

The Woman's Suffrage Movement: Dayton, Ohio (1890-1920)

Created By: Michelle Schweickart

The Battle for Suffrage in Ohio



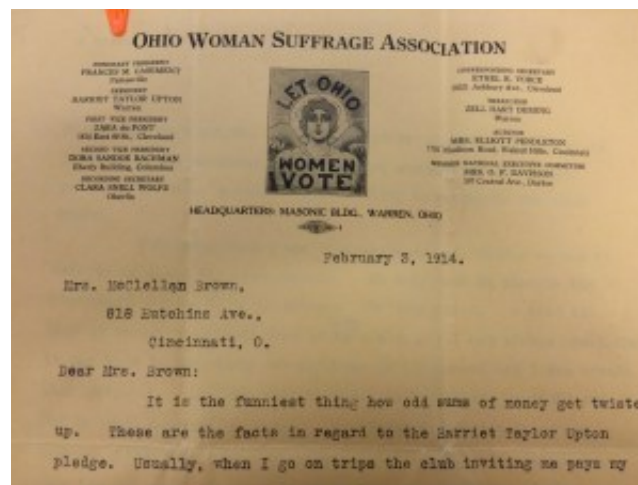
<https://womensuffragemovementindayton.files.wordpress.com/2015/04/let-ohio-women-vote-postcard.jpg>

"The devotion, the efficiency, the self-sacrifice of the suffrage workers in Ohio will never be known. Their strength lay in their cooperation. To give their names and their work would fill all the space allowed for this chapter . . ." – Ida Husted Harper, The History of Woman

Suffrage, Vol. VI, Chapter XXXIV: Ohio (1922).

The Early Years of the Suffrage Movement in Ohio

The local Women's Suffrage Movement first gained popularity in Ohio largely due to the second Woman's Rights Convention having been held in Salem, Ohio from April 19-20, 1850. It quickly gained momentum through groups such as the Ohio State Woman's Suffrage Association and the State Woman Suffrage Association formed in 1885; Mrs. Frances M. Casement and Mrs. Harriet Taylor Upton led these groups, respectively. The movement particularly in Ohio gained momentum out of the Temperance and Anti-slavery movements (MS-004 Finding Aid, 9). Many of the same advocates, both men and women, took to this new cause with the same vigor. These activists came from all different walks of life, and Ohio suffragists understood that these new supporters viewed the Women's Suffrage Movement as a new frontier in which to continue their movements for equal rights for all citizens. Their enthusiasm and varied backgrounds would prove to be increasingly useful for campaigning in Ohio, and the Ohio chapters of the Women's Suffrage Movement would prove to be progressive and unique in their acceptance of many people previously ostracized by the movement on the national level.



<https://womenssuffragemovementindayton.files.wordpress.com/2015/04/ohio-woman-suffrage-association-letterhead-e1429539706306.jpg>

The Early Years of the Suffrage Movement in Dayton

On January 12, 1869, the Woman's Suffrage Association was formed, and would last until 1874. This was the first women's suffrage group organized in Dayton, Ohio. Judge Samuel Boltin served as president (MS-004 Finding Aid, 9-10). Other groups such as the Dayton Equal Rights Association and the Woman's Suffrage Party of Montgomery County formed later and ran by women such as Dr. Madge Dickson and Mrs. Jesse Leech Davisson (MS-004 Finding Aid, 10). Many upper class women

served on the executive committees for these organizations and played a prominent role in the community such as Mrs. James Robert, Mrs. Valentine Winters and Miss Electra C. Doren. These groups did not always last long; some such as the Dayton Equal Rights Association only lasted one year (MS-004 Finding Aid, 10). The Women's Suffrage Movement in Dayton faced the same problems the rest of the movement. According to Harper, "There was never any state-wide anti-suffrage association of women but only small groups in Cleveland, Cincinnati, Dayton and Columbus. Most were rich, well-situated, not familiar with organized reform work, and not knowing the viciousness of their associates," (511).

Real opposition represented itself in the form of liquor supporters and interests. These supporters were known by various names, depending on the campaign, and were known as The Stability League, The Personal Liberty League or Home Rule Association (Harper, 511). Women also had to lobby for support among other resistant women, various immigrant groups, and religious factions despite rejection and indifference. Many of their opponents were politicians and affluent, wealthy citizens (MS-004 Finding Aid, 10). Of these, the biggest problem they faced was indifference. If they couldn't get people interested and passionate about the cause and involved in gaining more support for it, their mission would only prove more difficult to complete.

