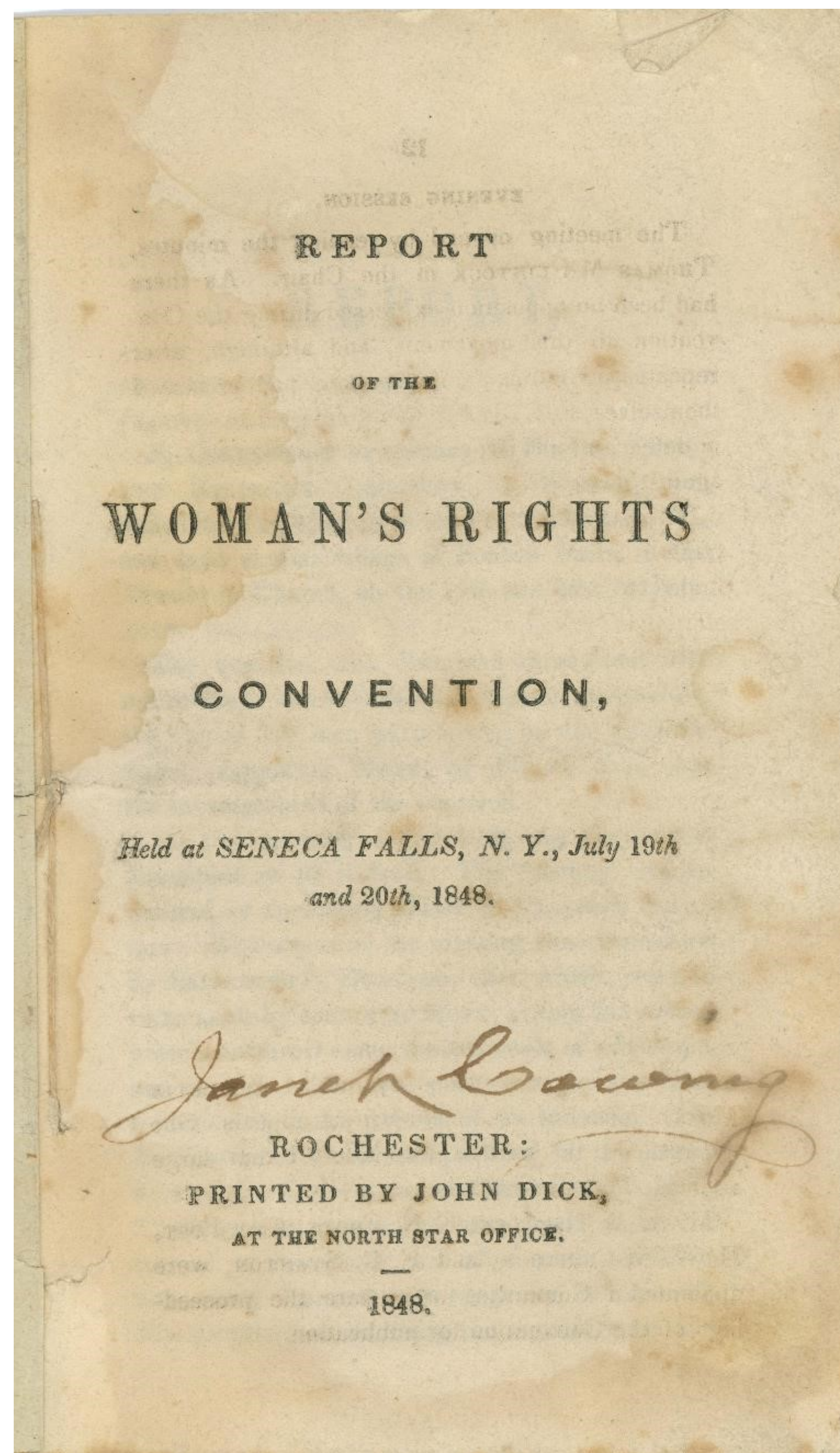


FINDING THEIR VOICES

The United States Constitution did not originally specify voting qualifications, allowing each state to determine who was eligible. Generally, men without property were prohibited from voting, as were women. During the 19th century, the standards changed until by mid-century all states had granted white men the right to vote regardless of property ownership. Women would wait much longer for this basic right.



During the 1820s and 30s, as more men gained the vote, women started seeking equal treatment and the campaign for women's suffrage accelerated. In July 1848, the Women's Rights Convention (also known as the Seneca Falls Convention) was held in Seneca Falls, New York, the home of Elizabeth Cady Stanton who was one of the event's organizers. Promoted as a convention to discuss the social, civil, and religious condition and rights of women, the convention focused on a number of topics, including suffrage.

