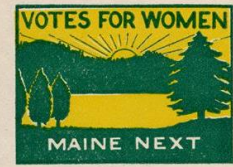


## WOMEN'S LONG ROAD

MAINE STATE MUSEUM TEACHER MATERIALS



## Maine Suffrage Who's Who

*Meet the Mainers who made the movement!*

### Olive Rose (1812-ca. 1875)

Olive Rose was the first woman known to be elected to office in Maine. She became assistant register of deeds of Warren in 1853. She was elected with 73 votes, her opponent (a man) got 4 votes.

An 1853 article in *The Maine Age* talked about her election. It said, "Men may laugh, and jeer and fume, as much as they please about this matter of 'woman's rights:' they cannot escape the issue."

### Julia Ward Howe (1819-1910)



Julia Ward Howe was an abolitionist and author born in Massachusetts. She opposed woman suffrage – until she heard Lucy Stone and other equal suffrage supporters speak. She helped form the American Woman Suffrage Association and other suffrage groups in New England. Howe edited the *Woman's Journal* for twenty years.

Howe visited Maine often because her daughter lived in Gardiner. She spoke at many Maine Woman Suffrage Association events. She was a strong believer in women's moral superiority to men. She used religion as an argument for women deserving the right to vote. Howe also was a peace activist and promoted education and careers for women. She was famous for writing the song "The Battle Hymn of the Republic."

*"The tree of prejudice must be cut down, and women and men in this country made sovereigns alike." - Julia Ward Howe, 1873*

### **Sarah Jane Lincoln O'Brion (1821-1904)**

Sarah Jane Lincoln O'Brion of Cornish, Maine was inspired by reading about the Seneca Falls convention. She worked for equal rights throughout her life. She served on the Maine Woman Suffrage Association (MWSA) executive committee from about 1885 to 1900. In 1885, she invited suffragist Lucy Stone to speak in Cornish and Augusta in 1855.

The MWSA held annual conventions, helped organize community suffrage groups, sent petitions to the Maine Legislature, and educated the public.

### **Rebecca Usher (1821-1912)**



Rebecca Usher of Hollis, Maine, chose to study French at a convent in Quebec. When her father died in 1855, she helped run his sawmill business. At age 41, she volunteered as a nurse in the Civil War and served at several army hospitals.

She signed many petitions over the years asking for women's suffrage. Usher was 78 years old in 1899 when she circulated and signed a petition to the Maine legislature objecting to paying taxes because she could not vote. An independent, single woman, Usher was active in community affairs and kept in touch with a number of soldiers and nurses she had met during the war.

Maine Historical Society photo

### **Jane H. Spofford (1826-1905) and Sophronia Snow (1833-1905)**



Jane H. Snow Spofford and Sophronia Snow of Hampden, Maine were active in the national suffrage movement. They lived in Washington D.C. where Jane and her husband, Caleb W. Spofford, ran the Riggs House hotel from 1876 to 1891. The hotel hosted National Woman Suffrage Association (NWSA) meetings and often housed prominent suffrage supporters when they were in Washington. The Spoffords became friends with Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and others. Jane Spofford also served as treasurer of the NWSA.

In 1895, the sisters organized the Hampden Woman's Suffrage Society. They continued to support suffrage efforts in Maine, circulating and signing petitions and hosting other events.

*"We found equal rights very unpopular with those who do not understand the principle."* - Jane Spofford, 1895

Photo courtesy of *History of Woman Suffrage Vol. III*

### Lavinia Snow (1826-1917) and Lucy A. Snow (1832-1912)



Lavinia Snow photo courtesy of  
Rockland Historical Society

Sisters Lavinia and Lucy Snow of Rockland were strong women's rights supporters. They were both known for independent thought. They founded the Rockland Equality League in 1868. It was Maine's first local women's suffrage group.

Lavinia remained single and Lucy married George L. Snow (1828-1891), who also helped organize suffrage meetings. Lavinia Snow heard Abraham Lincoln and Stephen Douglas speak in Illinois in 1857 and was a strong Lincoln supporter. She died several months before her planned trip to attend the 1917 suffrage parade/protest in Washington, D.C.

