BENEFITING A CITY:
WOMEN, RESPECTABILITY AND REFORM
IN SPOKANE, WASHINGTON, 1886-1910

By

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By

Nancy Arlene Driscoll Engle
Thanks, Daniel, for believing in me, and always encouraging me. Thanks, Amber, for your beautiful smiles, wonderful hugs, and for providing a diversion during some long days of research and writing. I dedicate this to you both.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Advising a doctoral student takes patience, time, and a lot of work, as well as requiring an extended commitment to one person’s success. Bertram Wyatt-Brown has generously done this for me, beginning with my first interview at the University of Florida in the summer of 1996. During the research phase he has had the added burden of playing coach to someone living and working thousands of miles away. Besides commenting on endless emailed drafts of chapters, he wrote many letters of recommendation, and provided me with some much-needed financial assistance.

In 2001, Angel Kwolek-Folland graciously agreed to be cochair, when a grad student she had never met before showed up in her office asking for help with her dissertation. Since then her insight into women’s history, along with her ability to encourage me to look at the big picture have proved invaluable. I have often thought that under the circumstances, writing letters on my behalf had to be more challenging for her, but she has done so many times.

In 1999, even before I had moved to Eastern Washington, Sue Armitage, of Washington State University, offered to help a grad student from Florida whom she did not know. She soon agreed to serve on my committee, and has since then always made time to meet with me when I requested it. She even wrote a letter for me, referred me to Karen Blair, has given me opportunities to present papers, and she put me in touch with many other grad students in the region. Because of her generosity, I have felt a bit less academically isolated.
Even before I became a student at the University of Florida, Louise Newman began giving me helpful advice. I have long admired her ability and energy for working with students. She was especially encouraging to me when I was considering changing my dissertation topic and relocating to Eastern Washington.

Irma McClaurin has graciously served as my anthropology advisor. After visit with her, I always felt inspired and challenged. After I moved away from Florida, she kept in touch with me. She even read Chapter 2 in an early stage, and recommended that I consider making “respectability” a central organizing theme for my entire dissertation.

Although the newest member of my committee, Betty Smocovitis was one of the earliest faculty members at the University of Florida to give me her vote of confidence. She and Ronald Formisano both made sure I felt welcomed there. Her presence on my committee seems a very fitting way to complete my formal association with the University of Florida.

Although not committee members, Barbara Guynn and Betty Corwin have helped me from both near and afar. Barbara has even delivered important documents for me, when the expense of getting back to Gainesville precluded me from doing it. They both have encouraged me to be persistent, and have kept in touch.

Having described all that came before, I have still incurred numerous debts to knowledgeable people in Spokane. Nancy Compau, historian and librarian in the Northwest Room of the Spokane Public Library helped me get started on my research when I was really new in town. Her knowledge of Spokane History has been a resource throughout. Susan Beamer at the Eastern Regional Branch of the Washington State Archives has been meticulous in bringing to my attention all documents that I might find
useful. She and Sherry Bays have been interested in my research, and always happy to talk to me about my most recent discoveries and questions. Their quarters were cramped, but they made sharing the space very pleasant. At varying times, Randy Smith, Karen DeSeve and Rayette Wilder worked with my schedule at the Eastern Washington State Historical Society, Museum of Arts and Culture. Dave Kingma, with the Jesuit Oregon Province Archives at Gonzaga University, retrieved whatever papers I thought might be useful, even occasionally letting me sort through uncatalogued holdings. Barbara Brazington, a member of the Eastern Washington Genealogical Society, assisted with many searches for obscure women, and an occasional institution. Her knowledge of censuses, post office records, and tax documents proved invaluable to me. She even helped me get loans of some difficult-to-locate documents. Then, when I really needed the help of an editor, Kristi Jarnes proofread the entire manuscript on very short notice.

At the same time, I have benefited from financial assistance and awards. During my first year at the University of Florida I enjoyed a Grinter Fellowship. In 2002, I received the Linda Vance Award in Women’s History. A help financially, these fellowships and awards also do wonders to energize and encourage. Linda Vance even wrote an inspiring note saying that she is looking forward to reading my book when it is published.

My family members, both immediate and extended, have supported my academic aspirations for many years now. Their encouragement proved invaluable. In the broader context, a dissertation is the product of many contributors. I remain grateful to all for helping to enrich this work.
"Benefiting a City" is most interested in the points where women's activities intersected with official city business. It explores how progressive women worked as boosters to help make Spokane, Washington a respectable city. It describes a piece of the history of the Pacific Northwest, and also provides a glimpse into part of the urban American West. It is interpreted within the context of the New Western History. The old version, as defined by Frederick Jackson Turner, assumed that the frontier had been closed in 1890. At that time, Spokane was in its infancy and in the early stages of its boom years. Thus, the city promoters who played such important political, economic, and cultural roles in this boomtown, cannot be explained within the individual frontier experience that Turner championed.

This circumstance was true for other locations within the Pacific Northwest as well. As late as 1914 Turner himself conceded that the "age of the pioneer" had not fully ended in the region.¹ His student and friend, Edmond S. Meany, understood that Turner's historical model scarcely addressed the conditions in the Pacific Northwest. Meany had once promoted the region as a writer for newspapers. Thus he had brought booster style thinking to his job as the most prominent historian of state.² He believed that there was


² For an example of Meany's work see, Origin of Washington Geographic Names, (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1923.)
too much untapped promise in the region to be content with a frontier, which had closed only months after Washington, had joined the union.

Although less well defined than Turner's paradigm, the New Western History provides a context for the two branches of historical analysis that have been most useful to "Benefiting a City." The first emphasizes the role that individuals played in municipal promotion. Beginning in the 1960s, urban historians began to recognize the important roles that boosters played, especially in the cities that flourished in the American West. For example, Daniel Boorstin ascribed to this zealous band, whose members he depicted as "upstarts," a causal role in national development. More recently, William Cronon's study of Chicago gives primacy to the businessmen who defined their city as the "western gateway" of the late nineteenth century America.

Focusing on the Pacific Northwest, the historian Carlos Schwantes credits boosters with selling the region to settlers who would have otherwise made their homes in California. While earlier histories made it seem as though boosters had convinced easterners to migrate in record numbers, Schwantes recognizes that external factors were influential in creating mass migrations. In his interpretation, the city propagandists drew people to the Pacific Northwest only after they had already decided to migrate westward.

Although boosters did invest much energy and money into promoting their city to outsiders, they also helped to shape the place they called home. This is the aspect of

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6 For an example of a western urban history that emphasizes external factors, see Jeffrey S. Adler, *Yankee Merchants and the Making of the Urban West*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991.)
boosterism that Elaine Naylor emphasizes. Her study of Jefferson County, Washington, demonstrates that promoters played a key role in defining the region itself, and in monitoring its reputation. In addition, she utilizes a broad definition of boosterism, demonstrating that the mentality went beyond a few prominent men.

Two important historians of Spokane and the Inland Northwest have emphasized the significant role that municipal self-pride played. John Fahey credits a relatively small number of men who built the downtown area anew after the 1889 fire with shaping the city for decades to come. Exploring the way that residents thought and talked about their city, Katherine Morrissey identifies in territorial boundaries a mental component. Using the promotional language evident in a wide range of such documents, as private letters, maps and in publications, she argues that the drum-beating tendency was widespread among Spokane residents. More fundamentally, she shows that this mindset was central to defining the region that Spokane residents dubbed the "Inland Empire."

"Benefiting a City," explores an additional way that promoters helped shape Spokane internally. Defining boosters broadly, to include any group or individual that worked to benefit the city, furnishes a way retrospectively to recognize women's contributions. In Spokane, charitable clubwomen and social reformers infused their work with their own interpretation of boosterism. Especially during the first 15 years of this study, women boosters were often married to the men who styled themselves as the

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7 Elaine Naylor, "It's Going to be a Place of Commercial Importance: Frontier Boosterism in Jefferson County, Washington, 1850-1890," (North York Ontario, York University, 1999.)


9 Katherine G. Morrissey, Mental Territories: Mapping the Inland Empire, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997.)
region's spokesmen. Besides a good measure of economic interest, they shared with them a desire to elevate the city's reputation. Yet prevailing gender conventions influenced their methods. Thus, their work appeared much different than the efforts of their male counterparts. They were, nevertheless, still boosters. For example, the ones who took up charitable causes often reminded city leaders that the alms they offered the poor boosted the city’s prestige.

Being in a boomtown that aspired to regional importance helped underscore their argument. By the mid 1880s Spokane’s leaders were verbally positioning their city to become the economic and political heart of the area, which later became known as the "Inland Empire." In order to achieve the urban prominence they envisioned they needed to convince those living throughout the Inland Northwest that the city could supple a wide array of basic services and institutions. Men dominated in politics, established banks, and courted railroad expansion. On the other hand, women predominated in creating social service institutions, such as hospitals, homes for children and women, and in aiding the poor. Throughout the city's boom years, they remained mindful that internal conditions influenced its reputation. And they further wanted the city's respectability acknowledged by anyone living in the nearby hinterlands as well as others living further afield.

The city's upstanding citizens wanted, for example, the farmers living and working in the rolling land that lies south of Spokane to get the message that the city was respectable. They wanted to reassure them that they could safely do business in the city. Further away, relatives of people already living in Spokane and other potential immigrants needed to know that Spokane embodied urban progress and respectability.
Finally, there were economic interests in eastern cities with which Spokane boosters sought favorable relations.

In Spokane achieving civic respectability depended heavily on the boosters’ capacity to distance the city from the mining culture that predominated in nearby north Idaho. The mineral wealth coming out of the Coeur d’Alene region was rapidly becoming an essential element in the boomtown that was mushrooming in eastern Washington. Creating a successful city required a delicate balancing act between economic stability and social and cultural respectability.

Thus, although most were personally dependent on the region's mineral wealth, Spokane's boosters were not content to let their city be defined by the rough mining culture that prevailed in nearby settlements. This was especially difficult in Spokane, because the city had a seedy side that was flourishing, to the dismay of the “respectable in town. For instance, a lucky miner could find, in the city's red light district, plenty of places where he might spend a day’s wages and more. Less fortunate male laborers could also while away the hours of unemployment at the city's saloons and brothels.

As used in this study, respectability provides a way to address boosters' ongoing efforts to manage Spokane's reputation. Yet it does not tell a simple tale. As Spokane's population became more diverse, new and different visions of respectability competed for a chance to be heard. Shaped by individual interpretations of morality, gender conventions, economic interest, and ethnic difference, a wide variety of people sought to partake in the urban discussion.

But no matter what respectability meant to a person or a group, the sense that it involved morality added significant weight to the concept. It also offered a way for
clubwomen verbally to link their individual acts of kindness and with the booster's effort to benefit the city. If what they were doing was moral and uplifting, and, if while they were being charitable they were relieving the city of its responsibility to care for the poor in its midst, and elevating its reputation. Thus, in the early 1890s, when clubwomen happily reported that their benevolent efforts ensured that the city would have no helpless paupers, they were ascribing to their own charity an importance that went beyond the simple act of helping someone in need. This was still the case in 1910 when others argued that a police matron would help improve the city's reputation. They were seeking a civic respectability imbued with their own sense of moral correctness.

While their arguments were founded on a gendered sense of what was moral, they did not seek to have their female moral authority recognized.\textsuperscript{10} Local clubwomen had brought Eastern ideas with them, and they may well have already decided, as Lori Ginzberg has demonstrated, that moral suasion was an ineffective persuasive devise.\textsuperscript{11} Michael Goldberg has further demonstrated, that men may have actually thought women were more moral, yet refused to acknowledging that idea because it would have given women more power than they were willing to allot to them. Rather than arguing that women had a special ability to recognize what was moral, an initiative presented in terms that held primary the city's reputation, proved much more effective.

\textsuperscript{10} Peggy Pascoe, \textit{Relations of Rescue: The Search for Female Moral Authority in the American West, 1874-1939}, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990.)

\textsuperscript{11} Lori D. Ginzberg, \textit{Women and the Work of Benevolence: Morality, Politics and class in the Nineteenth-Century United States}, (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1990.) Michael Goldberg points out that men in Kansas might have agreed that women were more moral, but they were not willing to grant them authority because of it. Michael Goldberg, \textit{An Army of Women: Gender and Politics in gilded Age Kansas}, (Baltimore: The John's Hopkins University Press, 1997,) 45.
Beyond helping to illuminate the interests of the most prominent clubwomen, respectability offers a way to recognize the concerns of differing economic groups. While economically comfortable progressive women could give considerable time and attention to promoting their style of boosterism, less well established women could and did have their own agenda. For instance, the nuns who founded Sacred Heart Hospital quietly demanded respect. Although not so committed to city puffery, they won some early approbation from city leaders by constructing a handsome building. Doing so was an important first step for the nuns in becoming an integral part of the urban progress that Spokane's boosters sought.

Although there are some important exceptions, which help deepen our understanding of women’s contributions to Spokane, "Benefiting a City" centers on white middle class clubwomen who created charities, built institutions and generally adopted social and moral reforms. The most prominent of these were women who benefited economically from the region's massive growth. In a city of immigrants, they enjoyed privileges that many other women did not. Their business-minded husbands concentrated on economic matters, leaving gaps of civic need that their wives filled. Surprisingly, however, less advantaged women, including some of color influenced the most prominent social and moral reformers. Sometimes poor women even formed their own clubs.12 Studying those relegated by society to more marginal positions points to a way for the historian to explore the limits of the white clubwomen’s efforts.

12 There may well have been clubs of black women formed before 1910, but this study identified no documentation of their existence. Spokane's best organized, and longest lasting black women's club would not be formed until 1913. Mamie Hagans served as the first president. Its purpose was to foster the interest of its members in the arts, as well as the "social, economic, educational and civic life of the community." Spokane Federation of Women's Clubs, History of Spokane Clubs, vol. 1, 1942, 261.
Spokane's clubwomen approached their work in a way that was shaped by their sense of proper gender conventions. Thus, this study is indebted to a long line of important women's histories. Karen Blair's study of clubwomen in the United States describes the general context of nineteenth century women's organizations from which many of Spokane's women took their notions of women's work. Similarly, Lori Ginzberg's study of benevolence and what she described as its "class nature" traces the moral and economic aspects of women's work and demonstrates how it eventually led them into progressivism.

Many of the clubwomen in Spokane before the turn of the twentieth century had grown up elsewhere. Thus, much of what they originally sought to do in their adopted hometown was inspired by a larger reform context. In his study of gender and Populist politics in Kansas, Michael Goldberg shows that populist men and women operated within a specific political context and culture, yet they were still influenced by the national culture. In the Inland Northwest, charitable ladies applied mainstream ideas about women's work, to the needs they found in this setting of rapid urban expansion.

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16 Michael Goldberg had equated respectability with women's interpretation of morality. Regina Kunzel emphasizes notions of female respectability, and how women's efforts to reform unmarried mothers brought charitable women into establishing the social work profession. *Fallen Women, Problem Girls:*

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They fashioned their plan how to go about their reform while remaining mindful that they help to make their city more respectable, both regionally and nationally.

In Spokane of the 1880s and early 90s women interested in their city’s development found many opportunities in which that they could participate. Thus, organized women had ways to contribute to the city, which their eastern counterparts did not share. But the city’s disorganized state could also be a disadvantage to women, especially for those whom society had relegated to the margins. Anne Butler’s important work on women prisoners validates one example of when the lack of civic infrastructure in Western cities placed added burdens on women. She illustrates how the inchoate character of many western prisons imposed even more severe limits on resources that necessary for preparing penal institutions to provide such basic things as bathrooms reserved for women prisoners.

Even for more privileged women the Western opportunity narrowed quickly as the city matured. In a boomtown like Spokane, it did not take long for charitable clubwomen to find that they were confined in a narrow sector of public life. By the 1890s they were presiding over city-funded institutions, but they had lost most of their influence beyond their immediate responsibilities. This result was especially evident when events outside of their control appeared, such as the Panic of 1893. But although they could become

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isolated while they managed an institution, many women branched out from the charitable arena, to advocate more openly moral reforms.

This process brought some clubwomen in Spokane into more reformist roles, but gaining a voice in what happened in the city proved an ongoing challenge. This was especially true when they sought a place for women in an activity or an institution that men thought was theirs or when women's initiatives might cost the city significant income. For example, they confronted real opposition from the men who led the city when they attempted to have a police matron appointed, and when they sought woman suffrage. Thus these two reforms took longest to achieve than any of the initiatives to build institutions did.

Spokane's boom years coincided with the early years of the nationwide movement of progressivism, effort to achieve reform, which had its roots in the middle class. As the city grew it saw women's organizations multiplying and their members learning valuable administrative skills. Its clubwomen became progressive reformers, much like those eastern women whom Lori Ginzberg has studied. They participated in this national trend toward finding solutions for social problems, applying the ideas of progressivism to their efforts to make the city as up to date as any Eastern urban center.

Rather than studying the Progressive political party in Spokane, “Benefiting a City” examines one path that some civic leaders took during the early stages of that movement. In this venture, it is indebted to a number of historians of women. In the 1980s Nancy Hewitt argued that progressive women could and did wield power but noted that their
efforts were not always beneficial to the people whom they tried to help.\textsuperscript{19} More recently, Robyn Muncy has demonstrated that progressive era women were seeking a public voice. She concluded that they found one in their reform efforts during the 1890s, and in the process they formed the roots of the American welfare state. \textsuperscript{20} Less optimistic about women’s success in terms of their position in society, Camilla Stivers incorporated gender into her study, to conclude that if progressive women had been more influential in reform, public services during the twentieth century would have been more humane, less bureaucratic.\textsuperscript{21}

In Spokane at the turn of the 20\textsuperscript{th} Century, progressive women were creating many of the city’s social service institutions. In the process, they learned new expertise and found a voice in the discussion that formed Spokane. By 1909 and 1910 they were ready to help bring about two of the reforms that they had sought so many years, first the appointing of a police matron, and second gaining woman suffrage. Yet, as an effort to appoint women to be police officers would demonstrate only a few years later, women in Spokane would face continuing opposition as they sought further representation of women.

