

Susan B. Anthony Visits Owensboro

By Jerry Long



Susan B. Anthony (1820-1906)



Daviess County, Kentucky Celebrating Our Heritage, 1815-2015
(Evansville, IN, M. T. Publishing Company, Inc., 2015):-

page 10:

Daviess County Bicentennial Chronology – 200 Historical Events,
by Jerry Long in celebration of Daviess County’s Bicentennial:

1879, 10-20 Susan B. Anthony (1820-1906), famous suffragette, gave a lecture in Owensboro at Hall’s Opera House at the northeast corner of St. Ann & Third. She visited Owensboro again on 14 January 1895 and spoke on women’s rights in the circuit courtroom at the Daviess County Courthouse. Two days later a woman’s suffrage society was organized here. Miss Anthony was acclaimed for her pioneer contribution to women’s rights.

Chapter 16, Profiles in Strength – Women in Daviess County,
by Aloma Williams Dew, pages 162-163:

... 1895, Susan B. Anthony and Carrie Chapman Catt spoke at a meeting in the circuit court room. The meeting was sponsored by the WCTU, but franchisement was the topic. As a result of that meeting the Political Equality Club was formed, beginning with 10 members and growing to nearly 200 by 1914. The Daviess County Woman's Suffrage Association, with nearly 200 members, hosted the 25th annual convention of the Kentucky Equal rights Association in November 1914. Mrs. J.D. Hayes was elected as a vice president and Mrs. George Rudy was elected as delegate to the National Association at Nashville in November 1917. By 1920 the Suffrage Association had grown to 500-600 members, men and women. A Women's Citizen League was formed to help prepare women to vote. This had grown out of the Women's Club, organized in 1908. This group had secured a site and building for the Library in 1911 after the men in the community had given up.

1920 marked a new decade and a new age for women who were kicking up their heels, bobbing their hair, raising their hems and demanding the vote. In August, the suffrage amendment passed, making it the official law of the land. Kentucky had ratified the amendment on Jan. 6, 1920.



Dictionary of American Biography, Vol. 1, Allen Johnson,
editor, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1928, pp.318-321:

ANTHONY, SUSAN BROWNELL (Feb. 5, 1820—Mar. 13, 1906), reformer, was a descendant of John Anthony, Jr., who came to America from Hampstead, England, in 1634. She was born in Adams, Mass., where her well-to-do Quaker father was a pioneer cotton manufacturer. The Anthony family had produced strong-minded omen, not afraid to face the public, before Susan's day. Her father's mother had been given an exalted place on the high seat in the meeting, and his sister, Hannah, had been a Quaker preacher. Susan grew up in an atmosphere of independence and moral zeal. Daniel Anthony had married Lucy Read, passionately fond of music and dancing, in defiance of the meeting. Much to the annoyance of his patrons, he discontinued the sale of liquor at the store he conducted in conjunction with his mill. He permitted none but Quaker preachers to smoke or drink in his home; was so opposed to slavery that he tried to get cotton for his mills which had not been produced by slave labor; encouraged his daughters to be self-supporting, ignoring the criticism of his neighbors; and finally was "read out of meeting" for permitting the young people of the town to dance on the top floor of his house, instead of over the tavern, though his own children were allowed the role of spectators only. His remark when told that the men would not come to the "raising" of tenement houses he had decided to build, unless he furnished them with gin, had in it the same grim determination which his iron-willed daughter later displayed: "Then the houses will not be raised."

Susan was a precocious child, learning to read and write at the age of three, endowed with an unusual memory, and eager for knowledge. When she was six years old, the family moved to Battensville, N.Y. Here she attended the district school and later a school which her father established in his home for his own children and those of his neighbors. This training, supplemented by a year at Deborah Moulson's boarding-school at Hamilton, near Philadelphia,

qualified her for good positions in the teaching profession, the best and last of which, head of the Female Department of Canajoharie Academy, she held from 1846 to 1849.