Lucy was at the American Equal Rights Association meeting in 1868 and the founding of the National Woman Suffrage Association.

*"I well recall the feeling of degradation that seized upon me when my younger brother arrived at the age of 21. That he ... should have a voice and a ballot, while I, at least his intellectual equal, should be condemned to*

*silence and political inaction, was deep injustice that I never have been reconciled to."*- Lavinia Snow

*"She never wavered in her espousal to [woman suffrage] and happily lived to see six states enfranchise its women .... but regretted that her native state still held them in bondage, as she expressed it."* Lucy Snow's obituary, 1912

### Ann F. Jarvis Greely (1831-1914) and Charlotte Hill (1834-ca. 1890)

Ann F. Jarvis Greely of Ellsworth was a supporter of abolition, temperance, and women's rights. Greely was an early Maine businesswoman. She opened her own millinery shop (shop that sells hats) in 1851, which she continued to run after she married real estate agent Everard H. Greely in 1853.

Charlotte Hill of Gouldsboro was a violinist and music and dance teacher who also wrote opinion pieces to newspapers using the pen name "Dirigo." Greely was also known for voicing her opinions. Greely wrote a newspaper column under a pen name "Qui Est," which is Latin for "Who is This?" When a reader tried to insult suffragists by calling them "old maids," Greely wrote, "The ladies interested in this movement are in such demand that they can't stop to be old maids." In another column, she points out that more people are willing to defend Maine's lobsters than Maine's women.

Anne Greely, Charlotte Hill, and Sarah Jarvis organized an equal rights lecture series in Ellsworth in 1857. In 1857, national suffrage leader Susan B. Anthony came to Maine to speak in the series and drew a large crowd. Greely and Hill created and signed many petitions to the legislature. Ann Greely attended the organizational meeting of the Maine Woman Suffrage Association in 1873 and served on the committee that wrote their resolutions.

### Elizabeth M. Young Allen (1838-1929)



Elizabeth Allen, 51, of Dresden wrote to the legislature in January 1889. She asked for the right to vote – not for all women, but just for herself.

In the letter, she said she was old enough to vote and had lived in Dresden for 14 years. She studied reading, writing, and arithmetic. She also said she was "treated with respect in public places."

She was married to Charles E. Allen, a printer, farmer, and historian. Her husband supported progressive causes including labor and women's suffrage. He passed away before Elizabeth Allen finally was able to cast a vote in 1920.

### Hannah Johnston Bailey (1839-1923)



Hannah J. Bailey of Winthrop was a writer, lecturer, business woman, and activist. She was well-known nationally for her work with the Woman's Christian Temperance Union.

Bailey was born in New York State. She taught school until she married widower Moses Bailey (1817-1882) of Winthrop in 1868. After his death, she ran his oil cloth and rug manufacturing business.

She was president of the Maine Woman Suffrage Association from 1891 to 1897 and helped revive the group, which had been struggling. She organized petition drives and testified before the legislature, fighting both for suffrage and temperance.

*"I never pay my taxes but what I feel like protesting against taxation without representation, and I have thought of paying them on the installment plan so as to protest as often as possible."* - Hannah J. Bailey, 1895. Courtesy of the Hannah J. Bailey Papers

*Swarthmore College Peace Collection photo*



### Clara Hapgood Nash (1839- 1921)



CLARA HOLMES HAPGOOD NASH.

Clarissa "Clara" Hapgood Nash was the first woman in Maine – and probably New England – admitted to the bar to practice law. She and her husband, Frederick C. Nash ran the law firm F. C. and C. H. Nash. She was a woman's rights supporter.

Nash was a native of Acton, Massachusetts. She studied at Pierce Academy in Massachusetts, Appleton Academy in New Hampshire, and the State Normal School in Framingham, Massachusetts. She taught school before her marriage in 1869. The couple left Maine in about 1880 to settle in Massachusetts.

