

So What Else Is New? Women Marched, Spoke Up 50 Years Ago

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NEW YORK — "We did all those things. I went swimming nude and worse things than that. But we did them privately. They do them publicly and I think that's a mistake," said Dorothy Kenyon, a former municipal court judge and still a practicing lawyer at the age of 82.

"Everything they talk about we talked about before 1914," asserts Jeannette Rankin, a pacifist who was the first woman to be elected as a United States Representative and who voted against American entry into both World Wars. Miss Rankin turned 90 last June.

"They" are the women's liberation movement, the latest regiment of feminists whose exploits from topless

swimming and barroom sit-ins to vociferous demands for equal treatment with men has kept them in the headlines and on the television and cocktail chatter circuit.

If there is a generation gap in feminism, as there is among students and blacks, it exists between the young cadres of 20 and 30 and their mothers who have been accused of letting the revolution lapse. The takeover generation of female activists on the whole revere the founding grandmothers and maiden grandaunts who have languished for nearly half a century in the historical garret reserved for eccentrics and those who arrived too early or late on the battlefields.

On the eve of the 50th anniversary of Woman's Suffrage however a spritely octagen-

arian has every right to claim her laurels.

The suffragettes won their victory by "making a scene" as one male political writer said on Aug. 26, 1920. They paraded and picketed, lit liberty bonfires, had their fingers broken by the police, were arrested, went to jail and held hunger strikes. Perhaps only in retrospect, it seems, they protested in style.

"Our skirts were to the ankles," said Mrs. Arthur Schlesinger Sr., a widow and mother of historians. Radcliffe Women's Archives are named after her and her husband. The suffragettes marched under banners of purple, gold and scarlet that bore such incendiary messages as "Resistance to tyrants is obedience to God."

"We always tried to make

our lines as beautiful as we could and our banners were really beautiful," maintains Alice Paul, "The Pale Wraith" and brilliant organizer who founded the National Woman's Party, the militant wing of the suffrage movement. Her card system on legislators was credited with steamrolling the 72-year-old campaign for the woman's vote through Congress.

Miss Paul was arrested seven times in the United States and in England, once for demonstrating across from the White House as part of her strategy to keep the cause alive in front of President Woodrow Wilson and the nation.

"We never did anything but make speeches, beautiful speeches, but we never got to finish them because as soon as a person opened her mouth she got arrested," recalled Miss Paul, who can be forgiven if at 85 and still going strong for the equal rights Constitutional amendment she proposed in

1923, she forgets that 60 years ago she broke a window of a banquet hall to gain the attention of Prime Minister Herbert Asquith.

From Lucretia Mott to Betty Friedan, feminists have been indefatigably verbal. Everything said today has indeed been said and written before.

In 1837 Susan B. Anthony, then a 17-year-old teacher, was asking for equal pay for women teachers, coeducation and higher education for women.

In 1848, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and other abolitionist women assembled at Seneca Falls, NY, and asserted in a declaration of principles, that "all men and women are created equal." But, they added, man has established "absolute tyranny" over woman.

In the 1970 vocabulary of radical feminism, man is a male chauvinist, a sexist and an oppressor.

"Radical reform" was what Miss Anthony and Mrs. Stanton expected their magazine *The*

Revolution, to further in 1863. "Educated suffrage, irrespective of sex or color; equal pay to women for equal work; eight hours labor; abolition of standing armies and party despotism. Down with politicians — up with the people!" They asked in language that seems startlingly contemporary.

But feminism has always seemed visionary. It has always swung from revolution to reaction, propelled on spasmodic bursts of energy toward astonishing achievement before subsiding into compromise and indifference.

The parallels between the decades and the centuries are numerous. The first 19th century feminists noticed their shackles while seeking emancipation for Negro slaves. But after black freedmen gained the vote white abolitionist women isolated their cause.

The present sisterhood honed its skills in the mid 20th century movements of civil rights, peace and radical politics. Current historians of feminism,

such as Caroline Bird, whose 1968 book "Born Female" is being reissued by David McKay, emphasize the kinship between women and blacks as second-class citizens.

But feminism has always been faction-prone. It always had its separatists, starting with Lucy Stone, who kept her name after marrying Henry Blackwell in 1855 in a remarkable ceremony that contravened all of the legal obligations of the nuptial rite. Today some feminists deny any man's name including their father's.

There were always the militants and the conservatives, the radicals and the reformers, the single-minded suffragists and broad-gauge social reconstructionists.

Victoria Woodhull published the first American translation of "The Communist Manifesto" and was later accused of trying to sabotage the First International for feminist deviationism. Because of the bitter rivalry between Alice Paul and Carrie Chapman Catt neither

witnessed the signing of the suffrage proclamation.

The suffrage triumph was a landmark for decline. Many feminists, old and new, acknowledge that counterrevolution followed. "We got sidetracked and discovered to our astonishment that when you got the vote you were not thereby made a full-fledged citizen. It was a horrible discovery," Dorothy Kenyon admits. "After 1920, a genuine wave of reaction set in."

Counter March

LOS ANGELES (UPI)—The recently passed women's rights bill benefits a minority of women and should be reconsidered, the national women's organization, Happiness Of

