

>> Janet Clemens: Imagine you're asked to make a monument that defines a movement. How do you tell a story through sculpture when the debate is ongoing, the voices are many and the people involved don't always agree? Who would you choose?

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You're listening to Shaping History Women in Capitol Art produced by the Capitol Visitor's Center. Our mission is to inform, involve and inspire every visitor to the United States Capitol. I'm your host Janet Clemens. Susan B. Anthony, Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton are the three women whose faces emerge from the portrait monument sculpted by Adelaide Johnson and presented to the Capitol as a gift in 1921. The monument has been variously interpreted to represent the fractious nature surrounding the pursuit of women suffrage, the unfinished work of equality, the multitude of unheard voices or simply that historically these three stand unique and peerless. Whatever opinion the viewer may form we know that the men and women who participated were divergent and at sometimes divided by the different types of equality they were aiming to achieve. To help us unpack this complicated history, I visited our neighbors at the Belmont Paul Women's Equality National Monument and spoke to park guide, Susan Philpott. Susan, welcome to the podcast.

>> Susan Philpott: Thank you for having me.

>> Janet Clemens: Absolutely, and we're so close to the Capitol. I mean we just walked over here from the Capitol Visitor Center and it's like a 6-minute walk maybe. Let's talk about where we are. So, can you tell us a little bit about Belmont Paul?

>> Susan Philpott: Sure. So, for the last 90 years this has been the headquarters for the National Women's Party founded by Alice Paul. It began in 1916 and is still here. I often introduce this as the place for troublemakers because they are known especially for their work fighting for the passage and ratification of the 19th Amendment, although they continued to do work in the cause of women's equality and are still here. They don't cause that kind of trouble anymore though, they now are an educational nonprofit. So, nobody is getting arrested. Now they are caring for the collections that we see around us in the museum. I have to point out one of the quotes that's here on the wall from one of the National Women's Party members. It says it's not merely a headquarters for our party that we plan but an embassy for the women of the nation, a center of thought and activity and a vantage point from which they may keep Congress under perpetual observation. So, they were very deliberate about making sure they put themselves here on Capitol Hill right in the center of power and kind of calling the government to account to make sure it was keeping the issue of women at the forefront.

>> Janet Clemens: So, let's talk about where we are specifically because we're in proximity to a certain artwork. So, we are standing here in the Hall of Portraits which would have been the place that people entered the headquarters when Alice Paul herself was here. You would have entered from Constitution Avenue into this hallway that is adorned by many portraits and statues and we actually have four statues that are up on pedestals here in the hallway. The one we are standing next to is a bust by Adelaide Johnson of one of the

founding mothers of the American Women's Rights Movement, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and this would become one of the models for Adelaide Johnson's work that is in the Capitol the portrait monument. And it's a portrait bust right, so head and shoulders and it's on a pedestal that makes it almost of the height with us and it's maybe just a little bit bigger than life size it looks like to me. And Elizabeth Cady Stanton has kind of a drapery around her shoulders which look a bit like a shawl but also like classical drapery a little bit to fit the sort of neoclassical look, right. And she has got a very distinctive hairstyle. She has got these huge kinds of curls, sort of horizontally back from her face and then kind of a big curly bun sort of thing at the back.

>> Susan Philpott: And my understanding is that Elizabeth Cady Stanton and her daughter Harriett Stanton Blatch, who was a member of the National Women's Party, didn't particularly care for this depiction. They felt like her hair looked like a bunch of bananas.

>> Janet Clemens: I mean it doesn't look unlike a bunch of bananas, but I think they're pretty recognizable as curls. So, you mentioned the portrait monument which Adelaide Johnson crafted which is in the Capitol currently and this was also by her and I'm looking at the date on it and it's 1892. So, this is made for the 1893 World's Fair, right?