*"Scarcely a day passes but something occurs in our office to rouse my indignation afresh by reminding me of the utter insignificance with which the law, in its every department, regards woman, and its utter disregard of her rights as an individual."*- Clara Hapgood Nash, 1872

Photo courtesy of [\*A Woman of the Century\*](#)

### Lillian M. N. Stevens (1844-1914)



Lillian Stevens of Portland met national temperance leader Frances Willard at a meeting at Old Orchard Beach in 1874, and got involved in the national Woman's Christian Temperance Union. Stevens helped form the Maine WCTU in 1875, and was its president from 1878 until her death in 1914. She became national WCTU president following Willard's death in 1898. Willard pushed the WCTU into supporting suffrage – a move not supported by all WCTU members or by all suffrage groups.

Stevens was active in the Maine Woman Suffrage Association and often testified at the Maine Legislature on behalf of women voting.

*"Two years ago we were met with the old argument that no considerable portion of the women of Maine want the ballot. We who came then were told that it would be better for our claims should we have the State represented by women from every section if we wanted to prove that we really want the ballot. ... Gentlemen, we have come."* - Lillian Stevens,

February 1885

Photo courtesy of the Frances E. Willard Memorial Library Archives

### **Ira G. Hersey (1858-1943)**



*Photo courtesy of the Library of Congress*

Ira Hersey of Houlton was one of Maine's strongest suffrage supporters in the early 1900's. He was a lawyer and ran for governor in 1886, but was not elected. He was a Republican state representative from 1909-1912, then a state senator. Hersey was president of the Senate from 1915-1916. He served in the U.S. House of Representatives from 1916 to 1929.

Hersey brought suffrage bills through both houses of the state legislature and supported the federal amendment in Congress. He gave long, passionate speeches to the legislature. He quoted history, comments from states where women could vote, and poetry and literature.

*"[My wife] stands by my side today in the battle of life and in the battle for bread, but she can take no part with me in defending our country and our home against the enemies of the country and the home. We were born in the same town. I vote, but she cannot because she is of a different sex ..." - Ira Hersey, 1911*

### **Isabel Greenwood (1862-1958)**

Isabel Greenwood of Farmington, Maine was active in many community groups and causes. She started the Farmington Equal Suffrage Association in 1906. She was one of the new activists who trained in lobbying and speaking in the early 1900s. Greenwood sat at tables at county fairs, spoke at clubs and rallies, and gathered petition signatures.

In 1906 she was part of a group that voted to establish the Franklin County Suffrage Association. Isabel Greenwood was elected president. They hosted the state suffrage convention in 1907. In ten years the group grew from 11 to 45 members.

### **Harriet Bird (1863-1932)**



Harriet Bird of Yarmouth was a vocal anti-suffrage speaker, debater, and worker. In 1918 Bird was elected president of the Maine Association Opposed to Suffrage for Women. She was active in many clubs and civic associations, including the Grange (which was pro-suffrage). Bird was a graduate of Wellesley College. She taught school until her marriage. Her husband was George E. Bird, a lawyer and associate justice on the Maine Supreme Judicial Court.

At a legislative hearing in 1917, Harriet Bird argued that "women were now completely employed in their homes" as well as working as teachers, nurses, and in other jobs. She argued women did not have time for politics. She often debated pro-suffrage speaker Elsie Wellcome (1893-1918), but the two women were friendly with each

*Photo courtesy of the Yarmouth Historical Society*

other. Wellcome was the assistant postmistress in Yarmouth and was 30 years younger than Bird.

*"Suffrage leads to Feminism and Feminism destroys the home. ... suffrage is not necessary, and the bad results that would be the outcome are too great to risk."* - Harriet Bird 1914

### Gail Laughlin (1868-1952)



Photo courtesy of the Library of Congress

Gail Laughlin of Robbinston, Maine moved to California and became a lawyer and national suffrage leader. She frequently visited her home state of Maine to speak at suffrage group meetings. She graduated from high school in Portland and attended Wellesley College and Cornell University Law School. She was the first president of the National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs.

