

## ↓ Women, Men and Suffrage

*Nancy Kohlhoff, Valparaiso branch*

*(Ed Note: This is the 17th in a series of our exclusive publication of the manuscript written by Nancy after much research to fill in the gaps left by history books when dealing with women's issues and their struggle to gain the vote.)*

### **Chapter Seventeen**

Dudley Field Malone was a long-time friend, political associate of President Wilson and the President's appointee as Collector of the Port of New York. Mr. Malone had campaigned for Mr. Wilson since his days as Governor of New Jersey. They never had a serious disagreement even though Mr. Malone supported suffrage.

In July 1917, Mr. Malone witnessed the arrest and trial of 16 women in the Washington, D.C. police court and heard their sentence of 60 days in the Occoquan workhouse. He left the court and went directly to Cameron House where he "offered to act as attorney on the appeal of the case." After that, he telephoned the President and went quickly to the White House.

Mr. Malone told the President that he had come to submit his resignation, as he "could not remain a member of any administration which dared to send American women to prison for demanding national suffrage." The President asked for details. "I told Mr. Wilson everything I had witnessed from the time we saw the suffragists arrested in front of the White House to their sentence in the police court. I observed that although we might not agree with the 'manners' of picketing, citizens had a right to petition the President or any other official of the government for a redress of grievances."

The President reminded Mr. Malone "that the women had been unmolested at the White House gates for over five months, adding that he had even ordered the head usher to invite the women on cold days to come into the White House and warm themselves and have coffee."

Mr. Malone replied, "the manhandling of the women by the police was outrageous and the entire

trial, before a judge of your own appointment, was a perversion of justice."

### **Wilson Defends Himself**

Mr. Wilson, becoming defensively angry, said he was ignorant of all this. "Do you mean to tell me," he asked Mr. Malone, "that you intend to resign, to repudiate me and my Administration and sacrifice me for your views on this suffrage question?"

Malone said that he did intend to do just that. "What will the people of the country think when they hear that the Collector of the Port of New York has resigned because of an injustice done to a group of suffragists by the police officials of the city of Washington?" asked the President.

Mr. Wilson and his Administration were shocked that any one should care enough about the liberty of women to resign a lucrative post in the Government.

"With all respect for you, Mr. President," Mr. Malone answered, "my explanation to the public will not be as difficult as yours, if I am compelled to remind the public that you have appointed to office and can remove all the important officials of the city of Washington."

Mr. Malone returned to New York conceding to the President that he would reconsider the matter of his resignation. Within two days, to Malone's surprise, the President pardoned the women, but the women refused to accept it on the grounds they were illegally arrested and confined in the first place. Within the next two months, six to eight more groups of women were arrested "on the same false charges, tried and imprisoned in the same illegal way." Mr. Malone concluded that the President may have been "innocent of responsibility" for the first arrests, "but he was personally and politically responsible for all the arrests that occurred after his

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pardon of the first group." Malone's "self-respect demanded action" and in September he sent his resignation to the President, "publicly stated my attitude and regretfully left his Administration."

Doris Stevens wrote, "Mr. Malone was shocked that the policy of arrests should be continued. Mr. Wilson and his Administration were shocked that any one should care enough about the liberty of women to resign a lucrative post in the Government. The nation was shocked into the realization that this was not a street brawl between women and policemen, but a controversy between suffragists and a powerful Administration. We had said so but it would have taken many months to convince the public that the President was in any way responsible. Mr. Malone did what we could only have done with the greatest difficulty and after more prolonged sacrifices. He laid the responsibility squarely and dramatically where it belonged. It is impossible to over-emphasize what a tremendous acceleration Mr. Malone's fine, solitary and generous act gave to the speedy break-down of the Administration's resistance."

