

Amanda Way

Winchester, Randolph County

July 10, 1828 – February 1914

Amanda Way was the second of eight children. Her father, Matthew Way, was part of a Quakers migration from slave-holding North Carolina to East Central Indiana. At age 21, Amanda was engaged to a Dr. Cook; however, he died in an 1849 cholera epidemic three weeks before their wedding. Her father also died of the disease that same year. After her brother's marriage, she remained unmarried and was left as the family's breadwinner and began work as a teacher but later became a milliner and seamstress.

She is known as the "mother of women's rights" in Indiana, garnering great crowds of followers; however, very few people know who she is. She devoted her life to the abolition of slavery, alcohol prohibition and women's equal rights. While living in Winchester, she assembled women and then marched to grocery stores and drugstores, requesting that their owners pledge not to sell liquor. When one owner refused, the women broke in, rolled liquor barrels into the street, and poured his whiskey out. The women were put on trial for malicious trespass and found not guilty.

In 1851, Amanda Way called for Indiana's first Women's Rights Convention. Held in Dublin, Wayne County, in 1851, the convention produced the Indiana Women's Rights Association. She served as Vice President in its first year and later became President in 1855. She gave the opening address at the convention, where she declared that "unless women demand their rights politically, socially, and financially, they will continue in the future as [they have] in the past..."

Living in Idaho, Amanda Way was nominated by the Prohibition Party to run for US Congress in 1900, making her the first Indiana-born woman to do so. Following her death in 1914, she was remembered in many communities throughout the country as a pioneer women's rights advocate who laid the groundwork for women's suffrage.

For more information about Amanda Way, go to:

<http://www.in.gov/history/markers/4117.htm>.

For more information about *Writing Her Story*, go to: <http://www.in.gov/icw/2440.htm>.

Photo: Indiana Historical Bureau (8 March 2013). "Where There's a Will, There's a Way".

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<http://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/INSTA/INSTATE/bulletins/6f2977>.



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