

Women's Suffrage in Ontario

an educational resource

LEGISLATIVE
ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO



MESSAGE TO TEACHERS

This educational resource was developed to compliment the documentary *Women Should Vote: A Short History of how Women Won the Franchise in Ontario* (www.ola.org/en/visit-learn/about-ontarios-parliament/womens-suffrage-ontario), which tells the story of the struggle for women's suffrage in Ontario at the turn of the 20th century.

It invites students to deepen their understanding of gender equality and democracy through examining and analyzing the suffrage movement, and facilitates engaging discussions and activities. Students will examine issues of identity, equity, activism and justice in historical and contemporary contexts.

A NOTE ON LANGUAGE

Some historical terms used in this resource are no longer in common use. First Nations peoples in Canada were initially called “Indians” by colonial Europeans. This term is no longer used, though “Status Indian” is still a legal definition and is mentioned throughout this guide. “Status Indian” does not include all Indigenous peoples – for example, Métis and Inuit are excluded (see the Glossary on Page 22 for more information).

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THE SUFFRAGE MOVEMENT IN ONTARIO: VOTES FOR WOMEN

WHO COULD VOTE BEFORE CONFEDERATION?

Before Confederation, voting in the British colonies that became Canada was restricted to British subjects over the age of 21 who owned a specific amount of property. Voters were also required to swear a loyalty oath to the British Crown, which disqualified Jewish, Quaker and Mennonite property owners as their faiths prohibited the taking of oaths. Anyone convicted of a serious criminal offence or treason was not allowed to vote. Treaty land was held in common by a First Nations group, so individual First Nations people could not meet the property qualification to vote. Black property owners were not officially excluded from voting, but their White neighbours often prevented them from voting.

The *Constitution Act* of 1791 did not specifically prohibit women from voting in Upper Canada (now Ontario). However, married women could not own property, and it was unlikely that widows and single women could accumulate enough property to qualify

to vote. Following British common law customs, property-owning women in Upper Canada were unlikely to defy convention and vote. It was different in Lower Canada (now Quebec) which followed French civil law conventions – married women were allowed to own property and many voted in the first half of the 19th century, until voting restrictions were also placed on them.

In 1844, at least seven women voted in the West Halton district of Canada West (now Ontario) in the united Province of Canada (now Ontario and Quebec) election. This is the first recorded instance of women violating common law tradition and voting. We can only speculate why these women decided to vote. Some people claim they were pressured by male relatives in a hotly contested district, but it is equally likely that they were inspired by their own political beliefs or wanted a say in local issues. Six out of the seven women have been identified. All were widows



LEFT: HANNAH WILLIAMS, ONE OF SEVEN WOMEN WHO VOTED IN THE WEST HALTON DISTRICT OF CANADA WEST IN 1844.

who inherited a portion of their husband's property. One was Hannah Williams, the daughter of Laura Secord, a War of 1812 heroine. Perhaps she was motivated by her mother's strong actions to vote?

The candidate who lost the West Halton election called for a parliamentary investigation, claiming that women voting was election fraud. Although the election results were not overturned, this incident led to the 1849 motion passed in the United Province of Canada parliament that "proclaimed and decreed that no one woman shall have the right to vote at any election."

A small victory was won in 1850 with the Act for the Better Establishment and Maintenance of Common Schools in Upper Canada – any "fit and proper persons" who owned property could vote for school trustees. This included women.

THE BEGINNING OF WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE MOVEMENTS

The push for women's suffrage in Canada gained popularity in the 1870s. Those who were in favour of extending equal voting rights to men and women were met with firm opposition. Most men and women believed that a woman's place was in the home, that women had no interest in voting, and that they were not capable of making decisions about who to vote for.

The women who pushed for voting rights were called suffragists, and they formed networks across the province and country. Suffragists were not a politically uniform and socially cohesive group – they represented a wide range of social backgrounds and ideals. Some wanted rights for homemakers, others were part of the temperance movement and wanted to ban the sale of alcohol, and others were searching for more wide-reaching societal change, such as gender and racial equality.

There were two main arguments that suffragists developed to explain why women deserved the vote. The equal rights argument was based on the idea that women are equal to men and therefore deserve

the same rights. The social argument was based on the idea that women's unique experience caring for families would improve society if they were allowed to vote. Many suffragists would use these arguments interchangeably, tailoring their speech, petition or meeting to what work best with the audience they were addressing.

Ontario suffragists were not alone in their struggle. They took inspiration from their American and British counterparts, as well as suffragists across other provinces. Suffragists across North America and Britain exchanged correspondence, sharing triumphs and setbacks.



ABOVE: THE CANADIAN SUFFRAGE ASSOCIATION MARCHES IN THE WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE PARADE IN NEW YORK CITY, OCTOBER 23, 1915. ©BETTMANN/CORBIS

THE LONG ROAD TO WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE

By the mid-1880s, the idea of women's suffrage was gaining some popularity. Ontario women increasingly protested against discrimination in education, employment, and society's acceptance of violence against women and children. Male unionists and socialists joined the suffrage cause, but the movement was still decades away from winning over the majority of the population.

In 1885, MPP John Waters introduced a Bill in Ontario's Legislature that proposed giving the franchise to women. The Bill was defeated. MPP Waters introduced a Bill on women's enfranchisement each year until 1893, all of which were defeated. Waters tried to convince his fellow parliamentarians that suffrage was a part of natural evolution in political life, but his opponents felt it threatened domestic life. Laughter rang out in the Legislature when he introduced his Bills. Bills supporting women's enfranchisement were introduced in other provincial legislatures as well as the House of Commons around this time, but all were defeated.

In the 1890s, the suffrage movement gained an important ally from Canada's largest women's group, the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU). They believed that giving women the vote would lead to prohibition of alcohol, which would in turn reduce violence against women and children.

Suffragists worked hard for their cause. They confronted governments, wrote articles, presented petitions, held lectures, and organized parades. Staging mock parliaments also helped spread the importance of women's suffrage.

Mock parliaments were held across Canada, with at least seven staged in Ontario. These were performances with clear political messages, and the goal was to raise money and generate sympathy for women's suffrage. Mock parliaments presented women as the ones who could vote, and made arguments why men should not get the right to vote.

RIGHT: THE STEPHENS SISTERS (ELLEN, ELIZA, RACHAEL, MARY) WERE MEMBERS OF THE OWEN SOUND WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN TEMPERANCE UNION. MARY WAS THE FOUNDER OF THE OWEN SOUND CHAPTER. COURTESY OF THE GREY ROOTS ARCHIVAL COLLECTION.

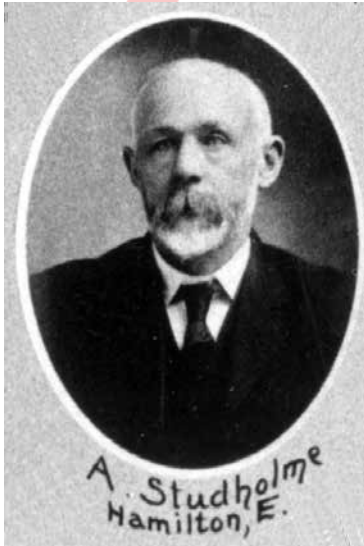


BOTTOM: THE WCTU RIBBON, COURTESY OF THE WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN TEMPERANCE UNION

The most celebrated Ontario mock parliament was held in Toronto on February 18th, 1896. Well-known suffragist Emily Stowe took on the role of Premier. There were men and women in the audience, and the three major local newspapers all published enthusiastic reviews, with the Toronto Star calling the evening "heaps of fun." Despite the evening being a success, it did not lead directly to any advancements of Ontario's suffrage cause.



A NEW CENTURY



The suffrage movement in Ontario grew in the early 1900s. Industrialization, growing urbanization and immigration at this time influenced both progressive and conservative groups to support the franchise for women. The socialist suffragists advocated for rights of women workers, who were poorly paid and not protected. Other suffragists supported the vote for women as a way to protect and strengthen the White, middle-class cause against the incoming tide of immigrants and the working class moving into urban centres.



In 1909, MPP Allan Studholme introduced a Bill to grant women in Ontario the same rights as men to vote and hold public office. It was defeated, but to show his support of the cause, he introduced the same Bill for the next four years. It was defeated each time. A huge suffrage delegation met in Toronto in 1909 and presented a petition to the Ontario Legislature signed by more than 100 000 citizens. In 1911, hundreds of suffragists met with Ontario Premier James Whitney. He listened to their request for enfranchisement but remained opposed to the idea.

The outbreak of the First World War interrupted the suffrage campaigns and divided activists. Many concentrated on supporting the war effort instead of women's enfranchisement. However ultimately the war helped the suffrage cause – in 1917, the federal vote was extended to women serving in the Canadian Army Medical Corps and to close female relatives of military men. At the same time, the Wartime Elections Act disenfranchised thousands of immigrants from enemy countries who had become citizens after 1902, as well as all conscientious objectors to the war.

