

Primary Sources: *Women's Suffrage in Britain*



Introduction

Below are two texts from the history of the women's suffrage movement in Britain. The first is the text of the Parliamentary Debate of 1905 on the Women's Enfranchisement Bill, illustrating the various arguments against and in favor of giving women the right to vote. The second is from the 1914 memoir of Emmeline Pankhurst, a key leader of the movement and the Women's Social and Political Union. The excerpts from her memoir tell her recounting of the events surrounding the 1905 parliamentary debate on the Women's Enfranchisement Bill.

As you are reading, consider what the events of the 1905 debates might have been like for those in attendance, and how people might have understood them at the time. Then, consider what meaning Pankhurst makes of the failure of the bill from the perspective of later hindsight.

PRIMARY SOURCES

INTRODUCTION

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE ON THE WOMEN'S ENFRANCHISEMENT BILL

PANKHURST, A SUFFRAGETTE TELLS HER STORY OF 1905

Primary Source 1: *Parliamentary Debate on the Women's Enfranchisement Bill, May 12, 1905*



Bamford Slack, 1907

Under pressure from leaders of the Women's Social and Political Union, Bamford Slack (1857- 1909), a Member of Parliament (MP) from the Liberal Party introduced the Women's Enfranchise Bill to the British Parliament in 1905. Before bills like this were voted on, they had to go through several steps first. The first reading of such a bill by MPs introduced it and determined whether to forward it to a committee for further review and a second reading. In this case, members of the ruling Conservative Party left the first reading to the end of the day. Despite plans to revisit the proposed Women's Enfranchise Bill the following Monday, it was not discussed again.

Source: Hansard's Parliamentary Debates, volume 146, at <https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/1905-05-12/debates/157b131f-5669-45b0-a10e-cb0ac234b6b3/WomenSEnfranchisementBill>

(Order for Second Reading read.)

MR. SLACK (Hertfordshire, St. Albans): in moving the Second Reading of this Bill, expressed his regret that the measure should have come on at so late an hour in the afternoon, and said that as a comparatively new Member he felt almost appalled at the extraordinary abuse of the forms of the House which that afternoon had been witnessed, manifestly and in some quarters avowedly with a view to preventing discussion of this Bill. A study of previous debates on the question of the Parliamentary enfranchisement of women had convinced him that no detailed argument in favour of the principle was necessary... The question was not one of Party, the principle having been supported by a majority of every Party in the House. The enfranchisement of women was a necessary factor in modern social progress.... The object of the Bill was to place women electorally in precisely the same position as men now occupied. The Bill would enfranchise women of every class, married and single, working women and women of leisure.... The class chiefly concerned, however, were the working women of the country. The Bill embodied no new-fangled fancy franchise, but simply extended all existing franchises to women. It equalised the Parliamentary suffrage by admitting women as citizens on the same terms as men and abolishing the electoral disqualification of sex.... The disfranchisement of women was unconstitutional, inexpedient, mischievous, and unjust. It was wrong to force reasonable and responsible citizens to obey laws which had been enacted without the possibility of sanction or protest on their part.... He begged to move.

* This is John Bamford Stack (1857-1909), a Liberal Minister of Parliament representing the city of St. Albans, a small city twenty miles north of London.

