



**Girl Scouts
Celebrate
Women's
Right to
Vote**

Tennessee Women's Suffrage Patch

Patch program developed by:
Diane D'Agostino, Margret Behm,
And Carole Bucy

Girl Scouts
Celebrate



Women's Right
To Vote

In August, 1920, women across America celebrated the ratification of the 19th Amendment to the U. S. Constitution which granted women the right to vote. Girl Scouts of Middle Tennessee proudly presents this patch program on women's suffrage to celebrate this historic event in hopes that our future generation of women voters will have an understanding and appreciation for this important constitutional right.

As part of the largest voluntary organization for girls in the world, Girl Scouts plays a critical role in the education and development of girls and young women. Our mission: Girl Scouting builds girls of courage, confidence and character, who make the world a better place. We thank our Girl Scout volunteers for serving as role models for today's girls and turning this vision into reality.

The Suffrage patch program was developed by Girl Scout troop leaders Diane D'Agostino and Margret Behm, and authored by board member Carole Bucy, also a former troop leader.

To earn this patch, girls must complete the following required number of activities:

- Brownie Girl Scout 4 activities
- Junior Girl Scout 6 activities
- Cadette Girl Scout 8 activities
- Senior Girl Scout 10 activities

1. Perform the “War of the Roses” play. Perform the play for your parents, school or community group. See page 8 for script.
2. Take a trip to the Tennessee State Capital and see where our House of Representatives and Senate gave women the right to vote. Ask a woman legislator to give you a tour. Also visit the Hermitage Hotel, where suffragist’s and antisuffragist’s headquarters were located.
3. Locate The Tennessean and Nashville Banner newspapers published on August 17, 18 and 19, in 1920. (You may find newspaper articles on microfilm, microfiche or a computer at your local library.) After finding the articles write your own headline and newspaper article about Women’s Suffrage events. Have troop members draw political cartoons that are both suffragist and antisuffragist. Collect the girls’ articles and distribute them to your local Girl Scout office and to school newspapers and community newspapers, or to your troop or another troop.
4. Read the short biographies of the suffragists included on page 6 of this booklet. Write a short essay about one of the suffragists and explain why she made an impression on you. Collect these essays and donate them to your school library, the Girl Scout library or the Suffrage Commission.
5. Write a fictional letter to a member of the 1920 Tennessee General Assembly and tell him why women should have the right to vote. Collect these letters and donate them to your school library, the Girl Scout library or the Suffrage Commission.
6. Visit a polling site on Election Day. (Many polling sites are located in schools.)
7. Write a story about how life would be different today if women were not allowed to vote. Share this story with your troop. Collect your troop’s stories and donate them to your school library, the Girl Scout library or the Suffrage Commission.
8. Invite a woman (or women) age 70 or older to come to your troop and share how lives of girls and women have changed since she was young. Ask her why it is important for women to vote. Ask her what changes she predicts for the girls in your troop in the years ahead. Write her a thank-you note for coming, and tell her what you enjoyed about her visit.
9. Write a short essay about why you might like to run for political office some day. Explain why you would be a good officeholder. Collect these essays and distribute them to the troop or to the Girl Scout library.
10. Invite a woman officeholder to speak to your troop. Ask her why it is important for women to hold a public office. Write her a thank-you note for coming to your troop and for running for office. Tell her what you enjoyed about her visit.
11. Draw political cartoons for and against suffrage.
12. Find out what the Equal Rights Amendment is, why it is controversial, what it offers to women, and what its current status is. In your troop, debate the ERA.
13. Write a piece of legislation that would improve the quality of life for women. In your troop, debate this legislation.
14. Select a country other than the United States and compare women’s roles, occupations, and activities in that country to those of women in the United States. See whether women’s right to vote in that country affects the quality of their life.
15. Write a song about women in the suffrage period. Perform the song for your troop, family or friends.
16. Find out how many women are governors of states, United States representatives and senators, Tennessee state representatives and senators, Tennessee mayors and Tennessee sheriffs. Get a woman civic leader in your area to talk to your troop about her role in planning for your community’s, or state’s, future.

THE SUFFRAGE AMENDMENT

Women in America haven't always had the same rights as men. The 1776 Declaration of Independence declared that "all men" were created equal, but said nothing about women; for the first century and a half in America, women had no political rights. Women could not vote. In early America, the only people who could vote were white men who owned property, and all the people they elected were white men who owned property. No women were elected.

After the American Revolution, the U.S. Constitution let states decide who could vote. Gradually, the states allowed men without property to vote. Abigail Adams, wife of our nation's second President, John Adams, wrote: "In the new code of laws... I desire you remember the ladies and be more generous and favorable to them than your ancestors...if particular care and attention is not paid to the ladies, we are determined to foment a rebellion, and will not hold ourselves bound by any laws in which we have no voice or representation."