TOP: MPP ALLAN STUDHOLME SUPPORTED WOMENS SUFFRAGE, HOWEVER FORMER ONTARIO PREMIER JAMES WHITNEY (BELOW) REMAINED OPPOSED

FACING OPPOSITION

Ontario suffragists faced opposition from politicians, as well as from many regular citizens, both men and women. In 1913, the Association Opposed to Woman Suffrage in Canada (AOWSC) was formed. This group brought together mostly wealthy women, and female relatives of politicians and industrialists whose goal was to organize against suffrage in Ontario. Unlike many suffragists, the majority of the AOWSC members were married and did not work outside the home.

The group lost its momentum with the outbreak of the First World War, as its members turned towards the war effort.



SAMPLE POSTCARDS AND POLITICAL CARTOONS FROM THE SUFFRAGE MOVEMENT.

TOP LEFT AND ABOVE: © DR. JOAN IVERSEN: WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE POSTCARD COLLECTION

LEFT: © ANN LEWIS: WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE COLLECTION

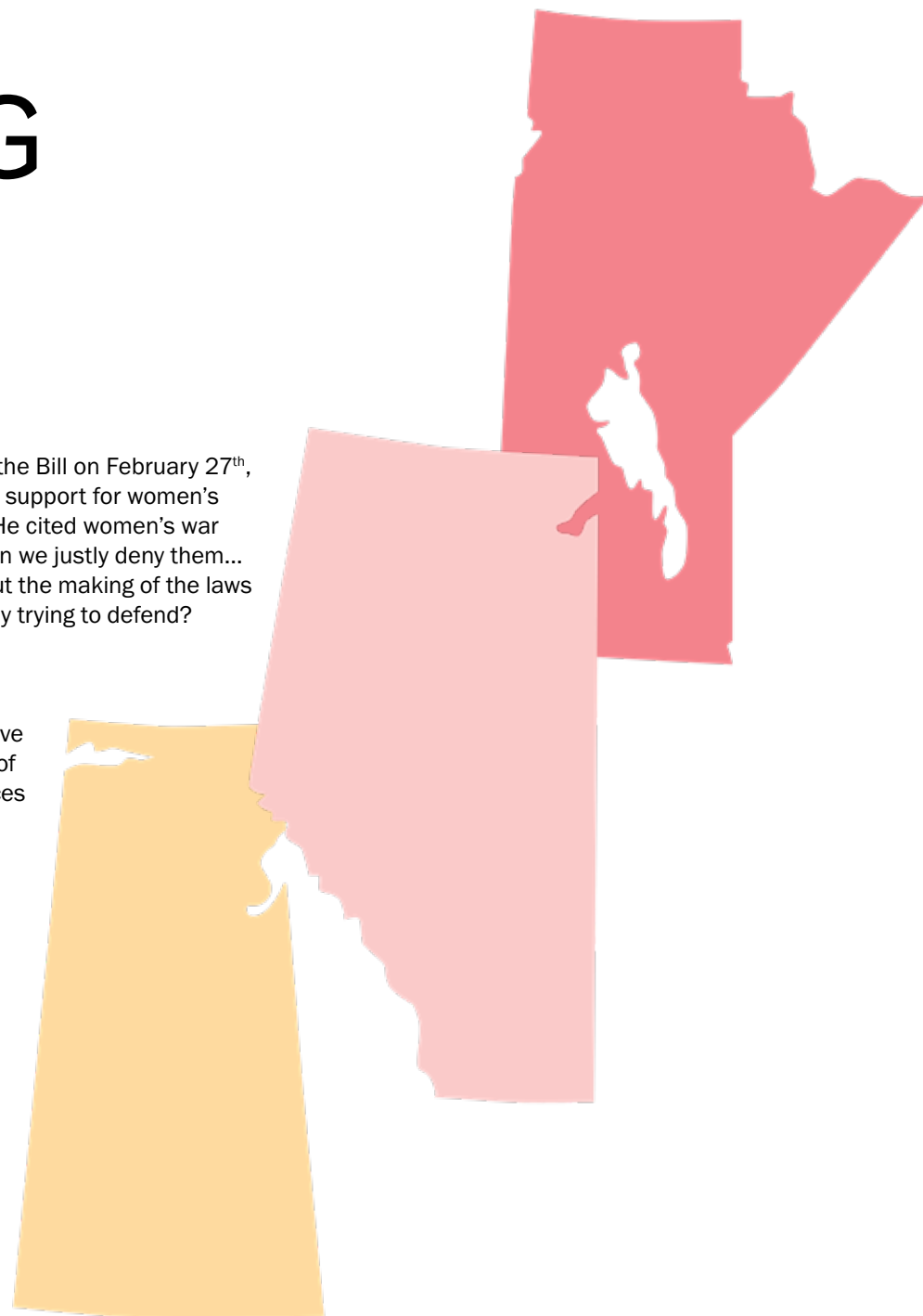
TRIUMPH AND THE CONTINUING STRUGGLE

It was during the First World War that suffragists saw real success in many provinces. The first province to grant women the vote was Manitoba in 1916, followed by Alberta and Saskatchewan later on in the same year. British Columbia and Ontario gave women the vote in 1917, followed by the Yukon (1919), the Maritime provinces (1918-25), Québec (1940) and the Northwest Territories (1951). Women were granted the federal vote in 1918. However, women of Asian background were excluded from the federal vote until 1948, and Status Indian women waited even longer – until 1954 to vote in Ontario and 1960 for the right to vote federally.

When the Ontario Legislature opened its session in February 1917, MPP Newton Wesley Rowell proposed that Conservatives and Liberals join together to introduce an all-party suffrage Bill. Because of the way it was presented – as a motion attached as an amendment to Premier William Hearst's Throne Speech – the Speaker struck it down as being out of order. However three more suffrage Bills were shortly introduced, and *The Election Law Amendment Act, 1917* received Royal Assent in Ontario on April 12th, 1917.

During Second Reading of the Bill on February 27th, Premier Hearst gave public support for women's suffrage for the first time. He cited women's war work, and stated that "...can we justly deny them... the right to have a say about the making of the laws they have been so heroically trying to defend? My answer is, I think not."

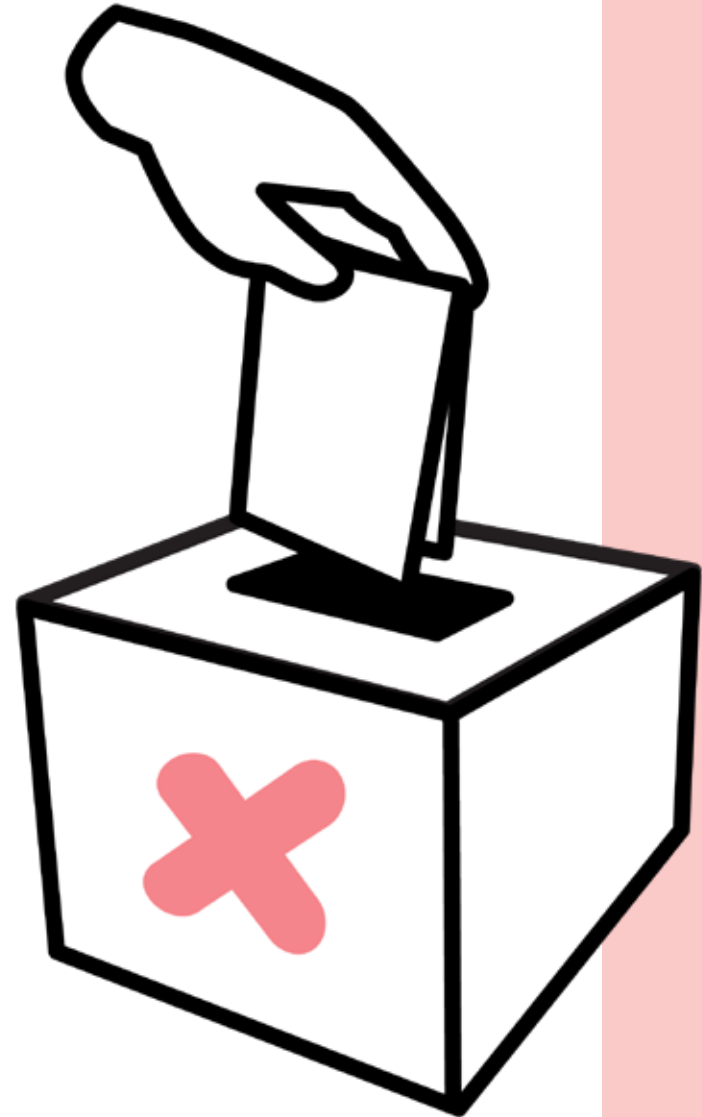
The suffrage movement also inspired other legislative changes. The introduction of provincial mothers' allowances and pensions beginning in the First World War would not have occurred without feminist pressure and politicians' fears of new woman voters.



