

Woman Suffrage in South Dakota: The Final Decade, 1911-1920

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During the final decade of the woman suffrage movement in South Dakota (1911-1920), antisuffrage groups worked openly to defeat equal suffrage amendments. Equal voting rights for women had been an issue in Dakota Territory and South Dakota since 1868,¹ and from the beginning, the movement had drawn both proponents and opponents. A state suffrage organization, established in 1889, had attempted to convince the legislature and the people of South Dakota to enfranchise women in four suffrage referendums (1890, 1894, 1898, and 1910); all four attempts had failed by large margins.² Suffragists identified their primary opponent as the liquor industry. Eager to see its own trade flourish, the industry maintained antisuffrage activities throughout the state,

1. Dakota Territory, *House Journal* (1868-1869), p. 34.

2. The establishment of the first state suffrage organization and the referendum campaign of 1890 are discussed at length in Cecelia M. Wittmayer, "The 1889-1890 Woman Suffrage Campaign: A Need to Organize," *South Dakota History* 11 (Summer 1981): 199-225. The 1894, 1898, and 1910 campaigns are briefly discussed in Dorinda Riessen Reed, *The Woman Suffrage Movement in South Dakota*, 2d ed. (Pierre: South Dakota Commission on the Status of Women, 1975).

spreading the propaganda that women neither wanted nor needed the privilege of expressing themselves politically.³ The liquor men used newspaper editorials, organizations of antisuffrage women, and the German-American Alliance to disseminate their antisuffrage rhetoric. In September 1911, prosuffrage women, concerned about the status of the suffrage movement in the state, organized the South Dakota Universal Franchise League to design a campaign strategy that would discredit the propaganda of the liquor industry and related groups. These new organizers were aware that the early state suffrage organization had made a strategic error by campaigning for both woman suffrage and prohibition, a fatal combination considering the major opposition. In the referendums of 1914, 1916, and 1918, the Universal Franchise League dropped all association with the advocates of prohibition and worked strictly for equal voting rights for women. But, as the suffrage proponents became better organized in this final decade of the movement, so, too, did their opponents.⁴

Two men were primarily responsible for the antisuffrage campaigns in South Dakota. Henry Schlichting of Deadwood, South Dakota, worked for the Black Hills Brewing Company of Central City and was its liaison with the United States Brewers' Association. Edward Dietrich served in the same capacity with the Sioux Falls Brewing and Malting Company. Both men took credit for having "defeated women's suffrage" at various times,⁵ and money was the source of their success. In 1918, a United States Senate Judiciary Committee investigating the pro-German activities of the United States Brewers' Association revealed that several million dollars were taken annually from liquor accounts and spent to defeat suffrage referendums and prosuffrage politicians. Either through bribes or direct financial support, the liquor inter-

3. At the 1881 Brewers' Association Convention, the delegates adopted an anti-suffrage resolution stating that brewers would "welcome prohibition as far less dangerous to the trade than woman suffrage, because prohibition could be repealed at any time but woman suffrage would insure the permanency of prohibition" (Carrie Chapman Catt and Nettie Rogers Shuler, *Woman Suffrage and Politics: The Inner Story of the Suffrage Movement* [New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1923], p. 134).

4. Aileen S. Kraditor, *The Ideas of the Woman Suffrage Movement, 1890-1920* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1965), p. 14.

5. U.S., Congress, Senate, *Brewing and Liquor Interests and German and Bolshevik Propaganda: Report and Hearings of the Subcommittee on the Judiciary, United States Senate, submitted pursuant to S. Res. 307 and 439, Sixty-fifth Congress, Relating to Charges Made against the United States Brewers' Association and Allied Interests*, 66th sess., 1919, vol. 1, p. 1179.

ests in South Dakota gave money to any group that was against female suffrage and made a tremendous impact on the course of the woman suffrage movement.⁶ Proponents of the movement had no such financial backing. During the second decade of the twentieth century, however, Mrs. John L. Pyle took charge of the South Dakota suffrage movement, providing the necessary energy to organize the state suffrage campaign and place opponents in a defensive position rather than an offensive one.

Mary Shields ("Mamie") Pyle lived all her adult life in South Dakota. She was a school teacher before she married John L. Pyle, who served as Republican attorney general under Populist governor Andrew Lee (1897-1901). A woman of unusual capability, Mary Shields Pyle directed the South Dakota suffrage movement after the November 1910 defeat of the woman suffrage amendment until the state legislature ratified the Nineteenth Amendment (the woman suffrage amendment) to the United States Constitution in December 1919.⁷ She had not been active in public affairs before her election to the suffrage presidency in 1910, and as a new figure on the scene, she was not known as a crusader for any cause other than suffrage. She had not been outspoken on the liquor question in South Dakota, and she clearly stressed that the suffrage fight and the temperance fight were separate causes. Pyle's assumption of the leadership put an end to the old suffrage organization whose ranks had been intertwined with supporters of prohibition.⁸

Pyle's approach to leadership indicated that she realized that suffragists themselves were sometimes enemies of their own cause and that they needed tighter organization and firm, but sympathetic, leadership. Politically wise, she was aware that German immigrants and liquor interests had worked together to undermine past suffrage efforts. She also recognized that women against woman suffrage could be the deadliest deterrent of them all. In the summer of 1911, Pyle called a suffrage convention in Huron and reorganized the suffrage association under a new name, the South Dakota Universal Franchise League. Acquiring new subordinates to help with the work, Pyle insisted that suf-

6. Ibid., pp. iii-iv, 85, 342, 400-401, 1178-80.

7. Cleata B. Thorpe, comp. and ed., *The John L. Pyle Family: Dakotans Extraordinary, 1882-1973* (Huron, S.Dak.: Cleata B. Thorpe, 1973), pp. 5, 7, 25, 27.

