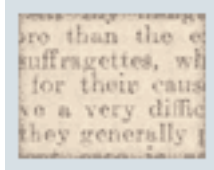
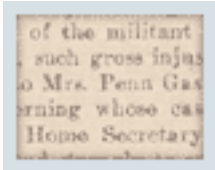


SOURCE 2

Extract from a letter written to The Daily News, November 1908

(PRO ref: MEPO 2/1223)



SOURCE 2A

SOURCE 2B

HOW TO USE THIS SOURCE TO HELP YOU ANSWER THE BIG QUESTION :

Look carefully at this source and consider what it tells you about how the Suffragists helped to achieve the vote for women in 1918. You should consider:

ASK YOURSELF:

- What is the overall attitude of the writer towards women's suffrage?
- How can you tell what his view is on women's suffrage?
- According to the letter, were the Suffragettes mentioned looking for trouble?
- Who does the letter writer blame for the trouble?
- Do you think this incident might have affected the views of the writer and other people like him towards the question of women getting the vote?

SOURCE 2A

Sir,—While I altogether disapprove of the reckless and foolish proceedings (for such they seem to me) of the militant section of the Suffragettes, such gross injustice as has been meted out to Mrs. Penn Gaskell and Miss Smith, concerning whose case I put a question to the Home Secretary on Wednesday, can only tend strongly to enlist my sympathy with their cause. These two ladies do not belong to the militant section. They had no desire whatever to come into conflict with the police. They were walking—not together, but separately—in Piccadilly and Regent-street, carrying placards and distributing handbills announcing a public meeting. These bills and placards were admitted by the magistrate who tried the case to be entirely unobjectionable.

Mrs. Gaskell and Miss Smith were walking, not on the pavement, but in the gutter. While so doing they were summarily arrested by two police officers and taken to Vine-street Police Station and thence to the Great Marlborough-street Police Court. It is stated

—that they were apprehended only “when they had shown a determination not to obey the police warning to move away, and when their removal from the street had become necessary in order to put an end to the obstruction.” I have no hesitation in saying that this statement is untrue. Miss Smith is personally unknown to me, but Mrs. Penn Gaskell I know well as a colleague on the Council of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, and as an earnest worker in the cause of humanity. She assures me, and I unhesitatingly accept her statement, that both she and her friend would have gone away at once if they had been directed by the police to do so, but no such order was given to them. . . .

SOURCE 2B

The ladies themselves denied upon oath that there was any crowd in Regent-street at the time of their arrest, or any obstruction either to roadway or footway, and they called independent witnesses who testified to the same effect. . . .

The magistrate accepted the evidence of the police, and found as a fact that an obstruction had been caused, but that he looked upon the supposed offence as a very trivial one is clear, for though he ordered the ladies to enter into recognisances to be of good behaviour for six months, they were actually allowed to go away without having complied with the order. I confess that such proceedings stir my indignation and disgust much more than the extravagancies of the militant suffragettes, who are at least ready to suffer for their cause. I know that the police have a very difficult duty to perform, and that they generally perform it admirably. The present case is an exception.—Yours, etc.,

GEORGE GREENWOOD.
House of Commons, Nov. 5.