Suffrage Activities in Dayton



<https://womenssuffragemovementindayton.files.wordpress.com/2015/04/ohio-political-ribbon.jpg>

Some of the ways that suffragists tried to engage the public on the subject, was to hold parades or marches, bring in nationally known speakers like Carrie Chapman Catt for example, and to clarify the facts on suffrage in Ohio. They passed out handbills on their meetings and other literature. They placed placards on streetcars "with suffrage messages from well known Americans and the date of election and amendment number," (MS-004 Finding Aid, 86). They even had a booth set up at the Arcade where a woman was stationed to sell and give away large quantities of propaganda literature, some of which was presented to the women by John H. Patterson, president of NCR (MS-004 Finding Aid, 86). Patterson was an ardent supporter of Equal Suffrage and in a telegram from July 30, 1912 he wrote, "Woman's Suffrage is right and in the end must win," (MS-004 Finding Aid, 71). Later that year on August 17, 1912 he wrote in another telegram, "Woman's Suffrage is America's greatest opportunity for Moral, Mental, Physical, Financial and Social Betterment," (MS-004 Finding Aid, 71). He also sent \$1,500 to the Woman's Suffrage Association to help with the cost of their campaigns (MS-004 Finding Aid, 71). It was through donations and support from prominent citizens like Patterson as well as average citizens that made the difference in the campaign for suffrage in Dayton and Ohio at large. There are multiple *Dayton Daily News* articles that show how the suffrage campaign used the news media in Dayton, Ohio to their advantage. This was accomplished by supporters using ads for meetings and upcoming events with speakers such as Catt, insuring articles on their work for the Woman's Suffrage Parade received widespread media coverage and that important facts on suffrage were included in the paper.

Oct. 21, 1914 Dayton Daily News Ad for Carrie Chapman Catt Speech at Memorial Hall (<https://womenssuffragemovementindayton.files.wordpress.com/2015/04/oct-21-1914-ddn-ad-for-carrie-chapman-catt-speech-at-memorial-hall.pdf>)

Oct. 22, 1914 Dayton Daily News – Women's Suffrage Parade to be Held on Saturday (<https://womenssuffragemovementindayton.files.wordpress.com/2015/04/oct-22-1914-ddn-womens-suffrage-parade-to-be-held-on-saturday1.pdf>)

Oct. 23, 1914 Dayton Daily News "Plans Complete for Big Suffrage Parade" (<https://womenssuffragemovementindayton.files.wordpress.com/2015/04/oct-23-1914-ddn-plans-complete-for-big-suffrage-parade.pdf>)

Oct. 24, 1914 Dayton Daily News "Suffragists Make Creditable Display" (<https://womenssuffragemovementindayton.files.wordpress.com/2015/04/oct-24-1914-ddn-suffragists-make-creditable-display.pdf>)

Oct. 24, 1914 Dayton Daily News “Suffragists Make Creditable Display Article Continued”

(<https://womenssuffragemovementindayton.files.wordpress.com/2015/04/oct-24-1914-ddn-suffragists-make-creditable-display-article-continued.pdf>)

Oct. 25, 1914 Dayton Daily News “Suffragist Parade a Revelation to All Interested in Local Work”

(<https://womenssuffragemovementindayton.files.wordpress.com/2015/04/oct-25-1914-ddn-suffragist-parade-a-revelation-to-all-interested-in-local-work.pdf>)

Nov. 2, 1914 Dayton Daily News Political Ad on Suffrage Facts

(<https://womenssuffragemovementindayton.files.wordpress.com/2015/04/nov-2-1914-ddn-political-ad-on-suffrage-facts.pdf>)

Entries from Bishop Milton Wright’s diary from 1914 coincide with these articles. Here are two quotes from the week of the 1914 election:

Tuesday, November 3 There was an animated — I might say excited — election throughout the states. Gov. J.M. Cox was beaten in Ohio, by Frank B. Willis; Geo. G. Harding was elected U.S. Senator by popular vote; most of the northern states went Republican; the Republicans almost overthrew the Democratic majority in Congress. The Roosevelt (progressive) party negligible.

