

CHRONOLOGY

Of the

Woman's Rights Movement in Illinois

The old English common law relating to woman's rights was practically unchanged in Illinois during the first half of the nineteenth century. Under it, married women had no right to their children, to their earnings, to their personal property, to the income from their real estate, or to their own personal liberty. Husbands had full control. Women were not admitted to the professions nor to higher schools of learning. They did not vote or hold office. Not only were these rights of women denied by law, but what was worse, many wrongs against women were not recognized nor redressed. The age of consent was ten years. No holier crusade ever enlisted nobler heroes than this which sought to gain the denied rights of women and to redress their wrongs. Many exhausted workers have died in the ranks but their places have been filled by younger women of unflinching courage and the cause moved on. Although the early progress was heartbreakingly slow, notice, that there have been no backward steps. No law giving women greater liberty has been repealed. Illinois men believe that Illinois women deserve all they have received up to date.

1855 First local suffrage Association in Illinois organized at Earlville. Moline, our oldest living club, was not organized until 1877.

1860 Dr. Hannah Tracy Cutler and Mrs. Frances D. Gage campaigned Illinois asking for suffrage and equal property rights.

1861 Mr. Pickets of Rock Island introduced in the Legislature the property rights bill. A petition about woman's rights resulted in an indecent report from a committee of the Legislature. Dr. Cutler asked the Legislature to make mothers joint guardians.

For several years the abolition of slavery engrossed the attention of many woman's rights workers. They were promised their freedom if they would help free the slaves. The Sanitary Commission also absorbed much time and money. Double agricultural, industrial and financial burdens were borne by women whose husbands, sons and brothers went to war. The negroes were finally freed, but Illinois women were left in the same legal position they were before the war. Their improved abilities, their sharpened wits, their successful achievements made their desire for liberty greater.

1868 In the fall, preliminary state organization effected.

1869 February in the Library Hall, Chicago, The Illinois Equal Suffrage Association was organized with Mary A. Livermore, President. Myra Bradwell was refused admission to the Illinois bar. She appealed to U. S. Supreme Court. A wife's wages were secured to her own use by Illinois law.

1870 Although the Constitutional convention refused to submit a woman's suffrage proposition, Judge J. B. Bradwell and Judge C. B. Waite secured the omission of a clause forbidding women to hold office. Ada H. Kepley of Union College of Law, Chicago, now the Law Department of Northwestern University, was the first woman in the world to be graduated from a law college.

- 1872** Catherine V. Waite filed a petition for mandamus to compel election officers to allow her to vote, but she was refused. Fathers and mothers were made equal in inheritance from a deceased child. As Myra Bradwell was held by U. S. Supreme Court to be ineligible to practice law, she and Alta M. Hulett then secured the passage of the law admitting women to all occupations and professions.
- 1873** The statute was passed recognizing women's eligibility to hold school offices.
- 1874** Ten women were elected County Superintendents of schools. "Curtesy" was abolished. Spouses' interests in each other's real estate were made a dower right for each.
- 1875** Women were allowed to be Notaries Public. Myra Bradwell secured the word "persons" in the law concerning notaries.
- 1876** Elizabeth Boynton Harbert was elected President of Illinois Equal Suffrage Association; re-elected until 1884, and then later, twice, one year each. Mrs. Harbert's idea for a "Sane Fourth" carried out at Evanston was the forerunner of the present Sane Fourth reform. Dr. Sarah Hackett Stevenson was the first woman admitted to American Medical Association.
- 1877** Woman's Kingdom in Inter Ocean with Mrs. Harbert editor for seven years, helped woman's cause. Mary H. Krout later was editor.
- 1879** The mammoth petition for suffrage for women was signed by 180,000 persons, but it was kicked about scornfully in the Legislature. This made Frances E. Willard more zealous for suffrage. The W. C. T. U. had many suffrage workers. Ten small Illinois cities allowed women a straw vote on the license question, but the men who elected the aldermen controlled. Helen Schuhardt was held by the lower court ineligible to be Master in Chancery, but the Supreme Court later reversed this decision; a Master's position was appointive.
- 1884** Mary E. Holmes was elected President of Illinois Equal Suffrage Association for five years and again for seven years, 1890 to 1897.
- 1887** Age of consent was raised from 10 to 14 years. Catherine V. Waite, the Superintendent of Legislative work, sent her resolution for suffrage amendment to Speaker Elizah M. Haines. She was Superintendent until the election of Mrs. McCulloch in 1890.
- 1888** Large suffrage conventions were held in the northern half of Illinois by Senator M. B. Castle, for twenty years Chairman of Executive Committee, Mary E. Holmes, Julia Mills Dunn, Helen M. Gouger, and Judge C. B. Waite. Many organizations were effected in this year and during the rest of Mrs. Holmes's presidency.
- 1891** Senator Charles Bogardus fathered a measure for full suffrage in the Senate. Hon. G. W. Curtis, of Lena, in the House, secured 54 votes, a

majority of those voting, but not enough. Mrs. Zerelda G. Wallace Mrs. Holmes and Mrs. McCulloch held six weeks of conventions in southern Illinois, even to Cairo. Senator Thomas C. MacMillan secured, 29 votes in the Senate for the School Suffrage Bill and Dr. H. M. Moore got 83 votes in the House. It passed. Four times the Supreme Court has decided what are its various constitutional limitations. The Child Labor Law passed.

