

Marion Wallace Dunlop

Source: Biography (thesuffragettes.org)

<https://www.thesuffragettes.org/map/outer-london-boroughs/ealing/marion-wallacedunlop/>

Marion Wallace–Dunlop was born in 1864. She became an artist and developed a reputation as an excellent a sculptress. Although born in Scotland she moved to London and lived in Montpelier Road, Ealing.

A supporter of votes for women she joined the Women’s Social and Political Union. By 1905 the media had lost interest in the struggle for women’s rights. Newspapers rarely reported meetings and usually refused to publish articles and letters written by supporters of women’s suffrage. Emily Pankhurst, the leader of the WSPU, advocated a new strategy to obtain the publicity that she thought would be needed in order to obtain the vote.

During the summer of 1908 the WSPU introduced the tactic of breaking the windows of government buildings. On 30th June Suffragettes marched into Downing Street and began throwing small stones through the windows of the Prime Minister’s house. As a result of this demonstration, twenty–seven women were arrested and sent to Holloway Prison.

On 25th June 1909 Wallace–Dunlop was charged “with wilfully damaging the stone work of St. Stephen’s Hall, House of Commons, by stamping it with an indelible rubber stamp, doing damage to the value of 10s.” According to a report in The Times Wallace–Dunlop printed a notice that read: “Women’s Deputation. June 29. Bill of Rights. It is the right of the subjects to petition the King, and all commitments and prosecutions for such petitionings are illegal.” Wallace–Dunlop was found guilty of wilful damage and when she refused to pay a fine she was sent to prison for a month.

Christabel Pankhurst later reported: “Miss Wallace Dunlop, taking counsel with no one and acting entirely on her own initiative, sent to the Home Secretary, Mr. Gladstone, as soon as she entered Holloway Prison, an application to be placed in the first division as befitted one charged with a political offence. She announced that she would eat no food until this right was conceded.”

Wallace–Dunlop refused to eat for several days. Afraid that she might die and become a martyr, it was decided to release her after fasting for 91 hours. Soon afterwards other imprisoned suffragettes adopted the same strategy. Unwilling to release all the imprisoned suffragettes, the prison authorities force–fed these women on hunger strike. In one eighteen month period, Emily Pankhurst, who was now in her fifties, endured ten of these hunger–strikes.

Marion Wallace–Dunlop died in 1942.



Source: Newspaper articles

SUFFRAGETTE STARVES HERSELF OUT OF JAIL

LONDON, July 9.—The latest heroine of the suffragette cause is Miss Wallace Dunlop, who recently was sentenced to a month's imprisonment in Holloway jail for posting notices on the walls of the house of parliament. Miss Dunlop organized a hunger strike in the prison and the authorities discharged her this afternoon after she had refused food for ninety-one hours.

Miss Dunlop had been in prison only five days.

A HUNGER STRIKE.

Miss Wallace Dunlop, the suffragist who last Friday was fined £5, with the alternative of a month's imprisonment, for posting a notice on the walls of the House of Commons, and chose the imprisonment, was released from Holloway prison yesterday afternoon. The Women's Social and Political Union has received a telegram from Miss Dunlop stating that her discharge is due to the fact that she instituted a hunger strike in the prison, herself abstaining from food for 91 hours.