

THE FIGHT FOR WOMEN'S EQUALITY OVER THE YEARS

1847 - 1900

eis 175 YEARS STRONG

Today, the EIS represents over 60,000 members across Scotland – from Shetland to Stranraer - and has a membership of around 80% women, but what did women's history look like for the EIS, in the very beginning?



1847

The Educational Institute of Scotland is established

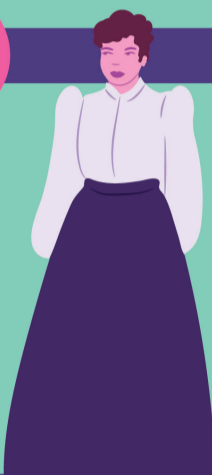
to enhance and protect teachers' professional status. The profession is dominated by men, as you need a university degree to teach most subjects and women are not allowed at UK universities.

65%
of teachers
are men



1861

35%
of teachers
are women



1851

Queen Victoria grants a Royal Charter

to the EIS, it becoming the only trade union to award degrees of "Fellow of the Institute"



1869

The Edinburgh Seven

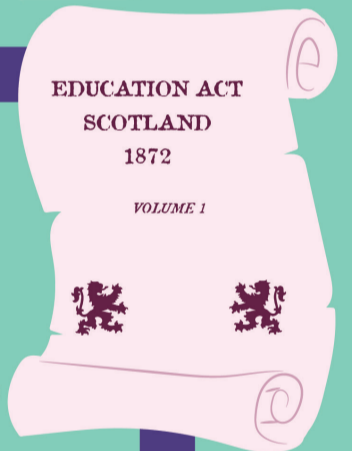
are the first women to study medicine at any UK university but are not entitled to a degree.



1872

The Education (Scotland) Act

is introduced, resulting in a rise in demand for teachers – and an increase in women teachers. This is seen by many as undermining the profession's traditionally high societal status, as women are not required to have a university degree to teach. Women are paid far less than men and viewed as best suited for work with infants and teaching domestic subjects.



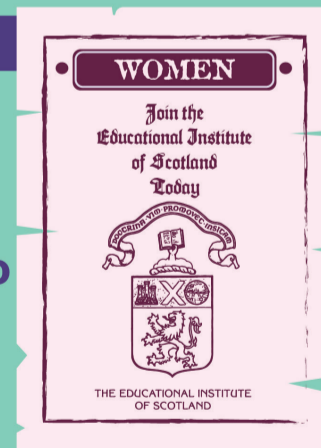
1892

Women at Scottish universities can finally receive a degree for their studies.



1876

Women are encouraged to join the Union to increase our membership figures.



Only
2,000
out of
13,000
teachers are
members of the
EIS

1896

Isabella Skea

becomes the fifth woman to be awarded Fellow of the EIS. She campaigned for better pay and pension rights for women teachers, and for children's access to green spaces. At the 1896 EIS Congress, she reads a paper titled "The Status of Women in Teaching", rallying for equal professional training to that of men, in the pursuit of equal status as teachers



Character would assert itself and no amount of ridicule or contemptuous deprecation would hinder or check the advancement of women, which would go on as surely as the march of civilisation itself.