Her early letters reveal a straight-laced, prudish young woman, serious-minded, with very rigid moral standards, and prone to criticize her elders with more than the ordinary assurance of conceited youth. She writes to her uncle, rebuking him for drinking ale and wine at yearly meetings; and after commenting sharply upon President Van Buren's patronage of the theatre, and revelings in the tents of luxury and "all-debasing wine," asks if there can be hope of less dissipation among the people, when one who practises such abominable vices "(in what is called a gentlemanly manner) is suffered to sit at the head of our Government." She was not without admirers of the other sex in those days, but there is no evidence that her passions were ever stirred. She never felt it her mission to be a home-maker. When nearing thirty she was in the family of a cousin when the latter gave birth to a child, and wrote home rather disgustingly that in her opinion there were some drawbacks to marriage which made a woman quite content to remain single. Later her views of amusements and life in general broadened, and she lost much of her priggishness. It was to reform, however, that she gave her heart, and in its service that she found an outlet for her emotions, pouring into it the devotion, loyalty, and self-sacrifice which most women give to their families.

Interest in the great issues of the day and a growing passion to join in the fight against injustice and vice had made her restless in the narrow confines of the school-room, and by 1850 she was back in the family home, now near Rochester, N.Y. It had become a rallying-place for reformers and about its table gathered such men as Garrison, Phillips, Pillsbury, Charming, and Frederick Douglass. Soon she became acquainted with Amelia Bloomer, Lucretia Mott, Lucy Stone, and Elizabeth Cady Stanton with whom she formed a life-long alliance, which in the face of seemingly insurmountable difficulties did much to force the woman suffrage movement on to ultimate success.

Her first public work was in behalf of temperance. In 1852 she was a delegate to a meeting held by the Sons of Temperance in Albany. Upon arising to speak on a motion, she was informed that "the sisters were not invited there to speak but to listen and learn." As a result of this treatment she and others organized the Woman's State Temperance Society of New York, the first of its kind ever formed. She continued her efforts for temperance in conventions and elsewhere, but all the time meeting violent prejudice against women's participation in public affairs, she became increasingly convinced that only through equal rights could women become effective workers for social betterment. She also attended teachers' 'conventions, where she demanded for women all the privileges enjoyed by men. She took a radical abolitionist stand, and in 1857-58 campaigned under the banner "No Union with Slaveholders." After the war she was one of the first to advocate negro suffrage. When the Fourteenth Amendment was under discussion, she attempted to have included a provision insuring the franchise to women as well as to male blacks but was unsuccessful. In 1852 with some reluctance she joined her friend Amelia Bloomer and others in wearing the short skirt and Turkish trousers, known as the Bloomer costume. In about a year she abandoned it. "I found it a physical comfort," she said, "but a mental crucifixion. The attention of my audience was fixed upon my clothes instead of my words. I learned the lesson then that to be successful a person must attempt but one reform."

Any chronological record of Miss Anthony's life would be one of unending lecture tours and the direction of campaigns in one state after another. In 1868 in association with Mrs. Stanton and Parker Pillsbury she published a periodical known as *The Revolution*, radical and defiant in tone. "We said at all times," Mrs. Stanton declares, "just what we thought, and advertized nothing we did not believe in" (Theodore Stanton and Harriot Stanton Blatch, *Elizabeth Cady Stanton*,

1922, 1,215). In 1869 the National Woman Suffrage Association was organized to secure a sixteenth amendment to the Federal Constitution, enfranchising women. Mrs. Stanton was made president and Miss Anthony chairman of the executive committee. Owing to some division in sentiment, the American Woman Suffrage Association was formed the same year, with Henry Ward Beecher as president and Lucy Stone chairman of the executive committee. It worked chiefly to secure suffrage through amendments to state constitutions. In 1890 the two societies were merged under the name National American Woman Suffrage Association and Mrs. Stanton was elected president and Miss Anthony vice-president at large. In 1892 Miss Anthony was elected president and served until 1900, when she retired at the age of eighty.