### Still Wilson Balks

But the Administration's breakdown did not come all that speedily. All the women in jail were "pardoned" by November 27 and 28, 1917, but the picketing continued, as did the arrests. Then, the women even turned to burning passages of the President's speeches in public ceremonies at the Lafayette monument. The women were threatened, bribed, coerced, arrested, imprisoned and force-fed, but they would not stop. Their persistence infuriated President Wilson and many men in both parties who angrily opposed NWP tactics of confrontation and stubborn refusal to relent.

However, by December 1917, the President conceded momentarily, at least long enough to examine what turn political maneuvers might take. The House Judiciary Committee voted to report favorably the amendment to the House. Shortly after, another group, the Suffrage Committee, formed and "decided to take the suffrage measure out of the hands of the Judiciary Committee and to press for a vote." Finally, "on the eve of the vote President Wilson made his first declaration of

support of the amendment through a committee of Democratic Congressmen."

On January 10, 1918, the House passed the amendment by a vote of 274 to 136, a two-thirds majority with just one vote to spare. The date was "exactly forty years to a day from the time the suffrage amendment was first introduced into Congress, and exactly one year to a day from the time the first picket banner appeared at the gates of the White House."

Of the 136 who voted against, the words of one, Mr. Gray of New Jersey, a Republican, are worth noting. Mr. Gray said in debate, "A nation will endure just so long as its men are virile. History, physiology, and psychology all show that giving women equal political rights with man makes ultimately for the deterioration of manhood. It is, therefore, not only because I want our country to win this war but because I want our nation to possess the male virility necessary to guarantee its future existence that I am opposed to the pending amendment."

By what leap of logic or faith can this be believed? Yet, Mr. Gray spoke for thousands of men and women who believed it.

(Quotes from Stevens, Doris, *Jailed for Freedom*, Liveright Publishing Co., New York, 1920; general background from various published sources on woman's history. Copyright 1993)



### Celebrate Women's Equality Day

Join your friends in celebrating Women's Equality Day on Wednesday, May 15 from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. in the enclosed courtyard/atrium of the Marriott Hotel at 2625 N. Meridian Street, Indianapolis. The Gender Fairness Coalition is sponsoring this event. The cost will be approximately \$20 per person. More information will be available on our website at <http://web.indstate.edu/aauw-in>.

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## Chapter Eighteen

After the House passed the amendment in January, the Senate dodged and delayed until October 18, 1918, when it defeated the passage by two votes. NWP stepped up the pressure through the fall of 1918 and the beginning of the year, 1919. Every day the pickets appeared outside the White House. Also, during this time they began setting "watchfires" in urns beneath the Lafayette monument. At one point, they burned a portrait of the President in effigy. Thirty-nine were arrested for that.

On February 24, 1919, the President was scheduled to return from Europe to the U.S. to report on the work done so far in settling the peace accords, the War having ended in November 1918. His destination was Boston, "where ancient liberties are so venerated." The National Woman's Party announced its plan in advance. "Upon his arrival a line of pickets would hold banners silently calling to the President's attention the demand for his effective aid. In the afternoon they would hold a meeting in Boston Commons and there burn the parts of the President's Boston speech which should pertain to democracy and liberty."

Boston officials were alarmed. For two weeks, the newspapers were filled with "clever plans of the police to outwit the suffragists." On the day of the event, the United States Marines formed a "hold back" to keep everyone away from the reviewing stand where the President would pass. Predictably, "a slender file of twenty-two women marched silently" through the ranks and lined up at the foot of the stand. After forty-five minutes, during which time the women stood silently holding the American flag and their banners, Police Superintendent Crowley went to Doris Stevens and said, "We want to be as nice as we can to you

suffragette ladies, but you cannot stand here while the President goes by, so you might as well go back now." The women refused. Patrol wagons were rushed to the scene, the women arrested, and the crowd electrified. "The sight of ladies being put into patrols seemed to thrill the Boston masses as nothing the President subsequently said was able to do." This was Boston's first exposure to the "lady suffragettes." In contrast to their "outrageous" behavior, some conservative Boston suffragists presented the President with a bouquet of jonquils tied with a yellow ribbon.