>> Susan Philpott: So, Adelaide Johnson made a set of busts that were at the 1893 Columbian World Exposition. She started out planning to sculpt Susan B. Anthony and then Susan B. Anthony suggested that she also needed to do Elizabeth Cady Stanton who also sat for the work and then they said well you can't have the story of women's rights without Lucretia Mott. Lucretia Mott by that point had passed away, so Adelaide Johnson was used to doing her sculptures from life but she was able to do Lucretia Mott from a photograph. So, there is a set that was at the Columbia Exposition. We believe that the ones we have are another set that she sculpted specifically for Alva Vanderbilt Belmont who was the primary benefactor of Alice Paul's work in the National Women's Party. She is the Belmont in the Belmont Paul.

>> Janet Clemens: Right, the Belmont in the Belmont Paul and actually, as we stand here she is directly opposite. There's a bust of her a little bit different, a little bit taller directly opposite.

>> Susan Philpott: Yes. Also sculpted by Adelaide Johnson. Yes, and you get a real sense of Alva's personality from the way Adelaide Johnson has depicted her in her bust. Not only is she elevated a little bit, but her drapery looks like it's kind of windswept. She has her shoulder bared and she really looks like the force of nature.

>> Janet Clemens: Yeah, there is that motion and life to this. It's interesting with a portrait monument that Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony be together with Lucretia Mott and you mentioned she had passed away. She is an earlier generation, right. I think the story of women's suffrage very much is the story of several successive generations. Can we go back sort of to the beginning or where can we say the beginning is?

>> Susan Philpot: Sure. So often one significant moment is not the beginning is the Seneca Falls Convention in July 1848 organized by Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott. Susan B. Anthony wouldn't join the movement for a few years after that. But it was bringing

together reform minded people who had been working on a lot of different causes but for this convention they were going to speak specifically about the issue of women's rights. And they drew up their mission statement, the declaration of sentiments modeled on the Declaration of Independence which boldly declared all men and women are created equal. Most of that document is a list of grievances. All the ways women were not treated equally, and it was a really long list in 1848, so they were talking about a number of different things, women's position politically, socially, economically. So groundbreaking things that all these reformers are on board with. But the one that got everybody a little stirred up was when Elizabeth Cady Stanton proposed the resolution that it is the duty of the women of this country to secure to themselves their sacred right to the elective franchise. To be enfranchised is to have the right to vote and another word for that is suffrage and that was considered even by these reformers to be going too far. Now you're getting ridiculous when you talk about women voting.

>> Janet Clemens: And I think that's something that people don't necessarily realize about the Suffrage Movement is that when they sat down at Seneca Falls they have this list of things and like you said social, economic and political. And the idea of getting the vote was sort of like you said the only bit that was controversial even for these reformed minded people, but they were sort of on board with the rest, right?

>> Susan Philpott: And Frederick Douglas, as far as we know, the only African American at that original women's right convention.

>> Janet Clemens: Yeah there's a couple of men there. We don't want to forget them.

>> Susan Philpott: Yes. A number of men who are supporters of women's right. Frederick Douglas asked to be heard and stands up and gives us a eloquent speech where he basically says if you want the other things on the list you have to include the vote and he sways the crowd and that resolution is passed.

>> Janet Clemens: Yeah, their viewing the vote as a tool to achieve the other aims because there are so many of these aims that they are trying to get at. We said they were foreminded, but I do want to emphasize the point that abolitionist is a huge part of this going into this. I mean Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott met at the World's Anti-Slavery Conference in 1840 and that's where sort of this seed all of Seneca Falls is kind of planted, right.

>> Susan Philpott: Yes, and so as I say we mark that as a significant moment but not the beginning. Lucretia Mott founding the Women's Anti-Slavery Society is an important moment in the cause for women's rights. She travels to that World's Anti-Slavery Conference as a delegate knowing that they don't want to seat women. And so, she is there knowing she's challenging them and as expected they do not want her to participate as a delegate. Elizabeth Cady Stanton is there as a young bride on her honeymoon. Her husband, her new husband, was an abolitionist. So, she did not know this was going to happen and was absolutely shocked at what happened and spent the convention in the company of Lucretia Mott and sort of learning at her side, although it wouldn't be until 8 years later that they decide to organize that women's right convention.

>> Janet Clemens: So, you mentioned that in 1848 Seneca Falls is an important moment in the beginning but that the movement is way before that, right. And I've noticed on the timeline that the park service has that you guys started in the 1600s somewhere.