In 1872, in a plan to test the legality of woman suffrage under the Fourteenth Amendment, she registered with fifteen other women and voted at the November elections in the city of Rochester. Two weeks later she was arrested for having violated the law. Her trial was postponed and she voted again in the city elections the following March. Since the trial of the United States vs. Susan B. Anthony was to be a jury trial, she and her associates spent the weeks and months preceding it in an intensive lecture campaign aimed to educate the voters from among whom the jury would have to be selected. She was most ably defended at the trial by Henry R. Selden and John Van Voorhis. At its conclusion Judge Ward Hunt delivered a written opinion, written before the trial had taken place, which directed the jury to bring in a verdict of guilty. In the face of Miss Anthony's counsels' objections to this questionable procedure, Judge Hunt refused to allow the jury to be polled and discharged them without permitting them to consult together. He then imposed a fine of \$100 on Miss Anthony. She told him she would never pay a dollar of the penalty and she never did. Courts and laws meant nothing to her, if they conflicted with what she thought was right. She "would ignore all law to help the slave," she once declared, and "ignore it all to protect an enslaved woman."

Throughout the many years of Miss Anthony's strenuous career she encountered opposition of almost every kind. She met hisses and clamor, rotten eggs and vegetables, press comments that were vile and all but obscene, but sustained by an unshakable confidence in the justice of her cause, she never wavered, and before her death she was rewarded with respect and honor rarely bestowed upon woman, and had the satisfaction of seeing equal suffrage granted in four states, and a measure of suffrage granted in others. At international congresses of women in London and Berlin (1899 and 1904), her appearance called forth demonstrations of exceptional regard.

When she was about thirty-five she was described by a newspaper reporter as having "pleasing rather than pretty features, decidedly expressive countenance, rich brown hair very effectively and not at all elaborately arranged, neither too tall nor too short, too plump nor too thin—in brief one of those *juste milieu* persons, the perfection of common sense physically exhibited." In her later years her face was lined, angular, and somewhat austere, but lighted with the spiritual beauty which life-long devotion to high purposes often imparts. She was of the militant type, and being engaged in a desperate fight, she not infrequently displayed some of the less pleasant characteristics which such warfare is likely to produce in a soldier. She had amazing physical vigor, was aggressive and bold. She spoke her mind with great frankness, and occasionally used strong epithets, but no stronger than those hurled at her. There was little of the conciliatory or diplomatic in her disposition. As is often the case with those who are obsessed with one idea, she showed little appreciation for the complexity of social and personal problems, and had difficulty in being altogether fair to points of view different from her own. These, however, were the faults of the qualities which gave her power, and she ranks high among the notable array of reformers, male and female, of her day. She died in Rochester, N.Y., one month after reaching

her eighty-sixth year, leaving her small fortune of \$10,000 for the cause to which she had given her life.

[Material for this sketch has been found in Ida H. Harper's three-vol. work, *The Life and Work of Susan B. Anthony* (vols. I, II, 1899; vol. III, 1908). These vols. contain much newspaper and mag. comment, giving a wide range of editorial opinion on her work and personality. See also M. A. De Wolfe Howe, *Causes and Their Champions* (1926); Don C. Seitz, *Uncommon Am.* (1925); Sherwood Eddy and Kirby Page, *Makers of Freedom* (1926); United States vs. Susan B. Anthony, in Blatchford, *Reports of Cases in the Circuit Court*, XI, 200-12. Elizabeth Cady Stanton, *Eighty Years and More* (1898), contains two chapters on Miss Anthony. With Mrs. Stanton and Mrs. Matilda Gage, Miss Anthony prepared a *Hist. of Woman Suffrage*. 3 vols. (1881-87), and in 1900, in conjunction with Mrs. Ida Husted Harper, she prepared a fourth vol., which closed the century.]

H. E. S.



Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 12 March 1996, p.1D:

Road to Equality for Women Came Through Owensboro

Susan B. Anthony visited city while crusading for equal rights for women

By Glenn Hodges, Messenger-Inquirer



Susan B. Anthony

During her crusade for equal rights for women, Susan B. Anthony came to Owensboro twice.

On her first visit to the city in 1879, she gave a "rousing lecture" in Hall's Opera House downtown at the northeast corner of St. Ann and Third streets.

