measure appeared to be two or three votes short of the 50 needed to pass the House. House Speaker Seth Walker (an opponent of the amendment) was so certain that it didn't have the votes for passage that he called for a final vote, confident that it was about to fail.

It was then, during the long roll call vote, that two House members who were expected to vote no voted yes.

Questions:

1. In what ways were Anne Dudley and Sue White different from each other?

2. In what ways were they alike?

3. Why do you think proponents of the suffrage amendment circulated the photo of Anne Dudley and her children?

Suffrage Amendment
High School
TN History for Kids Lesson 8

"Don't Keep Them in Doubt"

After the Tennessee State House of Representatives took its vote on the Nineteenth Amendment, there was much confusion and chaos on the House floor, because the two people counting votes for the House Clerk's office came up with different vote tallies. Because of this, the vote had to be taken twice (which took some time because voting was all done by voice vote.)

The second time around, however, the voter counters came up with the same figures. Only then did it become clear that the amendment had passed by a single vote, with 50 yes votes out of 99 members.

Leaders on both sides immediately turned their attention to members of the House who had said that they would vote against the amendment but who instead voted yes.

One of these members was Banks Turner , who was from the tiny Gibson County of Nebo. In the days leading up to the suffrage vote, Turner had made it clear he intended to vote against the amendment. But on the day of the vote, Turner voted yes. To this day, not a lot is known about why Banks Turner of Gibson County changed his mind.

Another person who changed his vote was Harry Burn, a young House member from Niota, in McMinn County. Not only had Burn told people that he was going to vote against the measure, he was wearing a red rose on his lapel (the symbol of the anti-suffrage movement). After the vote was tallied, opponents of the suffrage measure nearly mobbed Burn with questions and accusations about why he changed his vote. (One story claims that the mob on the House floor was so angry at Burn that he only escaped the House chamber by climbing out of a window.)

Later in the day a *Nashville Tennessean* reporter caught up with Burn and penned this story about him. This article made Burn and his mother, famous.

HARRY T. BURN.

BURN CHANGED VOTE ON ADVICE OF HIS MOTHER

Suffrage Victory Largely Attributed to Youthful Representative.

Back of the man whose change of vote Wednesday enfranchised the womanhood of America stood a woman—his mother.

"Vote for suffrage and don't keep them in doubt," she wrote him.

So when perhaps the tensest and most dramatic moment in the history of the many fights which have been waged on Capitol Hill came, Harry T. Burn, Republican, of McMinn county, cast his vote "aye", and the seventy-year suffrage fight was won.

As a boy, and he is still that, Harry Burn had learned to revere his mother and to know that her counsel was good.

"I knew that a mother's advice is always safest for her boy to follow, and that my mother wanted me to vote for ratification." This sentence he incorporated in the written statement of his reasons for changing his vote, which he caused to be spread on the journal of the House yesterday.

But more than that, Harry Burn changed his vote because he felt that ratification was right and just.

Gave Vote When Needed.

"I had not talked with all of my constituents," he said yesterday. "But those whom I had interviewed were against ratification. For that reason, I cast my vote 'No.' When I arrived, however, I told the women workers that in case my vote would decide the question, I would cast it according to my own convictions. That is what I did in the end."

And now Harry T. Burn is considered the man who gave 27,000,000 women of America their complete political freedom.

He has been deluged with telegrams from over the state and nation. Men and women, big and little in the world's affairs, have expressed their gratitude to him.

Among the wires is this one from H. M. Daugherty, director of the Harding campaign:

"After a conference with Senator Harding, I beg to extend our congratulations upon your support of suffrage and urge you to respectfully request all Republican associates to join in holding your lines, and hope that a unanimous Republican vote may be given to prevent a reconsideration of the resolution."

Mr. Burn is only 24 years old. In his brief life he has accomplished many things, aside from that which has just given him national prominence.

He owns one of the finest farms in McMinn County, which he and his brother "work." In the meantime, he is station agent at Niota, his home town, for the Southern Railroad, and is the president of the local bank, in addition to being actively interested in several textile mills of the section.

Is Nominee For Reelection.

He is a thirty-second degree Mason and a Shriner, and is the nominee for reelection to the House.

Mr. Burn says he had rather please his mother than every politician in the state. He is her main support, being head of the family, which consists of his mother, a brother, a sister and himself.

"Hurrah! Vote for ratification and don't keep them waiting," wrote Mrs. J. L. Burn, the mother. "I notice some of the speeches against. They are very bitter. I have been watching to see how you stood, but have not noticed anything yet. Don't forget to be a good boy and help Mrs. Catt put 'Rat' in ratification."