>> Susan Philpott: Before this was a nation there was a woman, Margaret Brent, in Maryland, the Colony of Maryland, who because she owned property she believed she ought to have a vote and be council, so we sometimes mark her as the very first woman suffragist.

>> Janet Clemens: Wow. So, we're talking about 1848, the beginning of Seneca Falls and then what happens from there? What's the next moment?

>> Susan Philpott: So, the movement for women's rights involves working on lots of things on the list. It's really after the Civil War when these women who have been united in both the cause of ending slavery and fighting for women's right that they see a split in the movement when the question becomes well who's rights are we fighting for. There's a significant moment in Kansas in 1867 where they believe that Kansas is going to be the first place where both black men and all women will be enfranchised and both valid initiatives fail. And that is really the moment that the decision is made among these reformers that we're going to have to fight for one thing at a time and that the first thing on the agenda is the enfranchisement of African American men. And for many women in the movement including Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony this feels like a betrayal. So, they decide that they are not going to work for the enfranchisement of black men. They are not going to support a new amendment to the Constitution, what becomes the fifteenth Amendment in 1870 that says that the right to vote cannot be denied or abridged based on race, color or previous condition of servitude. And when they can't get the word sex in there, they decide not to support it at all. This causes not only a split in the movement but a lot of bitter, angry, racist, ugly language from people like Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony. And so, we have the movement splitting into two, those who are fighting specifically only for the right of women to vote and those who believe that any expansion of the franchise is a march towards equality. In 1890, as those original founders, those original workers for women's rights are getting older, the next generation wants to see that split mended. And so, the groups come back together in 1890 and form the rather awkwardly names National American Women's Suffrage Association, NAWSA or NAWSA for short. This is kind of the next generation of suffrages coming together, Alva Belmont, is one of those but eventually she starts to feel as if those who've taken up the work are a little too concerned with being respectable and gracious as if women could win the vote by proving that they are outstanding moral citizens and that's the way they're going to get what they're looking for. Alva thinks that's not going to work. We need someone who is going to shake things up a little bit.

>> Janet Clemens: And she did it.

>> Susan Philpott: So, earlier they had a disagreement about aim and now they have a disagreement about tactic essentially, yes. So Alva Belmont uses her extensive wealth in addition to being the wife of Oliver Hazard Perry Belmont, the family of the Belmont Stakes, a wealthy family. Before that she had been married to William K. Vanderbilt, so married

into one of the richest families in the country. So, she had a fortune several times over at her disposal and also the privilege that comes with it, that she interacts with influential people, that the society pages follow her around to bring attention to the cause of women's suffrage and she decides to use her influence to support a young woman who she sees as a kindred spirit and that's Alice Paul. And Alva becomes the primary benefactor of all of Alice Paul's work. And so, it's that work that we highlight in the exhibits in this museum and although you don't see Alva's picture often in the picketing or the marching, it's Alva's money usually that's making it happen. You don't just need courage, you need the cash too.

>> Janet Clemens: Well she was busy. I'm sure she had social obligations too and I have been to a couple of, and worked at actually, a couple of historic sites associated with her and we always have the votes for women china tea set in the gift shop.

>> Susan Philpott: Yes, so if you sat down to tea with her you had a cup and saucer that were vote for women, so you would get the message even if she never said anything.

>> Janet Clemens: That's a tactic in it of itself, right. Okay, so now we've got Alice Paul on the scene and we have this disagreement over tactics. So, we have another split?

>> Susan Philpott: Yeah, so Alice Paul gets involved in the cause for women's right to vote not here in the United States, not at the feet of Susan B. Anthony as many of the leaders of NAWSA have been, she gets involved when she is going to graduate school in England attending the London School of Economics and she encounters the militant suffragettes lead by Emmeline Pankhurst and her daughters. Now here in the United States women who fought for the vote preferred to be called suffragist. They felt that suffragette was kind of demeaning and belittling them.

>> Janet Clemens: Because of the diminutive, the ette at the end.

