

# The Suffrage Movement in Llandudno



IMAGE 1 ANTI-SUFFRAGIST CARTOON [HTTPS://WWW.JOHNDCCLARE.NET/WOMEN2.HTM](https://www.johndclare.net/women2.htm)

This project was created March 2021 by Teleri Owen as part of the Llandudno Museum & Gallery's Digital Student Placement scheme. Let us know what you think!

1907-  
1918

## The NUWSS in Llandudno

*Llandudno was home to the first NUWSS (Suffragist) cell in Wales, formed in 1907 at the Cocoa House, a former Temperance Hotel. This handbook relates the suffrage movement to the 1918 and 1928 Representation of the People Acts. This short guide about the history of the suffrage movement in Llandudno focuses on suffragists, suffragettes, the Temperance Movement, and how the issues surrounding women's rights continue to affect us today.*

## THE WOMAN QUESTION

To understand any discussions about Suffrage, we have to think about how you define gender in the current age. Think about how gender relates to personal appearance, speech, rights, healthcare, and even public toilet design. (Did you ever wonder why men can see each other in the toilet but women can't?) Take a few moments and think about how you define the following terms:

1. What is a Woman?

---

---

---

---

---

2. What is a Man?

---

---

---

---

---

The definitions we make as a society for what defines a man and what defines a woman are the basis for all conversations connected to women's rights. In the 1870s, Queen Victoria said: "Let women be what God intended, a helpmate for man, but with totally different duties and vocations." Queen Victoria's statement reflects the thoughts at the time that men and women operated in 'Separate spheres.' Queen Victoria's idea that women act as 'God intended' stems from the biblical story that the Christian God created the first woman Eve as a "helpmate" to the first man Adam.

The 19<sup>th</sup> Century philosophy of "Separate Spheres" rested on a definition on what the 'natural' characteristics were for all men and all women. Women were supposed to be morally superior to men but physically and mentally weaker. Women were considered the "weaker" sex because of this perceived intellectual and physical inferiority. Men were thought to be physically and mentally stronger than women, but morally weaker. This philosophy said men were created to live in the Public Sphere: of working, socializing, travelling the world, and studying. Women were made for the Domestic Sphere: cooking, cleaning, and caring for their children and their husbands. Women were not supposed to crave social company naturally. They were supposed to devote their spare time to activities like sewing or washing, activities that promoted their family's wellbeing. This unhelpful idea of separate gendered spheres and so-called "natural" abilities are the same arguments that were used to prevent women from entering formal education and would be used in the 1950's to argue against same-sex marriage.

Ask yourself the following questions:

In what situations do we, as a society, need these gender definitions?

---

---

---

If our society didn't have this gender separation, how would our daily life change?

---

---

---

## SOCIALLY CONSTRUCTED MORALS

### Activity 2: Is this Modest?

Modesty is a mode of dress and attitude which intends to avoid the encouraging of sexual attraction in others. The word "modesty" comes from the Latin word modestus which means "keeping within measure". Standards of modesty are culturally constructed and vary widely. Pay attention to where and when the pictures below were taken because what is and isn't modest changes according to gender, place, and time. Ask yourself: Was the person in this photo modest Then? Are they modest Now? What is being "measured"?



IMAGE 2 LUCY SMITH AND PAULINE RANKEN OF THE LADIES' SCOTTISH CLIMBING CLUB, SALISBURY CRAGS, C.1908.  
<https://www.edinburghlive.co.uk/news/edinburgh-news/badass-edinburgh-photo-shows-two-15914541>

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....



.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

**IMAGE 3 TEENAGE BOYS WEARING SKIRTS TO SCHOOL TO PROTEST AGAINST 'NO SHORTS' POLICY, EXETER, 2017.**  
[HTTPS://WWW.THEGUARDIAN.COM/EDUCATION/2017/JUN/22/TEENAGE-BOYS-WEAR-SKIRTS-TO-SCHOOL-PROTEST-NO-SHORTS-UNIFORM-POLICY](https://www.theguardian.com/education/2017/jun/22/teenage-boys-wear-skirts-to-school-protest-no-shorts-uniform-policy)

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....



**IMAGE 4 POLICE OFFICER MEASURING THE LENGTH OF A WOMAN'S SWIMMING COSTUME, PALM BEACH (USA), C.1925**  
[HTTPS://RAREHISTORICALPHOTOS.COM/WOMEN-ARRESTED-BATHING-SUITS-1920S/](https://rarehistoricalphotos.com/women-arrested-bathing-suits-1920s/)

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....