"Benefiting a City" traces four different paths which women in Spokane took as they sought to benefit their adopted hometown. Local charitable ladies advocated reform in a growing and increasingly complex city. Chapter 1 provides a brief survey of the city of

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Spokane during its boom years, focusing on those portions of the city's story that are most pertinent to this study. Spokane provided the context within which local women built institutions. Chapter 2 introduces the most prominent women's groups who created institutions in the city, and provides a glimpse of the variety of reformers that sought to work in the city. Once Spokane's social service institutions had been established, the charitable minded found they had to keep working to convince city leaders that their institutions efficiently provided legitimate city services. Chapter 3 demonstrates that these ongoing efforts on behalf of the city were some early progressive initiatives. It also evaluates the women's effectiveness. Institutions turned out to be the quickest route for women to make a civic contribution, but these proved very limiting in terms of women's broader influence on the city. Thus, some women in Spokane pursued other initiatives. The fourth and fifth chapters examine two of the most prolonged reform initiatives led by women in Spokane. These explore the local police matron controversy, and women's struggle to gain the vote in Washington. Although each initiative is treated in separate chapters, the two segments demonstrate that the initiatives were closely connect in the minds of Spokane's voters. Each of these efforts stretched throughout Spokane's boom years, and both encountered the most outright opposition from the men at the centers of city power. Indeed booster men were happy to let women work in institutions designed to help women and children, and even gave them financial support, but they were far more reluctant, even opposed to giving women a role in sectors of city life they which thought should be men's. Both initiatives finally found success in 1910, yet gaining a police matron, and getting the right to vote were neither the ultimate goal that women
sought. Rather they were important steps in a continuing crusade for women to make their voices heard in Spokane.
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Sources

CCM .......................................................... [Spokane] City Council Minutes
RCCP .............................................Record of [Spokane] County Commissioners Proceedings

Archives

JOPA, GU ......................................Jesuit Oregon Province Archives, Gonzaga University
MAC, EWSHS................................................................. Museum of Arts and Culture, Eastern Washington State Historical Society
NWR, SPL ......................................Northwest History Room, Spokane Public Library
WSAERB ........................................Washington State Archives, Eastern Regional Branch
Abstract of Dissertation Presented to the Graduate School of the University of Florida in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

BENEFITING A CITY: WOMEN, RESPECTABILITY, AND REFORM IN SPOKANE, WASHINGTON, 1886-1910

By

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August 2003

Chair: Bertram Wyatt-Brown
Cochair: Angel Kwolek-Folland
Major Department: History

"Benefiting a City" examines how turn of the twentieth century white economically comfortable women in Spokane, Washington wrestled with a fundamental American dilemma: what to do when the land of plenty fails to provide? They were addressing concerns arising from the national culture and using progressive clubwomen’s ideas from across the nation. But they worked within a local culture shaped by Spokane, the Inland Empire, and the Pacific Northwest. Thus, their reform efforts interwove elements of the national culture into a western "boomtown."

Clubwomen's attempts to help the city involved them in wide-ranging social reforms, including charity, suffrage and a drive to have a police matron appointed. These women combined a concern for respectability and boosterism with attempts to protect children and women. They sometimes achieved their charitable goals, even occasionally crossing racial, economic and cultural lines of difference. In the process of shaping others, they changed themselves, and helped shape the city.
The upstart western “boomtown,” which provided both opportunity and challenges to economically comfortable ladies, reflected contributions made by a variety of women. Catholics, especially nuns, had the advantage of experience and a charitable track record in the West, but had fewer economic resources. Poor women were in a place where they could help illuminate the limits of middle class charitable efforts. Those who found themselves on the wrong side of the law, and the women who sought to protect them from the harsh male prison environments, discovered that the inchoate character of the city could be a distinct disadvantage. “Benefiting a City” examines four different paths progressive women took as they sought to benefit Spokane.

Public documents, (such as City Directories, City Council Minutes, and County Commissioner records,) form the bulk of the documentation. These illuminate the points where women's activities intersected with those of city and county leaders. Newspapers, reports of investigations, Federal Censuses, maps, oral histories, and photographs help fill in the narrative. Private documentation includes official club minutes from two different organizations, scrapbooks and letters, a diary, and a number of smaller collections.
CHAPTER 1
SHAPING A FAIR CITY

The women who invested energy into making Spokane respectable were acting within a larger community. Some moved to the city while it was still a small town, and worked with it as it grew to be the largest city in the northern United States lying between Seattle and Minneapolis, Minnesota. Although they worked within a national clubwomen's culture, they took up specific initiatives that had been inspired by Spokane and the missions they adopted reflected the needs they saw around them. Thus, their story begins with a town that had its roots in the nineteenth century, yet became part of twentieth century urban America.

Although women were viable actors in the city throughout its boom years, the city's traditional story begins with men. The city of Spokane Falls started in the 1870s as a fantastic dream in the minds of boosters.22 The region offered many advantages. The Spokane River flowed westward through Eastern Washington on its way to empty into the Columbia River.23 In addition to this potential source of waterpower for Spokane, resources lying to the east, south, west and north, seemed to make it the perfect place for the imperial city they envisioned. It could be the hub of an empire that capitalized on national and international trade even though it would be located more than 300 miles

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23 The river now empties into Roosevelt Lake, created in the 1940s when the Grand Coulee Dam was completed.
inland. If the city could gain a station on the northern transcontinental railroad line it would have all the advantages it needed to become great. The dreamers only had to look around to see the benefits this soon to be fair and imperial city of the Inland Northwest might enjoy.

James N. Glover selected the site in 1873 immediately upriver from the intersection between Latah Creek and the Spokane River, because if its spectacular falls. This entrepreneur had accumulated some money during the two decades he had spent in the Pacific Northwest's mining and transportation industries. He first encountered the falls during the month of May when the Spokane River was swollen with spring run-off from the neighboring mountains. With the roar of rushing water etching the beauty of the scene into his mind forever, he interpreted the Spokane River and its falls as a limitless source of energy, and then quickly set about to transform his dreams into reality.

In addition to the 158-foot drop the river made over an upper and lower falls, the area offered much that boosters found attractive. Mineral wealth abounded in the nearby mountains of North Idaho and British Columbia. The stately Ponderosa pines, stretching across the breadth of what is now Spokane County represented potential logging opportunities. Then there was the possibility, one that Glover was aware of, that the Northern Pacific Railroad would be laying track nearby. To the west of the tall straight pines, arid channeled scablands dominated the landscape, making Eastern Washington's trees and lakes appear more distinctive. Stretching miles to the south, fertile farmland on the high rolling hills that locals dubbed the Palouse, offered yet another asset for


25 Schrapps and Compau, 21.
imperialist promoters to tap.\textsuperscript{26} Glover and other boosters interpreted all these natural features as indications that business and commerce could thrive in Spokane.\textsuperscript{27}

The city at the falls began spreading southward from the Spokane River. As late as 1884, a Spokane Falls map began at a point slightly north of the river.\textsuperscript{28} On that side, only four buildings and two parallel streets can be seen. The heart of the city stretched south, across seven blocks of roads and buildings.\textsuperscript{29} By the late 1880s, however, the city began expanding northward. A homesteader on that side ensured this would happen: David Jenkins donated two plots of land—-one for the County Court House and one for Spokane's first college.\textsuperscript{30}

As early as 1886 the boosters' dream of urban progress had already begun to take on physical dimensions. Late that year local voters finally had grown numerous enough to give the city the right to house the County Seat.\textsuperscript{31} Spokane had grown beyond its pioneer settlement days. By 1887 it covered an area of four square miles, and supported a population that was nearing 7000.\textsuperscript{32}

\textsuperscript{26} Partially due to challenges with transportation, Spokane did not immediately tap into the region's farming income. It would not be until after the turn of the twentieth century that the city could do so fully.

\textsuperscript{27} For an intellectual history of the Inland Empire, see Katharine G. Morrisey, \textit{Mental Territories: Mapping the Inland Empire}, (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1997.)

\textsuperscript{28} 1884 Spokane Falls Map, Spokane Public Library, Northwest History Room, future references to this room will be abbreviate, SPL, NWR.

\textsuperscript{29} Schrapps and Compau, 41.

\textsuperscript{30} Schrapps and Compau, 31.

\textsuperscript{31} The nearby community of Cheney had taken the county records from Spokane in early 1881 after Spokane voters had refused to give them up to Cheney following the November 1880 election. Schrapps and Compau, 34.

\textsuperscript{32} The city's population was estimated at 7000 in 1887. Vertical file folder entitled Spokane Population, Spokane Public Library, Northwest Room.
During the next decade, this population boom would prove so large, it would place
Spokane's growth curve well ahead of that of other northwestern cities. In 1880
Spokane Falls had an estimated 350 residents. Only ten years later, the US census
indicated that the population was 19,922, an increase of more than 5600 percent. Growth
continued in the 1890s, but it was only 85% bigger in 1900, and 104,402 in 1910, a 183%
increase. At the end of Spokane's thirty years of boom, 1880-1910, it had become one of
the fifty largest cities in the nation. During the same decades, Seattle grew 1112%, 88%,
and 194%, respectively.

Table 1-1. Spokane's population growth

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<tr>
<td>1890</td>
<td>19,922</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>36,848</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>104,402</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

During the city's first decade the effects of this rapid growth were visible nearly
everywhere. As late as 1888 hastily constructed wooden buildings predominated over
unpaved streets. Symbolizing urban progress, the Northern Pacific Railway Depot
stood prominently at what had been the southern boundary of the city in 1884. Horse
drawn streetcars circled a four-mile route linking the business district with some of the
city’s first upscale homes located a little southwest of the city center. One Catholic

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University, 1995, 72-73.

(Washington D.C.: GPO, 1911)

35 The streets would not be paved until 1897, under the direction of Mayor E. D. Olmsted. "Death
Summons Dr. E. D. Olmsted," Spokesman- Review, 29 December 1918, 7:3
Church, twelve of the Protestant persuasion, general stores and hotels, two colleges, a
library, public school, and opera house helped round out the community. These
institutions hinted that the city was becoming more than a pioneer town.

Although less populated, the north side already showed signs of becoming part of
the city. A few newly platted additions overlooked the northern bank of the Spokane
River. Two roads, Howard and Post, linked the new development to the heart of the city.
A little to the east, lying approximately an hour’s walk from downtown--or a twenty
minute rowboat ride--lay the property for a school being erected by the Jesuits under the
leadership of Father Joseph Cataldo.

Named for St. Aloysius Gonzaga, the institution had originally been meant to be
the flagship of a chain of schools for native Americans that the priest was establishing
across the Pacific Northwest. But the non-native population boom in Spokane that
began in the 1880s quickly transformed the institution into a college dominated by
whites. This institution eventually became what is now known as Gonzaga University.

Further afield, remnants of the fur-trade days remained visible in a mill and trading
post operated about 17 miles upstream. Managed by Michael M. Cowley from 1872 until
early 1889, it had long played the dual role of providing a trading place for natives, as
well as encouraging white growth in the region. Preferring to monopolize the trade near
Idaho's boarder with Washington, Cowley himself had encouraged whites that came his
way to settle in Spokane Falls. Less visible but still marking an important site, remains
of the Spokane House lay nine miles northwest of the city. It had been the Hudson Bay
Company's trading post before 1826, lying where the Little Spokane River empties into

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36 Schrapps and Compau, 13.
the Spokane. Initially founded by the Northwest Fur Trade Company, it had functioned as an important site for trade between whites, the Spokanes, and the Nez Perces.

Local natives were not the only minority with a presence in the region. Between 1870 and 1920 settlers arrived in the Inland Northwest from many different countries and backgrounds. Katherine Morrissey has shown that during the city's boom years the region's residents represented more than thirty-three countries, thirty states, and ten provinces. Scandinavians, Germans, Russians, and Italians were the largest groups of foreign-born residents, but Chinese and people from the British Isles also migrated to the region.38

Blacks began arriving near the falls as early as 1878, only seven years after the first whites appeared there.39 The black community that developed in Spokane was always small, hovering at about 1% of the population.40 At the turn of the century, however, it was larger than Tacoma's, and even near the size of Seattle's. Spokane's blacks managed to create a solid community centered on family, friends, churches, clubs and organizations, despite limits imposed on them by the white-controlled city.41

37 Schrapps and Compau, 6.
38 Morrissey, 7.
40 Quintard Taylor has argued that black urban dwellers were the first to create black communities in the West. Quintard Taylor, In Search of the Racial Frontier: African Americans in the American West, 1528-1990, (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1998), 196.
41 Census data from Spokane in 1890 was destroyed in a fire. Nevertheless, Joseph Franklin estimated that black families were as stable in 1890 as they were in 1900 and after. Joseph Franklin, All Through the Night: The History of Spokane Black Americans, 1860-1940, (Fairfield, Washington: Ye Galleon Press, 1989), 32.
The first African American settler was Daniel K. Oliver, a mulatto who was married to a white woman. He was a carpenter by trade who bought a partnership in a wood planing business, then later branched into the white-dominated occupations of mining and real estate. He prospered, perhaps aided by his light complexion and his white wife and child. He even played a role in local politics by serving a two-year term on the Spokane City Council beginning in 1896.

Henry W. Sample, became the first black member of the city's police force in 1892. In 1900 Emmett Holmes began serving as deputy treasurer of the city, and eventually went on to serve as postmaster for the Washington State House of Representatives and Senate. In 1901, a group of black men formed the Inland Empire Lodge No. 53, A. F. and A. M. of Spokane. Excluded from other secret societies, they created the Prince Hall Masons, designed to practice traditional rituals and secret procedures, but they also contributed to the city and county by looking after local black interests.

Less recognized for their contributions to the larger community, black women still played important roles in Spokane. In 1890 the cook, known to whites as Grandma Hicks, was the only caterer in town. So much in demand were her services that white

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{42} Franklin, 22-3.
\item \textsuperscript{43} Franklin, 88.
\item \textsuperscript{44} For a useful study of secret societies in the 19th Century see Mark Carnes, \textit{Secret Ritual and Manhood in Victorian America}, (New Haven: Connecticut), 1989.
\item \textsuperscript{45} Juliet E. K. Walker's study of black owned businesses, both men's and women's, emphasizes the most lucrative business enterprises. Her point that antebellum Black women found success in menial occupations, similar to those their sisters in slavery were in, seems to be largely descriptive of the kinds of jobs black women were doing in Spokane at the turn of the 20th Century. Juliet E. K. Walker, \textit{The History of Black Business in America: Capitalism, Race, Entrepreneurship} (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1998.)
\item \textsuperscript{46} “Spokane Society of 25 Years Ago,” \textit{Spokesman Review}, 14 June 1917.
\end{itemize}
hostesses were careful to schedule parties for nights when she would be available to work. Similarly, from the middle 1890s until she died in 1902, Celia Rogers was the city's best-known and most colorful laundress.\textsuperscript{47} In 1908, Dora Alice Freeman, mother of six boys, worked as a sales clerk for a department store, Miller, Mower and Flynn.\textsuperscript{48} She did not maintain that position long, however, because white customers complained. But discrimination did not stop her, and she had the courage to join forces with Spokane's preeminent suffragist, May Arkwright Hutton, at a time when many white women would not.\textsuperscript{49}

The Chinese ethnic community played a prominent role in Spokane during the last decades of the nineteenth century. Some were miners, the likes of which had been in the Pacific Northwest since the 1850s. When mining and railroad jobs ended, they turned to building, manufacturing, and farming. By the 1890s anti-Chinese campaigns in the city and discriminatory acts by labor unions had forced many into laundries and other jobs that white men associated with women's work.\textsuperscript{50} At the turn of the twentieth century, Spokane's "Chinatown," anchored by successful merchants and their families, was located near the center of town. This community offered immigrants from China cultural continuity and some protection from white oppression.\textsuperscript{51}

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{47} "Their Toil is Ended" \textit{Spokane Daily Chronicle}, 8 July 1902, 1:5.
\textsuperscript{48} \textit{Northwest Black Pioneers}, 19.
\textsuperscript{51} By the turn of the twenty-first century, Spokane's "Chinatown" was gone. Some of the fortunate had returned to China. The few descendents of pioneering Chinese who still resided in Spokane, had settled in suburban Spokane.
\end{flushleft}
Immigrants to Spokane Falls from Scandinavian countries were numerous and varied. As early as 1890, the first year that City Directories listed churches under their own subheading, three of the four Lutheran churches listed were Norwegian, and Swedish.\textsuperscript{52} A Methodist-Episcopal church served a mixed group of Norwegians and Danes. Its pastor, Rev. E. M. Stangeland, edited a weekly English language newspaper for Scandinavians, entitled, the \textit{Spokane Falls Echo}. Stangeland managed the Echo Publishing Company, which produced the paper, and he proudly listed in city directories that the paper was "independent in politics."\textsuperscript{53}

A group of Finns settled a low-lying area on the south bank of the river at the western edge of town; a place called peaceful valley, that had been previously known as poverty flats.\textsuperscript{54} Separated by a steep cliff from an upscale addition named for the businessman J. J. Browne, it was a working class neighborhood. Many of the first Finnish immigrants were bachelors who had been attracted to Spokane by the region's timber industry. Others found employment in the city's construction industry.\textsuperscript{55} By 1910 this working class community was well established. For example, the Finnish Socialist Club of Spokane had just completed the construction of a social hall in the neighborhood, and it was quickly becoming an important meeting place for local Finns.

\textsuperscript{52} The fourth was German. Of the thirty churches listed, three German, two black, and three Scandinavian, served Spokane's ethnic and other population. Three additional Catholic congregations served additional Europeans. \textit{Spokane Falls City Directory}, (R. L. Polk & Co., 1890), 67.

\textsuperscript{53} The Echo Publishing Company had paid to have its entry bolded in the Directory. \textit{Spokane Falls City Directory}, (R. L. Polk & Co., 1890), 207. This study found no extant copies of the paper.


\textsuperscript{55} Compau, 28.
Back in 1890, a small band of non-treaty Spokane Indians still lived southwest of the city, a little beyond the area that had been popularly dubbed "poverty flats." Earlier they had pitched their teepees along the River, but by the late 1880s, they had been pushed away. They lived on low ground, near where Latah Creek empties into the Spokane River. They depended on the creek, which they called "Sin-too-too-ooley, the place where little fish are caught". Although they lived out of the sight of city residents, the Spokanes maintained a visible presence in the town until the small band signed the treaty and moved to the Couer d'Alene reservation in 1892.

From Latah Creek, the most direct path natives could take into the city followed a dirt road that brought them up a hill near the first homes built in Browne's addition. There they sometimes worked odd jobs. If they were not working, however, they still took that route into the city. On their way, they frequently encountered white children playing nearby. Passing beyond the children and the upscale houses, the natives arrived at the city's center where they participated in the town's economic interchanges.

Mary K. Todd, an immigrant to Spokane, remembered years later her surprise at having seen natives walking the streets in 1884 wrapped in blankets. In 1976

56 The Spokanes were Salish people, who had been using teepees for more than a century. After they had acquired horses, they gained the ability to travel to the Great Plains. There they learned how to build teepees from natives living there.

57 White immigrants to the inland northwest named this creek Hangman's, because in 1858 Colonel George Wright had executed several native leaders near its shores.