8. Interview of Gladys Pyle, by Paul O'Rourke, 21 June 1917, Tape no. 210, South Dakota Oral History Center, University of South Dakota, Vermillion.

frage not be confused with prohibition or any other partisan cause.⁹

The emergence of the South Dakota Universal Franchise League with Pyle as its president pushed the South Dakota woman suffrage movement into the twentieth century. The developments in the state organization paralleled changes in the National



Mary Shields Pyle

American Woman Suffrage Association. In this time period, both organizations came under the leadership of women who recognized the liquor industry as the enemy of equal suffrage and were

9. Ida Husted Harper, ed., *The History of Woman Suffrage*, Vol. 6, 1900-1920 (n.p.: National American Woman Suffrage Association, 1922), p. 587.

aware of the various guises the opposition used. In 1915, Carrie Chapman Catt was elected president of the national association. A veteran suffrage worker, Catt brought the qualities of a professional to the office. Her work experience had prepared her to head the woman suffrage movement in America. She had served as superintendent of schools in Mason City, Iowa, and worked as a journalist in San Francisco. She had already served as president of the National American Woman Suffrage Association from 1900 to 1904, and since then, she had been president of the International Woman Suffrage Alliance.¹⁰ Catt was an outstanding organizer, a skill she and Pyle shared. Both women had the ability to keep their work and workers on the suffrage track. Both were politically astute and diplomatic.¹¹ Although the South Dakota league ran its own campaign, sometimes to the dismay of the national,¹² Catt and Pyle became friends.

The first critical test of Pyle's organizational skills and determination was the 1914 suffrage campaign. A suffrage amendment was placed on the ballot for the fifth time in South Dakota in November 1914. During the campaign year, antisuffrage women worked openly for the defeat of the suffrage movement. They were supported by the Society Opposed to the Further Extension of Suffrage to Women, which was headquartered in Boston and was active in Massachusetts and several other eastern states. The basic tenet of their argument was that a woman's place was in the home, not at the polling place.¹³ This national antisuffrage organization mailed propaganda to South Dakota homes and newspapers and sent speakers around the state. While the society appeared to be a public protest against equal suffrage, it was, in fact, most likely controlled by brewers' money, and South Dakota suffragists were convinced that it was.¹⁴

State suffrage proponents decided that the best way to counter this antisuffrage activity on their own meager budget was through the *South Dakota Messenger*, the official newspaper of the state Universal Franchise League. The *Messenger*, which

10. *Dictionary of American Biography: Supplement Four, 1946-1950*, s.v. "Catt, Carrie Clinton Lane Chapman."

11. Andrew Sinclair, *The Emancipation of the American Woman* (New York: Harper Colophon Books, 1966), p. xxiv.

12. Anna Howard Shaw to Ruth B. Hipple, 19 Dec. 1913, Box 1, Folder 2, Woman Suffrage Movement Papers, 1889-1925, South Dakota Historical Resource Center, Pierre.

13. *South Dakota Messenger* (Pierre), 12 Mar. 1914.

14. Reed, *Woman Suffrage Movement in South Dakota*, pp. 84-86, 88-89; Catt and Shuler, *Woman Suffrage and Politics*, pp. 147, 272-78.

South Dakota Messenger

"If you would know the Political and Moral Status of a People, demand what place its Women occupy."

PIERRE, SOUTH DAKOTA, THURSDAY, OCT. 8, 1914

PRICE FIVE CENTS

sentation in politics—they should vote equally with men. Because women are citizens of the state and a government of the people by the people and for the people, and women are people—they should vote equally with men.

WHO SAID THERE WERE NO SUFFRAGISTS IN SIOUX FALLS?

These men's statements will not be that there were no suffragists on day, and no suffrage activity in Sioux Falls was a little premature in his conclusion. They have just had a Suffrage Tea down there which was attended by 300 of the city's most interesting men. A big social gathering was given. Even the social clubs are taking sides. Doubtless by their fancy work for the time if they devote afternoons to suffrage work in discussion and Mabel McNulty of the Sioux Falls Press gives to have a law party which turned into a most interesting affair.

"Yes," said the hostess in reply to the inquiry if she had entertained at cards the previous evening in honor of her house and guests. "It was my intention to entertain at cards, but from a chance word dropped by one of our guests early in the evening of the entire company was suddenly seized with that new and right to popular disease 'Suffragitis' and before I realized it the interest in the card game was forgotten and all were talking at once, either for or against the movement for woman suffrage. To continue the card game was no only a part of the question, so I accepted the conditions in the most graceful way possible and with interest watched the discussion take its natural course. Oh, yes, to be sure they were not all of the same opinion, that was what made it so interesting. The sides were about equally divided to begin with, but by one by one as the arguments were broken down by the enthusiastic and well posted suffrage advocates, the side increased in number. Unhappily the anti kept up their side of the argument but before the serving of the refreshments when I announced that there were

Woman Suffrage

Is the first Constitutional Amendment to be voted on November 3
VOTE "YES"

BECAUSE:

1. Taxation without representation is tyranny.
2. All governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed.
3. The home demands it.