Her speech was advertised under the "Amusements" section in the Owensboro Daily Messenger, and drew a "fair audience." The newspaper sized up Anthony as "a woman about 60

years of age, highly cultivated and a fine talker. She is as self-possessed as the average stump orator, never allowing herself to be the least disconcerted.

"Her diction is made up of the raw bone and sinew of the English language." Anthony's words hit home. "Before she closed she had nearly the entire audience ready to vote for the enfranchisement of her sex," the Daily Messenger reported.

Born into a Quaker family in 1820 at Adams, Mass., Anthony learned to read and write at the age of three and attended schools in New York State and Philadelphia. She became an activist in 1839 when she joined the temperance movement, and began devoting all of her time to the women's rights movement in 1851. She was an abolitionist during the Civil War.

Anthony worked hard to secure equal education opportunities, equal pay and property rights for women, and hardest of all to gain women's right to vote. Anthony founded the National Woman's Suffrage Association in 1869, and in 1868-1870 published the weekly journal, "The Revolution," demanding equal rights for women.

In 1872, Anthony voted in the presidential election, was arrested and fined \$100 for voting illegally. She never paid the fine, yet no other action was taken against her. In 1890, she helped organize the National American Woman Suffrage Association and served as its president from 1892-1900.

At age 75, Susan B. Anthony returned to Owensboro to speak again.

It was Jan. 14, 1895, and the circuit courtroom at the Daviess County courthouse was filled to hear Anthony and her colleague, Carrie Chapman Catt of Brooklyn.

Anthony and Catt were in town on a tour of the nation before attending the annual convention of the National American Woman Suffrage Association in Atlanta on Jan. 31.

The two women were introduced to the audience by Mrs. James McGinniss, president of the local temperance union.

A newspaper reporter gave Anthony credit for a "fine presence."

"She speaks right on, and is the product of the old time, while her companion Mrs. Catt has all the grace of the orator."

Though she appeared tired from her journey around the country, Anthony's direct approach succeeded in making her point. Summarizing the progress made by a few persistent women over the years, Anthony reminded her audience, "Our fathers established a white, male oligarchy founded on the aristocracy of wealth."

Anthony and Catt's visit drummed up local support for the national movement. Thirteen women who attended the speeches met at Mrs. McGinniss' home on Jan. 16 and a solid majority of them united under the name of the Political Equality Club of Owensboro.

The object of the club was "to secure to women the unrestricted exercise of all the rights of citizenship and equal constitutional rights with men, and equal protection of the law.

"All persons in favor of extending the ballot to women may become members of this club upon signing this constitution and paying a membership fee of not less than 50 cents."

The articles of the new club contained the signatures of Mrs. McGinniss, Mrs. Mary Shipp, Mrs. I.H. Axton, Miss Katherine Fuqua, Mrs. Mollie Davis, Mrs. James Haynes, Mrs. Dr. Harrison, Mrs. Laura Barnes, Miss Mattie Owen and Miss Ella Jewell.

The women then proposed sending a local representative to the national convention in Atlanta and scheduled a second meeting to elect officers. "Gentlemen sympathizing with the movement are earnestly requested to meet with the ladies on that occasion," they told the press.

The local club announced its intentions to invite other champions of the women's movement to visit Owensboro in the future, and to continue its effort to educate the public.

