

The extension of suffrage

A virtual museum by
Martha Ker



Welcome to Martha's Suffrage Museum!

Welcome to my Museum! Hopefully by the end, you will have learnt a little bit more about suffrage from 1819 through to 2020. Here is a brief overview:

The beginning of the suffrage campaign was said to be at St Peter's Field 1819 (Peterloo massacre). Over 60,000 people protesting peacefully had gathered that day to calmly protest and listen to the demonstrations by Henry Hunt, a famous suffrage speaker. Suffrage campaigns initially were for men, as only 3% of the population could vote, and these were male landowners with a salary of £2 a year or more.

The Great Reform Act was introduced in 1832, which increased the number of voters to 8%, but although it was deemed an important step towards Universal Suffrage, it was actually a very sly, hypocritical law. This was because only rich and middle class men could vote, who like Parliament owned land, and were happy to help keep the voting to themselves and not for lower or working class citizens. The Chartist group developed soon after the Great Reform Act, and was made up mainly of poorer weavers who were suffering at the hands of Parliament due to the introduction of machines which made mass unemployment or wage cuts. Parliament had also raised bread taxes and had almost made poverty a crime, making it harder for them to live. Chartists wanted secret ballots, votes for all, regular parliaments and the payment of MPs.

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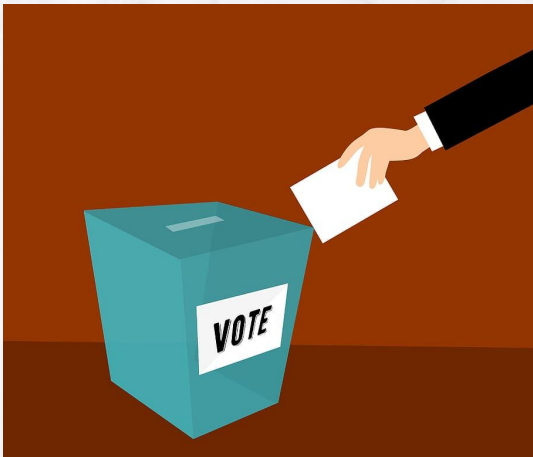
Sadly, they were unsuccessful as police spies were amongst them and all potential riots or protests were quickly diminished and their leaders imprisoned. By 1884, most working men aged 21 or above could now vote and the voting number had risen to 60 million. In 1872, Private Ballots were introduced and many more people began to campaign for women's suffrage; Harriet and John Mill, Langham Place Group, NUWSS (or suffragists), Millicent Fawcett, Selina Cooper, Lydia Becker and Manchester Suffrage Society. Many petitions were made but they all got laughed at by the male MPs. After 1903, women turned to more violent approaches of campaign after the peaceful protests of the suffragists didn't work. These women became known as suffragettes. The WPSU was founded in 1903 by Emmeline Pankhurst because she was annoyed at the lack of progress made towards women's suffrage. These suffragettes deliberately acted violently and broke the laws to get publicity. Many women like Kitty Marion and Mary Richardson threw bricks into windows, helped in bombing and arson attacks and were arrested many times. The Cat and Mouse Act was introduced in 1913 as prisoners were going on hunger strike as a protest and force feeding had not gone down well with the public. It involved releasing protesters from prison and then rearresting them once they had regained their health. This process could happen multiple times.



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Surprisingly, it was actually the war thought that really helped women in their campaigns to get the vote, as they took on jobs in ammunition factories and many other things that they wouldn't have done before. They were finally allowed to vote, although they had to be over 30.

In 1928, women and men finally had equal voting rights but it was not so fair in other areas of life and in other countries. For example, in Switzerland men got to vote in 1848 but women couldn't vote till 1971 - which is 123 years later!



Peterloo 1819, Manchester



This is a dress that would have been worn by a woman at St Peter's field, August 1819. It is very tight, and doesn't allow the wearer to move much, showing how difficult women would have found it to escape from the King's Hussars (professional cavalry) and Yeomanry (rich men on horseback- not soldiers and were said to be drunk and violent) at the massacre.

- This particular dress was owned by a shopkeeper called Mrs Mabbott, whose shop was on Bridge street in Manchester

Peterloo 1819, Manchester



- Even though there weren't as many female protesters at Peterloo (1 in 8 people were women), records imply that a larger percentage of women protesters were killed or injured, which may have been to do with the dresses!.
- Women weren't campaigning for a vote for themselves at St Peter's Field, but thought that having a male family member (ie a husband or brother) in the household voting would be enough to improve conditions and wages. At this time, only 3% of the whole population could vote: male, landowners with a salary of £2 a year or more.