The convention issued the "Declaration of Sentiments," a statement of grievances and demands patterned closely after the Declaration of Independence. It called upon women to organize and petition for their rights. The convention passed 12 resolutions designed to gain certain rights and privileges that women of the era were denied. Among these was a resolution demanding the right to vote.

While ridiculed by many at the time, this resolution became the foundation of the women's suffrage movement.

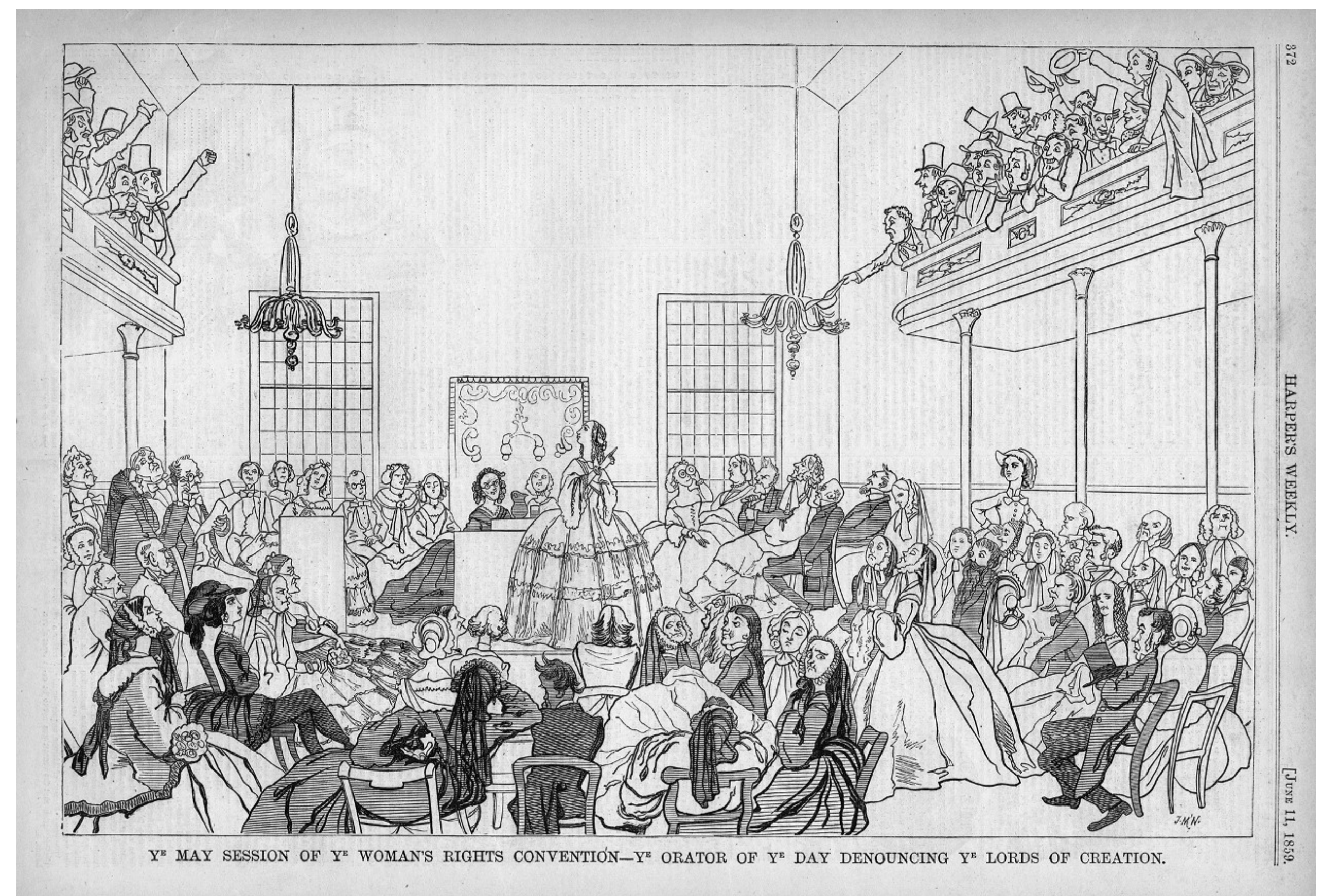


Illustration from Harper's Weekly depicting the May 1859 session of the Woman's Rights Convention. The image is captioned "The Orator of the Day Denouncing the Lords of Creation."

DIVISION IN THE RANKS

During the 1850s, the women’s rights movement gathered steam, but it lost momentum during the Civil War. Almost immediately after the war ended, the 15th Amendment to the Constitution brought the suffrage question back into the limelight.