IMAGE 6 TRACY BRABIN (LABOUR MP) WEARING A SHOULDERLESS DRESS IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, FEBRUARY 2020. [HTTPS://WWW.PERSONNELTODAY.COM/HR/MP-DEFENDS-CHOICE-TO-WEAR-OFF-THE-SHOULDER-DRESS-IN-PARLIAMENT/](https://www.personneltoday.com/hr/mp-defends-choice-to-wear-off-the-shoulder-dress-in-parliament/)



.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

IMAGE 5 CAITLYN JENNER ON THE COVER OF VANITY FAIR, JUNE 2015. [HTTPS://WWW.VANITYFAIR.COM/HOLLYWOOD/2015/06/CAITLYN-JENNER-BRUCE-COVER-ANNIE-LEIBOVITZ](https://www.vanityfair.com/hollywood/2015/06/caitlyn-jenner-bruce-cover-annie-leibovitz)

## SOME IMPORTANT DATES

Below is a timeline of events during the UK women's suffrage movement. Although the timeline begins in 1780, women were already campaigning for equal rights long before that.

- 1780** – 3% of the total population of England and Wales had the right to vote. This number included some women.
- 1832** - The Great Reform Act (also known as the First Reform Act) was passed after growing pressure for parliamentary reform. This formally excluded women from the electorate because it defined a voter as a man, previously there had been rare instances where women met the criteria i.e. owning enough land, to be able to vote.
- 1866** – The first mass Suffrage Petition was signed.
- 1870** – The Married Women's Property Act 1870 allowed women to keep their property and earnings in their own right after they were married.
- 1897** – The National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies (NUWSS) was formed by Millicent Fawcett. This group united societies that existed across the UK with the intent of achieving women's suffrage through peaceful and legal means and on the same terms as it was granted to men. These were the 'suffragists'.
- 1903** – The Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU) was a women-only political movement formed by Emmeline, Christabel and Sylvia Pankhurst. They were much more militant and were known as the 'suffragettes'.
- 1907** - The Llandudno NUWSS cell held their first meeting. This was the first NUWSS cell in Wales. The Women's Freedom League (WFL) was formed as a break away from the WSPU.
- 1908** - Ms. Walton-Evans urged the Llandudno Cell to attend the Great Suffrage Procession in London on the 13th of June to prove that women did want the right to vote. The London and North Western Railway had refused concessionary fares for the NUWSS members despite running a special excursion for the cup final in London for people travelling from Llandudno – was that more important than equal voting rights?
- 1918** – The Representation of the People Act is passed on 6 February 1918 which gave all women over the age of 30 the right to vote provided they or their husband met a 'property qualification.' In November the Parliament Qualification of Women Act is passed allowing women to stand for Parliament.
- Countess Constance Georgine Markievicz (1868-1927) was the first female elected as MP for Dublin St Patrick's. At the time she was an inmate at Holloway Prison, which was infamous for its imprisonment of suffragettes. However, her sentence was because she participated in the Easter Rising of 1916. As a member of Sinn Féin she never took her seat at Westminster.
- 1919** – Viscountess Nancy Astor was the first female MP to take her seat at Westminster after winning a by-election for the Conservatives. She held the seat until 1945 and although she never was a campaigner for women's suffrage, she was a great supporter of it whilst in Parliament.
- 1928** – The Equal Franchise Act is passed giving women equal voting rights with men. All women aged over 21 can now vote in elections.

**1929** – Megan Lloyd George (1902-1966) became the first female MP for a Welsh constituency when she won Anglesey for the Liberal Party. She later became the Deputy Leader of Labour and a Labour MP. Her father was David Lloyd George, the first and only Welsh Prime Minister, and the only Prime Minister to speak English as a Second Language to date! In 2016 Megan Lloyd George was named one of the most influential Welsh women.

## WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE CONTEXT

### Female Suffrage – The Suffragists vs Suffragettes

**The Great Reform Act of 1832** defined a voter as a man which formally excluded women from being able to vote, before that definition there had been rare cases where women with property were allowed to vote. Men from the lower class were also excluded from the right to vote at this time by rules for voting requiring high income and property ownership. Similarly, it wasn't just women who were involved in the campaigns for suffrage, many men were involved in the marches and the debates. Just as not all men were supportive of female suffrage, not all women supported it as many felt that politics were not the place for women, or other movements such as the Temperance Movement were more important to them.

One of the most important distinctions to make when studying the suffrage movement is being able to define and contrast suffragists and suffragettes. Essentially both wanted the same thing – votes for women – but their opinions differed on the way that they would campaign to get female suffrage. Suffragists were the members of the NUWSS and Suffragettes were members of the WSPU. Generally, suffragists were more peaceful and didn't resort to violent tactics like the suffragette counterparts, who had used tactics such as bombings and arson. Suffragettes were considered by many men as the exact reason why women should not be given the vote, i.e. women were too 'unstable' and 'reckless', and therefore they weren't as competent as men. Many suffragists also thought that the Suffragette campaigns could harm the advancement of suffrage and that votes could not be won by being militant. Their opinion was that women needed to demonstrate that they were as capable and deserving as men, able to operate within the confines of the law, and that peaceful means were the best way to persuade male politicians that they were deserving of the right to vote and were equal to men.

The idea of female suffrage was apparent for a great portion of the 19th century.

- John Stuart Mill raised the subject in 1867 when there were debates on the Reform Act (1867).
- Many suffrage societies were formed across Great Britain with mainly middle-class members who wanted the vote on the same terms as it was granted to men, i.e. if a man over 30 years of age could vote then women over 30 years of age should be able to vote.