EQUAL SUFFRAGE A SUCCESS AUSTRALIA 1902.



THE TRUTH ABOUT COLORADO

On April 8, the *Messenger* published an editorial from The People which will bear repeating at this time. It was headed "The Truth About Colorado" and said that to "make an even advantage of woman suffrage in Colorado and you've caught a prostitute of privilege."

In view of the fact that two Colorado men, both of whom have been shown to be suffering from delirium at the hands of the women of Colorado because they were asking political privileges to which they were not entitled, have recently been working against suffrage in this state, the *People's* editorial is particularly opportune. They say: "Woman suffrage in Colorado is condemned by the very interests and for the very reasons that ought to recommend it to every true democrat in the land. The facts alleged against it are false; the interests that originate them are predatory and socially vicious; the periodicals and individuals that circulate them are of the depraved, the reactionary or the duped class. From every point of citizen woman suffrage in Colorado has been a great civic success."

Judge Gayton" was shown to be a defeated candidate of the "Big Interests" against Judge Lindsey and J. H. Mailing is hired by the state at \$1,000 per month to work against suffrage. The Moffet Railroad, which Mr. Mailing says he represents, was prevented by the women of Colorado from obtaining \$5,000,000 of the state's funds to put a tunnel through a mountain 150 miles from Denver.

"Woman suffrage is a medium for the expression of that voice of the people which is the voice of God," continues the *People*, "and the voice of the people fully and fairly expressed is the voice of God; for a full and fair expression of the voice of the people, conflicting selfishness, narrowness, and other and the human impulse for righteousness comes to the fore. But righteous impulses are feminine as well as masculine in their qualities and tendencies. To check or suppress the feminine influence is therefore to unbal-

anceability that is required by women with the ballot. The time has come for the deploring the imposition of citizenship duties upon women. The man who does this is in the same position as the drawing-room; the woman who does it is a civic abhor—constitutionally, no doubt, and without deserving harsh condemnation—but "abhor" is really the only word that fits. For women are citizens now. The ballot would impose upon them no new duties; it would only give them the means of better performing those duties of citizenship which they already owe. They must be excused for their performance of their civic duties while the ballot is denied them, but it is not so easy to excuse them for begging that its denial be continued in order to relieve them of civic duties. Women who try thus to skirt the feminine duties of citizenship may be good mothers, good wives, good daughters, good sweethearts, good Sunday School teachers, good bridge players, good dressers, good anything you please of a personal kind—and doubtless most of them really are in every way good women personally—but they are not good citizens. And those men who were citizens, he they never as good personally, who take from such women their cue for endorsing opposing woman suffrage.

DOCTOR SHAW'S NORTH DAKOTA TRIP

Dr. Anna Howard Shaw's trip through North Dakota, where she went after speaking in Aberdeen, has been one continuous oration all along the way. Crowds have greeted her at every point on her schedule or where she could be induced to stop and flowers and wert tributes and social functions were part of the daily regime. She left this week for Montana. Her reception at Minot was thought to be the best one of all until she reached Bismarck and Mandak and elsewhere between. At Winifred the high school was closed to give the students an opportunity to hear so great

began publishing as a suffrage organ on 4 September 1913, reprinted literature that illustrated weaknesses in the antisuffrage arguments.¹⁵ Suffrage leaders also suggested that suffragists attend antisuffrage lectures and present counterarguments. One crucial argument of suffrage proponents was that liquor money paid for the antisuffragists' activities. Through an editorial in the *Messenger*, the Universal Franchise League pointed out the open

15. *South Dakota Messenger*, 7 May 1914.

working relationship between Minnie Bronson, a Massachusetts antisuffragist, and Edward Dietrich, the wholesale liquor dealer's representative in Sioux Falls, while she was campaigning in the state.¹⁶

The liquor interests in South Dakota were concerned with the outcome of the 1914 elections. Across the country, the liquor position was becoming weaker as interest in national prohibition grew. By 1914, Congress was considering passage of a prohibition amendment to the United States Constitution. In South Dakota, temperance forces were actively working for the enactment of a state constitutional amendment. Although no liquor measure was on the 1914 ballot, the temperance organizations across the state vigorously campaigned for local legislative candidates who were in favor of prohibition.¹⁷ The Universal Franchise League claimed that the state liquor forces countered temperance and suffrage activity by pouring money into the campaign and hiring men to work every angle of it to the liquor advantage.¹⁸

Besides the activities of antisuffrage women, a vehicle for some of this liquor money was the German-American Alliance.¹⁹ This alliance had been formed for people of German heritage soon after the turn of the century. It served to acquaint new immigrants with the American democratic process and to provide fellowship and aid to new arrivals. It also sustained activities to support its members' values. The defeat of prohibition and female suffrage was important to the German-American Alliance, and the brewers were particularly effective in using the organization to mobilize the German-Russian vote in South Dakota.²⁰ Historically, South Dakota counties with a German-heritage population of 25 percent or more rarely passed a suffrage amendment.

The first German immigrants arrived in South Dakota during territorial days, homesteading between the James and Missouri rivers in Hutchinson, Bon Homme, Turner, and Yankton counties in the south. Later groups settled in Campbell, McPherson, Walworth, and Edmunds counties in the north. Although immigration papers showed these Germans to be from Russia, the people never claimed Russian heritage. Their German heritage was rein-

16. *Ibid.*, 24 Sept., 8, 15 Oct. 1914.

