



“Campaign of 1914, Newport, R. I.” Photograph, National Woman’s Party Photograph Collection, 1914.001.071.02.
NATIONAL WOMAN’S PARTY, AT BELMONT-PAUL WOMEN’S EQUALITY NATIONAL MONUMENT.

INTRODUCTION:

“We shall neither delay nor rest until the cause is won.”

On January 5, 1920, the night before the Rhode Island legislature voted to ratify the 19th Amendment, R. I. suffrage workers held a “Victory Dinner.” The organizer of the affair, Sara Algeo, a key leader in the final woman suffrage effort, remembered that, although the event was held in Providence at the Turks Head Club, “it was wholly democratic in the happy mingling of men and women of all walks of life, who have stood from the beginning shoulder to shoulder in their fight for women’s rights.”¹

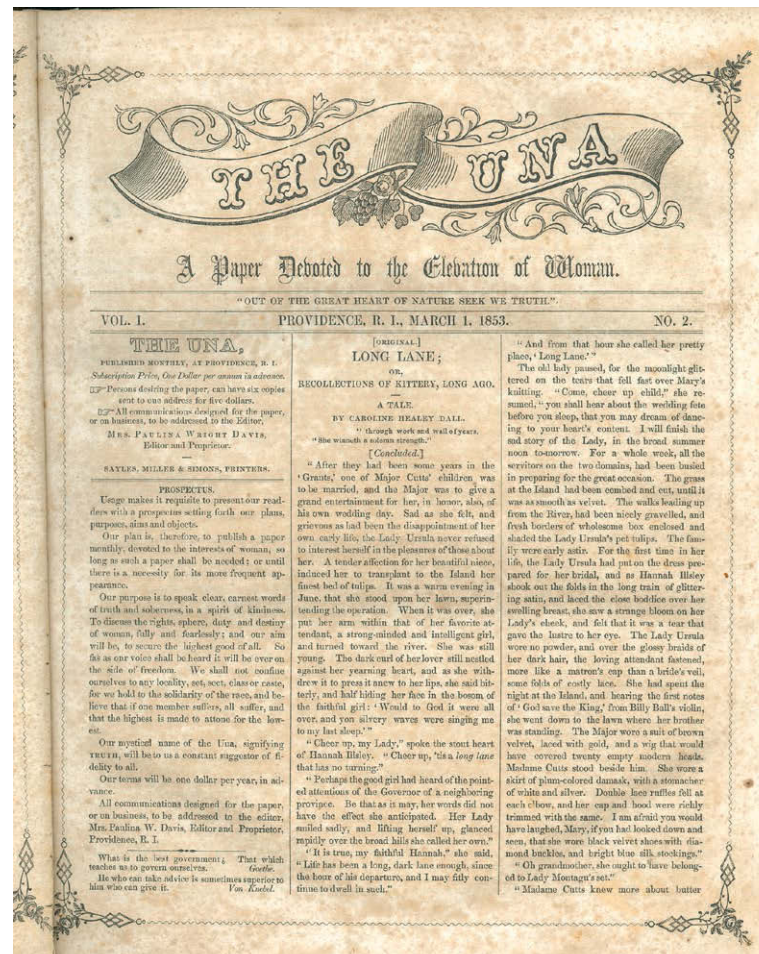
Although it contains neither speeches nor toasts, one hundred years after the suffragists’ celebration, this historic combined Summer/Fall 2020 issue of *Newport History* and *Rhode Island History* presents various aspects of the narrative of the woman’s suffrage cause in Rhode Island. Articles examining deeply embedded cultural obstacles and the work of organized anti-suffragists in the state frame accounts of the indefatigable labor of Rhode Islanders who worked for the right of women to gain the elective franchise.

At their January 1920 celebration, the suffragists hailed the “fifty year” fight of organized woman suffragists. Indeed, Rhode Islanders had advocated for women’s rights well before woman suffragists officially organized in December 1868. Providence’s Paulina Wright Davis spearheaded the first national woman’s rights convention in Worcester, Mass. in October 1850, when the culminating resolution called for, “Equality before the law, without distinction of sex or color.” Among the speakers at the 1850 convention was thirty-two-year-old Martha Mowry (1818-1899) of Rhode Island who was studying to be a physician.² Rhode Island could claim perhaps the first publications in the United States devoted to woman’s rights, Anna W. Spencer’s *The Pioneer and Woman’s Advocate* (1852-1853) and Davis’s *The Una* (1853-1855).

During the Civil War, Rhode Island women contributed mightily to the Union war effort. Women all over the state formed Soldiers Aid Societies, sewing and preparing clothes for R. I. troops and sending barrels of food and other necessities to the front. Katharine Prescott Wormeley organized soldiers’ wives and daughters in Newport into paid sewing brigades;

hundreds of “needlewomen” in Providence contributed some 29,000 articles of clothing. Wormeley went south to work on hospital ships and battlefields, returning to Rhode Island in 1862 when she was appointed superintendent of Lovell’s General Hospital at Portsmouth Grove, a facility for wounded soldiers.³

After the war, some Rhode Island antislavery and woman’s rights activists, like Elizabeth Buffum Chace of Valley Falls, George T. Downing of Newport, and Paulina Wright Davis, joined the Equal Rights Association, a national group that



Paulina Wright Davis's publication, *The Una*, was an early woman's rights paper. ("The Una—A Paper Devoted to the Celebration of Women," Providence, R.I., March 1, 1853, RHi X17 3983, RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY COLLECTIONS).