In 1897 Millicent Fawcett (1847-1929) formed the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies or the NUWSS for short, the women who were part of this movement were known as 'suffragists'.

- They used peaceful, non-violent, and moderate methods to spread their message for female suffrage such as meetings, petitions, booklets, and peaceful demonstrations (from 1907 onwards).
- Their peaceful tactics made them appear more 'level-headed' and they hoped that this would prove that women should have the vote.
- Their goal was to win over public opinion and the Government.
- They did gain a lot of support and they were not affiliated with any political party.

1903 saw the foundation of the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU) by Emmeline Pankhurst and her daughters, Christabel and Sylvia. The WSPU and their members, known as suffragettes, are more well-known than the suffragists because of their aggressive tactics.

- Suffragettes felt that the NUWSS/suffragists weren't making enough progress and they advocated more militant tactics.
- They became more militant between 1907 and 1912 and many were arrested and imprisoned – this did help bring the issue of female suffrage to newspaper headlines but not always in a positive way.
- A notable event was when Emily Davison threw herself under the King's horse at the Derby in 1913 and became a martyr for the cause.
- The Suffragettes did influence people's positions on female suffrage by gaining popularity and publicity, but politicians were reluctant to give in to their demands because they were violent and disruptive.

When imprisoned many would go on hunger strike, leading to the 1913 Temporary Discharge for Ill-Health Act more commonly called **The Cat and Mouse Act**. This act allowed for the early release of prisoners who were so weakened by hunger striking that they were at risk of death. The arrested suffragettes would be temporarily released on license, eat and recover, and then the police would arrest them again. The police also used force feeding tactics where women were restrained and tubes were forced down their throat or nose and liquid foods were poured in. This sometimes resulted in broken teeth, bleeding, vomiting, and choking. It did not, however, stop the movement.

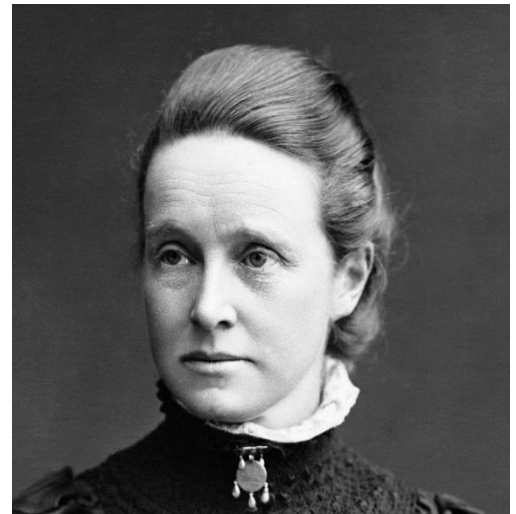


IMAGE 7 MILLICENT FAWCETT  
[HTTPS://WWW.THEGUARDIAN.COM/POLITICS/2017/APR/25/MILLICENT-FAWCETT-WAS-A-HEROINE-](https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2017/APR/25/millicent-fawcett-was-a-heroine-)



IMAGE 8 ANNIE KENNEY AND CHRISTABEL PANKHURST (RIGHT) C.1908  
[HTTPS://EN.WIKIPEDIA.ORG/WIKI/WOMEN%27S\\_SOCIAL\\_AND\\_POLITICAL\\_UNION](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Women%27s_Social_and_Political_Union)

## Women's Status during the 19<sup>th</sup> Century and Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century



## The Suffrage Movement in Llandudno

Women of all classes were expected to become good wives and mothers. To do otherwise was considered both unnatural and “unwomanly”. Many suffragists and suffragettes were portrayed as masculine, bitter, old, and engaged in the suffrage movement because they weren’t married. There was even a medical theory that stated that too much studying would damage a woman’s ability to have children.

Married women didn’t have an easy time either. Women lost the rights to the property they brought into their marriage. Even following divorce, a husband had complete legal control over any income earned by his wife. Women were not allowed to open banking accounts and married women were not able to enter or negotiate a contract without their husband's legal approval. These property restrictions made it difficult or impossible for a woman to leave a failed marriage, or to exert any control over her finances if her husband was incapable or unwilling to do so on her behalf. Even after **the Married Women's Property Act 1870** which gave women the right to retain some property after they were married, all cash earned was still considered a husband’s property. There were also many restrictions placed on women’s education.

Society during the suffrage movement was divided not only by gender but also by class. Very strict etiquette rules were in place, even for women of the upper class. Working-class women often worked long hours in low paid jobs and were still expected to look after their home and family. Jobs for lower class women included servants, low-skilled factory work, cleaning work, and Laundress. Middle-class women were also expected to be good Christian mothers but they were not expected to work. They had some education and often employed lower class women to do housework. This left many with time to pursue charitable and philanthropic causes such as suffrage and donating/raising money for good causes. Middle-class unmarried women, could have ‘respectable’ professions such as teaching, being a governess, or even nursing. They were, however, expected to give up their profession once they were married. There was little legal or social protection for a married woman of any class against adultery, cruelty, or abandonment regardless of their class.