59 Mary Todd, the daughter of an Irish immigrant, was divorced from John Todd, also an Irish immigrant, sometime after moving to Spokane. United States Census, 1900, Spokane, Washington, vol 17, sheet 4, enumeration district 66, line 96. She later married William H. Ludden. Mary Ludden will be discussed again in Chapters 2 and 3.
Marguerite Newman Powell looked back on the time and described the moccasin-clad natives that she had encountered as a child while sledding down the hill near Browne's Addition.\textsuperscript{60} Clearly, natives participated in the city despite being relegated to spaces that the whites thought were least desirable.

Still a visible, and sometimes dramatic, presence in the city, the aging Spokane Garry personified the early cooperation between whites and natives in the region.\textsuperscript{61} In the 1820s his father, Illim-eekum-Spokanee, a Middle Spokane's Chief whom the white fur traders had respected, had sent his thirteen year-old son, Garry, with the traders when they had closed up shop and gone East. This young son had attended for several years a white man's school near Winnepeg, Manitoba. There he had learned much about white practices and customs and had converted to Christianity. From about 1830 he was made chief of all three tribes of the Spokanes, had attempted to balance the white man's religion with his own native interests. By the time the city's boom began in the late 1880s, Chief Garry's etched face presented a visual reminder of ups and downs of the cross-cultural interactions that had shaped his entire life.

But if Garry, who died in 1892, was a tragic symbol of the changes in the region, urban-minded white boosters took pride in representing Spokane's future.\textsuperscript{62} They were predominantly Protestants with roots in the Midwest or Eastern United States who had

\textsuperscript{60} Marguerite Newman Powell, oral history record #373, MAC, EWSHS.

\textsuperscript{61} The Spokanes pronounced Garry as "Jerry."

begun arriving in Washington Territory during the 1870s. Of course, Catholics, most of them European or Canadian had been in the region for many years. A few Catholic men, such as M. M. Cowley and even Father Cataldo, had successfully made their contribution to the city through real estate and business. More generally, Catholic contributions to urban life in Spokane were much more indirect and thus they played less central roles in the city than did more traditional boosters.

Non Catholic men were the most prominent city leaders. At the top was James N. Glover, the man recognized as the father of the city. In the 1870s and throughout the 1880s, he worked as merchant and real estate agent, encouraging business development, and serving as one of the city’s first mayors. Close beside him were other white male boosters, such as Anthony M. Cannon and John J. Browne, who both had purchased one-quarter interest in the city's original townsite. They were all businessmen in the broadest sense of the word, respectfully referred to in city directories as "capitalists." They developed property, established banks; and sold land that they had both financed and insured. These male boosters concentrated on increasing the city's material interests as well as establishing themselves economically.

Many of Spokane's leading businessmen found personal success. They have been recognized both by their contemporaries and by posterity as the City's Founding Fathers. But their personal success should not obscure the difficulties that the city faced as they tried to create urban services while the city was experiencing such phenomenal growth.

63 For a study of a small number of white male business entrepreneurs who have been dubbed the city's founding fathers, see John Fahey, "The Million-Dollar Corner: The Development of Downtown Spokane, 1890-1920" Pacific Northwest Quarterly, 62: (April 1971,) 77-85.

64 Spokane City Directory, Polk, 1885.
For example, throughout the 1880s and 1890s, city leaders struggled to create and refine Spokane's law enforcement arm, despite budget constraints that constantly hampered. During the early years a town marshal worked independently or with a posse of volunteer men doing odd jobs such as getting cattle off the streets. In 1910 law-enforcement personnel were part of a police department, but the chief still thought the department understaffed.

Not only was Spokane experiencing problems creating city services that could keep up with the city's growing needs, but city leaders faced a more basic problem, the condition of the streets. They could be muddy, icy, slushy, or dusty, depending on the weather and the season and during its earliest period uncollected horse manure and other garbage multiplied the mess. Most traffic routes had simply evolved instead of having been planned, and intersections were dangerous. Horse drawn carts, street railways, buggies, wagons and pedestrians competed for the streets.

The physical problems Spokane encountered with its roads finally began to improve when the city started paving streets in 1896. At about the same time a street railway began serving the north side, which was the first successful electric powered line in the West. But that was years after the proud commercial buildings had gone up.

Another striking feature of the city was its saloons. Drinking establishments were so much a part of the urban scene that a descendent of one of the pioneer families

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65 Police Scrap Book 1, MAC, EWSHS.


67 Shrapps and Compau, 47.
estimated that Spokane had had one saloon for every 20 people in 1890.\textsuperscript{68} That may have been a bit optimistic, but Spokane's saloons were prominent both socially and politically.

In 1910 the Federal census listed 186 businesses that sold liquor by the drink, or one for every 729 people. Although some cities, (such as any of those listed in this report from Wisconsin,) had even more saloons per person than Spokane did; still this inland city had more saloons per capita than any other in Washington. Tacoma had a saloon for every 796 residents, Seattle for every 951, and Everett had the fewest saloons per capita with one for every 1,187 people.\textsuperscript{69}

In August 1889, a great fire swept thirty-six blocks of the city's business district.\textsuperscript{70} It was the event of a lifetime for many of the people who witnessed it. Afterwards local residents determined that the conflagration should become a stepping stone toward urban growth and progress, thus transforming the tragedy into a formative step.\textsuperscript{71}

The fire leveled saloons, stores, hotels, and dwellings. But it also cleared out streets congested with wooden or wooden core buildings, and provided room for handsome edifices made of brick and stone. Boosters immediately began construction. They changed the orientation of the city, moving the commercial district from Howard, a

\textsuperscript{68} Transcription of a Lecture presented by Margaret Cowles, 7 Jan 1989 before the Eastern Washington Genealogical Society, MAC, EWSHS. Cowles was a granddaughter of Henry M. Cowley, the Congregational minister who came as a missionary to the Spokane Indians in the 1870s. Her grandmother was Lucy P. Cowley, a leading member of the local WCTU. Cowles was a daughter-in-law of W. H. Cowles, who had became Spokane's preeminent publisher soon after he purchased the \textit{Morning Review} in the 1890s.


\textsuperscript{70} Chapter two will have a more lengthy discussion of the fire and its impact on charitable efforts.

\textsuperscript{71} For an example of some boosters' optimistic determination to rebuild after the fire see, \textit{Chronicle}, 6 August 1889, 1.
north/south road, to Riverside Street, paralleling the river. With a considerable amount of money, most of it borrowed from deep-pocketed branches of Dutch-owned banks in the city, the boosters quickly set out to create the fair and imperial city they envisioned for Spokane.72

But the city fathers were not the only ones to help Spokane arise from the ashes. The restoration involved the labor of thousands of residents plus many more that immigrated to Spokane after they had heard about the big fire. A reporter for the Northern Pacific Railroad sent to write about the conflagration and its aftermath assumed he was the only idle man in town when a stranger who saw him standing still asked him if he was looking for a job.73 Later, this same visitor talked to a laborer who informed him that 3,500 men were helping to rebuild the city, and they intended to put up $4 million worth of brick and mortar in less than a year's time.

Women responded to the fire as well, even though they were pushed to the margins of the city, both literally and symbolically, in the days following the fire. A few, such as three who may have been employees of the Western Union Telegraph Office, posed for a photograph in front of a hastily established branch office.74 Hundreds of others lost their residences or places of employment, and many of these returned to the scene, at least temporarily. Countless more revisited the region as retail businesses opened temporary quarters, but the local press made light of these shoppers. For example, one newspaper

72 “Plenty of Money” Spokane Falls Review, 9 August 1889, 1. For a scholarly exploration of the attitudes in Spokane after the fire, and the measures residents took to create a particular future for the city, see Katharine Morrissey, Mental Territories: Mapping the Inland Empire, (New York: Cornell University Press, 1997.)


74 Nolan, 41.
article made women appear hopelessly out of touch with what the fire had done to the city. Its detailed description gently mocked a genteel woman's attempt to navigate the burned out area while searching for temporary stores, i.e. tents, in which she could purchase black silk untainted by the fire.75

More broadly demonstrating that women were not officially viewed as part of the rebuilding effort, only a handful of them appear in the numerous "fire photos" that have been preserved in archives.76 In contrast, a number of men appear in the photos. Clearly, during a few weeks in 1889, the six square blocks that had been burned on the South side of the River were popularly thought to be almost strictly a male domain.77

But women's lives were disrupted as much as men's were by the Great Fire, and many were part of the effort to make their fair city even better than it had been before. Economically comfortable white clubwomen sought to help through charitable efforts, and thereby worked to restore the city's respectability.78 Others also sought to participate in broad discussions that arose following the fire. For example, members of the local WCTU criticized the mayor for letting saloons open for business only two weeks following the fire.

One of the larger discussions these women were participating in concerned how to maintain law and order. Immediately after the fire, the City Council closed all saloons

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75 "Woman's World" Spokane Falls Review, 25 August 1889.

76 The Eastern Washington State Historical Society holds the largest collection of post fire photographs. MAC, EWSHS.

77 Even a year later than the fire, while Spokane was proudly sponsoring an industrial exposition, boosters envisioned the city to be male. A souvenir program bragged that the city was not a "tottering infant," but "full grown" in "manhood." Nolan, 58.

78 For more indepth discussion of charitable women's reaction to the fire, see chapter two. For women's lengthy campaign to protect incarcerated women see chapter 4.
and enlisted military assistance for its Police Marshal. A local paper reported that these
men had been spending long hours patrolling the suburbs.\footnote{For an insightful discussion of law enforcement's reaction to the Chicago Fire, see Karen Sawislak, \textit{Smoldering City}, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995.} Women and men alike feared
disorder would arise.

The tremendous effort by thousands of people to recreate their city paid off, at least
in the short run. In October 1890, less than fourteen months after the fire, proud Spokane
boosters hosted the Northwestern Industrial Exposition. This was the first industrial
exposition, they proudly announced, to be staged in the state of Washington.\footnote{Nolan, 58.} Housed in
a magnificent hall specifically constructed for the event, it was Spokane's first
commercial, rather than agricultural, fair. It introduced the newly rebuilt city, asserted its
regional dominance, and encouraged investment in its newly established Board of
Trade.\footnote{Katherine Morrissey, \textit{Mental Territories: Mapping the Inland Empire}, (Ithaca, New York: Cornell
University Press, 1997, 57.}

Soon after the fair, city residents decided they no longer wanted the falls to
dominate their urban identity. In 1891 they dropped "Falls" from the city's name.\footnote{Schrapps and Compau, 45.} The
river remained a symbolic source of power, however, as evidenced in the name of the
regions' first power company, Washington Water Power. This popular decision to
change the city's name demonstrated a symbolic path the local boosters were taking away
from emphasizing its environmental advantages. They were using the falls for power, but
they did not want their city name to be tied too closely to its surrounding geographic
features. City development followed suit, so that it would eventually have so many
bridges and trains crossing the river that the water had almost disappeared from the visual landscape.\textsuperscript{83}

By the end of 1891, Spokane boosters had dramatically demonstrated their focus on urban progress. Rebuilding continued during the following year, transforming Spokane's appearance and putting the booster's dreams into brick and mortar. The process also placed a handful of men in prominent positions. Although his focus on elite white men excludes other important actors in the drama, John Fahey has argued that a small number of men who had resided in the city before the fire rebuilt the city, giving urban Spokane its determinative characteristics.\textsuperscript{84}

The defining buildings were set in eight blocks near Riverside Ave. These were imposing granite or brick structures standing six to seven stories high and built to house a number of businesses.\textsuperscript{85} Banks, attorney's offices and retail establishments all took up residence there. One Dutch banker who visited Spokane in the early 1890s thought he had never seen a town with such overwhelmingly monumental buildings. The scene made him wonder if Spokane's leaders had been too extravagant, perhaps overreaching themselves.\textsuperscript{86}

However the effort to make Spokane grow might impact individual developers, the post fire reconstruction became an important part of what the city would be for the next


\textsuperscript{85} Retmann, 73.

century. Immediately after the fire businessmen recreated a commercial center for the city. Many of the buildings they erected still exist at the turn of the twenty-first century.

But their version of Spokane was not the only one to be reborn after the fire. In essence, the city's commercial region encompassed two economic systems. Within a few blocks of these grand edifices, resting in the same commercial zone, Spokane's red light district, which locals dubbed the "tenderloin," flourished. These were separate, yet overlapping systems, fed by some of the same factors. The trains that intersected the city along with the money, wealth and people they brought in. Immigration helped increase the personal commercial interests of many a booster. At the same time, other people who came to the city preferred to participate in the informal economic system. At times, the alternative economy and culture that went along with it could masquerade as if it was Spokane's most prominent.

This group could include people with less formal ties to the city. Many came into the city from the region's mining and agricultural sectors. From the 1880s on semi-skilled migrant workers, sometimes colorful outlaws, and temporarily unemployed people flocked to Spokane for entertainment, possible job opportunities, or to spend the winter.

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88 Retmann, 74.

89 The railroad magnate, James J. Hill described the city in 1898 as the "worst old hole" in the West. Carl H. Trunk, *History of the City of Spokane, from 1880 to the Lilac Parades*, (Spokane: M. Kienholz, 1968), 1.

90 Retmann, 76.
Spokane's alternative economy featured peddlers who sold wares on every corner. For example, a patent medicine man known as Eve would take an open carriage to the corner of Stevens and Main and lecture on medicines. Similarly, "Painless Parker" set up a dental practice on the streets and pulled anyone's tooth for free, just to prove his dental procedures did not hurt. It also featured many madams, some of whom were quite well-known, such as one who extravagantly dressed her newest recruits then drove them around town in a luxurious open carriage giving local men a glimpse of the delectable treasures that awaited them at her brothel.

Spokane outlawed prostitution in 1889, but city leaders tolerated a fine system that regularly put money into the city's coffers, and allowed prostitution to continue throughout the city's boom years. In a testament to the importance of this alternative economy to the city, for many years local politicians and business leaders staunchly defended the system because it put so much money into the local economy.

Reformers, such as church groups and clubwomen would eventually convince the businessmen to listen to their concerns. But this would take years. In 1910 the city finally stopped endorsing the official acceptance of fines that allowed prostitution to continue. By that time opponents of the reformers were quiet at least publicly.

But in the years immediately following the Fire of 1889 the eventual political and moral reform of the city was still decades away. Other problems took precedence in the intervening years. For example, the nationwide Panic of 1893 hit Spokane especially

91 Trunk, 9.

92 Jay Moynahan, Red Light Revelations: Unveiling Spokane's Risque' Past, 1885-1905, (Spokane: Chickadee publishing, 1999.)

93 Retmann, 110-113.
hard. Hitting just as Spokane's all-out effort to rebuild was finishing, it brought painful
losses to the city. Business leaders who were heavily mortgaged struggled to keep their
financial interests afloat. Some of the elite boosters survived, but the experience of one
man demonstrates the difficulties that they and the city experienced. A. M. Cannon, one
of the city's four original investors, had enjoyed a measure of wealth as early as the
1880s. In 1893, the bank he owned, which had been mortgaged heavily to Dutch
financiers, was the first to be foreclosed.94 He died in New York two years later, a lonely
and nearly penniless man.

The depression had an impact on Spokane's politics, as well. It helped ensure that a
range of Spokane voters would be more favorable to alternative political parties than they
were at any other time during the city's boom years. For example, in 1891, Horatio N.
Belt was first elected to City Council. By 1894 this member of the People's Party was the
mayor, having been nominated during the first local Populist convention.95 Under his
leadership the city wrestled with the economic downturn and watched apprehensively as
a faction of Coxey's Army camped out in Spokane during May and June. He narrowly
avoided a serious riot in July when the nationwide strike of the American Railway Union
prevented trains from arriving for ten days on the Northern Pacific Railroad line.96 Belt
would serve again as Spokane's Mayor beginning in 1896, and might have been


95 "Horatio and Pat Return" Spokesman-Review, 6 July 1894, 3. The City Council remained controlled by
Republicans. See also N. W. Durham, 458, 59.

96 Durham, vol. 2, 426-27. Coxey's representatives recruited more than 400 to their ranks from Spokane.
nominated for Governor of Washington if Spokane had not already had an U.S. Senator, John L. Wilson, Republican, and an Attorney General.

Belt found a political ally in one of Spokane's most prominent attorneys, Leander H. Prather, who had first arrived in the city in 1884. By 1894, he and Belt were willing to stand up as members of the People's Party even though they had suffered a political defeat at a regional convention. In 1897 he was elected Spokane County judge.

The 1896 fusion ticket of Silver Republicans, Democrats and Populists gave to Spokane both of the State of Washington's U.S. Senators. One of them was George Turner, who served from 1897-1903. He was an attorney who had previously played a prominent role making sure that woman suffrage would not be a part of Washington State.

Nevertheless, the broad spectrum of support for political alternatives that had put Turner in as a Senator waned as the local economic situation began to rebound. As it did so, the potential for cross-class alliances in local politics ebbed. Spokane's diversity of political interests did not go away, but these were pushed into the background by an imperialist city intent on making up for lost time after the depression. Their voice would be heard again, however.

In the meantime, Spokane's corporate leaders had been busy increasing the city's status as a railroad center. Their success on that score convinced male boosters their empire was intact. They could argue that it was the imperial city because all regional rail lines stopped there. For example, in 1900 the Reverend J. Edwards enthused that the city

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97 "Former Senator George Turner Dies at Spokane," Seattle Times, 26 January 1932.

98 For more information see Chapter 5.
was being served by five transcontinental railroads. The three most prominent branches were the Union Pacific that had reached Spokane in 1889; the Great Northern that had arrived nearby in 1892; and the Canadian Pacific. Two more lines shared the Northern Pacific tracks with the Great Northern Railway. Finally two shorter systems connected Spokane with eastern British Columbia, and with the mining region around Lake Coeur d'Alene, Idaho.99

Other large corporate interests found the region attractive as well. In the early 1900s, big lumber companies took interest in Spokane, having used up the forests in the Midwest. They came to town and bought many of the small lumber companies and mills that had dotted eastern Washington and north Idaho. Railroads sold them huge tracks of land, and they built large sawmills, offering employment to many.

Another of the things that brought Spokane out of the economic doldrums of the 1890s was renewed mining productivity. Longtime residents of the city, such as James Monaghan, and Charles Sweeney acquired new wealth from their investments in minerals. At the same time individuals who had lived elsewhere in the region and had won the mining game often found it politically and socially expedient to move to Spokane. Two of the newly wealthy arrivals were May Arkwright Hutton and her husband Levi, who had been working class but had become wealthy off a moderate investment in the Hercules Mine.