Newport's Katharine Prescott Wormeley was a nurse and hospital administrator during the Civil War. Black, James Wallace, photographer. *Katharine Prescott Wormeley, Civil War relief worker, U.S. Sanitary Commission nurse, and hospital director / J.W. Black, Washington St., Boston. United States, None. [Boston: J.W. Black, Washington St., between 1861 and 1865] Photograph.* <https://www.loc.gov/item/2018653929/>.



Paulina Wright Davis was the dynamic first president of the Rhode Island Woman Suffrage Association. Photograph, n.d. RHi X17 3324. RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY COLLECTIONS.

pledged to work for equal rights for formerly enslaved people and for the right of women to gain the elective franchise. The earliest extant petition to the Rhode Island Legislature on the subject of woman suffrage, signed by men and women, was submitted in 1867 to the State House.

In November 1868, reformers met in Boston to found a New England association to agitate for the right of women to vote. Rhode Islanders Elizabeth Buffum Chace and Paulina Wright Davis, who attended the inaugural meeting of the New England Woman Suffrage Association (NEWSA), were so energized by the formation of the group that they immediately initiated an auxiliary in Rhode Island (the Rhode Island Woman's Suffrage Association, or RIWSA). The Call to the state's first woman suffrage convention was issued in early December 1868. Among the Rhode Island subscribers were several clergymen from Newport, including Thomas Wentworth Higginson, radical antislavery workers like Susan Sisson of Pawtucket, and Phebe Jackson and Asa Fairbanks of Providence, and manufacturer Rowland G. Hazard from Peacedale. The suffragists convened on December 11th at Roger Williams Hall in downtown Providence. Antislavery and woman's rights notables Frederick Douglass, Lucy Stone, and Abby Kelley Foster spoke to a crowd estimated at one thousand people.⁴

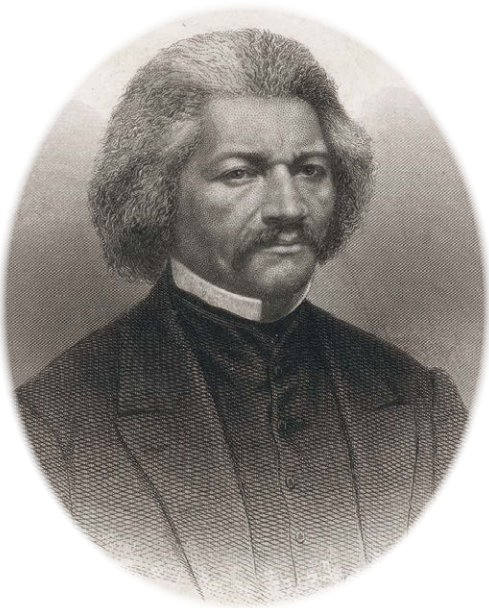
In the days following the December 1868 convention, workers set to the task of publicity and agitation, arranging monthly meetings and annual events with dynamic speakers, and petitioning the legislature. As seen in "A 'Crisis in our Cause': The Fifteenth Amendment and the Newport Woman Suffrage Convention of 1869," in this issue, a painful schism among woman suffrage leaders at this time reverberated in the fledgling Rhode Island woman's suffrage organization, although differences failed to dampen the resolve of RIWSA workers.

The fight for woman suffrage in the state was an intensely uphill one. In "Defending the 'Woman's Sphere': The Ideology and Opposition of Anti-Suffragists," J. Stanley Lemons explains, "There was no need for an anti-suffrage organization because woman suffrage was so wildly unpopular." In this issue, Lemons describes the deeply entrenched attitudes and customs that prescribed a role for middle-class white women in an enclosed domestic realm, while the brutish public world of business and politics was restricted to men. The early woman suffragists and allies were disparaged and scorned.⁵ State representative James W. Stillman, of Westerly delivered a