## General Attitudes Towards Female Suffrage

The two biggest political parties before the First World War were the Liberals (more left-wing) and the Conservatives (right-wing). The liberals were generally more accepting of the idea of female suffrage. Politicians on both sides supported the cause and both sides had politicians who dismissed the idea as too radical. For example, David Lloyd George favoured women’s suffrage whilst Herbert Asquith opposed it, and both were Liberals.

## The National League for Opposing Woman Suffrage

The Women’s National Anti-Suffrage League was formed in 1908 and subsequently merged with the Men’s League for Opposing Women’s Suffrage in 1910, forming the National League for Opposing Woman Suffrage.



IMAGE 9 'SUFFRAGETTES WHO HAVE NEVER BEEN KISSED' C.1910 UK

[HTTPS://HISTORYOFFEMINISM.COM/ANTI-SUFFRAGETTE-POSTCARDS-POSTERS-CARTOONS/](https://historyoffeminism.com/anti-suffragette-postcards-posters-cartoons/)

Some of the League's main arguments were:

1. Women and men 'naturally' existed in 'separate spheres', because of biological factors, therefore they should have different roles socially and politically.
2. The 19<sup>th</sup> century state depended on naval, military, diplomacy, financial, and heavy industries. Women's roles in these industries were minimal at best. They argued that because women weren't involved in these industries, they were not experienced enough to influence Parliament's decisions on them.
3. Women's influences were more important on a local and domestic level. They supported the admission of women into County and Borough Councils as these were areas within their experience and interest.
4. Social causes were important for women. If they gained the Parliamentary vote, they would have less time for these causes.
5. They thought that because of women's influence in the domestic sphere, they already influenced and were represented by their husband's vote. They also feared that political differences between husbands and wives would break families apart.

Both the Suffragist and the Suffragette movements were victim to cruel reactions from those who supported the 'anti-suffrage movement'. Satirical cartoons showed both Suffragettes and Suffragists as angry at themselves for not fulfilling these 'womanly duties.' Look at the Satirical Cartoons. What do you notice about the faces of the women drawn here? Read the signs around the women. Why do you think the artists have chosen to attack the appearance of the women engaged in the suffrage movement rather than their cause? What do they show us about the late 19th and early 20th century social values? Do the cartoons differ greatly from actual photographs of suffragists and suffragettes? Do the artists always know the difference between suffragists and suffragettes?

Anti-Suffrage Cartoons (Various Dates and Locations)





## The Impact of World War One 1914-1918

Suffragists and suffragettes called off their campaigns at the outbreak of World War 1 and many of the women worked in factories, farms, offices, transport, and nursing. Many historians agree that the war helped change attitudes towards women's rights and suffrage – some argue that the war gave women a chance to prove themselves as capable as men, as opposed to suffrage campaigns that were sometimes looked upon as 'silly' and 'foolish'. Other historians argue that the suffragettes and suffragists helped set the tone for suffrage and the war was the catalyst that prompted the final acceptance of a woman's right to vote, but also that the war alone would not have created the change.

**The 1918 Representation of the People Act** was passed during World War 1 and it gave the vote to all women over 30 years old, allowed them to stand for election as an MP, regardless of class, race, and education. However, at the same time, it gave all men over the age of 21 the right to vote. It was a significant move in the right direction, but it meant that women still didn't have the right to vote on the same terms as men, which is what advocates of women's suffrage wanted. It was still celebrated as a success and a very important act.

### By the 1930s

**The Representation of the People (Equal Franchise) Act 1928** was passed as an addition to the Act passed in 1918. It gave all women over the age of 21 the right to vote. Men and women were finally enfranchised on the same terms. In 1929 the first female Cabinet Minister Margaret Bondfield was appointed as Minister of Labour. After the war, many women lost their jobs to men who were returning home from the frontlines and there was some hostility towards working women. Many women did return to their pre-war roles as mothers and housewives, but they had made gains.

## THE NUWSS IN LLANDUDNO

## NUWSS Llandudno Cell



IMAGE 10 LLANDUDNO COCOA HOUSE, MEETING PLACE OF THE NUWSS  
[HTTPS://HISTORYPOINTS.ORG/INDEX.PHP?PAGE=SUFFRAGIST-PIONEERS-MEETING-PLACE](https://historypoints.org/index.php?page=suffragist-pioneers-meeting-place)

On the 23rd of January 1907, the first Welsh branch or cell of the NUWSS was established at the Cocoa House in Llandudno. The Cocoa House was part of a chain of Temperance hotels and restaurants where no 'indecent' behaviour was allowed, such as drinking alcohol. The NUWSS branch in Llandudno was formed to obtain a parliamentary franchise for women on the same ground as it is granted to men.