Abigail Adams did not get to vote for her husband for President. Neither did other president's wives, including Tennessee women Rachel Jackson, Sarah Childress Polk and Eliza McCardle Johnson. Although women had no right to vote, they fulfilled important responsibilities. They ran homes and farms. They taught their children to read and write when no schools were available. They raised crops and prepared family meals. They made clothes and were proud of their skills at shearing sheep, carding wool, spinning yarn and thread, weaving, sewing, and designing clothes. They cared for the needy. But in spite of their hard-won skills at managing, designing, creating and organizing, and their ability to work well and tirelessly, women were not allowed to vote.

A 70-year struggle won women the right to vote. It began in 1848 at the first women's rights convention in Seneca Falls, New York. Quaker minister Lucretia Mott led this meeting, which was attended by both women and men. Mott spoke forcefully for women's suffrage and to abolish slavery. The people at this convention adopted a Declaration of Sentiments that called for women to have equal rights with men, which stated, "all men and women are created equal."

At this time, many people thought women couldn't make political decisions well. Others thought that if women voted, this would destroy American family life. Many people accepted this tradition without questioning whether it was right or wrong to keep women from voting.

After the Civil War, the U.S. Constitution was changed. Now all men, regardless of race, color or previous slave status, could vote, but not women. Women began to organize to get the right to vote. In 1872 suffrage leader Susan B. Anthony was arrested and fined for voting illegally in New York. Susan B. Anthony wrote the first version of the suffrage amendment, the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which would give women the right to vote. Suffragists worked for 40 more years in the states campaigning and organizing local supporters to pass this amendment.

The suffrage movement gained support in Tennessee. Many reformers said the "petticoat vote" of women would improve politics. Antisuffragists said that women should stay home and clean house. Ladies Home Journal called women's suffrage a "God-given right" and declared: "Let them shake the dust off from a few of our political fixtures and see what is underneath. Let them drive the rats out of the public pantry."

Some women didn't want women to get the right to vote. These women held traditional beliefs that women should focus on family life and shouldn't compete with male authority. While newspaper articles and cartoons portrayed "suffs" as spinsters and "she-males" with henpecked husbands, suffragists worked to convince people that women voting wouldn't destroy family life.

Race issues complicated the suffrage movement. If women could vote, then black women could vote. Even though black men legally could vote at this time, white people found ways to keep them from

voting. Suffrage threatened to upset the power structure, promote racial equality and weaken segregation. Many white Tennesseans weren't ready to accept that.

Years before any organizations in Tennessee supported women's suffrage; Elizabeth Avery Meriwether of Memphis rented a theater in Memphis and held a public meeting to discuss women's rights. More than 500 women came. Mrs. Meriwether led a delegation of women to ask the Memphis School Board to give women teachers the same pay as male teachers. She believed women should have "equal pay for equal work," a principle for which women still fight today.

Another Memphis woman, Elizabeth Lyle Saxon (1832-1915) was vice president of the National American Woman Suffrage Association in 1890. In the years following, suffrage organizations declined. From 1900 to 1906 Tennessee had no organization for suffrage, and for the following five years the only suffrage group was in Memphis. In 1911, Nashville founded a suffrage club. The movement then grew and gained attention. The number of suffrage leagues in Tennessee rose from 5 to 75.

In 1914 the National Suffrage Convention took place in Nashville's Ryman Auditorium. Pro-suffrage speakers drew large crowds. For the next six years rallies, pamphlets, and newspaper editorials debated suffrage. "Votes for Women" and "No Taxation without Representation" were popular slogans among Tennessee suffragists. Women spoke out across the state. Fannie Moran Ezzell described Tennessee women suffragists: "Like most Southern women, I was born and bred in the briar patch of politics. From childhood, we women of the South breathe an atmosphere of political interest...No shirkers or slackers among the suffragists of Tennessee! When we asked 100 women to the Capital, 200 came, then more and more..."

A new amendment to the U.S. Constitution was necessary in order for women to gain the right to vote. Congress passed the 19th Amendment and sent it to the states to be ratified.

If legislatures in 36 states, three quarters of the total 48 states, ratified it, then women could vote in all 48 states. If less than 36 states ratified the amendment, then women could not vote anywhere.

By the summer of 1920, 35 states had ratified the amendment and eight states had rejected it. Supporters felt that Tennessee might be the only hope to be the 36th state, to pass the amendment in time for women to vote in the November, 1920 presidential election. A special session of the General Assembly debated the amendment. Nashville became a battleground; lobbyists for both sides set up headquarters in the Hermitage Hotel. Suffragists wore symbolic yellow roses, and antisuffragists wore red roses. Carrie Chapman Catt, President of the National American Woman Suffrage Association, came to Nashville to lead Tennessee's "War of the Roses." Antisuffragist leader, Josephine Pearson, a Tennessee educator and girls' school head who had promised on her mother's deathbed to defeat the Susan B. Anthony amendment, also moved into Hermitage Hotel. Both sides lobbied, advertised and rallied to influence the Tennessee legislature.

