

A HALF CENTURY OF STRUGGLE: GAINING WOMAN SUFFRAGE IN KANSAS

WILDA M. SMITH



"American Woman and Her Political Peers"



Clarina I. H. Nichols
(1810-1885)

INTRODUCTION

EVER SINCE the Kansas legislature ratified the Equal Rights amendment in 1972, the antiequal rights forces have tried unsuccessfully to gain repeal of that ratification. They argue that the legislature acted with indecent haste and insist that the question should be reconsidered with time for debate. The speed with which the legislative body acted in this case does indeed stand in sharp contrast to the rate at which women of the state were granted equal suffrage rights.

Most Kansans of today do not realize what a controversial subject woman suffrage was from 1859 when Clarina I. H. Nichols and others sat in the Wyandotte constitutional convention, unelected and uninvited, with their knitting in their hands, hoping to influence the delegates to leave the word "male" out of the franchise clause,¹ to 1912 when the woman suffrage

1. The contribution of this early suffrage worker is detailed in her papers.—See Joseph G. Gambone, ed., "The Forgotten Feminist of Kansas: The Papers of Clarina I. H. Nichols, 1854-1885," *Kansas Historical Quarterly*, Topeka, vols. 39-40 (1973-1974).



Woman suffrage parade Columbus, Kan.

In the picture at far left, Frances E. Willard (1839-1898), president of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union from 1879 until her death, is surrounded by the American woman's political peers: an idiot, convict, American Indian, and insane man. Henrietta Briggs-Wall, Hutchinson, designed the picture to show the American woman's relative political status under the laws of many states before women were granted equal suffrage rights. In Kansas the struggle for woman suffrage spanned more than half a century, from 1859 when Clarina I. H. Nichols sat in the Wyandotte Constitutional Convention, unelected and uninvited, hoping to influence the delegates to leave the word "male" out of the franchise clause, and 1912 when the woman suffrage amendment was adopted by the state's male voters. At left, a photograph of the participants in a parade in Columbus, Kan., shows that campaigning for woman suffrage was sometimes a family affair.

amendment was adopted by male voters of the state. Women have been voting in this state for more than 65 years, but a majority of our citizens regard woman suffrage as something we have always had. However, so many obstacles had to be overcome by the workers in the movement that it seems almost miraculous that the reform was ever gained. These obstacles included the indifference of some women, disagreements among the leaders of the movement concerning the tactics which should be employed to further their efforts, linking the suffrage fight with other unpopular reform movements, problems of finance, difficulties of transportation, etc.

While some writers on the subject have exclaimed over the fact that it took more than 50 years to gain woman suffrage in Kansas, after considering the handicaps of the movement, one might more appropriately express astonishment over the fact that it took *only* a little over 50 years to succeed in Kansas. In the course of that half century, the legislature granted women the right to vote in school elections in 1861 and in municipal elections in 1887, but three major campaigns (1867, 1894, and 1911-1912) were required before a woman suffrage amendment was added to the state constitution. Even so, it was accomplished eight years before the national amendment was adopted.

THE PROBLEM OF WOMEN'S INDIFFERENCE

ONE OF THE chief handicaps to the suffrage movement was the indifference and apathy of many women. It was often difficult to persuade them to work for the cause; in fact, it was impossible to get some to as much as sign their names to a petition or an enrollment book. The suffrage enrollment books of the Topeka society are remarkable for the few signatures which they contain.² Many claimed to favor woman suffrage and said they felt it was a right, but when asked to take some part in the campaign, they excused themselves on the grounds of its being unladylike to do so. Cora M. Downs expressed the hope that women would not petition for their rights. She felt that the system of coeducation, the avenues of labor opened up to women, their advancement in the

arts and sciences, and their influence over sons and brothers who represented them in the use of the ballot would serve as levers which would gradually bring the right to vote.³ Her attitude seemed to be that, since suffrage was a right of women, if they just waited long enough, men would recognize it and extend it of their own free will.

Some women refused to sign petitions because they objected to the wording. For example, there were objections to the word, "earnestly," by some women who were willing to ask for suffrage but not too insistently. Others claimed they did not care for the vote for themselves but would sign to help those who did, if the word would be stricken from the petition.⁴ Still others favored a policy of education and preparation for the ballot so that when men finally granted them the right to vote they would be ready to use that right intelligently. Of course, they expected the suffrage associations to continue working for the cause until it was successful.⁵

These attitudes infuriated leaders of the movement and did a great deal to hamper their efforts. In the eyes of the truly dedicated women who realized that the right to vote would never be granted if women themselves did not ask for it, these indifferent and complacent women were traitors to their own sex. Too often women in positions of leadership hurt the cause by letting their tempers flare, saying things which antagonized other women. A speech or an article or a letter would accuse women who did not take part in the campaign of being lazy or of being selfish in their indifference,⁶ or would complain that the greatest difficulty in the way of woman's legal status was her own ignorance of the law.⁷ Although probably true, such statements did little to attract indifferent women to the movement. There are undoubtedly lessons here for the present leaders of the women's movement.

It was disheartening to the leaders of the movement to be told by men that the right to vote would be extended to women when a

3. Cora M. Downs, "The Women of America," *Topeka Daily Capital*, November 11, 1882.

4. Mrs. Dr. Updegraff to S. N. Wood, May 28, 1867.—"Woman Suffrage Collection."

5. *Ottawa Journal & Triumph* (Topeka edition), May 10, 1894.

6. Laura M. Johns to friend, December 28, 1903.—"Lucy B. Johnston Collection," Woman Suffrage, 1903-1910, manuscript division, Kansas State Historical Society.

7. *Topeka Daily Commonwealth*, November 9, 1883.

2. Suffrage enrollment, Topeka, 1893.—"Woman Suffrage Collection," manuscript division, Kansas State Historical Society.

majority of them expressed a desire for it, not before. When only a small minority of the women in a community were willing to speak out, the local politicians pointed to the lack of apparent interest as proof of their contention that a majority of the women did not really want the right to vote and said that they did not believe in complying with the wishes of the minority to force something upon the majority which they did not want.

Women of Kansas were accused of being too apathetic to exercise the many civil rights granted to them by the state's constitution and legislature.⁸ Many men felt that the same thing could be said of the women's exercise of further political rights. Although suffrage workers in the later campaigns liked to refer to their step-by-step advance toward full suffrage, too often less than half of the qualified women in a community took the time to make use of even their limited suffrage.⁹ The opposition cited this as proof that only a few women wanted to vote. T. A. McNeal, a newspaper editor, in a speech to the suffrage association in Topeka in 1909, chided women for not working harder and told them it was the fault of women, not men, that women had not succeeded in this effort. Since only 40 people were in attendance at this meeting, his charge seemed substantiated.¹⁰ Sen. John J. Ingalls, refusing to commit himself on woman suffrage as a national issue in 1886, wrote, "In my judgment the principal obstacle to the cause which you represent will ultimately be found to exist rather in the indifference of women than in the hostility of men."¹¹ Lesser politicians were quick to use the ideas of the senator for their own purposes.

PROBLEMS OF TIMIDITY AND POOR PLANNING

AMONG those who were active workers there were also women who lost their nerve at the last minute. The suffrage associations had some difficulty in keeping a full slate of officers for this reason. The minutes of their meetings reveal how often it was necessary for



Samuel N. Wood (1825-1891), Free-State leader, outspoken editor, and railroad promoter, was also an advocate of woman suffrage in the first such campaign in Kansas in 1867. Elected corresponding secretary of the Kansas Impartial Suffrage Association at an organizational meeting that year, Wood championed the women's movement when it was unpopular with most men and some women.

the association to turn its attention to the election of officers to replace those who declined the honor or who had accepted the honor and then resigned, thus declining the responsibility it placed upon them. In one instance, out of four suffrage meetings held in 1868, the main business of three was the election of officers. On February 28 "Miss E. Morris was elected President for the unexpired term." On November 18 the president and vice-president refused to serve, Miss Morris was elected president pro tem, and D. H. Johnston was chosen for that office, but he refused to serve. The association voted again and elected Miss Morris. She apparently did not consider her office to be a great honor, since she was absent when the next meeting was held on November 27, and it again became necessary to choose a president pro tem.¹²

Many times this need to elect new officers arose because of the lack of planning before

8. Elizabeth Cady Stanton, et al, eds., *History of Woman Suffrage* (New York: Fowler and Wells, 1881), v. 1, p. 171.

9. Franklin G. Adams, correspondence regarding municipal suffrage, 1887, 1888.—"Woman Suffrage Collection."

10. Kansas Equal Suffrage Association, minutes of the convention, Topeka, December 10, 1909.—*Ibid.*

11. Sen. John J. Ingalls to L. A. Walker, December 18, 1886.—"Lucy B. Johnston Collection," *Woman Suffrage, 1886-1902.*

12. Woman Suffrage Association of Topeka, minutes for 1868.—"Woman Suffrage Collection."

the election. It was the usual practice to choose as officers women from the more prominent families in the city or community. This was an advantage if those in charge remembered to approach the prospective officer before the election to see if she would be interested in working with the organization. It could be disastrous if they failed to get her consent beforehand, because on occasion a woman had declined publicly, perhaps by way of the newspaper, and hurt the cause by denouncing woman suffrage and saying she would have no part of such a movement. Such public statements often hindered their organization because women who were social climbers and wished to be considered a part of the elite of the city were likely to follow the woman's example and refuse to have any part of the association or its work. Also, the politicians could point to her as a shining example of womanhood and say that she was a true lady who recognized the women's sphere of activities.