Attendance at the first meeting was by invitation only, and no men were allowed to be in attendance. This did not mean that there never were men involved in the movement in Llandudno. There were 20 founding members, and Mrs Walton-Evans was the first president, Miss Lucy Champneys, was the first Secretary, and Mrs Gooddy was the first Treasurer. They were middle-class women from Llandudno who likely knew each other beforehand through other philanthropical and charitable meetings, events,

and societies. For example, Mrs Marks, Ms. Reeves-Hughes, Ms. Goode, and Ms. Wyatt were among the members of the Women's Christian Association in Llandudno in 1898.

In March the NUWSS founder and President Millicent Fawcett visited the Llandudno cell. By 1908 the cell had 120 members. The first Annual General Meeting was chaired by Harold Rathbone, the founder of Della Robia Pottery in Birkenhead, and an avid supporter of the movement. On New Year's Day 1909 the Llandudno cell launched the 'Llandudno Suffrage News' which stressed on the title page that the NUWSS was not militant or affiliated to any specific political party. By 1912 other cells had formed along the North Wales Coast, in Bangor, Rhyl, Penmaenmawr, and Colwyn Bay. The cells in Bangor and Bethesda tended to be more Welsh-speaking and were vital to the recruitment of women in Wales to the cause of suffrage because they translated NUWSS reading material into Welsh.

### Susan Edith Champneys (1863-1928)

She was one of the founding members of the NUWSS at Llandudno. She objected to the censoring of the suffragette movement by the NUWSS. She was elected as a Board of Guardians Representative in 1903, which was a board to uphold the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834. She aided women in workhouses after reading a report on the terrible conditions women faced at the Caernarfon workhouse. She wanted to put a female candidate forward for a local election in Llandudno but Councillor Ernest Bone thought that this might harm the NUWSS's reputation as it was not supposed to be affiliated with political parties. She never married and joined the Women's Auxiliary Police in 1916. Although she is remarkable by current standards, she would not have been viewed as the 'ideal' woman by early 20<sup>th</sup>-century society.



IMAGE 11 EDITH CHAMPNEYS IN THE WOMEN'S POLICE SERVICE UNIFORM DURING WW1  
[HTTPS://WWW.NPG.ORG.UK/COLLECTIONS/SEARCH/PERSON/MP97606/SUSAN-EDITH-CHAMPNEYS](https://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/person/mp97606/susan-edith-champneys)

## What Issues Were Important to the Llandudno NUWSS Members?

- Annie Walton-Evans said that women's suffrage had become so important it was essential Llandudno women discussed it because they were just as intelligent.
- Mary Goody stated that the laws needed updating with regards to marriage and inheritance where women were at a disadvantage compared to men. She was concerned that this had a much greater impact on the women of the working-classes because they could not afford divorce and were also responsible for paying their husband's debtors even if their husband had abandoned them.
- Mrs Egdeell noted that women needed to assert their place in the world so men would realize how capable they were.
- Susan Edith Champneys said that once women were given the vote they could vastly improve social conditions.

The above statements were typical NUWSS arguments and are good representations of how many middle-class philanthropical women viewed the world. They had the time to help better conditions for women and especially working-class women. The movement was mainly comprised of middle-class women, but its ultimate goal was to help all womankind.

### Reactions

As in other parts of Great Britain and across Wales, reactions were mixed. The first meeting made local press and the North Wales Weekly News said that it was an honour to have the first cell in Llandudno, although they expressed that they did not want the women to become martyrs for the cause and feel compelled to follow what the Pankhurst's (WSPU) was doing. Other meetings are hard to trace, and many did not make headlines. There are many answers as to why the meetings were fairly secretive; the papers may not have supported the cause; keeping under the radar makes them seem less threatful; people may not have regarded the meetings as important. The *North Wales Weekly News* reported that an Anti-Suffrage League was formed in Llandudno to counteract the work and arguments of the NUWSS.

On the next page, an article titled 'Women's Suffrage' suggests that the *Llandudno Advertiser and List of Voters* was generally supportive of the NUWSS efforts in Llandudno. It also demonstrates that there were many men who were supportive. Yet the fact that this article appears on page 8, which happens to be the last page of this issue, may suggest that they didn't want to appear overly supportive of the matter. This might also imply that they didn't want to raise too much attention to the cause, despite the fact that it was obviously a large event, and the article itself takes up the majority of the page. The article also covers some of the arguments made against the suffrage movement and you can view the full article [here](#).

**WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.****DEMONSTRATION IN THE TOWN HALL.****MRS. FAWCETT DEFENDS THE MILITANT SUFFRAGETTES.****A REPLY TO MARIE CORELLI.**

The demonstration organised by the Llandudno Branch of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies must be written down as a complete success. The Town Hall on Wednesday afternoon was well filled, the audience being most comprised of ladies. On the platform were Archdeacon Evans, the Revs. H. Barrow Williams, and D. J. Lewis, B.A., Mr Wm. Bevan, J.P., the Rev. Arnold Edgell, Dr. and Mrs Gooddy, Dr. Lawrie, Mr E. E. Bone, Mr Jas. Marks, M.A. Mr and Mrs Harold Rathbone, Mrs and Miss Edwards (wife and daughter of the Bishop of St. Asaph), Miss Standish Howe, Mrs Batters (Mostyn), and the principal speakers, Mrs Fawcett, LL.D., widow of the late Mr Henry Fawcett, Postmaster General, and Miss Margaret Ashton, secretary of the Manchester Society.

