

Maud Wood Park

1871–1955



Maud Wood Park graduated summa cum laude from Radcliffe College in the class of 1898. SCHLESINGER LIBRARY, RADCLIFFE INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDY, HARVARD UNIVERSITY

I am “too much a reformer and too little an opportunist to be of use in Washington.” Maud Wood Park when first approached to lobby for women’s suffrage.

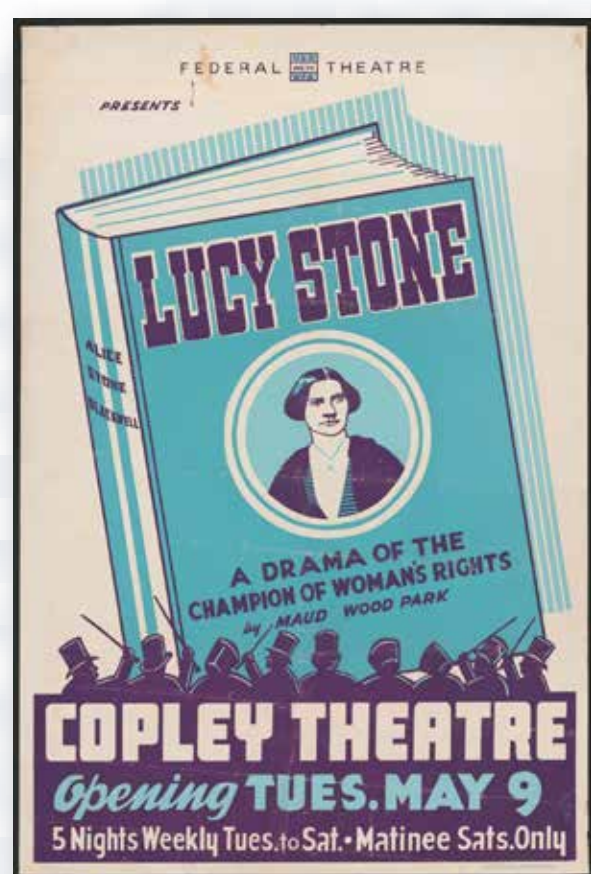
Maud Wood Park recruited college women for the suffrage cause and later became an effective lobbyist for passage of the 19th Amendment.

National College Equal Suffrage League

Maud Wood Park was born in Boston. At Radcliffe she was one of only two women in her class to favor women’s suffrage. Attending a national suffrage meeting at the age of twenty-nine, she was frustrated to be the youngest person present. Park founded the College Equal Suffrage League, toured college campuses, and established chapters in thirty states. She promoted the practice of recruiting college women for campaigns and social causes.

The Front Door Lobby

In 1916 Park was recruited to lead the National American Woman Suffrage Association’s lobbying campaign in Washington, D.C. She explained that her operation was called “The Front Door Lobby” a “half-humorous, half-kindly name given to our... Committee...by one of the press-gallery men there because...we never used backstairs methods.” A pioneering lobbyist, she kept detailed records on each member of congress, including biographical material and voting history. She also trained volunteers in effective advocacy.



Maud Wood Park wrote a play about suffragist pioneer Lucy Stone. It was performed in Boston in 1939. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

