

*The suffrage movement of the late 1800s and early 1900s was women's fight for the legal right to vote in the United States. This battle spanned over several decades, and it wasn't until 1920 that women were granted the right to vote nationally with the Nineteenth Amendment. This newspaper article from The Barre Daily Times discusses the various women involved in the suffrage movement, including those who opposed it, as well as the movement's progression over the years. As you read, identify the different tactics women used during the suffrage movement to gain the right to vote*

***Was Hard Fight to Get Vote*** by the Barre Daily Times (1920)

### **Many Special Sessions Called to Act on Ratification (1)**

Washington, D. C. Aug. 19.—Ratification of the suffrage amendment to the constitution ends a struggle which began in this country before the colonies declared their independence. It will eventually enfranchise (2) 25,000,000 women.

Woman suffrage first raised its voice in America in Maryland in 1647 when Mistress Margaret Brent, heir of Lord Calvert, demanded a place in the legislature of the colony as a property holder of wide extent. And in the days of the revolution, Abigail Adams wrote her husband, John Adams, at the continental Congress, which was framing the laws of the infant nation that, "if—in the new laws—particular care and attention are not paid to the ladies, we are determined to foment (3) a rebellion and will not hold ourselves bound to obey any laws in which we have no voice."

Organized work for woman suffrage began in the United States with the woman's rights convention in Seneca Falls, N. Y., 1848, which was called by Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, early leaders of Massachusetts and New York, in response to the indignation (4) aroused by the refusal to permit women to take part in the anti-slavery convention of 1840. From the date of that convention the suffrage movement in the United States began the fight that lasted 70 years and ended with victory. Another convention followed in 1852 at Syracuse, N. Y., at which delegates (5) from Canada were present and it was there that Susan B. Anthony assumed leadership of the cause to which she devoted her life.

In 1869 the National Woman Suffrage association, with Miss Anthony and Mrs. Stanton at its head, was formed in New York and in the same year the American Woman Suffrage association was organized in Cleveland with Lucy Stone and Julia Ward Howe as its leaders. At first differing widely in policy, the national association working to put a suffrage amendment through the federal Congress and its sister organization bending its efforts to convert the country, state by state, the two associations later united under the name of the National Woman Suffrage association. The association's drive for the vote was led in turn by Mrs. Stanton, Miss Anthony, Dr. Anna Howard Shaw and Mrs. Carrie Chapman Catt, the latter of whom is now its president.

Militancy in the fight for suffrage in America made its appearance with the formation of the national woman's party in 1913. On the eve of President Wilson's inauguration,(10) 8,000 women, led by Alice Paul, now the chairman of the party, attempted to march from the capitol to the White House. They were harassed by a hostile crowd which overran an unsympathetic police and the capital of the United States had its first experience with suffrage riots.

Continuing their demonstrations over a period of seven years members of the women's party picketed (11) the White House with banners in their hands and served terms in jail for the disturbances of the peace which grew out of their parades and blockade of the executive mansion. During the last few months before the adoption of the amendment the militants redoubled (12) their exertions.(13) Several demonstrations were held on the steps of the capitol and on New Year's day, 1919, watch fires (14) were lighted in front of the

White House in which every speech made by President Wilson in Europe on democracy and self-government was burned. The acts, however, were disavowed (15) by the national association.

Promptly with the passage of the amendment by the Congress the suffrage forces turned their attention to ratification by the necessary three-fourths of the states. More special sessions of the state legislatures were called upon the 19th than upon any other amendment.

Wisconsin and Michigan on June 10 were the first states to ratify, quickly followed on June 16 by New York, Kansas, Ohio.

Other states ratified in the following order: Illinois, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Texas, Iowa, Missouri, Arkansas, Montana, Nebraska, Minnesota, New Hampshire, Utah, California, Maine, North Dakota, South Dakota, Colorado, Rhode Island, Kentucky, Oregon, Indiana, Wyoming, Nevada, New Jersey, Idaho, Arizona, New Mexico, Oklahoma and West Virginia.

