

Little Known Women's Rights Advocates—Bennington and Beyond

Mary (Mrs. John) Spargo—In 1909, Mary Spargo came to Bennington with her husband, John, who founded the Bennington Museum. In an attempt to convince Percival Clement to call a special session to consider the Nineteenth Amendment, Mary organized the March of Four Hundred Women on April 21, 1920, to the Vermont State House. Read more about Mary Spargo: <https://documents.alexanderstreet.com/d/1010113811>
Read about John Spargo: <https://benningtonmuseum.org/library/walloomsack/volume-15/john-spargo-socialist-founder-of-the-bennington-museum.pdf>

Anna Hawk Putnam—Anna Putnam was a child labor reformer as well as a leader of the Fortnightly Club, a women's club in Bennington. Also involved in the suffrage movement, Putnam wrote that despite the "pernicious" maneuverings of some anti-suffragists in the legislature, a great deal of progress was being made in Vermont.
<https://www.documents.alexanderstreet.com/d/1010596407>

Annette W. Parmalee—Because of persistent arguing the cause of women's suffrage, Annette was called the "Suffragette Hornet." Born Annette Watson in the village of Washington in 1865, she married Edward Parmalee and moved to Enosburg Falls, Vermont. Although she was originally drawn to the temperance crusade, in 1907, she joined the Vermont Equal Suffrage Association and began lobbying the legislature to give women the vote.
<https://documents.alexanderstreet.com/d/1009639910>

Emma Willard—Willard was a strong supporter of women's right to a quality education, but not a supporter of women's suffrage. When she was just 20 years old, she was asked to set up a school for women in Middlebury, Vermont. When Susan B. Anthony, one of her star pupils, asked for her support, she declined. She did not want to jeopardize women's access to a higher education by connecting her school with a hot-button issue like suffrage.
<https://www.emmawillard.org/about-emma-hart-willard>

Lucy Terry Prince—Lucy Terry married Obijah Prince, a freed slave who was granted a parcel of land in Guildford, Vermont. When her husband's claim to the land was challenged, Lucy went to the United States Supreme Court to argue the case; she also traveled to Williams College to argue that her son should be admitted to college, in spite of its policy of not admitting blacks. Unfortunately, she was not successful in her effort. Lucy wrote a poem called the "Bars Fight," about the Deerfield, Massachusetts Indian massacre. Read More about Lucy Terry Prince: <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part2/2p15.html>

Naomi Douglas—Douglas was a farm wife from Shoreham, Vermont, who found her voice as a temperance advocate. Though not involved in the suffrage movement as such, her temperance speeches encouraged political reform. Read more about Naomi Douglas: <https://vtdigger.org/2019/12/29/then-again-farmwives-found-political-voice-through-temperance-movement/>

