

A KENTUCKY HISTORY MOMENT

SUFFRAGIST LEAVES LASTING LEGACY FOR KENTUCKY WOMEN

Massachusetts native and New York resident Susan B. Anthony may have visited Kentucky only once, but her work affected every Kentucky woman from 1920 to the present. Anthony was an activist on many fronts, but suffrage may be the cause for which she now is best known. Having co-founded the National Woman Suffrage Association with Elizabeth Cady Stanton in 1869, she registered to vote – and voted – in the 1872 election, a crime for which she was arrested and fined \$100 (she didn't pay it). She delivered thousands of speeches, traveled throughout the country attending meetings and conventions, and published widely on women's suffrage until her death at age 86 in 1906.

Anthony visited Kentucky in 1879 at the invitation of Mary Barr Clay and Sallie Clay Bennett, daughters of Cassius Marcellus Clay. Suffrage organizations formed in Richmond and Lexington after that visit. A statewide organization started in 1881.

For all of her effort, only four western states allowed women to vote when Anthony died. All U.S. women received the right in 1920 with ratification of the 19th Amendment, known as the Susan B. Anthony Amendment.

Anthony's legacy continues every time a U.S. woman exercises her right to vote. On July 2, 1979, she became the first woman to be honored with her likeness on a circulating U.S. coin. The U.S. Mint produced Susan B. Anthony dollar coins between 1979 and 1981 and again in 1999. The coin remains in circulation.



Left: The Susan B. Anthony dollar.
Above: Kentucky Gov. Edwin P. Morrow signs the 19th Amendment, Jan. 6, 1920. (KHS Collections)

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