## Attacked in New York

In March of 1919, the President was scheduled to leave for Europe again to work on the proposed League of Nations. He was departing after he addressed a mass meeting in the Metropolitan Opera House in New York. Twenty-five women with banners departed from their New York headquarters to picket the event, but before they could reach the Opera House, two hundred policemen "seized them, tore the pennants, broke the poles, some of them over our backs, trampled them underfoot, pounded us, dragged us, and in every way behaved like frantic beasts." A crowd of mostly soldiers and sailors, "many of whom had just returned from abroad," joined the police in the attack.

"When I appealed to the policeman, who was at the moment occupied solely with pounding me on the back, to intercept a soldier in his cruel attack (on Margaretta Schuyler who was carrying the American flag), his only reply was, 'Oh, he's helping me.' He thereupon resumed his beating of me and I cried, 'Shame, shame! Aren't you ashamed to beat American women in this brutal way?' I offered no other resistance. 'If we are breaking any law, arrest us. Don't beat us in this cowardly fashion.' 'We'll rush you like bulls,' was his vulgar answer, 'we've only just begun.'"

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The newspapers reported the incident: Two Hundred Maddened Women Try to see the President! Two Hundred Women Attack the Police!

While in Europe, the President finally capitulated. Since in February the Republican Senate had ended its session without voting on the suffrage measure, still lacking one vote for passage, the President from Paris summoned newly elected Democrat Senator Harris from Georgia. Harris was in Italy at the time. The President persuaded Harris to provide the one vote needed.

### Amendment Finally Passes

Now aware of the political pay-off in passing the amendment, plus realizing there was no longer any way out of it, the Republican Congress called a Special Session on May 19, 1919. The House again passed the resolution, this time by a vote of 304 to 89. On June 4, the Senate passed it by 66 to 30 votes – two more than needed. “Of the 49 Republicans in the Senate, 40 voted for the amendment, 98 against. Of the 47 Democrats in the Senate, 26 voted for it, 21 against.” Thus, by his years of stonewalling the amendment, President Wilson maneuvered himself and his party into the uncomfortable position of having a Republican Congress take credit for bringing in the amendment even though, all along, the Republicans had officially opposed it as strongly as the Democrats had.

Nevertheless, the Anthony Amendment, first introduced in Congress in 1878 by the agitation of Susan B. Anthony, was finally sent on its way June

4, 1919, to the states for ratification.

Doris Stevens summed up the struggle by saying, “Our objective was the national enfranchisement of women. A tiny step, you may say. True! But so long as we know that this is but the first step in the long struggle of women for political, economic and social emancipation, we need not be disturbed. If political institutions as we know them today in their discredited condition break down, and another kind of organization, perhaps industrial, supplants them, women will battle for their place in the new system with as much determination as they have shown in the struggle just ended. That women have been aroused never again to be content with their subjection there can be no doubt. That they will ultimately secure for themselves equal power and responsibility in whatever system of government is evolved is position. How revolutionary will be the changes when women get this power and responsibility no one can adequately foretell. One thing is certain. They will not go back. They will never again be good and willing slaves.”

All of which might be true today if women were taught anything at all about their historic past – about the women upon whose shoulders women stand today. But, so few know. And, unfortunately, perhaps only a few care.

(Quotes from Stevens, Doris, *Jailed for Freedom*, Liveright Publishing Co., New York, 1920; general background from various published sources on woman's history. Copyright 1993)

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sponsors of the day's events.

Cost of the morning conference is \$25 and an optional box lunch is \$10.50. Admission to the afternoon program which includes reduced admission to the NCAA Hall of Champions is \$4. Register by September 10 by sending your check to Tri Price c/o IUPUI, TCEM Department, School of Physical Education, 901 W. New York St., Indianapolis, IN 46202.