Wednesday, November 4 Captain Bristol and Liet. Maxfield dined with us. News show that Penrose is re-elected Senator by Pennsi. Nich. Longworth is Congressman from Ohio and J.G. Cannon from Illinois. Home Rule prevails in Ohio, and Female Suffrage goes down with Prohibition. I wrote to Mrs. M.M. Harvey and sent ten dollars on salary.

As a hotly debated platform point, suffragists would face continual opposition to their efforts to gain approval and passage of women’s suffrage into law, as seen in the excerpts from Wright. His enthusiasm for politics is easy to note. The special mention of women’s suffrage would indicate that it was an issue that he followed personally; whether because of his family involvement with the movement or simply personal interest remains an individual pursuit. Suffrage was often coupled with the prohibition issue in media to garner attention, which often harmed the suffrage initiatives. The perceived connections between the Women’s Suffrage Movement and the Temperance Movement cost suffragists many votes over the years. In order to gain suffrage in Ohio, suffragists were forced to attempt multiple political maneuvers, some of which are detailed in the timeline below.

Ohio Women’s Suffrage Campaign Timeline

In Harper's *A History of Women's Suffrage Vol. VI*, the author provides an overview of the women's suffrage campaign in Ohio between 1890 and 1920. It is important to note the chronological order of these events and how they contributed to the passage of the 19th amendment. While this is not a comprehensive look at all of the events that occurred leading towards the establishment of women's suffrage, it does provide a chronological look at some of the more noteworthy legislative events that transpired.

1894 – Women are granted the right to vote in board of education elections with the passage of a new law (Harper, 509).

1904 & 1905 – Suffragists requested “legislators to submit to the voters an amendment giving full suffrage to women. The resolution fails to report out of the committees,” (Harper, 509).

1908 – Suffragists try again to get an amendment providing full suffrage to women submitted to voters. It is reported, but no vote is taken (Harper, 509).

1910 – Suffragists attempt to get an amendment providing full suffrage to women submitted to voters. It is defeated on the floor (Harper, 509).

January 22, 1912 – An amendment providing full suffrage to women is submitted to voters. “A pro-hearing is held on February 8, 1912; an anti-hearing and public meeting is held on February 14, 1912; the measure is voted out 20-1 on February 15, 1912,” (Harper, 510).

March 7, 1912 – An amendment to the state constitution is put forth on March 7, 1912, seeking to “remove the words ‘white male from Section 1 Article V of the state constitution,” (Harper, 510). In response the anti's propose taking the word “white” out of the same section and article of the state constitution. They did this “to alienate the negro vote from the suffrage amendment...negroes were told it was a shame they would be ‘tied to the women's apron strings’” (Harper, 510). The amendment is number 23, which “is considered an unlucky number. The most illiterate could remember to vote against that ‘23.’ The anti-suffragist's amendment is number 24,” (Harper, 510).

- Suffragists spend \$40,000 on the campaign for the passage of Amendment 23 and bring in 50 workers from other areas (mainly from the east coast) for no reported compensation. “They work mainly in the cities. Women speak at picnics, county fairs, family reunions, circuses, beaches, institutes, labor meetings, at country stores, school houses and cross roads,” (Harper, 510).
- William B. Kirkpatrick, serving as the Chairman of the Equal Suffrage Committee, champions the suffrage amendment (Harper, 510).
- In comparison, liquor interests first spend \$500,000 and then add an additional

\$120,000 to their budget to defeat the suffrage amendment (Harper, 510).

- Amendment 23 fails with a vote of 336,875 to 249,420; with a difference of 87, 455 (Harper, 510).

February 17, 1914 – In order to get a referendum, suffragists need signatures from 10% of voters from the last election (equal to 130,000 signatures) for their petition to be considered. A petition is created in early 1913 and “the question of the validity of the petitions if circulated by women was raised and a ruling was asked for. The Secretary of State decided that women could circulate them and the Attorney General agreed,” (Harper 511). It successfully passed both initiative and referendum procedures. The referendum was signed by the Governor on February 17, 1914 (Harper 512).

July 30, 1914 – A petition with 131,271 signatures is filed with the Secretary of State by Ohio suffragists (Harper 512).