THE PROBLEM OF FINANCE

A MAJOR problem of the suffrage movement was that of financing. The most common methods of advertising the cause were not usually free: special suffrage meetings needed not only a speaker but also suffrage literature for distribution, newspaper items and special suffrage columns sometimes had to be paid for, and money was also needed to cover expenses of workers.

For the campaign of 1867, most of the money came from voluntary contributions from men as well as women along with small amounts supplied by the national suffrage association and the associations of the other states. Many speakers and other workers gave their time freely without any thought of reimbursement, but women without funds could not take an active part unless someone else paid their expenses. For most of them even a small contribution required a great deal of extra effort; for others it was impossible. A married woman usually had to have her husband's approval of the cause before she could make even a small donation, while a single woman was rarely in a financial position to give anything but her time. Therefore, women were forced to ask the group which had kept them from voting for money to be used for the purpose of securing

woman suffrage. Although many were undoubtedly aware of the irony of the situation, as one writer put it, "The big public is much like the Lord, who helps those who help themselves."¹³

Although much of the suffrage literature was printed by the national association and donated to the individual states, there was still the problem of distributing it over the state. Sometimes friendly congressmen used their franking privilege to distribute suffrage tracts containing quotations from famous people, excerpts from speeches, and articles written by suffrage workers.¹⁴ Editors friendly to the cause also helped by giving the women free printing as well as free space in their newspapers for advertising.¹⁵

For the first campaign, local suffrage associations looked to the state Impartial Suffrage Association for financial assistance to cover expenses of special speakers. It seemed to be impossible to get enough in a small community to keep the movement going. Numerous letters were written to state headquarters in Topeka inquiring if there was any money in the treasury. They had offers from speakers or writers to work for the cause, but these, unfortunately, expected to be paid for their services.¹⁶

Between campaigns, it was often difficult to keep alive an interest in woman suffrage, but the state association continued its work chiefly through literature sent over the state. Anna C. Wait of Lincoln believed that the inaction of women resulted not so much from apathy and indifference as from a lack of means and opportunity. She wrote, in 1885, that she knew of just one woman of leisure—one who did not have to make a personal sacrifice of some kind every time she paid a dollar into the treasury.¹⁷

In the minutes of suffrage meetings there was evidence that lack of money was felt even in Topeka, which had the strongest local suffrage association in the state. For example, at

13. Ida Husted Harper, ed., *History of Woman Suffrage* (New York: National American Woman Suffrage Association, 1922), v. 6, p. 197.

14. Stanton, *History of Woman Suffrage*, v. 2, p. 239.

15. Kansas Equal Suffrage Association, minutes of January 28, 1910.—"Woman Suffrage Collection."

16. George J. Martin to S. N. Wood, June 2, 1867; John W. Hutchinson to S. N. Wood, July 23, 1867; Susan B. Anthony to S. N. Wood, July 13, 1867.—*Ibid.* For an interesting evaluation of S. N. Wood's part in the suffrage movement, see Sr. Jeanne McKenna, "With the Help of God and Lucy Stone," *Kansas Historical Quarterly*, Topeka, v. 36, no. 1 (Spring, 1970), pp. 13-26.

17. Stanton, *History of Woman Suffrage*, v. 3, p. 704.

one meeting it was recorded that there was a gain of nine members to the organization, but only five paid their dues at the time.¹⁸ More proof of their problem was found in the records of a discussion centered around the search for a meeting place, limited by the available funds. It was reported that the "Music Hall could be secured for \$5.00," but that was considered to be too much. "A committee was appointed to secure [the] G.A.R. Hall or some other suitable place . . . provided the expense does not exceed 2 dollars."¹⁹ In the minutes for the next meeting was the information that the treasury then contained \$3.25 and that the Lincoln Post hall had been rented for \$2.00 and perhaps could be obtained cheaper for subsequent meetings.²⁰

The Lincoln Suffrage Association was quite active in money-raising activities to cover not only its own expenses but also to donate to the state organization. In 1885 they held a fair for the benefit of the state association.²¹ In 1892 the Kansas Equal Suffrage Association, perhaps following the earlier example, held a three-day fair in Topeka. Women were urged by the president of the association to bring not only fancy work but any other article that would prove that voting in municipal elections had not unsexed them and that they could do those substantial things considered a part of the proper occupation of the woman.²²

The campaign of 1894 was not as difficult to finance as that of 1867, partly because the suffrage workers were better organized and had learned from experience. Also, there were more women in a position to give financial aid to the cause. The few who had entered the various professions were now able to make donations. In addition, there were more who held property in their own names who did not have to ask a husband, father, or brother for money. Even so, the problem of financing the movement was not an easy one to solve, and in 1894 Laura Johns attended the National Suffrage Convention in Washington and made an ap-

peal for assistance in the way of speakers and funds, both of which were promised.²³

In the years between the campaigns of 1894 and 1912, women of the state showed further ingenuity. Helen Kimber, president of the state association in 1900, was successful in obtaining donations for the national bazaar including two sizable contributions, a carload of flour from the Kansas Millers' Association and 200 pounds of butter from the Continental Creamery Company of Topeka.²⁴ When she could not obtain funds for the organization from others, she advanced her own money. Laura Johns made a specific reference to this in a letter written in 1903, adding that she had advanced hundreds of dollars, but she was more able to do so because she had a husband to back her. However, in her opinion, this was not the proper basis for the finances, because it was not fair for the few to sacrifice "to help women to get into the kingdom who are too lazy or too selfish, or both, to help themselves."²⁵

A common method of obtaining funds was taking collections at suffrage meetings. A lecturer from Chicago gave Kansas women a valuable tip on how to get a crowd for such a meeting. She warned them not to advertise it as a suffrage rally, but as something else. Since everyone was interested in traveling, she advised them to announce that she would lecture on the Grand Canyon, one of her best lectures. At the close, before the audience had a chance to realize that the lecture was over, she would say that she had been requested to give her views on suffrage. She would then give a brief suffrage talk, followed by the leading local suffrage speakers and perhaps the taking up of a collection for the cause.²⁶ In this, too, women learned by experience and became quite sly at keeping the tin cups concealed until just the right moment for their use. The value of their strategy was shown in the sizable collections they sometimes made after a particularly good speaker had concluded her remarks.²⁷

In the final campaign, there was a wide variety of ways of financing the cause. As enter-

18. Kansas Equal Suffrage Association, Topeka Auxiliary, minutes for March 5 [1891].—"Woman Suffrage Collection."

19. *Ibid.*, February 2, 23 [1891].

20. *Ibid.*, February 26 [1891].

21. Stanton, *History of Woman Suffrage*, v. 3, p. 708.

22. Lakin *Index*, July 30, 1892; Mrs. S. A. Thurston to the Kansas Equal Suffrage Association Fair board of directors, Topeka, February 2, 1892.—"Woman Suffrage Collection."

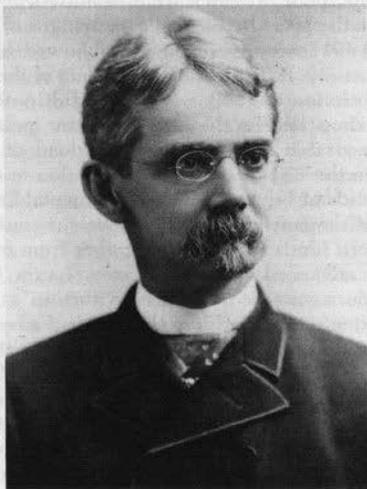
23. Susan B. Anthony and Ida Husted Harper, eds., *History of Woman Suffrage* (Rochester, N.Y.: Susan B. Anthony, 1902), v. 4, p. 644.

24. Mrs. W. A. Johnston, "History of Woman Suffrage," p. 1.—"Woman Suffrage Collection."

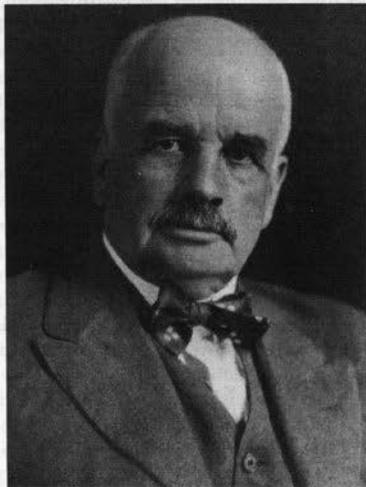
25. Laura M. Johns to friend, December 28, 1903.—"Lucy B. Johnston Collection," Woman Suffrage, 1903-1910.

