



Alice Paul (1885–1977) was a founder of the National Woman’s Party (NWP), an organization focused on the passage of a constitutional amendment ensuring women’s suffrage throughout the United States. Each time a state voted to ratify the 19th Amendment, Paul (center) sewed a star onto the NWP Ratification Flag. National Photo Company, Washington, D.C., circa 1919. Courtesy of the Library of Congress.

## NO LONGER DENIED: NEW HAMPSHIRE WOMEN WIN THE VOTE

New Hampshire’s ratification of the 19th Amendment in September 1919 marked the culmination of a decades-long struggle for women’s rights in the Granite State. Both women and men had fought for women’s greater participation in the political sphere for most of the 19th century, first within other reform movements like abolition and temperance, then through an overt effort to secure voting rights for women. The movement also met with a fair amount of opposition in New Hampshire, which did not end even after the 19th Amendment became the law of the land in 1920 when Tennessee proved the critical 36th ratifying vote.

At one point during the struggle for women’s suffrage, New Hampshire led the northeastern states for its progressive stance on women’s equality by acknowledging women’s right to vote in school elections in 1878—the first state east of the Mississippi to do so. By the early 20th century, though, Granite Staters’ enthusiasm for women’s suffrage had diminished somewhat. New Hampshire’s ratification of the 19th Amendment was by no means a sure thing, and an effort to enact a similar change to the state constitution failed just two years later in 1921.

(continued on page 4)

NEW HAMPSHIRE  
**HISTORICAL**  
SOCIETY FOUNDED 1823

30 Park Street  
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

**603-228-6688**

**nhhistory.org**

### **Newsletter**

Volume 57, No. 1  
Spring 2020

### **President**

William H. Dunlap

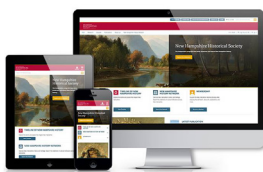
### **Editors**

Joan E. Desmarais  
Donna-Belle Garvin

### **Contributors**

Wesley G. Balla  
Douglas R. Copeley  
Korrena Cowing  
Elizabeth Dubrulle  
Sarah E. Galligan  
Jennifer Walton

**OPEN 24/7**



**nhhistory.org**



## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

Let me begin with the fervent wish that each one of you, dear readers, is well. As you read these words, please keep in mind they were written a few weeks ago. With each newsletter there is a lag time to allow for layout, printing, and mailing. Usually this doesn't matter much, but the current crisis seems to have distorted time, with events of only yesterday feeling like ancient history. So, who knows where we will be when this arrives in your mailbox.

One certainty is that history provides perspective, and the history being made now will provide guidance as we move forward through time, as a nation and a planet. Over the past several decades most Americans have enjoyed long-term economic prosperity and the indulgences it has permitted: a celebrity-based popular culture, social media obsessions, high levels of consumerism. Now comes the coronavirus crisis, and once we have weathered and emerged from it, we likely will have been changed irrevocably. Nothing creates clarity like an existential crisis.

Some things I believe we will have learned (the hard way): first, no amount of a sovereign nation's economic or military power can guarantee security. As the pandemic and accompanying economic dislocation have shown, globalization has evolved to a degree that, no matter what nation we live in, we are all in this together, globally speaking. The interconnected threads of our world's economy, health, and environmental destiny are woven together. As comforting as it is to nostalgically look back on isolationist eras in our nation's past, the reality is that those days and the policies they engendered are gone forever. We must respond accordingly.

A second lesson I believe will be learned is that our country needs a strong, well-functioning national government. Ours is a federal system, with much power dispersed at the state and local levels, and this is a good system that will continue. Indeed, the states have responded admirably in the current crisis after the initial missteps at the national level. In the future there will be continuing debates, as there should be, about the proper balance between state and federal power. But there can be little doubt, in my opinion, that a well-functioning federal government is essential in our complex, interconnected world. In the words of University of Washington history professor, Margaret O'Meara, in "the battle against the coronavirus . . . we are seeing the critical role that 'big government' plays in our lives and our health. We are also seeing the deadly results of four decades of disinvestment in public infrastructure and dismissal of public expertise."