After Senate approval, a hot debate on the amendment commenced in the Tennessee House of Representatives. The issue was in doubt as a vote approached.

A turning point came when Tennessee Representative Harry Burn changed his mind about giving women the right to vote. People in McMinn County, whom young Burn represented opposed suffrage, but Harry Burn's mother sent him a letter: "Dear Son, Hurrah and vote for suffrage! Don't keep them in doubt. I notice (in the newspaper) some of the speeches against. They were bitter. I have been watching to see how you stood but have not noticed anything. Don't forget to be a good boy and help Ms. Catt put 'rat' in ratification."

Finally, Tennessee House of Representatives voted. With his mother's letter in his pocket, the 24 year-old Harry Burn voted "yes" and suffrage won by a vote 49 to 47. The 19th Amendment became the law of the land and gave American women the right to vote.

After the 19th Amendment became law, the women's rights movement splintered, unable to agree on what rights to fight for next. Some sought complete equality for women. Others wanted special legislation that would protect women and children.

Not all the suffragists' dreams came true, even after the 19th Amendment passed. Carrie Chapman Catt had predicted that within ten years, half of the U.S. senate would be women. But women did not flock to the polls and run for office. Anne Dallas Dudley supported Governor Roberts' re-election campaign. When Roberts lost, he blamed women and his reluctant support of suffrage for the defeat. The League of Women Voters, which worked to pass several bills to benefit women and children, gradually lost power and disbanded. The league of Women Voters that we know today was founded during the Depression in 1936.

THE SUFFRAGISTS

✧ **Anne Dallas Dudley** – Nashville (1876-1955)

Anne Dallas daughter of a socially prominent Nashville family became a state and national leader in the suffrage movement. She was a mother of two and married to Guiford Dudley, a founder of Nashville's Life and Casualty Insurance Company. (This company is one of several companies that now is known as American General Life and Accident Insurance Company.) Mrs. Dudley's charm, graciousness, motherhood, social standing and feminine appearance contradicted the stereotype of suffragists as mannish, childless radicals.

Antisuffragists insisted that since only men could bear arms for their country, then only men should vote. Anne Dallas Dudley replied, "Yes, but women bear armies." Anne Dallas Dudley appears in the Tennessee Bicentennial Portrait that hangs in the State Capital.

✧ **Lizzie Crozier French** – Knoxville (1851-1926)

Lizzie Crozier French, widowed with an infant son, joined with her sisters to found the East Tennessee Female Institute, a girl's school in Knoxville. She was involved in women's issues, attended meetings of the Sorosis Club in New York City in 1885, then came back to Knoxville and organized Ossoli Circle, the first women's club in Tennessee. She advocated education for women of all ages.

When the 19th Amendment passed, she was already 71 years old and had accomplished many "firsts" as a woman. She served as a female police officer for women offenders. She was the first woman to address the Tennessee General Assembly. She spoke out for women's rights in Tennessee. One of her public speeches began: "I wish I could say 'fellow citizens.' But since I am not accepted as a citizen by the government, I must say citizens and fellow servants." She was first president of the Knoxville Equal Suffrage Society, a president of the Tennessee Equal Suffrage Association and a member of the National Woman's Party.

Lizzie Crozier French said, "The women of a race lay the foundations of character in the youth, and never will man be of the highest type possible to the human race until mothers learn the real meaning of freedom and enjoy it to the fullest extent in all its phases."

✧ **Catherine Talty Kenny** – Nashville (1874-1950)

Catherine Talty Kenny, an "intellectual" in the women's rights movement, worked with Abby Milton of Chattanooga to organize suffrage leagues across Tennessee. Milton said Kenny "had more political sense than half a dozen men."

After the passage of the 19th Amendment, Mrs. Kenny served as the second president of the Tennessee League of Women Voters. When her husband died in 1926, she moved away from Nashville.

✧ **Elizabeth Avery Meriwether** – Memphis (1824-1917)

Returning to her home in Memphis after refuge in Alabama during the Civil War, Elizabeth Avery Meriwether advocated full equality for women. She illegally voted in the 1872 presidential election. After that, she published *The Tablet*, a newspaper that supported women's rights and advocated equal economic opportunity. She appeared before the Memphis School Board and (unsuccessfully) demanded equal pay for women teachers.

Later, Elizabeth Meriwether traveled and spoke across the United States with Susan B. Anthony. Both women died before the 19th Amendment was passed.