Ratified in 1870, the 15th Amendment guaranteed black men the right to vote but it did not apply to women. This simple fact would split the women’s suffrage movement for decades.

Activists such as Frederick Douglass, Lucy Stone, and Henry Blackwell argued that the 1860s was the time to fight for rights for blacks, specifically voting rights for black men. They felt linking black suffrage with female suffrage would not accomplish either goal. In 1869, Stone and Blackwell formed the American Woman Suffrage

Association which believed that suffrage was a local issue and pressuring state governments was the most effective strategy.

That same year, Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton formed the all-female National Woman Suffrage Association. They advocated for securing woman suffrage through a federal constitutional amendment, and used litigation and confrontational tactics to promote their cause. They also promoted other women's rights issues, including advocating easier divorce laws and an end to discrimination in employment and pay.

These two groups competed over the next several decades but as the old leadership retired and gave way to the next generation, the animosity gradually faded. In 1890 the two groups merged to form the National American Woman Suffrage Association.

1870 lithographic print “Representative Women” featuring seven leaders of the woman’s suffrage movement: Lucretia Mott, Grace Greenwood, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Anna E. Dickinson, Mary Ashton Rice Livermore, Susan B. Anthony, and Lydia Maria Child.



ANNUAL MEETING

**AMERICAN
WOMAN SUFFRAGE
ASSOCIATION.**

CHURCH OF THE REDEEMER,
MINNEAPOLIS,
OCTOBER 13, 14 & 15, 1885

ORDER OF EXERCISES

TUESDAY AFTERNOON, 2:30.

Informal social and business meeting of delegates and members. Ap-
pointment of Committees.

TUESDAY EVENING, 7:30.

Prayer by REV. MARTHA J. JAMES, of Iowa. Suffrage Song by PROF.
JAMES G. CLARK. Address of Welcome by MAYOR PILLSBURY; Response
by MRS. JULIA WARD HOWE. Addresses by HON. WM. DUDLEY FOULKE,
President of the American Woman Suffrage Association, and LUCY STONE.
Music.

WEDNESDAY MORNING, 10:30.

Music. LUCY STONE will report for the Executive Committee. Re-
ports of State Societies: DR. MARTHA G. RIPLEY for Minnesota; ALMA
COLLINS for Wisconsin, Michigan, Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont; H. B.
BLACKWELL for Massachusetts; MRS. JULIA WARD HOWE for Rhode Island
and Connecticut; MARGARET W. CAMPBELL for Iowa. Music.

WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON, 2:30.

Music. Letters from MARY A. LIVERMORE, CHIEF JUSTICE GREEN, of
Washington Territory, CHANCELLOR ELIOT of St. Louis, Mo., Etc. Ad-
dresses by MRS. SARAH BURGER STEARNS of Duluth, DR. KATE I. KELSEY,
JUDGE HEMIUP, MRS. MARTHA ANGLE DORSETT and C. H. DUBOIS. Reso-
lutions and Discussion. Short Speeches by delegates. Music.

WEDNESDAY EVENING, 7:30.

