

The Suffragists of North Dakota

Between 1868 and 1920, hundreds of North Dakota men and women campaigned for suffrage in this state or in the nation's capital. Below is a list with brief biographies of just a few North Dakota suffragists.

Amidon, Beulah. The daughter of Beulah and Judge Charles Amidon was born in Fargo, 1895. She graduated from Barnard College, Phi Beta Kappa, in 1915 and then studied law at University of Southern California. Lecturer and press secretary for the National Woman's Party, especially in the 1916 western campaign. She was also a writer for the Nonpartisan League. She picketed the White House and, when some sailors in uniform destroyed the suffragists' purple, white, and gold flags, she was knocked down by one of the sailors. She was jailed for picketing on August 15th, 1917. Beulah Amidon married, but her husband died in 1926. She continued her career as a writer for progressive magazines until 1952. She died in 1958.

Amidon, Beulah. Beulah Amidon was Vice President of North Dakota Votes for Women League in 1914. She was a member of ND branch (1916), and National Board of the Congressional Union for Woman Suffrage (1917). She was also President of the Fargo Fortnightly Club, a women's study group. She was chair of Landmarks Committee, North Dakota Federation of Women's Clubs while the club sponsored the Sakakawea statue in Bismarck." She was married to Judge Charles F. Amidon and mother of Beulah Amidon.

Anderson, Elizabeth Preston. Elizabeth Preston was born in Indiana in 1861. She became a school teacher at the age of 15. In 1879, she moved with her family to Tower City, Dakota Territory. After a bad experience with alcohol-laced medicine, she organized a local chapter of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union. Elizabeth Preston elected president of North Dakota Woman's Christian Temperance Union in 1893. She served as president for 40 years. She believed that women voters would support prohibition on the sale and consumption of alcoholic beverages. She attended and observed every legislative session between 1893 and 1920. She actively pursued woman suffrage between 1893 until 1920 and attended and observed every legislative session between 1893 and 1920. She engaged politicians and the public with her published articles and speeches. In 1914, along with Clara Darrow, she wrote and published a document explaining how the 1914 woman suffrage measure failed at the polls. She was present at the signing of the 1917 woman suffrage legislation. She married Reverend James Anderson of Valley City in 1901. She died in 1954.

Baldwin, Marie Bottineau. Born in Pembina in 1863 to Jean Baptiste Bottineau and Margaret Renville. As an enrolled member of Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa, Marie grew up at Pembina and Turtle Mountain. She attended schools in Minneapolis and St. Joseph's College for Ladies in Winnipeg. She clerked in her father's law office in Washington, D.C. until 1904 when President Roosevelt appointed her to the Department of Education in Office of Indian Affairs. In



1914, she earned a law degree from Washington School of Law. After 1911, she embraced the traditions of her heritage and the suffrage movement. She marched with women lawyers in the 1913 suffrage parade in Washington, D.C. In 1914, she and other suffragists met with President Wilson. As an employee of the Department of the Interior, she was asked to curb her public political activity which she agreed to do. She died in California in 1952.

Darrow, Clara L. Mrs. Darrow was born in Wisconsin in 1860. She was a member of Fargo Fortnightly Club and founder of the Fargo Votes for Women League. She was the presiding officer of the North Dakota woman suffrage convention held in Fargo, June 1912. She served as President of the North Dakota Votes for Women League, 1912-1915. British suffragist Sylvia Pankhurst was a guest in her Fargo home Feb. 3-5, 1912. She was married to Dr. E. M. Darrow, physician and surgeon and was mother of suffragists Mary Darrow Wieble and Elizabeth Darrow O'Neil. Served on the North Dakota State Library Commission 1909-1915. She died in 1915.