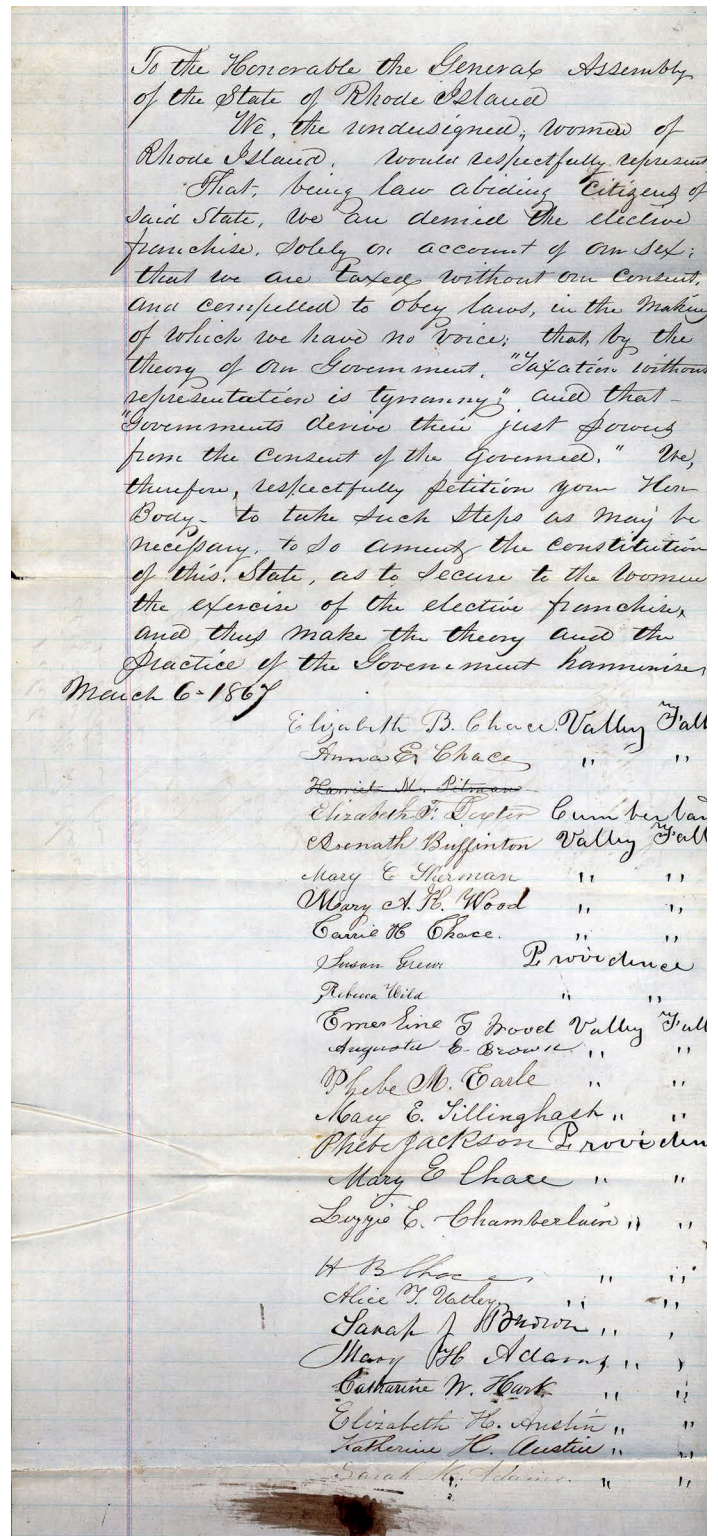
pro-woman suffrage address in the R.I. legislature in February 1869, "under a shower of ridicule and bitter sarcasm."⁶ Despite such daunting obstacles, Rhode Island woman suffragists persisted in their agitation.

By 1884, after years of petitioning the legislature, the women of RIWSA, scored a coup when they secured the R. I. State House as the setting for a gala convention that boasted such luminaries as Frederick Douglass, Susan B. Anthony, and Lucy Stone. At the event, attendees overflowed the assembly chamber and speakers were sent out to the corridors and passageways to address the crowds. The Rhode Island suffragists had come a long way in promoting their cause, their president Elizabeth Buffum Chace observed, but women still had a distance to go to secure the franchise for women in the state.⁷

Just three years after the State House convention, the Rhode Island woman suffragists' incessant push for an amendment to the constitution paid off in March 1887 when Rhode Island legislators approved a statewide referendum on woman suffrage. The suffragists and their allies had but three weeks to press their case. A cadre of able workers labored tirelessly. A fully-staffed headquarters was established in downtown Providence and a suffrage organizer was hired from out of state. Ninety-two meetings were held in cities and towns throughout



Frederick Douglass spoke at the inaugural convention of the Rhode Island Woman Suffrage Association in December 1868. Ritchie, Alexander Hay, Engraver, and Harriet Beecher Stowe. *Frederick Douglass* / engd. by A.H. Ritchie., 1868. [Hartford, Conn.: Hartford Publishing Co] Photograph. <https://www.loc.gov/item/2014645333/>.



The earliest known petition for woman suffrage in the state was submitted to the R.I. legislature in 1867. Petitions Failed/Withdrawn, 1811-1900, C#0869; C#01179, RHODE ISLAND STATE ARCHIVES.



Elizabeth Buffum Chace led the Rhode Island Woman Suffrage Association for three decades. Photograph of a painted miniature, n.d., RHi X17 4246, RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY COLLECTIONS.



Sarah Soule Wilbour (1804-1891), of Little Compton, was a dedicated woman suffragist in the first decades of the movement in Rhode Island. Painting, artist unknown, ca. 1860. COURTESY OF THE LITTLE COMPTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY; <https://lchistorical.wordpress.com/historical-resources/little-compton-womens-history-project/sarah-soule-wilbour/>.

Rhode Island, and several issues of a suffrage newspaper, *The Amendment*, were distributed. The state amendment failed badly (6889 ayes and 21957 yeas) yet the suffragists pressed on.⁸

During the arduous struggle to secure the vote in Rhode Island, women of RIWSA collaborated with other women activist groups in the state to work on achievable objectives that would favorably affect women's lives. The Gilded Age saw a proliferation of women's organizations and clubs in Rhode Island. For example, Chace led RIWSA to partner with WCTU activists to pressure the R.I. legislature to require cities to hire female matrons in police stations where women were detained. Suffragists, led by Sarah Doyle, spearheaded the push to admit women students to Brown University. RIWSA's concern for female factory workers, outlined by Elizabeth Buffum Chace in an address to a national Woman's Congress in 1881, eventually resulted in an 1893 legislative hearing in Rhode Island in which a broad coalition, including the R.I. Council of Women (a consortium of women's organizations), and women union organizers from the Knights of Labor participated. Their campaign prevailed. Fanny Purdy Palmer, a local suffrage activist, was hired as the first Female Factory Inspector in Rhode Island to oversee enforcement of new regulations protecting female and child factory workers.⁹

While RIWSA workers partnered with other women's organizations to benefit women and children in the state, the vote still remained elusive. As leaders like Chace began to curtail their activities due to advancing age in the 1890s, a next generation of suffrage leaders emerged. Ellen Kenyon Bolles (b. ca. 1847) who was born in Coventry and later lived in North Providence, was a reformer who was active not only in promoting woman suffrage, but in advocating for the rights of labor and other causes. After the crushing defeat of the amendment campaign in 1887, Ellen Bolles took the lead in a RIWSA campaign to press for presidential suffrage for women.

