

National Records of Scotland (NRS)

Women's Suffrage Timeline

- 1832 – First petition to parliament for women's suffrage. FAILS

Great Reform Act gives vote to more men, but no women

- 1866 - First mass women's suffrage petition presented to parliament by J. S. Mill MP
- 1867 - First women's suffrage societies set up. Organised campaigning begins
- 1870 – Women's Suffrage Bill rejected by parliament

Married Women's Property Act gives married women the right to their own property and money

- 1872 – Women in Scotland given the right to vote and stand for school boards
- 1884 – Suffrage societies campaign for the vote through the Third Reform Act. FAILS
- 1894 – Local Government Act allows women to vote and stand for election at a local level
- 1897 – National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies (NUWSS) formed
- 1903 – Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU) founded by Emmeline Pankhurst
- 1905 – First militant action. Suffragettes interrupt a political meeting and are arrested
- 1906 – Liberal Party wins general election
- 1907 – NUWSS organises the successful 'United Procession of Women', the 'Mud March'

Women's Enfranchisement Bill reaches a second reading. FAILS

Qualification of Women Act: Allows election to borough and county councils

Women's Freedom League formed

- 1908 – Anti-suffragist Liberal MP, Herbert Henry Asquith, becomes prime minister

Women's Sunday demonstration organised by WSPU in London. Attended by 250,000 people from around Britain

Women's National Anti-Suffrage League (WASL) founded by Mrs Humphrey Ward

- 1909 - Marion Wallace-Dunlop becomes the first suffragette to hunger-strike

20 October – Adela Pankhurst, & four others interrupt a political meeting in Dundee. Convicted of Breach of the Peace: £2 fine or 10 days in gaol. Chose imprisonment. [\(NRS, HH16/37\)](#)

Women's Tax Resistance League (WTRL) formed

Women's Suffrage procession in Edinburgh organised by WSPU. Celebrated past achievements of women, and future opportunities for women

6 December - Elsie Roe Brown and Edith Hudson interrupt a political meeting. Convicted of Malicious Mischief and Breach of the Peace: £3 fine or 15 days in gaol for Brown, £5 fine or 30 days in gaol for Hudson. Chose imprisonment [\(NRS, HH16/38\)](#)

- 1910 – WASL merges with Men's National League for Opposing Women's Suffrage

Conciliation Bill for limited suffrage. FAILS

10 November – In retaliation, 300 Suffragettes from WSPU march on parliament. Meet with police brutality, assault and arrests - 'Black Friday'

- 1911 – Census boycott organised by the Women's Freedom League

Women's Coronation Procession. 40,000 women from 28 suffrage societies march for female enfranchisement

- 1912 – Parliamentary Franchise (Women) Bill is defeated by 222 votes to 208. FAILS

23 February – Annie Rhoda Walker or Greig smashes the windows of a motor car. Convicted of Breach of Peace: 7 days imprisonment and £10 caution for 6 months good behaviour or 7 days further imprisonment ([NRS, HH16/39](#))

7 September – Ethel Moorhead (alias Edith Johnston) smashes the exhibition case holding the William Wallace Sword in Stirling. Convicted of Malicious Mischief: £2 fine or 7 days in gaol. Chose imprisonment ([NRS, HH16/40](#))

30 October – Ellison Gibb and Fanny Parker smash the windows of Savings Bank and Inland Revenue. Convicted of Malicious Mischief: 30s fine or 10 days in gaol. Chose imprisonment ([NRS, HH16/42](#))

2 November – Ethel Moorhead whips a Mr Peter Ross in the face. Convicted of assault: £1 fine or 10 days in gaol. Chose imprisonment ([NRS, HH16/40](#))

3 December – Ethel Moorhead (alias Mary Humphreys) throws stones through a car window. Convicted of Malicious Mischief: 40s fine or 10 days in gaol. Chose imprisonment ([NRS, HH16/40 & 41](#))

3 December – Fanny Parker, Joyce Locke and Marion Pollock are found hiding near a Liberal political conference, preparing to interrupt the speaker. Convicted of Breach of Peace: 20s fine or 5 days in prison. Chose imprisonment ([NRS, HH16/41](#))

5 December – Emily Wilding Davison (alias Mary Brown) whips Rev. Forbes Jackson on the head and body. Convicted of Breach of the Peace: 40s fine or 10 days in gaol. Chose imprisonment ([NRS, HH16/46](#))

- **1913** – ‘Cat and Mouse’ Act allows temporary discharge of prisoners on licence

4 February – Ethel Moorhead (alias Margaret Morrison) threw pepper in a policeman’s face, smashed 12 window panes and dumped a bucket of water over a police sergeant. Convicted of assault, breach of the peace, malicious mischief and assault: £20 fine or 30 days in gaol. Chose imprisonment ([NRS, HH16/40](#))

Emily Wilding Davison dies

50, 000 people take part in NUWSS’ Pilgrimage for Women’s Suffrage

19 May – Arabella Scott and four others attempt to burn down the grand stand at Kelso racecourse. Scott is charged with attempted fire-raising: 9 months imprisonment ([NRS, HH16/44](#))

29 August – Flora Ellen Smith and Winnie Wallace assaulted Prime Minister Herbert Asquith. Charged with Disorderly Conduct and Breach of the Peace. Kept untried at Inverness Prison before charges were dropped ([NRS, HH16/45](#))

15 October – Ethel Moorhead (alias Margaret Morrison) and Dorothea Lynas or Smith attempted to set fire to 6 Park Gardens, Glasgow. Convicted of House-breaking and attempted Fire-raising: 8 months imprisonment ([NRS, HH16/40](#))

- **1914 - NUWSS reaches 50, 000 members; WSPU has 5, 000 members**

9 March – Police attempt to re-arrest Emmeline Pankhurst at meeting in St Andrew's Hall, Glasgow. Witnesses allege police brutality

12 March – Helen Crawfurd convicted of Wilful and Malicious Mischief for smashing windows: 10 days' imprisonment ([NRS, HH16/45](#))

23 June – Frances Gordon convicted of House-breaking with intent to set fire: 12 months' imprisonment ([NRS, HH16/46](#))

3 July – Maude Edwards slashes a portrait of King George V in the Royal Scottish Academy: 3 months' imprisonment. Served 11 days in Perth Prison ([NRS, HH16/47](#))

4 August – Britain declares war on Germany

10 August – Government announces that all suffragettes will be released from prison

- **1918 – Representation of the People Act. Allows women over 30 and men over 21 to vote**

November – Parliamentary Qualification of Women Act. Women can stand as MPs

- **1919 – Millicent Fawcett retires as President of NUWSS. NUWSS becomes the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship**

Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act. Becomes illegal to prevent women from working in public roles because of sex or marriage. Women can become lawyers

Nancy Astor becomes the first female MP to take her seat

- **1923 – Duchess of Atholl becomes first female MP in Scotland**
- **1928 – Equal Franchise Act. Votes for all women over 21**
- **1969 - Voting age is lowered to 18 for women and men**
- **1970 – Equal Pay Act**
- **1975 - Sex Discrimination Act**

- 2016 – Voting age is lowered to 16 for women and men in Scotland
- 2018 – Great progress has been made, but there is still more to do. Only one third of MPs are women. Women are still campaigning for fully equal opportunities and pay. Sexual discrimination is still being rooted out, as the [#MeToo movement](#) has highlighted
- ? – Full equality