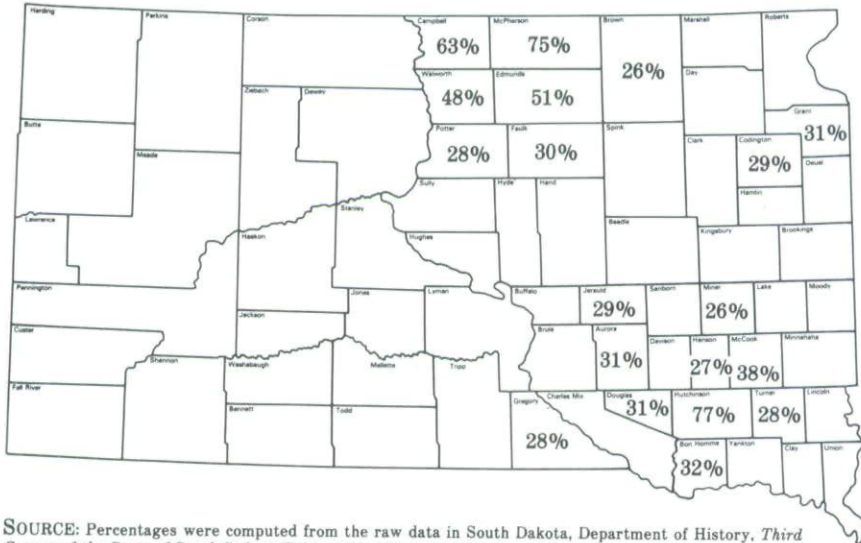
17. Alvin J. Brunn, "The History of the Temperance Movement in South Dakota to 1917" (M.A. thesis, University of South Dakota, 1948), pp. 72-73.

18. *South Dakota Messenger*, 13 Aug. 1914.

19. *Brewing and Liquor Interests and German and Bolshevik Propaganda*, 1:iv.

20. Catt and Shuler, *Woman Suffrage and Politics*, pp. 147-48, 194.

Figure 1. South Dakota Counties with a German-Heritage Population of at Least 25 Percent, 1915



SOURCE: Percentages were computed from the raw data in South Dakota, Department of History, *Third Census of the State of South Dakota Taken in the Year 1915* [1915], pp. 20, 36.

forced as new waves of German immigrants came to South Dakota at the turn of the century. By 1915, people claiming German ancestry comprised at least 25 percent of the population of nineteen counties, and all but one was east of the Missouri River. Germans accounted for 77 percent, 75 percent, and 63 percent of the population of Hutchinson, McPherson, and Campbell counties respectively. Prior to the 1914 election, only five of these nineteen counties had ever voted for a woman suffrage amendment.²¹ German men from these counties made up the membership of the South Dakota German-American Alliance, and the suffragists

21. Herbert S. Schell, *South Dakota History*, 2d ed. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1968), pp. 116-17, 169; South Dakota, Department of History, *Third Census of the State of South Dakota Taken in the Year 1915* [1915], pp. 20, 36; C. Kenneth Meyer et al., *Direct Democracy in South Dakota: The People Conducting Their Own Business*, Governmental Research Bureau Special Project, no. 45 (Vermillion: University of South Dakota, 1979), pp. 99, 101, 104, 115; Darrell R. Sawyer, "Anti-German Sentiment in South Dakota during World War I," *South Dakota Historical Collections* 38 (1976): 444-45.

were continually disappointed that their educational activities could not bring alliance members around to their perspective concerning women's right of franchise.

The women expressed their frustration in a *Messenger* editorial on 27 November 1913. The editor of the *Messenger*, Ruth B. Hipple, wrote that German and German-Russian men could not be expected to be in favor of equal suffrage when they allowed their own women to take week-old babies out into the fields while they worked. Hipple stated that German-Russian mothers left their babies at one end of the field, plowed a furrow up and back, nursed the babies, and then resumed plowing.²² This editorial prompted a reply from Henry L. Loucks, who was a supporter of woman suffrage when it suited his needs. At this time, he was chairman of the executive committee of the South Dakota State Grange. He could not agree with the franchise league's sentiments that the "Germans and German-Russians are opposed to anything making of feminine progress," and he concluded that the league was too hard on the Germans.²³ Initially, Hipple and Pyle accepted Loucks's reply as fair criticism of the editorial, but when his letter appeared on the editorial page of the 2 December 1913 issue of the *Sioux Falls Daily Argus-Leader*, the women became angry. In their opinion, Loucks had used the editorial and his response as an opportunity to ingratiate himself with the Germans.²⁴

If the suffrage amendment was to receive a majority vote in the predominantly German counties, however, the women also needed German approval. As a result, they renewed their efforts to educate the people of the state to the goals of suffrage. The league urged its workers to secure more subscriptions to the *Messenger*. They believed that if each household received a copy of the suffrage paper, it would be an effective method of education. As local chairmen began to work in each town, however, the Universal Franchise League encountered subtle resistance. Time and time again, chairmen reported to Pyle that they could not get women to the meetings, let alone to carry on any of the campaign work. The suffragists found that women were "too busy" or just indifferent. The workers concluded that for many women, the suf-

22. *South Dakota Messenger*, 27 Nov. 1913.