Yesterday Mrs. George Fort Milton, who had wired Mrs. Burn to come to Nashville, received this reply from her:

"Your wire received. Owing to illness, will not be able to come to Nashville. You have my heartfelt sympathy in this great fight for ratification. It is my desire that my son, Harry, stand by you until completed."

"I expect to stand by my decision," says Harry.

Questions:

1. **Based on the article, what is true?**

a. Burn voted "yes" on suffrage largely because his mother told him to do so.
b. Burn voted "no" on suffrage because his mother told him to vote that way.
c. Burn voted "yes" on suffrage even though his mother told him not to vote that way.
d. Burn voted "no" on suffrage even though his mother told him to vote "yes" on suffrage.

2. **What is something the article does not address?**

a. what Burn does for a living in his home county of McMinn
b. Harry Burn's age
c. how Harry Burn felt about his mother
d. how state legislators opposed to women's suffrage reacted when Burn voted yes

3. **As far as this article is concerned, when did the suffrage battle begin?**

a. 1830
b. 1850
c. 1900
d. 1920

4. **(LONG ANSWER) Does this article make Harry Burn out to be a hero or a bad person?**

Suffrage Amendment
High School
TN History for Kids Lesson 9

Forgetting and Remembering

For most of the twentieth century, Tennessee's history community had little interest in the fact that its state was responsible for the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment. For a long time there were no statues of suffrage leaders; no historical markers about the suffrage movement; and little or no mention of Tennessee's role in the passage of the suffrage amendment in history textbooks.

Then, in the early 1970s, Memphis journalist Carol Lynn Yellin began researching the suffrage movement. She interviewed everyone who played an active role in the passage of the amendment, including former state House members Harry Burn and Joe Hanover. Yellin wrote a long article about the passage of the suffrage amendment that was published in *American Heritage* magazine in 1978.

This "bas relief" sculpture about the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment hangs in the State Capitol THFK Photo

Nearly twenty years later, Yellin worked with two other women to reprint this article, along with other content about Tennessee's suffrage movement, into a book called *The Perfect 36*. "We raised $73,000 to print the books and made sure copies were donated to every public library and public school library in the state," said Paula Casey, one of Yellins partners in the endeavor.

The book project included the creation of suffrage-related artwork for the Tennessee State Capitol. The Tennessee Arts Commission and State Senator Steve Cohen helped secure state government money for that artwork—a "bas relief" sculpture created by Nashville artist Alan LeQuire.

From these beginnings, Tennessee has seen the creation of a series of statues and monuments about the suffrage movement:

Inspired by LeQuire's Capitol artwork, Knoxville attorney Wanda Sobieski headed the fundraising effort to create statues of three suffrage leaders in Market Square in downtown Knoxville. Also sculpted by LeQuire, the memorial honors Anne Dallas Dudley of Nashville, Lizzie Crozier French of Knoxville and Elizabeth Avery Meriwether of Memphis. It was unveiled in 2006.

A few years later, a group of Tennessee women raised money for a memorial in Nashville to five suffrage activists—Dudley, Carrie Chapman Catt, Sue Shelton White, Abby Crawford Milton and J. Frankie Pierce.

Artist Alan LeQuire works on one of his suffrage statues PHOTO: Alan LeQuire

Casey served as president of this fundraising group, and raising the $900,000 needed for the memorial was a lot of work. Donors were organized into different societies with names such as “Perfect 36” and “Yellow Rose,” depending on how much money they raised. It was unveiled in August 2016 in Centennial Park—site of Nashville’s first suffrage parade.

The Centennial Park suffrage monument is unveiled
PHOTO: Alan LeQuire

Since that time, Jackson has unveiled a statue of White; Knoxville created a second monument; Memphis began work on a huge memorial to more than a dozen suffrage leaders as well as female firsts; and Clarksville and Chattanooga have announced memorials in the works.

Paula Casey
PHOTO: Paula Casey

“The support from people who believe in this hasn’t waivered,” says Casey, who has been working on woman suffrage projects for more than 30 years.

“We wanted to honor these women for what they did. We want Tennesseans to never forget what they did.”

Casey is also one of the organizers of the Tennessee Woman Suffrage Heritage Trail (www.tnwomansuffrageheritagetrail.com), which helps raise public awareness of Tennessee’s suffrage story and the landmarks that honor it.

Questions:

1) Why do you think that Tennessee didn’t honor its suffrage leaders and suffrage history for many years?

2) Do you think that the women now being honored in these sculptures would have predicted that they would one day be honored in sculptures? Why or why not?