26. Anna Delony Martin to Lucy B. Johnston, June 28, 1912.—*Ibid.*, June 15-30, 1912.

27. Johnston, "History of Woman Suffrage," p. 1.



John J. Ingalls
(1833-1900)



T. A. McNeal
(1853-1942)

The indifference and apathy of many women was a major handicap to the woman suffrage movement. Sen. John J. Ingalls, refusing to commit himself on the issue in 1886, wrote that the major obstacle to the cause was not so much the hostility of men as the indifference of women. T. A. McNeal, a newspaper editor, in a speech to the suffrage association in Topeka in 1909, chided women for not working harder for their right to vote.

tainment for which they could charge admission, women presented theatrical performances and minstrel shows, popular at that time. The best-received suffrage play was entitled "How the Vote Was Won," which was presented in numerous communities. Films on woman suffrage were also available for use throughout the state. The film "Votes for Women" could be secured from the Western Film Exchange in Kansas City, Mo.²⁸

As proof of their womanliness, women not only held bazaars, food sales, and fancy goods sales, but also arranged booths and furnished meals for such gatherings as fairs and picnics. Those who were from the upper economic groups sometimes justified their contributions by doing their own housework, thus saving servants' hire. The less affluent made money by

making dresses or putting up fruit for their neighbors and themselves. Others reported that they were gardening and selling the vegetables to themselves at market price for home use.²⁹ They undoubtedly had their husbands' permission for such activities.

Combining profit with advertising, postal cards of Kansas scenes and of people as well as suffrage balloons and pennants were sold. To cut down on the cost of speakers, the officers of the Kansas Equal Suffrage Association asked public speakers for other associations to put in a good word for woman suffrage.³⁰ If a speaker could be persuaded to do this small favor, it meant free advertising for the suffragists, as well as making it possible to keep the subject alive to a wider audience. Women sometimes

29. Kansas City (Mo.) *Star*, September 1, 1912.

30. Kansas Equal Suffrage Association, minutes of the second executive board, July 10 and 11, 1911.—"Lucy B. Johnston Collection," *Woman Suffrage, 1907-1919*.

28. Woman Equal Suffrage Association, Topeka, headquarters bulletins, 1912.—*Ibid.*

took advantage of their position on a particular program. For example, Anna C. Wait and three other women of Lincoln secured permission to take part in the celebration of July 4, 1880. Mrs. Wait was to read the Declaration of Independence, and in her own words "embraced the opportunity of interspersing a few remarks not found in that honored document, to the delight of our friends and the disgust of our foes."³¹

Because of a wider variety of money-raising projects used, the campaign of 1912 was more easily financed than earlier attempts had been. By this time, many women were substantial property holders as a result of favorable property rights granted to them. Also, more unmarried women were able to make contributions because they were now self-supporting as a result of new laws and attitudes which permitted them to enter various fields of work. The fact that they were permitted to work with men but were paid less also served as an incentive for laboring women to donate to the cause with the hope that they could change the unfair wage situation by use of the ballot.³² Because of their better financial position, suffrage associations were able to pay speakers to spend all their time traveling over the state in behalf of the cause. In addition, they paid a full-time secretary, headquartered in Topeka.

Private contributions were sometimes secured by using flattery and playing on a woman's desire for social prestige. It was fortunate for the cause that Gov. W. R. Stubbs' wife favored the movement, since some wealthy women became suffragists because they were influenced by those in a high position. A woman from Harper wrote about a woman in her community who owned 20 quarters of wheat land. She thought they might be able to "put the bite on her."³³ Another suffrage worker wrote of a woman in Anthony who had pledged 50 cents per month. This was to be only the beginning for her, and Lucy Johnston was advised to try a letter from Mrs. Stubbs to secure a more generous donation. It was suggested that they "pat her on the shoulder and ask her for \$200."³⁴

31. Stanton, *History of Woman Suffrage*, v. 3, p. 701.

32. Inez Haynes Irwin, *Angels and Amazons* (New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co., 1933), p. 250.

33. Maggie Neff to Lucy B. Johnston, July 29, 1912.—"Lucy B. Johnston Collection," *Woman Suffrage*, July 17-31, 1912.

34. Helen B. Owens to Lucy B. Johnston, November 24, 1911.—*Ibid.*, November, 1911.

LACK OF TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES

THE DIFFICULTIES of transportation were closely related to the problems of finance, particularly in the last campaign. In both 1867 and 1894, the horse and buggy and the railroad were the chief means of transportation. Some of the suffrage leaders from the East even persuaded railroad companies to give them free passes. The fact that most railroads ran east and west necessitated the securing of some other conveyance for transportation north and south between railroads. When speakers were sent to help, some leaders of the community were asked to convey them from place to place for their engagements. In some instances, headquarters at Topeka were informed that the only type of transportation available was an open, plain spring wagon.

Transportation difficulties were made even worse by poor planning on the part of those in charge of the campaign, evidenced in their scheduling of meetings for a speaker at points too far apart to be reached by the appointed time, so some engagements had to be omitted, leading to disappointment of assembled crowds and sometimes, even, as a result, a loss of interest in the movement.³⁵ Some of these errors in scheduling may have occurred because those planning a tour were in the eastern part of the state and did not realize the difficulties of transportation in the western part, where roads were many times nothing more than trails.

The campaign of 1911-1912 showed a marked change for the better. The automobile was now in use; and the problem, instead of being one concerning the meeting of a schedule, was one of securing the support of those who owned the automobiles. This was sometimes solved by persuading a dealer to lend an automobile for a county tour. Obliging dealers obviously felt that it was good advertising for business since it was impossible to miss the suffrage group as it arrived in a car decorated with signs, bunting, and flags.³⁶

Some state officials, such as Governor Stubbs, donated the use of their automobiles because their wives were interested in the suffrage movement.³⁷ Auto tours were arranged

35. Charles Robinson to S. N. Wood, April 15, 1867.—"Woman Suffrage Collection."

36. Magdalen B. Munson to Lucy B. Johnston.—"Lucy B. Johnston Collection," *Woman Suffrage*, undated, 1911.

37. Topeka *Daily Capital*, September 9, 1912.

Woman Suffrage - Neither a Risk nor an Experiment, but
a Necessity in a Progressive Civilization Based upon
the Moral Principles of Christianity.

..Kansas..
Equal Suffrage Association

Miss RUTH K. WELCH, Clerk
222 W. 10th St., Topeka.

Aug. 24, 1908.

OFFICERS:
PRESIDENT
L. LILLA DAY MONROE, Topeka
VICE-PRESIDENT
I. J. D. McFARLAND, Topeka
SECOND VICE-PRESIDENT
& ROXANA E. RICK, Lawrence
SECRETARY
& E. E. ROBINSON, Topeka
TREASURER
& HELEN H. EACSON, Delphos
AUDITORS
& LORI HAYDEN, Topeka
& DEBORAH E. LOANMOSE, Topeka

DISTRICT PRESIDENT
First Mrs. A. J. HORTON, Topeka
Second Mrs. E. A. EVANS, Kansas City
Third Mrs. HELEN KIMBER, Sharon Spg
Fourth Mrs. J. JAY BOON, Emporia
Fifth Mrs. LAURA M. JOHNS, Salina
Sixth Mrs. C. W. SMITH, Sheldahl
Seventh Mrs. MARGARET NEW, Harper
Eighth Mrs. MARION E. GANNETT,
Wichita

Miss Zu Adams,
Topeka, Kans.

Dear Friend:

Enclosed find ten pledges, of which we are sending a number to friends in every county in Kansas, hoping thereby to receive money enough to conduct an extensive campaign.

Will you take charge of the campaign fund in Topeka? Both men and women should be solicited for contributions. When a party subscribes he will write his name and the amount of his subscription on one of the pledges. He may return this to you with his contribution. Then you can forward the amount which you collect.

What we want is a wide interest. If a woman can give only ten cents send us her name and contribution, as her name is a great big part of our assets. We wish to secure the support of every one interested throughout the state, thereby creating a general enthusiasm which will have its weight and influence when the Suffrage bill is introduced at the coming session.

The campaign will be extensive and the expense heavy. Besides being necessary to have clerks who can keep the records, get committees together over the telephone, send out telegrams, and do all of that kind of work pertaining to an active campaign, there will be a heavy correspondence and many other expenses.

We believe that as the Square Dealers will now be in control we may be able to get recognition, and that the Governor should recommend presidential suffrage in his message to the Legislature.

Will you not try to come to our State Convention this fall? We hear from you at an early date and let me know if you will be able to help. We want your help and hope you will be able to interest and gain the support of Topeka.