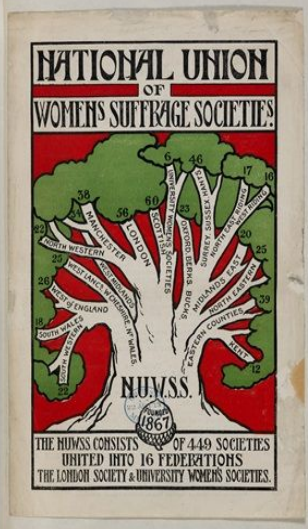
Chartists Movement: William Cuffay



William Cuffay was a prominent leader in some of the Chartist campaigns although he wasn't that successful. His rally of 20,000 at Kennington Common was deserted and he was eventually arrested and exiled to Tasmania in 1849.

- Cuffay was born in Kent and became a tailor before he gave up his job to join the Chartists
- Why were the Chartist Movements always diminished before they had even begun? The Chartist movements were full of Police spies, who would be ready whenever a riot began with the authorities, and would make arrests

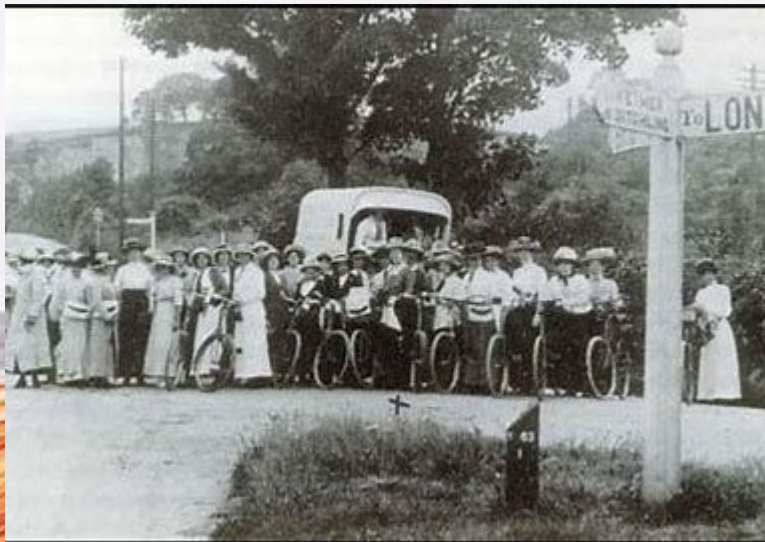
Suffragists (NUWSS)



Suffragists stressed the need for women's suffrage over adult suffrage, and campaigned in much more peaceful ways to the violent WSPU. This included petitions and calm debates.

In 1913, The Great Pilgrimage was a nonviolent suffragist march to Hyde Park, London to attend a rally of almost 50,000 organised by the NUWSS. An image of the women walking and biking can be seen to the left.

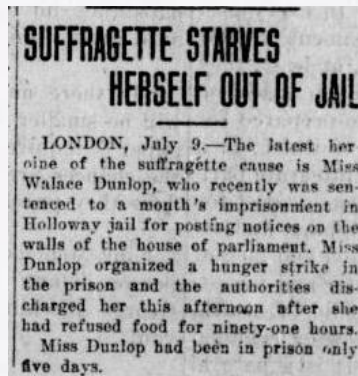
By 1914, the NUWSS had around 54,000 members, and the leading women were Elizabeth Garrett Anderson, Millicent Fawcett and Emily Davies.



Suffragettes 1903 (WSPU)



The suffragettes were formed in 1903 by Emmeline Pankhurst, after years of peaceful Suffragist campaigning. She was annoyed that no progression had been made towards women's suffrage and thought women should take a more aggressive approach to campaigning.



Suffragettes would commit arson attacks, chain themselves to railings, plant bombs, throw bricks into windows, go on hunger strikes and get arrested to get publicity. The Cat and Mouse Act was introduced in 1903 to stop protesters starving themselves in prison. This involved releasing prisoners and then recapturing them once they had regained their health

The iconic purple and green suffragette banners

Suffragettes 1903 (WSPU)



- Emily Wilding Davison was a famous suffragette who threw herself under the King's Horse at Derby Day June 13th. It's said that she was trying to pin a suffragettes badge to the horse but was trampled and died, becoming a martyr to the votes for women campaigns.



How women got the vote



The treatment of the suffragettes in prison (being force fed) gained sympathy and publicity to support the campaign, but their violent actions put some people off. So hundreds joined the peaceful NUWSS, who believed in nonviolent approaches.

Then the war broke out. The suffragettes worked with the government to get women involved with the war efforts and helped to set up the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC). Louisa Garrett Anderson was involved in setting up WHC, the Women's Hospital Corps and many women worked tirelessly in factories to help win the war.