✧ **Abby Crawford Milton** – Chattanooga (1881-1991)

Although she earned a law degree from Chattanooga College of Law, Abby Crawford Milton never practiced law in Tennessee. "I had a natural sense for law that helped me with my thinking, although I never planned to practice as any attorney, she once said, "I found the courthouse crowd didn't lie to me as much when they learned of my legal background." Mrs. Milton was the last president of the Tennessee Equal Suffrage Association and the first president of the League of Women Voters of Tennessee. She traveled the state speaking and organizing suffrage leagues in small towns.

In the thick of the 1920 "War of the Roses" in Nashville, Mrs. Milton lobbied the Tennessee General Assembly to vote for suffrage and become friends with national leader Carrie Chapman Catt. The Hermitage Hotel, headquarters for suffrage and anti-suffrage lobbyists, was "the scene of many fist fights and swarms of red roses" in the lobby every evening. No woman would dare venture down there. The mezzanine of the hotel had been bought up by the 'antis.' They served liquor there...It seemed too dramatic to happen in real life, but this was the real thrill of history-making, not the excitement of stage or movies. Personally, I had rather have had a share in the battle for women's suffrage than any other world event...The women suffragists have had the thrill, the victory in the struggle for liberty, that our ancestors had at the Declaration of Independence. It is the purest American patriotism." Mrs. Milton also helped create the Great Smokey Mountains National Park and was a delegate-at-large at the 1924 Democratic National Convention. She gave the seconding nomination for candidate William Gibbs McAdoo and a decade later ran for state senator.

✧ **Sue Shelton White** – Henderson (1887-1943)

Sue Shelton White, a member of many women's clubs, joined Carrie Chapman Catt and the Tennessee Equal Suffrage Association then left in 1917 to join Alice Paul's more radical National Women's Party (NWP), where she edited the organization's Suffragist publication. In the early spring before the 19th Amendment vote, NWP marchers rallied at the White House gates and Sue White burned in effigy a picture of President Woodrow Wilson, whose handling of the suffrage amendment did not satisfy the NWP radicals.

Moderate Tennessee suffragists condemned Sue White's "outside-the-system" approach. Said Anne Dallas Dudley, "It is unjust to hold a great body of over two million patriotic women responsible for the acts of a few half-crazed fanatics...Their whole policy is un-American...President Wilson has time and again proved the sincerity of his words." Some people felt that the NWP's actions and attitudes delayed the vote on the suffrage amendment. Others however, believed Sue White and her fellow radicals spurred President Wilson's support for the amendment.

After the 19th Amendment was ratified, Sue White earned a law degree, set up practice and helped draft and pass the Tennessee Married Women's Property Act, the Mother's Pension Law and the Old Age Pension Act. She was politically and legally active in the New Deal and pressed for women's rights until her death in 1943.

✧ **Charl Ormond Williams** – Memphis (1885-1969)

From 1914 to 1922, Charl Ormond Williams, an "aggressive and driving woman," served as Superintendent of Shelby County schools in Memphis, where she orchestrated a major school building program noted for its attention to African-American schools. She assumed the superintendent's role from

her sister, Mabel Williams Hughes, who in 1951 became a Tennessee state senator. Charl Ormond Williams was the first woman to be vice-chairman of the Democratic National Committee. After the 19th Amendment passed, she represented Tennessee at the national suffrage celebration in New York. In later years she was active in national politics in Washington, D.C., and became a friend of Eleanor Roosevelt. Charl Williams worked for civil rights and chaired a 1944 White House conference on “How Women May Share in Post-War Policy-Making.”

These are only a few of the thousands of Tennessee women whose hard work, vision and fortitude helped women gain the right to vote. When you realize how desperately these women worked to get Tennessee to be the 36th and final state to ratify the 19th Amendment, you see that each of these women may have been individually responsible for a critical vote giving women 75 years of voting rights, and the freedom to run for public office, influence community affairs, and shape national policy. Tennesseans can take pride in the history-making work of our native daughters.

WAR OF THE ROSES: Women’s Right to Vote

By Margaret L. Behm

Act I

Date: August 1920

Place: Nashville, Tennessee

Narrator: In 1920, Tennessee was a battleground for passage of the 19th Amendment, which gave women the right to vote. (Show sign.) Section 1 of the 19th Amendment simply says: *The right of 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.* However, these simple words caused much conflict. Those who wanted women to vote wore yellow roses. Those who tried to keep women from voting wore red roses. Tennessee was the last hope to pass the 19th Amendment. Here is the story of the War of the Roses.

[Suffragists, also called “suffs”, Catt, Kenney, Williams, Milton, White, Dudley and Pollitzer are gathered at the Hermitage Hotel, Nashville, Tennessee.]