SIR JOHN ROLLESTON** (Leicester): said he was glad to have the opportunity of seconding the Motion that this very modest Bill should be read a second time. That women who had the same qualifications as men should be placed on the Parliamentary register, and that sex should be no bar to the franchise, was a proposal which, in his opinion, was rendered both desirable and necessary by the modern conditions of industry, and by the development and extension of that commercial and industrial system on which the prosperity of this country rests. The position of female labour in many countries was such that woman was the servant of man, working for him, not as a free agent, but in a state of dependence upon him whether wives or daughters. In England at least women were free, going to their work as the equals, and, indeed, as the competitors of men, receiving their wages and disposing of them as they thought well.... But while women took their places in industry side by side with men, their position was by no means the same. They complained that they ... received lower wages than men even for the same work, and that, as regarded technical education, their needs were almost wholly disregarded. They were shut out from all schemes of industrial reform. This they attributed, and rightly so in his opinion, to political helplessness.... While the foundation of their vast system of commerce rested so much upon female labour, while women shared so largely in the upkeep of the nation by the contribution of their labour to its trade, he submitted that no argument could be advanced in favour of sex remaining a disqualification for the franchise. Many persons who were in favour of the franchise being given to women with a property qualification were opposed to this Bill. Personally, he took no interest in the extension of the franchise only to women with a property qualification. He did not believe that women with property cared in the least about the vote; to many it would be a luxury, to some even a nuisance, and Parliament need not trouble itself on account of those who were indifferent or were not pressing the matter forward. But women who worked for a weekly or daily wage did care about the vote; to them it would be not a luxury, but daily bread. He believed that inquiry had shown that 90 per cent. of the women who would go upon the register if this Bill passed would be working women. He understood that 7s. a week was the average wage of the working women of this country, and he remembered hearing it stated by a member of a deputation last year that she had worked ten hours a day welding chains for 5s. a week.

These were the women who wanted the same chance in life as men, and while they did the same work and furnished so large a proportion of the labour supply of the country, there could be no reason why they should be denied political rights.... A State, highly civilised and advancing in civilisation, conducting its internal economy on principles of equity and justice need have no fear of disturbance of political power. He hoped the Bill would be read a second time.

(Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time.")



Women workers at the Woolwich Arsenal fuse factory, late 1800s

** John Rolleston (1848-1919) was a Conservative MP representing the city of Leicester.



View of the Houses of Parliament, London

MR. LABOUCHERE: agreed, but he recognised that in every country in the last resort it was the business of every citizen of the country to go to its defence, and therefore he constituted one of the Reserves.

Apparently, his hon. friend suggested that the franchise should be given to women because they could fulfil the duties of citizenship by turning out as soldiers after all the men had been destroyed. But that was not women's business; they could not do it; it must be recognised as one of their limitations. Neither could women act as policemen. Order and liberty, the social fabric, rested ultimately upon force, and the fact that women could not contribute to that force was a limitation of citizenship. The vote should be given only to those who could maintain a Government by force if necessary, provided, of course, it was a sound Government, but women could neither defend a good Government nor upset a bad one... Of course, it was not their fault that they were more beautiful than muscular.

MR. LABOUCHERE*** (Northampton): ...He was entirely against female suffrage, and even if he were in its favour, he would, as a Radical and a democrat, oppose this Bill. After all, women were different from men physically and intellectually. We did not know how the difference had arisen. According to Darwin we all commenced from a single cell; the protoplasm by evolution became in some cases a man and in others a woman, and as a result of the processes in the laboratory of nature the sexes differed intellectually and physically. There were many physical tasks performed by men for which women were not fitted. They could not serve as soldiers.

AN HON. MEMBER: You are not a soldier.



Caricature of Henry Labouchere

*** This is Henry Labouchère (1831-1912), a Liberal MP from Northampton.

There was also a difference between women and men in mental equipment. In some things they were superior to men, but in other things men were very much their superiors. During the first years at school girls outstripped boys, but after a certain age the boys more than overtook the girls. In domestic matters women were much more useful and understood them better than men, and in certain little trades in which women engaged they might be able to give points to men. But in the consideration of the great problems which came before the Imperial Parliament they were certainly inferior intellectually to men. There were doubtless exceptions, but he was speaking of the sex as a whole. Women were nervous, emotional, and had very little sense of proportion. Every man knew what it was to argue with a woman. He had given it up. A woman would lay down her views, and though it were conclusively proved to her that she was wrong, she would continue stolidly to repeat her old arguments. But whence did she get her opinions and conclusions? Very often from someone who had influence over her.