Another related lesson will be a renewal of respect for science and expertise. Tom Nichols, professor at the U.S. Naval War College, observes, "the COVID-19 crisis . . . has forced people back to accepting that expertise matters. It was easy to sneer at experts until a pandemic

arrived, and then people wanted to hear from medical professionals like Anthony Fauci.” One can hope that the tendency in our recent hyper-polarized era for warring political partisans each to present their own version of facts will end, and we will get back to debates based on a starting point of objective facts.

Finally, we will once again be reminded that places such as the New Hampshire Historical Society have an important role to play in our society. We are a repository of facts—of history. The information we hold in our collections serves as a basis for research and helps contemporary decision makers develop policy. This information is not a product of spin; it is objectively true. Also, places such as the Society enrich our lives. We of course need health and economic security, but a full life is ideally more than that. The intellectual and aesthetic stimulation provided by a place like the Society feeds our souls, engages our intellects, and strengthens our community. When this ordeal is over the New Hampshire Historical Society will still be here for all of us.



## Board of Trustees

### Chair

Kurt M. Swenson  
*Hopkinton*

### Vice Chair

David B. Ruedig  
*Concord*

### Treasurer

Michael R. Reopel  
*Bedford*

### Secretary

James L. Garvin  
*Pembroke*

David B. Clark  
*Glen*

Helen H. Frink  
*South Acworth*

Sylvia B. Larsen  
*Concord*

Howard Mansfield  
*Hancock*

Rebecca Weeks Sherrill More  
*Lancaster*  
*Providence, Rhode Island*

Mike Pride  
*Bow*

Paul C. Remus  
*Bedford*

Carol M. Rymes  
*Center Ossipee*

Edward E. Shumaker  
*Concord*

Joseph L. Taggart  
*Amherst*

William W. Upton  
*Concord*

Robert A. Wells  
*Hopkinton*

Philip Zea  
*Norwich, Vermont*

## NO LONGER DENIED (continued from page 1)

In this 100th anniversary year of the nationwide passage of the 19th Amendment, the New Hampshire Historical Society is exploring how the struggle for women's suffrage unfolded in the Granite State. A new exhibition, *No Longer Denied: New Hampshire Women Win the Vote*, originally planned to open in March, was postponed when the Society closed to the public due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The exhibit, featuring images and objects about the long campaign for women's suffrage and the people who fought for this right, will be on display when the Society reopens. A special issue of *Historical New Hampshire*, to be published in the fall, will highlight the role of some of New Hampshire's most ardent activists in the cause of women's rights while also discussing those who opposed the expansion of suffrage in the Granite State during the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Many women in the 19th century became politically active because of their involvement in antislavery, temperance, and educational reform movements. All three issues had a direct impact on American families, as women left hearth and home and gradually entered the public sphere. In their efforts to combat societal ills, women employed traditional means—such as sewing circles and church fundraisers—and untraditional means—such as petition campaigns, public speeches, and political activism—to further their causes. Because many of their arguments were based on ideas of Christian social justice, their efforts to convince others to support these movements were called “moral suasion.” As they worked to reform society, women began to realize they had an important role to play in American politics.

Sarah Elizabeth Haley Burley (1833–1912) of Epping (seated, center), with members of the Rockingham County Woman's Christian Temperance Union at the organization's September 1896 convention held in Fremont. Many 19th-century women became politically active through their involvement in reform efforts like the temperance movement. Burley and Haley Family Papers, New Hampshire Historical Society, gift of the Joseph C. and Robert M. Burley Family Trust.



Meeting of the National Woman Suffrage Association in Chicago, from *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, June 19, 1880.

