

The Fight for Suffrage: Women You Should Know About



Alice Paul

- Head of the National Women's Party (NWP), which operated out of the capitol for women's suffrage and rights
- **Picketed in front of the White House for suffrage**, using President Wilson's own words against him, such as "We shall fight for the things we have always held nearest our hearts – for democracy."
- Jailed for "obstruction of traffic" due to protests
- **Spent 7 months in jail, was force-fed** when she attempted a hunger strike over conditions of women jailed – the women were fed and treated worse than the convicted murderers at the Occoquan Workhouse!
- Reports of her treatment forced President Wilson's hand and he shifted to support for the suffrage movement in his Congressional Speech, 1918
 - This led to a vote among the states for suffrage – Tennessee cast the final state vote needed, becoming the 36th state to ratify women's suffrage
- Wrote the first version of the **Equal Rights Amendment** in 1922 – "Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex."
 - This amendment was finally passed by Congress more than 50 years later, in 1972 when Paul was 87. However, not enough states ratified the amendment, meaning **women, to this day, do not have equal protection under the U.S. Constitution!**



Many suffragists thought Tennessee was their last best chance for ratification, but it looked like they didn't have the votes. To break the 48-48 tie, House of Rep. Harry T. Burn, wearing the red rose symbolizing he was against suffrage, changed his mind and **cast his vote for suffrage** – he had received a letter from his mother the day before urging him to vote for instead of against!





Inez Milholland

- “The Lady on the Horse” – led the March 3, 1913 Women’s Suffrage Procession in Washington, D.C.
- Part of the NWP and worked with Paul to organize marches and fight for women’s rights
- **Suffragist, lawyer, WWI correspondent and pacifist**
- Despite suffering from pernicious anemia, toured the American West in 1916 speaking for women’s rights with the NWP – collapsed during a speech in L.A. in Oct. 1916 and died two weeks later
- Her last public words: “Mr. President, how long must women wait for liberty?”

Ruza Wenclawska (aka Rose Winslow)

- Polish-American who immigrated to the U.S. from Poland as an infant
- Began factory work at the age of 11
- Worked for women’s rights and factory workers’ rights
- Gave speeches for the NWP, part of the protests at the White House
- Along with Paul, jailed at the Occoquan Workhouse and force-fed during the hunger strike
 - Smuggled letters out to her husband and her friends during her imprisonment



200+ women spent time in prison for their protests and their fight for women’s rights. Many suffered beatings and some were force-fed for taking part in hunger strikes.

Want to Know More?
Check out these resources:

✚ About the Equal Rights Amendment: equalrightsamendment.org

✚ *Jailed for Freedom*, by Doris Stevens

✚ Alice Paul: www.alicepaul.org