By 1907, the year that the Huttons arrived in Spokane, the city had become opulent, and was participating in its own "age of elegance."100 One historian has described it as

100 Shrapps and Compau, 53.
For example, leaders brought the city beautiful movement to Spokane by inviting the Olmsted brothers to come and make recommendations. While the Olmsteds stuck true to their previously established formulas, suggesting the city create wide curving boulevards, and spacious parks, the elite citizens were moving into fine houses. Some of these mansions were in Brown's Addition, where the 1880s elite business leaders had built homes. An architect and a nephew of a local banker, Kirtland Cutter helped to give the visual element to Spokane's newly upscale image. Cutter's designs for the homes of prominent leaders helped the city take the last step away from its frontier town image and assume that of a lovely and gracious city.102

However, all citizens did not share equally in the gracious new Spokane. Signals of discontent had been evident in 1902, when railroad officials met in a nearby town in an attempt to talk with the region's farmers. Local agricultural interests were upset over the railroad lobbying of state and national politicians, and they were seeking lowered shipping rates. The tracks had not been laid in the interests of farmers, and it could be expensive to ship produce to markets in Spokane and beyond.

Then an economic malaise that settled on the country in 1907 hit Spokane's working class. Laborers flocked to the city seeking jobs, because boosters and promoters had long described it as a place where one could find work. Once there, they found out it was not that simple. Employment agents charged prospective employees a fee, then promised them a job at a mine or at some other distant location. Applicants would go there only to find out that the job did not exist. In 1906 the city had attempted to crack

101 Durham, 531.

102 Schrapps and Compau, 55.
down on such practices, but agents still were not providing the numbers of jobs that seekers in Spokane needed. They preferred working for private corporate clients, rather than helping individuals.

Thus, a number of unemployed stayed in Spokane with little or nothing to occupy their time. They soon became potential audiences for stories, such as those that had been appearing in local papers describing worker unrest throughout the region. This theme had been recurring with some regularity since 1893. Employed or not, workers in Spokane heard of dynamited property, vandalism in mines, and other signs of unrest.

At the same time conservative progressive reformers saw what they thought were the first good results from their efforts to move the city away from the political influence of saloons and other special interests. Democrat Nelson S. Pratt, elected mayor in May 1909, campaigned on a morality plank. He immediately began working to clean up city hall, and set the city on track to function in a moral and business-like way. Supporters, such as clubwomen interested in appointing a police matron, also assumed that Pratt's morality campaign would reach beyond City Council.

At the same time, members of the Industrial Workers of the World were taking note of the numbers of restless unemployed in the city, and came to Spokane. The IWW's primary recruiting tactic, which had already been used locally by the Salvation Army, was to stand on street corners urging restless workers to consider their cause. Spokane had responded by strengthening local ordinances against speaking on the streets. The ranks of restless workers and members of the IWW tried to force the city's hand by

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103 In 1904, Republican Albert Mean, a handpicked railroad candidate, became governor. Independent-minded Republicans rebelled. Spokane's conservatives were among the rebellious, and that is when they began working toward political reform, both in the city and state. Knight, 22.
recruiting more speakers than the city jail could hold. After five months of overcrowded jails, the labor activists met with a measure of success in Spokane. City officials revoked the licenses of nineteen employment agencies.\textsuperscript{104}

Nationally known IWW leaders such as Elizabeth Gurley Flynn and James P. Thompson led the effort in Spokane.\textsuperscript{105} Besides the limited success in reaching union objectives, their campaign brought to light corruption in the local police department. Members of several different interest groups in Spokane, including socialists and the Woman's Club, worked to ensure that their reform interests could be addressed. Not a united coalition of reformers, these various efforts nevertheless simultaneously put pressure on city leaders and won the appointment of resident police matrons employed by the city police department.\textsuperscript{106} That victory helped pave the way for local support of giving women in Washington the right to vote in 1910.

But first, Spokane would go from being a western frontier settlement of the nineteenth century to becoming an urban center of the twentieth. Along the way it would be shaped by a variety of people. True, the businessmen who constructed the downtown after the fire gave the city a look and a characteristic that would be influential for more than a century. But a large and varied number of individuals and groups helped form the city's character. Among the religious, ethnic, and cultural groups who participated in shaping Spokane were white clubwomen, who would go from a "do-everything" style of reform to being some of the city's earliest progressives. At the same time, the maturing


\textsuperscript{105} For more information on Flynn and the police matron controversy in Spokane, see chapter 4.

\textsuperscript{106} Knight, 211.
city would allow some of them to branch into self-improvement groups. These were the clubwomen who would be most effective when seeking changes at the city level. The efforts to gain a resident police matron and convince Spokane's voters that women should also have that privilege faired better under a progressive guise of civic-improvement.

The Boomtown's window of opportunity left open for enterprising and sometimes privileged women the possibility of creating a number of social service institutions. But that window had already shut by the first decade of the twentieth century. In the mature city progressive white clubwomen took a leading role in expressing to city leaders women's perspectives on civic matters. However, to look more closely at the ways that women benefited the city of Spokane we now turn back to the "do-everything women" of the 1880s.
CHAPTER 2
MAKING THE CITY RESPECTABLE

In Spokane Falls of the late 1880s, charitable-minded white middle class women found that the inchoate city provided them with a myriad of needs that they could aspire to meet. If across the nation clubwomen were attempting to "Do Everything," those in this boomtown found that the options for them to get involved were even more numerous than they had been in their previous homes, this was especially so if they had lived in better established cities back east. Yet if their opportunities were great, so was the variety of people who responded to them. Reform minded Protestant women discovered very early in their quest make the city respectable that the right to "Do Everything" was not automatically theirs, it was contested terrain. Although the competition had been evident during earlier years, the Great Fire of August 1889 intensified many charitable efforts to contribute to their city.

On the hot, dry evening of August 4, 1889 Harriet Ross stood in her yard a mile north of the Spokane River looking down on a huge fire engulfing six square blocks of wooden buildings that lined the streets of Spokane's business district.\footnote{\textit{"Those were Happy Days,"} \textit{Spokesman-Review}, 24 July 1914.} The river and the relatively undeveloped nature of the steeply sloping land between them and the downtown area made her believe that her home would not be endangered. She and some female friends watched in stunned silence as high winds propelled the inferno onward. A sawmill crumbled, explosions rocked the air, and one of the three bridges linking the
north side to downtown collapsed. Horses and wagons headed up the hills in both directions away from the river, carting goods away in an attempt to save valuable possessions.\textsuperscript{108} Then at 9 p.m. the winds died down, and the conflagration stopped almost as abruptly as it had begun. The city had been fortunate that no one died in the fire, yet the devastation it wrought proved painful.

Already active in local charitable efforts, Ross no doubt grieved over what she saw happening to the city and quickly began contemplating what she could do to help alleviate the suffering. She and her husband, the businessman Andrew J. Ross, had migrated to Spokane in 1884. Since that time, both had invested energy into their adopted hometown. Among other things, he developed the subdivision from which his wife had viewed the conflagration. She had worked to benefit individuals in the community both by herself and as a member of women's organizations.

As early as 1886, Ross and other white economically comfortable women in Spokane had begun conferring among themselves regarding Spokane's increasing societal problems.\textsuperscript{109} They were seeing poverty and sickness among many recent immigrants, and children who had neither families nor homes. They were responding to suffering not so much different from urban conditions elsewhere in the United States. But in this inchoate boomtown, there were limited means of addressing such problems. The city fathers were,

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item \textsuperscript{108} Marcia O'Neill Schrapps, SNJM and Nancy G. Compau, \textit{Our City Spokane}, (Spokane: Lawton Printing Company, 1996), 41-2.
\item \textsuperscript{109} The earliest extant health statistics on Spokane were published in 1893. That year Spokane recorded 523 deaths, or 13.9 deaths per thousand. While this was less than 2\% of the total population, it was a sharp contrast to a statewide average of 3.5 deaths per thousand. \textit{State of Washington, Second Annual Report of the Board of Health} (Olympia: O C. White, 1893) 19. However, comparing the data on deaths in Spokane with those from other cities in Washington for the decade beginning in 1893 suggests that while 1893 was a difficult year for Spokane, the city was not much more deadly than others in Washington throughout the decade.
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as one historian has described it, "reluctant citizens." They concentrated on economic
growth, both civic and personal, and had little time left over for more humane matters.
Women, often those like Ross who were married to city leaders, noted these limits in
official policy and believed they made Spokane less respectable.

Throughout most of the 1880s Spokane County Commissioners had given small
sums of money to private citizens, reimbursing them for the expenses they had incurred
while caring for needy children. But that was the extent of official poor relief. The
lack of human service facilities in the city dismayed charitable-minded women. The
benevolent ladies believed their adopted hometown should not only prosper, but should
also address the problems faced by the region's most destitute residents. Their efforts to
right these wrongs even occasionally put the women at odds with the men at City Hall.

The well-to-do white Protestant women who promoted themselves as Spokane's
authorities in caring for the poor imported their notions of order and respectability. Many
had migrated from mature urban areas further east, and sometimes South, where the
middle class concept of women's responsibility for "municipal housekeeping" had been
established earlier in the nineteenth century. This notion seemed particularly appealing
to clubwomen in Spokane. The inchoate city, which they now called home, had few human service institutions.

The women who were interested in cleaning up Spokane further interpreted their philanthropic responsibilities through lenses shaped by their own religious, ethnic, and economic backgrounds. Their biases were especially evident when they were offering aid to children. For example, both Protestants and Catholics were convinced that the youngest poor should be educated to share their own religious beliefs, and not be cared for by adults who adhered to other tenets.

Although the white benevolent ladies considered themselves to be "western," they were most likely to model their voluntary organizations after those they had participated in elsewhere in the United States. For instance, a branch of the Women's Christian Temperance Union had been active in Eastern Washington in the late 1870s, even before Spokane's white population had grown beyond a handful of settlers. Like the temperance ladies, most of the benevolent ladies did not consider the possibility that western women's work might be different in nature from what they had done elsewhere.

Nevertheless western women, including those in Spokane, enjoyed what one historian has described as "unusual opportunities", allowing them to "start from scratch"

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114 For a study of the connection between reform and religion, see Elizabeth Hayes Turner, Women, Culture and Community: Religion and Reform in Gaveleston, 1880-1920, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997.)

115 Spokane was originally named Spokane Falls, but the falls was dropped in 1890. For simplicity sake, this chapter refers to the city with its post 1890 nomenclature.
in their reform efforts.\textsuperscript{116} Women could contribute to the boomtown by doing a number of things, ranging from establishing hospitals and orphanages to playing an occasional official role in municipal and county philanthropy.\textsuperscript{117} But in Spokane the window of opportunity would narrow quickly.

While it lasted, the city's exponential growth gave energy to the women's reform efforts as well as providing them with a lot of work to do. This was as true for the benevolent ladies as it was for many other women. Catholics were the most notable group of other charitable women, partly because the church had already enjoyed an extended presence in the region, as well as throughout the American West. They played an important role in establishing Spokane's human services sector. This meant that Catholic charitable and educational efforts were directly opposite those of the socially prominent white women.

During Spokane's earliest boom years, the mixture of charitable agents proved volatile, and the lack of human service institutions raised the stakes. Since a variety of agents were working to do the same thing, a conflict over the power to define and meet needs occasionally reached scandalous proportions. Each group participating in the "discussion" had their own interpretation of respectability.

White protestant women were interested in increasing the region's respectability. Their sense of what would make Spokane look good was based on what one historian has described as the version of moral order, that Victorian women advocated.\textsuperscript{118} Yet they

\textsuperscript{116} Pascoe, 11.

\textsuperscript{117} Fannie W. Cannon, an officer of the Ladies Benevolent Society, also served as County poor agent in 1893 and 1894. For example see RCCP, Book F, 27 September 1893, p. 534, WSAERB.

\textsuperscript{118} Pascoe, 10.
only indirectly appealed emphasized their female moral authority when talking with city leaders, but they were quick to argue that their charitable efforts relieved the city of having to be burdened with paupers. Their sense of moral authority was more likely to surface in their cross class relations, when dealing with people they thought were both poor and morally deficient.119 On the rare occasions when they felt the city leaders were directly questioning their moral authority, the benevolent ladies made primary their concerns for their personal morality and respectability.120

If the benevolent ladies positioned themselves at Spokane's socio-cultural center, the nuns who spearheaded Catholic charitable efforts played a more marginal role in making the city respectable. They were outsiders. In terms of respectability, their primary concern was in establishing a position for themselves that would allow them to interpret and carry out their specialty.

Even more illusive to historians, the people who were the potential beneficiaries of charitable efforts in Spokane had their own definitions of respectability. Their concerns had little to do with the city's reputation, but centered on the need to survive. Immigrant families were arriving in town without the resources they needed to pay for such basic necessities as food and housing. Disease and malnutrition exacted an especially hard toll. Their definitions of respectability varied the most from that of the economically comfortable benevolent ladies. This distance between themselves and the more prominent citizens would become evident as the benevolent ladies attempted to carry out

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119 Gordon, 62.

their charitable mission.\textsuperscript{121} Evidence of a problem that disproportionately affected the
city's poorest women can be found in local health reports.\textsuperscript{122} As late as 1893, twenty-
seven percent of infants succumbed to some disease before their first birthday. If a child
managed to survive a year, it was not unusual that at least one of her parents would not.

Nevertheless, the options for poor babies and needy adults began looking brighter
in June of 1886. It was then that the Sisters of Providence came to town, and began
constructing the city's first hospital.\textsuperscript{123} Experienced in the nineteenth century’s version of
medicine, the nuns came at the invitation of the region's ranking Catholic, Father Joseph
Cataldo, Society of Jesus.\textsuperscript{124} Since their order's founding days, its members had been
especially concerned with helping the poor.\textsuperscript{125} The nuns provided medicines, food,
housing, and work for many local indigents, as well as hospitalization for anyone who
needed it.

Harriet Ross and other local Protestant women, who were already engaged in poor
relief, at once eyed the nuns as rivals. They believed Catholic institutions could not
fulfill the benevolent ladies' vision of moral order neither could it fully enhance the city's

\textsuperscript{121} The frustration the ladies expressed over maintaining help in 1889 is evident in their annual report for

\textsuperscript{122} Annual Report of the Board of Health of the City of Spokane Washington, Shaw-Borden Company,
1894, 11, 17.

\textsuperscript{123} As early as 1882, Mother Joseph had begun considering the possibility of building a
hospital in Spokane, but the order’s superior, Mother Amable, waited until 1886 to decide
they could spare the resources. Mother Amable, Montreal, to Sister Joseph of the Sacred
Heart, Washington, Territory, 26 August 1882. Sisters of Providence Archives, Mother
Joseph Province, Seattle, WA.

\textsuperscript{124} Cataldo was a Jesuit. Members of this order use the initials, S. J. to connote their affiliation. Future
references to Jesuits will identify their membership in the society with these initials.

\textsuperscript{125} The founder, Mother Gamelin, first began working on behalf of poor people in Montreal, Canada. Fifty
Golden Years: A Short History of Sacred Heart Hospital, (Spokane: Acme Stamp and Printing Company,
respectability. For example, soon after the Sisters arrived, Ross and several other prominent white women met in Mrs. William Butterworth's millinery shop.\textsuperscript{126} They organized the Ladies Benevolent Society, which they initially designed to address a wide variety of different needs. Together these ladies tried running a hospital, caring for elderly women, and providing services designed for poor children and their families. So multifarious were their earliest charitable efforts that the undertaking proved awkward. But after an extended refining process the institution they created would continue to serve the region's children until the 1950s.

In early 1889, echoing the Protestant benevolent initiative of two years earlier, a small number of Catholic laywomen organized the Catholic Ladies Benevolent Society.\textsuperscript{127} At least two of the founders were Irish immigrants, and although few in number, they had already provided an effective support network for the Sisters of Providence. These women would prove to be valuable assistants for the other orders of nuns who later came to the city. This alliance of Catholic women would be instrumental in providing Spokane with schools at every educational level, as well as a hospital and an orphanage.

Despite their eventual success in Spokane, in 1886 when the Sisters of Providence began their work they quickly encountered challenges. For one thing, most of the nuns

\textsuperscript{126} The earliest historical account of the founding of the Ladies Benevolent Society comes from Edwards, Jonathan, Reverend, \textit{An Illustrated History of Spokane County}, (W. H Lever, 1900) 244. Edwards says 1885. If they did, the extant evidence indicated that they may have organized in 1886. The city directory first lists the organization in 1887, but the data in these was often as much as a year behind. Similarly, the directory suggests that Butterworth had her millinery shop less than two years. Her shop appeared in 1887, but was not listed in 1885 nor in 1888. \textit{Spokane City Directory}, (Polk, 1885, 1887, 1888.) Butterworth was also active in the local WCTU. See Charlotte Pinkham Hamblen Diary, 28 December 1887, MAC, EWSHS.

\textsuperscript{127} City Directory entries indicate the Society had been founded in 1889. \textit{Spokane City Directory}, Polk: 1889. "Notice of Meeting" Spokane Falls Review, 5 February 1890, 6:2.
were Canadians and their Motherhouse was in Montreal. They still used French as their primary language, even though the members in the Pacific Northwest could also converse in English.\textsuperscript{128} In addition to the nuns' accent, their ties to Catholics distanced them from the city's most prominent boosters. Local church officials, predominantly Jesuit priests, had a long tradition in the Pacific Northwest, but they had focused on the natives.\textsuperscript{129} Thus in 1886 Spokane, Catholics were a minority.

The nuns, of course, were interested in meeting the spiritual needs of the people with whom they came in contact, and thus were happy to win converts. They even thought they could do more good for the spiritual condition of their patients than could their Protestant competitors.\textsuperscript{130} This similarity to other Catholic leaders, however, should not be interpreted as a sameness of daily objectives. The sisters' work required that they cooperate closely with city and county officials. The success of their hospital depended on their ability to forge a cooperative relationship with local leaders.

In order to achieve this goal the Sisters of Providence had to become "boosters" of sorts. This meant agreeing on the broadest levels with other progressives in the city about what would improve Spokane's respectability. It required, at least tangentially, buying into the prevailing values of urban prosperity.

\textsuperscript{128} Mother Joseph, and her administrative counterpart, Sister Joseph of Arimathea were bilingual, and it is likely that the other nuns who came to Spokane from Vancouver, Washington knew English.

\textsuperscript{129} See Chapter 1 for a brief description of Catholic contributions to the Pacific Northwest before 1886. The Sisters of Providence had come to the Pacific Northwest years earlier, but they had settled on the Western side of the region. Two other orders had sent members to reservations in North and Central Idaho.

