

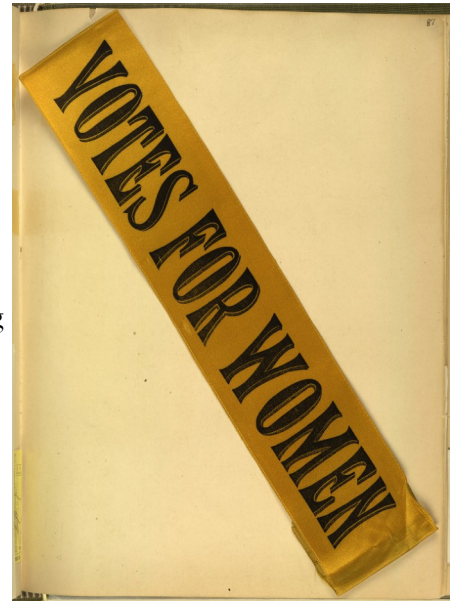
## Teaching with Primary Sources across Tennessee PRIMARY SOURCE SET: WOMAN'S SUFFRAGE IN TENNESSEE

### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Despite the proclamation that “all men are created equal” in the Declaration of Independence, not all Americans were equal under the law prior to 1920. Women received the right to vote in August 1920, just in time to vote in the presidential election that year.

In Tennessee, the suffrage movement began with Elizabeth Avery Meriwether writing letters to newspapers and publishing a journal in support of woman's right to vote. She, among other suffragists, tied early activities to abolitionist and temperance movements as a way to better society. Meriwether was not alone in Tennessee. Other influential Tennessee suffragettes were Lizzie Crozier French, Sue Shelton White, and Anne Dallas Dudley.

Tennessee played an important role in the ratification of the 19th Amendment. In 1920, Tennessee was the 36th state (and last needed) to ratify the amendment, which gave women the right to vote.



**"Votes for Women" Ribbon.** [1911]

### SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHERS & ADDITIONAL ONLINE RESOURCES

Some of the suffrage collections contain both suffrage and anti-suffrage propaganda. Ask students to consider why some men and women did not want to give women the right to vote. Since one of the biggest dangers was considered to be the effect on society, ask students to consider how society changed after giving women the right to vote.

Another great lesson that can come from studying the suffrage movement is that of irony. Be sure to check out **Are women people? A book of rhymes for suffrage times, by Alice Duer Miller.** One section is called “CAMPAIGN MATERIAL (For Both Sides).” In this section, you will find entries such as, “Our Own Twelve Anti-suffragist Reasons,” “Why We Oppose Pockets for Women,” and “Why We Oppose Votes for Men” (see below). Why might suffragists use irony to prove their point? After students read some of the arguments, do they believe that the arguments were successful? Why or why not?

#### ARE WOMEN PEOPLE?

##### Why We Oppose Votes for Men

1. BECAUSE man's place is the armory.
2. Because no really manly man wants to settle any question otherwise than by fighting about it.
3. Because if men should adopt peaceable methods women will no longer look up to them.
4. Because men will lose their charm if they step out of their natural sphere and interest themselves in other matters than feats of arms, uniforms and drums.
5. Because men are too emotional to vote. Their conduct at baseball games and political conventions shows this, while their innate tendency to appeal to force renders them peculiarly unfit for the task of government.

#### Collections to examine:

- [Votes for Women: Selections from the National American Woman Suffrage Association](#)
- [By Popular Demand: "Votes for Women" Suffrage Pictures, 1850-1920](#)
- [Photographs from the Records of the National Woman's Party](#)
- [Miller NAWSA Suffrage Scrapbooks, 1897-1911](#)
- Don't forget to look at [Collection Connections](#) for each!

#### More useful links:

- [Primary Source Set– Women's Suffrage](#)
- [Timeline: Women Suffrage in the Progressive Era](#)
- [Themed Resources: Women's History](#)
- [Woman Suffrage Movement](#) entry in the [Tennessee Encyclopedia of History and Culture](#)
- ["Women's Suffrage Movement"](#) from the [Tennessee Encyclopedia of History and Culture](#)

### Introduction

FATHER, what is a Legislature?  
A representative body elected by the people of the state.  
Are women people?  
No, my son, criminals, lunatics and women are not people.  
Do legislators legislate for nothing?  
Oh, no; they are paid a salary.  
By whom?  
By the people.  
Are women people?  
Of course, my son, just as much as men are.

Are women people? A book of rhymes for suffrage times, by Alice Duer Miller ... [1915]



Anita Pollitzer, W.J. Jameson, Chairman Nat[ional] Finance Comm[ittee] of Dem[ocratic] Party, checking tally of Tenn[essee]] legislature on ratification. [1920]



National Woman's Party Headquarters in Nashville, Tenn., in which the campaign for ratification of the suffrage amendment is being conducted, photographed on the day that Parley P. Christensen, presidential nominee for the new Farmer-Labor Party addressed a mass meeting, urging immediate ratification... [1920]

Note: See bibliographic page for entire title, which includes a

## "WOMAN SUFFRAGE CO-EQUAL WITH MAN SUFFRAGE."

(Quoted from the Platform of Principles of the American Federation of Labor.)

