

VALIANT MARYLAND WOMEN: THE FIGHT FOR SUFFRAGE

Lucy Fisher Gwynne Branham (Dates Unverified) Montgomery County

The early death of her physician husband left Branham with two infant children and not much money. She was the mother of Miss Lucy Branham, also a suffrage advocate. Like her daughter, she was arrested for the "Watch Fire" demonstrations held by the National Woman's Party (NWP) in January 1919 in Washington D.C. She served three days in the district jail. Branham and her daughter were chosen as Maryland delegates to the NWP convention. Late in her life, mother and daughter lived at the Sewall-Belmont House (NWP headquarters) in D.C.



Sarah B. Thomas Miller 1841-1924 Montgomery County

Miller grew up and lived in the Quaker farming community of Sandy Spring. In 1889, she was one of 13 community members who formed the Maryland Woman Suffrage Association (MWSA), and was the first Maryland delegate to a national suffrage convention later that year. MWSA merged with the Baltimore Woman's Suffrage Association in 1894 to better coordinate with the national campaign. Her eldest daughter, Rebecca, was also an active member of MWSA. They regularly attended conventions together from the early 20th century through 1920.



Caroline Hallowell Miller 1831-1905 Montgomery County

Maryland suffrage activity was suppressed for nearly two decades until 1889 when Caroline Miller, a Quaker and educator, revived it and launched the Sandy Spring Woman's Suffrage Association (SSWSA). She served as its president. Miller coordinated with the National American Woman Suffrage Association, sending delegates to national suffrage conventions on Maryland's behalf. In 1892 Miller merged the SSWSA with the Baltimore City Suffrage Club, creating the stronger and larger Maryland Woman Suffrage Association. The MWSA held annual conventions featuring speakers such as Carrie Chapman Catt.

Rebecca Thomas Miller 1864-1949 Montgomery County

Miller was related to two of the founders of the Maryland Woman's Suffrage Association (MWSA): Sarah T. (her mother) and Caroline H. (a relative). She held several leadership positions within MWSA, including vice-president in 1895. She also served on the executive committee of NAWSA and contributed to publications such as the *Suffragist*, the *New Voter*, and *Progress*. Miller never married. She was active in her Sandy Spring community and well-traveled. She toured the U.S., Europe, Africa and Bermuda with Sandy Spring resident, Ellen Farquhar.

Lavinia Margaret Engle 1892-1979 Montgomery County

Engle was an Antioch College graduate, World War I volunteer, and National American Woman Suffrage Association field secretary. She founded the Montgomery County League of Women Voters and, in 1929, became the first Montgomery County woman elected to the Maryland House of Delegates. She was also the first woman to serve on the Montgomery County Board of Commissioners. She advised Governor Albert C. Ritchie, suggesting women for government seats, and was appointed by President Franklin D. Roosevelt to the Social Security Board.



Madeleine Lemoyne Ellicott 1856-1945 Howard County

Ellicott studied chemistry at Rush Medical School and spent a year at the polytechnic in Switzerland before marrying into the founding family of Ellicott City, Maryland. As vice president of the State Franchise League in 1917, she wrote about the federal suffrage amendment: "It will be mortifying if Maryland fails to do her duty towards this final drive." As founder and twenty-year president of the Maryland League of Women Voters, her vision was to bring together women of both parties to pursue goals set by women, not for them.



Mary Melvin 1889-1951 Howard County

Melvin of Ellicott City was an honor student and suffragist at the Women's College of Baltimore (now Goucher College). She was blind, and impressed classmates with her zeal and academic achievement. While a student, she gave open-air speeches in Baltimore and collected signatures on a petition at the 1911 Maryland State Fair with her sister, Anne Delia (1886-1939), a Goucher alumna. Anne Delia worked for the Equal Suffrage League and the Just Government League in Baltimore. Mary marched in the 1913 Woman Suffrage Procession in Washington, D.C.



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