\textsuperscript{130} For example see trans, Sr. Emerita, S. P. Spokane to Rev. Sr. M. Olive, Vancouver, WA, 8 October 1906. Sisters of Providence Archives, Mother Joseph Province, Seattle, WA.
They took the first step toward doing so by simply moving to Spokane. The six members of the order who came during the summer of 1886 more than doubled the number of Catholic officials who made the city their primary place of residence and work. Prior to their arrival, the regionally based Father Joseph Cataldo and a parish priest, who presided over mass in a downtown shanty but ministered to a far-flung flock, were the most visible church officials in Spokane.

Once there, the Sisters of Providence positioned themselves strategically. The nuns decided that a piece of ground north of the Spokane River which had been offered to them by "the Reverend Jesuit Fathers was not suitable because it was located too far from the city."131 They had no objection that Father Joseph was erecting a school there, but they required a more convenient location for their hospital. As a result, the Sisters of Providence spent $2000 of their own money on a "more beautiful and central site," situated near the city center on the south side of the river.132

Playing a key role in this decision, the legendary Mother Joseph had been one of the first two nuns to take up residence in Spokane. She thrived in this fledgling "boomtown" where she could apply her considerable architectural skills, and make sure that her fellow nuns had a home in which to live, work, and serve the Inland Northwest's poor. So suited was she for this vein of work, Mother Joseph would move on to another


construction project soon after completing Sacred Heart Hospital, leaving the administrative and nursing tasks to other members of the order.133

While she was in Spokane Mother Joseph oversaw the construction of a beautiful and distinctive edifice. In this way she helped the nuns make great strides toward establishing a respectable presence in the city. The building was constructed of wood, like most of the others in the city, but she had it faced with bricks and added a fashionable cupola to the roof. Inside it featured a state of the art heating system and the most up-to-date operating rooms.134 It was a project destined for success. Long after the Sisters of Providence had moved away from the original facility, city residents continued to commemorate the skills of the legendary nun who had walked the streets of Spokane carrying a hammer in her belt.135

With Mother Joseph's help the Sisters of Providence quickly pulled away from the traditions that had been established during the many years that the Jesuits had been in the region, and they soon began playing a role in Spokane's progressive reform scene.136 Their first chaplain's experience illustrates the contrast between the nun's daily objectives and routines, and those of many of the local priests. When Father Peter Barcelo, S. J., arrived at Sacred Heart soon after the sisters had opened their doors, he found the nuns


134 Spokane Falls Review, 1 January 1887, 2:2

135 “That Hospital in 1886 Made a City of a Town” Spokane Daily Chronicle, 25 December 1967. The Sisters of Providence sold their property near the River to the Great Northern Railroad and moved into a building on their current location on Spokane's South Hill in March 1910. See Fifty Golden Years, 27.

136 Father Schoenberg contrasted Mother Joseph's object, the poor, with Father Cataldo's, the Indian. Wilfred P. Schoenberg, “The Drama of Four Holy Joseph's, and Other Sundry Characters,” in a speech presented to the Spokane Club, 17 November 1986.
urban-centered routine already underway. But Barcelo had spent most of his career on far-flung missions to the Cheyenne.\(^{137}\) When his health had finally broken, he left the reservation and headed for Spokane where he spent his last days. Everything was so different there from what he had been used to that he felt isolated and alone. In their "Chronicle," the Sisters of Providence's collective diary, one nun explained the chaplain's predicament: "This assignment caused him much daily suffering having been in the habit of living with his dear children of the woods; his only happiness was to live in their midst."\(^{138}\)

The nuns were meeting needs in the city, but this did not make it easy for them to garner the necessary funds.\(^{139}\) Their plans required raising significant amounts of money even before they could open the hospital doors. Although Spokane did have at least one resident who had amassed a fair amount of wealth by 1886, they found no one willing to provide the level of funding they required. On the one hand, there were no Catholics living there who possessed any considerable cash reserves. For example, Father Cataldo owned land, but he had invested his financial resources into developing Gonzaga College. The Irish immigrants, James Monaghan and Charles Sweeney, who would later become the mainstays of Catholic charitable efforts in the region, had not yet been established among the city's well to do. On the other hand, the non-Catholics who could have afforded to help the Sisters of Providence were investing heavily in developing

\(^{137}\) Wilfred P. Schoenberg, S. J. "The Drama of Four Holy Joseph's, and Other Sundry Characters," in a speech presented to the Spokane Club, 17 November 1986, Sisters of Providence, Mother Joseph Province, Seattle.

\(^{138}\) Chronicles, Sacred Heart Medical Center, 1886, Spokane, Washington. Sisters of Providence Archives, Mother Joseph Province, Seattle, WA.

\(^{139}\) Sister Joseph of Arimethea, the first superior of Sacred Heart Hospital in Spokane, had begun going into people’s home’s to tend the sick as soon as Mother Joseph commenced construction on the hospital.
businesses and buying property. They had a "boomtown" mentality that could celebrate
Mother Joseph’s beautiful building, while reserving their discretionary money for
economic development and giving an occasional nod to Protestant benevolent efforts.\textsuperscript{140}

To help meet their budgetary requirements, the nuns held local bazaars, relying on
a number of small donations from city residents. Protestants enjoyed these fair-like
events and supported them. But these provided only a fraction of the funds that the
Sisters of Providence needed. So the nuns turned to what regional church officials called
“begging tours.” This usually involved going to nearby mining regions mostly located in
northern Idaho, where many immigrant Irish Catholics lived and worked.\textsuperscript{141}

During these regional fund-raising excursions, the nuns placed mining gear over
their habits and headed underground to solicit the small sums that the laborers could
provide. Sacred Heart memoirs fondly describe one trip after which Mother Joseph tried
to board a train with a cow in tow. The conductor asked her to pay for transporting the
animal, but she insisted that the bovine qualified as the unspecified guest which her train
pass allowed. Tradition says the animal got a free ride.

Such colorful descriptions provide strong visual images of Mother Joseph and the
determination that fueled her quest to give Spokane its first hospital. While these may
have been embellished over the years, they demonstrate that fundraising in Spokane's
hinterlands played a significant and ongoing part of the nuns' early efforts in the city.

\textsuperscript{140} For the thought processes behind this imperial boomtown, see Katherine Morrissey, \textit{Mental Territories},

\textsuperscript{141} While not pertaining to the specific begging tours the Sisters of Providence took, Father Charles
Mackin’s memoirs provide several references to the Catholic’s ritual of going out into the Inland
Northwest seeking donations. Father Charles Mackin Personal Papers, Jesuit Oregon Province Archives,
Gonzaga University.
However, local leaders were impressed with what the Sisters of Providence contributed to the city, and eventually began providing a measure of economic assistance to the nuns. For example, in January 1887, approximately two weeks after they had opened the hospital doors, they signed a contract with Spokane County administrators to care for the indigent sick under its jurisdiction through February of the following year. In exchange for these services, they would earn $1.00 per person each day.\textsuperscript{142} About that time, city leaders gave them a small measure of support in the form of property tax waivers.\textsuperscript{143} A short time later, city council members contracted, somewhat grudgingly, with the nuns to care for the sick poor for which the city was responsible.\textsuperscript{144}

The occasionally cooperative relationship the sisters developed with the businessmen who controlled local governments was mirrored in their associations with Spokane's charitable women. Of course, Catholic ladies were their allies and partners, assisting the nuns in many ways. Protestants even sometimes helped them, but most of the sisters were foreigners and all were religious outsiders making inroads into creating human service institutions--that sector of Spokane, which the Protestant benevolent ladies wished to control.

The nuns did, nevertheless, enjoy a few advantages in the contests among Spokane's charitable individuals. The Sisters of Providence had arrived in Spokane as members of an organization that had years of practice with tending the sick, as well as helping the poor. If relevant experience had been the most important factor in

\textsuperscript{142} RCCP, Book C, 14 February 1887, 200, WSAERB.

\textsuperscript{143} CCM, 12 March 1888, 163-165. Washington State Archives, Eastern Regional Branch.

\textsuperscript{144} See Chapter three for a further discussion of how city and county leaders determined which indigent sick they were responsible for.
determining which faction would establish and control Spokane's human-service institutions the nuns would have won before any contests had begun.

But nursing and hospital administration were not yet defined by consistent professional standards. At the time social service occupations were even less well established. For example, the prevailing assumption about nursing held that women's familial roles qualified them to be nurses in public situations. Spokane's socially prominent white women regarded themselves as qualified by nature to care for the sick and poor as the nuns were. More importantly, white native-born Protestant women feared that allowing Catholics too much of a foothold would be a step toward taking social control away from themselves and placing it in the hands of foreign immigrants. They could see merit in—even benefit from the nuns' charitable efforts—and at the same time, work to limit the sister's influence in the city.

Even as Mother Joseph was overseeing the construction of Sacred Heart Hospital, a number of Harriet Ross' associates were discussing what they could do to help meet the needs they saw around them. Although they first planned to offer a wide range of services, they placed a high priority on providing assistance to the region's indigent sick. As they saw it, the Sisters' hospital would be a Catholic institution and they must provide a Protestant alternative.

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145 For an example of American women's path toward nursing in a public setting see Nancy Driscol Engle, "We can’t be the Women we were Before:” Mary Livermore, Chicago Women, and the American Civil War” unpublished master’s thesis, University of Central Florida, 1996.

146 Linda Gordon's study of child-protection efforts in Boston provides a valuable discussion of the motivations of white, native born Progressive Reformers. Gordon, 29. See also, Peggy Pascoe's summary of home mission women's Protestant positions, Relations of Rescue, 43-44.

147 At least two different women claimed to have been the founding president of the Ladies Benevolent Society, Primary documentation of the organization during its first six years of operation is limited to newspaper articles, and some brief comments in one woman's diary.
These various women were all responding to needs in Spokane. In 1886 a population boom was bringing scores of immigrants to the city. In turn, this multiplied the numbers of people requiring help. But the increasing need did not change the procedures of the men at the centers of political power. They were more likely to give poor people one way tickets out of Spokane, than they were to try to effect any real change in the lives of those who were suffering. In their opinion devoting resources to help the poor took away from their own advancement.

The benevolent ladies appreciated the opportunities that their husbands found in Spokane to provide for their families' material advancement. But the ladies wanted their husbands and other city leaders to support their efforts. In asking them for funding they often found their interests lay beyond where men cared to go.

These women adhered to a feminine version of booster thought, as demonstrated by Mary Todd Ludden, several years later. She and her associates celebrated the material successes of their city, but they also responded to the plight of immigrants in Spokane. Ludden recalled being especially drawn to babies with "half-starved" looks on their faces. In response, she and her associates had tried to solve the problems that immigrant families faced by supplying basics such as bread and milk. And this was only a beginning.

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148 Long lists of people's names and the destination to which their train tickets took them are frequent in the poor expense sections of city council records and those of county commissioners of the time. For an example see RCCP, Book E, 7 June 1892, 350, WSAERB.

149 Pascoe, 11.

150 "Early Day Settlers Found Much Charitable Work was Necessary" The Chronicle, 29 July 1914.
Ross, Ludden and the benevolent ladies formalized their charitable efforts by establishing a new organization on January 17, 1887. They planned to offer various kinds of aid to a wide range of people.¹⁵¹ Among other things, they wanted their city to have a hospital. The timing of their meeting, however, indicates that these white Protestant women had other motives. Two days before they met, Ludden and a friend had helped a young man who had been found in a local tavern, alone, destitute, and gravely ill.¹⁵² The ladies had assessed his condition and had decided that he needed further medical help. They had done what they could for him, then turned to the Sisters of Providence. The hospital would not officially open for twelve more days, but she recalled that "Sister Joseph [Arimethea] and little Sister Peter" had graciously cleared one of the rooms of extra bedding and supplies, and cared for the young man until his death three days later.¹⁵³ After recounting the story of the transient's last days, Ludden noted that a wealthy family from Oregon had eventually claimed his body and had reimbursed the hospital for his expenses.

Sacred Heart historians remember the incident with a measure of self-deprecating humor, admitting that their first patient died while under the nuns' care. But they do not mention that a group of Protestant women had been involved in the case. Instead, they say that “someone” had found a Protestant man ill and alone in a shed. They go on to

¹⁵¹ “Early Day Settlers Found much Charitable Work was Necessary” The Chronicle, 29 July 1914.

¹⁵² At the time, Mary K. was married to the Irish immigrant, John Todd, a local distiller. She went by the name of Mary K. Todd. In order to simplify this written account, she has been referred to throughout as Mary Ludden.

¹⁵³ This was Sister Joseph of Arimethea, the first Superior of Sacred Heart Hospital. She had arrived in town with Mother Joseph, and had spent the months while the hospital was under construction visiting the sick in their homes and raising money.
explain that the nuns had freely opened their hospital to him, nevertheless they had been unable to prevent his death.\textsuperscript{154}

Ludden's glowing story about the cooperation between the Protestant benevolent ladies and the nuns masks the competitive nature of Spokane's charitable scene between 1887 the mid-1890s. In retrospect she could tell how she had brought them the hospital's first patient without revealing the contested relationship the Protestant ladies had had with the nuns. In the intervening years between the opening of the hospital and the time that Ludden told this story, the two charitable groups had indeed carved out complementary initiatives and the passage of time made it seem that this had always been the case.

Nevertheless, when the Sisters of Providence had signed their first contract with county commissioners, the benevolent ladies were carefully looking over their shoulders. In February 1887, two weeks after they had opened the hospital's doors, the nuns agreed to care for the sick poor which the county was responsible for a year. Only seven months later, however, members of the Ladies Benevolent Society decided to establish an official home in which they could take care of the sick.

In November 1887, the members discussed the preparations they would have to make in order to get the contract for the following year. On the 7\textsuperscript{th} of that month, after attending one of the society's meetings, Charlotte Pinkham Hamblen noted in her diary that the ladies had discussed founding “some kind of a hospital or a home.” This was not a wild notion; the ladies had some quasi-official support in their scheme. She went on to explain, “if it can be done in a week, the ladies have the promise of all the county

patients." Hamblen did not say, however, who had told the ladies that the county commissioners would prefer having Protestant caretakers for the local indigent, but they clearly believed the patients would be theirs if they could only make provisions for them. She also did not explain why they wanted them.

Nevertheless, it is possible to speculate on the benevolent ladies' motivations to get the county patients. In 1887 members of the Society had concentrated on distributing food and other provisions to poor families. They were not formally caring for patients and would not do so until 1890 after they had built their permanent home. At this early stage getting the money that went along with the contract would not have been the ladies' primary motivation. Instead, the ladies were beginning to form a list of requirements that they wanted to have in place before they could open a hospital. They would need a building in which to house patients, as well as accommodate the help. They planned to hire nurses, because although society ladies were willing to visit the sick in their homes and informally nurse the less-serious cases, they were not interested in being employed. They did not seek to be nurses so much as they wanted to manage a hospital. And, as revealed in repeated later claims about the neutral impact of their own charitable efforts, they viewed the institutions their Catholic competitors established as biased and sectarian. In the early days of the Ladies Benevolent Society, the members' desire to get the county patients was probably an effort to free the city's residents from having to patronize a Catholic institution.

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155 Emphasis mine. 7 November 1887, Charlotte Pinkham Hamblen Diary, MAC, EWSHS.

156 For example, see "In Charity's Name" The Spokane Falls Review, 4 March 1890, 9. See also, "Were Hopping Mad" The Spokane Review, 5 February 1897, 5:1.
Despite their demonstrated interest, the benevolent ladies may not have put much effort into getting the county patients in late 1887. At least Hamblen made no mention of any such activity in her diary. At any rate, it was a formidable undertaking, and members of the society did not meet that initial deadline. They did not abandon the idea, however.157

In April 1888, only five months after the first time the ladies had discussed getting the county's business, they incorporated their society for the purpose of erecting a building, and set out to raise the money they would need for the project.158 In the meantime, they sent their sick charges to Sacred Heart Hospital. Throughout the year of 1888 they aided 280 people, increasing the number to 450 during the year immediately following. These early charitable efforts involved distributing food, as well as providing clothing and a limited amount of housing.159

By June 1889 members of the Society had grown more energetic about their fund raising. Anna Stratton, the aging mother-in-law of the prominent booster J. J. Browne, noted in her diary on several different occasions that her daughter, Anna Stratton Browne, had been out soliciting contributions. She had raised $2150 during four half days of work.160 At that rate, it seems reasonable to assume that she and the other

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157 In February 1888, The ladies held another special meeting to discuss if they could take the county patients during the 88-89 year, but decided against it. 11 February 1888, Charlotte Pinkham Hamblen Diary, MAC, EWSHS.

158 “Early Day Settlers Found much Charitable Work was Necessary” Chronicle, 29 July 1914. For documentation on one member’s efforts to raise money for the Home of the Friendless, see Anna Stratton Diary, 18 June 1889, MAC, EWSHS.

159 "Ladies Benevolent Society" Spokane Falls Review, 17 November 1889, 6:2.

160 Anna Stratton Diary, 18 June 1889, MAC, EWSHS.
members of the Ladies Benevolent Society did raise the $20,000 in pledges that they later claimed.\textsuperscript{161}

Then the Fire of August 1889 swept through Spokane's business district. While no one was killed in the fire, it injured some and left many others in need.\textsuperscript{162} Both the Sisters of Providence and the benevolent ladies responded. The nuns, whose centrally located hospital had narrowly missed being destroyed by the blaze, took in the handful of people who had been injured. They provided, in addition, housing for thirty-seven individuals who had been sick abed when their homes had been burned, and distributed meals to many newly homeless.

Meanwhile the benevolent ladies decided that they would need a facility before they could have a building of their own constructed. Thus, they began searching for a house they could rent and use for temporary quarters.\textsuperscript{163} At the same time they announced publicly that they were looking for ways to help victims of the fire, carefully stressing their desire to cooperate with the official Fire Relief Committee.\textsuperscript{164} Then, sensing that every available dollar in Spokane--plus hundreds of thousands more in borrowed funds--would be devoted to rebuilding, the ladies began rethinking their plans to raise money.

After the conflagration, the city's Fire Relief Committee controlled the only significant source of charitable funds. Appointed by the City Council, and chaired by A.

\textsuperscript{161} "For Charity's Sake" \textit{Spokane Falls Review}, 9 November 1889.

\textsuperscript{162} For more detail on the fire, see chapter 1.

\textsuperscript{163} "For Charity" \textit{Spokane Falls Review}, 26 January 1890, 12:1.

\textsuperscript{164} "Ladies at Work" \textit{Spokane Falls Review}, 8 August 1889, 4:1.
M. Cannon, a wealthy pioneer and prominent businessman, the committee was packed with well-known citizens. One was William H. Taylor, an attorney who had previously served as mayor of Spokane. Another was Frank A. Bettis, a judge who was currently serving as a council member.