A Women's Army Auxiliary Corps advertisement poster

How women got the vote



Soon after, the government decided to hold an election, and were in touch with women like Millicent Fawcett (leader of the NUWSS) insisting that women get the vote after the excellent service shown during the war and the changes in their education and legal status. Women finally got to vote, although the voting age was still 9 years higher than the men's until 1928, when there was universal suffrage..

How effective were the campaigns?

Who was more effective, suffragists or suffragettes?

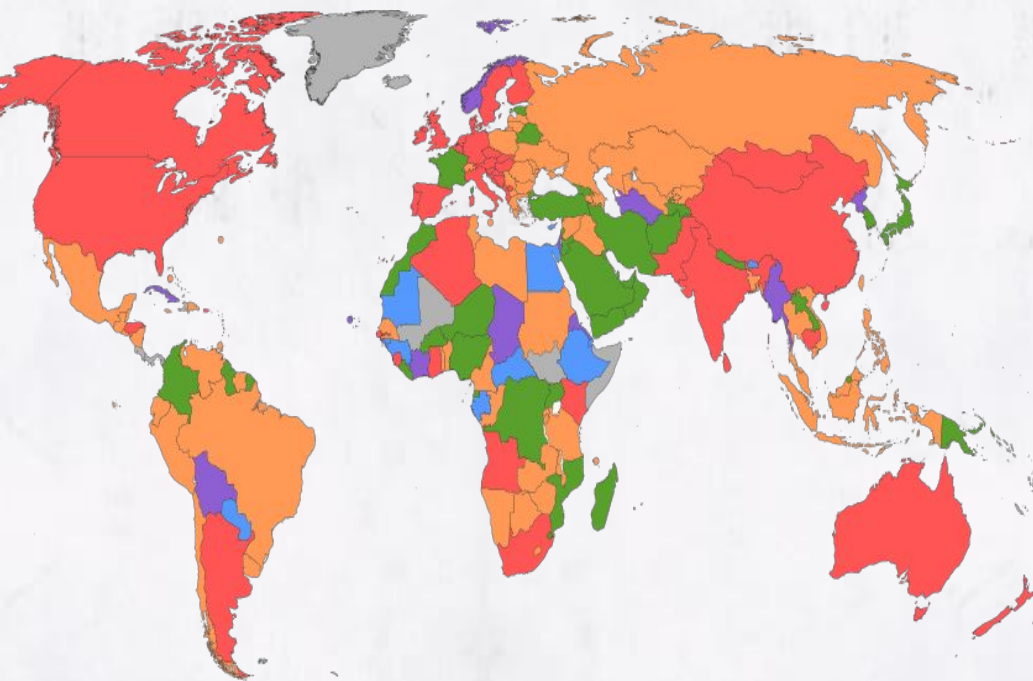
Although women had been campaigning for years, neither of the two groups were actually that successful. It was the war that really helped to gain women the vote as they were very involved and set up the WAAC, WHC and all worked tirelessly to support the country

Suffragettes raised a lot of awareness, but very few women were actually prepared to be that violent or put themselves in danger or arrest. The government also did not approve of the very aggressive tactics and were therefore never actually very likely to change the law due to their campaigning. This resulted in many women joining the suffragists (or NUWSS) to support the fight for women's suffrage in a peaceful way, which was probably more persuasive, but never put MPs under any rush or pressure to change the laws.



Modern day (21st century)

When women finally got equal voting rights in 1924, that wasn't the end of all inequality - women still did not have equal rights and are suffering today!



- In countries like Saudi Arabia, India, Iran, Pakistan, Egypt, Morocco and others **fewer than 30% of all women aged 15-64** work for pay.
- In at least **41 countries**, women and girls do not have the same **inheritance rights** as men and boys
- Women's share of seats on boards:
2% are women in South Korea, **5%** in Chile and Japan, **6%** in Brazil, Indonesia and Mexico, there are still only **27%** women in the UK!