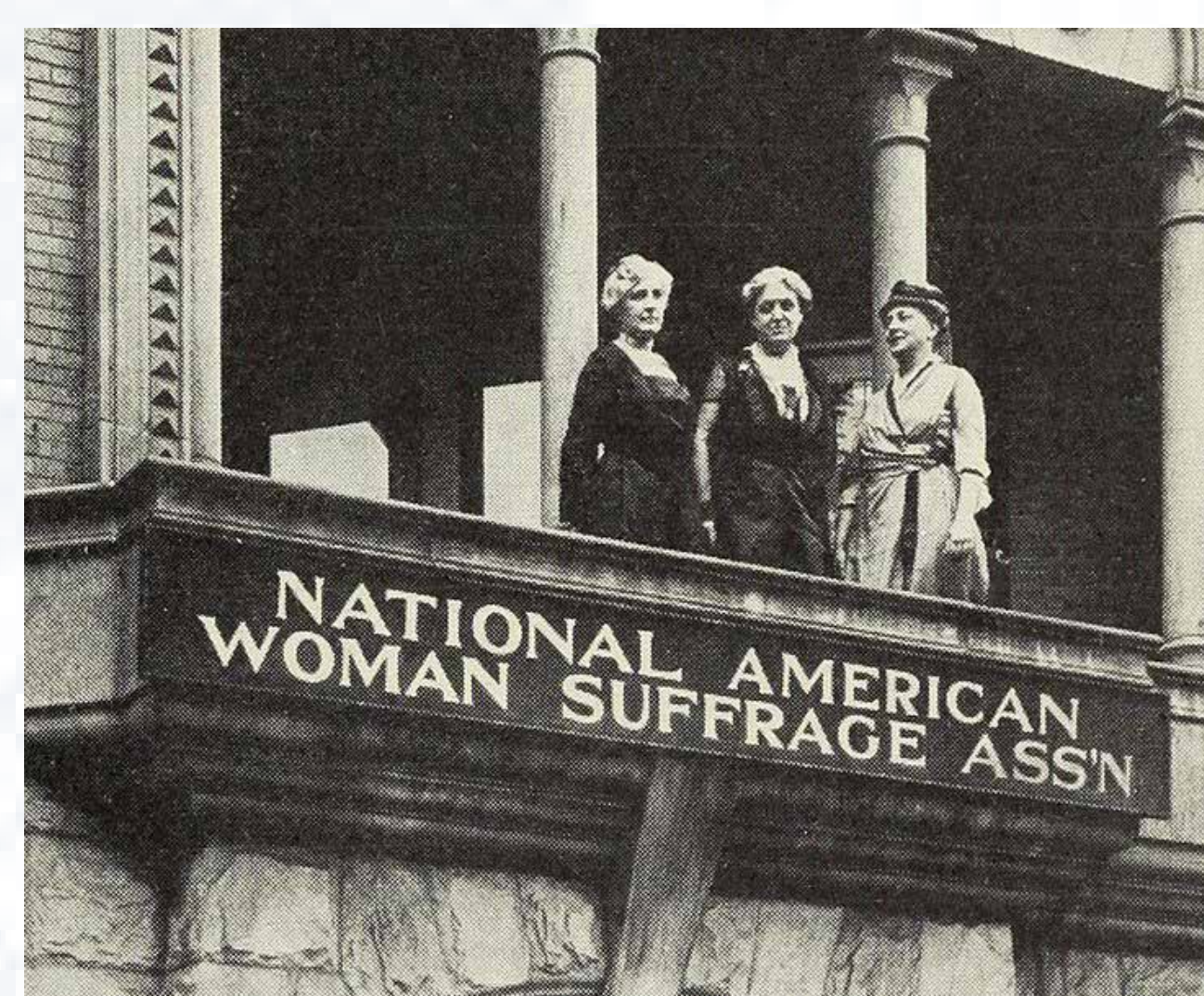


Carrie Chapman Catt proposed a League of Women Voters after passage of the 19th Amendment. Maud Wood Park became its first president in 1920. The board is pictured at a Chicago meeting. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

A Private Life

As a student at Radcliffe, Maud Wood secretly married architect Charles Edward Park. Several years after his death she married theatrical manager Robert Hunter Freeman, again in secret. She used the name “Mrs. Park” because her work “could be better done by a supposed widow than a woman known to be married and therefore suspected of neglecting her husband.”

Maud Wood Park had a reputation for honesty, tact, and efficiency while serving as chief lobbyist for the National American Woman Suffrage Association. HARRIS AND EWING



Maud Wood Park with Helen Hamilton Gardner and Carrie Chapman Catt, President of the National American Woman Suffrage Association, on the balcony of Suffrage House, the organization’s headquarters in Washington D. C.

Six Don’ts

Maud Wood Park issued advice for lobbyists.

1. Don’t tell all you know. 2. Don’t tell anything you do not know (don’t listen to rumors and repeat them). 3. Do not repeat even a slight remark that has been made to you in confidence. 4. Don’t lose your temper. 5. Don’t nag. 6. Never give up. Her careful and forthright approach was effective in increasing legislative support for the 19th Amendment.

Maud Wood Park donated her papers to Radcliffe College in 1943. Her gift led to the formation of the Women’s Archives, now known as the Schlesinger Library.

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