

# Women and Reform

# Voting Rights for Women and the Temperance Movement

## Voting Rights for Women

Voting rights for women, aka **suffrage**, started at Seneca Falls in 1848 and was carried forward by a number of middle class women.

In 1890, two of the pioneer feminists of the 1840s, **Elizabeth Cady Stanton** and **Susan B. Anthony** of New York, helped found the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA) to secure the vote for women.

A **western state, Wyoming**, was the **first to grant full suffrage to women**, in 1869. By 1900, some states allowed women to vote in local elections, and most allowed women to own and control property after marriage.

**Constitutional Amendment:** The **Nineteenth Amendment in 1920** guaranteed women's right to vote in all elections at the local, state and national levels.

# Alcohol as a Social Evil

## Temperance Movement:

Excessive drinking of alcohol by male factory workers was one cause of **poverty** for immigrant and working class families. It was also a cause of **domestic abuse**.

The **Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU)** was formed in 1874. Advocating total abstinence from alcohol, the WCTU, under the leadership of Francis E. Willard of Illinois, had 500,000 members by 1898.

The **Antisaloon League**, founded in **1893**, became a powerful political force and by 1916 had persuaded 21 states to **close down all saloons and bars**.

Unwilling to wait for the laws to change, **Carry A. Nation** of Kansas created a sensation by raiding saloons and **smashing barrels of beer with a hatchet**.

**Constitutional Amendment: 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment (Prohibition Law) 1919**

# Settlement Houses

**Jane Addams and Lillian Wald** – social reformers in the “Settlement House” movement.

Settlement Houses were places for **poor people** living in the **cities** to learn to read and write, and to obtain the **social services** they needed.

In **1889**, **Jane Addams** opened **Hull House in a slum area of Chicago**. Soon afterwards, Lillian Wald opened the Henry Street Settlement House in NYC. Others followed their example. For many immigrants living in cities, Settlement Houses represented **a place of safety and self-improvement**.

**These women became the first social workers.**