Eaton King, Cora Smith, M.D. Cora Smith was born in 1867 in Pennsylvania. She attended the University of North Dakota in Grand Forks from 1884 to 1889, graduating with the university's first class. While in college she taught arithmetic, geography, spelling, handwriting and physical education to university students. She studied medicine at Boston University School of Medicine, M.D., and graduated in 1892. She returned to Grand Forks and became the first woman to practice medicine in North Dakota. She was elected the first President of the ND Equal Suffrage Association in 1895. She practiced medicine in Grand Forks until 1896 when she moved to Minneapolis to become surgeon of the Minneapolis Maternity Hospital. Dr. Smith later moved to Seattle where she was involved in the Washington State suffrage movement. She married Dr. Robert A. Eaton. In 1912, she moved to Washington, DC. She was the attending physician to Miss Alice Paul, President, National Women's Party, when Paul went on a hunger strike in a Washington prison. Dr. Smith Eaton died in 1939. Cora Smith Hall on the University of North Dakota campus is named for her.

Falger, Mrs. Annie, Devils Lake. Born in 1876, Annie Falger was married to William Falger and mother to a daughter born in 1907 and a son born in 1909. Falger claimed the title of suffragist long before 1914, and was personally acquainted with Dr. Anna Howard Shaw. She was a member of the Devils Lake WCTU and spoke at a meeting on suffrage. She was also a member of the Devils Lake Study Club where she presented a speech titled "Ma Can't Vote." She brought a petition in support of a 1911 suffrage bill (SB73) to the Devils Lake Shakespeare Club. She was president of the Second District of the North Dakota Votes for Women League (1914) and contributed articles to *Suffrage Advocate* in 1914.

Lutz, Alma. Lutz was born in Jamestown in 1890 and graduated from Vassar College in 1912. She returned to North Dakota for a few years, and became Secretary and Treasurer of the Jamestown Votes for Women League between 1914 and 1917. but then moved to Boston in 1918. She moved to Boston in 1918 where she joined the National Woman's Party as one of

their writers and wrote several books. She became renowned as a women's activist and historian. She died in 1973.

Page, Alice Nelson. Page was born in Illinois and came to North Dakota with her family in 1888. She lived in Larimore and Grand Forks. She worked for the Grand Forks Evening Times as society editor, then took a job with the *Grand Forks Herald*. She co-owned (with Dan Brennan) the *Devils Lake Inter-Ocean* newspaper for a while. She also owned The Page Printerie (1912). She started a weekly newspaper in Grand Forks called the *Grand Forks Independent*. She lobbied for Woman Suffrage at the 1911 Legislative Assembly. She was the first President of the Votes for Women's Club of Grand Forks (1912) and chaired the Committee on Resolutions for 1912 Organizing Meeting of the North Dakota Votes for Women League. Died at age 39 of a brain hemorrhage. One son, Cyril Dike Page.

Slaughter, Linda Warfel, Born in Ohio in 1843, Slaughter came to Dakota Territory, as an Army officer's wife. She was elected Burleigh County Superintendent of Schools in 1874 and re-elected three times. She was elected to public office before women had the right to vote. Dakota Territory laws did not prevent women from holding office. She did not believe in woman suffrage during her years in office, but by 1883, she was engaged in the suffrage movement and became a representative for the National Woman Suffrage Association in the territory. She made her ideas known through frequent newspaper articles and editorials. She supported the 1884 Equal Rights Party candidacy of Belva Lockwood for President of the United States. She died in Minnesota in 1911.

Wilder, Kate Selby, born 1876 in Pennsylvania. She was active in suffrage and temperance work in North Dakota after 1909. She worked for the Woman's Christian Temperance Union as Superintendent for Press Work (1909-1912). She was recording secretary for the North Dakota Votes for Women League 1912-1913; She chaired the Women's Committee for the Progressive Party of North Dakota in 1912. She campaigned around the state in 1914 for passage of the Woman Suffrage law. She was a member of the Fargo Fortnightly Club and a founding member of the North Dakota Votes for Women League which was sponsored by the Fortnightly Club in 1912. She became a Fargo City Commissioner, 1919-1922 (women could hold city offices after the passage of the 1917 suffrage law in North Dakota). While commissioner, she held the police commission portfolio for two years, and health commission portfolio for two years. Kate Selby Wilder was married to Frederick H. Wilder. Kate Wilder died in Fargo in 1946.

Middle School Suffragist Biographies. Courtesy ND Woman Suffrage Centennial Committee.