Besides being some of the key players in the city, the members of this group had close, and sometimes personal, ties to the benevolent ladies. For example, the former Acting Mayor of Spokane, William H. Taylor was married to a vice president of the Ladies Benevolent Society in 1890. Cannon's and Bettis' wives were not active in women's clubs at the time, although Jennie Cannon maintained connections to the benevolent ladies. Between 1890 and 1910, however, it was not uncommon to have at least one husband of a benevolent lady serving in an official capacity for the city or county. The Ladies Benevolent Society did recruit some elite women, as Anna Browne's early fund-raising efforts illustrate. Less well-to-do women, however, were the most active in leadership positions in the organization. Whatever their personal economic circumstances, the members were socially prominent enough that they were all society ladies.

165 *Spokane City Directory*, (Polk, Spokane,) 1890.

166 Jennie F. Cannon died in September 1893 after a prolonged illness. "Mrs. Cannon is Dead" *The Chronicle*, 8 September 1893. See also "A Good Woman's Funeral" *Spokane Falls Review*, 11 September 1893. City directories listed only the officers; it is quite possible that Bettis and Cannon were members of the society, although they did not serve in official positions. In 1893 the Society had 175 members. *Spokane City Directory*, Polk, 1893.

167 Mrs. William Butterworth, who was active in the organization for at least 10 years, illustrates that there was a fairly broad range in the economic status of women who were members of the Ladies Benevolent Society during its earliest years. She was married to a tailor in the 1880s, and she worked for a short time as a milliner. Likewise, Mrs. W. A. Cannon was president of the Society in the late 1890s, although she also served as Matron of the Home. *Spokane City Directories*, Polk, 1885, 1887, 1888, 1897-98, 1899, 1900. Cannon may have been so active in the society because she was married to William A. Cannon, a younger brother of A.M. Cannon, a well known and wealthy city father, before he lost it all in the panic of 1893.
The benevolent ladies quickly set their sights on the $34,000 in donated funds that Cannon and the Fire Relief Committee members had charge over. They probably sensed that the city fathers would be more forthcoming with funds that had not come from the city budget. Two weeks after the conflagration, the members received their first $1000 from the Committee.\(^\text{168}\) Upon hearing that they would receive the money, they met to "earnestly discuss the best manner of disposing of it." They were sincere, of course, in their desire to use the contribution efficiently. But it is clear that they enjoyed a privileged position in the eyes of local political leaders. Their religious affiliations, their family ties and their social prominence all gave them an initial advantage in the charitable contest.

At the time the committee announced its gift to the benevolent ladies, it had distributed $6,353.81 in free meals, cash, supplies, and transportation expenses. The men's handling and distribution of relief money provides an interesting glimpse of their priorities. First, they celebrated growth selectively. For example, they spent $283.30 on outbound train tickets, but only $208.08 on free meals.\(^\text{169}\) Second, they preferred to aid the charitable efforts of the white Protestant women. For example, the committee gave only $500 to the Sisters of Providence even though the nuns had been caring for fire victims on a daily basis. They may have justified this discrepancy because the city was already paying a quarterly sum to the hospital for the care of the indigent sick. The amount the municipality was paying had been based on a very low estimate of quarterly

\(^{168}\) "The Helping Hand" *Spokane Falls Review*, 21 August 1889, 3:1.

\(^{169}\) *Spokane Falls Review*, 21 August 1889, 3. At the time Spokane County probably got discounted railroad rates. The first documented time the County got special rates was in 1892. RCCP, Book F, 4 October 1892, p. 58, MAC, EWSHS.
costs, however, and it had not been designed to cover an event with the proportions of the 1889 Fire.

The nun's problem was not in determining the best way they could use the money, but in stretching it to cover the many services they were already providing. Clearly they simply did not enjoy the insider position that the benevolent ladies did. Despite their beautiful building, their continued distance from the local power centers resulted in less official financial support.

The Sisters of Providence also played a more marginal role in Spokane's progressive reform scene, in part because of their perspective on the poor. Their critics thought them overly generous. For example, in distributing meals, they found more hungry people than local officials cared to recognize. An article that appeared in print three days after the fire illustrates the matter. Among other things, the sisters reported having given 40 meals to poor men. But an editor scoffed at the nun's assertion that the men really needed such assistance. “Poor men Forsooth! Young, healthy fellows who ought to be ashamed to beg from the sisters.”\textsuperscript{170} Clearly the most powerful men in the city believed that a man who was capable of holding a paying job did not need free food. The men were probably noting that in the immediate aftermath of the fire, construction jobs were plentiful.\textsuperscript{171} For their part, however, the nuns recognized there might be mitigating circumstances in these men’s lives. For example, some jobs might well have come with wages that were below subsistence level.

\textsuperscript{170} “Sacred Heart Hospital” \textit{Spokane Falls Review}, 7 August 1889, 3.

\textsuperscript{171} Jobs probably were not so plentiful in the immediate aftermath of the fire, and it may well have been the spring of 1890 when a plethora of new construction jobs began in earnest.
However, the nuns did have at least one sympathetic official on their side. The acting Mayor, Fred Furth, wrote an eloquent letter in September 1889 urging the City Council to increase the money they were giving to the hospital. He described the “unsatisfactory workings of the present manner of caring for the city sick . . .” explaining that the current appropriation “has long since been short of the requirements owing to the large increase in our population . . .”\textsuperscript{172} The mayor had been consulting with the nuns, and he asserted that the current rate of $1200 per year provided for the expenses of only three patients at a time. But, he insisted, the nuns had been consistently treating at least twice that many indigent sick. Since the fire a month before, Furth observed, he had approved eleven requests for city-sponsored medical care. The clerk transcribed the Mayor's letter in the minutes, but council members failed to act on it.

In contrast to the Sisters of Providence, the benevolent ladies were much more careful to dispense their charity to those whom they deemed to be "deserving." In their assumptions about which poor individuals were worthy they most closely corresponded to those of the business-minded city administrators. They believed able-bodied men should provide for their own subsistence needs. The ladies were more willing, however, to reach out to women and children.\textsuperscript{173} But they still needed a home base from which to work.

On November 2, 1889 the ladies formally presented a less ambitious building plan to Cannon and his associates on the Fire Relief Committee. They won approval for $8,500. Then, armed with more than twenty-five percent of the total relief fund, and a

\textsuperscript{172} CCM, Book B, 31, WSAERB.

\textsuperscript{173} Pascoe, 34.
plot of land valued at $3000, which J. J. Browne had given them during the previous February, they immediately began entertaining construction bids.174

Five months later on May 23, 1890, amid a rush of local pomp and circumstance, the benevolent ladies dedicated the Home of the Friendless. Among the prominent figures giving the ladies their blessings was city councilman and Fire Relief Committee member, Judge Frank A. Bettis, who officially "presented" the home to the women. Rev. A. J. Wilson, pastor of the First Methodist Church, pronounced the ladies charitable institution a manifestation of the "Second Advent" of Christ. The Honorable Anthony Cannon, who had chaired the Relief Committee, closed the day's festivities with a short speech and the presentation of yet another official check, this time for $2000.175

The Spokane Falls Review made the sum appear as if it had been personal, subheading the paragraph "Mr. Cannon's Gift." But the competing daily paper, The Chronicle clarified tersely, "The check was the gift of the relief committee and was presented to the society by Mr. Cannon as the representative of that committee."176 Clearly, the benevolent ladies enjoyed a disproportionately large portion of the official relief funds, and the approval of the "city dads," as one local priest facetiously described the region's male establishment in his memoirs.177

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174 Of the $34,000 in relief money collected during the immediate aftermath of the fire, the ladies benevolent society got a total of $10,000 between August of 1889 and June of 1890. Spokane Falls Review, 21 August 1889, 3:1. They also got money in November 1889, March and May 1890.

175 "Formally Opened" The Spokane Falls Review, 23 May 1890, p. 5:1.

176 "An Explanation" The Chronicle, 23 May 1890. Besides the $1000 the ladies distributed of fire relief funds in early fall, the society itself got $11,000 in three separate gifts from the relief committee, in November 1889, March 1890, and in May of that year.

177 Charles Mackin, S.J., "Wanderings of Fifty Years", 26. Mackin Papers, JOPA, GU.
But, as the benevolent ladies soon discovered, maintaining official approval required hard work. They had planned to administer their home effectively but almost immediately ran into difficulties. First, managing an official home while depending on hired help to do the actual work intensified the problems they faced as they attempted to cross class lines and limited their effectiveness, sometimes making it nearly impossible for them to achieve their goals. Second, concentrating their various relief efforts in a single building complicated matters. They found themselves providing services for healthy children and adults in the same premises where they housed patients. Thus, the benevolent ladies' priorities for the Home in 1890 inflamed their daily management challenges. While they never explicitly stated what their home's primary purpose would be, clues can be found in the way that they initially planned to use their building.

Although not attractive on the exterior, the Home of the Friendless was large by standards of the time. On the first floor, it had a nursery, a room for elderly ladies to spend their last days, sewing and dining areas, and a parlor. The second floor would house a nurse and three hospital wards. The third featured four large wards, plus a room for the presiding matron.

With seven hospital wards filling up two out of three floors, it seems clear that the ladies initially intended their home to be primarily a hospital. Although they devoted two rooms to children and old women, these initiatives were not their focii. The ladies were attempting to match what the Sisters of Providence were doing, at the same time they were running a nursery, and a rest home. In addition to managing a home with very

178 "For the Friendless" *Spokane Falls Review*, 18 May 1890, 5:1

179 Lucy Ide asserted in 1897 that the Home could accommodate 75 more children on top of the 42 they currently housed, making a total of 117. "Were Hopping Mad" *Spokane Falls Review*, 5 February 1897,
broad objectives, the lady managers depended on employees of another class to do the work. In contrast, their competition, the Sisters of Providence, worked both as administrators and nurses. The nuns did hire servants and support personnel, but they were much less dependent on others to get their work done.\textsuperscript{180}

The benevolent ladies' broad approach to charity proved a daunting task, and they kept their nursery open only four months after the Home of the Friendless had been dedicated. In September 1890 they announced that they had decided to shut down their children's department. They explained that they had found their multipurpose home awkward, keeping sick people too close to where children played. At the time it had seemed more important to provide indigent medical care. As a result they had decided to put their full efforts into that aspect of their work.\textsuperscript{181}

The Ladies Benevolent Society's experiment in hospital management peaked in early April of 1891 when they underbid the Sisters of Providence and signed a contract to provide all the County's invalid medical care. They agreed to do the usual tasks--providing care and medicines, food and lodging--at a rate of $.75 per person per day.\textsuperscript{182} That amount was $.25 less for each patient than what the Sisters of Providence had gotten under the 1887 contract they had had with the County.

The Home Hospital did not last. Only three weeks after signing the contract the benevolent ladies asked the County to release them from its requirements. Trying to

\textsuperscript{5:1. In comparison, the Sisters of Providence said shortly after the Fire that their utmost capacity had been reached at 130 patients. \textit{Spokane Falls Review}, 13 September 1889, 3:1}

\textsuperscript{180} Godefroy, "Circular Letter 11," 1890, Mother Joseph Province, Seattle

\textsuperscript{181} "It is a Noble Work," \textit{Spokane Falls Review}, 10 September 1890, 3.

\textsuperscript{182} RCCP, Book D, 2 April 1891, 261, held in the collection of the Washington State Archives, Eastern Regional branch, Cheney, Washington.
avoid unpleasant publicity, they briefly explained to commissioners that they had decided they wanted their institution to be a home, not a hospital. When they saw that they could not compete with the Sisters of Providence, they reordered their priorities, transforming the Home of the Friendless from primarily a hospital to an orphanage.

In response to the benevolent ladies' decision, County commissioners pronounced the agreement with the "Home Hospital for the care and keeping of the invalid county poor . . . canceled and held for naught." They immediately turned to the nuns at Sacred Heart promising to pay $.85 per person per day. The Home Hospital's difficulties apparently convinced commissioners that the work could not be done for $.10 less per day.

While they said nothing publicly about the incident, this was clearly a difficult time. The ladies found they could not manage a hospital on so slim a budget. Although the extant records shed no light on what went on inside the home, clearly the lady managers had endured three troublesome weeks. It is possible they found it necessary to be their own nurses. At the very least, they were finding their multifaceted approach to providing charitable assistance difficult, if not impossible.

On the other hand, the nuns had endured a loss in terms of morale. But they had been contracting with other entities, including the Northern Pacific Railroad and mining interests in Idaho, so the loss of county patients did not become a financial crisis for

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184 RCCP, Book D, 22 April 1891, 277, WSAERB.

185 The County had established a Poor Farm in 1889. The year previous to the 1891 contract, the indigent care business that Sacred Heart had done was transferred to the Poor Farm. "Inventory of the County Archives of Washington," no. 52, Spokane County. (Seattle: Washington Historical Records Survey, 1941), 168.
them. The order's collective diary, however, described their competitors as imposters, and although they discreetly left them unnamed in their official records, they were clearly referring to members of the Ladies Benevolent Society.\footnote{“Chronicle” Sisters of Providence, entry in June 1890.}\footnote{A Century of Caring, Sisters of Providence, Sacred Heart and St. Ignatious Provinces, 1979, 11.}

The difficulty that they had experienced during those weeks lingered in their minds years later. A 1979 official memoir of Sacred Heart Hospital describes the time when the nuns lost the contract to provide Spokane County's indigent care. The memoir concludes the account by happily explaining that they won the contract back soon after because their Protestant competitors had decided that they could not handle the work.\footnote{“Early Day Settlers Found Much Charitable Work Necessary” Chronicle, 29 July 1914.}

If providing hospital services for the indigent was contested terrain among Spokane's charitable women in 1890, so was the path toward aiding poor children. The Ladies Benevolent Society's first big effort for Spokane's youngest poor had begun in 1888 when they opened an industrial school designed to teach needlework skills to poor girls.\footnote{The extant documentation on this industrial school is limited to a few brief newspaper articles. And the ladies seemed to assume that readers would know the gender of their industrial students. None of the available evidence suggests that boys attended the school.} By their second year of operation, the school had 74 children enrolled. Ludden later recalled that they had had an average attendance of 45 at the Saturday afternoon classes.\footnote{“Early Day Settlers Found Much Charitable Work Necessary” Chronicle, 29 July 1914.}

Approximately a year after the school was founded the ladies proudly told a reporter about one mother who had written to thank them for what her daughter was learning at the school. Whether this grateful woman was representative of the majority of parents whose children participated is impossible to ascertain. Nor can the scant
documentation available shed light on the broader question of how well the poor thought that the school met their children's needs.  

In any event, the benevolent ladies were acting in accordance with their own economic interests. For example, neither the benevolent society member Mrs. A. B. Junken, who was the administrator for the school, nor her associates did much of the teaching. They preferred to maintain their own economic and social standing by enlisting the teaching services of volunteers. Whatever deals the ladies made with their sewing instructors, it apparently did not involve financial remuneration. In early 1890 while the ladies were in the midst of the school's second year, they published an annual report that complained "The work [of the Industrial School] has been much hampered by the irregularity of those who have offered to teach . . .."

Beyond their negotiations with teachers, the benevolent ladies' class-bias is evident in their assumptions about what poor girls needed. They took for granted that they were offering them a useful skill, and perhaps they were, but it also served their own interests. Most, if not all, of their sewing students were girls who might later become domestics in the homes of the economic group to which the benevolent ladies belonged. They were attempting to prepare the girls to be good domestic employees, while at the same time, they hoped to inculcate their students with middle class standards of domesticity. In

190 "Ladies Benevolent Society" Spokane Falls Review, 17 November 1889, 6:2.
193 For an example of the challenges that well-to-do women faced in keeping domestic help see Anna Stratton's diary, 30 November 1889. Stratton's daughter Anna Stratton Browne was married to the wealthy businessman and municipal leader J. J. Browne, and she was a member of the Ladies Benevolent
the case of the Ladies Benevolent Society's industrial school, their charity mixed a bit of largess with a healthy element of moral and practical teaching.\textsuperscript{194}

Indeed the benevolent ladies found reaching across class lines difficult in more than one situation. For example, they closed their in-home children’s department in September 1890, in part because the location of their building made it difficult to get to poor children. The Home lay in a new subdivision on the north side of the river, and was located too far away from where the poor lived. Thus no one they deemed "deserving" of free childcare was taking advantage of the day nursery.\textsuperscript{195} Instead, a number of mothers of the better classes, whom the ladies had no desire to help, had begun dropping their children off regularly.

In addition to providing an industrial school and nursery, the benevolent ladies wanted to help improve the health of poor children. In this regard they may have been motivated by the region’s high infant mortality rate, or they may have been responding to more general challenges of survival that the city's lower-income groups faced.\textsuperscript{196} If babies managed to live through the first year, health problems and accidental deaths

\textsuperscript{194} Dudden, 167.

\textsuperscript{195} “It is a Noble Work” \textit{Spokane Falls Review}, September 7, 1890. The property upon which the Home of the Friendless sat was in a fashionable newly established sub-division located on the north side of the River, which J. J. Browne was developing.

\textsuperscript{196} Spokane County reported in 1893 that there had been 346 recorded births and 94 deaths of children less than one year of age. \textit{Spokane Board of Health Reports}, Shaw-Borden Co., 1894, 11, 17. This study identified no comparable statistics on infant death rates in Washington. However, a comparison of overall death rates between Spokane and other urban areas in the state indicates that Spokane had an occasional bad year, but over longer periods of time it was not more deadly than other cities in the state.
among poor adults in the region created other difficulties for them. Low-income children, who had lost at least one parent, were especially vulnerable.

Sometime after the fire the benevolent ladies' quest to help children spurred a conflict between themselves and the local parish priest, Father Charles Mackin, S. J. In 1890 Protestants and Catholics interested in helping homeless children agreed on only one point: there was a need for such institutions in Spokane. The confrontation stimulated a campaign in the Catholic community to bring to Spokane members of the Sisters of Saint Francis; an order based in Pennsylvania, to establish an orphanage.197 Meanwhile, the benevolent ladies continued keeping their eyes on the needs of poor children. At the heart of the dispute lay the question of who should have the power to define the experiences of Spokane's needy children.

Despite their claims to be completely free of "sectarian bias," the benevolent ladies favored the poor who shared their religious persuasion.198 This was, in part, for pragmatic reasons. Providing the same level of service to Catholics and Protestants alike would have complicated their in-house routines. More fundamentally, however, they were reluctant to have Catholics interacting with Protestant children. Spokane's benevolent ladies defined moral order and the respectability it could bring within a Protestant framework.