Early 20th century anti-suffrage postcard, characterizing women as irrational and unpredictable

Considering the nature of this great Parliament and what its duties were he was convinced that women, fitted as they were for many things, were not fitted to have votes. It was said that women were entitled to the franchise as a right. But the giving of votes must depend upon whether it was an advantage to the community, and it would be a great disadvantage to the community to give women votes. It would also be injurious to women themselves. It was said also that the argument against women being unfit for the franchise was disproved by the fact that this country had an excellent Queen for many years. But it must be remembered that the Queen could only act on the advice of her Ministers, and in his opinion it would be easier for a woman to act as Queen than to act as a simple voter. Women exercised a great influence over men, and they desired to retain that influence. The laws of nations had been largely shaped by women, although women had no hand directly in the making of the laws. This influence would be lost to women if they had votes, and that was the reason why the vast majority of women did not desire the franchise. In fact, women had at present such an influence over the actions of men that if they had been really united in the desire for the franchise they would have got it long ago. It was only a few women with masculine minds who took an interest in politics and desired to have votes in order that they might enter the political arena.... Somehow or other there were more females than males born, and at the time of a general election there were always more men than women absent from the country. Therefore, as there were more women than men in the country, if the female franchise was established it would mean the absolute abnegation of the rights of men, and the surrender of the whole government of the country to women. It was true that on ordinary questions women would not all act together; they would be split up into Parties; but when it came to a question of the interest of women versus the interest of men they would be absolutely united against the male portion of the community. It was, therefore, absolutely dangerous. Women would want to sit in Parliament. Whether his hon. friend was in favour of that or not—

MR. SLACK: I am not in favour of assisting you to talk it out.

MR. LABOUCHERE: Talking it out! Was it really supposed that a measure of this tremendous importance could be voted upon after a discussion of two hours? No, it was not a question of talking it out; he was trying to convert his hon. friend. But whether his hon. friend was in favour of it or not, it would matter very little if women were given votes, as the right to sit in the House could not then logically be denied. Now, would it really be desirable to turn this venerable and respectable Parliament into an arena with a promiscuity of sexes? He thought it would be most undesirable. There were young men there. He had seen in the lobbies all sorts of political flirtations going on to get their vote. As an old man he could not conscientiously countenance placing them or anybody else in the hands of those ladies. He had had cards sent in to himself, and gentlemen had come to him and said, "The ladies want to see you." Well, he was cautious. He remembered the intelligent Ulysses closed his ears not to hear the sirens; and so he did not go to those ladies. If he had gone—man was weak—he might have been cajoled and humbugged into taking their part and voting for this measure. No, it was really not safe. That was the view taken in all other matters. Boys and girls were not now taught together; it was recognised that the education for the one was not exactly suited to the requirements of the other sex. Would anybody suggest that there should be juries of women? ... The general opinion was that the administration of justice would not gain by having jury-women instead of jurymen. Men were calmer and more likely to give a fair verdict. Would his hon. friend suggest that there should be women Judges and women advocates?

MR. CORRIE GRANT[†] (Warwickshire, Rugby): All we want is freedom.

MR. LABOUCHERE: said that was what he wanted. He wanted freedom for men. He was not going to be crushed under the dominion of women.

...

To give the franchise to women would destroy the best relation between the sexes. Think of a married man after having heard speeches maundering on all the evening having to go over the whole again with his wife and daughters. They might be on opposite sides, and it would mean the destruction of the social relations that had existed from time immemorial...

MR. SLACK: rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put;" but Mr. Deputy-Speaker withheld his assent, and declined then to put that Question.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTSON[‡]: said that for the hon. Member to say that no one could conscientiously refuse to support the Bill appeared to be a parody of the whole situation.

And, it being half-past Five of the clock, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Monday next...

Adjourned at twenty-six minutes before Six o'clock till Monday next.



