

Ruth Hanna McCormick: A Life in Politics, 1880-1944

Kristie Miller



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"I choose to run, " declared Ruth Hanna McCormick in 1929, illustrating both her sense of fun in the parody of Calvin Coolidge and her lifelong commitment to partisan politics. Her life illustrates the opportunities and limitations that faced women participating in American politics during the early twentieth century. Unlike many other veterans of the fight for suffrage, McCormick learned the techniques of politics early from her father, Senator Marcus A. Hanna, McKinley's legendary campaign manager. Her political apprenticeship continued under her husband, Medill McCormick, Chicago Tribune scion, and a leader in Progressive and Republican circles. Associated with the major figures and pivotal events of U. S. history for nearly fifty years, McCormick was the first woman elected to a national statewide office, the first nominated by a major party for the Senate, and the first to manage a presidential nomination campaign, that of Thomas Dewey. Unique though McCormick's accomplishments were, she shared with other modern women the problems of balancing personal ambition with the demands of husband, children, and social expectations. Hers is the story of a vital, engaging, and complex woman and sheds new light on women's political and social history.

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