WHO WAS EXCLUDED?

Not all women gained the right to vote in Ontario in 1917. Like men, only women who were 21 years or older, who were born or naturalized British subjects, and who had lived in the country for at least 12 months could vote. Polling stations were not always easily accessible, and those who lived in remote communities had great difficulties in voting.

Male and female Status Indians were excluded from voting provincially until 1954 (for more information go to Indigenous Suffrage on Page 11). Homeless people gained the right to vote provincially in 1998. Inmates had restrictions placed on their voting rights until 2002.



RUNNING THE GOOD RACE

The fight for women's rights did not end with the vote. In 1919, women gained the right to run for office both federally and provincially in Ontario. However again there were restrictions - only women who were born as or naturalized British subjects could run. Indigenous women, as well as those who were thought to suffer from mental illness were barred from running.

Agnes Macphail became the first female federal Member of Parliament elected in 1921. Four other women - Harriet Dick, Rose Mary Henderson, Elizabeth Bethune Kiely and Harriet Dunlop Prenter - also ran in the same election but they were not successful. Agnes Macphail was the only woman in the House of Commons until 1935, when Martha Black was elected.

October 20th, 1919 was the first provincial election in which women could run for a seat in Ontario's Legislature. There were two women nominated to run in this election: Henrietta Thompson Bundy and Justerna Sears. Neither won their seats.

Bundy came in second out of four candidates in her riding of Toronto Northeast. She advocated for mothers' pensions, equal pay, minimum wage, and the Temperance Act. She also served as the president of the Toronto Women's Association. Sears ran as an independent candidate in Ottawa

West. She was an advocate for the Temperance Act as well as mothers' pensions, equal pay, minimum wage, and believed in implementing policies to improve the price and quality of housing. She was an ambitious and self-determined woman who worked as a bookkeeper for twenty years.

Four accomplished women - teachers, journalists and an author - ran in the 1923 Ontario election, but none won their seats. Two women ran in 1926, four ran in 1929, six in 1934, and two in 1937, all unsuccessful. All in all, Ontario waited 24 years after The Women's Assembly Qualification Act passed in 1919 before it saw the first female Members of Provincial Parliament (MPPs) elected. Agnes Macphail (who ran provincially after losing her federal seat) and Rae Luckock were elected to serve in Ontario's parliament in 1943.

TOP TO BOTTOM: JUSTERNA SEARS, HENRIETTA THOMPSON BUNDY, AGNES MACPHAIL, AND RAE LUCKOCK



RUNNING THE GOOD RACE (CONT.)

Agnes Macphail served as an MPP from 1943 to 1945 and again from 1948-1951. Rae Luckcock served only one term, from 1943 to 1945. Although Macphail and Luckcock broke down the barrier for women serving as Members of Provincial Parliament (MPPs), the road ahead was not easy. After Macphail lost her seat in 1951, Ontario waited until 1963 for another woman to be elected - Ada Pritchard. The next time more than one woman was elected was 1971, when Margaret Birch and Margaret Scrivener were elected.

The road for non-White women in Ontario politics has been even harder. The first racialized woman was elected in 1990, when Zanana Akande won her seat to become the first Black female MPP. In 2018, Suze Morrison became the first Indigenous woman elected as an MPP.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: MARGARET BIRCH, SUZE MORRISON, AND ZANANA AKANDE



INDIGENOUS SUFFRAGE

Indigenous women faced both racial and gender discrimination. Although women in Ontario gained the right to vote provincially in 1917 and federally in 1918, Indigenous women got the provincial vote in 1954 and the federal vote in 1960.

Before European contact, although there was a huge socio-cultural diversity in the hundreds of First Nations living throughout Canada, in general there was a balance between gender roles in many of the communities. Women and men had different roles, but they were seen as complimentary and not hierarchical as they were in European society. First Nations women often held positions of power and leadership in their communities. Some communities were matrilineal, meaning that wealth, power and inheritance were passed down through the mother. The Haudenosaunee Six Nations had Clan Mothers, and these women were responsible for choosing the male chief and had the authority to take his power away.

When Europeans arrived in what is now Canada, they brought with them their patriarchal values and First Nations women were slowly stripped of their power. The government decided that to be an Indian, you had to be an Indian male, a child of an Indian male, or be married to an Indian male. Under this system, a woman depended on her relationship with a man to determine whether or not she was an Indian.

Embedded in the Indian Act of 1876 were marriage policies that discriminated against women. The “marrying out” policy stated that if a Status Indian woman married a non-Status man, they lost their Status, meaning they had to give up their rights and privileges as band members. They lost treaty benefits, health benefits, the right to live on their reserves, the right to inherit family property, and even the right to be buried on the reserve with their families. Their children also lost their rights.

However a non-Status woman would gain Status if she married a Status Indian man. This meant that there were White women who gained Status through marriage, while Indigenous women lost Status through marriage.

And further, if a Status Indian woman married a Status Indian man from a different band, she would become a member of his band and lose membership in her band. If a Status Indian woman was widowed or abandoned by her husband, she would also lose her Status rights. All women’s rights were tied to their husband.

LEFT: GAHANO WENT ON TO BECOME A HAUDENOSAUNEE CLAN MOTHER IN THE 1870s. IMAGE FROM LEAGUE OF THE IROQUOIS BY LEWIS HENRY MORGAN



INDIGENOUS SUFFRAGE (CONT.)

It was only in 1985 that the Indian Act was revised to finally abolish the discriminatory marriage policies. A woman's Status was no longer tied to their husband. This came after years of court battles, led by outspoken Indigenous women such as Jeannette Corbiere, Yvonne Bédard and Sandra Lovelace Nicholas.

Even today some gender discrimination remains in the Indian Act. In November 2017, the federal government pledged to amend the Act to fully remove gender restrictions against women. The revised Act will enable women to pass down their status to their descendants and reinstate status to those who lost it before 1985. The bill has yet to pass into law.

The original version of the Indian Act also restricted First Nations women from participating politically in their bands. It was revised in 1951 so that women could vote and hold office in First Nations elections, restoring some of their pre-contact decision-making roles.

The Indian Act does not apply to Métis and Inuit people, who had different paths towards voting and other rights. Métis people were not excluded from the vote since most were not covered by treaties

and not looked at as Indigenous in eyes of the government. Despite having the right to vote, they did not have any other rights or recognition as a distinct Indigenous group until 2003. Inuit people gained the right to vote federally in 1950. However, the geographic isolation of northern communities meant that many did not have the opportunity to vote until ballot boxes were placed in all Inuit communities for the 1962 federal election.

Indigenous people are Canadian citizens and participate in the Canadian democratic system, but they also have the right to self-determination and have their own representational organizations that oversee areas such as land management, education, and language rights. Indigenous communities still face challenges in implementing and upholding their recognized rights, and often experience difficulties when their representational organizations work with federal, provincial and territorial governments. Ongoing reconciliation work requires recognition and redress for the long history of human rights violations to all Indigenous people – First Nations, Inuit, Métis, women and men.

RIGHT: SANDRA
LOVELACE NICHOLAS

BELOW: JEANNETTE
CORBIÈRE, PHOTO
COURTESY OF
THE MANITOULIN
EXPOSITOR



FINAL REFLECTIONS

Voting rights are one of the most important rights we have in Canada and Ontario today. By voting, we can make our voices heard and enact real change in our communities.

Although women won the right to vote several generations ago, the fight for gender equality remains, having evolved since the suffragists' time. We are still working towards gender parity of elected officials in parliament, income equality, and eradicating sexual violence against women. Women are not the only group still fighting for rights and equality – the LGBTQ+ community, Indigenous people, and racialized people all still face discrimination and prejudice.

Suffragists fought long, loud, and hard to change prevailing societal views about what women could do. Take them as your example - get involved with local organizations in your community and work towards equality for all, both at home and around the world.

“The usual statement is that I am a remarkable woman because I can do it; the implication is that the average woman is too dumb to succeed at a man’s task – and I resent that implication, for it is false.”

– E. CORA HIND, FIRST FEMALE JOURNALIST
IN CANADA, SUFFRAGIST

TIMELINE OF WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE IN ONTARIO AND CANADA

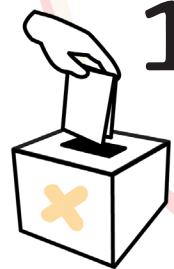
1792
FIRST ELECTION HELD IN THE BRITISH COLONY OF UPPER CANADA (NOW ONTARIO). BRITISH SUBJECTS OVER THE AGE OF 21 WHO HAVE NOT BEEN CONVICTED OF A SERIOUS CRIMINAL OFFENCE OR TREASON AND OWN PROPERTY ARE ELIGIBLE TO VOTE. BECAUSE OF COMMON LAW PRACTICES FOLLOWED FROM ENGLAND, WOMEN DO NOT VOTE, EVEN THOUGH THE LAW DOES NOT EXPLICITLY BAN THEM FROM VOTING.