In 1897, Ellen Bolles demanded that presidential suffrage for women be included in a new R. I. constitution. When the commission ignored her pleas, she sent a protest to the R.I. House of Representatives. In a letter to the suffrage weekly, *The Woman's Journal*, in 1892, Bolles stated that, "suffrage...is an inseparable right of citizenship... To make sex a qualification disenfranchises half the citizens of a State in a manner impossible to overcome, and is a discrimination utterly unwarranted by any word or syllable of the U.S. Constitution." Bolles's untiring work continued for years as she agitated on the state, regional and national level for woman suffrage.¹⁰

Please Circulate at Once—Add Additional Paper as you may require, and forward before January 1, 1879 to
Mrs. ELIZABETH B. CHACE, Valley Falls, R. I.

WOMAN SUFFRAGE PETITION.

To the Senate and House of Representatives of the General Assembly of Rhode Island:

The undersigned, citizens of Rhode Island, of lawful age, believing that morality, justice and wise legislation require that women shall participate in governmental affairs; and also, that it is the duty of women to make the result of their best thought and experience a power in the State, do earnestly pray your honorable body to adopt the necessary measures so to amend the Constitution, that no citizen of Rhode Island shall be disfranchised on account of sex.

WOMEN.	MEN.
Smithfield R. I.	
Mrs. Harriet Winsor.	Rev. Arthur Given.
" Sarah S. Winsor.	Mr. George B. Warfield.
" Matilda Mathewson.	" Joseph Mathewson.
" Josie F. Store.	" Elmy Mathewson.
" Alvia Allen.	
Miss Ella Harvey.	
" Fanny M. Eddy.	
" Hannah Polk.	
" Abby Polk.	
" Laura Mathewson	
Mrs. Abby F. Angell.	
" Caroline Stone.	
" Louisa Phalcott.	
" Betsey Mathewson.	
" Abbie A. Evans.	
" Rebecca Mathewson	
" Mrs. Mowry	
" Smith Phillips	
Miss C. C. Store	
" Mary Mowry	

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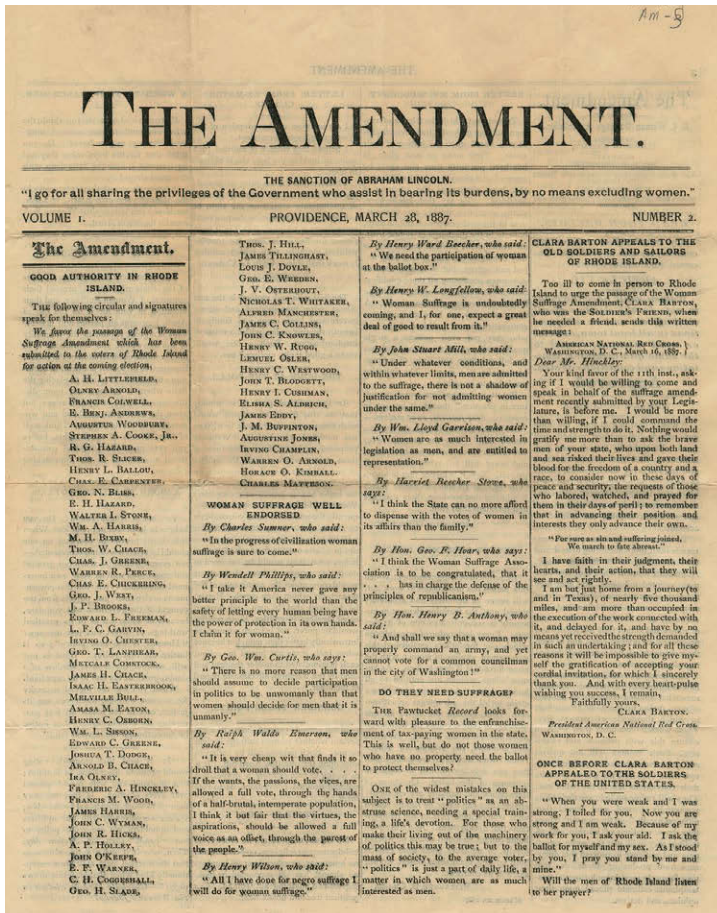
WOMAN SUFFRAGE PETITION.