Very truly yours,

Lilla Day Monroe



Lilla Day Monroe
(1858-1929)

Another major problem for the suffrage movement was that of financing. Lilla Day Monroe, president of the Kansas Equal Suffrage Association, wrote this letter in 1908 asking Zu Adams to take charge of the campaign fund in Topeka. District presidents listed on the letterhead include Helen Kimber, Sharon Springs, who obtained sizable donations and gave her own money, and Laura M. Johns, Salina, who also advanced money and said she could do it because she had a husband to back her.

in many cities and counties. In Hays, a house-to-house canvass was conducted in automobiles decorated with balloons. The driver stopped in front of a house, tooted the horn, and when the occupants came out to see what was going on, suffrage workers handed out their literature.³⁸ Mrs. H. P. Pomeroy planned an auto tour every Saturday to different towns in Phillips county. About 15 decorated autos were in line at these outdoor meetings at which Rev. H. M. Hunter of Phillipsburg was speaker.³⁹ In the eastern part of the state, a car decorated with balloons went from Topeka to Kansas City, stopping at every house so that literature could be handed out. In addition, a suffrage flyer and a copy of a pro-suffrage congressional speech were placed in each mail box between Lawrence and Topeka.⁴⁰

A proposed whirlwind tour of a special boosters' train to take place in October of 1912⁴¹ failed to materialize, probably because of lack of money,⁴² and another attempt to get aid from railroads for the campaign met with no success. A Chicago woman went to the Santa Fe railroad office where she "was greeted by a very gracious gentleman who listened politely to what I had to say, but assured me it was out of the question to expect either transportation or other aid from the Co. Such arrangements are a thing of the past."⁴³

Some women were willing to use any means of transportation to carry on their work. Helen B. Owens, one of the most tireless workers of the movement, went by freight from Greensburg to Liberal.⁴⁴ But many of the workers of the last campaign were either more particular or made of less sturdy stuff than their predecessors who had undergone the hardships of the early campaign, considering themselves lucky if horse and buggy were available.

38. Woman Equal Suffrage Association, headquarters bulletin, July 29, 1912.—"Lucy B. Johnston Collection," Woman Suffrage.

39. *Ibid.*, September 9, 1912.

40. Mrs. P. M. Clark to coworkers, 1912.—*Ibid.*, 1912-1913, undated. For a chronological account of the final campaign, see Martha B. Caldwell, "The Woman Suffrage Campaign of 1912," *Kansas Historical Quarterly*, Topeka, v. 12, no. 3 (August, 1943), pp. 300-318.

41. Mildred Peck to Lucy B. Johnston, May 31, 1912.—"Lucy B. Johnston Collection," Woman Suffrage, May, 1912.

42. Mary E. Haines to Lucy B. Johnston, August 13, 1912.—*Ibid.*, August 1-13, 1912.

43. Anna Delony Martin to Lucy B. Johnston, July 12, 1912.—*Ibid.*, July 1-16, 1912.

44. Helen B. Owens to Lucy B. Johnston, December 1, 1911.—*Ibid.*, December, 1912.

DISAGREEMENTS AMONG LEADERS CONCERNING TACTICS

THERE WERE sometimes serious disagreements among leaders of the suffrage movement, both men and women, concerning tactics and methods of campaigning. Some arguments were results of personal jealousies while others were basic differences of opinion. Both were poor advertising for the movement.

There were also rivalries among women's clubs as to their chief objectives. Even on the national level, the suffrage forces were split. To remedy this situation, at the National Council of Women in 1887, it was suggested that an international association of women's clubs be formed under the auspices of the suffragists. Nothing came of the suggestion since many women in cultural clubs were not interested in the right to vote. As the suffragists saw it, these women were interested only in their own leadership in their own clubs. Gradually the clubs with a definite purpose outnumbered the merely cultural ones, probably because by then most young women had gone to high school, some to college, and they wanted to take part in affairs of the nation rather than just study about them.⁴⁵

During the campaign of 1894, some of the leading suffrage workers were accused of working in the interests of the Republican party, while others worked openly for the Populist party. Laura Johns, president of the Equal Suffrage Association and also president of the Woman's Republican Club of Kansas, was accused of entering into an agreement with the Republican politicians whereby the prohibition question was not to be mentioned in the suffrage campaign throughout the state. Mrs. Johns supposedly would keep prohibition speakers off the suffrage platform as her part of the bargain. Some critics went so far as to accuse Mrs. Johns of spending suffrage money in the interest of the Republican party, but this was probably untrue, since Annie L. Diggs, a staunch Populist, came to her defense and denied the truth of such a claim.⁴⁶

Following the defeat of the suffrage amendment in 1894, women seemed to concentrate on quarrels over leadership in the state organiza-

45. Irwin, *Angels and Amazons*, pp. 229-235.

46. *Ottawa Journal & Triumph* (Topeka edition), September 20, 1894.

tion and the meeting places of suffrage conventions. Much of the criticism of Mrs. Johns had come from Topeka. Therefore, when it was time for the annual meeting in 1894, she used her influence to prevent the meeting's being held there. Her stated objection to Topeka as a meeting place was the friction and squabbling among Topeka women. She was very outspoken in the criticism of her opponents, going so far as to say that she really thought that Dr. Eva Harding was not well-balanced or even quite sane! Mrs. Johns had heard that the Topeka women planned to put Mrs. [Mary E.?] Lease in as state president. She swore she did not want to be president, but said she would accept the office rather than see Mrs. Lease take over.⁴⁷

The following year, Mrs. Johns again expressed the wish to retire from the presidency, but again she feared that the wrong woman would succeed her. The woman being considered for the position was a Populist who had proposed that the state suffrage association pledge its support to the People's party for two years in exchange for their pledge to enfranchise women. Naturally, Mrs. Johns, a faithful Republican, objected to such a proposal.⁴⁸

In preparing for the final campaign, suffrage leaders looked back to the earlier attempts to try to discover the mistakes made, hoping to avoid them. Since some men had voiced an objection to out-of-state speakers, Kansas women were determined to run things themselves. They had encouragement for this plan from women in Western states who had gained suffrage. Laura Johns, who had moved to California, warned against letting the national association dominate the campaign, because she felt that was what had defeated the Kansas forces in 1894.⁴⁹ The same advice came from a Washington woman who gave her formula for winning. She said that the Washington association had withdrawn from the national, had none of their lecturers, none of their organizers, and only literature they could not get from the states that had already won. Their idea was to take advice from the states where women voted, believing that women who had waged a successful battle knew more of effectual methods than those who had never won a victory. She emphasized the fact that women

had been far more successful in the West than in the East in the matter of equal suffrage.⁵⁰

The women of Kansas followed the Washington advice, withdrawing from the national association and asking national headquarters not to send any workers unless they were requested. One of the Kansas leaders wrote at great length to Anna Shaw, national president, explaining why Kansas wanted only outside speakers of its own choosing. She had heard some men say that they objected to having help brought in from outside to coerce them into giving women the ballot. She also pointed out that speakers from other states had no way of knowing local political conditions and often offended the men whose support they needed. She said that such an incident had just occurred and requested that the woman be recalled from Kansas.⁵¹ In later reference to this letter, Anna Shaw stated that the national association had no intention of interfering with the Kansas work and that its leaders had not begun making suggestions until they were asked for.⁵² She expressed her willingness to overlook the letter as a part of the antagonistic forces and the work of unprincipled people, urging the Kansas workers to call upon the national association for any help they needed.⁵³

In her letters she warned that if Kansas failed to accept the amendment, it would be the fault of the Kansas women themselves and a blow to suffrage over the whole United States. She made the gloomy prophecy that "It looks very much as if Kansas is going to act as South Dakota did, spend the first year in quarrelling for the glory and the last year in finding there was no glory to quarrel over."⁵⁴ She felt that if, after having granted municipal suffrage in 1887 the men of Kansas now voted down full suffrage, it would be a national calamity and a reflection upon Kansas women. In her opinion, if Kansas women were not willing to forget their differences and work for the measure in a wholehearted way, they should not have persuaded the legislature to pass the measure.⁵⁵

The squabble among workers of the movement was not confined to the state, but reached

47. Laura M. Johns to Lucy B. Johnston, November 11, 1894.—"Lucy B. Johnston Collection," *Woman Suffrage, 1886-1902*.

48. *Ibid.*, July 21, 1895.

49. *Ibid.*, October 13, 1911.

50. Berthe Knatvold Kittilsen to Lucy B. Johnston, May 16, 1911.—*Ibid.*, January-May, 1911.

51. Lilla Day Monroe to Anna H. Shaw, February 25, 1911.—*Ibid.*

52. Anna H. Shaw to Lucy B. Johnston, March 8, 1911.—*Ibid.*

53. *Ibid.*, March 21, 1911.

54. *Ibid.*, March 25, 1911.

55. *Ibid.*, April 20, 1911.

to the national association as well. Helen Kimber, one of the Kansas delegates to the national convention in 1900, wrote of disagreements among national leaders:

I am glad Mrs. Johns did not come. This will surprise you. Yes, but the truth is Miss Anthony, Mrs. Avery and Miss Shaw are fighting Mrs. Catt just as they fought Mrs. Johns and they are still fighting me because of what I said in '94. If you hear of the East and the West knocking at each other's heads you just know that I have taken all I can or will take. Lucy Anthony, Anna Shaw's private Sec'y, it seems is only waiting to annihilate me. Well, there will be a grease spot when she is through. I shall be on my good behavior for Kansas' sake and for Mrs. Catt but let me get some of those women off and I'll quietly and deliberately tell them the whole truth. I'll even tell them that D. R. Anthony said in my presence, "Susan you're a damn fool—go home, etc."