- 1893** Senator Charles Bogardus made an excellent report to the Senate on the petitions, saying that there were more for woman suffrage than for all other subjects put together. Twelve anti-suffragists signed a petition. Mrs. Altgeld, the wife of the Governor, came on to the floor of the Senate and personally thanked the Senators who on second reading had voted for our bill. Senator R. W. Coon secured the necessary 26 votes in Senate for the passage of the township suffrage bill
- 1894** Dr. Julia Holmes Smith was appointed to fill an unexpired term on the Board of Trustees of State University, the first woman. Mrs. Lucy L. Flower, who had been elected before, took her seat second. Mrs. Florence Kelley was appointed Chief Factory Inspector. No other State has thus honored women. Governor Altgeld appointed several women to important positions.
- 1895** First big suffrage hearing with twenty women speakers. Senator R. W. Coon secured 23 votes for the township suffrage bill.
- 1897** Senator George W. Munroe labored faithfully to pass our bills.
- 1898** At special session about taxation Senator Munroe introduced bill to exempt women's property from taxation until they could vote.
- 1899** Governor Tanner appointed Mary M. Bartelme Public Guardian of Cook County. She was reappointed by Governors Yates and Deneen. Senator Isaac M. Hamilton forced two of our bills to a vote. Suffrage petitions from 25,000 labor union men of Chicago were well received.
- 1901** Joint Guardianship Bill passed Senate with 34 votes and House with 119. Senator Niels Juul and Rev. John Hughes fathered the bill. Rev. Kate Hughes worked for it constantly. Supreme Court decided tax cases in favor of Teachers' Federation.
- At this session and the many following sessions suffrage amendments, township suffrage bills and larger suffrage bills were introduced every session by different Senators, among them being Senators D. A. Campbell, O. T. Berry, E. C. Curtis, John McKenzie, and James Gibson. Petitions were presented, literature mailed, letters poured in from constituents, eloquent speeches were made and the tone of Illinois newspapers grew more friendly. At one hearing Iva G. Wooden had pasted the petitions on muslin a yard wide and draped 75 yards of them from the galleries and through the aisles of the House.
- 1902** Illinois Federation of Women's Clubs endorsed a tax-paying woman's suffrage bill.
- 1903** At an Executive Mansion reception, Mrs. Yates, the wife of Governor

Yates, asked two of the suffrage officers to stand by her in the receiving line. Since then Governor Deneen's wife has often invited the suffrage officers and speakers to her receptions following the suffrage hearings.

1904 Illinois Federation of Woman's Clubs endorse municipal suffrage bill.

1905 Age of consent raised to 16 years.

1906 Ella S. Stewart was elected President of the Illinois Woman Suffrage Association. Illinois Federation of Woman's Clubs endorsed woman suffrage in the proposed Chicago charter.

1907 Ellen M. Henrotin, chairman of delegates from women's organizations aggregating a membership of 100,000 women urged municipal woman suffrage in the Chicago charter. It was defeated in convention by only one majority. Though this charter passed the Legislature no woman worked for its approval and it was defeated by the voters.

1909 Jane Addams was chairman of the committee which went before the charter makers the second time. They agreed to submit a separate woman suffrage measure which in the Legislature received more votes than most of the separate measures. Senator Charles Billings secured twenty-five votes for the full state wide municipal suffrage bill. Ten hour law, law against pandering and law as to providing seats for women employees passed both houses.

1910 Ella Flagg Young elected Chicago Superintendent of Schools and later President of National Educational Association. At special legislative session Senator Martin Bailey and Representative R. P. Hagen introduced bills to allow women to vote at primary elections and under a commission form of government. Summer suffrage auto tours covered seven-eighths of Illinois counties. Jane Addams was elected President of National Conference of Charities and Corrections.

1911 Municipal Suffrage bill passed the Senate with a vote of 31 to 10; thanks to Senator Wm. M. Brown and other friends. Representative Homer Tice secured two roll calls in the House, on the first of which we had 74 friends and on the last 67. We needed 77 there to pass the bill. This is the first time in many years that the House has gone on record. Ten hour law for women extended to more occupations. Automobile tours in the counties not touched in 1910 find similar enthusiasm.

1913 What will be done by this Legislature? Will it do as well as did five other State Legislatures in 1911? Wisconsin, Kansas, California, Oregon and Nevada submitted the question to the voters. Six other states already have fully enfranchised their women: Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, Idaho, Washington and California. Illinois will continue her progress when the voters demand it insistently.

CATHARINE WAUGH McCULLOCH

The Illinois Equal Suffrage Association, 934 Fine Arts Bldg., Chicago, sell this leaflet at \$3.00 per thousand.