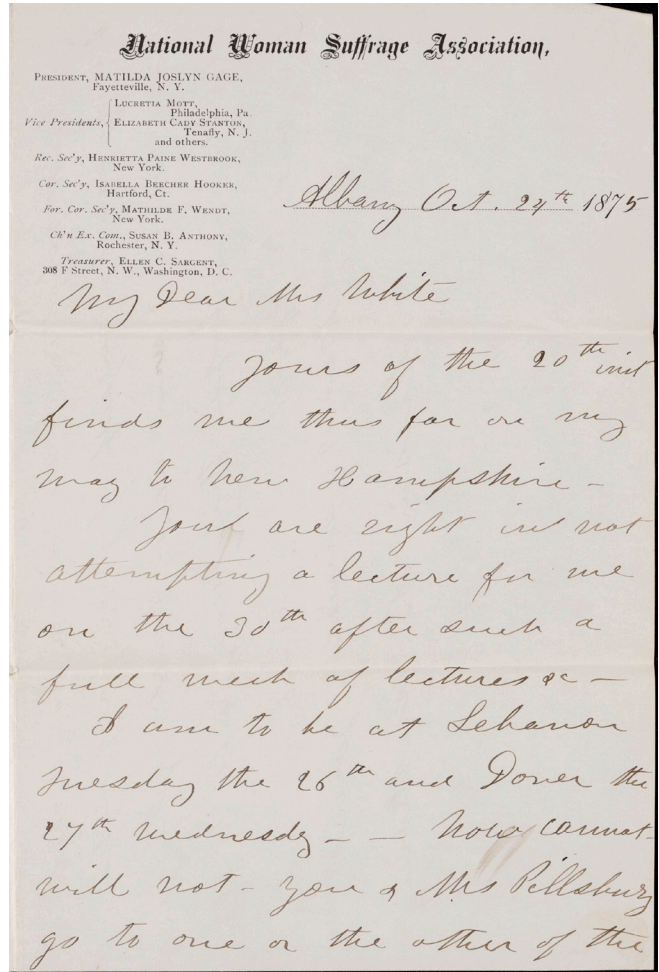
Nationally, women began arguing for the right to vote in the 1840s mainly by organizing suffrage conventions, the most famous of these being the Seneca Falls Convention of 1848 in New York. In New Hampshire, suffragists began to build networks and form organizations to advocate for the vote in the years after the Civil War. Speeches to rally supporters and to persuade the public at large were made both by national leaders in the suffrage movement who traveled to the state and by local advocates. Suffragists also used newspapers to make the case for women's voting rights.



The New Hampshire Woman Suffrage Association (NHWSA) was formed in December 1868 when, led by Nathaniel and Armenia White, 127 men and women from across the state gathered at Concord's Eagle Hall in answer to a statewide call to organize for "the efficient advocacy of woman suffrage." After two days of fiery speeches and debate, the convention passed resolutions arguing for the extension of the right to vote to women on both the national and the state level, based on the nation's founding principles of freedom and equality. For the next 50 years, the NHWSA would spearhead New Hampshire's suffrage effort.

A Quaker and teacher, Susan B. Anthony became involved in the temperance and women's rights movements in the 1840s. An accomplished public speaker, she traveled and lectured extensively across the United States for the abolition of slavery, as well as the rights of women to vote, own property, control their own finances, and form their own labor organizations. In a letter to women's suffrage advocate Armenia White of Concord, dated October 24, 1875, Anthony wrote about her busy lecture schedule, including upcoming engagements in Dover and Lebanon. White Family Papers, New Hampshire Historical Society, gift of Lucy Hawkes Winship.

Equal Suffrage campaign button, circa 1916. New Hampshire Historical Society, gift of Stanley A. Hamel.



In 1840, the radical wing of the New Hampshire Anti-Slavery Society, led by Nathaniel P. Rogers, took control of the organization. Later that year, Rogers traveled to London with other American abolitionists to attend the World Anti-Slavery Convention, but he withdrew in protest when the convention refused to seat American women delegates. Returning to America and finding himself widely praised for supporting equality of the sexes, as well as equality of color, he received offers to head major newspapers and became known as a public speaker on issues of temperance, women's rights, and the abolition of slavery.

Nathaniel P. Rogers (1794–1846), engraving by Frederick Halpin, after an original drawing by H. B. Brown, 1847. A native of Plymouth, Nathaniel Rogers was educated at Dartmouth College and became a lawyer. A founder of the New Hampshire Anti-Slavery Society in 1835, he soon gave up his law practice and moved to Concord, becoming editor of the abolitionist newspaper *Herald of Freedom*. New Hampshire Historical Society.



## NO LONGER DENIED (continued from page 5)

In 1878 the New Hampshire legislature acknowledged a woman's right to vote in local school elections, a clear victory for suffragists. Although some western states had already recognized this right for women, New Hampshire was the first state in the northeast to do so. The movement in New Hampshire also sparked fierce opposition, and anti-suffragists fought the introduction of equal voting rights at the state constitutional conventions in 1902 and 1912. As more women became involved in the suffrage effort, they began advocating for the right to vote on the basis of women's equality rather than on their role as protectors of the American family. They were challenging traditional boundaries that separated men and women and the social spheres in which they operated.