Suffragettes outside Parliament

[†] Corrie Grant (1850-1924) was an MP from the Liberal Party who supported women's suffrage.

[‡] This is Thomas Herbert Robertson (1849-1916), a Conservative MP representing the South Hackney area of London.

Primary Source 2: *Emmeline Pankhurst, A Suffragette Tells Her Story of 1905*



Emmeline Pankhurst

Emmeline Pankhurst (1858-1928) was a middle-class leader of the women's suffrage movement in Great Britain. In 1903, she organized the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU), an organization devoted to extending the right to vote in Britain to women whose membership was largely working class. In 1914, Pankhurst published her autobiography, from which this excerpt comes. It recounts the first major national attention the WSPU achieved during their two failed efforts to get the government in Great Britain to support the Women's Enfranchise Bill, first in May 1905 when the Conservatives were the ruling party and then again after the Liberal Party gained power in December 1905. Ironically, Pankhurst died in 1928, only weeks before all women 21 and older women gained the right to vote in Britain.

Source: *Emmeline Pankhurst, My Own Story* (London: Eveleigh Nash, 1914), 41-51, 53-56.

[W]hile a large majority of members of the House of Commons were pledged to support a bill giving women equal franchise rights with men, it was doubtful whether a majority could be relied upon to support a bill giving adult suffrage, even to men. Such a bill, even if it were a Government measure, would probably be difficult of passage...*

The new session of Parliament, so eagerly looked forward to, met on February 13, 1905. I went down from Manchester, and with my daughter Sylvia, then a student at the Royal College of Art, South Kensington, spent eight days in the Strangers' Lobby of the House of Commons, working for the suffrage bill ... [W]e finally induced Mr. Bamford Slack, who held the fourteenth place, to introduce our bill... the second reading of our bill was set down for Friday, May 12th, the second order of the day.**

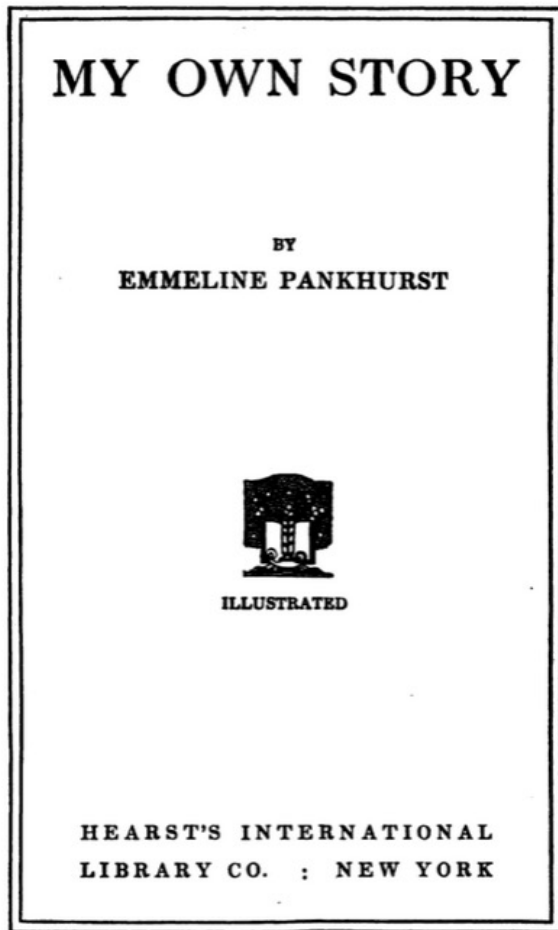
This being the first suffrage bill in eight years, a thrill of excitement animated not only our ranks but all the old suffrage societies. Meetings were held, and a large number of petitions circulated. When the day came for consideration on our bill, the Strangers' Lobby could not hold the enormous gathering of women of all classes, rich and poor, who flocked to the House of Commons. It was pitiful to see the look of hope and joy that shone on the faces of many of these women. We knew that our poor little measure had the very slightest chance of being passed.