23. H. L. Loucks to *Messenger* Editor, 28 Nov. 1913, Box 1, Folder 2, Suffrage Movement Papers.

24. [Mrs. John L. Pyle] to Mrs. [Ruth] Hipple, 3 Dec. 1913, Box 1, Folder 2, Suffrage Movement Papers.

frage issue generated painful memories of previous campaigns—memories of slights, rebuffs, quarrels, condemnations, and defeat. It was easier to let it alone.²⁵

Despite these problems, the suffrage proponents' efforts gained support from South Dakota voters in the 1914 election. The results showed that more voters were beginning to cast their ballots for equal suffrage. The total number of votes cast on the issue of suffrage in 1914 was 1,875 less than the total number cast for the same amendment in 1910, but the 1914 amendment lost by only slightly under twelve thousand votes. In 1910, the amendment had lost by over twenty-two thousand votes. In four years, approximately ten thousand men had changed their minds.²⁶ The South Dakota suffrage workers claimed a victory with those ten thousand votes, and Pyle, along with the other members of the legislative committee of the Universal Franchise League (Mabel Rewman of Deadwood and Etta Estey Boyce of Sioux Falls), confidently lobbied the 1915 state legislature for the passage of another woman suffrage amendment. The new measure passed the legislature without any serious impediments.²⁷

A new era of South Dakota politics was evident. Both Democratic and Republican attitudes had changed, and both parties now endorsed equal suffrage. The period from 1900 to 1915 was called the Progressive Era in national and state politics. The Progressive movement in South Dakota and the nation defined a general direction toward moral and social reform and brought about legislation that was directed at restructuring political and administrative agencies that were failing to meet the needs of the country's growing population.²⁸ Progressive politicians considered the issue of woman suffrage to be a moral concern. By 1914 in South Dakota, both major political parties were ready to end their twenty-five-year silence on the issue and give public endorsement to the cause. Republicans and Democrats alike included a

25. Sec. N. E. Dist. [Mae Billingham] to Mrs. Kelly, Sr., 4 Oct. 1913, Josie R. Mariette to Mrs. May B. Billingham, 8 May 1913, and Adele M. Nelson to Mrs. [Ruth] Hipple, 14 May 1913, all in Box 1, Folder 2, Suffrage Movement Papers. Beginning with the first suffrage campaign in 1890, the same women were asked repeatedly to approach their neighbors in support of the cause. Understandably, they were growing weary of the negative response they received on such campaigns.

26. South Dakota, *Legislative Manual* (1911), p. 469, and *ibid.* (1919), p. 312.

27. Harper, *History of Woman Suffrage*, 6:590.

28. Richard Hofstadter, ed., *The Progressive Movement, 1900-1915* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1963), pp. 2-5.

woman suffrage plank in their 1914 campaign platforms. Thus, legislators from both parties favored passage of the 1915 bill calling for a suffrage referendum. These same moral reformists also passed another controversial bill, calling for a prohibition referendum.²⁹

On the 1916 November ballot, an amendment to give equal voting rights to women immediately preceded an amendment that would prohibit the making and selling of liquor in South Dakota. The stage was set for the most vigorous campaign yet waged in the history of the state woman suffrage movement. The two reform issues of prohibition and female suffrage were before the voters at the same time. To meet the task before her, Pyle decided to abandon the previous organizational tactic of using district organizers, and she developed a plan to use county leaders instead. These county leaders would then find township workers. By this method, every household in South Dakota would be contacted by someone who was committed to suffrage.³⁰

Just as the plans of the Universal Franchise League were carefully developed, so were the activities of those elements within the state that opposed suffrage. In the summer of 1916, the women antisuffragists of South Dakota became an auxiliary of the National Association Opposed to Woman Suffrage headquartered in Boston. The South Dakota group, led by Mrs. Ernest Jackson of Dallas and Mrs. C. M. Hollister of Pierre, produced a pamphlet in August 1916 entitled *A Woman's Protest against Woman Suffrage*, and a month before the election, they published a newspaper called the *South Dakota Anti-Suffragist*.³¹ They also rented auditoriums and spoke to audiences throughout the state. They gathered signatures on petitions that stated that women did not want the vote. During the 1916 campaign, therefore, the most vocal element against enfranchising women was women. With the brewery and liquor interests busy with the campaign against the prohibition amendment, the fight against suffrage was overtly in the hands of their allies, women against suffrage and antisuffrage German immigrants. The prosuffragists spent a large part of

29. George W. Kingsbury, *History of Dakota Territory*, and George Martin Smith, ed., *South Dakota: Its History and Its People*, 5 vols. (Chicago: S. J. Clarke, 1915), 3:726; Brunn, "History of the Temperance Movement," p. 73.

30. Harper, *History of Woman Suffrage*, 6:590.

31. *A Woman's Protest against Woman Suffrage* (Pierre: South Dakota Auxiliary of the National Association Opposed to Woman Suffrage, 1916), and *South Dakota Anti-Suffragist* (Pierre), 16 Oct. 1916. Copies of these publications can be found in the Suffrage Movement Papers.

their campaign effort in petition drives in an attempt to counter the old rhetoric, given new life by the female antisuffragists, that "women do not want the vote."³²

32. Harper, *History of Woman Suffrage*, 6:591.

A Woman's Protest Against Woman Suffrage

To the Clergy, the Press and the People of South Dakota :

This organization opposes the woman suffrage amendment to be submitted to the voters of South Dakota at the presidential election, November 7, 1916.