This fight makes me want to be President of Kan's E.S.A. If I once get into that National Executive Committee I bet you I'll sit on Anna Shaw until she won't want to be reelected. . . . Lucy Anthony, Mrs. Avery and Mrs. H. T. Upton also Mrs. Ida Husted Harper are laying for me. You watch in the paper for four bloody nosed women!!! I am in this fight to stay. . . .⁵⁶

The women also disagreed on methods of publicity. Some favored more newspaper advertising as the chief means of keeping the

question before the men. One woman in this group made slighting remarks about the ineffectiveness of "pink teas."⁵⁷ Others made wide use of suffrage teas to which they invited the women of prestige, calling for them in carriages and returning them to their homes after the meeting. In their opinion, this was the best way to keep the question before the people in a position to help the movement.⁵⁸ In many communities, women attempted to secure at least one day of the chautauqua for the suffrage cause. On occasion they were given permission to send speakers but were not permitted to charge admission.⁵⁹ This method of advertising was sometimes a failure if the purpose was announced ahead of time: in fact, workers were warned that to advertise a suffrage day was a good way to keep people away from the chautauqua.⁶⁰

With all of its internal disagreements and bickering among the workers, the suffrage movement was no different from other reform

57. Catharine A. Hoffman to Lucy B. Johnston, October 31, 1911.—*Ibid.*, October, 1911.

58. Mattie E. Kimball to Lucy B. Johnston, June 21, 1911.—*Ibid.*, June-July, 1911.

59. J. S. White to Catharine A. Hoffman, June 20, 1911.—*Ibid.*

60. Mamie Bardwell to Lucy B. Johnston, June 3, 1912.—*Ibid.*, June 1-14, 1912.

56. Helen Kimber to Lucy B. Johnston, November 27, 1900.—"Lucy B. Johnston Collection," Woman Suffrage, 1886-1902.



In the campaigns of 1867 and 1894 transportation problems hindered the woman suffrage cause. But by 1911-1912 automobiles were in use and women sought the support of those who owned them. Some state officials, such as Gov. Walter Stubbs, donated the use of their automobiles because their wives were interested in the campaign. Pictured here are women who made a suffrage tour in his car in 1912. They are, left to right: Laura Clay, Lexington, Ky., president of the Kentucky Equal Rights Association; and four officers of the Kansas Equal Suffrage Association, Lucy B. Johnston, president; Sarah A. Thurston, treasurer; Helen Eacker, secretary; and Stella H. Stubbs, vice-president.

movements. In any undertaking of that size, it was inevitable that, although the workers agreed on their ultimate objective, they did not always agree on how to achieve their goal.

WORKERS WHO HINDERED THE CAUSE

AS IN ANY great movement, there were people who were often more of a hindrance than a help. Such people could be divided into three categories: those who took part for selfish reasons, those who were well-meaning but not responsible, and those who belonged to the "lunatic fringe." With some, it was difficult to decide into what category they should be placed.

Men sometimes took part because they hoped to make a profit for themselves. A newspaper editor from Ottawa asked the suffrage organization for money because he was in financial difficulty. He was careful to remind them that his paper had been a staunch advocate of woman suffrage since it had been started 11 years before. Although he assured them that it would continue to support them, there was a possibility that he would not be able to without their help.⁶¹

Although most of the women workers gave their time freely, there were also women who attached themselves to the movement for their own gains. The secretary of the National Women's Trade Union League of America wrote that she could provide a lecturer to speak on the subject of the working women in America. The charge was \$25 for each lecture, which obviously provided for more than expenses.⁶²

In the opinion of some of the Kansas suffragists, insufficient checking sometimes resulted in placing in positions of leadership women who hurt their cause. Complaining about the choice for district president, a critic from Pittsburg wrote that the woman, Mrs. M. B. Munson, was an egoist who had no diplomacy or common sense, and was as unpopular with men as she was with women. According to the report, merchants complained of her threatening them if they did not contribute, and others wondered how their women could

be expected to follow the lead of a woman who had so much trouble with her own husband.⁶³

The field secretary of the Pennsylvania Woman Suffrage Association warned the Kansas association against Anna Laskey, who was supposed to come to help. She stated that if they needed someone to do petition work, Mrs. Laskey would be all right, but she would not do for any other work, because "she is illiterate, tactless and tremendously ambitious" and needed constant watching, since she had been a loan shark in Oklahoma City.⁶⁴

Even more damaging to the cause they purported to help were those people like George Francis Train, who belonged to the lunatic fringe. Notorious for his clowning, his attacks on the Republican party, and the constant use of his own name, Train was a Democrat, campaigning for the Presidency in 1867. One newspaper reported that he "occasionally touched upon the question of female suffrage, just enough to convince Miss Anthony that he had not forgotten the subject."⁶⁵

LINKING WOMAN SUFFRAGE WITH OTHER CAUSES

DURING their long struggle, the suffragists also unwittingly delayed the achievement of their goal by linking their interests with other unpopular reforms, such as Negro suffrage and prohibition.

In the first campaign for the woman suffrage amendment to the state constitution there was also an amendment proposed to enfranchise the Negro. This amendment was looked upon by some Republicans as the natural result of the Civil War, and although they could see the need of extending equal political rights regardless of race, they could not see any reason for extending those rights to the opposite sex. Men who favored both woman suffrage and Negro suffrage also objected to the linking of the two reforms.

The fact that the suffrage workers did not agree even among themselves to work wholeheartedly for both proposals tended to weaken

63. Elizabeth Callen to Lucy B. Johnston, December 4, 1912.—*Ibid.*, December, 1912.

64. Ida Porter-Boyer to Lucy B. Johnston, September 17, 1912.—*Ibid.*, September 1-19, 1912.

65. "Opinions of the Press," in George Francis Train, *Championship of Women. The Revolution* (Leavenworth: Prescott & Hume, 1867), p. 25. "Woman Suffrage Pamphlets," v. 1, library, Kansas State Historical Society.

61. V. C. Robb to Lucy B. Johnston, December 21, 1911.—*Ibid.*, December, 1911.

62. S. M. Franklin to Helen N. Eacker, September 23, 1912.—*Ibid.*, September 20-30, 1912.

the movement since both were being considered at once by the voters. The attempt to get the two proposed changes in the constitution adopted in the same election ended in total defeat. The final vote was a total of 10,483 for Negro suffrage, 19,421 against, and 9,070 for woman suffrage, 19,857 against, which did not prove that one cause hurt the other.⁶⁶ But the results were humiliating to the women who had worked so hard for their cause while Negroes had done very little to gain the suffrage.⁶⁷

The Kansas W.C.T.U., one of the first women's organizations in the state, both helped and hindered the suffrage cause. In the first place, it served as a training school in the methods of organizing and working for a definite purpose. Also, many of the women who were members of temperance clubs were also members of suffrage organizations, making it possible for them to work for both reforms in two different capacities. It was easily recognized that women could do more to control the use of alcoholic beverages if they had the right to vote. As early as 1859, the territorial legislature passed a dram shop law which, if enforced, gave the women some control over drinking husbands. It also showed that Kansas had some temperance followers in the law-making body. Section 6 of the law stated:

. . . it shall be unlawful for any person or persons, by agent or otherwise, to sell intoxicating liquors to persons intoxicated or who are in the habit of getting intoxicated, or any married man, against the known wishes of his wife.⁶⁸

In 1867 the state legislature passed a temperance law which should have given women even more control over the sale of liquor, requiring dealers to get the signature of one half of the women, as well as the men, to their petitions before the authorities could grant them licenses.⁶⁹ Such laws undoubtedly were the reason for the liquor interests' opposition to woman suffrage.

As early as 1884, the W.C.T.U. of Kansas had adopted a strong suffrage resolution.⁷⁰ Therefore, it was not surprising that they cooperated with the suffrage association during the 1886

campaign for the municipal suffrage law.⁷¹ At Susan B. Anthony's request, they temporarily gave up their plan of asking for an amendment, hoping to secure the same results with the right to vote in city elections.⁷² Later, a bill was proposed in the legislature to take away the right, but it was not reported from the committee, possibly because so many letters of protest had been written by women, a great many of whom were members of the state W.C.T.U.⁷³ It would certainly have been a blow to the suffrage movement if women had lost a part of what they had gained at that point.

At their convention in 1910, the W.C.T.U. voted to make equal suffrage the principal work of the entire organization until it should be won in Kansas.⁷⁴ But during the campaign of 1911-1912, some members of the temperance organization felt that they should not be too prominent in suffrage work, possibly thinking that it would detract from their own cause.⁷⁵ It had been suggested that the Kansas Equal Suffrage Association and the Kansas W.C.T.U. be joined for the campaign, but some who were members of both organizations felt that they should remain separate, since the W.C.T.U. had a suffrage department of its own.⁷⁶ Even though the W.C.T.U. remained apart from the suffrage organization, it cooperated in the sending of over 100 petitions with a total of 25,000 names to the legislature in 1911.⁷⁷

The chief disadvantage to the cooperation of the W.C.T.U. was the opposition it brought from the liquor interests. Liquor dealers and their customers could see the handwriting on the wall, taking it for granted that many women who voted would be against them. The liquor interests, therefore, apparently placed large sums of money at the disposal of the antisuffrage workers. For example, it was claimed that the National Brewers Association

71. Anthony and Harper, *History of Woman Suffrage*, v. 4, p. 639.

72. *Ibid.*, p. 649.

