

Writing for Equality: Susie Revels Cayton

by Abby Rhinehart

Susie Revels was born in 1870. Her parents were Hiram Revels and Phoebe Bass Revels. Her father was the first African American politician in the United States Congress. He was the Senator from Mississippi from 1870 to 1871.

Revels graduated from Rust University when she was sixteen years old. In Mississippi, Revels started reading a newspaper called the *Seattle Republican*. Revels wrote a story and sent it to Seattle. The newspaper printed it. Revels wrote more letters to the man who ran that newspaper, Horace Cayton. They wrote many letters to each other. In 1896, Revels moved to Seattle to marry Horace. After she got married, she changed her name to Susie Revels Cayton.

Susie and Horace Cayton ran the newspaper together. What they wrote helped build the African American community in the state. In their newspaper, they supported education and equality for many groups, including women. The newspaper had many stories that supported women's suffrage. They also wrote about being African American in Washington state. In 1910, women in Washington state officially got the right to vote. However, many African Americans were still blocked from voting by local rules.

Susie Cayton also organized several clubs. She started the Sunday Forum, which brought together black Seattle residents to talk about important issues. She also helped start the Dorcus Charity Club. This club gave money to African American people who needed it, especially orphans and widows. Cayton supported education, and said it was the most important way for African American people to become successful.

Susie Revels Cayton died in 1943.

Sources:

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Susie Revels Cayton. Image via BlackPast.org



Washington State History Museum Suffrage Curriculum
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Footer images, left to right: "Woman forever march," Washington State Historical Society Catalog ID Number: 2010.151.4; "Woman's suffrage pin," Washington State Historical Society Catalog ID Number: C2008.0.132; "Votes for women: official organ of Washington Equal Suffrage Association," Washington State Historical Society Catalog ID Number 2000.104.38.14