### Women's Leadership Exchange

This series of monthly conferences discusses women's issues and are held at the University of Indianapolis campus on the first Friday of each month, in the University's Conference Center in Schwitzer Student Center, Room 012 from 8-10 am. There is no cost to attend.

To register, call Kaye Nave at 317-788-3393 or 800-232-8634 ext. 3393 or via email at [knave@uindy.edu](mailto:knave@uindy.edu) or online at <http://sal.uindy.edu/registration.html>.

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## Chapter Nineteen

Wisconsin was the first state to ratify the Anthony Amendment, followed by Michigan, Kansas, Ohio, New York, 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, West Virginia and Washington.

Twenty-eight of these 35 states had to convene special sessions of their legislative bodies to do it. If the 36<sup>th</sup> state would ratify before November 1920, women throughout the country could vote in the fall elections.

By June 1920, eight states had defeated the amendment. Connecticut, Vermont, North Carolina, Florida and Tennessee had taken no action. Of these, North Carolina and Florida were found by caucus to be beyond reach. The governors of Connecticut and Vermont refused to call special sessions in their states. Therefore, the eyes of the nation were focused on Tennessee whose governor, after much legal wrangling, finally called a special session.

By August 1920, Nashville was inundated with suffragists, anti-suffragists, the railroad lobby, the manufacturer's lobby and the "whisky lobby." As a majority of the legislators had pledged support, the outcome appeared to be a foregone conclusion. "Yet, the experienced suffragists faced the coming event with anxiety."

A huge reception was held in the "foyer of the Hermitage Hotel" on Saturday evening, August 7. Anti-suffragist women, mostly from the South,

were bedecked with red roses. Suffragist women wore yellow roses. "Mysterious men in great numbers" strolled the foyer while "in and out through this crowded house moved the bewildered legislators."

## Sponsor changes his mind

In their recording of the events in *Woman Suffrage and Politics*, Carrie Catt and Nettie Shuler wrote, "That very day the ominous possibilities of the 'invisible government' (which is how they referred to the liquor interest) were made manifest. Seth Walker, Speaker of the House, who had willingly joined the Men's Ratification Committee and had not only pledged his vote verbally and in writing but had accepted the invitation to introduce the resolution, sought out the president of the League of Women Voters and announced a change of mind.

The suffragists suspected at once that Mr. Walker's cowardly mind change had been facilitated by soothing spirits. Having been defeated so many times by the liquor interest, the women were immediately alarmed. By evening, their worst fears were confirmed. "Groups of legislators under escort of strange men left the foyer" and visited "a room on the eighth floor." They returned "reeling through the hall in a state of advanced intoxication!"

But on Monday, August 9, the legislature convened at noon as planned. "The Governor's message recommending ratification was delivered and both Houses adjourned for the day. With nothing to do, members again accepted the invitation to the eighth floor, where a group of anti-suffrage men dispensed old Bourbon and moonshine whisky with lavish insistence."

Prohibition was in effect, and Tennessee, like the rest of the nation, was supposed to be dry. Indeed, Tennessee had ratified the prohibition amendment. But when the women asked why the law wasn't enforced, the answer was, "Now see here, in

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Tennessee whisky and legislation go hand in hand, especially when controversial questions are urged. This is the Tennessee way." The women were incredulous.

Throughout Monday evening and most of the night, suffragists, both men and women, visited "the different hotels of the city to talk to legislators." They all returned to Hermitage headquarters to report "the same story—the legislature was drunk!"

"How many legislators?" was the abashed query. No one knew. "Are none sober?" was next asked. "Possibly," was the answer. In agony of soul, suffragists went to bed in the early morning, but not to sleep. The members of the Tennessee Legislature, however, largely slept themselves sober during the night, and hope revived.