Carrie Chapman Catt: 35 states that have given women the right to vote. We need one more state. Tennessee seems to be our last hope because the other states have either voted against the 19th Amendment or won’t even call the legislature in to session. We have to concentrate our efforts in Tennessee.

Catherine Talty Kenney: I agree. We’ll hold our meetings here at the Hermitage Hotel because it is right across the street from the State Capital. We can keep a close eye on the legislators and do our best to persuade them to allow women to vote.

Charl Ormond Williams: I am very worried. This state is hard to organize. The antisuffragists say many things which are not true. They say that if we vote, it will destroy families.

Abby Crawford Milton: Remember what Susan B. Anthony said. She was born 100 years ago in 1820, and she was one of the first persons in the United States to say women should get to vote. Susan B. Anthony said, “Failure is impossible.”

Sue Shelton White: We must not fail. Women and men have worked for women to get to vote for 70 years. The whole country is watching. We have to make sure women get the right to vote. Tennessee is our last hope.

Act II

[Antisuffragists, also known as “antis,” Pearson, Williams and Hale are gathered at the Hermitage Hotel in Nashville, Tennessee.]

Josephine Pearson: Things are looking good for us now. Although I know we can't keep the Senate from giving women the vote, the House of Representatives might block passage and then the suffragists will lose in Tennessee. Speaker Seth Walker has changed his position and now he will vote against women getting to vote.

Martha Williams: How can we get the votes in the House to block passage?

Annie Riley Hale: We need to keep in constant contact with the legislators who will vote with us to make sure they don't change their minds. We need to convince undecided legislators to vote with us. Speaker Walker can help us get legislators to change their minds and vote with us.

Martha Williams: We don't have the votes yet. How do we stop the Legislature from voting until we get the votes?

Annie Riley Hale: Speaker Walker is going to delay the legislative sessions until we have the votes we need to keep the 19th Amendment from passing.

Martha Williams: We've got a whole lot of work to do, but the whole country is watching. We must win the “War of the Roses.” We have to make sure women do not get the right to vote. Tennessee is their last hope.

Act III

[Living room, McMinn County, Tennessee]

[Mrs. Burn is reading a newspaper]

Mrs. J. L. Burn: There is no mention of Harry! I'm very worried about how my son, Harry, is going to vote. He's only 24, the youngest member of the House of Representatives. These speeches against women voting are so harsh. My husband has died, and I own much land and have many employees. Yet, even with all my responsibilities, I cannot vote. I haven't actively sought out the vote for women but I must do something now before it is too late. I must contact Harry. The only way I can get in touch with him is to write a letter.

[Mrs. Burns pretends to write a letter and she then reads it out loud]

Mrs. Burn: Dear Son, Hurrah and vote for suffrage! Don't keep them in doubt. I notice some of the speeches against. They were bitter. I have been watching to see how you stood but have not noticed anything. Don't forget to be a good boy and help Mrs. Catt put “rat” in ratification.

[After reading the letter, she puts it in the envelope.]

Mrs. Burn: I must mail this letter immediately. I hope it gets to Harry before he votes!

[Mrs. Burn leaves the stage quickly]

Act IV

[Debate in Nashville, Tennessee (or wherever your troop is located).]

[All antis (men and women) and suffs (men and women) are present to listen to the debate between Josephine Pearson, leader of the antis, and Anne Dallas Dudley, leader of the suffs.]

[A sign, "War of the Roses Debate," is between the two women.]

Josephine Pearson: Women should not be allowed to vote. Women's vote will destroy family life and male authority. Women should stay home and clean house.

[Antis applaud.]

Anne Dallas Dudley: Those same arguments were used when women were denied the ability to go to school and get an education. But with an education, we have improved the lives of our children, our families and our communities. We have felt better about ourselves. All people, men and women, should participate in our political process.

[Suffs applaud.]

Josephine Pearson: If this amendment passes, then black women will be allowed to vote. Also, black women will want equality. For these reasons, the 19th Amendment must fail.

[Antis applaud]

Anne Dallas Dudley: We should not deny any United States citizen, black or white, male or female, the right to vote. The color or sex of a person should not determine whether a person is qualified to vote. We all must be free to vote.

[Suffs applaud]

Act V

[Floor of the House of Representatives, Nashville, Tennessee]

Speaker Seth Walker: Good Morning, Representative Burn.

Representative Harry Burn: Good Morning, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Seth Walker: It is good to see you are voting with me. We need to make sure women don't get the vote, and the delay has allowed us to get more support to defeat the 19th Amendment. I like the red rose!

Representative Harry Burn: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I won't let you down.

[Speaker Walker walks off stage]

Representative Harry Burn: [To himself.] I need to make sure that I read this letter from Mother I got this morning. I keep carrying it around with me.