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WOMEN.	MEN.
Helia B. Arnold	Agnes Arnold
Chloe S. Paine	Mr. Herbert Aldrich
Sarah S. Paine	S. J. Storick
Mrs. G. E. Cranston.	A. J. Ellwell
Miss R. Cranston.	J. A. Ellwell
Whitely Andrews	
Lois A. Aldrich	
Catharine S. Aldrich	
Glance A. Smith	Albie Stockwell
Mary Frank Smith	Mrs. M. J. Aldrich
Florence E. Seagrave	Mrs. Wm. C. Grant.
Ruth J. Ellwell	" S. J. Bannock
N. F. Hayward	
Mrs. J. J. Davenport	
J. F. Milson	
Mrs. M. A. Jencks.	
Martha S. Vose	
Mrs. M. A. Bollett	
Mrs. J. Brackett	
Mrs. O. M. Burgess	
Mrs. F. M. Perkins	
S. J. Grant	

Petitions from Smithfield and Woonsocket, 1879. Woman suffragists tirelessly circulated petitions throughout Rhode Island urging an amendment to the Rhode Island state constitution between 1869 and the end of the century. Petitions Failed/Withdrawn, 1811-1900, C#0869; C#01179, RHODE ISLAND STATE ARCHIVES.



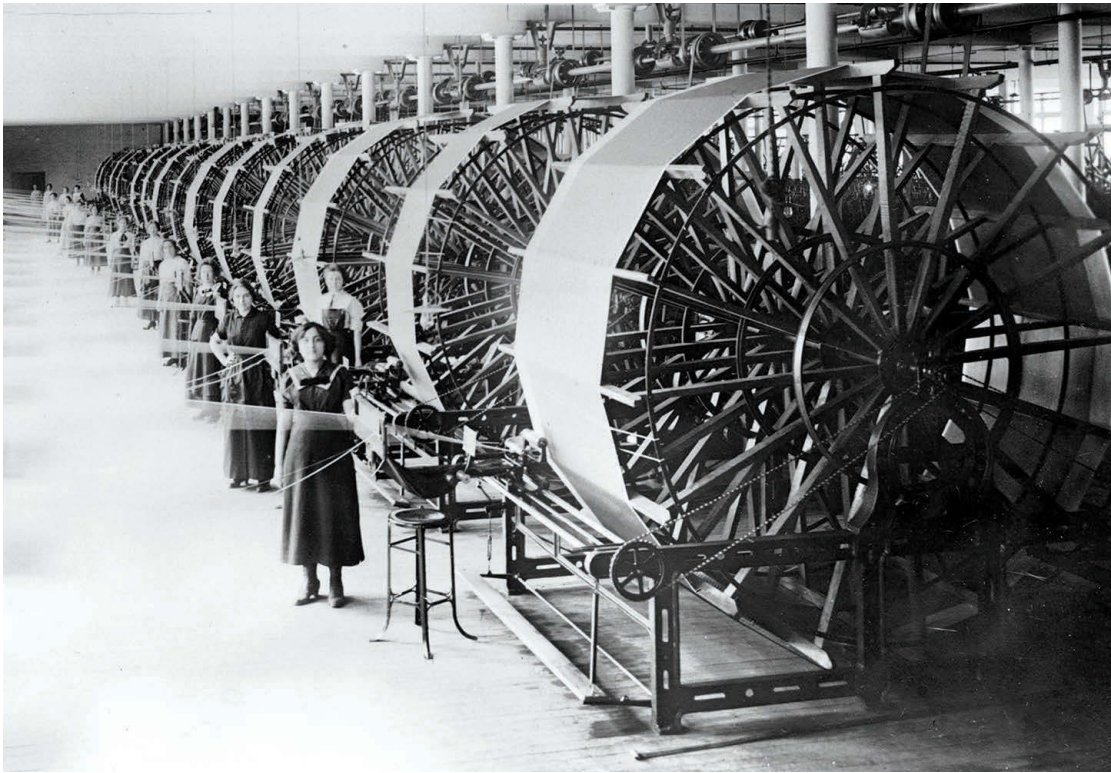
In 1887 woman suffragists waged an all-out campaign to win over male voters in a statewide push for an amendment to the state constitution. Printed, RHI X17 4255, RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY COLLECTIONS.

During the 1890s, the suffrage impulse was growing in Rhode Island as the Colored Women's Club movement was gaining traction. Mary H. Dickerson of Newport, an African American who ran a successful tailoring business was instrumental not only in the founding of the Woman's Newport League, but in organizing a national consortium of Colored Women's Clubs and in engendering regional and state associations of the clubs. These organizations worked on a broad array of issues, including against lynching and racial discrimination in fields of employment and education. The Colored Women's Clubs believed that woman suffrage would advance their goals; their national association had a "Suffrage Department," which, for a time, was headed by Mary E. Jackson, a Rhode Islander.¹¹ In 1913, leaders in the R.I. Colored Women's Clubs organization, like Jackson and Bertha Higgins, steered their state organization to formally endorse the cause, thereby strengthening the woman suffrage coalition in Rhode Island.¹²

In her article, "Uncovering the Lives of Ordinary Rhode Island Suffragists" in this issue, Elisa Miller chronicles the contributions of African-American women and their white counterparts as the suffrage movement in Rhode Island moved into the twentieth century and a new generation took over the helm. Miller's article explores how new organizations, innovative forms of agitation, inventive strategies, and dedicated workers in Rhode Island infused the movement in the first decades of the 1900s.



The Woman's Christian Temperance Union was the largest women's organization in the country with hundreds of thousands of members. The R. I. WCTU had its own "suffrage department" to work on gaining the vote for women. Rhode Island Woman's Christian Temperance Union, photograph, c. 1890, RHI X17 4245, RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY COLLECTIONS.