Laughlin returned to Portland in 1924 to practice law. She was active in the campaign for the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA). She led a 200-car motorcade to South Dakota to try to get President Calvin Coolidge's support for the ERA in 1927. Gail Laughlin served six terms as a representative and senator in the Maine Legislature where she worked on laws to help workers, promote women's rights, improve services for people in need, and prohibit alcohol.

*"It has been a long, long way over which women have traveled to reach their present position but nothing now can stop them until the goal of full equality of rights and opportunity is won."* - Gail Laughlin, ca. 1933

### Florence Brooks Whitehouse (1869-1945)



Photo courtesy of the Library of Congress

Florence Brooks Whitehouse was a native of Augusta, Maine. She joined the Congressional Union/National Woman's Party (NWP) after hearing an anti-suffrage speech. She helped form its Maine chapter and local groups throughout the state. She frequently spoke about woman suffrage, debated anti-suffrage speakers, and wrote a suffrage column for newspapers. She worked to try to pass the failed 1917 Maine referendum. She then helped ensure that Maine ratified the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment in 1919.

Florence Brooks Whitehouse and her husband Robert Treat Whitehouse both became active in the Civic Club in Portland in 1912 and woman suffrage in about 1913. She tried to work with the Maine Woman Suffrage Association (MWSA) but ran into problems. The MWSA was connected with the National American Woman Suffrage Association, which was NWP's rival. Both organizations wanted her to choose just one.



### Maud Wood Park (1871-1955)



*Photo courtesy of the Carrie Chapman Catt papers, Bryn Mawr College Library Special Collections*

Maud Wood Park was a native of Massachusetts who moved to Cape Elizabeth, Maine after retirement. She was one of only a few students in her 1898 Radcliffe College graduating class who favored suffrage. She organized the College Equal Suffrage League and traveled the country to help establish chapters of that organization.

In 1916, Park became the head of the congressional committee of the National American Woman Suffrage Association. She skillfully coordinated the lobbying effort that successfully led to two-thirds vote of both houses of Congress approving the 19<sup>th</sup>

Amendment. She described the twists and turns of that work in her book *Front Door Lobby*.

Maud Wood Park was the first president of the League of Women Voters. While living in Cape Elizabeth she worked on writing projects such as a play about the life of early suffragist Lucy Stone.

*“I see no more reason for the men of my family to decide my political opinions and express them for me at the polls than to choose my hats and wear them, or my religious faith and occupy my seat in church.” - Maud Wood Park ca. 1915*

### Deborah Knox Livingston (1874-1923)



Deborah Knox Livingston and her husband, the Rev. Benjamin T. Livingston, were both natives of Glasgow, Scotland. They came to Maine from Rhode Island late in 1912 when Benjamin became minister at the Columbia Street Baptist Church in Bangor.

Livingston led the 1917 referendum campaign to approve a constitutional amendment to give Maine women the right to vote. She was active in both the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) and the Maine Woman Suffrage Association (MWSA). The National American Woman Suffrage Association paid her salary to run the campaign.

Livingston's organizational skills quickly drew attention in the MWSA. She frequently testified at the Legislature and spoke throughout the state – often to rave reviews. She also headed the WCTU Franchise Department starting in 1913.

*“The gateway of political equality is creaking on its hinges. During the last seven years a greater advancement has been made than in the 70 years previous.” - Deborah Knox Livingston, 1917*



### **Katharine Reed Balentine (1875-1934)**

Katharine Reed, a native of Portland, married Arthur Balentine in 1905 and the couple moved to California. She started *The Yellow Ribbon*, a statewide suffrage newspaper. California women got the vote in 1911.

Balentine came back to Maine shortly after her mother died in 1914. She continued her suffrage work with the Portland Equal Suffrage League and Maine Woman Suffrage Association. She served as president in 1917 during the unsuccessful referendum campaign in Maine. She and her family returned to California by the early 1920s.

Balentine and Florence Brooks Whitehouse frequently argued over strategies during the intense last few years of the suffrage movement in Maine.