>> Susan Philpott: But in England the Pankhurst embraced that term. And like Susan B. Anthony they could give fiery speeches, but they didn't think anything was going to change by talking about it. If you want change, you got to cause trouble. So, they would have big demonstrations that would shut down things in the city. They'd break into places where women weren't allowed, heckle and interrupt politicians. They're slogan was deeds not words. Some of those deed involved property destruction like throwing rocks and breaking windows. Later they even started setting buildings on fire. So, Alice Paul and other young Americans who were there in Europe join in these demonstrations and like the British women they get arrested and they go to jail which is not something they were ashamed of. They were not interested in being respectable. They wore their prison time as a badge of honor and would wear even pins or metals with a jail door on them to indicate that they had served their time.

>> Janet Clemens: Yeah, they considered themselves political prisoners.

>> Susan Philpott: Yes.

>> Janet Clemens: And then what happens then in the United States?

>> Susan Philpott: So, when Alice Paul returns to the United States in 1910, she arrives to discover she's kind of a celebrity, that the press here has been paying attention to this crazy American girl and all her antics. So, when her ship arrives at the dock in Philadelphia there's a gaggle of reporters there to meet her and they say Ms. Paul are you going to join the American Women's Suffrage Movement and her response was that she didn't know there was an American Women's Suffrage Movement much probably to the consternation of all the American Women Suffrages. There wasn't anything here that looked like what she had seen in Britain but, of course, there was an extensive women's suffrage movement. By this point, NAWSA had annual conventions. They had chapters and affiliate organizations also around the country. They were working to win women the vote at the state level because it's actually states who decide who is eligible to vote. And they had had some success. There were four states where women could vote on the same terms as men, Wyoming, Utah, Idaho and Colorado and in 1910 another state gets added, Washington State and that sort of begins more states enfranchising women. In other states women might be able to volunteer for school board or for some local municipal positions but Alice Paul really didn't have patience for this incremental progress. She had seen such energy and passion in Britain, she wanted to bring those kinds of tactics here after she finished her Ph.D. So, then she jumped into the Women's Suffrage Movement here in the United States in 1912 and she convinces the NAWSA leadership that what they need to do is hold a women's march down Pennsylvania Avenue on the day before Woodrow Wilson's Presidential Inauguration 03/03/1913.

>> Janet Clemens: Wow, yeah, I was hoping we would get to that soon.

>> Susan Philpott: That's kind of her first big foray into the American Women's Suffrage.

>> Janet Clemens: And it's a huge event. I mean unprecedented.

>> Susan Philpott: So, she is the first one to use Pennsylvania Avenue as a route of protest. So, if anybody has ever marched down Pennsylvania Avenue for their cause you're doing it in Alice Paul's footsteps. She is making an argument right there along the inaugural route to say that women have been left out of this whole process and should not be and here we're going to make an argument right here on the streets of the city of why we should be included. And she gets thousands of women from around the country to all come to represent their states or their professions because more and more professions are opening up to women. Women are earning money. They represent their universities because there are more and more opportunities for women to get educated and men march to. There's a Men's League For Women Suffrage, some very prominent men who face a lot of ridicule for standing up and being allies of the Women's Suffrage Movement. So, as we stand in this hallway of portraits there are lots of paintings and photographs all around us and I have been told that when people came in here to visit, Alice Paul would often point at portraits like this and say do you know who these women are. If you are looking around, I would guess that very few of these faces would be familiar to you. If I told you their names you wouldn't know who they are. They're a reminder to me that while there are often a few leaders that come to the top and get their names in the history books the work of change involves lots and lots of people most of whom names are lost to history. So, that's the one thing I would say. The other thing I would say is that Alice Paul like many white women

suffragists was often willing to push African American woman to the side. As Alice Paul is putting out the call to bring women to Washington DC there's women right here in Washington DC who show up in Alice Paul's office ready to sign up. Mary Church Terrell who is the President of the National Association of Colored Women comes to say there's a group of sorority women from Howard University, Delta Sigma Theta and we are ready to march. And Alice Paul is not welcoming. She says well I don't think that's the story I wanted to tell there along Pennsylvania Avenue. I don't really want to bring the race issue into things. We don't want to upset anybody. I don't think you should march. If you go to the National Archive Women's Suffrage Exhibit you will find that they uncovered a telegram from the NAWSA leadership to Alice Paul saying we hear that you are trying to exclude black women from the women's suffrage procession knock it off basically.