1800



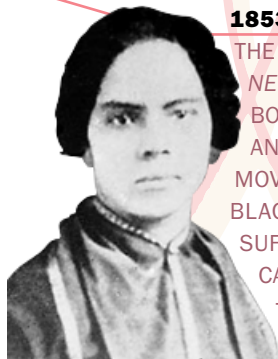
1867
CONFEDERATION - CANADA IS CREATED. UNDER THE BRITISH NORTH AMERICA ACT, WOMEN ARE **NOT** ALLOWED TO VOTE.

1876
THE INDIAN ACT IS PASSED IN THE FEDERAL PARLIAMENT. THE INDIAN ACT ALLOWED INDIGENOUS MEN WHO OWNED PROPERTY TO VOTE, BUT IN ORDER TO DO SO, THEY HAVE TO GIVE UP THEIR STATUS.



1825

1850



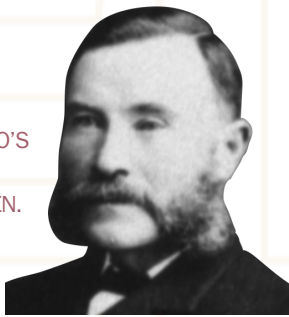
1853
THE PROVINCIAL FREEMAN NEWSPAPER, WHICH PROMOTES BOTH THE ANTI-SLAVERY AND WOMEN'S RIGHTS MOVEMENTS, IS ESTABLISHED. BLACK ABOLITIONIST AND SUFFRAGIST MARY ANN SHADD CARY IS THE EDITOR, AND USES THE NEWSPAPER TO TELL READERS THAT GENDER AND RACIAL EQUALITY ARE BOTH FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN RIGHTS.

1875

1918
WOMEN WHO ARE CANADIAN CITIZENS AGED 21 AND OVER GAIN THE RIGHT TO VOTE IN FEDERAL ELECTIONS. RACIAL AND INDIGENOUS PROHIBITIONS MEAN THAT NOT ALL WOMEN GET THE VOTE.

21+

1900



1885
MPP JOHN WATERS INTRODUCES A BILL IN ONTARIO'S LEGISLATURE THAT PROPOSES GIVING THE FRANCHISE TO WOMEN. THE BILL IS DEFEATED. MPP WATERS INTRODUCES A BILL ON WOMEN'S ENFRANCHISEMENT EACH YEAR UNTIL 1893.

1960
ALL INDIGENOUS PEOPLE GAIN THE RIGHT TO VOTE IN FEDERAL ELECTIONS, ALTHOUGH THEY ARE STILL EXCLUDED FROM SOME PROVINCIAL FRANCHISES UNTIL 1969 (QUEBEC IS THE LAST PROVINCE TO GIVE INDIGENOUS PEOPLE THE VOTE IN PROVINCIAL ELECTIONS).



1921
AGNES MACPHAIL BECOMES THE FIRST WOMAN TO WIN A SEAT IN THE FEDERAL PARLIAMENT.

1919
WOMEN CAN NOW RUN FOR OFFICE IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

1919
ON APRIL 24TH, THE WOMEN'S ASSEMBLY QUALIFICATION ACT PASSES IN ONTARIO, GIVING WOMEN THE RIGHT TO RUN FOR OFFICE IN PROVINCIAL ELECTIONS. TWO WOMEN, HENRIETTA THOMPSON BUNDY AND JUSTERNA SEARS, RUN FOR SEATS IN ONTARIO'S PARLIAMENT BUT NEITHER ARE SUCCESSFUL.



1925

REVERSING A SUPREME COURT OF CANADA RULING. WOMEN CAN NOW HOLD SEATS IN THE CANADIAN SENATE.

1934
THE DOMINION FRANCHISE ACT EXPLICITLY DISQUALIFIES INUIT AND STATUS INDIANS FROM VOTING IN FEDERAL ELECTIONS, BUT MAKES AN EXCEPTION FOR STATUS INDIAN VETERANS.

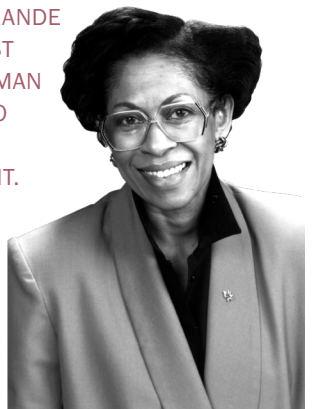
1950

PEOPLES AND JAPANESE CANADIANS.

1947
THE CITIZENSHIP ACT IS PASSED IN THE FEDERAL PARLIAMENT, EXTENDING THE RIGHT TO VOTE FEDERALLY AND PROVINCIAL TO CHINESE-CANADIAN AND SOUTH ASIAN-CANADIAN MEN AND WOMEN, BUT EXCLUDING INDIGENOUS

1943
AGNES MACPHAIL AND RAE LUCKCOCK ARE THE FIRST TWO WOMEN ELECTED TO ONTARIO'S PARLIAMENT.

1990
ZANANA AKANDE IS THE FIRST BLACK WOMAN ELECTED TO ONTARIO'S PARLIAMENT.



1972
MARGARET BIRCH IS THE FIRST WOMAN TO HOLD THE POSITION OF CABINET MINISTER IN ONTARIO.



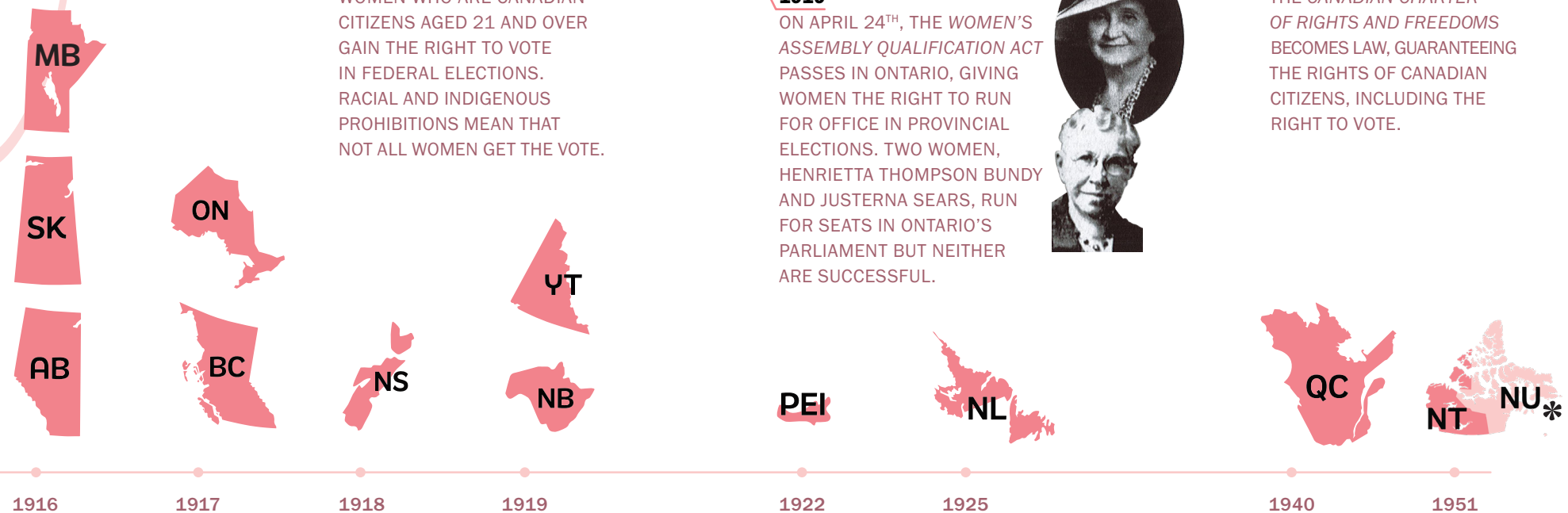
*NOTE: NUNAVUT (NU) SEPARATES FROM THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES (NT) IN 1999.

2013
KATHLEEN WYNNE BECOMES ONTARIO'S FIRST FEMALE PREMIER. SHE IS ALSO THE FIRST OPENLY GAY PREMIER IN CANADA.



2000

WHEN DID WOMEN IN EACH PROVINCE AND TERRITORY GAIN THE RIGHT TO VOTE?