- The referendum is defeated 518,295 to 335,390 with a difference of 182,905 (Harper 513).
- During this part of the campaign, it becomes clear that liquor interest groups and anti-suffragist groups are working together. One tactic is to pass out leaflets on the Home Rule “Wet” Amendment and how to vote against women’s suffrage (Harper 513).

New Strategy: Ohio suffragists realize that they need a new strategy in order to make progress in their battle for suffrage. They decide to seek municipal women’s suffrage in charter cities. (Harper 513).

- **1916** – East Cleveland – The matter is taken before both the Ohio and U.S. Supreme Courts; the vote is upheld on April 3, 1917, and thus constitutionality is established (Harper 514).
- **1917** – Lakewood – A city adjoining Cleveland passes municipal women’s suffrage not long after the success in East Cleveland (Harper 514).
- **1917** – Columbus also passes municipal women’s suffrage (Harper 514).
- The measure is not successful in Sandusky, Ohio (Harper 514).

January 30, 1917 – A bill to “give women the right to vote for presidential electors is proposed on January 30, 1917,” (Harper 515).

- Democratic Rep. James A. Reynolds of Cleveland takes up the cause for the Presidential Suffrage Bill. This represents a unique relationship because he is an anti-prohibitionist, but feels it is his duty as a representative to support the measure. He continued to fight for it until Tennessee ratified the Federal Suffrage Amendment in 1920 (Harper 514).
- The measure passes 20 to 16 (Harper 515).

- James M. Cox signs it into law on February 21, 1917 (Harper 515).
- The liquor interests and anti-suffragists use underhanded tactics to get the law repealed. They falsified petitions and signatures in order to gain a referendum vote. Gaining most of those by posting them in saloons (in the saloons they offered free drinks for signatures) (MS-004 Finding Aid, 32). They went so far as, "to stop an article written by Mrs. Elizabeth Hauser from being published in the *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, so there would be no publicity on the National Amendment in Ohio," (MS-004 Finding Aid, 34). In response, suffragists file a lawsuit against them to get the signatures thrown out as fraudulent (MS-004 Finding Aid, 34). They are successful in 4 of 6 counties they filed suit in (Harper 516).
- "The petitions in Franklin County (Columbus), Lucas County (Toledo) and Montgomery County (Dayton) are fraudulent, but the election boards in these counties remain hostile to women's suffrage and powerful with the courts" (Harper, 516). The courts within these counties refuse to allow the lawsuits to be filed. When suffrage leaders attempt to intervene the courts declare they have no jurisdiction (Harper, 516).
- The suffragists are able to have 17,000 signatures that were originally removed by a court judgment recertified by the Secretary of the State of Ohio in October 1917 (Harper 516). The problem is the wording of the referendum. It is, "hard for voters to understand and they are not clear on whether or not they should vote yes or no. Apparently the wording is such that voting 'no' in the referendum issue means rejecting the presidential suffrage measure," (MS-004, 32) which many voters understood and became confused. This may be what causes the approval of the referendum (MS-004, 32).

November 1917 – The presidential election vote for women is repealed by the general vote, 568,382 to 422,262; 15 counties in Ohio uphold the law despite the official repeal (Harper, 517).

New Tactic: Ohio suffragists turn their attention to the national suffrage movement because they realize they cannot outspend the liquor interest groups. Focus turns to the passage of the Federal Suffrage Amendment (Harper, 517).

February 20, 1919 – An amendment is introduced "in the Senate that women should vote exactly as men now vote, slightly different than the previous version of the amendment" (MS-004, 37-38). This version of the amendment aims to gain the support of Southern supporters, as the question regarding the status of Negro voters has been resolved (MS-004, 37-38).

May 21, 1919 – Republican majority legislature endorse the Federal Suffrage Amendment. In the United States Senate the votes are 23 to 10; in the United States House of Representatives it is 79 to 31. (Harper, 517).

- Only two Ohio members vote against it, “one a Democrat, Warren Gard of Hamilton, one a Republican, A. E. B. Stephens of Cincinnati” (Harper, 517).