### Tennessee Senate ratifies

It took four intense days for the Tennessee Senate to ratify the amendment, which it finally did on Friday, August 13. But the House "ominously postponed the date of the vote" while suffragists "in vain tried to get the resolution on the calendar." Meanwhile, the 62 legislators who had pledged support were "threatened and cajoled from early morning of each day until the wee hours of the next... baited with whisky, tempted with offers of office, loans of money, and every other device which old hands at illicit politics could conceive or remember."

To the consternation of the suffrage women and the delight of the anti-suffragists, "Every day men dropped from the poll. One man who had written nine letters in which he declared that he would be on hand 'to vote for woman suffrage until I am called up yonder' had fallen early. Before the end, all men checked as 'briable' on the poll, taken before the Legislature met, fell from it."

Four more anxious days followed, everyone was tallying the vote, trying to count which legislators remained steadfast and which had succumbed to other pressures. Finally, on Tuesday, August 17, the resolution was put to the first vote. Debates were intense, the chamber reeling with emotion. Seth Walker "made what the mountaineers called a bear cat of a speech" in which he tried to explain

his change of mind. He said, "it had been charged that his change of attitude was due to a certain railroad which he named; this he resented, but he conspicuously failed to give an explanation of his strange about face, which was amazing the entire nation."

After Seth quieted down, to the surprise of everyone, the anti-suffragists moved to adjourn. The motion passed. The suffragists were stunned. It appeared the anti-suffragists were in control of the session. Back in their hotel that night, the "president of the National American Suffrage Association said, 'there is one thing more we can do and only one, we can pray.'"

Apparently, Alice Paul was not present.

(Quotes from Catt, Carrie Chapman, and Shuler, Nettie Rogers, *Woman Suffrage and Politics*, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1926; general background from various published sources on woman's history. Copyright 1993)

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## Book of the Month Club ¡Adelante! Style

AAUW recommends the following books:

- 📖 June – *Odd Girls and Twilight Lovers: A History of Lesbian Life in 20<sup>th</sup> Century America*, by Lillian Faderman
- 📖 July – *The Ladies Auxiliary*, by Tova Mirvis
- 📖 August – *Wasted: A Memoir of Anorexia and Bulimia*, by Marya Hornbacher

Each book relates to a different group of people and encourages each of us to view things from a different perspective than we may have now. Read these yourself and/or form a group to discuss them. Everyone can benefit from the exchange of ideas.

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## Chapter Twenty

The following morning was blistering hot, but the House was packed in anticipation of the final votes being taken that day. Men in broadcloth suits and women in their long, tightly fit dresses and enormous hats filled the galleries. Hand-held fans fluttered throughout the chamber.

Of the 99 members of the House, one had resigned. Two others, "both suffragists, were kept at home by serious family illness." When Dr. J. Frank Griffin was informed of the special session, he rushed back to Nashville from California to cast his vote for the amendment. However, it was feared the anti-suffragists had one vote more than the suffragists.

The debates began, hot air flowing in about equal portions from the politicians inside and the weather outside. Suddenly, Speaker Seth Walker, believing he had enough anti-votes, jumped to his feet and shouted, "The hour has come! The battle has been fought and won!" He moved to table the resolution, which would allow the anti-suffragists to keep it off the calendar indefinitely. But when the roll call was taken, the count was tied, 48 to 48.

It was Mr. Walker's turn to be surprised by a "change of mind." Rep. Banks Turner, counted among the solid anti-suffragists, voted against tabling, thus saving the amendment. Mr. Walker could not believe it. He demanded a second count. As the roll was being called, he rushed to Mr. Banks and "with arms thrown about him whispered insistent entreaties in his ears." When Mr. Turner's name was called the second time, he passed.

"Heads stretched forward and every eye centered on the legislator and the Speaker, while a breathless silence pervaded the room. The fans ceased to wave. Even the overpowering heat was forgotten." When the roll call was finished, the secretary went back to Mr. Turner. Mr. Walker was still blatantly

cajoling him in front of the entire House! At last, Mr. Turner "threw off the Speaker's arm, drew himself up proudly and shouted a defiant 'no' to the motion to table." The chamber shook with cries of ecstasy and agony.