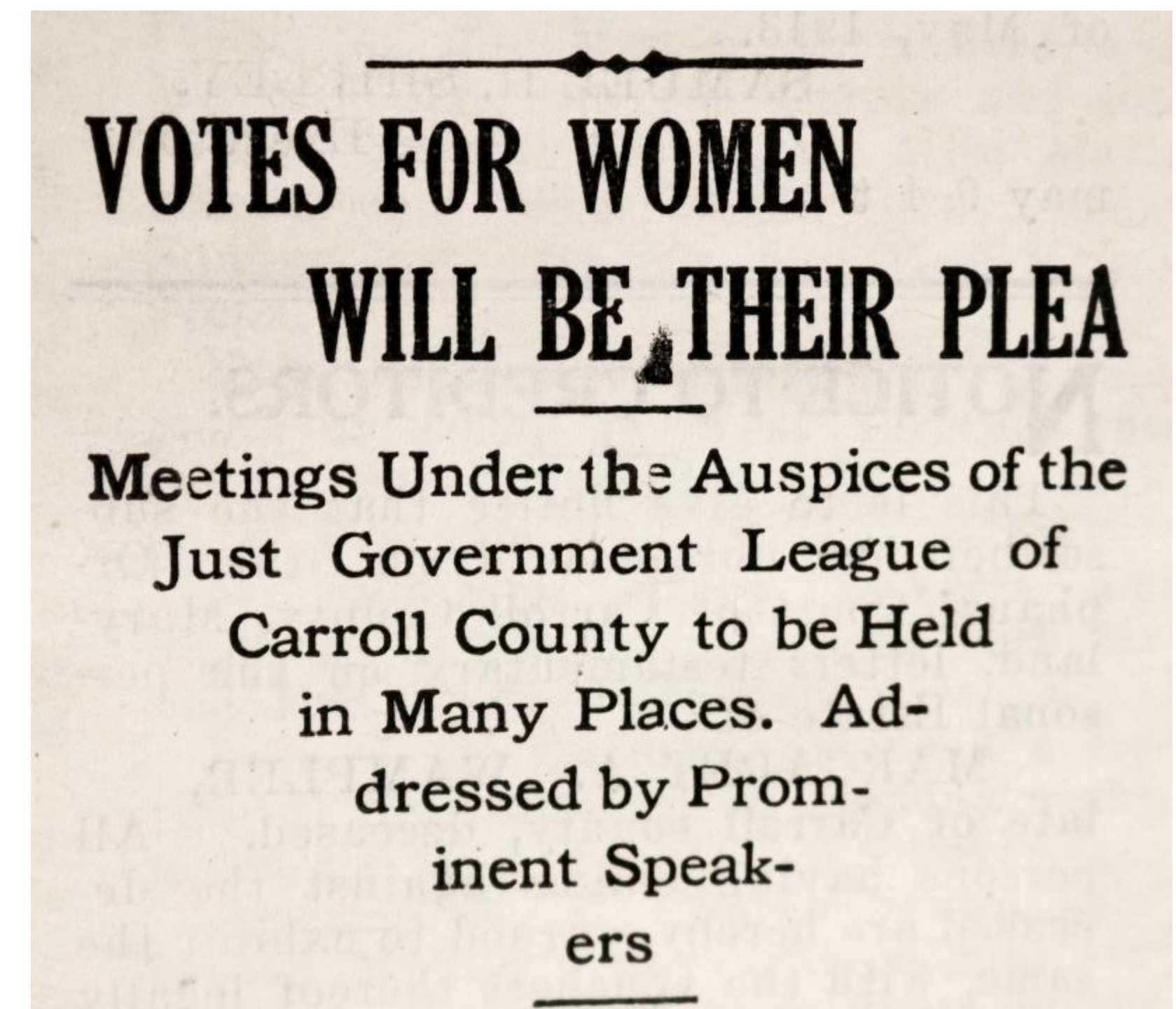
Music. Addresses by MARGARET W. CAMPBELL, of Iowa; MAJOR J. A.
PICKLER, of DAKOTA; and MRS. ABIGAIL SCOTT DUNIWAY, of Oregon.
Music.

CARROLL COUNTY JOINS THE FIGHT

As the 20th century dawned, the suffrage movement gained momentum. By 1910, most states west of Mississippi had granted full voting rights to women, and states in the Midwest at least permitted women to vote in Presidential elections.

Three major woman suffrage organizations were active in Maryland. The Maryland State Suffrage Association, the Just Government League of Maryland, and the Equal Suffrage League all organized events and held meetings throughout the state to fight for the right to vote.

The Just Government League of Carroll County was organized on January 10, 1913, by Mrs. R. T. Foster, field secretary of the Just Government League of Maryland. Mary Shellman was selected as the group's first president. At that meeting eleven women became members. The first public meeting of the League was held at the Opera House in Westminster on February 13. By that time the group had grown to 40 members. Local branches were established around the county and were responsible for holding public meetings, circulating petitions, recruiting new members, and soliciting support for the cause from political candidates.



The Times, 16 May 1913

But the movement faced stiff opposition. The National Association Opposed to Women Suffrage was established by Josephine Jewell Dodge in New York City in 1911. Soon state branches of NAOWS appeared around the country. Many members belonged to wealthy families who feared suffrage would upset the status quo while others feared that rights for women would open the door to rights for minorities.



Headquarters of the National Association Opposed to Woman Suffrage



Just Government League sash that belonged to Mary Shellman

RAISING THE STAKES

Suffragists launched a new tactic to draw attention to their cause: the “Suffrage Hike.” In February 1913, Rosalie Jones organized a pilgrimage hike from New York to Washington to participate in the National Woman Suffrage Parade. After a grueling 200-mile journey that took 20 days, the group arrived in Washington on March 3 and joined over 5,000 of their fellow suffragists in marching down Pennsylvania Avenue.