* In this parliamentary system, all Ministers of Parliament could submit bill for consideration, but Pankhurst is identifying here that only bills supported by the ruling party had a chance of passage.

** Stack was a Member of Parliament from the Labour Party, while the ruling party at the time was the Conservative Party.

**Women's Social and Political Union
demonstration, Trafalgar Square, London, 1906**

The bill that occupied the first order of the day was one providing that carts travelling along public roads at night should carry a light behind as well as before. We had tried to induce the promoters of this unimportant little measure to withdraw it in the interests of our bill, but they refused ... [T]he promoters of the Roadway Lighting Bill were allowed to "talk out" our bill. They did this by spinning out the debate with silly stories and foolish jokes. The members listened to the insulting performance with laughter and applause.



**Title page of Emmeline Pankhurst's autobiography,
My Own Story, 1914**

When news of what was happening reached the women who waited in the Strangers' Lobby, a feeling of wild excitement and indignation took possession of the throng. Seeing their temper, I felt that the moment had come for a demonstration such as no old-fashioned suffragist had ever attempted. I called upon the women to follow me outside for a meeting of protest against the government. We swarmed out into the open, and Mrs. Wolstenholm-Elmy, one of the oldest suffrage workers in England, began to speak. Instantly the police rushed into the crowd of women, pushing them about and ordering them to disperse.*** We moved on as far as the great statue of Richard Cœur de Lion that guards the entrance to the House of Lords, but again the police intervened. Finally the police agreed to let us hold a meeting in Broad Sanctuary, very near the gates of Westminster Abbey. Here we made speeches and adopted a resolution condemning the Government's action in allowing a small minority to talk out our bill. This was the first militant act of the W. S. P. U. It caused comment and even some alarm, but the police contented themselves with taking our names.

*** This was Elizabeth Clarke Wolstenholme-Elmy, who formed the Manchester Committee for the Enfranchisement of Women in 1866, and remained a tireless advocate for women's suffrage until her death in 1918.

Meeting of the WSPU, with Annie Kenny standing at center, and Emmeline Pankhurst to her right, 1906

The ensuing summer was spent in outdoor work. By this time the Women's Social and Political Union had acquired some valuable accessions, and money began to come to us. Among our new members was one who was destined to play an important rôle in the unfolding drama of the militant movement.



At the close of one of our meetings at Oldham[†] a young girl introduced herself to me as Annie Kenney, a mill-worker, and a strong suffrage sympathiser. She wanted to know more of our society and its objects, and I invited her and her sister Jenny, a Board School teacher, to tea the next day. They came and joined our Union, a step that definitely changed the whole course of Miss Kenney's life, and gave us one of our most distinguished leaders and organisers. With her help we began to carry our propaganda to an entirely new public.

In Lancashire there is an institution known as the Wakes, a sort of travelling fair where they have merry-go-rounds, Aunt-Sallies, and other festive games, side-shows of various kinds, and booths where all kinds of things are sold. Every little village has its Wakes-week during the summer and autumn, and it is the custom for the inhabitants of the villages to spend the Sunday before the opening of the Wakes walking among the booths in anticipation of tomorrow's joys.



On these occasions the Salvation Army, temperance orators, venders of quack medicines, pedlars, and others, take advantage of the ready-made audience to advance their propaganda. At Annie Kenney's suggestion we went from one village to the other, following the Wakes and making suffrage speeches. We soon rivalled in popularity the Salvation Army, and even the tooth-drawers and patent-medicine pedlars.

The promenade at Blackpool, Lancashire, where Wakes Week was held 1890-1897

[†] Oldham was a town near Manchester, England, that was a center of textile production that employed many women in the production of clothes.