The ballot is not a natural right. It is a responsibility which the state imposes or withholds at its own pleasure. The question of who shall exercise the franchise is one of expediency. It is a political question and all political questions are properly determined from the standpoint of the state's advantage.

Material to this question of the state's advantage is the question of whether women generally desire the ballot. For eternal vigilance at elections and in the investigation of public men and

With a total of nine amendments on the 1916 ballot, there was no shortage of issues. The Republicans and Democrats each pulled their previously factionalized parties together. The Democrats were elated by the national victories; Democrat Woodrow Wilson had served four years as president of the United States and ran a successful campaign for a second term. The Republicans nominated Peter Norbeck for governor, and he won the election with 56.6 percent of the vote in one of the largest voter turnouts in the history of the state. For the suffrage issue, however, these party victories did not mean success. Although the Republican party had endorsed woman suffrage and Peter Norbeck received over half of the votes cast at the November 1916 general election, the endorsement was not enough to sway Republican voters to support the suffrage issue. In the counties where Norbeck did well, suffrage did not (*see* Table 1 for rank-order analysis by county). The prohibition amendment won by 55 percent of the vote, 65,334 to 53,380.³³ The voters who supported the prohibition amendment gave substantial support to woman suffrage. The higher the German-heritage population in any county, however, the lower the support for either cause. As the prosuffrage women would claim, and the comparative data shows, the German vote substantially defeated woman suffrage in 1916.³⁴ Overall, the suffrage amendment received the largest percentage in its history, 48 percent with 53,432 ayes and 58,350 noes. The cause had gained approximately five thousand positive votes since the 1914 election. Still, seventeen of the nineteen counties with a German population of 25 percent or more defeated the 1916 equal franchise amendment.³⁵ Before the next election, however, the impact of a world war would be one factor that would redirect the German vote.

The most important aspect of the 1916 election for the South Dakota woman suffrage movement was the passage of the prohibition amendment. The largest, most influential enemy of the suffrage cause had been defeated by the voters. With national senti-

33. Schell, *History of South Dakota*, pp. 264-65; Henry L. Speh, "The Progressive Movement in South Dakota, 1902-1914" (M.A. thesis, University of South Dakota, 1936), p. 73; *Legislative Manual* (1919), pp. 374, 385-86; C. Kenneth Meyer, Mitchel J. Beville, Jr., and Dennis L. Eisenbraun, *South Dakota Votes for Governor, 1889-1978*, Governmental Research Bureau Special Project, no. 46 (Vermillion: University of South Dakota, 1981), p. 15.

34. Harper, *History of Woman Suffrage*, 6:591.

35. *Legislative Manual* (1919), p. 385. To compare these county returns with German-heritage population, *see* Figure 1 in this article.

TABLE 1
RANK-ORDER ANALYSIS OF THE 1916 WOMAN SUFFRAGE VOTE

COUNTY	A. RANK WOMAN SUFFRAGE SUPPORT	B. RANK NORBECK SUPPORT	C. RANK PROHIBITION SUPPORT	D. RANK (LOW-HIGH) GERMAN SUPPORT	d ² (A - B)	d ² (A - C)	d ² (A - D)
Butte	1	60	7	5	3481	36	16
Fall River	2	56	12	12	2916	100	100
Haakon	3	38	25	13	1225	484	100
Harding	4	13	19	8	81	225	16
Custer	5	55	10	2	2500	25	9
Hyde	6	8	35	31	4	841	625
Jackson	7	15	2	32	64	25	625
Stanley	8	57	8	18	2601	0	100
Lawrence	9	41	50	4	1024	1681	25
Hand	10	50	28	44	1600	324	1156
Clark	11	17	11	30	36	0	361
Clay	12	37	1	3	625	121	81
Beadle	13	58	37	42	2025	576	841
Davison	14	35	16	26	441	4	144
Brookings	15	11	5	23	16	100	64
Sanborn	16	47	23	19	961	49	9
Meade	17	61	46	14	1936	841	9

TABLE 1—Continued

COUNTY	A. RANK WOMAN SUFFRAGE SUPPORT	B. RANK NORBECK SUPPORT	C. RANK PROHIBITION SUPPORT	D. RANK (LOW-HIGH) GERMAN SUPPORT	d ² (A - B)	d ² (A - C)	d ² (A - D)
Perkins	18	36	34	17	324	256	1
Pennington	19	59	31	22	1600	144	9
Jerauld	20	19	14	52	1	36	1024
Spink	21	26	41	40	25	400	361
Dewey	22	32	17	27	100	25	25
Lyman	23	46	22	28	529	1	25
Roberts	24	25	56	24	1	1024	0
Moody	25	23	20	39	4	25	196
Marshall	26	30	4	15	16	484	121
Codington	27	39	32	51	144	25	576
Sully	28	10	24	35	324	16	49
Minnehaha	29	31	36	20	4	49	81
Kingsbury	30	14	6	16	256	576	196
Lincoln	31	4	9	41	729	484	100
Bennett	32	63	33	1	961	1	961
Buffalo	33	62	49	6	841	256	729
Brown	34	52	45	45	324	121	121
Miner	35	28	13	46	49	484	121

