



*Mary I. Pyle*

## *Dakota Images*

As a leader in the woman's suffrage movement, Mary I. Pyle was the president of the state suffrage organization. She was born in Orange, New Jersey, on 28 February 1866 and as a young woman, she and her family moved to Minnesota and then to Dakota Territory. She was one of the pioneer schoolteachers of Beadle County.

On 26 May 1886 she married John L. Pyle and they eventually had a family of four children. The couple moved to Huron in 1889, where Mrs. Pyle was elected president of the Woman's Suffrage Association of South Dakota in 1910 and carried the movement into all counties and to all organizations who could wield any influence for the cause. She and her organization were successful in getting the legislature to give women the right to vote in 1918, just before the National Suffrage Amendment was passed.

Mrs. Pyle was also named to the board of trustees of Huron College. Her husband had been president of that board at the time of his death in 1902. Mrs. Pyle served as trustee from 1902 until she died on 22 December 1949. She was the president of the Huron College Women's Association, which raised the money to erect the first permanent building on the campus. She also supervised the laying out of the campus and the planting of the shrubs and trees. For many years she was active in the Huron YWCA, Red Cross, and civic, study, and temperance organizations.

In 1947 she was chosen as the state mother of South Dakota. One daughter, Gladys Pyle, was a former United States senator, state legislator, secretary of state, and member of the Board of Charities and Corrections.

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