June 16, 1919 – The bill is ratified by a final vote, and passes 76 to 6 in the House of Representatives; The Presidential Suffrage Bill passes 75 to 5. The Senate passes both measures 27 to 3. It is named the Reynolds-Fouts Bill after Rep. James A. Reynolds of Cleveland and his colleague Rep. C.H. Fouts who also championed it from the beginning. Miss Elizabeth Hauser, editor of The Bulletin (the official State Suffrage Association newspaper) wrote:

We had just witnessed a perfect exhibition of team work and a demonstration of loyalty to a cause and to each other by members of opposing political parties that was heart warming. We had finished the suffrage fight in Ohio as Mrs. Upton had always wanted to finish it, with love, good will and harmony in our own ranks, and, so far as we were able to judge, with nothing but good will from the men whom we had worked since the present stage of the contest was inaugurated in 1912 (Harper, 518).

- Contention to the amendment is almost immediate – liquor interests and anti-suffragists want a referendum. Harper writes, “In 1918 the Home Rule Association (the liquor interests) had initiated and carried at the November election an amendment to the State constitution providing that Federal amendments must be approved by the voters before the ratification of the Legislature was effective. This was designed primarily to secure a reversal of prohibition in Ohio but also to prevent ratification of the suffrage amendment,” (518-519).
- Once again they use falsified petitions and signatures to do so. Suffragists take the matter to the Ohio and U.S. Supreme Courts with the help of George Hawk, a Cincinnati lawyer. The courts rule that, “the power to ratify a federal amendment rests with the legislature and cannot be passed on by voters,” (Harper, 518-519).

1920 – The Ohio Legislature meets in an adjourned session. Women obtain primary suffrage in an amendment to the Presidential Bill as a result of this session. This proves unnecessary because the Federal Suffrage Amendment passes in August 1920 (Harper, 519).

- Harriet Taylor Upton of the State Suffrage Association’s last work on behalf of suffrage is “to help gain the 36th and final ratification of the Federal Suffrage Amendment from Tennessee in the summer of 1920. She travels to Nashville at the request of the Republican National Executive Committee (of which she is the Vice-chairman) in order to complete this work. While the victory may not take place in Ohio, it does involve an Ohio woman ,”(Harper, 519).

Seventy years after the struggle began, with the combined efforts of both women suffragists and their male supporters that aided them in the struggle, Ohio women obtain the right to vote from the federal government. (Harper, 519).

Dayton, Ohio – A Progressive Landscape for the Women's Suffrage Movement

The Women's Suffrage Movement was unique in Dayton, Ohio because of its inclusive and progressive nature. According to Wilkey, "Although white, middle-class, native-born women dominated the movement, especially at the national level, black, working-class, and immigrant supporters played a meaningful part in the eventual victory. Within the cities and states where suffragists fought daily and eventually won, issues of race, class, and ethnicity were not easily ignored," (27). Dayton suffragists not only included, but "actively sought support from the working-class, immigrant, and black segments of Dayton's population. Unlike their counterparts at the national level, Dayton suffragists realized that a broad base of support would be necessary for the suffrage amendment to pass and viewed cross-race, class, and ethnic support as an advantage and not a liability," (Wilkey, 27). Wilkey states that suffragists, in their approach to gaining women's suffrage, "... spent the majority of their time trying to convince the city's largest enfranchised group, white males, that woman suffrage was a desirable goal. They also devoted a significant amount of time to persuading white women, the city's largest disenfranchised group, that woman suffrage deserved passage . . . Perhaps political expediency was their only motivation, but even if so, their actions were unique because national suffrage leaders often saw working-class, immigrant, and especially black support as a disadvantage. Dayton's suffragists, in contrast, viewed any support as an asset and moved to court such groups," (28).

However, leaders of the national movement such as Carrie Chapman Catt did not see it this way. In 1894 Catt made a speech in Iowa, in which she said, "This government is menaced with a great danger . . . That danger lies in the votes possessed by the males in the slums of the cities and the ignorant foreign vote which was sought to be brought by each party, to make political success . . . There is but one way to avert the danger – cut off the vote of the slums and give to women," (qtd. in Hymowitz and Weissman, 273-274). The Dayton suffragists also faced opposition to their inclusiveness from the state level. In an undated letter to Jesse Leech Davisson, Mrs. Harriet Taylor Upton states, "I believe colored women should have the same rights as white women and colored men. But I do wish this crowd could have held off a little longer. There is no use of incensing Southern Senators. If they had held off we would have gotten it for all of us [;] now their pressing may make us lose it. The suffragist's row is a hard one," (qtd. in Wilkey, 32). Many suffragists feared that the inclusion of working class, foreign born and black women would prevent the passage of suffrage. According to Hymowitz and Weissman,

