

Elizabeth Gurley Flynn

Girl Scout Curriculum book, *Your Voice Your World*, Page 42

VOICES FOR GOOD: WOMEN ADVOCATES THROUGH THE YEARS

1907

Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, a union organizer for the Industrial Workers of the World, leads campaigns to organize Pennsylvania garment workers, New Jersey silk weavers, New York restaurant workers, Minnesota miners, and Massachusetts textile workers. In 1920, she helps establish **the American Civil Liberties Union**, which declares it will defend civil rights guaranteed in state and federal constitutions.

http://www.brooklynmuseum.org/eascfa/dinner_party/heritage_floor/elizabeth_gurley_flynn.php

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Elizabeth Gurley Flynn

b. 1890, Concord, New Hampshire; d. 1964, Moscow

Elizabeth Gurley Flynn was an American socialist, labor organizer, and activist for the rights of women and immigrants. As a leading member of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), Gurley organized strikes for textile workers; she also fought for freedom of speech and women's reproductive rights, including access to birth control. In the wake of the Red Scare, when thousands of leftists were jailed or deported for their political beliefs, Flynn became a founding member of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), established in 1920. In 1941, she was elected to the Communist Party's Central Committee. During the McCarthy period, along with other members of the party, Flynn was arrested and charged with conspiracy to overthrow the U.S. government; convicted, she served two years in a women's penitentiary at Alderson, West Virginia. She wrote about her experiences there in *The Alderson Story: My Life as a Political Prisoner* (1955). In 1961, she became National Chairman of the Communist Party, the first woman to head the organization. She died on a visit to Moscow; after a state funeral in Red Square, her remains were flown to Chicago for burial.

See also <http://www.nwhm.org/education-resources/biography/biographies/elizabeth-gurley-flynn/> and <http://www.apwu.org/join/women/lbportraits/portraits-labor-eg-flynn.htm>