>> Janet Clemens: Wow.

>> Susan Philpott: And sometimes in the history it will say that black women marched, but in the back.

>> Janet Clemens: Right.

>> Susan Philpott: I feel pretty confident that Alice Paul wanted them to but I don't think they did because we have numerous sources including the NAACP's magazine, The Crisis, that places African American women marching where they believe they belonged, the Delta's marching with the university women, other women marching with their states or their professions. The most famous story is Ida B. Wells who by 1913 was living in Chicago and so she came with the Illinois delegation. She had started the Alpha Suffrage Club already and was among the many things she worked on. One of them was the cause of women's suffrage and as their lining up there by the Peace statue the word sort of comes down oh sorry Ida we're hearing you can't march with us, that you're supposed to go to the back. And Ida B. Wells gets upset and storms off. They don't know what's happened to her. They think maybe she's left but she hasn't. She and two white allies are waiting along the parade route so when the Illinois Delegation pass, they stepped right in front. We're not going to the back we're leading the delegation. We have a little panel about Ida B. Wells here in the museum written by one of our Civil Rights interns and his first statement is you can't spell formidable without Ida.

>> Janet Clemens: She definitely was. So, it routes to Pennsylvania Avenue where does it go to? Where does it start? Where does it end?

>> Susan Philpott: So, it starts by line up out here by the Capitol in front of the Peace statue and the plan is to travel the entire route of Pennsylvania Avenue which is the inaugural route and to end at the White House and their using kind of the stands that have been set up for the inauguration the next day and to hold a large pageant on the steps of the Treasury Building demonstrating the accomplishments of women. That is the plan anyway. It doesn't quite work out the way they were intending.

>> Janet Clemens: Yes, so stands along the parade route there to accommodate cheering crowds ending up with, I would say, jeering crowds.

>> Susan Philpott: So, there were about a quarter million people who came out to see this procession, so it was huge crowds. You know a lot of people in the city for the inauguration and some, you know, supporting women's suffrage or enjoying the pageantry but others are booing and cat calling and yelling out ugly vile insults at the women. You can kind of imagine the sort of things their hearing as their marching. And then the crowds start to come off the sidewalk and into the street. Now there are more police there than there will be the next day for the inauguration actually, but they decide they either can't or won't control the crowds. One says to a woman you know if you'd stayed home you wouldn't have had this trouble. And so, women are getting manhandled and grabbed. Some were spit on. Others tripped and as more and more crowds come in people are getting pulled down off of floats and they're being trampled. One hundred people have to go to the hospital. But they are not deterred by this attack. It takes the calvary coming over from Arlington to finally control the crowds and clear the route but once they do the marchers come back to Pennsylvania Avenue and finish about an hour and a half later than they thought with that planned pageant on the steps of the Treasury Building. And those were big in that time period, these tableaux these sort of living scenes and people in costume and posing. So, I often say they didn't have YouTube or TikTok they made their arguments with these kinds of tableaux or pageants where they're demonstrating the accomplishments and the virtues of women. And it's a form of entertainment that people are familiar with and it's an iconography people are familiar with, the observers are going to know based on what someone's wearing or what they're holding or what they're meant to represent.

>> Janet Clemens: Exactly.

>> Susan Philpott: In the way that we might not looking at the photos now.

>> Janet Clemens: Oh, speaking of the parade, like directly over your shoulder there's a gorgeous painting here on the wall. It's quite big I would say and there's gorgeous gold leaf on it, really strong blue and white and gold colors, almost a purple blue right because of that purple, white and gold are the colors.

>> Susan Philpott:: I think it was meant to be purple.

>> Janet Clemens: Yeah.

>> Susan Philpott: Or violet which will become eventually Alice Paul and the National Women's Party's trademark colors, white for the purity of their purpose, gold for victory moving into the light of justice and violet for courage and nobility of their cause or if you say it gold, white and violet, GWV is give women the vote.