Suffragists collaborated with other women's organizations in a push to secure legislation benefitting female factory workers in Rhode Island. Silk warping machines and employees, Royal Weaving Co., Pawtucket, R.I. Photograph c. 1910, RHi X3 875, RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY COLLECTIONS.



Due to the efforts of a consortium of women's organizations, suffragist Fanny Purdy Palmer, was named the first woman factory inspector in Rhode Island. (Frances E. Willard and Mary A. Livermore, eds., *A Woman of the Century: Fourteen Hundred-Seventy Biographical Sketches Accompanied by Portraits of Leading American Women in all Walks of Life* [Buffalo: Charles Wells Moulton, 1893], 555. IMAGE COURTESY OF MR. RON, <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/66439756/fanny-palmer>.



Frederic A. Hinckley was a minister, labor activist and ardent woman suffragist who helped run the 1887 Rhode Island campaign for a statewide amendment. Photograph published in Moses King, *Philadelphia and Notable Philadelphians* (New York: M. King, 1902), 20.



Mrs. Sarah E. H. Doyle (d. 1890), a devoted woman suffragist was among the first women to run for Providence School Board in 1873. Photograph album, Elizabeth Buffum Chace and family papers, Ms. 89.12, JOHN HAY LIBRARY, BROWN UNIVERSITY; Russell DeSimone, "Rhode Island Women Enter 19th Century Politics," <http://smallstatebighistory.com/rhode-island-women-enter-19th-century-politics/>. Accessed Oct. 28, 2020.

Sarah Algeo later recalled that 1911 and 1912 brought “a distinct renaissance in the suffrage movement.” In this stage, she remembered, suffrage activism in Rhode Island was characterized by “propaganda,” with “Parades, pageants, pilgrimages, floats, balls, fairs, theatricals, store windows, movies, luncheons, dinners, teas, out-door meetings, church gatherings...heckling political aspirants, all old devices with some new ones added.”¹³ Activists kept up the pressure on lawmakers. Algeo apparently marched in the grand suffrage procession held in Washington, D.C. just before the inauguration of President Woodrow Wilson in early March 1913.¹⁴

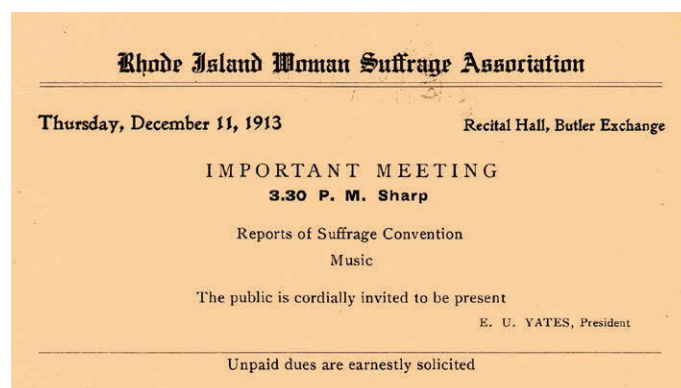
In this era, a part-time Rhode Islander, Alva Belmont, brought energy and enthusiasm to the cause when she put on grand suffrage events at her mansion, Marble House, in Newport. Belmont, who lived in New York, but summered in Newport, opened a “summer headquarters” of the Congressional Union in downtown Newport where workers organized to pressure Congressmen to vote for the woman suffrage amendment. At her mansion, Belmont gave teas and dinners where refreshments were served on “Votes for Women” china to raise funds and recruit supporters to the cause. Belmont also hosted fundraisers, lecture series and talks



Rhode Island women took part in the “Grand Suffrage Procession” in Washington, D.C. on the eve of Woodrow Wilson’s inauguration in March, 1913. Buck, G. V, photographer. *Woman suffrage parade, Wash., D.C.* Washington D.C, 1913. Photograph. <http://www.loc.gov/item/2013648100/>.



This Rhode Island banner was almost undoubtedly carried in the Grand Suffrage Procession in Washington, D.C. in March, 1913. National Women’s Party Textile Collection, yellow cotton sateen front, violet cotton sateen back, purple painted letters, 1913.251a. NATIONAL WOMAN’S PARTY, AT BELMONT-PAUL WOMEN’S EQUALITY NATIONAL MONUMENT.



Suffragist membership increased markedly in the nineteen-teens. FROM THE COLLECTION OF RUSSELL DESIMONE.



Sarah E. Doyle, RIWSA officer, and Girls Principal of Providence High School from 1878-1892, was the driving force behind the admission of women to Brown University. Photograph, Horton Bros., c. 1900, RHi 17 4258. RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY COLLECTIONS.



Susan Hammond (Mrs. J. K.) Barney was the first president of the R. I. WCTU who later went on to prominence in the national organization. RIWSA women collaborated with Barney and WCTU women in successfully advocating for police matrons in Rhode Island jails where women were detained. "Mrs. Barney," photograph, n.d., RHi X17 4243, RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY COLLECTIONS.



Ellen M. Bolles was a dynamic leader of the RIWSA effort in the 1890s. Photograph, n.d., from photograph album, Elizabeth Buffum Chace and family papers, Ms. 89.12, JOHN HAY LIBRARY, BROWN UNIVERSITY.