TABLE 1—Continued

COUNTY	A. RANK WOMAN SUFFRAGE SUPPORT	B. RANK NORBECK SUPPORT	C. RANK PROHIBITION SUPPORT	D. RANK (LOW-HIGH) GERMAN SUPPORT	d ² (A—B)	d ² (A—C)	d ² (A—D)
Tripp	36	45	3	29	81	1089	49
Lake	37	12	26	33	625	121	16
Hughes	38	34	42	10	16	16	784
Union	39	43	27	7	16	144	1024
Mellette	40	51	21	9	121	361	961
Hamlin	41	5	18	38	1296	529	9
Corson	42	48	51	36	36	81	36
Faulk	43	21	53	53	484	100	100
Gregory	44	25	40	49	361	16	25
Deuel	45	6	29	34	1521	256	121
Day	46	9	39	43	1369	49	9
Turner	47	7	15	50	1600	1024	9
Aurora	48	49	54	57	1	36	81
Grant	49	16	38	55	1089	121	36
Ziebach	50	22	44	11	784	36	1521
Yankton	51	40	52	25	121	1	676
McCook	52	29	48	58	529	16	36
Charles Mix	53	54	47	21	1	36	1024

TABLE 1—Continued

COUNTY	A. RANK WOMAN SUFFRAGE SUPPORT	B. RANK NORBECK SUPPORT	C. RANK PROHIBITION SUPPORT	D. RANK (LOW-HIGH) GERMAN SUPPORT	d ² (A-B)	d ² (A-C)	d ² (A-D)
Hanson	54	42	43	47	144	121	49
Brule	55	53	57	37	4	4	324
Potter	56	27	59	48	841	9	64
Walworth	57	20	60	59	1369	9	4
Bon Homme	58	44	55	56	196	9	4
Edmunds	59	33	58	60	676	1	1
Douglas	60	18	56	54	1764	16	36
Campbell	61	1	62	61	3600	1	0
Hutchinson	62	3	61	62	3481	1	0
McPherson	63	2	63	63	3721	0	0
					Σ53615	14042	15976

Spearman's Rho*: $r_s (A-B) = -.286$ $r_s (A-C) = +.662$ $r_s (A-D) = +.616$

*Spearman's Rho is a measure of the similarity between two rankings. A score of +1.00 indicates that in two rankings every item is in the same order; this would be perfect positive association. A score of zero indicates no association at all. A score of -1.00 indicates perfect but negative (inverse) association. The formula for Spearman's Rho is $r_s = 1 - \frac{6\sum d^2}{n^3 - n}$ (d = difference in order of two rankings; n = number of items).

The correlation between support for Norbeck and support for woman suffrage was negative and low ($r_s = -.286$). The correlation between support for the prohibition amendment and the woman suffrage amendment was positive and high ($r_s = +.662$). The lower the German-heritage population in any one county, the greater the support for woman suffrage ($r_s = +.616$).

Source: Computations are based on the percentages in C. Kenneth Meyer et al., *Direct Democracy in South Dakota: The People Conducting Their Own Business*, Governmental Research Bureau Special Project, no. 45 (Vermillion: University of South Dakota, 1979), pp. 130-31, and C. Kenneth Meyer, Mitchel J. Beville, Jr., and Dennis L. Eisenbraun, *South Dakota Votes for Governor, 1889-1978*, Governmental Research Bureau Special Project, no. 46 (Vermillion: University of South Dakota, 1981), p. 15; and on the raw numbers in South Dakota, Department of History, *Third Census of the State of South Dakota Taken in the Year 1915* [1915], pp. 20, 36.

ment toward prohibition soon resulting in the Eighteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution (proposed in December 1917 and ratified in January 1919), the liquor industry was effectively silenced after this 1916 state election. Thus, the South Dakota Universal Franchise League approached the 1917 state legislature with confidence that the next victory would be theirs. The legislature passed the seventh and final woman suffrage bill, and the women of the league immediately began to implement their campaign plans. The entrance of the United States into World War I, however, precipitated an action on the part of the governor and the legislature that changed the complexion of the 1918 woman suffrage campaign.

On 17 March 1918, Governor Peter Norbeck called a special session of the legislature. One of his chief concerns was alien voting. The national enemy was Germany, and at that time, South Dakota was one of only six states in the country that allowed aliens to vote on first papers taken out in application for citizenship. In the early settlement of the state, this privilege was viewed as an incentive for foreign immigrants. Noncitizens could actively participate in the government of the state, a freedom denied most of them in their homeland. In 1917, however, when 22.4 percent of the residents of South Dakota claimed German heritage, the sentiment toward alien voters changed drastically.³⁶ With so many American men away from home and not able to vote, people feared that the aliens could sway the vote through their greater numbers (first-paper aliens were not being called for military service). To allay this fear, Governor Norbeck asked the legislature to amend the suffrage clause of the South Dakota Constitution—the same clause woman suffrage proponents had been working to amend since 1868.³⁷

As Universal Franchise League president, Mary Shields Pyle was called to Pierre to consult with the governor and the legislature regarding this constitutional change. As she traveled to the capital, she was quite concerned that this move was yet another ploy to defeat woman suffrage, but her fears were relieved when she learned that the legislature intended to add a citizenship clause to the already existing woman suffrage amendment bill.³⁸

36. Sawyer, "Anti-German Sentiment in South Dakota," pp. 444-45, 462-63; *Third Census of the State of South Dakota*, p. 36.

37. Harper, *History of Woman Suffrage*, 6:592.

38. Mrs. John L. Pyle to Rev. Katherine Powell, 27 Mar. 1916, Box 2, Folder 4, Mrs. John L. Pyle Papers, Richardson Archives, University of South Dakota, Vermillion.