Maryland suffragists sent a delegation to National Woman Suffrage Parade, riding a special train from Baltimore to Washington called the “Suffrage Special.” And they organized their own suffrage hikers on several trips throughout the state. This new approach to getting their message out proved very effective. According to the February 28, 1913, issue of Taneytown’s *Carroll Record* newspaper:

A rather militant suffragette, from Baltimore, who paid the RECORD office a visit, last week, was asked why the “hiking” proposition was engaged in, as it seemed to represent a lot of wasted energy? The reply was, “So the newspapers will give our cause free advertising—see how they give us columns of valuable front page space.” And so they do.... Equal suffrage is therefore “hiking itself” into prominence.



Suffrage Hike to Washington, 1913-1915



“College Day on the Picket Line,” February 1917. Women came from across the country to join the picket in front of the White House. These women are from colleges including Stanford, Bryn Mawr, Swarthmore, Vassar, and Oberlin.

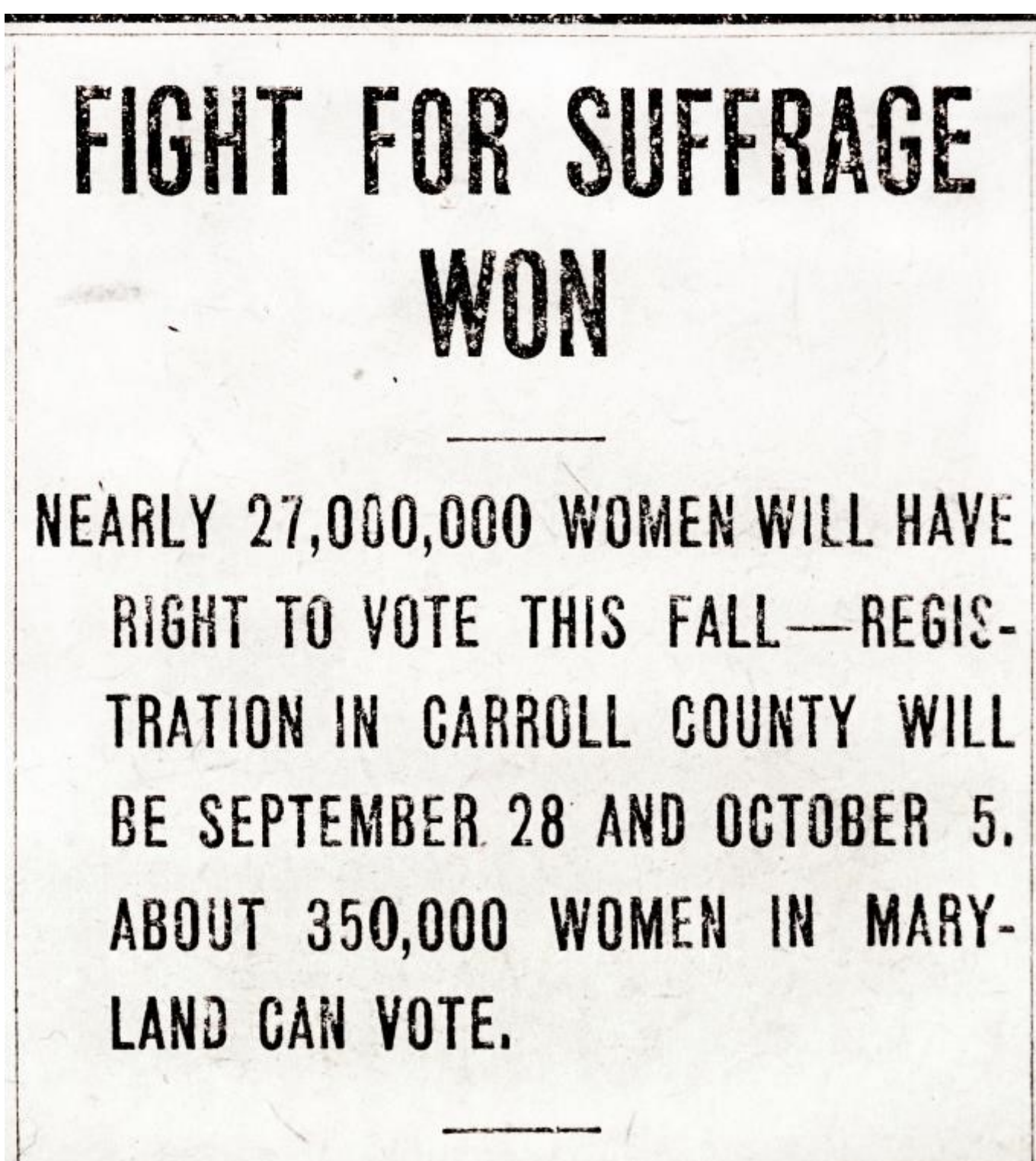
The Congressional Union for Women’s Suffrage focused on more militant tactics. Beginning on January 10, 1917, the group launched a protest in front of the White House that would last over two years. The “Silent Sentinels,” as they were known, showed up six days a week, in all kinds of weather, holding banners demanding the right to vote.