The summer headquarters of the Congressional Union in Newport, 1914. Alva Belmont is in the back row, standing, on left. Photograph, National Woman's Party Photograph Collection, 1914.001.076. NATIONAL WOMAN'S PARTY, AT BELMONT-PAUL WOMEN'S EQUALITY NATIONAL MONUMENT.

by nationally famous figures at Marble House. Newspaper coverage of Belmont's events increased visibility of the woman suffrage cause in the state and elsewhere.¹⁵ Belmont's work received much publicity, but as Elisa Miller's informative article attests, the ultimate result—ratification of the 19th amendment by the R.I. legislature—was attained by hard day-to-day and year-to-year effort of a multitude of Rhode Island women.

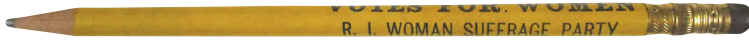
The first organized anti-suffrage effort coalesced when mainly upper-class Rhode Island women began a campaign against woman suffrage around the turn of the century. In her article on the Hazard family and women's activism, Carrie E. Taylor points to privileged women's public roles in the state and their embrace of anti-suffragism. In his article, J. Stanley Lemons provides biographical details of the women who were drawn into the anti-suffrage movement. Suffragists in the state were irritated by the agitation of the anti-suffragists. In her short history of woman suffrage in Rhode Island, suffrage leader Agnes Jenks, observed of the Antis: "Some of them are very excellent and useful members of society in many



Alva Belmont commissioned "Votes for Women" china to be used at the July 1914 conference and for other suffrage events. (John Maddock & Sons commemorative plate, made for the "Conference of Great Women," held at Marble House July 8 and 9, 1914. Gift of Susan Coen, 91.20.1, NEWPORT HISTORICAL SOCIETY COLLECTIONS.)



A suffrage event at Marble House. At Mrs. Alva Belmont's house in Newport, RI. Newport Rhode Island United States, 1914. Photograph. <https://www.loc.gov/item/mnwp000341/>.



(ABOVE) In the early twentieth-century, R. I. woman suffragists held open-air meetings and handed out souvenirs like this “Votes for Women” pencil. Souvenir pencil from the collection of Dr. Kenneth Florey; “Prominent Suffragists Speak at Rocky Point,” *Providence Journal*, July 12, 1914.

“For Every Fighter A Woman Worker,” Poster, c. 1917. Both suffragists and anti-suffragists supported women’s work for the war effort during the First World War. RHi X17 4221, RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY COLLECTIONS.



Gertrude Cottrell Bray of Pawtucket served overseas with the YWCA and Red Cross during World War I. Photograph, The Randall Studio, Gertrude Bray, c. 1917, RHi X17 4257. RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY COLLECTIONS.



In 1918, suffragist Louise Lyman Peck directed a highly successful state campaign to raise funds for the war effort. Photograph, n.d., RHi X17 4250, RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY COLLECTIONS.



During World War I, a 1918 Liberty Loan parade is seen passing City Hall in downtown Newport. Photograph, P2519, NEWPORT HISTORICAL SOCIETY COLLECTIONS.

Maud Howe Elliott, Newport resident and daughter of Julia Ward Howe, used her “persuasive power” to bring many Newport women into the suffrage movement. (Algeo, *Story of a Sub-Pioneer*, 138; Photograph, Maud Howe Elliott, ca. 1915, P37.

NEWPORT HISTORICAL SOCIETY COLLECTIONS).



particulars, but they show an astonishing moral obliquity when it comes to anti-suffrage propaganda.”¹⁶

During World War I, suffrage organizing continued in the state. Carrie E. Taylor observes that both R.I. suffragists and anti-suffragists were active in the war effort. Suffragist Louise Lyman Peck oversaw a statewide campaign that raised over twelve million dollars for the war effort.¹⁷ Some Rhode Island women, like Gertrude Bray of Pawtucket, served overseas with the YWCA and Red Cross, nursing and staffing canteens for U.S. soldiers.

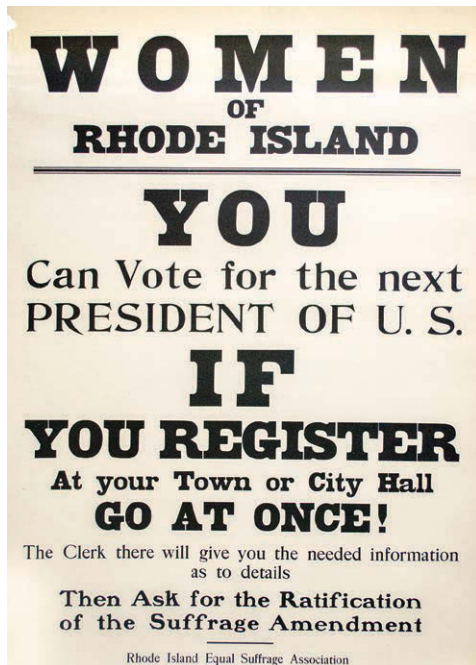
Persistent lobbying by Rhode Island women suffragists resulted in the passage of a bill in 1917 granting suffrage to women in presidential elections. Rhode Island was the first state in New England to do so. If the voter registration records of Newport are any indication, Rhode Island women flocked to enroll when registration for the presidential election opened on July 1, 1919. In her journal, Mary Merchant DeWolf of Warren recorded that she was the very first woman in Rhode Island to register. Six months later, Rhode Island ratified the 19th Amendment, which went into effect in early September 1920.