In New Hampshire, one of the most promising opportunities to secure the right to vote for women came in 1902 at the state constitutional convention. Of the many amendments to the constitution that were considered, the one pertaining to women's suffrage was the most controversial. Speakers at the convention convinced the delegates to strike the word "male" from the provisions of the state constitution regarding the right to vote. Following a vote of 145–92 among the delegates, the referendum was sent to New Hampshire voters in March 1903 as Question 7 on the ballot. Voters defeated it, with 62 percent casting ballots against the change.



Anti-Suffrage campaign button, circa 1916. New Hampshire Historical Society, gift of Stanley A. Hamel.

Broadside for the Dartmouth vs. Brown annual debate on March 3, 1910. Around 1905 Dartmouth College, Williams College, and Brown University formed a regional triangular debate league. Every spring students met at each school for a series of debates on timely subjects. In 1910 Dartmouth, Williams, and Brown met to debate the question, "Resolved, That throughout the United States proper, suffrage equal to that now accorded to men should be granted to women." Dartmouth successfully made the case for women's suffrage, winning debates against Williams at Williamstown and then Brown at Hanover. New Hampshire Historical Society, gift of Richard and Anne Thorner.



*The Spirit of America—JOIN*, poster printed by the Forbes Lithograph Manufacturing Company, Boston, 1919, after an original painting by Howard Chandler Christy (1873–1952). World War I strengthened political activism and empowerment among women. The American Red Cross, led by women, provided food, supplies, and nurses to a devastated Europe both during and after the war. New Hampshire Historical Society, gift of Charles E. Greenwood.

## DARTMOUTH vs. BROWN

IN THIRTEENTH ANNUAL DEBATE, ON

# WOMAN SUFFRAGE

With GOVERNOR QUINBY Presiding

WEBSTER HALL

8 p. m.

Thursday, March 3, 1910 Admission 10c

The passage of the 19th Amendment in 1920 made suffrage efforts at the local and state levels no longer necessary, but securing the right to vote was just one of several measures advocated by reformers to achieve equal rights for women. Some of those measures are still being debated today. Even the right to vote—for women and other traditionally underrepresented groups—is not as secure as we might think. In fact, just two years after New Hampshire ratified the 19th Amendment, voters in the state once again failed to amend the state constitution to remove the word “male” from the section about voting rights. The ballot measure received a majority of the votes but not the required two-thirds to change the state constitution. It was not until 1958 that New Hampshire voters supported such a change to the state constitution and, in the meantime, other efforts to guarantee Granite State women equal rights continued.

Just three years after the 19th Amendment had been ratified, women’s rights activists proposed the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) to the U.S. Congress. The amendment’s goal was to remove any legal distinctions between men and women in terms of marital, property, employment, and other rights. The ERA gained little support; it took nearly 50 years before Congress approved the amendment in 1972. New Hampshire was the second state to ratify the ERA, doing so just one day after Congress sent it to the states. Although 35 of the required 38 states had ratified the ERA by 1977, an anti-ERA movement organized by conservative women prevented the final states from ratifying by the deadline in 1979. Even after Congress extended the deadline to 1982, it was not until 2020, long after the deadline passed, that Virginia became the 38th state to ratify the ERA. Debate over the ERA continues today at both state and national levels.



Suffragists gathered in front of the New Hampshire Historical Society’s Park Street building, photograph by Kimball Studio, Concord, N.H., circa 1915. New Hampshire Historical Society, gift of Paul O. Bofinger.

NEW HAMPSHIRE  
**HISTORICAL**  
SOCIETY FOUNDED 1823

30 Park Street  
Concord, NH 03301-6384  
[nhhistory.org](http://nhhistory.org)

Nonprofit  
Organization  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
CONCORD, NH  
PERMIT #280

The independent nonprofit that saves, preserves, and shares New Hampshire history.



New Hampshire's apple blossoms are in full bloom in this springtime photograph by Charles H. Sawyer (1868–1954) of Concord, N.H. *The White Mountains from Sugar Hill* is one of 70 hand-colored photographs the New Hampshire Historical Society purchased from Sawyer in 1928. The entire set is available for viewing via the Society's online collections catalog at [nhhistory.org](http://nhhistory.org).