In June, police began arresting the protesters. When they refused to pay their fines, they were jailed. As the protests dragged on, the jail terms grew longer. Many of the women were abused while in jail – fed bread and water, chained in their cells, and even beaten. In October, the prisoners began a hunger strike. Authorities responded by force feeding them. As the strike continued, public opinion started to change. In November the women were released, some having spent over a month in jail.

ON TO VICTORY

Beginning in 1914, the world focused its attention on the bloodshed taking place in Europe. World War I slowed the activities of the suffrage movement but still advanced the cause. Women's work on behalf of the war effort proved that they were just as patriotic as men, challenged the notion of women's physical and mental inferiority, and made it more difficult to maintain that women were unfit to vote.

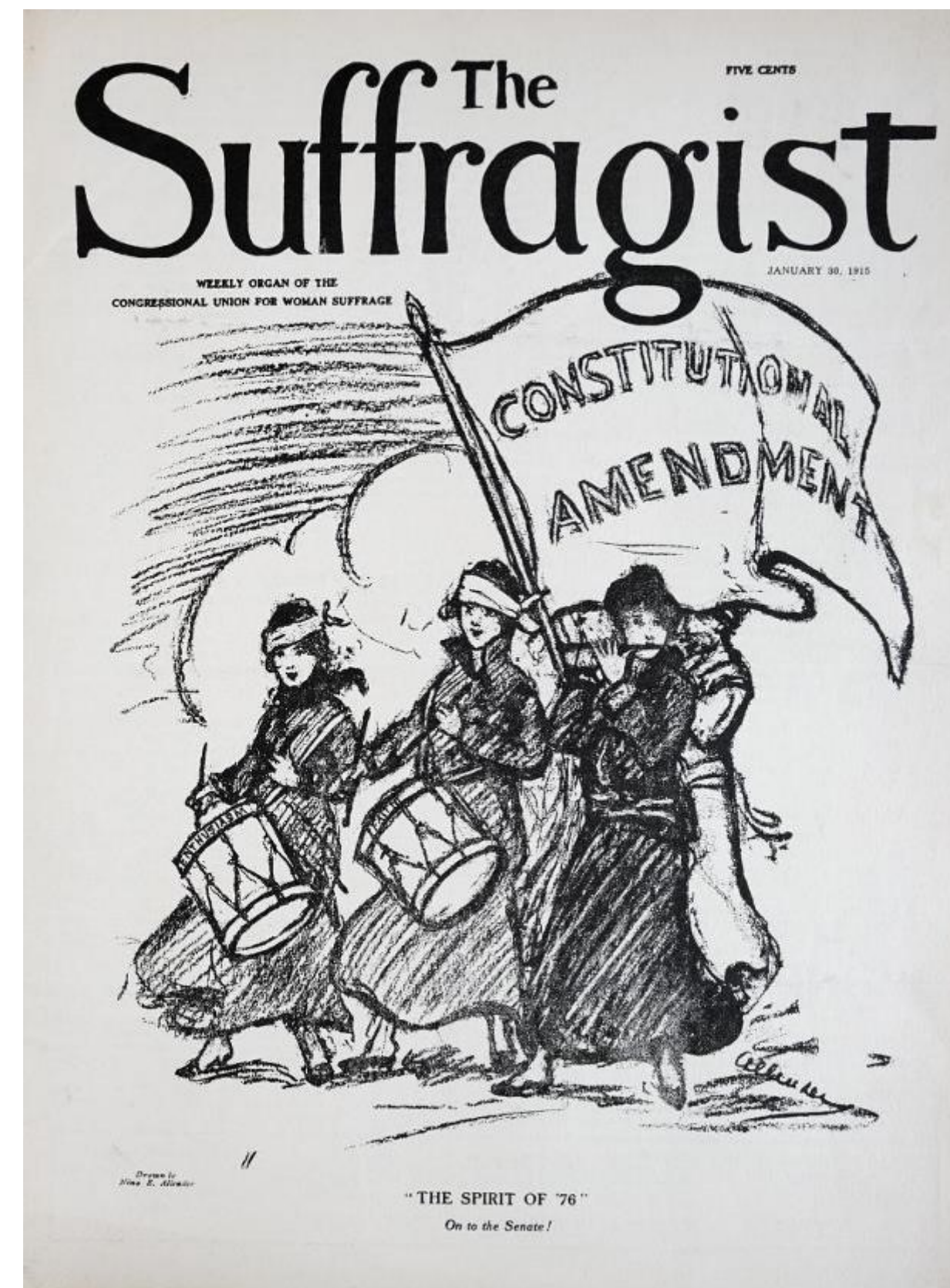
In January 1918, President Wilson announced his support for the women's suffrage amendment. The next day, the House of Representatives narrowly passed the amendment. The Senate did not vote on the amendment until October when it failed by two votes. To keep up the pressure, on December 16, 1918, protesters started burning Wilson's words in watch fires in front of the White House. On February 9, 1919, the protesters burned Wilson's image in effigy at the White House.