 Likewise, Catholics were happy to establish their own institutions. Many of their leaders in Spokane appear to have been conservative when it came to lay women's roles in social reform. They turned to nuns with a professional track record when they wanted

197 James Joseph Kenneally has argued that conservative elements within the Catholic hierarchy held that lay women should not get involved in settlement work. Kenneally, 98-99.

198 For their claims to the contrary, see “In Charities Name” Spokane Falls Review, 4 March 1890, 9:4.
a hospital, orphanage, and schools. Lay women were praised for their support for the nuns, but were not encouraged to begin social reform efforts on their own. For example, in 1890 Father Mackin and a group of men founded a local chapter of the St. Vincent de Paul Society. Women were not allowed to join this ministry to the poor until the 1960s. Mackin and other local Catholics most likely saw the Protestant women's social reform efforts as an attempt to convert their charges.

Of course, the backdrop to this "discussion" over who should care for Spokane's needy children, was the Great Fire of August and its aftermath. Although devastating, it gave momentum to the city boosters and progressive reformers in two ways. Its scope was large enough that it spread Spokane's reputation across the nation, attracting charitable interest and spurring a new wave of immigrants heading into the city. Thus the need for benevolent assistance increased at the same time that people outside Spokane were most sensitive to finding ways to help relief efforts there.

The weather that hit the Inland Northwest during the following winter intensified the situation. While tents still dominated the downtown district, the city dwellers had to endure unusually cold temperatures and a higher than average snow accumulation. To Spokane's inhabitants, especially the business people and shopkeepers whose buildings had been in the fire's path, along with residents living in temporary abodes downtown, the winter of 1890 seemed especially harsh.

199 Kenneally demonstrates that conservative strands of Catholicism were still healthy as late as 1919, when a priest from New York described settlement workers as women who used love in order to deceive innocent children, kidnappers, or socialists. Kenneally, 98. The information on women's memberships in the local Society of St. Vincent de Paul is from an Oral Interview, Bruno Kensock, March 2002.

200 "Few Winters Like This" Spokesman-Review, 21 January 1937.

Sometime between the fire and the following spring, the benevolent ladies took in nine immigrant German children whose father had died in the woods, perhaps in a logging accident.\textsuperscript{202} The benevolent ladies initially thought these children were good candidates for their charitable attention, and they took them into the temporary home they were operating. But complications arose when their mother, who could speak no English, insisted that the children be allowed to attend mass regularly.

If this woman had wanted her children to participate in Protestant services, the ladies would have been happy to grant her request.\textsuperscript{203} They were in the habit of providing in-house Sunday school activities for their charges. But taking these children to mass would have required extra effort, and they were unwilling to undertake the task. So they turned to the young Irish Jesuit who was presiding over the local parish.

Father Mackin later described the benevolent ladies as a "club of non-Catholic women, who were very active." He recalled the incident involving the German children, explaining that the matron had "sent for me and wanted me to take them away." Then, emphasizing her heated emotions, he repeated, "she wanted all of them out of there."\textsuperscript{204}

Mackin had no place to put the children, but he had taken them off the ladies' hands anyway. Eventually finding homes for them by splitting the family up, he sent the boys to the Jesuits at the Desmet Mission and the girls to Lewiston, Idaho, where "the Sisters"

\textsuperscript{202} "Wanderings of Fifty Years," 24, Mackin Papers, JOPA, GU.

\textsuperscript{203} The extant Ladies Benevolent Society’s minutes do not cover this period, but in 1893 the ladies were converting their nursery into a “Sunday School” every week. It is likely, therefore, that these good Protestant ladies were doing the same thing three years earlier. “Home for the Friendless” The Spokane Review, 11 July 1893, 3:1. The benevolent ladies also kept a record of the numbers of children in their home that attended church services each week. Ladies Benevolent Society Minutes, Book 1, MAC, EWSHS.

\textsuperscript{204} Mackin Papers, JOPA, GU.
could take charge. Mackin did not say whether the mother went with her children, but whatever had happened to her, he disliked having to separate the family. The incident prompted him to begin considering what it would take to establish a Catholic-operated "orphan asylum" in Spokane.

Rumors of the priest's intentions reached the matron, and she summoned him to the home again. Standing in her presence, he thought that she was "ready to tear [me] to pieces." But some of the "more moderate women" intervened, taking him to another room and telling him that he "should not oppose them." He went on, "I told them as quietly as I knew how that I wasn't opposing them . . .." Instead, he agreed wholeheartedly that orphans in the city needed to be cared for.

This colloquy between Mackin and the more moderate ladies defused the immediate situation. But, he left the Societies' temporary quarters even more convinced of the need to pursue other options for Catholic children. Shortly thereafter, at Mackin's request, the region's ranking Catholic sent an official invitation to the Sisters of St. Francis.

The Protestant ladies had told Mackin they did not want the competition that a second orphanage would create. But, this quarrel suggests the ladies were not as interested in offering the same level of aid to Catholic children, as they were in providing

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205 Mackin’s memoir leaves no indication as to what happened to the children’s mother. It is possible that he sent her, along with her daughters, to Lewiston.

206 Mackin wrote his memoirs many years after the incident, and it seems quite possible that he had done more than simply thinking about establishing a Catholic Orphanage before his second visit to the Home.

207 Joseph Cataldo's official invitation to the Sisters of St. Francis is not extant. Thus it is unclear precisely when it happened. But the combined documentary evidence indicates that the invitation went out sometime between the fire of August 1889, and May of 1890 when the benevolent ladies dedicated their Home.
for Protestants. It is possible that the children's mother did something to irritate the ladies, perhaps dumping her offspring at their doorstep or refusing to look for some way to earn their keep while they were in the home. But the latter seems rather unlikely since she could not speak English and was probably a recent immigrant. More likely, the ladies thought she would not be able to earn enough money to defray the expenses of supporting her nine offspring. Besides, taking in that many additional children would have taxed their system, perhaps doubling the number of young charges they had in their interim headquarters.

Father Mackin believed there were other, deeper reasons for the ladies' opposition. He sensed an undercurrent of anti-Catholicism. First, this Irish priest believed that the current matron was an "orangewoman," or an Irish Protestant immigrant. He assumed that the longstanding religious differences among the Irish made her anger toward him especially intense. Further, he believed that the ladies were simply unwilling to help the children attend mass.

When the ladies dedicated the Home of the Friendless in May, Mackin noted that another priest, along with the Sister Superior at Sacred Heart Hospital had both received

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208The ladies expected surviving parents to pay a small fee, to get their children in the Home, and then work thereafter to defray the home's expenses. Charles D. Raymer and Company, Raymer's Dictionary of Spokane, A Complete Encyclopaedic Dictionary of Spokane and the Inland Empire, (Allied Printing, Spokane, 1906.)

209Mackin gave no date for this incident, but it clearly happened after the ladies had rented a place to use as a temporary home in October of 1889, and before they opened the Home of the Friendless in May of 1890. Thus, although it is impossible to say precisely how many children the ladies were caring for at the time, they reported in March that they had nine children in a second temporary facility, into which they had moved in order to get more space. They were expecting to add five more on the following Monday. "Ladies Benevolent Society" Spokane Falls Review, 9 March 1890.

210"Wanderings of Fifty Years", Mackin Papers, JOPA, GU.
invitations to the official dedication ceremony. Neither accepted, but each sent a graciously worded regret, which the ladies had published in the local paper. Mackin had not been invited, and he concluded that the Protestant women still resented his efforts on behalf of orphans.

The priest believed that Catholic children would not be truly welcome in the benevolent ladies' Home, and although he did not say so in his memoirs, Mackin probably thought they should not be under the care of Protestant women. In addition, he was irritated that the Ladies Benevolent Society had received such a large portion of the city's fire relief funds, and his frustration surfaced decades later as he was writing his unpublished memoirs. Although he did not name the organization, he described the group as the one "that had gotten all the money and provisions that had come in to Mayor Cannon after the fire." He was indignant and perhaps jealous, that the ladies had enjoyed such preferential treatment. No doubt many other charitable-minded Catholics shared similar frustrations during the months following the fire.

Despite the challenges they faced, local Catholics joined together in preparing for the arrival of the nuns and the opening of St. Joseph's Orphanage. Female parishioners

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211 Regrets from both Father William Kauten, and Sister Mary of Mercy, Sacred Heart Superior, appeared in the paper the day the Home was opened. "Formally Opened" Spokane Falls Review, 23 May 1890, 5:1.

212 Emphasis added. "Wanderings of Fifty Years," Mackin Papers JOPA, GU.

213 In February 1890, the Spokane Falls Review announced yet another gift of $500 in cash from the Fire Relief Committee went to the Ladies Benevolent Society. "A Welcome Donation" Spokane Falls Review, 21 February 1890, 3:1. Juxtaposed nearby, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, which was headed by Mackin, made an earnest appeal for funds and clothing to assist the parish's worthy poor. "A Charitable Call" Spokane Falls Review, 21 February 1890, 3:2.

214 As late as 1894 City Council members briefly cut their monthly appropriation to the orphanage while leaving money going to the Home of the Friendless intact. "St Joseph's Orphanage" The Spokesman-Review, 21 July 1894, 3:1.
helped the Sisters of Providence to throw a fund-raising bazaar, proceeds from which
were divided between Sacred Heart Hospital and the children's home. Their husbands
and sons helped Father Mackin construct the facility.

Margaret Monaghan and her friend Annie Cowley, both Irish immigrants, walked
the streets of the city soliciting funds. Monaghan even made a deal with her husband
to share the money budgeted for her own household use, explaining to Father Mackin,
that “[My husband] Jimmy wants me to have a servant, but I can do without her, and he
must give $35 a month for an orphan asylum.” A few months later, this mother of four
opened her home to four Sisters of St. Francis and approximately six children who were
waiting for the men to complete construction on the building.

Efforts to establish the Catholic orphanage were compressed into an unusually
short time. Sometime between the fire of August 1889, and May of 1890 when the
Ladies Benevolent Society officially dedicated their Home, Father Cataldo invited the
Sisters of St. Francis to the city. Apparently responding to the emergency, the order
accepted immediately. Its representatives arrived in late August of 1890, then waited for
a month before they could move into their new building. Local Catholics officially
dedicated St. Joseph's Orphanage on October 4, 1890. This order of nuns had come to
town and gotten prepared for business less than fourteen months after the fire, and only
three months after the Ladies Benevolent Society had opened the doors of the Home of
the Friendless.

215 Mackin's insight is a rare glimpse into the life of Margaret Monaghan, "Wanderings of Fifty Years"
Mackin Papers, JOPA, GU. The Monaghan collection contains only one letter of Margaret's. Her
untimely death in 1896, while she yet had small children prevented her from reaching her full potential as
a charitable figure in Spokane. Her husband was a businessman, and was well respected in the city. He
invested in mining, and later became quite the philanthropist to Catholic institutions near and far.

216 Mackin Papers, JOPA GU.
The timing was not merely coincidental. Of course, other factors, such as the August 1889 fire and the population growth, which was rapidly heating up, played important roles. But power struggles, fueled by religious and ethnic differences plus competition over the boomtown's scarce resources, proved determinative in the proliferation of local charitable institutions. The various groups of women involved were vying for the control of Spokane's hospitals and orphanages, and the opportunity to define the character of poor relief in the city.

Spokane's status as the self-styled center of the regional economy intensified the conditions of need, and raised the stakes by limiting the funding available for benevolence. This western boomtown set the stage for the charitable drama that unfolded there, and lined up the players, giving women reformers a briefly open window of unusual opportunities. But the conflict that raged over the nature of poor relief in the city emulated standards that were not substantially different from those used in similar institutions across the nation. Harriet Ross, Mary Todd Ludden, and Anna Stratton Browne along with their associates who worked to endow Spokane with a moral order that could be respected did not make western originality a priority.

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217 Pascoe, 13.
CHAPTER 3
CREATING CITY SERVICES

Once women had taken the first and earliest steps in creating the institutions that Spokane needed, they found it necessary during the 1890s to cultivate their relationship with city leaders on an ongoing basis. In the process, they promoted the maintenance of human service institutions that cooperated with local governments, and created neoprogressive charities taking the first steps toward Progressive governmental control of human services. But the road toward cooperation was circuitous and long, and the inexperienced benevolent ladies would find many challenges and pitfalls along the way.

In March of 1890, "Lady Albion" effused in a local paper that the Ladies Benevolent Society was "entirely free from sectarian bias," and not "curtailed in any way."\(^{218}\) Such high praise for the club and its members probably came easier because she published under a pseudonym.\(^{219}\) She was Mrs. W. A. Mears, a member of the organization upon which she lavished praise, and a favorite contributing writer in the newspaper.\(^{220}\)

\(^{218}\) "In Charity's Name," *Spokane Falls Review*, 4 March 1890, 9.

\(^{219}\) It is not clear how many people knew the identity of Lady Albion. Her newspaper articles indicate that she enjoyed some status among Spokane's society women at the time. Nelson W. Durham, *History of the City of Spokane and Spokane County, Washington, From its Earliest Time to the Present Time*, Vol. 2., (Spokane: S. J. Clarke Pub. Co., 1912), 424. Durham, a longtime newspaper editor may have remembered from working with her that Lady Albion had been Mrs. W. A. Mears. But the insider article that she published talking about the Ladies Benevolent Society demonstrates that the benevolent ladies knew who Lady Albion was in 1890. It is quite likely that her identity was generally known among members of Spokane's society at the time.

\(^{220}\) "Ladies Benevolent Society" *Spokane Falls Review*, 18 February 1890, 4. City Directories indicate that Mrs. Mears' husband, William A. was involved in mining in the region from 1889-1892. The last two years he was listed, his occupation was "capitalist." Polk, *Directory, City of Spokane Falls*. 1888-91. See
Mears asserted that the ladies were effective charitable agents, who ensured that there were "no very poor people in Spokane, and no helpless paupers." The ladies operated, she believed, an efficient charity, meeting the needs of local poor. But that was not all, she and her fellow benevolent ladies believed they were benefiting the broader community. For example, she claimed that local churches had no need to organize charitable entities, and went on to aver that the county had only a "few troublesome charges." She predicted that if they continued to garner sufficient financial support this one society would be able to satisfy the needs of "all the thousands of people" who called the city home. In other words, their attention to the detail of human suffering would help their fair city develop services and become more respectable.

While she touched on this broader context, Mears was describing the benevolent ladies' contributions to progressivism. Although they took pains not to be overtly political, she and her associates were establishing services that the city lacked. The Western boomtown they were working in provided what was nearly a clean slate to start with. From there, they went on to create institutions that eventually would become part of a government bureaucracy replicated throughout the twentieth century urban west.

But if they worked with a slate much more open than any their fellow progressives were encountering in the East they still worked within the local context of Spokane. They were not the only ones creating institutions and filling in the blanks. Others were doing very similar work, and the ladies knew it.

also, "The Lady Albion: A Favorite Contributor Again Heard From," *Spokane Falls Review*, 4 March 1890, 16:3.

Even while claiming their ability to treat all the human suffering in the city, Mears felt compelled to recognize two of their competitors. In a single sentence set off as its own paragraph, she quickly listed Sacred Heart Hospital, which had been in Spokane for more than three years. The all-male St. Vincent de Paul Society, which she claimed had been established only three weeks earlier, completed her short detour.\textsuperscript{222}

At the time that Mears gave this slight nod to Catholic charities, tents still lined the downtown streets—a visible aftermath of the 1889 fire six months earlier. These temporary shelters at the heart of the city were unspoken reminders of the region's inchoate character, and they made this future urban center appear smaller than it was. Thus, they helped bolster Lady Albion's claims that the Ladies Benevolent Society could meet all the needs of the poor in Spokane.

At least in 1890 the most influential whites found little reason to challenge Mears' claims. Spokane's leading men had already bought into the idea that local governments should take some responsibility for helping the poor.\textsuperscript{223} For example, as early as 1880 small portions of government funds had been designated as reimbursements to individuals who were acting as private charitable agents.\textsuperscript{224} In so doing, they were following long established traditions that settlers to the colonies brought with them.

\textsuperscript{222}The Spokane branch of the Society was already functioning in late 1889, and may have been organized earlier in the year. "Catholic Institutions" \textit{Spokane Falls Review}, 24 November 1889, 16:1. See also, "About the City: Save Your Old Clothes" \textit{The Spokane Falls Review}, 9 January 1890:3:2. In early 2002, the local chapter of this organization had been in operation for more than 110 years.

\textsuperscript{223} Eric H. Monkkonen has argued that the city's acceptance of the idea that it was responsible to deal with local problems is historically significant. Monkkonen, \textit{America Becomes Urban: The Development of U.S. Cities & Towns, 1780-1980}, (Berkely, California: University of California Press, 1988), 4.

\textsuperscript{224} An early case the County became involved in was that of Clara Stuck and her minor children. Clara's Husband, Joseph was declared insane in 1880. Probate Court of Spokane County, Record of Letters Spokane County, Book A, 17 June 1880: 3.
Spokane's founders had not created what later progressives would consider a complete welfare system, nor had they developed what Eric Monkonnen has described as a service government.225

When Spokane's male founders were creating and refining a municipal government, the complex, aggressive, highly bureaucratized American city had already begun to take shape elsewhere.226 But local leaders had to recreate its manifestation in the boomtown they called home, and charitable women played an important part of that. In the earliest days, women relieved the city from the burden of managing service institutions. Their subsequent repeated requests for the city's financial support, however, kept the two initiatives intertwined, and the partnership ultimately helped prepare the way for a more complex service city.

Lady Albion and her associates were key figures in helping to create a voluntary/municipal alliance. They had argued from their earliest days as charitable agents, that having a number of poor in their midst hurt the city's reputation.227 At the time that she wrote this article, the benevolent ladies were busily creating an institution--The Home of the Friendless--to help needy women and children. As they argued that the

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226 Monkonnen, 89.

city should sponsor their institution to help poor children and destitute women, they took a step toward creating an early version of a progressive style institution. By doing so, they were playing an important role in the city.228

Of course Spokane was not the only city creating a complex municipal government at the eve of the twentieth century. The women's efforts were part of building the modern American city. And they had been inspired by concepts that they had brought with them from mid-western or eastern cities.

However, the local situation helped shape their charitable efforts. First, there was an individual economic benefit for boosting the city. Many of Spokane's business leaders were invested in real estate, and as Eric Monkonnen has pointed out, population growth benefits all real property owners. Many of the benevolent ladies were married to owners, if not owners in their own right. Promoting healthy growth benefited all propertied boosters.

