

# Katharine Kennedy Brown

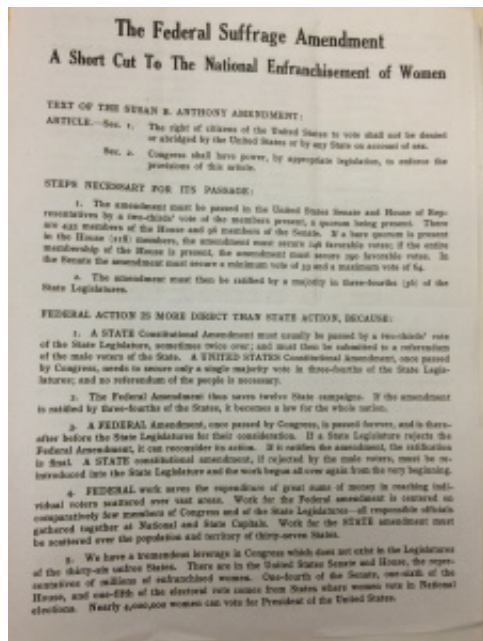
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April 14, 2015

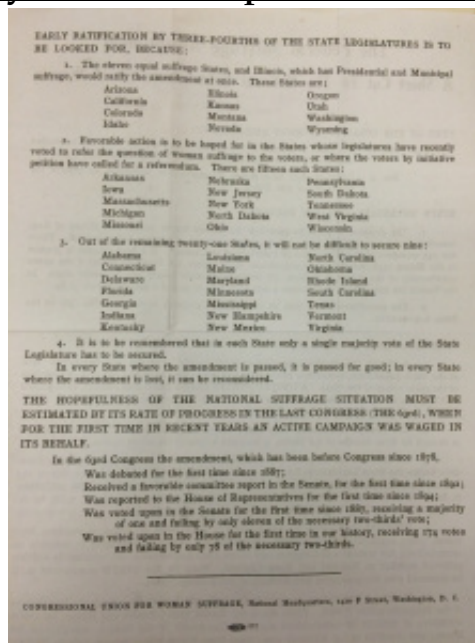


(<https://womensuffragemovementindayton.files.wordpress.com/2015/04/katharine-kennedy-brown-voting-for-first-time.jpg>)

**A Youthful Suffragette**



<https://womenssuffragemovementindayton.files.wordpress.com/2015/04/the-federal-suffrage-amendment-front.jpg>



<https://womenssuffragemovementindayton.files.wordpress.com/2015/04/the-federal-suffrage-amendment-back.jpg>

<https://womenssuffragemovementindayton.files.wordpress.com/2015/04/the-federal-suffrage-amendment-back.jpg>

### Involvement in the Women's Suffrage Movement

Brown was involved with the Women's Suffrage Movement with her mother and mother-in-law, Louise Achey Kennedy and Martha McClellan Brown. While there was not much to be found on her involvement in the Women's Suffrage Movement, her collection mainly consisted of items related to her later political career, especially in relation to the Republican Party. She was a member of the Woman's Suffrage Party of Montgomery County. Among her suffrage activities in the Dayton area, Brown attended lectures on suffrage, writing, printing and distributing suffrage

literature and pamphlets and other published materials, participating in parades and marches at both the local and state levels, attending suffrage dinners and luncheons to raise money and awareness for the cause and educated and polled others regarding women's suffrage. Given her involvement in the local movement, she most likely would have attended the first Woman's Suffrage Parade in Dayton on October 24, 1914.