*"There is nothing radical about equal suffrage."* - Katharine Reed Balentine, 1917

### **Annie "Lou" Rogers (1879 – 1952).**



Annie Rogers, who went by her nickname "Lou," was born in Patten, Maine. She was one of the first, and the most popular, female suffrage cartoonists in America.

Rogers was taught school in Patten until she went to the Massachusetts Normal Art School. When she was about 21 years old, she went to New York City to pursue a career as a political cartoonist.

During the 1910s, Rogers' cartoons were published by *The New York Call*, *Woman's Journal*, *Woman Citizen*, and *Judge Magazine*. At *Judge* she regularly contributed to the column, "The Modern Woman." In 1918 she joined Margaret Sanger's *Birth Control Review* as one of three art editors.

Lou Rogers' drawings show injustice in a country where women have no control over the laws that govern their bodies. There is also a theory that her work inspired the original drawings of the

superhero Wonder Woman.

After women won the vote, Rogers continued to draw cartoons. She also became an NBC radio personality and wrote and illustrated children's books. She died in 1952 and is buried in Patten, Maine.

### Lucy Nicolar Poolaw (1882-1969)



*Photo courtesy of New England Historical Society*

Lucy Nicolar Poolaw of Indian Island, Maine, was artistic and talented from an early age. Before she turned twenty and began performing nationwide as Princess Wahtawaso. She brought songs, legends, and dances from Native American cultures to mostly white audiences.

She returned to Indian Island in 1930 and spent the rest of her life using artistry and activism to benefit the Penobscot people. With her husband, Poolaw presented large dramatic pageants of Indian life and opened an Indian crafts shop. She helped improve education for Penobscot children and successfully lobbied for a bridge between the mainland and the island.

Poolaw and her sister, Florence Shay, also tackled voting rights. In Maine, Indians living on reservations were considered “wards of the state.” That meant they did not pay taxes and could not vote. Finally, in a 1954 referendum, Maine people approved Indian voting rights for all elections. In 1955, Lucy Nicolar Poolaw was the first Native person living on a reservation to cast a vote in Maine.

### Camille Lessard Bissonnette (1883-1970)



*Photo courtesy of University of Southern Maine, Franco-American Collection*

Camille Lessard was born in Quebec, Canada, and moved to Lewiston with her family in 1904. She worked in a textile mill for four years. She began writing a woman's column for *Le Messenger*, Lewiston's French-language newspaper.

Lessard was concerned for all women and the difficult circumstances they faced. She wrote about the need for women's suffrage in the U.S. and Quebec.

She left Lewiston around 1912 but continued to write about suffrage. In 1936, she published a novel, *Canuck*, about a young French-Canadian immigrant to the U.S. In 1943, she married Napoleon P. Bissonnette.

Many Franco-Americans were torn about the suffrage issue.

Suffrage was closely tied with the prohibition of alcohol, which many Franco-Americans did not support. There was also a Republican-backed 1892 law that required a literacy test – often given in English – to vote. Most Franco-Americans were Democrats.

### Dora Bradbury Pinkham (1891-1941)



Dora Bradbury Pinkham was born in New Limerick, Maine and became Maine's first female legislator. She attended schools in Fort Kent and Houlton, graduated from Mount Holyoke College, and earned a Master's Degree from Columbia University. She worked in the U.S. Department of Labor before returning to Maine where she married, taught school, and became an investigator for the U.S. Children's Bureau.

Pinkham settled in Fort Kent. She won election to the Maine House of Representatives in 1922 at the age of 31. She sponsored a bill to authorize Maine's participation in the Sheppard-Towner Maternity and Infancy Act, the first federally-funded social welfare program. Pinkham's bill passed the legislature, but was vetoed by the governor.

Dora Pinkham lost her re-election bid in 1924, but in 1926, won a State Senate seat. During her first senate term, Pinkham chaired two committees and sponsored many pieces of legislation, including a

successful effort to ensure, at last, Maine's participation in the federal Sheppard-Towner Act.