FEATURE FIGURES

Countless women contributed to the cause of women's suffrage and women's rights in Ontario. Here you'll find features on just a few of the many important figures who helped popularize and promote women's rights throughout Ontario. They all have different points of view, experiences, and ideas to share.

EMILY STOWE

(1831-1903)

Emily Stowe was a lifelong champion of women's rights, and a doctor. No Canadian college would accept female students, so she enrolled at the New York Medical College for Women and set up a practice in Toronto after she graduated in 1867.

Stowe was the first Canadian woman to practise medicine in Canada, although she was not licensed until 1880. Ontario required all U.S.-trained physicians to attend at least one course in an Ontario medical school, but she was ineligible because she was a woman. As an act of civil disobedience, she continued to practice unlicensed until her credentials were finally recognized.

In addition to running her medical practice, Stowe gave lectures about women's rights across southern Ontario. She condemned "the conventionalities of society" which prevented women from exploring "whatever fields of nature her God-given faculties qualify her for."

Most people opposed and persecuted her for these views, but she did gain a small following that was interested in exploring the political inequities of women.

In 1876 she founded the Toronto Women's Literary Club (TWLC), Canada's first suffrage group. The name gave the organization legitimacy – those against women's suffrage assumed it was for discussing literary works. The TWLC members discussed women's rights, reviewed the work of charitable institutions, and investigated the working conditions of women. Members – mostly White, middle-class women – also supported Stowe's dream of opening the University of Toronto to women. In 1883, growing acceptance of women's suffrage led to the TWLC changing its name to the Canadian Women's Suffrage Association.

Stowe is considered Ontario's most significant 19th-century suffragist. Her defiance of social expectations and willingness to break barriers directly influenced political gains for women in Ontario. Because of her leadership, by 1884 women were allowed to study at the University of Toronto, unmarried women and widows could vote in municipal elections, and married women had more property rights. A person triumph came when her daughter Augusta Stowe-Gullen became the first woman to gain a medical degree in Canada.

BELOW: EMILY STOWE



“Self reliance is
the fine road to
independence!”

– MOTTO OF THE PROVINCIAL FREEMAN NEWSPAPER,
WHOSE FOUNDER AND EDITOR WAS
MARY ANN SHADD CARY, A BLACK ABOLITIONIST
AND SUFFRAGIST.

MARY ANN SHADD CARY (1823-1893)

Mary Ann Shadd Cary was a teacher, publisher, and abolitionist. She was born free in the slave state of Delaware, but moved to Windsor, Ontario in 1851 to take a teaching position. She soon opened her own school, which was racially integrated – something that was not normally done during this time. She was critical of many Black leaders in Canada who promoted segregated settlements, arguing that integration was the best course of action.

In 1853 she created her own newspaper, *The Provincial Freeman*, making her the first female publisher in North America and one of the first female journalists in Canada. Through the newspaper, she promoted the abolition movement in the United States, encouraging Black people to move to Canada, as well as equal rights for women. She expected women to take an active role in local political life, and educate themselves about the day's issues.

Shadd was a controversial figure for her time – her ambition and openness regarding equal race and gender rights challenged what a woman was expected

to be. The *Provincial Freeman* faced criticism with her as editor, so she hired a male editor and male journalists, and she continued to work behind the scenes, publishing articles under her initials only. The paper folded under financial pressures in 1860.

Shadd eventually moved back to the United States, and became the first Black female to earn a law degree, from Howard University in Washington D.C. Her graduation was delayed nine years, because the university feared backlash from having a female graduate. In her later years, Shadd devoted herself to the women's suffrage movement in the United States.

Shadd's early activism in Canada had led to Ontario's first feminist wave, which pre-dated the suffrage movement by several decades. However, the racist attitudes of most White women in the late 19th century meant that they did not look to the activism experiences of Black women, or draw any parallels between racism and sexism when they began to advocate for equality. The suffrage movement in Canada and Ontario remained largely a White cause.



ABOVE: MARY ANN
SHADD CARY. LIBRARY
AND ARCHIVES CANADA
/ C-029977.

*FLORA MACDONALD
DENISON*
(1867-1921)

Flora MacDonald Denison grew up in an impoverished family in the small town of Bridgewater, Ontario. She eventually made her way to Toronto, where she opened a dressmaking business. Providing high fashion garments to Toronto's social elite class gave her insight into class inequities and the exploitation of garment workers. Denison was also a journalist for the Toronto World (although she was unpaid), writing a weekly column from 1909-1913 called "The Open Road towards Democracy," where she shared her outspoken views on women's suffrage and feminism. Denison believed that suffrage was a doorway to all other rights for women – marriage rights, custodial rights for mothers, child labour laws, equal pay, and dress reform.

Many suffragists shared Denison's views on equal rights for men and women. However her opinions on other topics were unconventional for the time, and set her apart from others. She advocated for the right of women to initiate divorce and to have access to birth control, both of which were considered scandalous.

"I do protest and will continue to protest with all the strength of the womanhood in me against the treatment of our sex in every walk of life."

– FLORA MACDONALD DENISON, JOURNALIST,
DRESSMAKER, AND ONTARIO SUFFRAGIST

She also had unusual spiritual beliefs, which created a divide between her and most other suffragists who belonged to Protestant churches.

Denison was President of the Canadian Suffrage Association from 1911 to 1914. She was forced to resign because of her support for the British militant suffragettes.

RIGHT: FLORA MACDONALD DENISON'S
BUSINESS CARD, COURTESY OF THE
TORONTO PUBLIC LIBRARY



MARGARET HAILE

Margaret Haile was a socialist and was the first woman to run for provincial office in Ontario – she put her name on the ballot in 1902, even though women were not allowed to vote or sit in the Legislature at that time.

Haile was active in the socialist world in both Canada and the United States. She was concerned with the rights of the working class, as well as gender equality. She worked at various times as a teacher, stenographer and journalist, and she often experienced economic hardship. Her marital status remains unknown, but she had to support at least one child.

When she was nominated as a candidate in the 1902 Ontario election for the riding of Toronto North, she knew she could not win. However, the hope was that a female candidate would raise awareness of the universal suffrage platform of the Ontario Socialist League. She did not have any support outside suffragist and socialist groups – at an all-candidates meeting before the election, her opponents left before she had a chance to speak.

During her campaign, Haile was daring enough to raise the issue of prostitution. She broke from societal norms at the time which considered it a moral flaw, and instead said that prostitution was a consequence of the lack of well-paid employment for women.

On election day, Haile received 81 votes, the second-lowest in her riding. Not much is known about her life after the election.

“She does not believe that life is over for her when she stands at the altar...The new woman believes in being herself right down to the end of life, living out her own personal life.”

– MARGARET HAILE, FIRST FEMALE CANDIDATE TO RUN IN AN ONTARIO PROVINCIAL ELECTION

AGNES MACPHAIL

(1890-1954)

Agnes Macphail was the first woman in Canada to be elected to the House of Commons in 1921, the first election in which women could run for office. In 1943, she became one of the first two women elected to Ontario's Legislature.

Macphail grew up in Grey County, Ontario. Her family were farmers, but she disliked the work and wanted to continue her education. She became a teacher, and taught in numerous schools around Ontario and Alberta.

Her last teaching position was in Sharon, Ontario, where she became active with the United Farmers of Ontario, a farmer's political, social and educational organization. In 1921 she ran and won a seat in the House of Commons. She entered politics to represent the farmers of her region, but she also championed the rights of miners, immigrants, prisoners, women, and other marginalized groups.

One of Macphail's greatest accomplishments was her role in reforming the Canadian penal system after seeing the shocking conditions at the Kingston Penitentiary. She argued that prisoners should be reformed and educated, and that corporal punishment should be reduced. Her findings led to a Royal Commission, and as a result, the Penitentiary Bill of 1939 made 88 recommendations to improve prison conditions.

"I owed it to my father that I was elected to Parliament in the first place, but I owed it to my mother that I stuck it out once I got there."

- AGNES MACPHAIL, FIRST WOMAN ELECTED TO THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, AND ONE OF THE FIRST TWO WOMEN ELECTED TO ONTARIO'S PARLIAMENT

An outspoken peace advocate, Macphail argued against military spending and the glorification of war, and was the first Canadian woman delegate to take part in the League of Nations in 1929.

Macphail was an outspoken advocate of gender equity and strove to end legal discrimination against women, including modifying the grounds for divorce. She continued to support women's rights when she was elected as an MPP to the Ontario Legislature in 1943.

She played an integral role in passing the Employees Fair Remuneration Act of 1951, Ontario's first equal pay legislation. This was her final political success, and she lost her seat shortly after.

After losing her seat, Macphail continued to work for equality of all people, but she struggled with poor health and limited income. She died in 1954, shortly before her appointment to the Senate was to be announced.