[Opens the letter and reads out loud]

Representative Harry Burn: “Hurrah, and vote for suffrage! Don’t keep them in doubt. I notice some of the speeches against. They were bitter. I have been watching to see how you stood, but have not noticed anything yet. Don’t forget to be a good boy and help Mrs. Catt put the ‘rat’ in ratification -Your Mother.”

Oh no! Mother would be very upset if she knew I was wearing a red rose and planning to vote against women getting the vote.

[Anita Pollitzer enters stage.]

Anita Pollitzer, suffragist: Mr. Burn, I see you have a red rose. Won’t you please consider your position and give women the vote? We really need you to vote with us, for it is very, very close.

Representative Harry Burn: Mrs. Pollitzer, my vote will never hurt you.

[Burn leaves the stage. Pollitzer remains and looks puzzled.]

Anita Pollitzer, suffragist: [To herself.] What did he mean by that, for he is wearing a red rose?

Act VI

[Floors of the House of Representatives, Nashville, Tennessee August 18, 1920.]

[Women suffragists are on one side of the room. Women antisuffragists are on the other side. Speaker Seth Walker is in between them. Representative Harry Burn, Representative Banks Turner and Representative Joe Hanover are seated at their desks ready to vote. Narrator is in the corner.]

Annie Riley Hale, antisuffragist: [To other suffragists.] Speaker Walker told me this morning that because of the delays, we now have enough votes to defeat the 19th Amendment. But some representatives don’t want to be on the record that they voted against the 19th Amendment. So, Speaker Walker told me he has a good idea that will kill the 19th Amendment.

Representative Joe Hanover: [Wearing a yellow rose.] Mr. Speaker, the motion to concur in the Senate action to ratify the 19th Amendment to give women the right to vote has been pending for several days. You have delayed the vote several times.

Speaker Seth Walker: You are right Representative Hanover. The hour has come. The battle has been fought and won, and I move that the motion to concur in the Senate action go where it belongs-to the table!

[Suffragists gasp in horror. Antisuffragists grin clap.]

Carrie Chapman Catt, suffragist: Oh no! Speaker Walker has moved to kill the bill. Instead of our needing the most votes to win, the antisuffragists can now win with the most votes. Some of our shakier votes may not stick with us and pass when it is their turn to vote. This way they will not have to vote. If the antisuffragists get the most votes, we will lose.

Speaker Seth Walker: It is time for the roll call.

Narrator: Thereafter, there was a roll call. The House Chambers was filled with tension.

Speaker Seth Walker: Representative Burn?

Representative Harry Burn: I vote to table the bill. I vote yes.

Speaker Seth Walker: Representative Hanover?

Representative Hanover: I vote against tabling the bill. I vote No.

Narrator: When it came time for Representative Banks Turner to vote, everyone held their breath. Representative Turner had been undecided and would not tell anyone how he would vote.

Speaker Seth Walker: Representative Turner?

Representative Banks Turner: I pass.

Narrator: Other votes were taken, and when the roll call finished, Speaker Walker smiled boldly.

[Speaker Seth Walker smiles boldly.]

Narrator: He was just about to say that the antisuffragists had killed the Amendment, when Representative Turner asked to speak.

Representative Banks Turner: Speaker Walker, please record my vote as “No.” I do not want to table the 19th Amendment.

[Speaker Walker frowns.]

Speaker Seth Walker: Record the vote.

[Rep. Turner and Rep. Hanover hold up signs that each read “48”]

Speaker Seth Walker: The vote is a tie. The motion to table the 19th Amendment fails.

[Suffragists scream in delight. Antisuffragists frown.]

Carrie Chapman Catt, suffragist: This is not good. Since it is a tie, we do not have enough votes to win when it comes time to vote for the amendment. We have to win by at least one vote.

Narrator: Speaker Walker then asks for a recount. He hopes that maybe someone will change their vote, knowing there was a tie, and he will be able to defeat the 19th Amendment.

Speaker Seth Walker: The roll call is ended. Record the vote

[Representative Turner and Representative Hanover hold up signs that each says “48.”]

Speaker Seth Walker: [Frowning.] Motion to reconsider fails.

Narrator: There was now no other choice. It was time to vote for or against the 19th Amendment. The suffragists were discouraged and afraid. If no legislator changed his vote to break the tie women would not get the vote. They had to have a majority of the vote to win. Just one more vote than the antisuffragists would be enough, but they did not know where that vote would come from.

Representative Hanover: I now renew my motion to ratify the 19th Amendment to give women the right to vote.

Speaker Seth Walker: Call the vote.

Narrator: The room was full of tension. The moment had come. Then Harry Burn’s name was called. Very quietly, he said:

Representative Harry Burn: [Mr. Burn very quietly takes out the letter and says.] Yes.