73. Etta W. Gilmore to Sen. John Chaney, January 24, 1901.—"Woman Suffrage Collection."

74. Frank W. Blackmar, ed., *Kansas: A Cyclopaedia of State History, Embracing Events, Institutions, Industries, Counties, Cities, Towns, Prominent Persons, Etc.* (Chicago: Standard Publishing Co., 1912), v. 2, p. 930.

75. Helen Eacker to Lucy B. Johnston, September 7, 1911.—"Lucy B. Johnston Collection," Woman Suffrage, August-September, 1911.

76. Minnie J. Grinstead to Lucy B. Johnston, September 11, 1911.—*Ibid.*

77. Blackmar, *Kansas: A Cyclopaedia of State History*, v. 2, p. 928.

66. D. W. Wilder, *Annals of Kansas, 1541-1885* (Topeka: Kansas Publishing House, 1886), p. 463.

67. Mrs. W. A. Johnston, "Kansas Woman Suffrage Movement," pp. 5-6.—"Woman Suffrage Collection."

68. William E. Connelley, *History of Kansas: State and People* (Chicago: American Historical Society, 1928), v. 2, p. 684.

69. Stanton, *History of Woman Suffrage*, v. 2, p. 231.

70. *Ibid.*, v. 3, p. 702.

Serious disagreements among leaders of the suffrage movement were results of both personal jealousies and basic differences in opinion. Laura Johns (1849- ?), president of the Equal Suffrage Association during the 1894 campaign, was also president of the Woman's Republican Club of Kansas and was accused of using suffrage money in the interest of the Republican party. She, in turn, was outspoken in her criticism of other women active in the movement.



Since some men had voiced objections to out-of-state speakers in earlier campaigns, leaders of the women's movement in Kansas did not want the National American Woman Suffrage Association to dominate the 1912 effort. Anna Howard Shaw (1849-1919), president of the national organization, warned that if Kansas failed to accept the amendment, it would be the fault of the Kansas women themselves and a blow to suffrage over the whole United States.

On several occasions suffrage workers injured their cause by political squabbles. At a July 4 celebration in 1893 Annie L. Diggs (1853-1916), staunch Populist, made a political speech which aroused resentment among Republican suffragists. After Kansas went strongly Republican in the election of 1900, Mrs. Diggs resigned as president of the state suffrage association since she did not wish to be responsible for opposition to the cause.



had appropriated \$1,000,000 for an antisuffrage campaign in Kansas. The woman who reported this felt sure that some of it was being used to subsidize newspapers in Crawford county. She felt that the W.C.T.U. could do little to help the cause of suffrage in Crawford and Cherokee counties, because they were antitemperance in belief as a result of the majority of foreign voters. Her advice was to keep out temperance speakers for fear they would hurt the cause in that section of the state.⁷⁸

From other sections of the state came reports that the liquor interests were at work. Ella Wilson reported that the opposition was well supplied with funds from some outside source, since she knew that the men involved could not put up any great amount of money individually.⁷⁹

In the last month of the campaign of 1911-1912, the Kansas women were warned that the state would be flooded with antisuffrage literature during the last days before the election. It was reportedly to be sent out by the liquor interests under the misleading titles of the Merchants' and Manufacturers' League, State Business Men's League, and Progressive Protective League, to name a few. In an attempt to counteract the effect of this literature, the suffrage association requested the cooperation of the newspapers of the state in printing a letter exposing the scheme.⁸⁰

In a report on the successful campaign of 1911-1912, Lucy Johnston stated that one thing that entered more largely than any other into the success was the fact that Kansas had been a prohibition state for 32 years. In her opinion, having no saloons, the liquor interests were deprived of centers where they could congregate their forces for action. Although they didn't give up at this, the men and women of Kansas, having had so many years' experience in keeping the hirelings of the brewers and distillers out of the state, knew how to meet them and circumvent their activities.⁸¹

But it was impossible to determine whether the cooperation of the W.C.T.U. did more to

help or to hinder the cause of woman suffrage. Its help came chiefly in the form of keeping the subject before the public, while it possibly hindered in some areas by aligning all those opposed to temperance against the cause.

WOMAN SUFFRAGE AS A POLITICAL ISSUE

THE ATTEMPT on the part of some suffragists to make woman suffrage a political issue also proved to be a mistake. Major political parties usually tried to avoid getting involved with unpopular causes, for their own protection. Thus, the Republicans in Kansas refused to give full support to the woman suffrage movement from the beginning. They adopted Negro suffrage as a party issue in the campaign of 1867 as being simply related to the reconstruction program after the Civil War. But women could not get the same endorsement for their cause. Although the amendment had been proposed by a Republican legislature, as the election drew near, political leaders who had been relied upon as friends of the cause were silent; others were active in their opposition.⁸² In fact, the enemies of Impartial Suffrage accused the men and women in the movement of trying to split the Republican party.⁸³

In 1874 the Prohibition party came out in favor of woman suffrage, but it gave the cause little help to have the support of a minor party of the state.⁸⁴

The Democratic party was the first in Kansas to nominate a woman for a state office, when they selected Sarah A. Brown of Douglas county as their candidate for superintendent of public instruction in 1880.⁸⁵ Unfortunately, Miss Brown was defeated more resoundingly than the rest of the regular Democratic ticket,⁸⁶ which did not do anything to encourage the party to put forth women candidates in the future.

In the state conventions of 1882, the Green-

82. Stanton, *History of Woman Suffrage*, v. 2, p. 259.

83. W. H. McClure to S. N. Wood, June 21, 1867.—"Woman Suffrage Collection." For a careful analysis of the political aspects of the campaigns of 1867, see Ellen Carol DuBois, *Feminism and Suffrage: The Emergence of an Independent Women's Movement in America, 1848-1869* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1978), pp. 79-104.

84. Blackmar, *Kansas: A Cyclopaedia of State History*, v. 2, p. 927.

85. Stanton, *History of Woman Suffrage*, v. 3, p. 705.

86. *Ibid.*

78. Magdalen B. Munson to Lucy B. Johnston [1911].—"Lucy B. Johnston Collection," *Woman Suffrage*, undated, 1911.

79. Ella Wilson to Lucy B. Johnston, September 26, 1911.—*Ibid.*, August-September, 1911.

80. Lucy B. Johnston to newspaper editors, October 26, 1912.—*Ibid.*, October 16-31, 1912.

81. Lucy B. Johnston, "Report of Kansas Campaign for Political Liberty, 1911-1912," November 21, 1912.—*Ibid.*, 1893-1922 addresses.

back party supported woman suffrage by stating,

We are opposed to all monopolies, and in favor of equal rights, equal burdens, equal taxation, and equal benefits for all, with special privileges to none; and we hold that it is the best government wherein an injury to one is the concern of all.⁸⁷

The Republican party hedged, saying it was "resolved to ask the next legislature to submit an amendment to the constitution in favor of woman suffrage."⁸⁸ The Democrats flatly opposed woman suffrage at this time.⁸⁹

By 1884 the Republicans withdrew their lukewarm support of woman suffrage and ignored the question at their convention. The Greenback party remained faithful and demanded that woman be given equal pay for equal work, equal laws with man to secure her equal rights, and the right to vote.⁹⁰ In its state convention the Prohibition party endorsed the Greenback party's nominee for state superintendent of public instruction, Fannie Randolph of Emporia.⁹¹

In 1891 the Populist party gained control of the house of representatives. Annie L. Diggs, a suffragist, had been appointed by the Farmers' Alliance on their state legislative committee, and she began a vigorous campaign to secure suffrage for women by statutory enactment.⁹² But much to the disappointment of Susan B. Anthony, Mrs. Diggs campaigned as a Populist in 1892 and did not insist on the suffrage plank.⁹³

The state suffrage organization, in order to preserve the nonpartisan attitude of the organization, selected the Populist Mrs. Diggs as vice-president and the Republican Laura Johns as president.⁹⁴

Again making a bid for political support, the women asked the parties at their state conventions in 1894 to adopt a suffrage plank. In reply to this request, the Democrats adopted a resolution saying they opposed woman suffrage "as tending to destroy the home and fam-

ily. . . ." ⁹⁵ The Republicans did not take a definite stand against the reform, but they did refuse to endorse it as a party measure. The Prohibition party followed its usual policy of endorsement; and the Populists, who had become quite strong in Kansas, adopted a suffrage plank.⁹⁶

Since most of the leaders in the suffrage movement were not Populists and hoped for votes from other parties, the Kansas Equal Suffrage Association decided to run an independent, nonpartisan campaign. If any suffrage speakers made political speeches, they were instructed to make them under the auspices and by arrangement of the state central committee of their respective parties.⁹⁷

But it was too late for a nonpartisan campaign. The woman's cause was already linked to the Populist party in the eyes of the Kansas voter, and the success of the amendment depended on the fortunes of that party. The Republican women formed a Republican club and seemed to be more interested in their party than in their demand for woman suffrage.⁹⁸

On several occasions, suffrage workers injured their cause by political squabbles. In one case, a July 4 celebration was arranged by all parties in 1893 at Kingman. The women were told they could talk all the suffrage they wanted to, but no politics. Laura Johns followed the instructions of the Republican chairman of the celebration, but Annie Diggs made a Populist speech, and Mrs. Johns had to listen to it, much to her disgust. According to Mrs. Johns, Mrs. Diggs was not to blame, because she had been kept at a Populist's house until time for the meeting and had not been properly instructed. However, Mrs. Diggs's political speech aroused considerable resentment among the Republicans, and Mrs. Johns felt the Populists were attempting to carry the amendment and claim all the credit. This would have been distasteful to such a strong Republican as she, even one who was working for woman suffrage and who should have been thankful for any support.