Democratic Advocate, 20 August 1920

But, finally on August 18, 1920, Tennessee became the 36th state to ratify and the 19th Amendment became law.

On May 21, 1919, the House of Representatives passed the amendment, and two weeks later on June 4, the Senate finally followed. But before it became law, 36 states had to ratify the amendment. Now the battle shifted to the states as each legislature debated the amendment's fate. On June 10, Wisconsin became the first state to ratify. Over the next year, success grew nearer as more and more states ratified. However, eight states—Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, Alabama, South Carolina, Georgia, Louisiana, and Mississippi—rejected the amendment. In Maryland, the amendment was soundly defeated. In the State Senate the measure lost by a vote of 18 to 9. The House of Delegates voted 64 to 36 against the amendment.



Above: "The New Freedom," illustration from *Puck* magazine, 30 October 1915

Left: *The Suffragist*, the weekly publication of the Congressional Union for Woman Suffrage

GREETINGS TO THE WOMEN

Now that women had the vote the big question was whether they would use it. Based on the 1910 census, it was estimated that the addition of women would almost double the number of eligible voters. In Maryland, it appeared that 405,000 women were eligible to vote—27,000 of them in Carroll County.

Almost immediately the major political parties began the push to win female voters to their side. Under the headline “Greeting to the Women,” the Chairman of the Republican State Central Committee issued a statement that appeared in the August 27, 1920, issue of the *Times*:

The Republican party of Maryland heartily welcomes the women of our state to political equality, fully endowed with the right to vote. Our party had consistently led in this great movement, now so triumphantly successful.... The Democratic State machine of Maryland has steadily contested this advance in human rights.... But in vain. The hand that rocks the cradle will help to rule both State and Nation.

We invite the women of Maryland to enroll themselves in the ranks of the Republican party, the party which for 60 years has advocated human rights and promoted progress and prosperity in our land.

In September the Carroll County Just Government League held a “school of citizenship” at the Armory in Westminster. Over 200 women attended the meeting where they received instructions on every detail of the voting process. The Republican Party arranged for an “instruction” room near each polling place, where there would be sample ballots and somebody to provide instructions for those who needed help. Mary Shellman’s home at 206 East Main Street served as one instruction room.

When the votes were finally counted, fewer women voted than men, with female turnout averaging two-thirds the rate of men. But there was a great deal of variation at the state and local levels. Women's turnout varied from a high of 57 percent in Kentucky to a low of 6 percent in Virginia. Women voters showed a special concern for social issues and were more likely to attach priority to issues involving children, education, and health care.

Have You Registered ?