From its beginning in this country, the suffrage movement met determined opposition from women as well as from men. The first organized opposition on the part of women manifested (16) itself in 1873 when a committee of prominent (17) women presented a petition to Congress “protesting against the extension of suffrage to women.” Mrs. W. T. Sherman, wife of the Civil war hero, headed the committee, of which Miss Catherine Ward Beecher, sister of the famous divine, (18) Henry Ward Beecher, was a member. Various anti-suffrage organizations came into being subsequently, (19) until the national association opposed to woman suffrage was formed in 1911 with Mrs. Arthur M. Dodge of New York as its first president. This body, step by step, fought the adoption and ratification of the amendment.

Full suffrage is enjoyed to-day by the women of 21 foreign countries, including the new slates of Czecho-Slovakia and Poland and the ancient nations of England, Germany and the Scandinavian countries. Now that the women of the United States have won the right equally with men to take their part in the government of the republic the effect of the women’s vote on the political life of the country remains for a time to show. Many women are joining the old line (20) parties with their men folk but the national woman’s party holds its own convention in June and will draw up its platform for the coming campaign. First efforts probably will be directed to the laws on inheritance, divorce, guardianship and other laws alleged (21) to discriminate against women.

1. Ratification is the process by which a law or decree is formally approved and instituted (usually by a body of government).
2. Enfranchise (verb): to give the right to vote
3. Foment (verb): to stir up an undesirable course of action
4. Indignation (noun): anger or annoyance provoked by what is perceived as unfair treatment
5. A “delegate” is a person who acts for another as a representative to a convention or conference.
6. Abridge (verb): to reduce in scope; to diminish
7. In this sense, a “provision” refers to the clauses or provided parts that make up the law or amendment.
8. A “forerunner” is a person or thing that leads the charge or comes before the development of something else.
9. A “militant” is someone that acts aggressively for their cause.
10. An “inauguration” is the formal introduction of someone to office.
11. “Picket” means to protest outside a place of work or other venue.
12. Greatly increased
13. Exertion (noun): physical or mental effort
14. A fire maintained during the night as a signal of for the use of someone who is on watch
15. Disavow (verb): to deny any responsibility or support for something
16. Manifest (verb): to display or show by one’s acts or appearance; to demonstrate
17. Prominent (adjective): important; famous
18. A “divine” is a dated term for a priest or religious leader.
19. “Subsequently” means “afterward.”
20. “Old line” is phrase that means “adhering to conservative principles.”
21. Allege (verb): to assert or state



Directions: For the following questions, choose the best answer or respond in complete sentences.

1. PART A: Which statement identifies the central idea of the text?

- A. All women were united in their fight for the right to vote in the United States.
- B. Women were tireless in their efforts to ensure that they had a right to vote, and therefore, a say in the future of their country.
- C. The United States' democratic values made it one of the leading nations to allow women the right to vote.
- D. The women's suffrage movement was overrun by radicals who used violence to advance their cause.

2. PART B: Which quote from the text best supports the answer to Part A?

- A. "During the first 33 years after its introduction into Congress the amendment made practically no progress and until seven years ago it had not been debated on the floor for 30 years." (Paragraph 9)
- B. "She became, however, the forerunner of the 'militants,' who adopted the forceful tactics of the latter days of the campaign." (Paragraph 10)
- C. "Continuing their demonstrations over a period of seven years members of the women's party picketed the White House with banners in their hands and served terms in jail for the disturbances of the peace..." (Paragraph 13)
- D. "Full suffrage is enjoyed to-day by the women of 21 foreign countries, including the new slates of Czecho-Slovakia and Poland and the ancient nations of England, Germany and the Scandinavian countries." (Paragraph 18)

3. PART A: How do the early efforts of women during the suffrage movement compare to the later years?

- A. Women became less motivated in later years.
- B. Women increasingly opposed suffrage in later years.
- C. Women resorted to mainly violence and riots in later years.
- D. Women supported the cause more intensely in later years.

4. PART B: Which detail from the text best supports the answer to Part A?

- A. "The amendment holds the record of being before the country longer than any other successful amendment to the constitution." (Paragraph 8)
- B. "They were harassed by a hostile crowd which overran an unsympathetic police..." (Paragraph 12)
- C. "During the last few months before the adoption of the amendment the militants redoubled their exertions." (Paragraph 13)
- D. "From its beginning in this country, the suffrage movement met determined opposition from women as well as from men." (Paragraph 17)

5. List some examples of how the author supports the claim that it was a "hard fight" for women to win their right to vote?