On the other hand, the Populist women of Topeka informed Mrs. Johns that there was a

87. Clara H. Hazelrigg, *A New History of Kansas* (Topeka: Crane & Co., 1895), pp. 201-202.

88. *Ibid.*, p. 202.

89. *Ibid.*

90. Stanton, *History of Woman Suffrage*, v. 3, p. 707.

91. Hazelrigg, *A New History of Kansas*, p. 209.

92. Anthony and Harper, *History of Woman Suffrage*, v. 4, p. 652.

93. Connelley, *History of Kansas*, v. 2 (1928), p. 1178.

94. Anthony and Harper, *History of Woman Suffrage*, v. 4, p. 643.

95. *Ibid.*, p. 646.

96. *Ibid.*, pp. 644-646.

97. *Ottawa Journal & Triumph* (Topeka edition), July 26, 1894.

98. Blackmar, *Kansas: A Cyclopaedia of State History*, v. 2, p. 928.



Susan B. Anthony
(1820-1906)



Elizabeth N. Barr
(1884- ?)

Some of the tactics of woman suffrage crusaders antagonized men and undoubtedly delayed a victory in the women's campaign for equal voting rights. Susan B. Anthony, an officer of the National Woman Suffrage Association from its founding in 1869, wrote and lectured ceaselessly to promote the women's cause. But her angry retort to a Kansas politician in 1867 would not have persuaded the state's male voters to grant equal suffrage rights to women. Even as late as the campaign of 1911-1912, some women hurt the cause they professed to help by their belligerent statements. Elizabeth N. Barr, who issued the suffrage publication *Current Topics*, called some newspapermen "grafters," a label that would antagonize a group that could do so much to help or hinder the women's cause. Photograph of Miss Barr reproduced from *A Souvenir History of Lincoln County, Kansas*, by Elizabeth N. Barr (N.p., 1908).

great deal of resentment against her political attitudes and activity for the Republicans. Although she did not find any antagonism when among the Populists, she did agree to put more Populist women in the field to speak for the cause.⁹⁹ While Annie Diggs felt that very few Republicans would vote against woman suffrage because it was endorsed by the Populists,¹⁰⁰ too many voted against it for some reason, and the amendment was defeated. Many women felt that having their cause identified with the Populists had definitely been detrimental to them, and after the state had gone strongly Republican in the election of 1900, Mrs. Diggs resigned as president of the state

suffrage association, since she did not wish to be responsible for any opposition to their cause.¹⁰¹

The women's cause was helped by the progressive wave of the early 1900's, demanding changes in the laws and the federal constitution. Jane Addams, a Progressive party supporter who spoke at a convention in Topeka in 1912, felt that women needed the ballot in order to carry on humanitarian work.¹⁰² Possibly as a result of her stand as a Progressive, the National Woman Suffrage Association decided to allow its members to take part in partisan politics, and some Kansas women worked for the Progressive party.¹⁰³ But this decision was

99. Laura M. Johns to W. A. Johnston, July 15, 1893.—"W. A. Johnston Collection," General Correspondence, manuscript division, Kansas State Historical Society.

100. *Ottawa Journal & Triumph* (Topeka edition), August 2, 1894.

101. Anthony and Harper, *History of Woman Suffrage*, v. 4, p. 648.

102. *Kansas City (Mo.) Journal*, November 5, 1912.

103. *Topeka Daily Capital*, November 24, 1912.

WHAT VOTERS CAN DO!

AN ADDRESS TO THE WOMEN OF KANSAS.

Do you not wish to have all dramshops, gambling dens and houses of prostitution closed in your city?

Do you not wish to have your schools in the most competent hands, and your school-houses made wholesome places for your children?

Do you not wish to help make your town as attractive as possible, to encourage your library and to discourage rowdyism and pauperism?

Do you not wish to have your streets and public places kept cleaner and in better order?

Do you not wish to have live stock kept from roaming your streets, breaking your walks and invading your gardens?

Do you not wish to have your money spent as prudently as possible?

Then use your newly acquired power. By the new law passed this winter, women in cities are voters.

City officers to be elected this spring have these and many more matters affecting the welfare of your home in their hands.

The City Council makes all laws for the government of the city. They may re-enact the State prohibitory law as a city ordinance, thus bringing its enforcement within the hands of city officers.

The Board of Education makes your schools what they are—may make them what they should be.

The Mayor is charged with seeing to the enforcement of all city laws. He appoints the Marshal, Attorney, Engineer, Street Commissioner, Policemen, and, except in cities of the second class, the Treasurer. Note how much depends on the Mayor.

The Marshal's duty is to arrest all offenders against both city and State laws, on view. Where there's a will there's a way. Do you not want a Marshal who will see?

The Police Judge's duty is to try all cases of violation of city laws, and to give the guilty due punishment. A Police Judge in sympathy with law-breakers can invalidate the best of ordinances. Do you want a Police Judge who will compound with crime?

The City Attorney's business is to prosecute all cases before the Police Court. If he neglects to act, neither a good judge nor good laws are of much use.

HOW AND WHEN.

REGISTRATION.—To be entitled to vote in first and second-class cities (not in third class), women must appear before the City Clerk some time between the first Monday in January and the tenth day before election, and give their name, age, occupation and residence, receiving a certificate of registration which must be ready for presentation at the polls. To avoid possible annoyance, we suggest that ladies go to the Clerk's Office with their friends.

ELECTIONS.—In cities of the first and second classes, elections will be held on the first Tuesday in April. In cities of the first class will be elected a Mayor, Police Judge, and one Councilman from each ward, and some members of the Board of Education. In cities of the second class will be elected a Mayor, Police Judge, City Treasurer and Treasurer of the Board of Education, together with Councilmen and members of the Board of Education. In cities of the third class on the first Monday in April will be elected a Mayor, Judge and Councilmen.

BALLOTS.—Women's ballots should contain only the elective officers above mentioned the name of the candidate desired must be clearly printed or written in full. Station from this may invalidate the whole ballot.

CAUCUSES.—Are voluntary meetings of voters of any given party to nominate or to elect delegates to a convention for this purpose. After nominations the voter often only a choice between two evils. To be effective, reform must begin in and the caucus. The regular caucuses are advertised, are perfectly respectable places, and will be welcomed in the caucus of any party.

THIRD CLASS CITIES.—No registration is required. The Council of a third class may by ordinance provide for the appointment of a City Attorney, who may thus be the prosecutor of offenders against the prohibitory law.

THE RIGHT FOR SMALL VILLAGES.—Any village of 250 inhabitants may be organized into a city of the third class on petition of a majority of the tax-payers to the Judge of the district Court. This puts it into the hands of the people to add greatly to the extent of application of the woman suffrage law.

ANNY H. RASTALL
Pres. Kan. W. C. T. U.

SARAH A. BROWN,
W. H. GARRUTH.

Maria 1880



Sarah A. Brown
(1838- ?)



Lucy Johnston
(1846-1937)

Kansas women received their suffrage rights by installments over a period of more than half a century. From 1861 to 1887 they had the right to vote for members of school boards. In 1887 the legislature gave women the right to vote in municipal elections; and after another 25 years they won their full political freedom in 1912. The 1887 flyer at left, "What Voters Can Do," explained to women how to register to vote in municipal elections and how their votes could affect issues and the election of public officials in their cities and towns. Above, Lucy Johnston was president of the Kansas Equal Suffrage Association during the 1911-1912 campaign. In a report on that successful campaign, Mrs. Johnston stated that one of the most important factors in the victory was that Kansas had been a prohibition state for 32 years. Although it has not been determined whether the cooperation of the W.C.T.U. helped or hindered the cause of woman suffrage, the organization did keep the subject before the public and assisted in such educational efforts as the flyer reproduced here. At far left, Sarah A. Brown, whose name is on the 1887 flyer, was nominated by the Democratic party as its candidate for superintendent of public instruction in 1880. Photograph of Miss Brown reproduced from *A History of Lawrence, Kansas, From the First Settlement to the Close of the Rebellion* by Richard Cordley (Lawrence Journal Press, 1895).

opposed by some of the Kansas leaders, who believed that women should have the right to vote before they pushed any particular party.¹⁰⁴

To maintain a nonpartisan stand, women were obliged to balance support by one party with corresponding testimonial from the others. No party wanted a rival to have the monopoly of women's gratitude if and when the amendment went through. For this reason, in the campaign of 1911-1912, political parties of Kansas were getting on the band wagon and insisting they had always been for woman suffrage.