**LETTERS FROM PUBLIC MEN.**

Mr R. S. Chamberlain, who presided, announced that apologies for non-attendance had been received from the Lord Bishops of Bangor and Liverpool, Lady Augusta Mostyn, the Hon. Mrs Henry Mostyn, Mr Darbishire, Mr and Mrs Edminson, and others, including that old advocate of women's suffrage, Sir Charles Maclaren, M.P.—(Applause.)

Mr Arthur Hughes, Conservative candidate for North Carnarvon at the last election, wrote that the refusal of the franchise to women now rested upon no logical basis or constitutional principle. Mr R. A. Naylor, Conservative candidate for Carnarvon Boroughs, wrote: "Your movement has my sympathy." The Bishop of St. Asaph expressed a similar opinion: "It seems to me that there can be no logical ground for refusing the Parliamentary franchise to a woman who has the necessary property qualification." Mr Emmett Barlow, M.P., of Colwyn Bay, replied to an inquiry as to his views of the subject that his votes in the House of Commons since 1892 would show that he was favourable.

The *Welsh Coast Pioneer and Review for North Cambria's* [article](#) below doesn't seem as supportive of women's suffrage. It expresses how suffragettes and suffragists were seen as something humorous and it was acceptable to make fun of the movement. What does this imply about the reactions of the people of Llandudno to female suffrage? Might these types of reactions be part of the reason why the NUWSS preferred to keep a relatively low profile?

**HUMOROUS FOOTBALL MATCH AT LLANDUDNO.****SUFFRAGETTES v. SHOP ASSISTANTS.**

On the Llandudno Council Field on Wednesday a humorous football match was played between a team of shop assistants and Suffragettes. Among the Suffragette team were several well-known players, who were attired in female garb of marvellous design, and carried parasols and umbrellas, which were frequently in evidence during the game. The Suffragettes had also the advantage of being allowed to use their hands, while the shop assistants, who wore top hats, were more severely handicapped. If a hat fell off a foul was given against them. Mr Fred. Jones, who wore a policeman's uniform, and the proverbial red whiskers, was the referee, and he was in constant trouble with the Suffragettes, and had frequently to consult the huge rule book which he carried under his arm, in order to settle disputes.

The proceeds were in aid of local charities, and judging from the crowd of spectators present a substantial amount has been realised.

The play was of the rough and tumble order, interspersed with many humorous incidents. A melee in front of the goalmouth caused much amusement. So mixed up did the enthusiastic Suffragettes become that it was difficult to distinguish one player from another in spite of the vari-coloured costumes.

During the first half the Suffragettes scored three goals. The Shop Assistants scored one goal but as the referee was looking for his hat, which had been knocked off, he did not see the point, and it was therefore disallowed.

In the second half the Shop Assistants had the better of the play, and scored two goals, and the game terminated in a victory for the Suffragettes by three goals to two. They were therefore awarded the cup, which was in the form of a tin can covered with ribbons, and the team were also presented with tin medals.

## WELSH SUFFRAGE

### Characteristics



FIGURE 1 WELSH SUFFRAGE SUPPORTERS AT A MARCH IN LONDON

The NUWSS was more popular in Wales than in England. The Liberals often had the majority vote in Wales, but the WSPU felt betrayed by them, this might explain why the NUWSS was more popular in Wales. Religion was an important factor to many Welsh women and the movement often followed a more peaceful religious aspect. The Cymru Fydd movement supported women's suffrage but lost a lot of influence by the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The Welsh-speaking suffrage movement developed later, possibly due to the delay in translating key suffrage text into Welsh. The Bangor cell was pioneering in getting the support of monoglot Welsh women.

### Temperance

The Llandudno NUWSS had links to the Temperance Movement which was especially popular in Wales, and many women were part of both movements.

- The Cocoa House was part of a temperance chain of hotels and restaurants.
- In 1909 the Llandudno Cell held a meeting in Aberconwy Temperance Hotel.
- The North Wales Women's Temperance Union was established in 1892 in Blaenau Ffestiniog and there were branches all over North Wales.
- Women would stand up and protest against pubs and on the street against drinking.
- The working-classes were particularly against drinking and many Nonconformist Welsh monoglot speakers were advocates of the movement. They viewed drink as the work of the devil and that it was often a financial strain and eroded family life and relationships.
- The Temperance Movement gaining momentum in Wales and the Sunday Closing Act (1881) meant that pubs across Wales would have to shut on Sundays. Notably, this was one of the first acts to apply to Wales only, and pubs in some areas in Wales were closed on Sundays as late as 1996!
- This empowered Welsh women before the NUWSS and WSPU and gave them the confidence that they could change their society.
- Many women continued to advocate the complete abstinence of drink and were heavily involved in the movement, and there were many supporters in Llandudno.