>> Janet Clemens: So, who is this?

>> Susan Philpott: So, this is a painting of Inez Milholland as she appeared leaving the 1913 Women's Suffrage procession. She is on a white horse and all in white and she has upon her head a crown with a gold star on the top, the star of hope which would eventually become the inspiration for Wonder Woman's tiara. The creator of Wonder Woman is one of those members of the Men's League For Women's Suffrage. So, Inez Milholland was one of his models among many for Wonder Woman. And Alice Paul chooses Inez Milholland to lead



the procession. She is well known as first women admitted to the New York bar, an activist for many different causes including the NAACP, a dynamic speaker but that is not why everyone knows her. They know her because she is movie star attractive. She is known as the most beautiful suffragist. So, Alice Paul puts her out front as the herald of the future to say this is the new generation of suffrages, this is the new woman of the twentieth century, this is what a feminist looks like. They did call themselves feminist. So, that is part of the story that Alice Paul is telling there on Pennsylvania Avenue.

>> Janet Clemens: Brand it, you've got the color scheme. You've got the gorgeous spokes model, so they got the attention they wanted, right?

>> Susan Philpott: Right. So, the next day the newspapers all around the country not really talking about Woodrow Wilson's inauguration, they're all talking about the women's suffrage procession and then here are hearing in Congress. So, the story keeps going. They're staying in the news cycle. They've got everybody's attention, and this is one of the things that really reenergizes the women's suffrage movement in the United States and particularly a new tactic. One of the floats, the first float everybody sees in this parade is emblazoned with the words of what become known as the Great Demand. We demand an amendment to the Constitution of the United States enfranchising the women of this country. So, she is declaring forget about one state at a time, little by little, we want to change the US Constitution to ensure the vote for every woman and she chose that language deliberately when she said we demand. Respectable women are not supposed to demand things. She is trying to stir people up and it works.

>> Janet Clemens: And demand rather than request, I mean this is.

>> Susan Philpott: We're not petitioning. We're not requesting. We're not asking. We're demanding.

>> Janet Clemens: Yeah. This is an inherent right. Now what does Alice Paul do next to bring this right to the front pages?

>> Susan Philpott: So, fairly quickly Alice Paul has kind of a falling out with the NAWSA leadership. They think she hasn't paid her dues and she is a little too, doesn't really know her place and what was she doing over there in England anyway. So, she breaks away from NAWSA and forms an organization that is first called the Congressional Union for Women's Suffrage and eventually changes their name to the National Women's Party. They are always a very small part of the women's suffrage movement. NAWSA is much larger and doing a lot of work, winning women the vote one state at a time actually, it's working. Of course, you don't get an amendment to the Constitution through one parade. It takes a lot of work and most of it is the work that doesn't get you headlines, lobbying and petitioning and phone calls and letter writing. They try in 1916 to get Woodrow Wilson thrown out of office. They have sort of held Woodrow Wilson accountable as the President and leader of the country to get this amendment through and Woodrow Wilson was now an ally. He said I'm very busy. This is not a priority for me. Don't you know there's a war going on in Europe and by the way voting is a states rights issue. If you want to vote go back to your states and ask. You can afford to wait. So, when they can't get him defeated in the 1916 election to decide to take the matter right to Woodrow Wilson's doorstep and that's when

they begin to picket the White House. So, they are the first ones to protect there too. So, if you have protested in Lafayette Square or seen anybody out there well the National Women's Party started it. They showed up in January when it was really cold, took up positions at the White House gates and stood there all day long without saying anything. There were known as the silent sentinels. They just held big banners with block lettering on it. Anybody walking by or taking a photo could read very clearly and they often took Woodrow Wilson's words about democracy and liberty and turned them around on him. Mr. President you say liberty is the fundamental demand of the human spirit, Mr. President how long mucosa women wait for liberty and it's a case of divided loyalty's as there was during the Civil War, right. There were women who, and I think Elizabeth Cady Stanton wrote about feeling that she had to put energy behind the war effort and kind of back off from the cause a little bit and so Alice Paul and others are facing tremendous criticism for the act of criticizing the President while a war is going on. So, they're criticized even before the US enters WWI because, you know, respectable women don't stand on street corners, you're making a mockery of the cause.