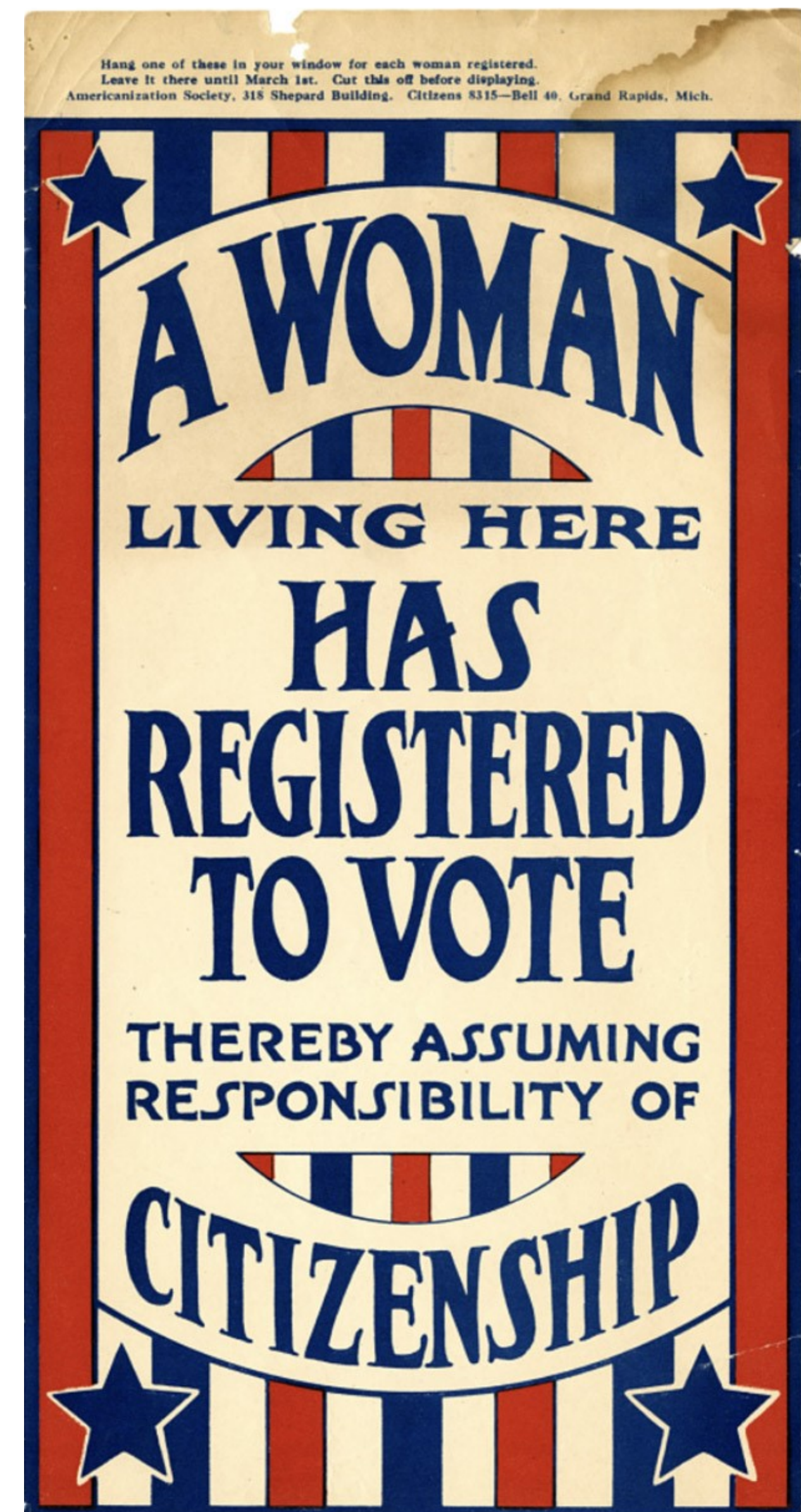
Only two days remain Tomorrow, Saturday,
October 9th, and Tuesday, October 12th.

Republican women do not fail to have your names placed on the registration books tomorrow or next Tuesday.

Registration does not require you to vote, but no matter how much you may desire to vote, or how important it may be for you to do so, you can not unless your name is on the registration book.

Young men who have or will reach the age of 21 on or before November 2 are entitled to register.

Let all Republicans, both men and women, make a special effort from now until Tuesday to see every Republican man and woman entitled to register and urge them not to neglect to have their names placed on the books Saturday, Oct. 9, or Tuesday, Oct. 12.



Above: Woman voter poster, DATE. The instructions were to hang one poster in the window for each registered woman voter in the household.

Left: The *Times*, 8 October 1920

THE COLORS OF SUFFRAGE

Throughout history, color has been a way to provide instant visual identification of people and causes.

Three colors came to represent the woman's suffrage movement. In December 1913, *The Suffragist*—the newspaper of the Congressional Union for Woman Suffrage—explained the symbolism of the colors:

Purple is the color of loyalty, constancy to purpose, unswerving steadfastness to a cause. White, the emblem of purity, symbolizes the quality of our purpose; and gold, the color of light and life, is as the torch that guides our purpose, pure and unswerving.

To deflect the impression of masculinity that was projected upon the women's suffrage movement, women were encouraged to wear dresses in delicate fabrics and colors, with white often the color of choice. Sashes of purple and green were worn over the white dress.

The tri-colors were used not only on sashes but also on pins, posters, banners, ribbons, and a host of other items.

Sash, Just Government League, c.1915

Silk

This sash, done in the suffrage tri-colors, belonged to Mary Bostwick Shellman. In January 1913, Mary was selected as the first president of the Just Government League of Carroll County. She held meetings in her parlor, organized rallies, and even offered her home as one of the instruction rooms for new voters on election day in 1920. Later, Mary served as chair of the Carroll County League of Republican Women.