FIGURE 2 LLANDUDNO WOMEN'S TEMPERANCE SOCIETY C.1900

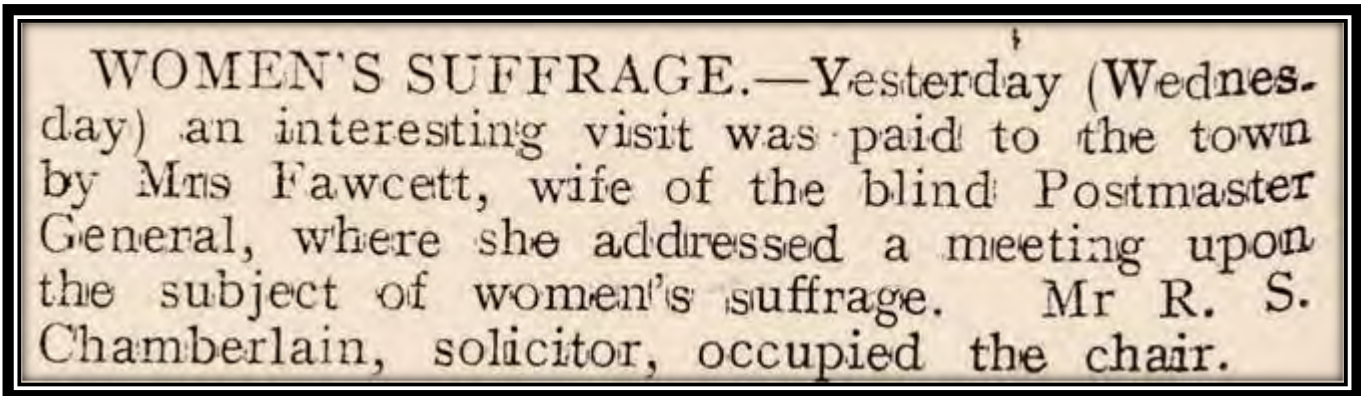
- The Temperance Movement and meetings offered a way for women to socialise, and it was a natural progression that other pressing issues, such as universal suffrage and women's rights, would find roots in the movement. It was a likely place for the conversation on suffrage to first be discussed in Wales.

### The Cocoa House

The Cocoa House is located at 66 Mostyn Street and 2 George Street Llandudno, where there is a plaque on the George Street entrance commemorating the establishment of the first NUWSS cell in Wales. It was family friendly and people would meet there as an alternative to the pub and drink hot cocoa instead of alcohol. It was run by Sarah Annie Reeves Hughes and her husband Hugh. They held penny dinners for the poor and set up a Workmen's Blue-Ribbon Club in 1884 to help alcoholics who would pay 3d (3 pence) a week to the Temperance Association. Alcoholics would receive support from the society, but if they were caught drinking they'd be fined 2/6d (2 shillings and 6 pence). Helping the poor and reforming alcoholics was seen as a good Christian thing to do and both the Temperance and Suffrage Movements had strong Christian links.

## SOURCE ANALYSIS

### Activity 2: Millicent Fawcett Visits Llandudno (1907)



Take a look at [this article](#) from the North Wales Weekly News.

- What does the source tell us about women's suffrage?
- What does this article tell us about Mrs Fawcett?
- Origin
  - Who created the source?
  - What type of source is it?
- Context
  - When was the source created?
  - Where there any other significant events happening at the time? Refer back to the timeline.
  - Was the most interesting detail about Millicent Fawcett, the fact that she was the wife of the Postmaster General? What does this show us about 19<sup>th</sup> century values?
- Audience
  - Who was the audience for this article?
- Motive
  - What was the purpose of this article?
  - Is the event presented as an important event?
- Language
  - Is it persuasive?



- What is the tone of the source?

### Extra:

Why don't you take a look at the article on The National Library of Wales's (NLW) website. Can you spot the [above](#) article on the page? What might the placement of the article tell us about this event? What about the length of the article?

After this, why don't you try searching for articles that interest you on the [NLW Newspaper](#) database. Think about terms that are relevant to the suffrage movement, or try finding something you're interested in, for example football. Analyse the articles and newspapers and try to think about what this tells us about society at this time. Some terms to search: NUWSS, WSPU, Suffragist, Suffragette, "women's rights", "masculine women"... (TIP – using "parenthesis" around two or more search terms during a search will ensure that both words are relevant to the search instead of articles that contain only one of those key words. I.e. "masculine women" would return articles with both terms. Whereas a search for the term masculine women without parenthesis would return articles containing masculine, women, and masculine women.

## CONCLUSION

Llandudno was home to the first NUWSS cell in Wales, but others followed soon after. Although cells like Bangor helped get Welsh-speaking women involved in the cause for women's suffrage, the Llandudno cell was the foundation on which other North Wales societies were based. Their courage in establishing the cell was vital to the cause in North Wales, and subsequently across Wales. The Temperance movement and Christian attitudes may have enabled women to stand up for themselves and right to vote. The fact that not much of the NUWSS's meetings were reported on by newspapers, and that there are no known photographs of the women in the Llandudno cell is a challenge for modern researchers.