### State Federations that have endorsed Woman Suffrage:

California,	Minnesota,
Connecticut,	New Hampshire,
Colorado,	New York,
Iowa,	Ohio,
Illinois,	Oklahoma,
Indiana,	Oregon,
Kansas,	Pennsylvania,
Maine,	Tennessee,
Massachusetts,	Washington,
Michigan,	West Virginia.

"I am for unqualified woman suffrage as a matter of human justice.

"It is unfair that women should be governed by laws in the making of which they have no voice.

"MEN would feel that they were used badly if they did not have that right, and WOMEN naturally feel the same."

SAMUEL GOMPERS.

"I'm in perfect harmony with the declaration of the American Federation of Labor, which has endorsed the demand that woman be given the right to vote.

"I have always stood for the SQUARE DEAL, and that's the only square thing on the woman suffrage question, as I see it.

"I personally believe that it would be for the good of US ALL for woman to be enfranchised."

JOHN MITCHELL.

"I would advise all the Workers of America to work for Woman Suffrage.

"My message to them is COURAGE.

"I never make a speech on any subject without bringing in Woman Suffrage."

KEIR HARDIE.

There are 300,000 Working Women in New York.

Will not a vote be worth as much to them as to working men?

WOMAN SUFFRAGE PARTY

OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

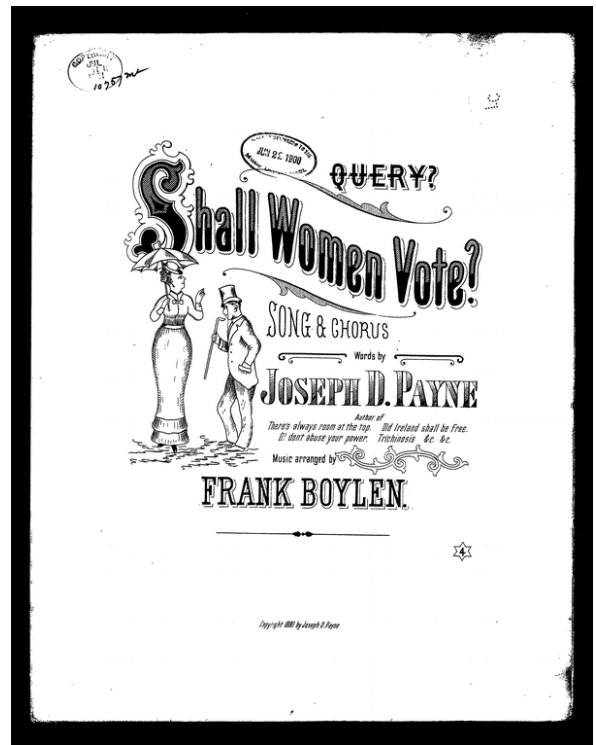
Headquarters: Room 212 Metropolitan Life Building

Enclosure: Fliers supporting women's suffrage

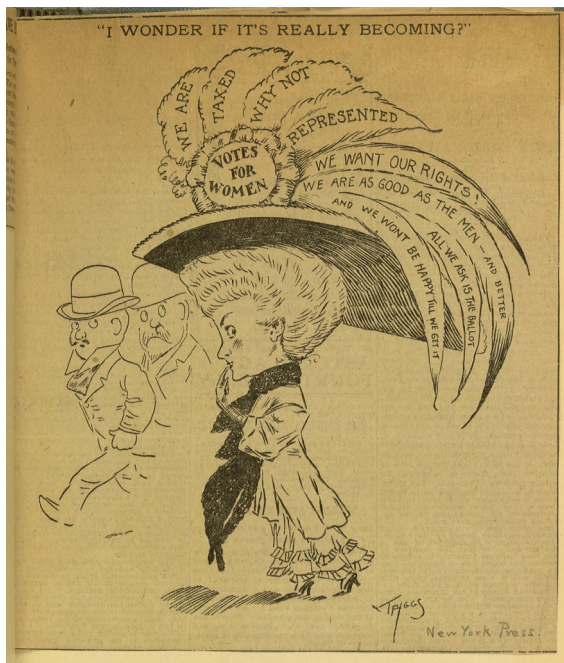
Note: This is page 3 of 6.



When Tennessee the 36th state ratified, Aug 18, 1920, Alice Paul, National Chairman of the Woman's Party, unfurled the ratification banner from Suffrage headquarters.



Shall women vote / by Frank Boylen. [1881]



I wonder if it's really becoming? Suffrage Cartoon.