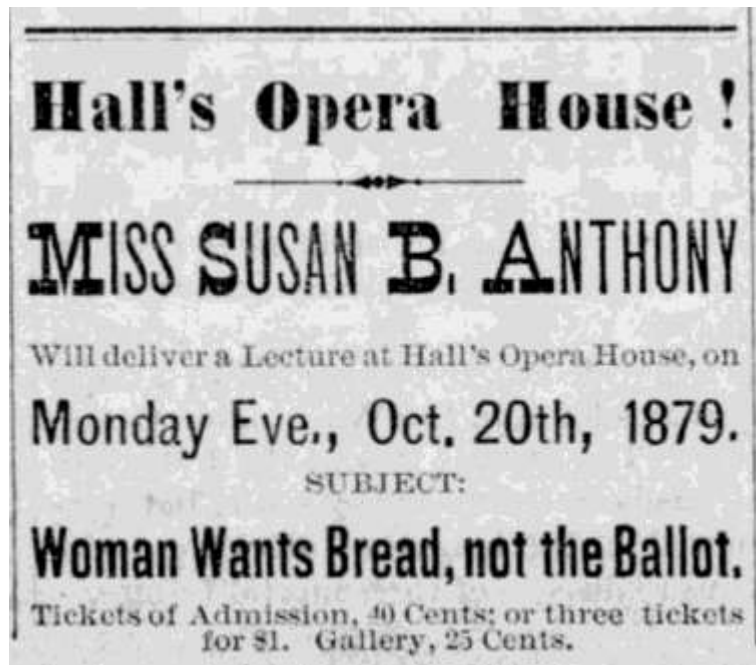
In her remaining years, Susan B. Anthony campaigned tirelessly for the women's suffrage and continued her lectures.

In 1904 Anthony and Catt established the International Woman Suffrage Alliance, and, at meetings in London and Berlin, Anthony was acclaimed worldwide for her pioneer contribution to women's rights.

Anthony died in 1906, 14 years before the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution became law and gave women the right to vote.



Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, 19 October 1879, p.1:



Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, 19 October 1879, p.4:

Miss Susan B. Anthony arrived in the city last night, and is registered at the Planter's House.



Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, 21 October 1879, p.4:

AMUSEMENTS.
HALL'S OPERA HOUSE.

Only a fair audience welcomed Miss Susan B. Anthony's first bow before an Owensboro audience last night. It was a cultivated and appreciative one, however, and just the kind to enter into the spirit of the occasion. Miss Anthony is a woman of about sixty years of age, highly cultivated and a fine talker. She is as self-possessed as the average stump orator, never allowing

herself to be the least disconcerted. Her diction is made up of the raw-bone and sinew of the English language, and every sentence is lucidly as well as forcibly expressed. A deal of quaint humor and poignant sarcasm was interspersed in the lecture, which only made it the more fresh and interesting. Her review of the two great political parties, which are now scrambling for the spoils of the Government, was full of historic interest, and betrayed a keen perception of what is right and just. Her reference to the emancipation of the negro was well put. But her advocacy of the heathen Chinese, who possesses none of the elements of progressiveness, is indeed out of the question. More especially is this true, when we consider that the prime object of the lecture is to secure the enfranchisement of the women, in order that they may occupy positions of trust and emolument, and at the same time graduate their wages by their political influence. Has it not been clearly demonstrated that if Chinese immigration is not interdicted it will eventually paralyze the labor system of the country? Why, Miss Anthony remarked herself last night that, while in San Francisco her "chamber-maid" was a Chinaman, simply because he made a better servant at low wages than any white woman that could be employed. If this be the case what would become of the women when the country was flooded with these heathens? But, Miss Anthony then went on to draw some very logical conclusions, and before she closed had nearly the entire audience ready to vote for the enfranchisement of her sex. Throughout the lecture was interesting and instructive, and those who heard Miss Anthony last night will always remember her as a faithful champion of "woman's rights."



Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, 3 January 1895, p.8:

MISS SUSAN B. ANTHONY.

She Will Lecture in Owensboro January 14 for the W. C. T. U.

The W. C. T. U. of Owensboro have secured the promise of Miss Susan B. Anthony, the noted female suffragist, to deliver a lecture in this city, Monday evening, January 14, at the court-house. Miss Anthony's fame is so extensive that the announcement of her appearance should be sufficient to draw a large audience. She will of course talk upon 'Suffrage.' It is probable that a reception will be given in honor of Miss Anthony at the Rudd house during her stay. She is en route South from Boston and will lecture in Louisville the night before she appears here.



Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, 15 January 1895, p.1:

SUFFRAGE FOR WOMEN.

Talks by Two Distinguished Advocates of Their Enfranchisement.

A Fine Audience Listens to Miss Susan B. Anthony and Mrs. Carrie L. Catt.
Reception Given the Visitors at the Rudd House Attended by a Representative Gathering.

PLEASANT IMPRESSIONS OF THEM.

