

Women's Suffrage Revisited

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WASHINGTON—The first time Miss Lavinia Engle wore her cream lace and brocade dress was 50 years ago, at a banquet marking the end of the National American Woman's Suffrage Association and the beginning of the League of Women Voters of the United States.

Earlier this month the Silver Spring, Md., resident wore the same dress. This time it was for the opening of the "Women and Politics" exhibit at the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of History and Technology.

Rescue by Cavalry

Miss Engle, who was the original association's field representative, still recalls vividly the day more than a half-century ago when she and other suffragettes, including her mother, marched on the White House and had to be rescued from an angry crowd by a flying wedge of cavalry.

"There's still much to do for women's rights," said Miss Engle, who was chief of field operations for the Social Security Administration until her 70th birthday eight years ago (she still takes on some special assignments for them).

"Our fight was always for civil rights," she said. "The militant women's groups of today I believe won't get their goals through the channels they're using. The mili-

tant groups—the ones who chain themselves to the White House fences and the balustrade in the Congress—hindered us in our work for the vote 50 years ago."

The first panel of the museum exhibit — which will continue through July—shows that there were advocates of women's rights long before the formation of Miss Engle's group.

Abigail Adams, whose husband, John, went on to become the second President of the United States, wrote a note of caution to him March 13, 1771, when he was sitting in the Continental Congress during the American Revolution.

"In the new code of laws which I suppose it will be necessary for you to make," she wrote, "I desire you would remember the ladies and be more generous and favorable to them than your ancestors. Do not put such unlimited power into the hands of the husbands. Remember, all men would be tyrants if they could. If particular care is not paid to the ladies, we are determined to foment a rebellion and will not hold ourselves bound by any laws of which we have no voice or representation."

Keith Melder, the Museum of History and Technology's associate curator in the division of Political History, and a bachelor, who is writing a book about the feminist movement, did the historical

mobile in the exhibit that says: "For the safety of the nation, to the women give the vote; the hand that rocks the cradle, will never rock the boat."

The exhibit also includes some opposition material, such as "The Anti-Suffrage Rose," a song represented by the cover of the sheet music.

Some of the British posters of the early 1900's are even more adamant than the American ones. One shows a woman standing with a motley group behind bars, saying, "It is time I got out of this place. Where shall I find the key?" The legend adds, "Convicts, lunatics and women have no vote for Parliament."

Many Are Listed

Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt, Senator Margaret Chase Smith, Jeanette Rankin, twice a member of the House of Representatives, Frances Perkins, the first woman Cabinet member, Mary Church Terrell, first president of the National Association of Colored Women, Representative Edith Green, Oregon Democrat, and Representative Shirley Chisholm, Brooklyn Democrat, are pictured as being recent workers for women's rights.

The last panel in the show mentions the rise of feminism in women's liberation groups but begs the question of the movement's future with a large mirror topped with a red question mark.