Suffragists seized the opportunity to suggest that the votes of native born women could counter the 'foreign menace.' First they repeatedly cited statistics to show that native-born women outnumbered foreign born men and women combined. Thus, even if all women were enfranchised, the votes of native-born women would outnumber the total immigrant vote. Next suffragists began suggesting that unfit voters be disenfranchised. An educational qualification for voting, they claimed, would insure rule by the native-born white portion of the population . . . Not all suffragists went along with this ill-disguised bigotry. Opposing voices argued that each class was entitled to speak for itself at the polls, that education did not necessarily instill a sense of justice, and that the concept of a privileged ruling class went against the basic tenets of American democracy," (274-275).

Suffragists would provide information to the uninformed voters to counter these misconceptions, and worked hard to overcome the stigma with which they had become associated.

In Dayton, suffragists worked together to advance their common agenda, regardless of class or race. According to Wilkey, "A Mrs. Welliver, for example, "volunteered to work with the Hungarians," and Rose Schneiderman, the famous union activist who had come to the state to help organize the campaign, "addressed factory workers." Mrs. Thresher spoke before the "colored WCA" and the "NCR [National Cash Register] girls," and Frau Von Klenze disappointed the suffragists by being "unable to deliver her speech in German." Some of the city's more prominent black women citizens, such as Mrs. Jewelia Higgins and Miss Hallie Q. Brown, conducted much of the work in Dayton's small but vocal black community," (29). While the foreign born women in Dayton were approached, Wilkey claims that, "Of all the groups that the DWSA [Dayton Women's Suffrage Association] attempted to mobilize, immigrants received the least attention. Although 12 percent of Dayton's population was foreign born in 1910, the city's suffragists put far more energy into recruitment and mobilization of Dayton's black and working-class communities. The DWSA apparently concentrated most of its energy on the Hungarian and German population, the only groups specifically mentioned in the organization's records . . . Language was likely a barrier, because the suffragists expressed regret on two occasions at being unable to speak or publish suffrage literature in German," (29). Another reason Dayton suffragists struggled to gain support among foreign born women was due to "the perceived connection between woman suffrage and temperance . . ." (Wilkey, 29-30). More success was to be found with the working class women of Dayton. Wilkey states that, ". . . suffragists repeatedly argued the need for women workers to have a voice in the government. The suffragists issued broadsides that proclaimed, "[t]axpaying Women need the vote to protect their financial interests," and "[w]orking women need the vote to secure laws determining proper conditions and hours of labor . . . Dayton suffragist . . . were acutely aware of the difficult conditions that working women faced, and much of

their propaganda presented woman suffrage as the answer to their plight” (30). Dayton Suffragists also had a productive relationship with the black leaders in the community. Wilkey writes, “The suffragists themselves worked closely with black leaders and had at least four black members active in the upper echelons of the DWSA. Also, their speeches and propaganda made clear that Dayton suffragists wanted the vote for all women. “All Women,” declared one advertisement, “need the vote because it is the accepted method of self-expression in a democracy . . . The fact that black women ran the suffrage information booth in downtown Dayton independently one day per week represents more concrete evidence of interracial cooperation on suffrage,” (31). According to Wilkey, “All of the black women involved in the DWSA were highly educated and middle-class, but regardless of their status, the ability of these women to unite, even if only for political expediency, indicates a willingness to ignore racial differences, perhaps in favor of class and gender similarities. Working-class women, on the other hand, although courted for support of suffrage, were never active participants in DWSA meetings,” (32). Wilkey concludes that, “The eventual passage of woman suffrage was a local phenomenon. Had local communities not organized and convinced their state representatives to ratify the Nineteenth Amendment, the entire national movement would have been meaningless,” (33).