>> Janet Clemens: Troublemaking.

>> Susan Philpott: You also look ridiculous but then when the US enters WWI now that really starts to get problematic. You know, who do these women think they are protesting a President during wartime, isn't that treasonous maybe. Now Paul's response is when men are denied justice they go to war, this is our war only we're fighting it with banners instead of guns. And so, when they decide to continue picketing and kind of ratchet up the rhetoric on the banners, crowds start to gather and attack the women. Throw things at them. Scream at them. Rip their banners down which means the police have to break up violence in front of the White House during a war and so they say that's it Alice Paul you are causing too much trouble, no more picketing. You ladies show up here again and we're going to arrest you. Alice Paul's response was it wasn't illegal in January when we started, it's not illegal now. We have a right. We are not stopping. So, when they continued to picket, they knew they were subject to arrest and as promised they were arrested.

>> Janet Clemens: Yes, that's when the arrest start, right?

>> Susan Philpott: So, the charge eventually is obstructing traffic or failure to move on for standing on the sidewalk.

>> Janet Clemens: Like loitering, failure to move on.

>> Susan Philpott: And the first group of women convicted are just fined \$25 but because they refused to pay the fine the judge sends them to jail for three days which is kind of shocking but women keep coming and keep getting arrested and there sentences for not paying the fines start to get longer and they start getting sent not to the DC jail but to the women's prison, the Occoquan Workhouse thinking surely these women will stop and they don't. I met one woman here who told me the story of her grandmother, Betty Graham, and her great aunt who were living in New York and saw an add in the paper that said come and picket you will be arrested, they were.

>> Janet Clemens: We promise you'll be arrested. Come on down and see. So, there in the Occoquan Workhouse and their treatment is not ideal.

>> Susan Philpott: The prison is, as all prisons are, horrific, dangerous, rat infested and it's a workhouse. They're put to heavy labor. They're cut off from their families and their lawyers. And then Alice Paul heads out on the picket line and when she is arrested the officials tried to commit her to the insane asylum which is even worse than the prison. This woman must be crazy that she won't give this up. Fortunately, for Alice Paul the doctor won't go along with it. He said she's perfectly sane she just wants to vote. But through all of this they began to claim you're not locking us up for what we're doing. We're not obstructing traffic. You don't like what we're saying. That makes us political prisoners. So, here are the Geneva Conventions governing the treatment of political prisoners. We want to wear our own clothes and we want better food and we're not going to work, and you can imagine how the officials responded to these demands.

>> Janet Clemens: Demands again, we demand that we be treated as political prisoners.

>> Susan Philpott: And there was one night where the women were beaten all night long, called The Night of Terror. But they began to protest their conditions through hunger strikes just like women in Britain had done that were attacked that Alice Paul learned from Britain. But they know how to keep people talking and get the message out and they have. People like Alva Belmont on the outside giving interviews. Also, the husbands and fathers of many of these women are prominent, citizens who can also speak to what's happening. They're getting a lot of publicity. They've got friendly guards giving testimony about what's happening to them and there's this kind of public outcry about the brutalization these women are facing. And so, the officials back down and release all the women by the end of November of 1917 just in time for them to get home and cook Thanksgiving dinner and they don't stop protesting. And now they have another story to tell. They go around the country wearing prison garb which was considered very transgressive to be outside in public as a respectable woman looking like a prisoner and they would give testimony about what had happened to them and say, you know, do you see this is why women need the vote right now. This is how your own country can treat you when you don't have a force. So, now we're in 1917, so we're almost there. By 1918 Woodrow Wilson starts to let it be known that as a matter of fact he does support an amendment to the Constitution enfranchising the women of this country but not, he makes it clear, because of troublemakers like these. It's because he wants to reward the women of the nation who have so faithfully supported the war effort on the home front. It is certainly true that the war made it clear how important women contribution to society was and sort of highlighted how unfair it was to expect women to participate in their civic community while not having a voice in their politics. Whatever the reason for Woodrow Wilson's change of heart, it turns out that Alice Paul's tactic of targeting the President was the right one that his support is the thing that starts to get things moving through Congress. That and that a woman has been elected to Congress.