RIGHT AND BELOW:
AGNES MACPHAIL



RAE LUCKOCK

(1893-1972)

Rae Luckock was one of the first two women elected to Ontario's Legislature in 1943. Luckock came from a political family – her father was one of the founders of The United Farmers of Ontario, the political party that served as Ontario's government from 1919 to 1923.

Luckock experienced poverty after losing her job as a milliner and seamstress during the Great Depression. Tragedy struck when her daughter Fern died at the age of 12 from complications from scarlet fever. After her daughter's death, Luckock became determined to represent the underprivileged and disadvantaged. She ran as a Member of the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (which became the New Democratic Party in the 1960s) and won her seat in Toronto's Bracondale riding.

While in the Legislature, she served as her party's Education Critic, and promoted the idea of free university tuition and improved rural education. She campaigned for the equality of women by advocating equal pay for equal work and pay for homemakers, and the right for women to stay on in the workforce after the war ended. She was also an early environmentalist, and was critical of deforestation and air pollution during House debates.

Although she served only one term at the Legislature, Luckock continued her career as an activist. As president the Housewives and Consumers Association, she organized a petition known as the March of a Million Names to protest the rising prices of food and household goods in the post-war years. A life-long

pacifist, Luckock became the first president of the Congress of Canadian Women and travelled around the world to promote disarmament and to participate in international peace conferences.

While in the Legislature, Luckock was accused of communist tendencies. This rumour grew after she travelled to China in 1956 for peace talks.

She spent the last 14 years of her life in the hospital, after being diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease.

BELOW: RAE LUCKOCK

“Every human being of every colour, race, or creed has an equal right to life, liberty and happiness.”

- RAE LUCKOCK, ONE OF THE FIRST TWO WOMEN VELECTED TO ONTARIO'S PARLIAMENT



EDITH MONTURE

(1890-1996)

Edith Monture (1890-1996) was the first Indigenous woman to become a registered nurse in Canada and the first Status Indian woman to gain the right to vote in a Canadian federal election. Of Mohawk descent, Monture grew up on the Six Nations reserve near Brantford, Ontario.

Monture completed her high school education, which was rare for any woman in Canada at the time. Because she was Indigenous, she was not accepted to any Canadian nursing schools, so she went to New York to complete her degree. She graduated first in her class, and became the first Indigenous registered nurse in Canada in 1914, although she remained in the United States to practice.

When the United States entered the First World War in 1917, Monture volunteered as a nurse. Stationed in France, she assisted in surgeries, treated victims of mustard gas attacks, cared for amputees and offered moral support to injured soldiers.

She was the only First Nations woman known to have

served in the Allied armed forces during the First World War. As a member of the Allied forces, she was qualified to vote in the December 1917 Canadian federal election, but was not able to exercise her new voting privilege as she was nowhere near a ballot box.

Monture returned to the Six Nations reserve after the war and retained her voting status, even though other Status Indians were not able to vote federally until 1960. There was no polling station on her reserve, and she travelled to a nearby town to vote. Although some members of her reserve were opposed to involvement in settler politics, voting was important to her as a Haudenosaunee person, a woman, and a veteran.

In 1954 when Status Indians gained the right to vote provincially in Ontario, Monture and her husband opened up their home as a polling station and acted as scrutineers.

Monture died on the Six Nations reserve in 1996, a week before her 106th birthday.



ABOVE: EDITH MONTURE

GLOSSARY

E

Enfranchisement

1. The giving of the right to vote to a person or group of people (for example: women, Japanese Canadians, incarcerated persons, etc.).
2. The legal process by which Indigenous peoples lost their Indian Status under the Indian Act. The right to vote was one of the supposed advantages of loss of status before Indigenous people acquired the federal vote in 1960.

F

Franchise

The right to vote granted to a person or group by a government.

S

Status Indian

The legal status of a First Nations person who is registered as an “Indian” under Canada’s Indian Act. They are eligible for a range of benefits, rights, programs and services offered by the federal and provincial or territorial governments.

Although the term “Indian” is no longer used when referring to Indigenous peoples, it is still used when referring to the legal status of an Indigenous person in Canada.

Métis and Inuit people are not recognized as “Status Indians.” They have separate agreements with the Canadian government in regards to rights and benefits.

Suffrage

The right to vote in public elections. Universal suffrage means everyone gets to vote, not just certain groups of people like men or property holders.

Suffragist

A person advocating for a group of people to be legally allowed to vote, especially women. Many suffragists were members of suffragist organizations, which used petitions, posters, leaflets, and public meetings to raise awareness and support for women’s right to vote.

Suffragette

A member of militant women’s organizations who used direct actions, violence, and civil disobedience to fight for women’s suffrage. The term refers in particular to members of the *British Women’s Social and Political Union*.

“For the taxes we pay, and the laws we obey, we want something to say.”

– MOTTO OF THE OTTAWA
EQUAL FRANCHISE ASSOCIATION

CLUES FROM THE ARCHIVES

An activity designed for Grades 8-12

OVERVIEW

This activity uses primary sources to discover the history of the suffrage movement. Students will examine photographs, newspaper articles, speeches, political cartoons and Bills to explore different attitudes towards women's suffrage, as well as who was for and against the movement.

OBJECTIVE

Students will gain a better understanding of the suffrage movement in Ontario, different attitudes towards it, and how it fit into the overall society of the time.

TO START

1. Students should form pairs or small groups for this activity. Alternatively, this activity can be completed individually as a homework assignment.
2. Each group will choose one of the primary source documents/photographs found in Appendix A (Page 26).

3. The students will examine their document or photograph and answer a series of questions:
 - a. What is the main idea conveyed in your document/photograph?
 - b. What is the perspective of the creator of your document/photograph?
 - c. How did they feel about women's suffrage?
 - d. What do you think influenced their beliefs?
 - e. What was the social and political climate when this document/photograph was made?
 - f. What customs or traditions are associated with this document/photograph?
 - g. Who is represented? Who is not represented?
 - h. Are there any similarities between your document/photograph and your current community?
4. Students then present their findings to the class, and have a discussion.

FOLLOW-UP

The following activities are optional additional assignments:

- Use curiosity to discover more about your document/photograph. List at least four sources you could use to learn more about it.
- Use critical thinking to discover more about your document/photograph. Write a short story about it. Who created it? What were they thinking at the time? What else was going on in their life?
- Write a response to the following question: does your document/photograph relate to your community? Why or why not?



SHOULD I SUPPORT THE VOTE?

An activity designed for Grades 4-7

OVERVIEW

This activity asks students to examine different scenario cards and discover how a person's everyday experiences could affect whether or not they supported women's suffrage.

TO START

1. Students should form small groups or pairs for this activity.
2. Each group will then be given a scenario card found in Appendix B (Page 30).
3. After examining the card, students will consider whether or not they think the person on their card would have supported women's suffrage.
4. Students should take into account the following when deciding whether the person in their scenario card would have supported women's suffrage:
 - a. Where do they live? In a city, a small town, or in a rural area?

- b. What is their social class?
- c. What is their marital status? Are they married, widowed or single?
- d. What is their ethnicity?
- e. Were they born in Canada or did they immigrate?
- f. What is their religion?
- g. Would they support women's suffrage for all women, or just some women? Who would be included and excluded?
- h. Do they think that women are equal to men?
- i. Do they think that women would bring a different perspective to voting than men?
- j. Are they influenced by their family and friends?

5. Students will present their findings to the class and have a discussion.

FOLLOW-UP

The following activities are optional additional assignments:

- Write a short story about the person featured on your card. What was their daily life like?
- Compare and contrast your daily life with that of the person on your card. What are the similarities and what are the differences?
- Pretend you are the person featured on your card and write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper with your views on women's suffrage.

OUR RIGHTS TODAY

OVERVIEW

The following discussion questions are designed to get students thinking about their rights today, and the rights of those groups who have historically been marginalized. These questions can be incorporated into class discussions, prompts for essay assignments, or class debate topics.

1. The suffragist movement in Ontario was largely a White, middle-class cause. Racialized, Indigenous, and poor women were often not considered. Can we discuss “women’s suffrage” as if it were a single, unified process? Are equality movements today still mostly homogenous, or are they more inclusive?
2. Suffragists used non-violent ways to promote their cause such as petitions, lectures, marches and performances. The more militant suffragettes in England use vandalism and physical violence. Do you think this was justified? Why or why not? Is non-violent or violent protest more effective?
3. Suffragists faced a lot of discrimination in their daily lives, and often had little to no support even from their families. Do you think this affected the decision of some women to not get involved? Would you hesitate to get involved in a cause that was important to you if you knew it could affect your daily life? Or are there some causes that are worth it?
4. Today, everything is on social media and we see a lot of slacktivism – using a hashtag or liking an Instagram post, but not going any further in our support of a cause. Do you think social media helps or harms causes? Is social media used differently to support causes in Canada versus other parts of the world?
5. From our perspective today, it can be hard to believe that women were once excluded from voting in Canada. Looking ahead fifty years, what current equality movements do you think will become generally accepted to the future generation?
6. First Nations people were one of the last groups to get the right to vote. Prior to 1960, only a small portion of the population could vote federally (military veterans) without losing their status. They could choose to vote only if they gave up their status, treaty rights, tax exemptions and cultural affiliation. Today, we would view this as a punishment, not a privilege. How did views differ between First Nations people and the Canadian government when it came to voting rights? Have views changed today?
7. Inuit, Métis and Status Indians were treated differently by the government in terms of voting rights. Why do you think this was? Can we discuss “Indigenous suffrage” as if it were a single process?