The circuit court room was filled last night with as fine an audience as has greeted any speaker in Owensboro to hear Miss Susan B. Anthony and her colleague, Mrs. Carrie L. Chapman Catt, of Brooklyn.

Miss Anthony has a fine presence and "speaks right on," as she herself laughingly said. She is the product of the old time, while her companion, Mrs. Catt, has all the grace of the orator. Her voice is clear and resonant, and with a magnetic quality that took hold on her audience from the first sentence. Every point was appreciated, and the listeners were responsive to every thought on the part of the distinguished speakers. Mrs. James McGinniss, as president of the W. C. T. U., presided over the meeting, and introduced the speakers.



Susan B. Anthony

Miss Anthony began by saying that while the Declaration of Independence took the right ground that after all it had taken years of progress to bring the country up to that ideal. Our fathers established "a white, male oligarchy, founded on the aristocracy of wealth." In a rapid resume of the movement with which she has been identified, showing the progress made through the persistent effort of a few determined women. She stated that at first, Lucretia Mott, a Quaker minister, was the only woman accustomed to public speaking. For this reason, too, Quaker women were first heard on temperance and other public questions. The first woman's convention was at Rochester, N.Y., in 1852. In those days, if a woman failed of support on the part of a drunken husband, and worked at washing or whitewashing, and the employer paid her 50 cents for her day's labor, the vagabond husband could prosecute him, and recover the 50 cents. He could apprentice the children, and use the proceeds absolutely as he saw fit. The mother had no recourse.

She told how she first came to pledge her every effort to obtaining suffrage for woman. Three women, herself one of them, went over the state of New York, agitating against the abuses above named, and obtained 28,000 signatures to a petition to the general assembly, and a young lawyer from one of the rural districts, speaking against the petition, asked contemptuously: "Who are they that sign this? Who are the 28,000?" As he kicked the roll of the petition, he exclaimed, "Nobody but a pack of women and children." She said, "I saw in a flash why women's names didn't count in a petition. That insult stung me into pledging my life-work for suffrage for women."

She detailed how all along the line every concession to women, in admission to higher institutions of learning, to the practice of medicine, to the ministry, to the bar, and earlier, to the ordinary avocations of life, was a battle fought out by some pioneer woman. Resistance, said she, to this movement is the old story of Dame Partington with her broom and mop trying to sweep back the rising tide.

She said she had never known a successful strike on the part of women alone. She had watched this for thirty years. Why was it? Because they were a disfranchised class. She told how 5,000 women in Troy, N.Y., failed one year, with press and all against them, when the next year

200 brick layers won their strike, with the press outspoken for them. Why? Because 200 men held the balance of power. Everywhere a disfranchised class is a pauper class.

Many avenues are now open to women, formerly closed to them, but they were paid one-third to one-half of what men received for the same work. The ballot always levels up, it never levels down. She said she didn't like the way she was classed. All could vote now but unpardoned convicts, idiots, Indians not taxed, and women. She wanted to get out of that class, All in all, she made a plain, sensible, shrewd and taking argument.

Mrs. Chapman Catt said that intelligent men and women never asked but two question about woman suffrage: What is to be the effect upon woman herself, and upon the government, if woman is to vote, and then proceeded to answer from the history of female suffrage in Wyoming. She told how Wyoming got the ballot for women, and in a dramatic recital of Wyoming's stand for the ballot, when it looked as if it would cost the territory its statehood, she fairly brought down the house.

"Why is it?" she asked, "why is it, that when women want to do anything, they get out and beg the money, and when men want to do some similar thing, they go and get an appropriation? I'll tell you, it is because the men have a vote. The disfranchised classes are at a discount." Among other illustrations, she cited a case where women in Illinois had in vain asked for help from the legislature for an industrial school for girls for ten years, and then three men, who saw that it would be well to do the same thing for boys, went up and got an appropriation of \$300,000 at the first asking.

She showed how added responsibility would help women, and met the objection as to the fear of the influence of bad women on elections by saying the men would take care of the bad men, they (the women) would see to the bad women. She stated that conservative Kentucky had been the first, away back in 1832, to grant a limited suffrage to women.