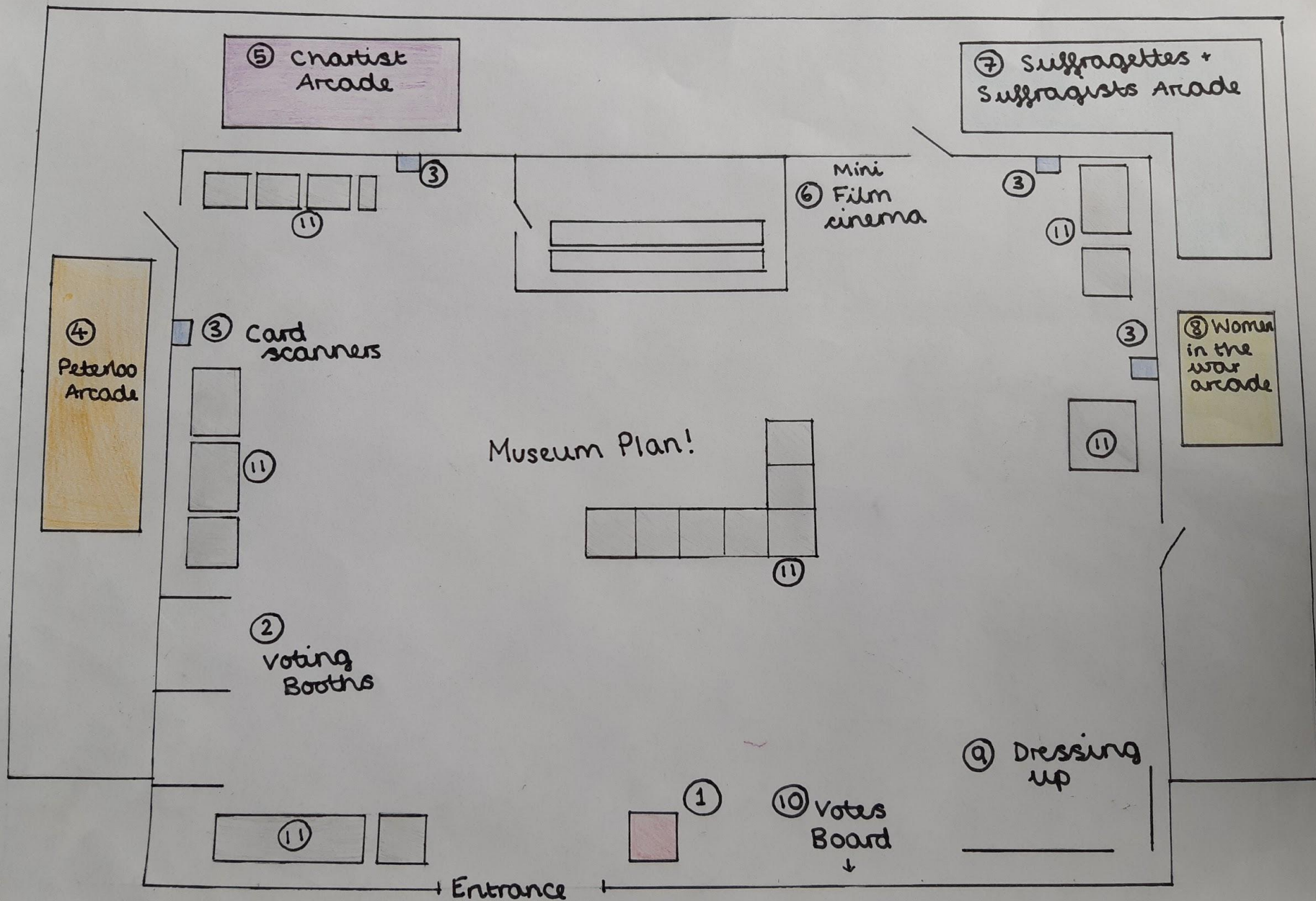
Modern day (21st century)



Emma Watson after speaking at a He For She campaign

- Cambridge University opened to males in **1209**, but only admitted females in **1948**!
- There are many feminist campaigns still happening today in Britain, such as the HeForShe campaign, launched by actress Emma Watson, which aims to get men and boys to join the feminist fight for gender equality.





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Here is the key

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1NTg1oTj_7_kFNAYP9LxE1TypdZyoQfMsGQSWv8HJAK/edit

Some highlights of the museum are:

The voting booths and cards

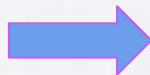


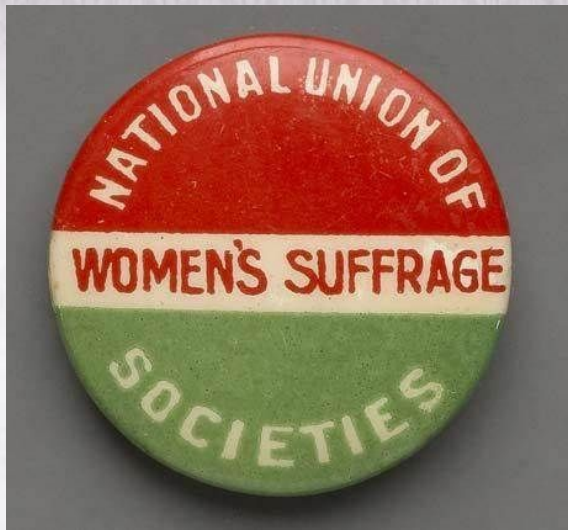
The Arcades:

Waxwork recreations of Peterloo, Chartists, Suffragettes, Suffragists and women working for the WAAC in the war.



The Museum of London People's city
1850-1940s arcade





Thank you!

By Martha Ker 7Y

