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A Woman's Crusade: Alice Paul and the Battle for the Ballot

By Mary Walton



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A Woman's Crusade: Alice Paul and the Battle for the Ballot By Mary Walton

Alice Paul began her life as a studious girl from a strict Quaker family in New Jersey. In 1907, a scholarship took her to England, where she developed a passionate devotion to the suffrage movement. Upon her return to the United States, Alice became the leader of the militant wing of the American suffrage movement. Calling themselves "Silent Sentinels," she and her followers were the first protestors to picket the White House. Arrested and jailed, they went on hunger strikes and were force-fed and brutalized. Years before Gandhi's campaign of nonviolent resistance, and decades before civil rights demonstrations, Alice Paul practiced peaceful civil disobedience in the pursuit of equal rights for women.

With her daring and unconventional tactics, Alice Paul eventually succeeded in forcing President Woodrow Wilson and a reluctant U.S. Congress to pass the Nineteenth Amendment, granting women the right to vote. Here at last is the inspiring story of the young woman whose dedication to women's rights made that long-held dream a reality.

"Alice Paul was a visionary and a pioneer. Her struggle for women's rights was built on the premise that no society or nation can reach its full potential if half of the population is left behind." -- Hillary Rodham Clinton



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A Woman's Crusade: Alice Paul and the Battle for the Ballot By Mary Walton Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #933762 in Books
- Published on: 2010-08-17
- Released on: 2010-08-17
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.00" h x .81" w x 6.00" l, 1.06 pounds
- Binding: Hardcover
- 304 pages



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Editorial Review

Review

"Mary Walton, a veteran reporter at the Philadelphia Inquirer, has captured Paul's fire, her slow burn in *A Woman's Crusade*. Part of the genius of the book lies in Walton's quiet analysis of the methods used by the National American Woman Suffrage Assn. and the National Women's Party, founded by Paul in 1916." ?*Los Angeles Times*

"[A] fast-paced narrative...Recommended." ?*Choice*

"Mary Walton delivers an engrossing account of one of the most dramatic episodes in American History--the culmination of the seven-decade quest for woman suffrage. This moving portrayal of the brilliant activist Alice Paul and her dedicated companions in prison and on the picket lines captures the courage and sacrifice demanded of women who risked reputations, health and even their freedom to gain the right to vote." ?*Marla R. Miller, author of Betsy Ross and the Making of America*

"*A Woman's Crusade* makes it clear that rather than the Constitution simply conferring voting rights on women, women suffrage activists chiseled their demand into the Constitution through a strategic, relentless, and sometimes personally painful campaign. Mary Walton vividly captures Alice Paul's determined leadership of that movement." ?*Donald A. Ritchie, author of Our Constitution*

"Nearly a half century before Martin Luther King brought Ghandian methods to bear on racial segregation, Alice Paul used non-violent protest to win full voting rights for American women; but few Americans know about her. Mary Walton vividly brings her to life again in this brilliant, important and highly readable book. America's understanding of its history will be all the richer for it." ?*Gene Roberts, The Race Beat, 2007 Pulitzer Prize winner for History*

"Perhaps more than any other person, Alice Paul was responsible for U.S. women finally securing the right to vote in 1920--and yet most Americans have never heard of her. It's astonishing that an individual of such courage and accomplishment would have to be "rescued" from obscurity, but that's precisely what Mary Walton has done with this dynamic and entertaining biography. Walton sweeps the reader along in Alice Paul's seven-year crusade for suffrage, all the way to its nail-biting conclusion. This is a wonderful and important book." ?*Thomas Kunkel, author of Genius in Disguise: Harold Ross of The New Yorker*

"Mary Walton's exciting, carefully researched biography offers a rare behind-the-scenes look at one of the most intriguing personalities of the 20th century. Walton helps us appreciate Paul's leadership and aggressive vigor in a story that reveals all the drama, doubt, and grandeur of true history." ?*Robert P. J. Cooney, Jr., author of Winning the Vote: The Triumph of the American Woman Suffrage Movement*

"Mary Walton has written a passionate history of one of my heroines (and distant relative), Alice Paul – a fiery feminist who understood political strategy and the value of a sound-bite better than anyone. A leader in the suffragist movement and founder of the National Woman's Party, Alice Paul drafted the Equal Rights Amendment, which I now proudly carry as lead sponsor in the House. All Americans should read this book to learn more about one of our most extraordinary and dynamic leaders." ?*Congresswoman Carolyn B. Maloney*

“Richly endowed with research . . . detailed, absorbing . . . I value the book for introducing her to the next generation of feminists with a taste for revolution.” *Ms Magazine*

About the Author

Mary Walton is a veteran journalist who wrote for the *Philadelphia Inquirer* for 20 years. The acclaimed author of several books including *For Love of Money* and *Car: A Drama of the American Workplace*, she lives in Ocean Grove, NJ.

Users Review

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