

# VALIANT MARYLAND WOMEN: THE FIGHT FOR SUFFRAGE

## Harriet Ross Tubman 1822-1913 Dorchester County

Born in Maryland, Tubman escaped enslavement in 1849 and worked in Philadelphia as a domestic. Earning the name "Moses," she orchestrated 13 rescue missions back into Maryland to liberate enslaved people. At risk of arrest, she spoke out against enslavement and in favor of women's rights. Tubman embodied the conflict of being both black and female. These were both marginalized groups. She championed the activism of black women leaders in response to racism they encountered in the white National Woman's Suffrage Association, of which she was a member.



## Mary Bartlett Dixon Cullen 1873-1957 Talbot County

Born in Baltimore, Dixon graduated from the Johns Hopkins School of Nursing. Believing that women's suffrage could not be separated from the nursing profession, she fought for suffrage at the state and national level. During World War I, she fought for nurses to receive officer rank. Dixon was arrested for picketing the White House and sent to the Occoquan Workhouse. After marrying and moving near Easton, she continued to be a leader, founding the Talbot County League of Women Voters and helping establish the Easton Memorial Hospital.



Mary Bartlett Dixon of Talbot County (third from left) is shown on the picket line with fellow suffragists on November 10, 1917. Ms. Julia Emory of Baltimore is on the right. Library of Congress

## Nannie V. Melvin

1865-1942 Caroline County

Melvin expanded the Just Government League's reach across the Chesapeake Bay to Maryland's Eastern Shore. She traveled by boat from Baltimore and up the Shore's scenic rivers to reach small towns. On the way, she polled fellow passengers on their pro- and anti-suffrage views. She established suffrage clubs from Cambridge to Elkton, welcoming rural women to the movement. As a field secretary, Melvin established the League's office in Denton, her hometown. In 1911, she founded the Just Government League of Caroline County.



## Margaret Boone Moss

1868-1942 Anne Arundel County

The April 1, 1916 *Maryland Suffrage News* featured Moss on its cover and described her as "one of the most energetic and popular suffragists in the State." Boone's interest in women's issues was already emerging while she attended the Baltimore Women's College in the mid-1880s. She wrote her senior thesis on heroic women. After graduation from the State Normal School in 1886, Moss worked as an Anne Arundel County teacher. She belonged to numerous organizations that supported children, women's suffrage and education.



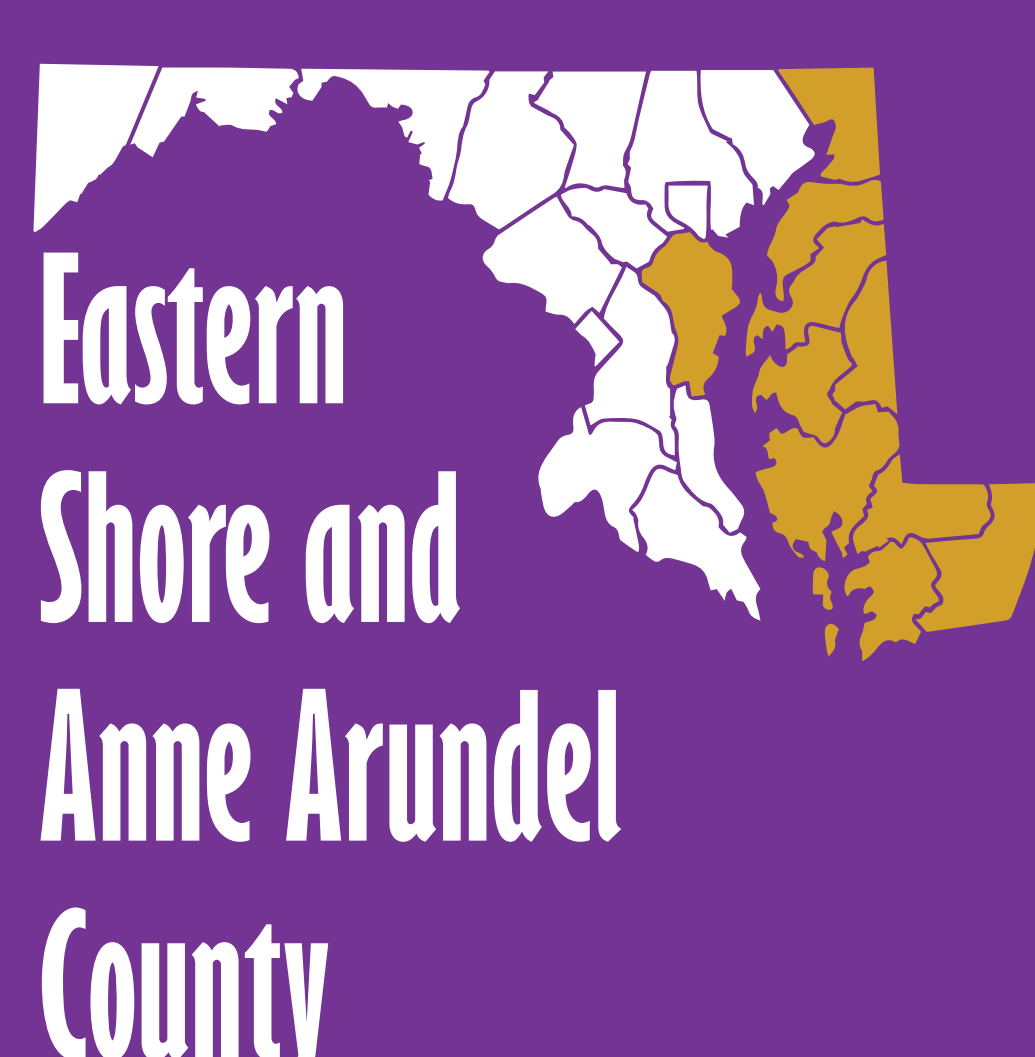
## Wilhelmina von Stosch Nichols

1871-1954 Anne Arundel County

The daughter of a count, von Stosch was born in Washington, D.C. She became a painter and married the well-known artist Henry Hobart Nichols. Both were featured in exhibits around D.C. Her artwork is included in Doris Weatherford's *Women in American Politics: History and Milestones* (2012), where she is listed as a "Prominent Women's Rights Pioneer." At some point, she moved to Anne Arundel County, participating in collective local organizing and representing the county at suffrage and other conventions and events.



From a painting by Wilhelmina von Stosch. The Book. Credit: Gibbs, George. "In Washington." The Monthly Illustrator III, no. 9 (January, February).



## Lola Carson (LC) Trax

1885-1962 Talbot County

Born in Easton, Trax was a Baltimore City suffrage and union activist. As a field secretary for the Just Government League in 1913, she was assigned to organize Washington County and laid the groundwork for the Hagerstown affiliate. As an organizer for the Women's Trade Union League, she went to Cecil County, an area with many cannery workers, to explain the need for collective bargaining and suffrage to 600 people gathered around a soap box. Back in Baltimore, she made a "stirring suffrage appeal" to 700 striking men and women.

## Alice Coale Simpners

1843-1920 Cecil County

Simpners attended Warnings' Friends' School near Colora, Maryland. She qualified as a teacher at Baltimore's State Normal School. Simpners advocated for women's suffrage with letters, essays, stories and poems for publications such as the *Cecil Whig*, *New York Sunday Mercury* and the *Women's Journal*. At the 1898 Maryland State Suffrage Association's Baltimore convention, she rallied for action in a speech called "First in War, First in Peace, First in the Hearts of (Her) Countrymen, but Last at the Ballot Box."