In 1890 Dayton was approaching its centennial and while the women’s suffrage topic was becoming more prominent, there was still a lot of opposition to the movement locally, as well as at the state and the national levels. These women’s rights activists had a desire to begin to play a more prominent role in society, and in order to do so they needed more political clout. Social power within society was not enough anymore to achieve the goals that they had for the city of Dayton and the country at large. While not a major suffragist, Ms. Mary Steele was a prominent citizen who supported the Women’s Suffrage Movement in Dayton. Steele used her affluence to help bring about social change through her role in the selection of Dayton’s first police matron, Louanda Bowman. The tale is chronicled in Charlotte Reeve Conover’s *Some Dayton Saints and Prophets* (1907). As the excerpt below indicates, Dayton was in desperate need for a police matron (Refer to link below to read the full story of Dayton’s first police matron). Conover writes:

For years the entire police system of Dayton, as of other cities, had been in the hands of men. Young girls arrested on charges of loitering were taken in hand by policemen, locked up by policemen, often in the same cell with hardened women, who, by their conversation, soon finished the work of pollution begun on the street. Women prisoners were searched by the officers before being locked up. This was the law, and it sometimes bore as hard upon the officers as the prisoners. No woman, even if she be on the criminal road, likes to submit to such indignity . . . (65).

First Dayton Police Matron Story PDF

(<https://womensuffragemovementindayton.files.wordpress.com/2015/04/first-dayton-police-matron-story-pdf.pdf>)

Steele recognized this need after hearing many stories of the injustices young women in the city faced at the hands of the male officers of the Dayton Police Department. She proceeded to assemble a committee of influential women from Dayton organizations to conduct research on police matrons in other cities and how the appointment of these matrons took place. At the conclusion of this research period, she and her committee proposed the appointment of the police matron for the city of Dayton. While originally blocked through financial concerns by the City Solicitor and Tax Commission, she persevered by opening the Revised Statutes of Ohio, and upon showing the City Solicitor the passage regarding the direction to appoint a female Police Matron as reading 'There Shall Be a Police Matron,' was reported to have stated, "My dear sir, the law does not say 'may,' it says 'shall'; are you going to obey it?" (qtd. in Conover, 69) in regards to his duty to enforce the code and appoint an official in the office. As a result of her tenacity regarding the enforcement of the law, Louanda Bowman would be appointed as the first Police Matron of Dayton in 1893. Social change like this was progressive on multiple levels, indicating an increase for societal recognition in a changing landscape; it represented a huge success for female activists as their hard work had influenced change on a large scale and had been influential in affecting social change in Dayton.

In 1920 Daytonians faced the new challenge of adapting to the political and social ramifications of the ratification of the 19th amendment. Now that the battle for women's suffrage had been won, it was time to make sure that these new voters would be prepared to carry out their new civic duty. Many of the women's suffrage groups later changed focus and became women's voter groups to help "educate them in citizenship, public welfare, efficiency in government and international co-operation to prevent war," (MS-004 Finding Aid). They maintained their links with the larger state and national movements for the completion of this new mission, and was non-partisan in membership enrollment to engage women from all political backgrounds. For example, the local Women Voters of Dayton and Montgomery County came into being out of the Woman's Suffrage Association of Montgomery County. Some of its leaders were: President – Mrs. N.M. Stanley (1920-32), Vice President – Mrs. Jesse Leech Davisson, and Field Secretary – Miss Charlotte Mary Conover (daughter of Mrs. Charlotte Reeve Conover). It maintained its national links with Carrie Chapman Catt and her national voter group the League of Women Voters (MS-004 Finding Aid, 12). A new era of equal rights between the sexes had begun.

Photo 1 Citation: Postcard with a color image of the Seal of Ohio with a woman's face in the center. The woman's face is framed by the rising sun and the slogan "Let Ohio Women Vote." *The postcard was sent from Columbus, Ohio by Elizabeth J. House to Mrs. C. L. Martzloff in Athens, Ohio, 1915 (The Ohio Historical Society SC 5690, AL01124 from the Woman's Suffrage Postcard Collection). Note: This logo or image was also used by the Ohio Woman Suffrage Association on their official letterhead.*

Photo 2 Citation: Letter to Martha McClellan Brown on Ohio Woman Suffrage Association Letterhead from Harriet Taylor Upton, the organization's president, 1914. (WSU Special Collections and Archives). *Note: If you look closely at the top right hand side of the page, Jesse Leech Davison is listed as 'member national executive committee.'*

Photo 3 Citation: Ohio Political Ribbon, n.d. (WSU Special Collections and Archives).

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