On the whole, a fine impression was made by these able advocates for the cause they so ably represent, and their visit has been enjoyed by the people of Owensboro.

A representative gathering of Owensboro women called at the Rudd house yesterday afternoon to pay their respects to Miss Anthony and Mrs. Catt. Several gentlemen were also included in the party. Miss Anthony was suffering from the effects of a fatiguing journey and could not appear, but Mrs. Catt and the local committee very graciously received those who came. Mrs. Catt gave a very entertaining talk on the necessity for placing the ballot in the hands of women and answered several inquiries put to her on phases of the woman suffrage movement. She is a woman of prepossessing appearance and pleasing address, and made quite a favorable impression on those who met her. She said the question of woman's suffrage had been discussed but little in the South, but she had been very kindly received and believed the cause was receiving accessions every day. She and Miss Anthony are shaping their tour so as to attend the 27th annual convention of the National American Woman Suffrage association, which meets in Atlanta January 31. Miss Anthony is president of the association.



Owensboro Weekly Messenger, Owensboro, KY, 17 January 1895, p.8:

A Gift- From Miss Anthony.

Miss Susan B. Anthony presented a History of the Woman's Movement in America. in three large volumes, with some excellent pamphlets, to the library of the high school with her

compliments, and with her autograph inscribed in each volume. These will make an interesting addition to the library.



Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, 17 January 1895, p.1:

THEY WANT TO VOTE,
A Woman Suffrage Society Formed as a Result of Recant Lectures.

Thirteen Respond to the Call, but Only Ten Enrol Their Names as members.
Articles Setting Forth the Objects Adopted and a Delegate to Be Sent to Atlanta.

THE MEN ASKED TO PARTICIPATE.

In accordance with the announcement made in yesterday's Messenger, the women interested in the woman suffrage movement met at the residence of Mrs. James McGinniss yesterday afternoon at 3 o'clock. There were thirteen present, several of whom went through curiosity to know what would be said and done, but the majority were warm advocates of the cause, and the manner in which they handled the several questions that came before the meeting proved that some of them had given the subject much thought and were in solemn earnest. Mrs. Mary Shipp was made chairman, and after some discussion the following articles were adopted and signed by ten of the women present:

"Article I. We, the undersigned, citizens of the state of Kentucky, do hereby unite under the name of the Political Equality Club of Owensboro, Daviess county.

"Art. II. The object of this club is to secure to women the unrestricted exercise of all the rights of citizenship, and equal constitutional rights with men, and equal protection of the law.

"Art. III. All persona in favor of extending the ballot to women may become members of this club upon signing this constitution and paying a membership fee of not less than 50 cents."

These articles were signed by Mrs. Mary Shipp, Mrs. I. H. Axton, Miss Katherine Fuqua, Mrs. Mollie Davis, Mrs. James Hayes, Mrs. Dr. Harrison, Mrs. James McGinniss, Mrs. Laura Barnes, Miss Mattie Owen, Miss Ella Jewell.

It is proposed, if it can be done, to send a delegate to the National American Woman Suffrage convention, to be held in Atlanta from January 31 to February 5, the object of which is "to educate women into a knowledge of their rights and duties as citizens of a republic, and through them to arouse the nation to a sense of a national wrong, perpetuated by the disfranchisement of half of the people of the United States in opposition to the principles of government declared by our laws and constitution." Later it is the intention of the local club to invite other noted champions of this movement to visit Owensboro and attempt to educate the people up to an interest in it. A second meeting was called to meet with Mrs. McGinniss, on Saturday afternoon at 3 o'clock, when it is desired to have a larger gathering, and an election of officers. The gentlemen sympathizing with the movement are earnestly requested to meet with the ladies on that occasion.



Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, 20 January 1895, p.1:

OFFICERS ELECTED.
POLITICAL EQUALITY CLUB FORMALLY ORGANIZED.

More Resolutions Adopted Declaring the Belief of Those Who Would Have Women to Vote
Planning for Another lecture at an Early Day.