APPENDIX A

The following are supporting resources for the *Clues from the Archives* activity. Cut out the articles and images to distribute to each group in the class.

But my strongest objection to the bill of my hon. friend is the evil effects which in my judgment would result to society and to woman herself. These results would not be seen immediately; they would not be observed at the first few elections, but probably would take years to work out, but in the end the result would be evil, and evil alone. The right to cast the ballot carries with it the right to be elected by the ballot. If woman is part of the people, as is alleged, if she stands on an equality with man, having the same rights in the body politic, having equal intelligence, equal education, equal business training, by what process of reasoning can you show that the right to vote in her case does not carry with it the right to be voted for? The right to vote in a temperance lodge carries with it the right to be elected to preside. The same result would follow here. The right to vote for a member of the legislative assembly would carry with it the right to be elected a member of this assembly, the right to preside here, the right to take part here in all its deliberations. I think I hear the question coming to my ears. And why should she not take part? My answer is, not because woman is not intelligent, nor because she is not sufficiently educated, but because she is woman, because by putting her thus out of her sphere you unsex her, you are seeking to make her a man, to induce her to fill the place of a man; it is an attempt to compel man to perform that class of work requiring physical strength, while woman sits in parliament making laws and governing the

stronger sex—sitting as judge on the bench and as juror in the box.

A LOW TYPE OF WOMANHOOD.

I am well aware that this is the ambition of some women, masculine in character, disliking their own sex, having only selfish ambitions, deploring the fate that brought them into the world as women, and determined at all hazards to break the bonds of womanhood, and to take the part of a man. Such a woman says, Give me a chance and I will show you that I am not dependent; I refuse to take the place of humble submission which nature has assigned me; I am as able as any man; I can fill his place anywhere. Such a person I describe as a manly woman—the lowest type of true womanhood. An effeminate man or a manly woman are not the ideal types of humanity. They are nowhere in demand. The masculine, manly woman is not respected by her own sex—they generally despise and mock her—and I am certain that she is not strongly admired by many men either. It is not her misery that she cannot be a man, but rather that she cannot be a woman. I appeal to true womanhood if its highest joy is not to know that in man they have a protector, one who loves them, provides for their needs, not by force, but willingly, because he delights to do it, and I appeal to true manhood if the strongest incentive to active exertion to do their best in every way is not the fact that there is dependent upon them a loving, dutiful wife, or a mother, daughter or sister.

Can you not see that when you have brought woman into the rightful sphere of man you will have revolutionized society, and changed altogether the relationship of man and woman? Will such a course bring greater harmony? Will the happiness of the people be thereby increased? Will, as these people imagine, all sin thus be stamped out? How will such a course affect the home life? Suppose that men and women voted differently, the mother against the son, the husband against the wife, and so on. If they did not thus vote differently, according to the argument, all these wrongs could never be righted, and no object would be gained by adding this enormous number to the list of voters. If they did vote differently, is it possible that this would add to the joy of the home? Will it permit in many cases harmony and love to continue?

WRONG IDEAS OF WORK.

One reason urged why women's suffrage should be granted is because so many women are without homes. I know that this is true, and that the tendency in that direction is increasing, but it is largely the result of the prevailing fashion among young people to desire neither to be mistress of a home nor to work in the home of another. They choose in preference the factory, the counter of a store, and the tailor shop—anywhere to be entirely independent, and to live unto themselves. I have no quarrel with them if they wish to do this, but I want to say that it is certainly not conducive to increasing morality. Intemperance is spoken of as the greatest evil, but I ask those who have observed more closely the workings of society whether or not the tendency to forsake home and home life does not lead directly to that end? I ask whether the prevailing vices of our cities and towns are not the direct outcome of forsaken homes, and do not lead directly in the way of the saloon and the grog shop? To introduce women into the political arena is to add to this tendency, and those who advocate it are incurring a great responsibility. I certainly shall not be one of them. The home is woman's place of power; if she is a true woman she rules there, although she does not assume that place. This is her queenly station in every Christian country. Here her nobility, grace and moral power can be felt, and will always yield a greater influence on the nation than she ever could by assuming to take control in the political world.

I have already stated that woman is most respected in Christian and civilized countries. Introduce her into politics; make her an active agent, an active canvasser in political campaigns; bring her upon the platform and let her try her hand at sarcasm and ridicule; let her drop her winning ways and patient persuasion; let her shake her fist in man's face; let her undertake to fight her way thus to fancied freedom, and declare her power to compel him to submit to her dictation, and what inevitably must be the result? Shall I still be expected to lift my hat in respectful deference? Will man anywhere give place to her, in the car or on the street? In so doing she declares her equality, and constantly states that she is not dependent. She will in the end be taken by most men at her word, and left in public to look after herself.

APPENDIX A (CONT.)



This same lady tells us that women do not receive equal pay with men for equally good work. How can the ballot correct this? Can you compel by law the payment of a higher scale of wages? So long as women are willing and anxious to work for less wages than men, so long will they be paid less. Would she use of the ballot compel the mistress on Bloor street to give her servants higher wages? Would it insure the dressmaker down town more wages for her work? All this is regulated by the law of supply and demand, and is in no way affected by the ballot.

MR. DRYDEN'S SPEECH

Mr. Dryden said:—I crave the indulgence of the house, while for the third time I give expression to my views on the proposition contained in the hon. gentleman's bill. I desire to congratulate him on the advanced position he now takes as compared with that of former years. In some of his previous measures he proposed to give the franchise to certain classes only among women; but it is evident that the principle of the parliamentary franchise, if once conceded to women, must in the end be given to all, as it was given to all men. I prefer, therefore, to discuss the subject on this broad basis rather than piece by piece.

On some former occasions, when this matter has been brought to the attention of the legislature, it has been the custom to treat it in a light, trifling manner, and to consider it as something which merely forms amusement for the time being. But, in my judgment, it is by no means a light matter; it is a most serious question; it involves far-reaching results, and it is, undoubtedly, one of the most revolutionary measures ever submitted to this legislature. The measure proposes to introduce at one sweep into the political arena at least 100 per cent. more voters—more than doubling the number that we have at present on the rolls—and these of a class yet to be educated in the political affairs of the province. And not only this, but it would double the cost of the preparation of the voters' lists throughout the province, and vastly increase the labors of the canvass in every political campaign.

ONLY TWO WOMEN ELECTED MEMBERS
The Globe and Mail (1936-Current); Aug 5, 1943; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The Globe and Mail
 pg. 10

ONLY TWO WOMEN ELECTED MEMBERS

Only two of the six women candidates in today's Ontario election made the grade, but their victory set a precedent in a Province whose legislators since Confederation have been men.

Agnes Macphail, C.C.F. candidate in York East, was the first woman elected to the Legislature just as she was the first of her sex to enter the House of Commons 22 years ago. She sat at Ottawa until her defeat in 1940 in Grey South, which she had represented as a United Farmers of Ontario member.

The other winning woman candidate, Mrs. Rae Luckock who took Toronto Bracondale for the C.C.F., also has a United Farmers of Ontario background. Her father was the late J. J. Morrison, potent U.F.O. organizer a little more than two decades ago when that party swept into power in Ontario.

Defeated women candidates were: Mrs. George Fulford, Liberal, Leeds; Helen Carefoot, 22-year-old C.C.F. candidate in Grey South; Elsie Raikes, C.C.F., Simcoe East; Mrs. Charlotte Brown, C.C.F., Prince Edward-Lennox.

