

FAIRFAX COUNTY

VIRGINIA

Found in the Archives no. 87 Circuit Court Clerk's Office Historic Records Center

Women in the List of Voters Registered 1902-1920



Happy summer, and welcome to *Found in the Archives*, a publication of The Clerk of the Fairfax Circuit Court, 19th Judicial Circuit, who proudly serves The City of Fairfax & Fairfax County. While our newsletter will look slightly different from now on, you can expect our regular content coming to you once a month. For questions and comments, please email CCRHistoricRecords@fairfaxcounty.gov.

In June's edition, we will discuss a transcription project we have been working on at the Historic Records Center, and some of the interesting information we have been able to learn!



Over the past couple of months, we have been transcribing the List of Voters Registered 1902-1920. This ledger is significant because it is our first voting record that shows women registering to vote. Although the Women’s Suffrage movement began much earlier, women did not gain the right to vote in the United States until 1920 with the 19th Amendment, which prohibited voter discrimination on the basis of sex. Passed by Congress on June 4, 1920, the amendment did not take effect until August 18. . This record includes individuals registering to vote from 1902 to 1925, with a large influx of women registering in the latter part of 1920 because of the 19th Amendment. The Voter Register contains interesting biographical information about those registering including occupation, which area of the county they lived in, age, and birthdate. While many entries simply include name and voting precinct, we were able to use the Register to learn about some of the interesting women who lived and voted in Fairfax County.

Sep. 25, 1920	Beggins James W.	
Sep. 25, 1920	Brown Robt. P.	14
Sep. 11, "	Brige Margaret C	"
" " "	Ball Isabelle	"
" 18 "	Brunner Carrie D.	"
" 22 "	Brinkerhoff Mary B	"
" 24 "	Bouknight Beulah	"
" 28 "	Berger Della	"
	P. L. ...	"

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September 11, 1920 is the first day we have on record that a woman legally registered to vote in Fairfax County, with nine individual women registering from Falls Church. Many women who registered to vote on the same day listed the same neighborhood as

their place of residence, leading us to believe it is possible they came in large groups to register together. It is also possible that September 11 was the first day voter registration opened in Fairfax County after the passage of the 19th Amendment, since there is no record of a woman registering before then even with the 19th Amendment's enforcement beginning on August 18.

Information on women's employment can be difficult to find, but because the Voter Register has an "Occupation" column we are able to learn about many of the women who registered to vote and the interesting jobs they had. Twenty-three year old Clelia Boushee from Vienna was a stenographer, an occupation also listed by men on the voter register. Katherine Dabney of Vienna was 64 years old at the time she registered to vote, and she was a clerk in the United States Treasury. Fifty-two year old Mary Rippey also worked for the Federal Government as a clerk in the United States War Department when she registered to vote in October 1920. Dorothy Freeman was a dentist assistant, Mary Alice Gunnell was a poultry raiser, and Eunice Glasscock was a printers assistant. Martha Albord Sherman listed herself as a library assistant, and Caroline Baldwin Sherman, who registered right below her, was a "Librarian" [sic]. Another interesting woman who gave an occupation is Alma Hine, widow of O. E. Hine, who developed much of the Town of Vienna. When O. A. Hine passed away, his wife Alma took over his real estate ventures as well as the Hine Family Farm, and when registering to vote at the age of 77, she listed herself as "a Farmer and Householder."

Walt Viola E.	"	1866	67	"
Hetwiler Rosa E.	"	Dec. 4 1859	35	"
Rhyer Mary A.	"	Feb 22 1865	64	clerk in U.S. Treasury
Dabney Katherine M.	"	May 9 1881	39	Housewife
Hearn Rosa L.	"			
Blundas W. W.	"			

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Richards Sarah	"	June 2, 1867	31	teacher
Reeder Mary H.	"	Dec. 25, 1867	33	Housewife
Robinson Mary Sherman	"	April 24, 1898	22	"
Randolph Edythe L.V.	"	Aug. 22, 1881	39	clerk in U.S. Treas.
Rippey Mary G.	"	Aug. 29 1868	52	" " " " War Dept

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" Warren M.	"			
Freeman Dorothy L.	"	Dec. 6 1875	23	Dentist Assistant
Freeman Mattie B.	"	1876	44	Housewife
J. J. J. J. J.	"			

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Sherman Elsie B.	"	Nov. 14 1859	61	" wife
Sherman Dorothy Kate	"	Sept. 7 1893	37	Teacher
Sherman Martha Albord	"	July 31 1886	34	Library Assistant
Sherman Caroline Baldwin	"	Oct. 6, 1881	38	Librarian
Smith Nellie B.	"	Oct. 26 1881	38	Housewife
Shawen Rosita	"	Jan 6 1860	60	" "

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We would also like to note the age range of women registering to vote for the first time. Our oldest woman was Sarah E. Besley of Ashgrove, who was 81 when she registered to vote in September 1920. The youngest woman to register to vote was Mary Sherman Robinson, also of Ashgrove, who was 22 years old. Both women also listed themselves as a housewife.

Gallard Madeline	"			
Cyrene M. Vanier K.	"			
Bayless Jennie J.	"			
Bayless Catherine	"			
Besley Sarah E.	"	1931	81	Housewife
Brashears Mary J.	"	march 1861	58	"
Babcock Sarah Elizabeth	"	Sept. 17, 1880	40	"
B...	"		71	

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Bawlings Rebecca L.	"	Feb. 22 1873	49	Housewife
Richards Ira H.	"	June 2, 1869	51	Teacher
Beecher Mary H.	"	Dec. 23, 1867	53	Housewife
Robinson Mary Sherman	"	April 24, 1898	22	"
Randolph Estythe L.V.	"	Aug. 22, 1881	39	teacher in U. S.
Ripley Mary A.	"	Aug. 29 1868	52	" " " " " "
Richards W. C. T.	"			

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We began transcribing this Voter Registration with the intent of publishing the index on our website so it will be available for use by both local and distance researchers. We are excited to make this information available to the public, and have it be easily accessible and searchable for those using our records for research!

For more information on these and other records held at the Fairfax Circuit Court Historic Records Center, please call 703-246-4168 or email CCRHistoricRecords@fairfaxcounty.gov.

The Historic Records Center is open to both walk-ins and appointments. You can make a research appointment by calling 703-246-4168.

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