

# EMMELINE PANKHURST

## BIOGRAPHY

Emmeline Pankhurst was a British feminist activist. She was born on July 15, 1858 in Manchester, UK and died on June 14, 1928 in Hampstead.

She was married to Richard Pankhurst and had 3 daughters and 2 sons with him.

She is best remembered for organizing the UK suffragette movement and helping women win the right to vote.



## EDUCATION & INFLUENCE

Emmeline started reading books when she was very young and she studied in France.

At the age of 14, Emmeline Pankhurst attended with her mother a public meeting on women's suffrage in which Lydia Becker participated. During her marriage, she was supported by her husband in her activities as an activist.

In 1999, *Time* named her one of the hundred most influential people of the 20th century, stating that "she shaped an idea of objects for our time" and "shook society into a new pattern from which there could be no going back".

## MOVEMENT & ACTIVISM

In 1889, Emmeline founded and became involved with the Women's Franchise League, which advocated suffrage for both married and unmarried women.

In 1903, noting that years of moderate speeches and promises by parliamentarians had brought no progress, Pankhurst founded the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU), an all-women suffrage advocacy organisation dedicated to “deeds, not words”. She then transformed the WSPU machinery into the Women's Party, which was dedicated to promoting women's equality in public life.

Pankhurst, her daughters, and other WSPU activists received repeated prison sentences, where they staged hunger strikes to secure better conditions, and were often force-fed.

Eventually the group adopted arson as a tactic.

With the advent of the First World War, Emmeline organised and led a massive procession called the Women's Right to Serve demonstration to illustrate women's contribution to the war effort.

## REASONS WHY WE CHOSE HER

In Great Britain, equal voting rights were only obtained in 1928. As soon as she could, Emmeline fought for equality between men and women and for the place of women in society. She set up and created movements to claim the rights that women deserved to have. It is a good example to show what women had to do before they acquired the same treatment as men, even if we still have a long way to go before we can say that we are really equal.