

When Inez Milholland—the "lady in white" who led the March 13, 1913 suffrage parade—dies in 1916 (at age 30), Alice Paul is devastated. She worries whether the suffragist movement can continue, so effectively, without Inez.

But Lucy Burns, another firebrand and friend of Alice, has other ideas.

Lucy was born in Brooklyn. Her family is Irish Catholic, and Lucy is an educated girl. As we learn from the "American Memory" section of the Library of Congress, she first became interested in the more militant side of gaining woman's rights when she was pursuing a doctorate in English as an Oxford-University student:

Born in Brooklyn, New York, to an Irish Catholic family, Burns was a brilliant student of language and linguistics. She studied at Vassar College and Yale University in the United States and at the University of Berlin in Germany (1906-8). While a student at Oxford College in Cambridge, England, Burns witnessed the militancy of the British suffrage movement.

Burns set her academic goals aside and in 1909 became an activist with Emmeline and Christabel Pankhurst's Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU). She perfected the art of street speaking, was arrested repeatedly, and was imprisoned four times. From 1910 to 1912 she worked as a suffrage organizer in Scotland.

Meanwhile, Alice Paul also became interested in more radically activating for women's rights. The two young women met in a London police station:

Burns met Alice Paul in a London police station after both were arrested during a suffrage demonstration outside Parliament. Their alliance was powerful and long-lasting.

Returning to the United States (Paul in 1910, Burns in 1912), the two women worked first with the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA) as leaders of its Congressional Committee. In April 1913 they founded the Congressional Union for Woman Suffrage (CU), which evolved into the NWP [the National Women's Party].

Burns organized campaigns in the West (1914, 1916), served as NWP legislative chairman in Washington, D.C., and, beginning in April 1914, edited the organization's weekly journal, The Suffragist.

Lucy wonders if picketing the White House - to change the President's mind about a constitutional amendment, giving women the right to vote - might be as effective as the days when she and Lucy picketed Parliament. Maybe ... such lobbying actions would work again?

In January of 1917, she gives it a try.

See, also:

Alice Paul - Chairman of the Congressional Committee

Alice Paul and Lucy Burns - Building the Base

Suffragette Parade - March 13, 1913

Success and Resistance - Alice Paul Keeps Fighting

Breaking Ranks within the Women's Movement

Lucy Burns and Alice Paul - Advocates for Women

Lucy Burns - Imprisoned at the Occoquan Workhouse

Alice Paul - Imprisoned

Alice Paul - Force Feeding

Victory - The 19th Amendment is Ratified

Credits:

Clip from "Iron-Jawed Angels" (2004), an HBO film about suffragettes fighting for a constitutional amendment, giving American women the right to vote.

Clips online, via HBO and YouTube. All copyrights/ownership rights belong to HBO. Provided here as "fair use" for educational purposes and to acquaint new viewers with the program.

Director:

Katja von Garnier

Producers:

Len Amato

Lydia Dean Pilcher

Robin Forman

Paula Weinstein

Writers:

Sally Robinson

Eugenia Bostwick-Singer

Raymond Singer

Jennifer Friedes

Starring:

Hilary Swank - Alice Paul

Frances O'Connor - Lucy Burns

Molly Parker - Emily Leighton (a fictional character portrayed as a senator's wife)

Laura Fraser - Doris Stevens

Lois Smith - Rev. Dr. Anna Howard Shaw

Vera Farmiga - Ruza Wenclawska (also known as Rose Winslow)

Brooke Smith - Mabel Vernon

Patrick Dempsey - Ben Weissman (a fictional character)

Julia Ormond - Inez Milholland

Adilah Barnes - Ida Wells-Barnett

Anjelica Huston - Carrie Chapman Catt

Music:

Reinhold Heil

Johnny Klimek

Cinematography:

Robbie Greenberg

Editing:

Hans Funck

Distributor:

HBO Films

Release date:

February 15, 2004

Running time:

125 minutes

Quoted passages from an article by Sheridan Harvey, online at the [Library of Congress - American Memory - web site](#).

For more details about this period of American history, as women struggled for the right to vote, see this [American Memory story](#) (in PDF format) from the Library of Congress.

See [Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:](#)

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/Lucy-Burns-Let-s-Picket-the-White-House>

See [Learning Tasks for this story online at:](#)

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/Lucy-Burns-Let-s-Picket-the-White-House>