



EMMELINE PANKHURST



- **Full name:** Emmeline Pankhurst
- **Born:** 14th June 1858
- **Hometown:** Manchester, England
- **Occupation:** Campaigner for women's rights.
- **Died:** 14th June 1928
- **Best known for:** Her hard work with the WSPU in the fight to help get British women the right to vote.

EARLY LIFE AND EDUCATION

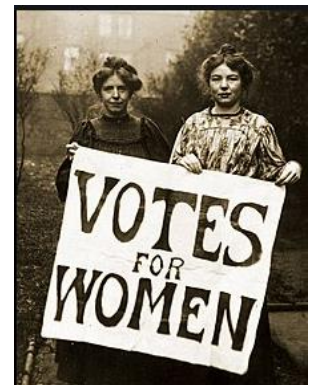
Emmeline Pankhurst was born Emmeline Goulden in 1858 in Manchester, England, the eldest of ten children. Her parents, Robert and Sophia, were political activists who supported women's suffrage (the right for women to vote). Emmeline's mother took her to a **women's suffrage** meeting when she was just 14.

At 15, Emmeline went to a finishing school in Paris and on her return met Richard Pankhurst, a lawyer and supporter of women's rights. Although he was 24 years older, they **married in 1879**, and had five children together: Christabel, Sylvia, Adela, Frank and Harry. Sadly, Frank died in childhood.

As she grew older, Emmeline noticed that women were not treated **equally** to men and became motivated to help change that

WOMEN'S SOCIAL AND POLITICAL UNION

In 1903 Emmeline, along with her daughters Sylvia and Christabel, founded the **Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU)**. The WSPU was a group led by Emmeline. Their aim was to gain **equal voting rights** for women. Emmeline gave speeches encouraging women to take action in order to achieve this goal of greater equality.



SUFFRAGETTES

Suffrage – The right to vote, especially in public and political elections.

The WSPU, at the time, became known as a '**radical party**', which means they used extreme methods in order to get their message heard. Because these methods were sometimes violent, WSPU members became the first women labelled as '**suffragettes**' by a British reporter in 1906. Members were known to smash windows, damage public property and even start fires to gain public attention. This got many



women in trouble with the police and some even sentenced to time in prison, where they were treated very badly. When the stories of bad treatment reached the newspapers, it actually helped to increase support for the suffragette movement.



THE WAR YEARS

In 1914 the First World War began. Emmeline Pankhurst encouraged WSPU members to put their demonstrations on hold, in order to focus on the war effort. Emmeline asked women to take up roles in factories in support of the men fighting. In response, the government released all WSPU prisoners. When the war ended in 1918, the **Representation of the People Act** was introduced, giving women over the age of 30, who owned property, the right to vote.

LEGACY



In later years, Emmeline went to live abroad for a time, returning to England in 1926. She became a **member of the Conservative Party**, but her health began to deteriorate at the age of 69.

Although Emmeline lived to see some women gain the right to vote, she died on 14 June 1928, just a few weeks before a law (**The Equal Franchise Act 1928**) was passed giving all women over 21 years of age the right to vote.

Emmeline Pankhurst is one of the most influential people of the 20th century. She was a British woman who fought for and is remembered for her hard work with the WSPU in the fight to help get British women the right to vote.

Emmeline famously said "Deeds not words" in a speech. This later became the slogan of the Women's Social and Political Union.

FIND OUT MORE...

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zd8fv9q/articles/zh7kdxs>

EXAMPLE QUESTIONS:

1. When and where was Emmeline born?
2. What was WSPU?
3. What did Emmeline Pankhurst do to get the vote?
4. What was a 'suffragette'?
5. In the UK when could some women over 30 vote for the first time?