>> Janet Clemens: Jeanette Rankin, I was just thinking about her.

>> Susan Philpott: So, Jeanette Rankin representing Montana which she had sort of singlehandedly won women to vote in Montana and then they elected her to Congress. She is on the inside able to get this amendment moving through committee and out onto the floor of the House. It is not until the Democrats lose mid-term election at the end of 1918 that it finally passes through the Senate in 06/04/1919 but they have one the first hurdle of getting that amendment through Congress by June of 1919.

>> Janet Clemens: In 1919 but we're celebrating the centennial of the amendment this year 2020, right, because it's not until 1920 that every state gets on board.

>> Susan Philpott: Right so to amend the Constitution is a big job. Not only do you have to pass it with the 2/3 of the majority of both Houses of Congress but you have to get 3/4 of the states to approve it or ratify it. There are 48 states in 1919 which means they need 36 for full ratification. By that point, 28 states had some form of women's suffrage because NAWSA was continuing to fight for women's vote at the state level. They're big victory was in 1917 when women in New York won the vote. So, by the time this amendment is going out to the states there are lots of places that support women's suffrage. What had seemed so crazy when Elizabeth Cady Stanton had first proposed it had become much more common place. And it turned out that whatever the anti-suffrages say, when women vote society does not, in fact, collapse. But all those fighting for women's right to vote believed they had to get this amendment ratified before the 11/1920 election because after that election there will be a new President and maybe they're going to have to start all over again. They will lose momentum which is a really short window. It means that in most states the Governor has to call a special session of the legislature together to vote but they are getting it done one state after another. By 03/1920 Washington State becomes the 35th state to ratify which means they only need one more but by that point already five states had voted no and in the coming months three more states had voted no, so they are running out of time and running out of states when it comes up for a vote in Tennessee in August of 1920. Everybody thinks this is our last chance. No other states are going to vote before the November 1920 election. So, all eyes are on Nashville. The Tennessee State Senate votes to ratify the amendment, it goes to the Tennessee State House, they all vote and it's a tie 48 to 48. Ugh, are you kidding me? All this time, all this work, it's come down to getting one guy to change his vote. So, both sides are down, their lobbying trying to hold on to their supporters and sway one more person over. There is by this point a very concerted and organized anti-suffrage movement.

>> Janet Clemens: Is this where the roses come in?

>> Susan Philpott: Yes. So, each side is handing out roses to their supporters. So when men in the Tennessee State House all gather again to take another vote, they all have a rose pinned to their lapel. If it's a yellow rose he is a suff he's going to vote yes but if it's a red rose, he's an anti, he's going to vote no. And if you were standing there is the chamber counting up roses you would say it's going to be another tie. Nobody has changed their vote. Harry Burn, the youngest guy there, only 24 is wearing the red rose of an anti but he also has a letter in his pocket that was delivered to him that morning. So, a long letter but part of it reads hurrah and vote for suffrage and don't keep them in doubt and it's signed don't forget to be a good boy. Lots of love Mama. Harry Burn changed his vote. That was the

one vote that made the difference. Tennessee became the 36th state to ratify the amendment 72 years after the Seneca Falls Convention. The women of this country have secured to themselves their sacred right to the elected franchise.

[ Music ]

>> When the portrait monument arrived in 1921 it wasn't the first time women were featured in the art of the Capitol. The statue of Frances Willard by Helen Fransworth Mears had been given by the State of Illinois in 1905. Similarly, the 19th amendment wasn't the beginning or the end of the story of women in Congress. In our next episode we'll explore more than a century of women at the Capitol. Thank you for listening to Shaping History Women in Capitol Art. For more information or to book a tour please go to [visitthecapitol.gov](http://visitthecapitol.gov). The interviews included in his podcast represent the personal reflections and opinions of the interviewees and should not be considered as the official views or opinions of the US Capitol Visitor Center, The Architect of the Capitol or members of Congress.