In compliance with the suggestion made at the last meeting, the Political Equality club, of this city, met yesterday afternoon at the residence of Mrs. James McGinniss to effect a more thorough organization. In addition to the original ten members there were several additions made to the membership. These additions were : Mrs. Sarah Heavrin, Mrs. Lulu Foor, Mrs. Sanford, Mrs. Shelby Hicks, Mrs. Eliza Kennedy, Mrs. Sue Phillips Brown, Miss C. H. Tyler, Messrs. James McGinniss, James H. Parrish and W. M. Fuqua.

After these names had been enrolled, the following officers were elected: President, Mrs. Mary Shipp; vice president, Miss Ella Jewell: corresponding secretary, Miss Katherine Fuqua: recording secretary, Mrs. James Hayes: treasurer, Mrs. Sarah Heavrin,

The next business was the reading and adoption of the following resolutions:

Resolved, That the possession and exercise of suffrage by the women in Wyoming and other states for the past quarter of a century has wrought no harm and has none great good in many ways; that it has largely aided in banishing crime, pauperism and vice from these states, and that without any violent or oppressive legislation: that it has secured peaceful and orderly elections, good government, and a remarkable degree of civilization and public order: and we point with pride to the facts that after nearly twenty-five years of woman suffrage not one county in Wyoming has a poor house, that its jails are almost empty, and crime, except when committed by strangers in the state, almost unknown; and we urge every civilized community on earth to enfranchise its women without delay.

Resolved, That an authenticated copy of these resolutions be printed and sent to the legislature of every state and territory in this country, and to every legislative body in the world; and that we request the press throughout the civilized world to call the attention of their readers to these resolutions. It was then decided to authorize the corresponding secretary to write to Miss Laura Clay, of Lexington, president of the state association, and ask her aid in procuring a lecturer who will speak here at an early day.

The members seem deeply interested in their work, and very enthusiastic as to their prospects for effecting reforms along this line.



Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 26 August 1995, p.9A, Editorial:

19th Amendment

Susan B. Anthony's own words remind
us of struggle we commemorate today

Editor's Note: Much ink and paper have been expended in the last few days commemorating the adoption of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution, and deservedly so. Rather than add our verbiage, we thought we would let one of the women who fought the fight have a turn. Susan B. Anthony gave a speech defending her right to vote in 1872. The following passages are excerpted from her comments.

The preamble of the federal Constitution says: "We, the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America."

It was we, the people; not we, the white male citizens; nor yet we, the male citizens; but we, the whole people, who formed the Union. And we formed it, not to give the blessings of liberty, but to secure them; not to the half of ourselves and the half of our posterity, but to the whole people, women as well as men. And it is a downright mockery to talk to women of their enjoyment of the blessings of liberty while they are denied the use of the only means of securing them provided by this democratic-republican government – the ballot.

For any state to make sex a qualification that must ever result in the disfranchisement of one entire half of the population is . . . a violation of the supreme law of the land. By it the blessings of liberty are forever withheld from women and their female posterity . . . To them this government is not a democracy. It is not a republic. It is an odious aristocracy; a hateful oligarchy of sex; the most hateful aristocracy ever established on the face of the globe . . . this oligarchy of sex, which makes father, brothers, husband, sons, the oligarchs over the mother and sisters, the wife and daughters, of every household – which ordains all men sovereigns, all women subjects, carries dissension, discord and rebellion into every home of the nation.

Webster, Worcester and Bouvier all define a citizen to be a person in the United States, entitled to vote and hold office.

The only question left to be settled now is: Are women persons? And I hardly believe any of our opponents will have the hardihood to say they are not. Being persons, then, women are citizens; and no state has a right to make any law, or to enforce any old law, that shall abridge their privileges or immunities. Hence, every discrimination against women in the constitutions and laws of the several states is today null and void, precisely as is every one against the Negro.

Despite Anthony's eloquence, American women did not win the Constitutional right to vote for another 50 years.



Mount Hope Cemetery, Rochester, New York



Susan B. Anthony dollar issued in 1979



3-cent stamp issued in 1936 and 50-cent stamp issued in 1955