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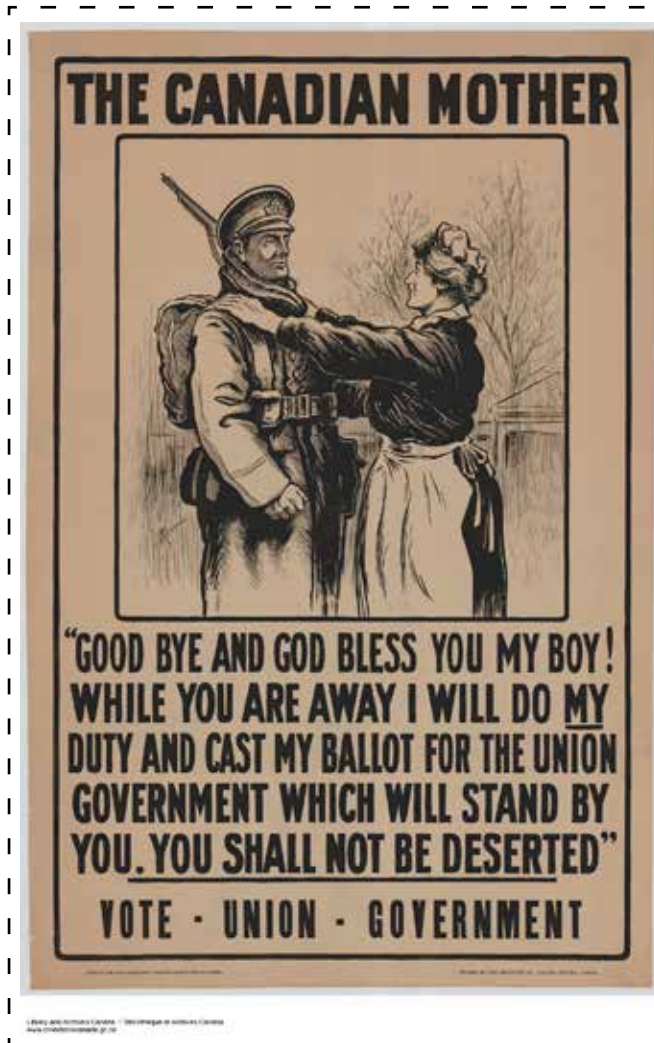
APPENDIX A (CONT.)



RIGHT: "NATIONAL SUFFRAGE MEETING
OTTAWA," IMAGE COURTESY OF WILLIAM
JAMES TOPLEY/LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES
CANADA

APPENDIX A (CONT.)

RIGHT: WARTIME
POSTER, COURTESY
OF LIBRARY AND
ARCHIVES CANADA



Many New Faces Appear as Victors in Toronto and York Ridings
The Globe and Mail (1936-Current); Aug 5, 1943; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The Globe and Mail
pg. 5

Many New Faces Appear as Victors in Toronto and York Ridings



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APPENDIX B

The following are supporting resources for the *Should I Support the Vote?* activity. Cut out the scenarios and distribute one to each group in the class.

SCENARIO #1

My husband and I have lived in the small town of North Bay our whole lives. He works on the railway and I stay home raising our four children. I do some sewing to make extra money. We get by, but money is always tight. Even though I bring in less income than my husband, I do just as much to contribute to the household – canning vegetables for the winter, cooking, cleaning, laundry. I make sure our kids always have clean clothes and full stomachs. I would like to see more equality for women, for us to have more of a say in how we live our lives. I don't believe women are too soft and emotional to vote, we would take the responsibility seriously. Politicians often forget about northern towns, and I want to voice my opinion in how our public money is spent. My husband doesn't see the point in giving the vote to women until all men are allowed to vote. Some of his coworkers from the railroad can't vote because they are from Italy so are not British subjects. The Native Indians can't vote either. I don't know if I will tell him that I think women should vote, I would not want to add to his worries.

SCENARIO #2

My family has a farm outside of Hamilton. We have three generations living and working on it – my parents, my brother and his wife and children, plus myself and our children. My husband died in a farming accident last year. We work hard every day, from dawn to dusk. We employ many farmhands, anyone who will put in an honest day's work, it doesn't matter to us if they are Black or a Native Indian. I'm not sure I see the point in women voting, it's really only the fancy rich men in the big cities who make all the decisions. Many men in our area don't even vote, even though they are allowed to – my husband never voted, and neither has my father, although my brother and his son voted in the last election. We don't feel like our voices and concerns are heard, and I don't know that giving women the vote would change that.

SCENARIO #3

I was born in Ireland, but we moved to a small town in Prince Edward County when I was a child. I was fortunate enough to get a good education, and when I finished school, my teacher recommended me for a teaching job in the city of Ottawa. As I was not yet married, I jumped at the chance to move to the big city. I love it here! I rent a room in a boarding house with other young, unmarried Irish women. On the weekends, I love to ride the streetcar past the majestic Parliament Buildings, and think about all the important work that goes on there. Although I lead a comfortable life, I see a lot of poverty in the city. Some people cannot even afford food or medicine. When I get married, I will have to give up my teaching job. What if we fall on unfortunate times and my husband cannot work? How will we support ourselves? I wish I had more of a say on how wealth is distributed. My thoughts and ideas are just as developed as any man's.

APPENDIX B (CONT.)

SCENARIO #4

My husband and I emigrated from England after we married, and we now live a very comfortable life in Toronto and he has a good job working for the Mayor. Our children are grown – our son is an accountant and our daughter is married to a doctor. My husband laughs at the very idea of women voting. He told me that we have everything we need, which is true, I never want for anything. My friends and I discussed it at our weekly garden get-together, most of us think the same thing – when we have everything we could want, surely it would be an added burden to us if we had to vote? How would we obtain all the necessary information? Our place is in the home, looking after our husbands and children. That is the most important job we can do, and we can leave the voting and political dealings to the men.

SCENARIO #5

I live in Amherstburg with my husband and two children. My grandparents escaped from slavery in the United States and found freedom in Canada. My husband is one of the first Black lawyers to practice in Canada. I work in his practice as a secretary and bookkeeper. We are active in our church community, and help those less fortunate than us. Our children are getting a good education. We are quiet, law-abiding citizens. Although my husband is legally allowed to vote, he has never been able to exercise his right. One time a group of white citizens barred the Black males from entering the polling office. Another time the officer claimed his name was not on the voter's list. We contribute to our community and deserve to have a say. We both support universal suffrage.

SCENARIO #6

I am a member of the Cayuga Nation. I live on the reserve with my parents and younger siblings. My family's history and traditions are very important to me. My older sister married an Irish man she met in town, and she had to move away, she wasn't allowed to live on the reserve. My uncle left the reserve for a few years to work and make money for his family, and when he came back, they said he couldn't be part of the band any more, but instead he was allowed to vote in elections. He wanted the benefits that came with band membership, he did not care about voting. I would like to move to the city for a while where there are more opportunities for me, but I don't want to leave my family, or not be allowed back on my traditional lands. We are part of Canada but we are still our own people. If we get the vote, will we be able to keep our traditions and heritage? Will we have to give up our traditional lands? I've heard lots of people talking about whether or not women should be allowed to vote. To me, it doesn't matter as much if women get the vote, it is more important to focus on my own community and our rights.

APPENDIX B (CONT.)

SCENARIO #7

I immigrated to Toronto from Kiev to seek a better life. My family endured persecution because we are Jewish, and last year our house was destroyed and we had to leave. There was only enough money to send me to Canada, and my parents and the rest of my siblings went to another town in Russia to stay with my uncle's family. I am a tailor by trade, and here I work in a factory sewing garments. I hope to save enough money to open up my own tailor shop, but it is hard as the wages are low. My coworkers and I are organizing a petition to give to our employer to ask for better working conditions, shorter work weeks, and better wages. There are many capable women who work in the factory as well, under equally deplorable conditions as the men. I will soon be able to apply for naturalization, and then be allowed to vote. I see no reason why the women should not be allowed to vote as well, they work just as hard as us men. Back home, women worked only in the home, but it is different here in Canada. I want to be able to affect change in working conditions and protections, and the women's perspective will help strengthen our cause.

SCENARIO #8

My father spent all his wages on drink, and as a child we never had enough to eat. I vowed that when I had my own family, they would never have to endure such suffering. I proudly joined the Women's Christian Temperance Union when a chapter opened in my hometown of Windsor. They have shown me that women can have a place in public life, without sacrificing our duties in the home. I have affixed my signature to numerous petitions supporting the ban of alcohol sales, and if women gain the vote, we shall at last be able to rid our communities of the harmful effects of drink. Yesterday, two Black women approached me about WCTU membership – I was surprised that they wanted to join our cause, but I am sure they too have suffered from their men abusing alcohol. I am unsure as to whether I should inform the WCTU leadership of their wish to join. However if women receive the vote, surely it would only be extended to British subjects.

SCENARIO #9

Today in our city council meeting, a group of women came in with a petition demanding that the franchise be extended to them in the next provincial election! They want our support in bringing the petition to the provincial parliament. Preposterous! Women do not have the same mental capacity as men when it comes to politics. Their place is in the home, looking after their husbands and children. That is not to say that women have no smarts at all, but they are different than men. Running a household requires a woman to have a good head for numbers to keep to their weekly budget, negotiation skills to get the best quality and prices with the butcher and dressmaker, and to have salves and balms at the ready for scraped knees and tummy aches. But voting and politics? A woman could never understand anything as complicated as that!

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