Speaker Seth Walker: What was that vote?

Representative Harry Burn: [Louder.] Yes.

[Suffragists all say to each other with smiles, “Did he say ‘Yes’?” At the same time, antisuffragists all say to each other with frowns, “Did he say, ‘Yes’? Oh no!”]

Narrator: When the roll call was finished the suffragists could hardly contain themselves. Speaker Walker asked for the final tally.

Speaker Seth Walker: Record the vote.

[Representative Hanover raises the sign that says “For—49.”]

[Speaker Walker raises the sign that says “No—47.”]

Speaker Seth Walker: The 19th Amendment passes. Women can vote.

[Suffragists scream and sing. They dance in the aisles. They take off their yellow roses and throw them in the air. Antisuffragists chase Harry Burns out of the room. Speaker Seth Walker slowly leaves the stage.]

Act VII-finale

[The next day, August 19, 1920, Nashville, Tennessee]

[Representative Harry Burn is with the suffragists at the Hermitage Hotel. He is wearing a yellow rose.]

Anita Pollitzer, suffragist: What changed your mind? You made the difference. Without your vote we would have lost.

Harry Burn: I got a letter from my mother. I know that a mother’s advice is always safest for her boy to follow, and my mother wanted me to vote for

ratification. I had told you that my vote would not hurt you. I made up my mind that if the 19th Amendment needed only one extra vote I would give it.

[The remaining cast comes on the stage. They have on their Girl Scout Uniforms or their costumes. Everyone is wearing a yellow rose.]

Narrator: So, the War of the Roses ended in Tennessee over 85 years ago when Tennessee gave women the right to vote.

Another speaker: The women’s right to vote was a long, hard struggle. Women and men fought for over 70 years to get the vote for women. They remembered what Susan B. Anthony said: “Failure is impossible.”

Another speaker: Tennessee took its place in history as the “Perfect 36,” the last and the 36th state to make women’s suffrage the law of the land. Women could now vote in Tennessee as well as across the United States.

All Girl Scouts: Now that we know about the War of the Roses and the fight for us to get the vote, we will always cherish that right. When we are old enough to vote, we will go vote. We now know that our vote, one vote, can make the difference.

The End

This play is designed for a small or large troop. Please change the play in any way so that it fits your troop. If you have a small troop, many parts can be combined for one person. If you have a large troop, there can be several narrators or more suffragists, antisuffragists and legislators. Also, the girls might want to change or add lines, especially if it is an older troop. Here are some suggested props. However, your troop will probably want to develop some of its own ideas.

Characters

Women Suffragists

Women Antisuffragists

Mrs. J. L. Burn

Speaker Seth Walker

Representative Harry Burn

Representative Joe Hanover

Representative Banks Turner

Other signs:

- Wording of Section 1 of the 19th Amendment
- War of the Roses Debate

Props

yellow roses (paper, plastic or real), long skirts, hats

red roses (paper, plastic or real), long skirts, hats

newspaper, reading glasses, long skirt, paper, pen and envelope, desk/chair

red rose, pants/suspenders, “No—47” sign

red rose, pants/suspenders, letter and envelope, yellow rose—finale, desk/chair

yellow rose, pants/suspenders, “48” sign, “Yes – 49” sign, desk/chair

no rose, pants/suspenders, “48” sign, desk/chair

THE BIBLIOGRAPHY

Selected Bibliography of Books and Materials on Suffrage and Women's Rights
By: Carole Bucy

Books Available for Students:

- Ash, Maureen. *The Story of the Women's Movement*. Chicago, Children's Press, 1989.
(grades 4-6) only a small part about suffrage
- Bacon, Margaret Hope. *I Speak for My slave Sister: The Life of Abby Kelly Foster*. New York, Crowell, 1974. (grades 7-12) pacifist, abolitionist, and campaigner for women's rights in the 1840s
- Blumburg, Rhoda. *Bloomers!* New York, Bradbury Press, 1993. (Kindergarten-3) delightful picture book
- Cullen-Dupont, Kathryn. *Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Women's Liberty*. New York, Facts on File, 1992.
(grades 7-12)
- Daffron, Carolyn. *Gloria Steinmen*. New York, Chelsea House Publishers, 1988. (grades 5-9) American Women of Achievement series.
- Feber, Doris. Lucretia Mott, *Foe of Slavery*. Champaign, Garrard publishing Co., 1971. (grades 3-5)
- Fritz, Jean. *Harriet Beecher Stowe and the Beecher Preachers*. New York, G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1994.
(grades 6-9)
- Gehret, Jeanne. *Susan B. Anthony and Justice for ALL*. Fairport, New York, Verbal Images Press, 1994.
(grades 5-9)
- Gleiter, Jan and Kathleen Thompson. *Elizabeth Cady Stanton*. Austin, TX, Raintree Publishers, 1988.
(grades 3-5) good illustrations.
- Hakim, Joy. *War, Peace, and All That Jazz*. New York, Oxford University Press, 1994. (grades 5-9) good review of 1918-1945; part of A History of US series
- Johnston, Norma. *Harriet, the Life and World of Harriet Beecher Stowe*. New York, Four Winds Press, 1994. (grades 7-12)
- Levin, Pamela. *Susan B. Anthony*. New York, Chelsea Juniors. 1993. (grades 4-8) part of the Junior World Biographies series
- Levinson, Nancy Smiler. *The First Women Who Spoke Out*. Minneapolis, Dillon Press, Inc., 1983.
(grades 5-8) Grimke, Lucretia Mott, Sojourner Truth, E. Stanton, Lucy Stone
- Meltzer, Milton. Betty Friedan, *A Voice for Women's Rights*. New York, Viking Kestrel, 1985.
(grades 4-6)
- Rooke, Patrick. *Women's Rights*. London, Wayland Publishers, 1972. (grades 7-12) Deals with women's rights in England, not in the United States.
- Sawyer, Kem Knapp. *Lucretia Mott: Friend of Justice*. Lowell, Massachusetts, Discovery Enterprises, Ltd., 1991. (grades 3-6) good illustrations, considerable text
- Smith, Betsy Covington. *Women Win the Vote*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J., Silver Burdett Press, 1989.
(grades 4-8) many photos, illustrations
- Stein, R. Conrad. *The Story of the Nineteenth Amendment*. Chicago, Children's Press, 1982.
(grades 3-5)
- Sullivan, George. *The Day the Women Got the Vote*. A Photo History of the women's Rights Movement. New York, Scholastic, Inc., 1994. (grades 5-9) excellent pictures
- Tedrow, T.L. *The Great Debate*. Nashville, Thomas Nelson, 1992. (grades 5-8) a novel
- Weisberg, Barbara. *Susan B. Anthony*. New York, Chelsea House Publishers, 1988. (grades 6-9) part of the American Women of Achievement series.
- Wharton, Mandy. *Rights of Women*. New York, Gloucester Press, 1989. (grades 6-9) International coverage. Note: This book may be controversial.

Books Providing General Background on American Womens' History for Adults:

- Chafe, William H. *The Paradox of Change: American Women in the 20th Century*. 1992.
- Covey, Alan, editor. *A Century of Women*. Atlanta. TBS Books, 1994
Based on documentary, numerous photos
- Davis, Louise. "Wilted Roses v. Women's Vote." Nashville Tales. Gretna, La., Pelican Publishing Company, 1981. (excellent read-aloud story for grades 5-12)
- Dykeman, Wilma. *Tennessee Women: An Infinite Variety*. Newport, Wakestone Books, 1993.
- Evans, Sara M. *Born for Liberty: A History of Women in America*. 1989.
- Flexner, Eleanor. *Century of Struggle: The Woman's Rights Movement in America*. 1975.
- Giddings, Paula. *When and Where I Enter: The Impact of Black Women on Race and Sex in America*. 1984.
- Scott, Anne Firor. *One Half the People: The Fight for Women's Suffrage*. Philadelphia, Lippincott, 1975. Chicago Press, 1970.
- Sherr, Lynn and Jurate Kazickas. *Susan B. Anthony Slept Here, A Guide to American Women's Landmarks*. New York, Random House/Times Book, 1994.
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- Weatherford, Doris. *American Women's History, An A to Z of People, Organizations, Issues and Events*. New York, Prentice-Hall, 1994.
- Wellin, Carol Lynn. "Countdown to Tennessee." American Heritage Magazine, December, 1978.

Related Tapes and Videos

- Anderson, Candace. *The Perfect Thirty-six*. Kalamazoo, MI, Hermoniker Records, 1989.
(audio tape) Available from Ms. Anderson at 1500 Acklen Avenue, Nashville, Tennessee 37212
- Generations. *Vote 70*. Memphis, TN. (video of suffrage in Tennessee) Available from Paula Casey at 109 Main street, Memphis, TN 38103 Cost: \$20.00
- How We Got the Vote, The Exciting Story of the Struggle for Female Equality*. Republic Pictures Home Video. (52-minute video) Available from National Women's History Project in California (see below)
- One Woman, One Vote*. American Experience Public Television series.
- There's No Such Thing as Woman's Work*. Women's Bureau of the U.S. Department of Labor, 1987.
(30-minute video)
- We the Women*. (excellent 8-mm move available in the Nashville Public Library)

Note: An excellent free catalog of materials and posters are available for purchase by contacting the National Women's History Project, www.nwhp.org. Phone number: 707-636-2888.