Party members picketing the Republican convention, Chicago, June 1920. L-R Abby Scott Baker, Florence Taylor Marsh, Sue White, Elsie Hill, Betty Gram.

## CITATIONS

*Teachers: Providing these primary source replicas without source clues may enhance the inquiry experience for students. This list of citations (Chicago Manual of Style) is supplied for reference purposes to you and your students.*

“Votes for Women’ Ribbon.” May 6, 1911. From the Library of Congress, *Miller NAWSA Suffrage Scrapbooks, 1897-1911*. [http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/rbcmillerbib:@field\(DOCID+@lit\(rbcmiller004024\)\)](http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/rbcmillerbib:@field(DOCID+@lit(rbcmiller004024))).

Miller, Alice Duer. “Are women people? A book of rhymes for suffrage times, by Alice Duer Miller ...” c.1915. From the Library of Congress, *Votes for Women: Selections from the National American Woman Suffrage Association Collection, 1848-1921*. [http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/nawbib:@field\(NUMBER+@od1\(rbnawsa+n3348\)\)](http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/nawbib:@field(NUMBER+@od1(rbnawsa+n3348))).

“Anita Pollitzer, W.J. Jameson, Chairman Nat[ional] Finance Comm[ittee] of Dem[ocratic] Party, checking tally of Tenn[essee] legislature on ratification.” 1920. From the Library of Congress, *Photographs from the Records of the National Woman's Party*. [http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/mnwp:@field\(DOCID+@lit\(mnwp000257\)\)](http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/mnwp:@field(DOCID+@lit(mnwp000257))).

“National Woman's Party Headquarters in Nashville, Tenn., in which the campaign for ratification of the suffrage amendment is being conducted, photographed on the day that Parley P. Christensen, presidential nominee for the new Farmer-Labor Party addressed a mass meeting, urging immediate ratification. Left to right: Rankin Smith, Central Trades and Labor Council; Jim F. Nicholson, Business Manager of the Machinist; W.C. Birthright, Secretary of the Tenn. Federation of Labor; Mrs. Anne Calvert Neely, Mississippi state chairman of the National Woman's Party; W.M. Mitchell; Mrs. Mabel Reber, of New York; Mrs. Walter C. Jackson of Murfreesboro; Mrs. Florence Bayard Hilles, of Wilmington, Delaware, member of the Executive Committee of the Woman's Party; Parley P. Christensen, Presidential candidate of the Farmer-Labor Party; Miss Sue White, of Nashville, Tennessee state chairman of the Woman's Party; W.M. Fox, president of the Trades and Labor Council; Miss Mary Winsor of Philadelphia, Pa., member of the Advisory Council of the Woman's Party; Archie Craig; Charles P. Sweeney.” 1920. From the Library of Congress, *Photographs from the Records of the National Woman's Party*. [http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/mnwp:@field\(DOCID+@lit\(mnwp000311\)\)](http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/mnwp:@field(DOCID+@lit(mnwp000311))).

Women’s Suffrage Party. “Enclosure: Fliers supporting women's suffrage.” n.d. From the Library of Congress, *Miller NAWSA Suffrage Scrapbooks, 1897-1911*. [http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/rbcmillerbib:@field\(DOCID+@lit\(rbcmiller004037\)\)](http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/rbcmillerbib:@field(DOCID+@lit(rbcmiller004037))).

“When Tennessee the 36th state ratified, Aug 18, 1920, Alice Paul, National Chairman of the Woman's Party, unfurled the ratification banner from Suffrage headquarters.” From the Library of Congress, *Photographs from the Records of the National Woman's Party*. [http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/mnwp:@field\(DOCID+@lit\(mnwp000256\)\)](http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/mnwp:@field(DOCID+@lit(mnwp000256))).

Boylen, Frank. “Shall women vote / by Frank Boylen.” 1881. From the Library of Congress, *Music for the Nation: American Sheet Music*. [http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/mussm:@field\(NUMBER+@band\(sm1881+10757\)\)](http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/mussm:@field(NUMBER+@band(sm1881+10757))).

New York Press. “I wonder if it's really becoming? Suffrage Cartoon.” n.d. From the Library of Congress, *Miller NAWSA Suffrage Scrapbooks, 1897-1911*. [http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/rbcmillerbib:@field\(DOCID+@lit\(rbcmiller001148\)\)](http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/rbcmillerbib:@field(DOCID+@lit(rbcmiller001148))).

“Party members picketing the Republican convention, Chicago, June 1920. L-R Abby Scott Baker, Florence Taylor Marsh, Sue White, Elsie Hill, Betty Gram.” 1920. From the Library of Congress, *Photographs from the Records of the National Woman's Party*. [http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/mnwp:@field\(DOCID+@lit\(mnwp000306\)\)](http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/mnwp:@field(DOCID+@lit(mnwp000306))).