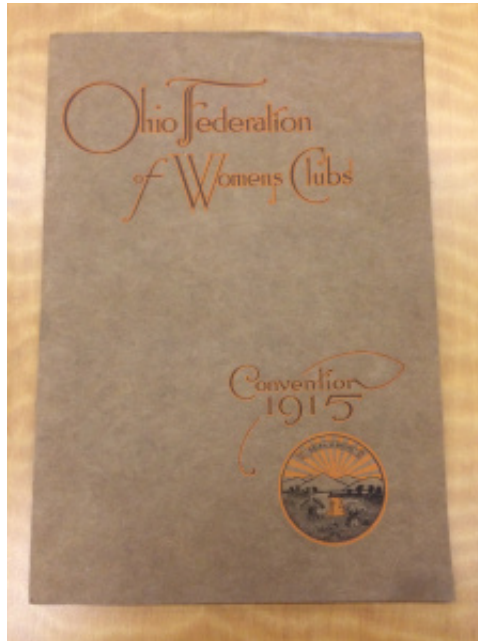
### **A Political Career Begins**

After the 19th amendment was ratified, her political career focused on the Republican Party. She was involved in politics at the local, state and national levels. Initially her male peers resented the intrusion of women into their political circles. According to her collection's finding aid, ". . . women were initially denied a place on the Montgomery County Republican Executive Committee," (MS-146 Finding Aid). In time however, she enlisted many of these men as allies in her efforts. She belonged to a group of activists that both fought for the equality of women in politics and used the rights gained by the amendment's passage to such an advantage, when she cast her first vote at 29 years old. According to her collection's finding aid it is said, "She decided that she was tired of being "given things" by men and determined to "take what was legally ours" (MS-146 Finding Aid). Her involvement in politics did not wane with the passage of the 19th Amendment; instead it was only the beginning of a long and prosperous political career.



<https://womenssuffragemovementindayton.files.wordpress.com/2015/04/wsa-20th-century-club-ribbon.jpg>

### **A Political Life: Katharine Kennedy Brown**



<https://womenssuffragemovementindayton.files.wordpress.com/2015/04/ohio-federation-of-womens-clubs-booklet-c-1915-convention.jpg>

## Early Life

Katharine Kennedy Brown, like her parents, was a prominent member of Dayton's affluent society as well as a political activist. She was born on July 16, 1891 in Dayton, Ohio. Her parents, Grafton Claggett Kennedy and Louise Achey Kennedy, were prominent members of the social scene in Dayton, "owing their wealth and status largely due to her father's position as a prominent attorney and role as the U.S. Commissioner of Dayton for the Southern District of Ohio from 1883-94," (MS-146 Finding Aid). She would travel with her parents in Europe as a child, and spent her summers in Nantucket, Massachusetts. Brown was educated by German and French governesses at home in her early life, and also attended Dayton Public Schools through the fifth grade, finishing her education at the boarding school Dana Hall in Wellesley, Massachusetts.

## Tragedy and Activism

She married Kleon Thaw Brown, the son of Martha McClellan Brown and her husband Reverend William Kennedy Brown on April 20, 1921; however their infant child passed away suddenly, and her husband died soon after on May 20, 1925. She never remarried (MS-146 Finding Aid; MS-404 Finding Aid). After the loss of her infant child and husband, she became heavily involved in politics through her work with the Republican Party. She also became more involved in Dayton society. She also moved back home to live with her mother Louise Achey Kennedy to the family's beloved Duncarrick Mansion in downtown Dayton, Ohio. Brown held

multiple leadership positions in organizations including: the Women's Republican Club, the Junior League of Dayton, the Colonial Dames of America, and the Women's Rights Movement.

### End of an Era

Following the passage of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment, she remained active in the political scene well into the early 1970s, with the most recent pieces in her collection documenting her work in the 1972 campaign of President Richard Nixon. The youngest of the seven Dayton suffragettes profiled here, Brown passed away on November 10, 1986, in Kettering, Ohio at the Kettering Convalescent Center. She was 95 years old. Brown and her family are interred at Woodland Cemetery in Dayton. (MS-146 Finding Aid; MS-404 Finding Aid).

**Photo 1 Citation:** Katharine Kennedy Brown voting for the first time, c. 1920 (WSU Special Collections and Archives).

**Photo 2 Citation:** Leaflet entitled "The Federal Suffrage Amendment: A Shortcut To The National Enfranchisement Of Women." (WSU Special Collections and Archives).

**Photo 3 Citation:** W.S.A. 20th Century Club Ribbon, n.d. (WSU Special Collections and Archives).

**Photo 4 Citation:** Ohio Federation of Women's Clubs 1915 Convention Booklet, c. 1915 (WSU Special Collections and Archives).

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