

# Inez Milholland

1886–1916



*“Not to know what things in life requiring remedying is a crime.”*  
*Inez Milholland*

Inez Milholland provided some of the most enduring images in suffrage history as the imposing leader of the 1913 Washington, DC march on horseback.



The official program for the 1913 Woman Suffrage Procession.  
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*In her tragically brief career Inez Milholland was a labor lawyer, (having graduated from New York University Law School), an anti-war correspondent in Italy during the First World War, and a suffrage activist.*

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## College Activism

The summer after her sophomore year at Vassar College Milholland visited London and was influenced by Emmeline Pankhurst. Returning to Vassar, she founded the “Vassar Votes for Women Club,” but was opposed by the college administration. One of the Club’s meetings was organized at a nearby cemetery with the help of Harriet Stanton Blatch, a Vassar alumna and daughter of suffragist pioneer Elizabeth Cady Stanton.

*During Inez Milholland’s years at Vassar James Monroe Taylor, the college president, maintained that the mission of the college was “not to reform society but to educate women.”*

## Inez Milholland Boissevain

*On a trans-Atlantic voyage she proposed to Dutch coffee merchant, Eugen Jan Boissevain after their brief acquaintance. They married upon arriving in London.*

## A Suffragist Martyr

In 1916 she began a speaking tour of the western states, despite health concerns on the part of her family. Suffering from “pernicious anemia” she collapsed while speaking in Los Angeles and died one month later at Good Samaritan Hospital – at the age of 30. Her final public words were “Mr. President, how long must women wait for liberty.” Quickly she became a martyr for the suffrage cause.



Inez Milholland Boissevain (center) departing for her tragic western states speaking tour.  
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Alice Paul arranged a memorial service for Inez Milholland Boissevain in the Capitol’s Statuary Hall, a ceremony which raised Inez to the stature of SUFFRAGE MARTYR. When President Wilson refused to receive petitions gathered in her name, the National Women’s Party picketed the White House with intense determination, for 17 months, bearing banners using Inez’s final words.  
NATIONAL WOMEN’S PARTY

## A Privileged Life

*Inez Milholland’s father, John, was a reporter for the New York Tribune who later made a fortune in the manufacture of pneumatic tubes. The family maintained houses in New York and London. Her mother, Jean, introduced her family to theater and museums, but also athleticism at the family’s up-state summer home. Both parents supported social reform.*

*Inez Milholland received great enthusiasm from supporters, but hostility from men anti-suffragists who attacked marchers as Washington, D.C. police looked on.*

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## Movement Icon

In 1913 Milholland was selected by Alice Paul to lead on horseback the massive and theatrical suffrage parade in Washington, D.C. the day before the inauguration of President Woodrow Wilson. Dressed in flowing white cape, wearing a crown, and riding “Grey Dawn”, she rode through crowds of drunken men who were heckling and attacking the marchers. Over 200 suffragists were injured, many hospitalized. Before and after the 1913 Suffrage march in Washington, DC, Inez was a prominent speaker and leader, often on horseback, of suffrage marches in New York City.

*This 1924 poster was created for a pageant commemorating the life of Inez Milholland Boissevain held at the upstate New York home of her parents.*

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