Although Llandudno was one small part of a very big fight, there is still much work to be done on the advancement of women's rights, and gender studies. Some of the aspects that were being fought against over a hundred years ago are still impacting us today. In Hungary at the date this project was being researched gender studies was recently outlawed. It is important that historian and future historians preserve and share the cultures of people who have been historically marginalised.

## FURTHER READING

'Anti-Suffrage Postcards, Posters, & Cartoons', <https://historyoffeminism.com/anti-suffragette-postcards-posters-cartoons/>

'Anti-suffragists' <https://www.parliament.uk/about/living-heritage/transformingsociety/electionsvoting/womenvote/overview/anti-suffragists/>

'Art Responds to Women's Suffrage: Pro and Con', <https://www.radford.edu/rbarris/Women%20and%20art/amerwom05/suffrageart.html>

Ashworth, Emma, 'Suffragists and Suffragettes', <https://www.oxfordhomeschooling.co.uk/blog/the-suffragists/>

Bohata, Kirsti, "'For Wales, see England?' Suffrage and the New Woman in Wales', *Women's History Review*, (2006), <https://doi.org/10.1080/09612020200200342>

Bush, Julia, 'The Anti-Suffrage Movement', (2018), <https://www.bl.uk/votes-for-women/articles/the-anti-suffrage-movement>

'Gender Ideology & Separate Spheres in the 19th Century' <http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/g/gender-ideology-and-separate-spheres-19th-century/>

Hughes, Kathryn, 'Gender roles in the 19th century', <https://www.bl.uk/romantics-and-victorians/articles/gender-roles-in-the-19th-century>

John, Angela, *Our Mother's Land: Chapters in Welsh Women's History, 1830-1939*, (Cardiff, 1991).

Lawson-Reay, Barbara, *Votes for Women: The North Wales Suffragists' Campaign, 1907-1914*, (Llanrwst, 2015).

Murphy, Cliona, 'The religious context of the women's suffrage campaign in Ireland', *Women's History Review*, (2006), <https://doi.org/10.1080/09612029700200158>

Phillips, Elen, "'Here comes the Devil': Welsh Suffrage and the Suffragettes', <https://museum.wales/articles/2018-02-01/Here-comes-the-Devil-Welsh-Suffrage-and-the-Suffragettes/>

Swetnam, Joseph, 'The Arraignment of Lewd, Idle, Froward, and Unconstant Women' (1615), <https://pages.uoregon.edu/dluebke/WesternCiv102/SwetnamArraignment1615.htm>

'The Temperance Hotel and the Suffragist Movement', <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/aberconwy-house/features/the-temperance-hotel-and-the-suffragist-movement>

Tippings, Lisa, *Women's Suffrage in Wales*, (Yorkshire, 2019).

Wallace, Ryland, *The Women's Suffrage Movement in Wales: 1866-1928*, (Cardiff, 2009).

'Why women won greater political equality by 1928', <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zx9887h/revision/1>

'Women and the Vote', <https://www.parliament.uk/about/living-heritage/transformingsociety/electionsvoting/womenvote/keydates/>

## ANSWERS

### Activity 1 Answers

Every picture had positive and negative reactions. What might be modest to one culture, society, religion, is not considered modest to another. The concept of 'modesty' and being 'moral' is socially constructed – its reality depends on several factors that are always changing. It is possible to view all of these pictures as examples of modesty and immodesty depending on the context of the picture and contemporary values. For example, the women rock climbing were seen as immoral and immodest because of what they were wearing but 21st-century British society would most likely interpret their clothes as extremely modest (and completely impractical to go rock climbing).

These concepts are constantly evolving, sometimes 'progressively' and sometimes 'regressively' for example, the Iranian women could now face punishment by the state for not covering their hair. Similarly, the police were regulating the length of swimming costumes in the USA would now be seen as unacceptable. When discussing subjects like modesty we should remember to respect the opinions and values of other societies, cultures, and religions. What is and isn't deemed acceptable according to gender is a reflection of the society in which the matter exists. Understanding the power of words and ideas is crucial. Equality is important and major opinion shifts are occurring, but across the globe, there is still much work to be done, especially with regards to BAME and LGBTQ+ people.

When studying the history of the suffrage movement, it is important to bear these changing concepts in mind and try to look at it through the lens of the period in which it existed and not impose our views on it. Understanding what was and what wasn't acceptable helps explain reactions to the suffrage movement and why it was seen as radical. Values change over time so understanding what late 19th century and early 20th-century society thought of women's suffrage (in Wales) is crucial to understanding the current culture in Wales.

### Activity 2 Answers

The source is written by an unknown author and appears on page 14 in a general list of events that happened in Llandudno. This demonstrates that the newspaper or author does not consider the event important, even though Millicent Fawcett was a major figure in the suffrage movement and the president of the NUWSS. Note how her first name is not noted, she is just 'Mrs. Fawcett'. This demonstrates the status of women in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and how they are defined only by their husbands and not as individuals in their own rights. The missing first names for women in historic articles make modern research of individual women challenging.