



Beatrice Reynolds Kinkead

Beatrice Reynolds Kinkead of Upper Lake, California, 100 miles North of San Francisco, was a continent away from the infamous Occoquan Workhouse in Virginia, but it was almost inevitable that she would eventually journey from one place to the other. The same kind of drive and commitment that led her to excel in academics would carry over into her work for the suffrage movement.

Like many others, she became involved in the suffrage cause during her college years. In 1893, while she was an undergraduate at the University of California, a coalition of Golden State suffragists, W.C.T.U. members, and even a number of groups that had never been involved in suffrage before, united to get the State Legislature to pass a school- suffrage bill allowing women to vote at any school election and run for any school office. But it never became law. The Governor said he had concerns about the constitutionality of the measure, asked a law firm to study the matter, and by the time the lawyers made their report, the deadline

to sign the bill had expired, a great convenience to the Governor, but a source of great exasperation to suffragists.

Though Reynolds was busy with her studies, becoming one of the first women to earn a B.A. from the University of California on February 12, 1895, and an M.A. in 1897, she still found time to help the cause. In 1896, while still pursuing her M.A., and teaching in a San Francisco high school, she was quite active in the local suffrage league. That year, suffragists convinced the legislature to bypass the governor, and put woman suffrage directly on the ballot for the state's (male) voters to decide.

She married James Alan Kinkead, on August 8, 1902. The young couple soon moved to Montclair, New Jersey, where Beatrice would give birth to four children (Robin, James, David and Donald) between 1906 and 1911. Though busy raising a family, the New Jersey Suffrage Referendum of 1915 would bring another suffrage campaign to her doorstep, and she could not ignore the call to duty.

She first began going down to D.C. to be a banner- bearing "Silent Sentinel" picket along the White House fence on "New Jersey Day" in February, 1917. But the friendly spirit of those pre-war days was long gone by July 14, 1917, when she and 15 other picketers were arrested on false charges of "obstructing traffic" on the wide Pennsylvania Avenue sidewalk. She spent 3 days in the Occoquan Workhouse in Virginia.

By the end of her life, she was back home in California, a state whose suffragists didn't give up after the setbacks of 1893 and 1896, and who won the vote through a referendum in 1911, nine years before the 19th Amendment was ratified.