

Lucy Stone

1818-1893



Lucy Stone has been called the “heart and soul” of the suffrage movement. As a speaker, organizer, editor, and motivating force, she altered public opinion, customs, and laws pertaining to women’s rights.



Born in West Brookfield, Massachusetts Lucy Stone was a primary organizer of the first National Woman’s Rights Convention in Worcester in 1850 and continued as a key organizer and manager of subsequent national conventions. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



Where is Lucy Stone’s monument? One is located on Commonwealth Avenue in Boston. BOSTON WOMEN’S MEMORIAL, SWAMPYANK

“Where is Lucy Stone’s monument, reaching up to the stars?”
H. L. Mencken

A Turning Point

A young Lucy Stone was angered by a pastoral letter to Congregational ministers condemning women for public speaking to mixed audiences. As her minister criticized the activist Grimké sisters for speaking on abolition, she made her cousin “black and blue with the indignant nudges of my elbow at each aggravating sentence,” ... “If I ever felt bound to silence by misrepresentation of Scripture texts or believed equal rights did not belong to women, that pastoral letter broke my bonds.”

A Voice For Women

After the Civil War Lucy Stone founded the Boston based American Woman Suffrage Association and became editor of *The Woman’s Journal* the most influential national publication advocating woman’s suffrage. The Journal also printed pamphlets and brochures that were distributed in states where suffrage campaigns were underway. AWSA emphasized state-by-state efforts to gain suffrage believing that a successful federal constitutional amendment (both congressional approval and state-by-state ratification) would be more likely if women were already voting in several states.



Based in Boston and edited by Lucy Stone, *The Woman’s Journal* became the most influential national publication advocating woman’s suffrage. SCHLESINGER LIBRARY, RADCLIFFE INSTITUTE, HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Later in life Lucy Stone dedicated her energy to the American Woman Suffrage Association.



Alice Stone Blackwell succeeded her mother as editor of *The Woman’s Journal* and played a leading role in uniting AWSA with the National Woman Suffrage Association of Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton. (The new organization was called the National American Woman Suffrage Association.) LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

An Independent Woman

Having resolved to remain single rather than assume the subordinate legal position of a wife, Lucy Stone sought independence by enrolling at Oberlin College in Ohio, the first co-educational college in the United States. She was the first Massachusetts woman to earn a bachelor’s degree. Encouraged in part by abolitionist Abby Kelley Foster’s appearance at Oberlin, she became a paid lecturer advocating reform.



This cartoon depicts an actual event as Lucy Stone was pelted with vegetables. She kept speaking despite being doused with a hose. Her “musical voice” was said to combine the “sweetest, modest manners” with a delivery “as unshrinking and self-possessed as a loaded canon.” ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

Lucy Stone and husband Henry Blackwell sometimes shared a platform. Blackwell once spoke for over an hour at a Cleveland convention, prompting a local newspaper to comment, “He forgot it was a Woman’s Convention.”



“Lucy Stoners”

Lucy Stone accepted a marriage proposal by reformer Henry Blackwell. A Protest against unjust marriage laws was part of the ceremony. The couple took steps to ensure Stone’s financial and personal independence within marriage. To retain her individuality she kept her own name. Those who followed her lead in not taking a husband’s name were called “Lucy Stoners.”



Iconic: after her death these suffrage campaign buttons featured an image of Lucy Stone.