In addition to granting voting rights to women, the proposed Amendment E would now specify as well that the rights of suffrage were limited to naturalized citizens. Thus, through this new provision, if men voted against enfranchising women, they virtually classified women as aliens. In spite of this favorable development, Pyle advised her workers to carry on with their suffrage activity: "It will not mean . . . that we can lessen our activity. No campaign will carry on its own momentum. We must work earnestly and persistently, upheld by the knowledge that we are serving our State and our country, as well as gaining our own political freedom, when we cooperate with our men to add to the vote a large body of loyal, intelligent citizens and eliminate, at the same time, those who are unnaturalized."³⁹

Throughout the 1918 suffrage campaign, the South Dakota Universal Franchise League maintained an active and aggressive approach to the success of Amendment E, now called the Citizenship Amendment. However, the league also encouraged its supporters to engage in any war work that would bring victory to the United States. As a result, outside helpers became necessary for the suffrage campaign. The National American Woman Suffrage Association sent women to South Dakota to campaign throughout the state, and the work of the state and national organizations defeated the final subtle foe of the movement—apathy among women themselves.⁴⁰ This issue had surfaced during the first suffrage referendum in 1890 when the *Aberdeen Daily News*, for one, had observed that there was great apathy for the cause among women and that the majority of them did not want to assume the responsibility of being voters. "This point must be cleared up in this state," the editor had insisted, "if the proposed measure is to succeed."⁴¹ To combat this attitude, state and national workers in 1918 supervised a county-by-county petition drive and then printed and mailed the signed petitions, along with two suffrage pamphlets, to each voter in every county. In 1918, 95 percent of the women in the state to whom a suffrage petition was presented signed it, indicating that they were willing to assume the responsibility of being voters.⁴² The male voters fi-

39. Mrs. John L. Pyle to Chairman, 26 Mar. 1918, Box 2, Folder 4, Pyle Papers.

40. Harper, *History of Woman Suffrage*, 6:593.

41. *Aberdeen Daily News*, cited in *Sioux Falls Daily Argus-Leader*, 13 Feb. 1890.

42. Harper, *History of Woman Suffrage*, 6:593.

nally gave them what they wanted—the privilege to vote in all local, state, and national elections.

On 6 November 1918, the Citizenship Amendment received 64 percent of the vote cast, and the disenfranchisement of half of the citizens of South Dakota came to an end. The wording of the amendment had discredited the remaining opponent with access to the ballot, the German antifeminist vote. Antisuffrage women had also been quieted and could not openly campaign against the amendment without appearing to side with Germany. World War I had created open hostility toward Germans, so the suffragists had used this situation in their propaganda, stating that anyone who sympathized with antifeminist sentiment also appeared to sympathize with the enemy alien.⁴³ The county voting returns demonstrated that voters in fourteen of the nineteen German-populated counties were influenced by this propaganda, and South Dakota women were enfranchised just as the war ended.⁴⁴ Pyle wrote to Ruth Hipple that she was glad the war had not ended sooner, for if it had, their publicity, centering on hostility toward alien voters and the issue of citizenship, would have been valueless.⁴⁵

Nationally, South Dakota was the seventeenth state to grant full suffrage to women. Two other states granted only primary suffrage, and four states granted women only presidential suffrage. After years of unrelenting effort, three generations of South Dakota women and men had finally succeeded in getting an equal suffrage amendment passed by male voters of South Dakota. Carrie Chapman Catt, president of the national suffrage association, which had been involved in South Dakota since 1889, expressed appropriate sentiment when she learned of the South Dakota victory after such a long struggle. "The state," Catt said, "presumably had accumulated some education on the subject from campaign to campaign. The general feeling around [the national office] is: 'The Lord be praised that South Dakota is out of the way.'"⁴⁶ Certainly, the residents of South Dakota had ma-

43. Mrs. John L. Pyle to Mrs. [Cara L.] Gallett, 14 Nov. 1918, Box 10, Folder 1, Pyle Papers.

44. Meyer et al., *Direct Democracy in South Dakota*, pp. 99, 101, 104, 115, 126, 131, 136.

45. Mrs. John L. Pyle to Mrs. [Ruth] Hipple, 8 Nov. 1918, Box 10, Folder 3, Pyle Papers.

46. Quoted in Eleanor Flexner, *Century of Struggle: The Woman's Rights Movement in the United States*, rev. ed. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, Belknap Press, 1975), p. 324.

tured through the half-century from the first introduction of a suffrage bill in 1868 to the successful passage of the 1918 amendment. One wonders, however, how much longer the various factions and forces opposed to equal suffrage for women would have worked to keep female enfranchisement at bay if progressive moral education had not convinced the state voters to eliminate the liquor interests through statewide prohibition and if a world war had not silenced the antifeminist sentiment.

In June 1919, the United States Congress proposed a woman suffrage amendment to the United States Constitution. Thoroughly committed to woman suffrage at long last, the South Dakota legislature was one of the first to ratify this amendment, doing so at 12:44 a.m. on 4 December 1919 in a special midnight session of the legislature.⁴⁷ Seven months later, in August 1920, the Nineteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution became law. The women of South Dakota and the nation were more than ready to vote in the 1920 presidential election.

47. Harper, *History of Woman Suffrage*, 6:594-95.

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