## A second vote is taken

Order restored, the motion to ratify the amendment was made again. The roll was called "in a tension that was well-nigh unbearable." At the finish, the vote stood 49 for ratification, 47 against. "The House broke into an uproar, and the cheers of triumph that rang through the old legislative chamber were heard far down the street." There had been another "change of mind."

Harry Burns was the youngest member in the House. The district he represented was described as conservative and "backwoods." His political cronies sent him to Nashville to vote "No" on ratification. For days, he agonized privately over his decision. Much pressure was put on by both sides.

On the morning of the vote, Mr. Burns received a note from his mother. An elderly lady and survivor of the aftermath of the Civil War, Mrs. Burns lived in the countryside in Southern gentility. Her faithful black "butler" still drove her about with horse and buggy. After things quieted down, Mr. Burns revealed the contents of his mother's note:

"Hurrah! And vote for suffrage and don't keep them in doubt. I notice some of the speeches against. They were very bitter. I have been watching to see how you stood, but have noticed nothing yet. Don't forget to be a good boy and help Mrs. Catt put 'Rat' in Ratification."

By a margin of only two votes, Tennessee became the 36<sup>th</sup> and last state needed to ratify the Anthony Amendment. Formally Amendment XIX to the Constitution of the United States of America, it reads:

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“Section 1. The right of the citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.

“Section 2. The Congress shall have power, by appropriate legislation, to enforce the provisions of this article.”

### Author's final comments

So ends the series of human-interest stories about the suffrage reformers, which I wanted to share, especially with other women. My discovery of them through reading woman's history was the beginning of a journey of self-realization. For me, it was enriching as well as gratifying to learn, though rather late in life, that woman has a history, that she contributed greatly to the development of the country I love above all others, and that she earned her place in its affection and gratitude.

Some men still object to woman's claiming her empowerment and her responsibilities as a viable half of the human race. Their reluctance to give up “the divine right of men to rule over women” is understandable where tradition alone or a literal interpretation of Scriptures is solely depended upon to instill values in children. Those who insist, both women and men, that being born male guarantees superiority in all respects must be taught that such belief is the sheerest blasphemy of the creation of Divine Providence—if I might borrow the

expressions of some of my favorite heroines!

One hundred and forty-five years have passed since Elizabeth Stanton called the first Woman's Rights Convention. Much of what she asked for woman has been won. Men who fought for woman's equality then, and men who believe in it today, cannot, however, secure woman's future. Woman must take her destiny into her own hands, and as her foremothers did, remove the obstacles to full realization of her Divine right to be a human being. To envision her future course in the world, woman must understand her past.

When Ruth Bader Ginsburg said before the Senate Judiciary Committee in July, 1993, that she would not be present there that day if it were not for the women who went before, that she “stood on the shoulders of Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony,” she knew. Unfortunately, many Americans who do not know simply looked at each other and said, “Who?”

Women must remember what Susan said. Failure is impossible.

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## Working Women in Indiana

- Indiana working women are not as far along the road to equal pay as women in many states; in 2000, Indiana's working women earned 73.7 percent as much per hour as men, while nationwide women earned 77.6 percent as much per hour as men. Indiana ranked 44<sup>th</sup> among all states in equal pay.
- The rate of progress in closing Indiana's hourly wage gap was better than average in the 1990s. Indiana ranked 10<sup>th</sup> among all states in progress in closing the hourly wage gap.
- Slower wage growth for men contributed to the closing of the gap – wages for men in Indiana grew by 10.3 percent over the decade, compared with 21.4 percent wage growth for women.
- At the current rate of change, working women in Indiana won't have equal pay until 2032. Nationwide, women won't achieve equal pay until after 2050.

(Source: [www.aflcio.com](http://www.aflcio.com))