... The autumn of 1905 brought a political situation which seemed to us to promise bright hopes for women's enfranchisement. The life of the old Parliament, dominated for nearly twenty years by the Conservative Party, was drawing to an end, and the country was on the eve of a general election in which the Liberals hoped to be returned to power. Quite naturally the Liberal candidates went to the country with fervid promises of reform in every possible direction. They appealed to the voters to return them, as advocates and upholders of true democracy, and they promised that there should be a Government united in favour of people's rights against the powers of a privileged aristocracy...

We laid our plans to begin this work at a great meeting to be held in Free Trade Hall, Manchester, with Sir Edward Grey as the principal speaker.[‡] We intended to get seats in the gallery, directly facing the platform and we made for the occasion a large banner with the words: "Will the Liberal Party Give Votes for Women?" We were to let this banner down over the gallery rails at the moment when our speaker rose to put the question to Sir Edward Grey. At the last moment, however, we had to alter the plan because it was impossible to get the gallery seats we wanted. There was no way in which we could use our large banner, so, late in the afternoon on the day of the meeting, we cut out and made a small banner with the three-word inscription: "Votes for Women." Thus, quite accidentally, there came into existence the present slogan of the suffrage movement around the world.

Annie Kenney and my daughter Christabel were charged with the mission of questioning Sir Edward Grey. They sat quietly through the meeting, at the close of which questions were invited. Several questions were asked by men and were courteously answered. Then Annie Kenney arose and asked: "If the Liberal party is returned to power, will they take steps to give votes for women?" At the same time Christabel held aloft the little banner that every one in the hall might understand the nature of the question. Sir Edward Grey returned no answer to Annie's question, and the men sitting near her forced her rudely into her seat, while a steward of the meeting pressed his hat over her face. A babel of shouts, cries and catcalls sounded from all over the hall.

As soon as order was restored Christabel stood up and repeated the question: "Will the Liberal Government, if returned, give votes to women?" Again Sir Edward Grey ignored the question, and again a perfect tumult of shouts and angry cries arose. Mr. William Peacock, chief constable of Manchester, left the platform and came down to the women, asking them to write their question, which he promised to hand to the speaker. They wrote: "Will the Liberal Government give votes to working-women? Signed, on behalf of the Women's Social and Political Union, Annie Kenney, member of the Oldham committee of the card-and blowing-room operatives."[§] They added a line to say that, as one of 96,000 organised women textile-workers, Annie Kenney earnestly desired an answer to the question.



Annie Kenny and Christabel Pankhurst

[‡] The Free Trade Hall was a public hall. Edward Gray (1862-1933) was a Minister of Parliament from the Labour Party. After Labour became the ruling part in December 1905, Gray began serving as Foreign Secretary.

[§] Carding and blowing were two processes in the industrial production of cotton textiles. That is, Kenney was a factory worker in the textile industry.

Mr. Peacock kept his word and handed the question to Sir Edward Grey, who read it, smiled, and passed it to the others on the platform. They also read it with smiles, but no answer to the question was made. Only one lady who was sitting on the platform tried to say something, but the chairman interrupted by asking Lord Durham to move a vote of thanks to the speaker. Mr. Winston Churchill seconded the motion, Sir Edward Grey replied briefly, and the meeting began to break up. Annie Kenney stood up in her chair and cried out over the noise of shuffling feet and murmurs of conversation: "Will the Liberal Government give votes to women?" Then the audience became a mob. They howled, they shouted and roared, shaking their fists fiercely at the woman who dared to intrude her question into a man's meeting. Hands were lifted to drag her out of her chair, but Christabel threw one arm about her as she stood, and with the other arm warded off the mob, who struck and scratched at her until her sleeve was red with blood. Still the girls held together and shouted over and over: "The question! The question! Answer the question!"

Six men, stewards of the meeting, seized Christabel and dragged her down the aisle, past the platform, other men following with Annie Kenney, both girls still calling for an answer to their question. On the platform the Liberal leaders sat silent and unmoved while this disgraceful scene was taking place, and the mob were shouting and shrieking from the floor.