The editor of *The Coming Nation*, a Socialist newspaper at Girard, claimed that his party had been making a fight for it long before any other party had heard of woman suffrage. In fact, he stated that "a Socialist who would not vote for Woman Suffrage would be practically a political impossibility."¹⁰⁵ Some Republicans accused the Socialists of using the suffrage cause to further their own ambitions, but a Gove countian replied that the Socialists voted for woman suffrage because they believed in it, not because they expected to gain favor.¹⁰⁶

But most of the women felt that it was risky to become linked with the Socialists' cause, because they were only a minor party in Kansas. A worker in the 1894 campaign who had moved to California hesitated to return to help in the 1912 campaign because she had become a strong Socialist and felt she would not be welcome;¹⁰⁷ and a suffrage leader from Pittsburg wrote that she was almost afraid to get in touch with suffragists by correspondence because in one instance she discovered the woman contacted to be a Socialist in a community very strong in their opposition to the Socialists. Realizing the threat to the movement, she went to other leading women in the community and persuaded them to take all of the offices to prevent the Socialist woman from taking an active part. To avoid any hitch, she also primed other women to nominate the cho-

104. Alberta Corbin to Lucy B. Johnston, October 23, 1912.—"Lucy B. Johnston Collection," Woman Suffrage, October 16-31, 1912.

105. A. H. Simons to Lucy B. Johnston, October 30, 1912.—*Ibid.*

106. *Gove County Republican Gazette*, Gove City, November 21, 1912.

107. Anna H. Shaw to Lucy B. Johnston, September 21, 1911.—"Lucy B. Johnston Collection," Woman Suffrage, August-September, 1911.

sen few for their offices.¹⁰⁸ Women were finally catching on to some of the tactics used in machine politics.

Although the Democratic party's attitude ranged from lukewarm support to open opposition in earlier campaigns, it had been of little importance because that party was a minority one in Kansas politics. Even so, in the final campaign, at Democratic rallies that party's members were favorable and in some instances went to great lengths to explain why they had formerly been against equal suffrage. As they put it, they were not personally against equal suffrage but had all sorts of other good reasons for their opposition to it. One suffrage worker felt that the politicians could see what was coming and wanted their past sins forgiven.¹⁰⁹

The most definite evidence that no political party deserves either the blame or the credit for the fate of the suffrage amendment in any of the campaigns lies in the fact that the majority party had never taken a stand against it in Kansas. Although their support had often been lukewarm and they sometimes simply ignored the question in their platform, the Republicans at least had never had a plank against it. In the earliest campaign it had been a party measure not supported by party members, because with the majority the Republicans had at that time, they could have carried it in the election if all members had been favorable. Therefore, it seemed that the women were successful in 1912, not simply because all the parties endorsed the measure, but because the voters had either been convinced of the justness of it as a part of the progressive reform sweeping the nation or they realized the granting of suffrage was the least the women would settle for.

TACTICS THAT ANTAGONIZED MEN

ONE FINAL factor which undoubtedly played a part in delaying woman suffrage in Kansas was that women sometimes forgot that only men could grant them the right to vote and so seemed to be starting a battle of the sexes by their belligerent attitude. Setting the stage for the struggle, the following warning was issued to young women:

We would point for them the moral of our experiences: that woman must lead the way to her own enfranchisement, and work out her own salvation with a hopeful courage and determination that knows no fear nor trembling. She must not put her trust in man in this transition period, since, while regarded as his subject, his inferior, his slave, their interests must be antagonistic.¹¹⁰

In the campaign of 1867, a Kansas politician had observed to Susan Anthony that every woman should be married, implying that if she were, she would not be taking part in crusades. Miss Anthony retorted that to do so, it was essential to find some decent man, and one could not be found among the Kansas politicians who had forsaken woman's cause. This response may have given vent to the steam of her feelings, but it could not have persuaded any Kansas voter to favor her cause.¹¹¹

Some suffragists made the mistake of antagonizing newspaper editors. In one such instance, a group of women selected as their target for ridicule an editor who was an outspoken opponent of the suffrage movement. At one of their suffrage meetings, they commented on the errors in the newspaper, a total of 147 misspelled words, mistakes in grammatical construction, punctuation, etc. A resolution was made to present him with a copy of some standard English spelling book and English language lessons for his special use, and he was informed of their decision by letter. Needless to say, the following week he published a diatribe consisting, in their opinion, of brazen falsehoods. They should have followed Abraham Lincoln's example and not mailed the letter after it had served its purpose of permitting them to release their feelings; they should have realized that he was in a position to have the last word in his newspaper about the matter.¹¹²

In 1880 George W. Anderson, an antisuffragist, announced himself as a candidate for the legislature. The suffrage society of his community adopted a resolution to do everything possible to defeat him. They were not successful, and their opposition to his election added one more legislator in a position to help them who would never be persuaded to do so.¹¹³

Women could have profited from a bit of advice printed in the *Ottawa Journal and Tri-*

108. Magdalen B. Munson to Lucy B. Johnston, October 10, 1911.—*Ibid.*, October, 1911.

109. Laura R. Yaggy to Lucy B. Johnston, September 14, 1912.—*Ibid.*, September 1-19, 1912.

110. Stanton, *History of Woman Suffrage*, v. 2, p. 268.

111. *Ibid.*

112. *Ibid.*, v. 3, p. 699.

113. *Ibid.*, pp. 699-700.

umph (Topeka edition), which suggested that the way for them to gain suffrage was to use tact and kindness to their husbands, not go over the past nor treat them with abuse.¹¹⁴ But as late as the campaign of 1911-1912, some women failed to heed the warning and hindered the cause they professed to help by their thoughtless statements. Elizabeth N. Barr, in her suffrage publication, called some newspapermen "grafters," a poor policy considering that they could do so much either to help or to hinder the women's cause.¹¹⁵

Fortunately, most of the leaders of the suffrage movement in the final campaign had learned from experience and determined to avoid tactics which were antagonistic. Part of their success lay in their decision to run the campaign without interference from the national association. Kansas men seemed to take criticism from Kansas women with less resentment than that from outsiders. A woman who had taken part in the successful campaign for suffrage in Washington warned the women of Kansas,

Do not allow any woman speaker to abuse any man, even if he is the veriest blackguard in existence. You are asking something of them, and while I know it is gall and wormwood to be compelled to ask some of the specimens whose only claim to manhood is that they wear trousers, yet remember always, that they have the vote.¹¹⁶

After becoming irritated by her experience at an earlier meeting, Anna Howard Shaw made some unfortunate remarks in her address at Winfield; and after the meeting a prominent man who was in favor of suffrage said the women should consider themselves fortunate that the weather had prevented a larger audience. The woman reporting the incident was of the opinion that speakers should be women with a sense of humor, but logical and reasonable, since they had to please the voters who did not want to be found fault with or reminded of their shortcomings. "We must have speakers to plead our cause, and not make a demand for justice. Men will grant us anything as a favor if its justice has been proven, but

they will not be commanded to do even justice."¹¹⁷

Another bit of valuable advice from a woman who had taken part in the campaign in Washington was to avoid such topics as temperance and the eight-hour day for women. She described their method in the following words:

We did not argue with men in conversation—we waited till we got on the platform where they could not "sass back." We were never spectacular—never spoke on the street corner—never had a parade. All of these things tended to arouse our enemies. We tried to put our enemies to sleep and arouse our friends to action. . . . We did not *fight* for suffrage, we *worked* for it. Therein lies a great secret.¹¹⁸

Final proof that women had learned that it did not pay to antagonize men was found in a letter to Lucy Johnston, president of the Equal Suffrage Association during the final campaign. The writer, in telling of the district convention to be held in Wichita, stated that they intended to ask the men to help with the meeting because they realized they needed their votes. She requested that Mrs. Johnston and Mrs. Stubbs, the governor's wife, come to the convention because their presence would undoubtedly increase the attendance at the meeting. She further asked Mrs. Johnston to have her stenographer write an "advertisement" of the two women, telling how good looking they were, so people would come out to see them.¹¹⁹ As much as they might have resented having to do it, the leaders of the suffrage movement had learned some important lessons about how to conduct a successful campaign.

Although so far the Kansas legislature has not proposed a state equal rights amendment, it has done its part in taking the final step toward full equality for women by ratifying the national Equal Rights amendment. The rights of women in this state have been gained little by little, with much debate and discussion involved. To maintain that the final step was taken with indecent haste is to reveal ignorance of the long struggle for women's rights which began in 1859.

114. *Ottawa Journal & Triumph* (Topeka edition), June 7, 1894.

115. *Current Topics, The Club Member*, Topeka, v. 9, no. 52 (April 15, 1911), p. 1.

116. Mrs. M. A. Hutton to Lucy B. Johnston, February 12, 1912.—"Lucy B. Johnston Collection," Woman Suffrage, February 1-19, 1912.

117. Helen B. Owens to Lucy B. Johnston, December, 1911.—*Ibid.*, December, 1911.

118. Emma Smith DeVoe to Lucy B. Johnston, June 21, 1911.—*Ibid.*, June-July, 1911.

119. Nannie K. Garrett to Lucy B. Johnston, January 7, 1912.—*Ibid.*, January, 1912.