

Matilda Joslyn Gage

1826–1898



As a suffragist writer and speaker Matilda Joslyn Gage enjoyed a thirty-year collaboration with Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton. Her role is gaining new recognition.

*“There is a word sweeter than Mother, Home or Heaven: that word is Liberty.”
Inscription on the headstone of Matilda Joslyn Gage*



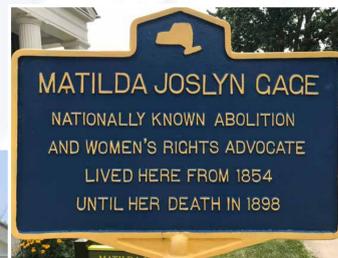
Matilda Joslyn Gage

From Abolition to Women’s Rights

Matilda Joslyn Gage began her activism as an abolitionist. Her childhood home and her home after marriage to merchant Henry Hill Gage were stops on the Underground Railroad. In 1852, at the age of twenty-six, she spoke at the third National Woman’s Rights Convention in Syracuse. After the Civil War she joined with Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton in writing the first three volumes of *The History of Woman Suffrage* which remains an essential source on the movement.



The Gage home in Fayetteville, NY. Significant portions of *The History of Woman Suffrage* were written in the house, currently a museum and home of the Gage Foundation. MATILDA JOSLYN GAGE FOUNDATION



New York State Historical Marker

Radical Turn

With Anthony and Stanton, Gage was a founding member of the National Woman Suffrage Association. A skilled writer, she edited NWSA’s newspaper the *National Citizen and Ballot Box*. She co-authored the “Woman’s Declaration of Rights” in 1876. Commemorating the centennial of independence it called for impeachment of “our rulers” for denying women’s rights. In later years some turned away from Gage because of her criticism of the Bible and Christianity arguing that they encouraged the subordination of women.

Testing the Right to Vote

After the Civil War, hundreds of women, including Matilda Joslyn Gage, unsuccessfully attempted to vote. Some argued that the “privileges and immunities” of U.S. citizens—guaranteed in the 14th Amendment—included the right to vote. Susan B. Anthony was tried and convicted after voting in the 1872 Presidential election. Gage wrote about the trial in the Albany Law Review. Once women had achieved suffrage for Fayetteville school committee elections, Gage successfully registered 102 women to vote.



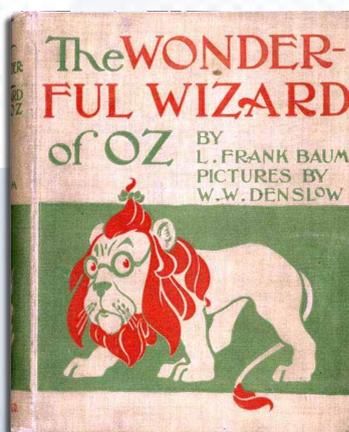
Susan B. Anthony in 1870. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



Site of the Anthony Trial. Canandaigua, NY. DANIEL CASE

Off to See the Wizard

Matilda Joslyn Gage’s son-in-law L. Frank Baum wrote the *Wizard of Oz*. She encouraged him to write and publish the stories that he told to his son. Her influence can be seen in the fourteen Oz books that portrayed a female-run egalitarian society. One of her granddaughters was named Dorothy.



First edition. GEORGE M. HILL, CHICAGO, NEW YORK.

Ka-ron-ien-ha-wi

Gage protested the harsh treatment of Native Americans and argued that the government of the Six Nation Iroquois Confederacy provided a model of “nearly equal” rights for women. After an honorary adoption into the Wolf Clan of the Mohawk nation she was given the name Ka-ron-ien-ha-wi which means “Sky Carrier.”