Flung into the streets, the two girls staggered to their feet and began to address the crowds.... Within five minutes they were arrested on a charge of obstruction and, in Christabel's case, of assaulting the police. Both were summonsed to appear next morning in a police court, where, after a trial which was a mere farce, Annie Kenney was sentenced to pay a fine of five shillings, with an alternative of three days in prison, and Christabel Pankhurst was given a fine of ten shillings or a jail sentence of one week.



A policeman tries to take a banner from a suffragette at a demonstration

Both girls promptly chose the prison sentence...

Of course the affair created a tremendous sensation... Ignoring the perfectly well-established fact that men in every political meeting ask questions and demand answers of the speakers, the newspapers treated the action of the two girls as something quite unprecedented and outrageous. They generally agreed that great leniency had been shown them. Fines and jail-sentences were too good for such unsexed creatures. "The discipline of the nursery" would have been far more appropriate.^{||} One Birmingham paper declared that "if any argument were required against giving ladies political status and power it had been furnished in Manchester." Newspapers which had heretofore ignored the whole subject now hinted that while they had formerly been in favour of women's suffrage, they could no longer countenance it. The Manchester incident, it was said, had set the cause back, perhaps irrevocably.

^{||} This term referred to corporal punishment of children, including beating and spanking.



***Christabel Pankhurst in
Suffragette procession, 1911***

This is how it set the cause back. Scores of people wrote to the newspapers expressing sympathy with the women... On October 20, when the prisoners were released, they were given an immense demonstration in Free-Trade Hall, the very hall from which they had been ejected the week before. The Women's Social and Political Union received a large number of new members. Above all, the question of women's suffrage became at once a live topic of comment from one end of Great Britain to the other.

We determined that from that time on the little "Votes For Women" banners should appear wherever a prospective member of the Liberal Government rose to speak, and that there should be no more peace until the women's question was answered. We clearly perceived that the new Government, calling themselves Liberal, were reactionary so far as women were concerned, that they were hostile to women's suffrage, and would have to be fought until they were conquered, or else driven from office...

This was the beginning of a campaign the like of which was never known in England, or, for that matter, in any other country...

We decided that the next step must be to carry the fight to London, and Annie Kenney was chosen to be organiser there. With only two pounds, less than ten dollars, in her pocket the intrepid girl set forth on her mission. In about a fortnight I left my official work as registrar in the hands of a deputy and went down to London to see what had been accomplished. To my astonishment I found that Annie, working with my daughter Sylvia, had organised a procession of women and a demonstration to be held on the opening day of Parliament. The confident young things had actually engaged Caxton Hall, Westminster; they had had printed a large number of handbills to announce the meeting, and they were busily engaged in working up the demonstration... How we worked, distributing handbills, chalking announcements of the meeting on pavements, calling on every person we knew and on a great many more we knew only by name, canvassing from door to door!



Annie Kenney, 1909

Early 20th century pro-suffrage postcard

At length the opening day of Parliament arrived. On February 19, 1906, occurred the first suffrage procession in London. I think there were between three and four hundred women in that procession, poor working-women from the East End, for the most part, leading the way in which numberless women of every rank were afterward to follow. My eyes were misty with tears as I saw them, standing in line, holding the simple banners which my daughter Sylvia had decorated, waiting for the word of command. Of course our procession attracted a large crowd of intensely amused spectators. The police, however, made no attempt to disperse our ranks, but merely ordered us to furl our banners. There was no reason why we should not have carried banners but the fact that we were women, and therefore could be bullied. So, bannerless, the procession entered Caxton Hall. To my amazement it was filled with women, most of whom I had never seen at any suffrage gathering before.



Our meeting was most enthusiastic, and while Annie Kenney was speaking, to frequent applause, the news came to me that the King's speech (which is not the King's at all, but the formally announced Government programme for the session) had been read, and that there was in it no mention of the women's suffrage question.... Not a member could be persuaded to take up our cause.