The women and men who met in Providence on January 5, 1920 to celebrate the impending ratification of the 19th amendment were well aware of the decades of indefatigable labor and sacrifice that led to that victorious moment—their own and that of the women they called the “pioneers.” The following night, the recently formed Providence League of Women Voters, founded by suffragists to educate newly enfranchised women, hosted another celebration. Almost five decades before, Anna Garlin Spencer observed that Paulina Wright Davis “lived to experience bitter disappointment... and she died without realizing the reward of her labors.”¹⁸ Mary Dickerson (1830-1914) never had the opportunity to vote despite her many years of local, national and regional effort on behalf of the Colored Woman’s Clubs. Elizabeth Buffum Chace died in 1899, without ever marking a single ballot. Yet the early suffrage workers inspired later generations to continue the fight for women’s equality via the elective franchise. The determination and persistence of Rhode Island suffragists was summed up by Agnes M. Jenks, who concluded her 1916 account of the obstacles encountered by those seeking woman suffrage in Rhode Island with a vow: “We shall neither delay nor rest until the cause is won.”¹⁹

Elizabeth C. Stevens
EDITOR

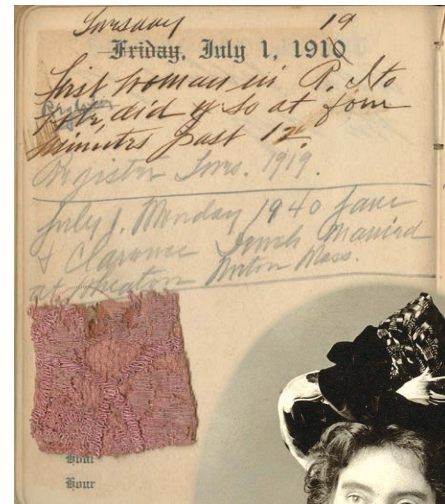


Suffragists surrounded Governor Beeckman as he signed the bill authorizing the state’s ratification of the 19th amendment. Photograph. January 7, 1920, RHi X17 3953, RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY COLLECTIONS.



(LEFT) Broadside urging Rhode Island women to register to vote. FROM THE COLLECTION OF RUSSELL DESIMONE.

(RIGHT) Mary Merchant DeWolf claimed to be the first woman in Rhode Island to register to vote. As seen in her journal, she registered at the Warren town clerk's office shortly after midnight on July 1, 1919, the first day that Rhode Island women could register to vote in the presidential election of the following year. Mary DeWolf photograph, COURTESY OF THE WARREN (R.I.) PRESERVATION SOCIETY; Mary DeWolf journal, MSS 9001-D B2, RHi X17 4262, RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY COLLECTIONS.



Endnotes

- 1 Sara Algeo, *The Story of a Sub-Pioneer* (Providence, R.I.: Snow & Farnham, 1925), 2-6.
- 2 *The proceedings of the Woman's Rights Convention held at Worcester, October 23d and 24th, 1850* (Boston: Published by Prentiss & Sawyer, 1851), 15, 50; Frances E. Willard and Mary A. Livermore, eds., *A Woman Of The Century: Fourteen Hundred-Seventy Biographical Sketches Accompanied by Portraits of Leading American Women in All Walks of Life* (Buffalo, N.Y.: Moulton, 1893), 528.
- 3 Edwin W. Stone, *Rhode Island in the Rebellion* (Providence: G. H. Whitney, 1865), 392-93; "Katharine Prescott Wormeley," in Edward T. James, ed., *Notable American Women 1607-1950* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1971), 3: 675.
- 4 Anna Garlin Spencer, "History of the Rhode Island Woman Suffrage Association" [1893], 2-3. Records of the League of Women Voters of Rhode Island, MSS 21, Box 1, Folder 1. Rhode Island Historical Society.
- 5 "History of the RIWSA," [1893], 4-5.
- 6 *Speech of James W. Stillman, of Westerly delivered in the House of Representatives of Rhode Island, February 25, 1869 published by the Rhode Island Woman Suffrage Association* (Providence: Providence Press Co., 1869); letter of Elizabeth Buffum Chace to the *National Anti-Slavery Standard*, April 3, 1869.
- 7 Spencer, "History of the RIWSA," [1893], 5, and Agnes M. Jenks, typescript, "A Brief History of Woman Suffrage in Rhode Island" [1916], 2. Records of the League of Women Voters of Rhode Island, MSS 21, Box 1, Folder 1, Rhode Island Historical Society; Elizabeth C. Stevens, *Elizabeth Buffum Chace and Lillie Chace Wyman, A Century of Abolitionist, Suffragist and Workers' Rights Activism* (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland Publishers, 2003), 148.
- 8 Agnes M. Jenks, "Brief History of Woman Suffrage in Rhode Island" [1916]; Stevens, *Elizabeth Buffum Chace and Lillie Chace Wyman*, 148-152.
- 9 *Ibid.*, 87-91, 114-115, 120-132, 152, 158-159; Algeo, *Sub-Pioneer*, 91-94.
- 10 Samuel Layton and Elisa Miller, "Ellen Bolles" in Biographical Database of NAWSA Suffragists, <https://documents.alexanderstreet.com/d/1010596352>. Accessed Sept. 30, 2020.
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The National Anti-suffrage headquarters was located in Washington, D.C. Harris & Ewing, photographer.
National Anti-Suffrage Association., 1911. [?] Photograph. <https://www.loc.gov/item/97500067/>.