Out of the disappointment and dejection of that experience I yet reaped a richer harvest of happiness than I had ever known before. Those women had followed me to the House of Commons. They had defied the police. They were awake at last. They were prepared to do something that women had never done before—fight for themselves. Women had always fought for men, and for their children. Now they were ready to fight for their own human rights. Our militant movement was established.

Christabel and Emmeline Pankhurst "Hiding from police on the roof of Clement's Inn," 1908

Image Citations:

Page 1:

Emmeline Pankhurst at a woman suffrage meeting near the Subtreasury Building on Wall Street, New York City, November 27, 1911, Bain News Service Photographic Collection, Library of Congress, Public Domain,
<https://www.loc.gov/item/mnwp000276/>

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Bamford Slack, 1907, Public Domain,
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Workers inside the Fuse Factory, Woolwich Arsenal, late 1800s, National Maritime Museum, Public Domain,
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View of the Houses of Parliament from the River, London, England, 1890-1900, Library of Congress,
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Carlo Pellegrini, Caricature of Henry Labouchere, Vanity Fair, November 7, 1874, Public Domain,
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Page 5:

John Hassall, Anti-Suffragette postcard, c. 1912, CC: BY-SA 3.0, The Women's Library: Suffrage Collection,
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Page 6:

Group of suffragettes standing outside Parliament, London, c. 1910, Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C., Public Domain,
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Emmeline Pankhurst, seated, 1913, Library of Congress, Public Domain,
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Women's Social and Political Union demonstration, Trafalgar Square, London, May 1906, from Sylvia Pankhurst, *The Suffragette: The History of the Women's Militant Suffrage Movement, 1905-1910*, New York: Sturgis & Walton Company, 1911, pg. 80, Public Domain,
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Title page, from Emmeline Pankhurst, *My Own Story*, New York: Heart's International Library, 1914, Public Domain,
<https://www.gutenberg.org/files/34856/34856-h/34856-h.htm>

Page 9:

Women's Social and Political Union meeting, 1906, with Flora Drummond, Christabel Pankhurst, Annie Kenney, Emmeline Pankhurst, Charlotte Despart, and two others, LSE Library, Public Domain,
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Meeting_of_Women%27s_Social_and_Political_Union_\(WSPU\)_leaders,_c.1906_-_c.1907._\(22755473290\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Meeting_of_Women%27s_Social_and_Political_Union_(WSPU)_leaders,_c.1906_-_c.1907._(22755473290).jpg)

Blackpool, the promenade, 1890-1897, Library of Congress, Public Domain,
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:The_promenade,_Blackpool,_Lancashire,_England,_ca._1898.jpg

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Annie Kenney and Christabel Pankhurst, WSPU leaders, c. 1908, Public Domain,
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Annie_Kenney_and_Christabel_Pankhurst.jpg

Page 11:

A policeman tries to seize the pole of a banner from a suffragette on Black Friday, *The Daily Mirror*, November 19, 1910, Public Domain,
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Page 12:

Christabel Pankhurst in a suffragette procession, 1911, LSE Library, Public Domain,
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/lselibrary/22896758086>

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Colonel Linley Blathwayt, Suffragette Annie Kenney, 1909, Public Domain,
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Postcard, "This is 'the house' that man built," 1910, CC: BY-SA 3.0, The Women's Library: Suffrage Collection,
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:THIS_IS_THE_HOUSE_THAT_MAN_BUILT.jpg
Christabel Pankhurst and Emmeline Pankhurst, "Hiding from Police on the Roof of Clemenet's Inn," 1908, LSE Library, Public Domain,
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The_Pankhursts_on_the_roof_at_Clements_Inn,_1908._\(22930649452\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The_Pankhursts_on_the_roof_at_Clements_Inn,_1908._(22930649452).jpg)