Second, the reform scene in Spokane influenced how the benevolent ladies defined their institution. There were several different charitable agents active, and their ranks became more diversified as the city grew and matured. At first, individuals, such as Jennie F. Cannon, wife of A. M. Cannon, one of the first owners of the townsite, had been tireless in their efforts to help others. When she died in 1893 a newspaper reported that, although she had not been "a public woman in any sense" during the fifteen years she had made her home there, she had been as much interested in building up the city as her prominent husband had been.229 She was a feminized version of a booster, playing

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228 Peggy Pascoe has demonstrated that there was a short window of time in the development of western cities when women "unusual opportunities" to impact their city. Pascoe, 11.

the gracious hostess to many immigrants, "always remembering" the poor, and being a "ray of sunshine" in the rooms of the sick.\textsuperscript{230}

Besides Cannon countless others were also active as individual charitable agents.\textsuperscript{231} Very early on, these began joining with other like-minded women in organizations.\textsuperscript{232} The Protestant and a Catholic version of the Ladies Benevolent Societies were founded in 1887 and in 1889 respectively.\textsuperscript{233} A Hebrew Ladies Benevolent Society appeared on the scene in 1893. Two years later a Ladies Scandinavian-American Aid Society was formalized.\textsuperscript{234} Although no black women's charitable organizations appeared in official city publications, the Calvary Baptist and the Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Churches provided rallying points for local Black efforts. Both churches had opened their doors just a few months after the fire.\textsuperscript{235}

Despite the existence of other charitable organizations in Spokane, when Lady Albion wrote her perspective on the Ladies Benevolent Society, she and her associates

\textsuperscript{230} In later years she had regularly contributed money to the Home of the Friendless, and supported the Woman's Exchange. "Mrs. Cannon is Dead," \textit{Chronicle}, 8 September 1893.

\textsuperscript{231} A. M. Cannon was a prominent "founding father." He had been one-fourth owner of the original townsite, and had amassed some wealth by the early 1880s. His home, which the family moved into in January of 1884 was described in 1907 to have been the "finest private residence in the Pacific Northwest" when it was first built. "Cannon Residence Being Moved," \textit{The Spokesman-Review}, 17 November 1907.

\textsuperscript{232} Lucy Abigail Cowely, wife of the congregation minister H. T. Cowley who came to the region as missionaries to the Indians in 1874 was instrumental in establishing the first women's charitable group in what would later become the city of Spokane.

\textsuperscript{233} By 1889, two women's Relief Corps and five separate WCTU branches appeared in the City Directory. \textit{Spokane Falls City Directory}, (R. L. Polk and Co., 1889), 42-44.

\textsuperscript{234} By the late 1880s City Directories listed information about women's clubs and their officers. For an example, see \textit{Spokane Falls City Directories}, (Spokane: Polk, 1890), 89.

were accustomed to getting a significant portion of the local press's attention. But getting reporters to attend their meetings was easier than convincing city and county leaders that they should support their institution.

City administrators were most generous to charities when they had under their control excess cash, as they had had in aftermath of the Great Fire, of 1889. Their top priority for expending official budgets, however, was in creating an ideal environment for economic growth. The process progressives would later use to develop a welfare government had not yet been worked out.

Throughout the 1890s, however, when it came to official budgets, local leaders were careful not to give too much to charities. As late as 1897, County Commissioners logged a complaint upon returning from a visit to Sacred Heart Hospital that illustrates this. They bewailed that Spokane was "a dumping place for the sick and disabled from every quarter." From as far away as Asia, to as nearby as Coeur d'Alene and British Columbia, the invective went on, "all send their quota of sick and unfortunate to this city." But, lest the commissioners should appear unconcerned about the plight of the needy, the clerk added, "The list of county charges is now kept as small as is consistent with the interests of humanity . . .."

A variety of people, including clubwomen and the supporters of local nuns, began arguing that money for charitable institutions should come from official sources. This contributed to a sporadic, but lengthy dispute between the city council and the county commissioners over which entity should pay the most to help the needy. City leaders were painfully conscious that they and other citizens personally paid a significant portion

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236 "Record of [Spokane] County Commissioners Proceedings," Book I, 21 January 1897, 405, WSAERB.
of county property taxes, and frequently argued that the county should therefore be responsible for the largest proportion of poor sustenance.237

The county did aid local institutions, but even then commissioners had little interest in linking charitable forces with city leaders. They often ignored city demands that the county become more deeply involved in poor relief, even occasionally refusing to enter into cooperative charitable ventures.238 A local paper once predicted that there was likely to be war between the city and the county because the latter had been "saddling paupers on the city to be taken care of."239

This point of contention between the two governing bodies surfaced in June of 1891 when representatives of the Ladies Benevolent Society appeared before the City Council requesting money to dig a well.240 The Home of the Friendless stood on a high point approximately a mile north of the Spokane River. The large rock formation upon which they had placed the foundation of the home complicated their efforts to reach water.241

Stone was not an uncommon characteristic of the region's real estate, so Council members were not surprised to hear that the project would require $65 more than its original estimated cost. Accompanying their request, the women submitted a list of individuals to whom they had provided free medical care during the previous year. Their

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237 In the calendar year 1892 the Spokane County reported having given $8,111.50. In the fiscal year ending on 30 June 1894, that amount had been raised to $14,526.62. "Auditor's Annual Statement and Report of Finances of Spokane County, Washington, 1892, and 1894." WSAERB.

238 RCCP, Book I, 20 January 1897, p. 402. WSAERB.

239 "Cinching the City," The Spokane Review, 10 June 1891, 5:1.

240 "This and That" The Spokane Review, 3 June 1891, 5:2.

241 Mackin Personal Papers, "Wanderings," 23, JOPA, GU.
assertion that these patients would have otherwise been charges of the city encountered no opposition, and council members increased the subsidy to $500. 242

This gift to the Home eventually cost the city at least three times that amount. A month after they had settled with the benevolent ladies concerning the well project, Council members allocated $500 for monthly appropriations to St. Joseph's Orphanage and Sacred Heart Hospital, as well as making provisions to give $500 more to the Home. 243 Probably as a direct result of this venture, City leaders once again took up the cry that the County should be more charitable. They were especially critical of the County's six-month residency requirement, which they believed allowed commissioners to ignore the plight of hundreds of the region's most needy residents. 244 Compounding City Council members' sense that the County had little interest in helping the poor, they were painfully aware that they were providing the largest appropriations to the Home of the Friendless through the end of 1892. In addition to the $8,000 the fire relief committee had given the ladies by May of 1890, and the $500 for the well, it had begun considering providing monthly support.

Despite this municipal largess, the Protestant benevolent ladies discovered that keeping their institution operating was a formidable challenge. Many of them were married to businessmen, but their connections did not necessarily translate into large monthly appropriations to the Home. 245 The benevolent ladies could sometimes gain the

242 "Cinching the City," The Spokane Review, 10 June 1891, 5:1.

243 CCM Book C, 31 July 1891, p. 95, WSAERB.

244 "Cinching the City," The Spokane Review, 10 June 1891, 5:1.

245 Sandra Haarsager has demonstrated that leaders of club women in the Northwest were more likely to be well educated wives of local businessmen than they were to be married to the wealthy political elite. Sandra Haarsager, Organized Womanhood: Cultural Politics in the Pacific Northwest 1840-1920,
ear of city council members more often than the nuns could, but having able competitors helped ensure that securing operating expenses for the home would prove more difficult, especially after official funds began drying up. In January 1892 some exasperated benevolent ladies were discussing with City Council members the Society's financial needs. They blamed their difficulties on restrictions in the city charter, prohibiting municipal funds to be spent on charities. They were so frustrated that Alice Houghton, a prominent businesswoman and member of the Society, proclaimed indignantly that any charter opposed to charity should be "swept from the face of the earth." 

In an interesting twist that demonstrates the connections between some of the benevolent ladies and influential men, Houghton’s husband, Horace E., who had been a judge and was currently Corporation Counsel for the city, responded to her outburst. He conceded that the charter did not have a fund designated for charitable gifts, but informed her that city politicians had already found a way to get around that restriction. The Home's managers, he explained, could submit bills to the city for services they had already provided, and then the Council would be free to "reimburse" them. That is the

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246 Eric Monkkonen has argued that nineteenth century American cities developed charters that were licenses to increase private capital. Monkonnen, 112.


249 City Charter Book, Section 42, 1891, WSAERB.
process, Judge Houghton went on to add, that they had worked out with the nuns who oversaw Sacred Heart Hospital.

This "solution" was administration-friendly. Council members could review itemized bills submitted by charities, yet still limit the amount of the reimbursement. For example, in response to Houghton's appeal city leaders considered drawing $600 from the 1889 Fire Relief Fund instead of dipping into city coffers.\textsuperscript{250} No extant record indicates that they followed through with the idea, but the city did give the Home of the Friendless $150 in July, then in October worked out a monthly appropriation of $100.\textsuperscript{251}

Likewise, the city had been the first governmental body to give more than a token gift to St. Joseph's Orphanage. The $500 that council members allocated to the orphanage in late July 1891 was divided into monthly appropriations of $75 that lasted into 1892.\textsuperscript{252} This money proved especially important to the nuns.

The Sisters of St. Francis had no personal ties with local leaders that they could use when seeking funding for their orphanage, so its first months in operation had proved especially difficult. These nuns were members of an order based in Philadelphia, but they received no operating funds from the Mother House. So when they dedicated their orphanage on October 5, 1890, the institution had been wholly dependent on charitable support.\textsuperscript{253}

\textsuperscript{250} CCM Book C, 9 February 1892, p. 448, WSAERB.

\textsuperscript{251} City Auditing Committee Record, Book 1, see entries for 26 July, 11 October, 1 November and 20 December 1892. WSAERB. The Specter of the old relief fund was healthy as late as June of that year. WCTU leaders referred to it while requesting money to help establish a rescue home. "For a Rescue Home," \textit{The Spokane Review}, 22 June 1892, 5:1.

\textsuperscript{252} "At the Orphanage," \textit{The Spokane Review}, 7 October 1891, 3:5.

\textsuperscript{253} Unidentified news clipping from Scrapbook I, Sisters of Saint Francis, St. Joseph’s Family Center Papers, Spokane.
St. Joseph's Orphanage served children in Spokane for several months, existing on the small donations they received from local individuals. When recalling in October 1891 the challenges facing the Sisters of St. Francis during their early months in Spokane, the local superior confided to a reporter that they had had a "dreadful struggle." She went on to explain that she had even sometimes considered closing the orphanage.254

Yet the nuns were not without some access to City Council, and they could gently prod them for assistance. In June 1891 the Sister Superior invited Council members to make what appeared to be their first official visit to St. Joseph's. One month later city officials discussed making regular appropriations to St. Joseph's that would total $500.255

In addition to their own efforts, two individuals came to their aid. The first was L.C. Dillman, a local business owner and developer who was not a Catholic.256 He had happened to encounter the Sister Superior sometime during the orphanage's early months in Spokane, and had begun giving the nuns small sums to help them out of financial crunches.257 In June of 1891, the same month that Council members had visited the

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254 "At the Orphanage," *The Spokane Review*, 7 October 1891, 3:5. The sisters had taken in children almost as soon as they had arrived in Spokane, thus they started incurring expenses at least two months before the Orphanage was open. In the previously mentioned interview the Sister Superior said that the orphanage was by October 1891 enjoying a stipend of $75 per month from the city. This study did not document any monthly gifts from the city to the orphanage before July of 1892, but the 31 July 1891 appropriation for $500 was worded in such a way that the money could have been granted in monthly installments. CCM Book D, 31 July 1891, p. 95, WSAERB.

255 CCM, Book D, 31 July 1891, p. 95, WSAERB

256 In 1892, Louis C. Dillman was apparently a member of Spokane's All Saints [Episcopalian] Church. "Roses Without Thorns," *The Spokane Review*, 24 June 1892, 6:3.

257 In 1889 Dillman was a founding partner of Dillman, Routhe and Co, a Real Estate and Mining Broker firm. His occupation and home address first appeared in the Spokane City Directory in 1887, and last in 1896. *Spokane Falls City Directory*, (Spokane Falls: R. L. Polk and Company) 1887-1896.
orphange, he wrote a letter to City Council members regarding the nuns' financial needs.\textsuperscript{258}

The second individual to assist them was M. M. Cowley, a Catholic Parishioner. He visited County leaders in March of 1891.\textsuperscript{259} Father Mackin later recalled that officials had been reluctant to comply with his request, so he had responded, “All right, I’ll turn them all loose.”\textsuperscript{260} Commissioners gave him a onetime gift of $25.

The first recorded county monthly appropriation to St. Joseph's Orphanage appeared in January 1892, ten months after Cowley's first request for help and fifteen months after the Orphanage had been opened.\textsuperscript{261} The amount was for $75, and commissioners continued giving at that level for six months. In June, Cowley once again visited County commissioners, and they raised their appropriation to $125 per month. By the end of 1892 they had given St. Joseph's Orphanage $1125.

At the time the County gave more to the Orphanage than it did to the Home of the Friendless. In June of that year the first warrant for a gift to the Home appeared on the books. It specified $1 for each child in the home or $40, whichever amount was smaller.\textsuperscript{262} Commissioners revised this warrant on the first day of August, to provide a flat rate of $40 per month, rather than tying the amount to the number of children in the

\textsuperscript{258} CCM, Book C, 23 June 1891, WSAERB.

\textsuperscript{259} RCCP Book D, 9 March 1891, p. 247, WSAERB.

\textsuperscript{260} Mackin's memoir said this encounter happened while Cowley was talking to the "city dads." This study, however, found no indication that Cowley visited City Council on the Orphanage's behalf. Mackin Papers, JOPA, GU.

\textsuperscript{261} RCCP Book E, 4 January 1892, p. 155, WSAERB

\textsuperscript{262} RCCP Book E, 2 August 1892, p. 369, WSAERB.
The first recorded monthly appropriation appeared in the books in early September. Nothing further appears about the institution in official records until December, when a delegation of prominent men asked for $100 per month. This request apparently produced an appropriation in March 1893. But it was not repeated in following months. A notation in April of 1894 indicates that that particular initiative expired just one month after it had been ordered.

The reason the County gave more money to St. Joseph's Orphanage than it did for the Home seems most likely to have been because of the benevolent ladies' failed attempt to take charge of County patients in April of the previous year. Perhaps the women felt embarrassed about this misstep, and simply did not ask that governing body again for money until fourteen months later. On the other hand, County Commissioners may have lost some confidence in the Home and its administration during the incident.

Whatever the reason for the discrepancy, it demonstrates that the benevolent ladies did not enjoy the sole claim to charitable authority that Lady Albion and her cohorts had purported to hold only two years earlier. The Ladies Benevolent Society could lose its position, more easily than it could gain ground. Errors such as the short-lived Home

263 RCCP, Book E, 1 August 1892, p. 398, WSAERB. On 24 August 1892, a short notice in the local paper confirmed that the Home needed more money to care for the 40 children it housed at the time. "Home for the Friendless," The Spokane Review, 24 August 1892, 5:5.

264 RCCP, Book F, 6 September 1892, p. 20, WSAERB.

265 RCCP, Book F, 9 December 1892, p. 138, WSAERB.

266 RCCP, Book F, 3 March 1893, p. 260, WSAERB.

267 RCCP, Book G, 2 April 1894, p. 218, WSAERB.

268 RCCP Book D, 22 April 1891, p. 277, WSAERB. A more detailed discussion of this appears in chapter two, "Making the City Respectable."
Hospital proved costly. What is more, the lady managers learned that a "do everything" policy did not necessarily create the best business strategy.  

Like the Benevolent ladies, their competitors found the business of charity tough. Nevertheless, Catholics founded solid institutions in Spokane. What is more, their continued service to a number of needy people demonstrated in yet another way, that the benevolent ladies were not meeting all the human services needs in the city and region.

The system of official monthly appropriations to charities that evolved in Spokane operated smoothly for more than two years. But by the summer of 1894, the nationwide Panic of 1893 had taken an especially heavy local toll, where business leaders had borrowed heavily in order to recreate the city after the 1889 fire. Accordingly, the city council was struggling to meet its financial obligations. The Councilmen announced in August that they were cutting the $100 allowance to St. Joseph’s Orphanage.

Despite the economic depression, the Ladies Benevolent Society continued to receive their monthly appropriation of $100. Twenty lady managers did, however, attend a Council meeting at which they discussed the cost of running the home. They helped debate whether it was possible for them to operate the home for less money than it would be for a government body to do so. Although they were not convinced that a city-managed home could save money, the ladies said they would be happy to let them step in,


271 "Charities of the City," The Spokesman-Review, August 7, 1894, 3:3.
thereby releasing the ladies to focus their charitable endeavors on other initiatives. In a closed door session three days later, Council members made a decision and announced they would treat all charities alike--by cutting off the money they were giving to the Home.272

The following month, however, appropriations to both institutions reappeared on the Auditing Committee's records. The municipal change of heart may have been prompted by the refusal of County Commissioners to join the venture.273 Council members probably felt they had no other viable option. The incident temporarily halted the city/county argument, but the incident only heightened city leaders' convictions that the county was shirking its duty when it came to caring for the poor. In short, the city leaders were not willing to make up for what they interpreted as county shortcomings.

The Council members' struggle to stay within the confines of a constricting municipal budget provides an opportunity to identify differences in the way that city leaders related to the lady managers of the Home of the Friendless and the nuns who presided over St. Joseph's Orphanage. They cut off the appropriation to the orphanage without inviting any nuns or other representatives of the institution to discuss it. But before they made a decision on cutting the Home's allocation, they allowed its managers to attend a council meeting and participate in the debate.274 The protracted discussion

272 "Will Treat All Alike," The Spokesman-Review, August 10, 1894, 3:2.


over cutting the Home's income suggests that there were council members who were
more willing to slash the Orphanage's appropriation than the Home's.\textsuperscript{275}

Even without the severe economic downturn, charities in Spokane found operating
money hard to come by. Being situated as they were in a “boomtown” made fundraising
especially difficult. Father Mackin described spur-of-the-moment real estate agents
selling lots on the streets before they had an office from which to work, and developers
who were rapidly putting up buildings using borrowed money. Asking these opportunists
for a contribution, he remembered, yielded nothing. They would respond to his requests
with, “We came here to get in on the ground floor. Come to us six months or a year from
now and we’ll give you all you want.”\textsuperscript{276}

Besides trying to operate a charity in a city where discretionary money was almost
non-existent, charitable workers in Spokane had to meet a demand that mirrored the
exponential population growth. Nobody understood this more clearly than did the Sisters
of St. Francis. In late 1891, as the nuns completed their first year in Spokane, their
orphanage had already outgrown its original building and they had moved into an
addition that allowed them to house 70 children. Father Mackin later recalled that the
nuns had had as many as 100 children in the facility at one time during its inaugural
year.\textsuperscript{277}

\textsuperscript{275} Spokesman Review, 10 August 1894, 3:2.

\textsuperscript{276} “Wanderings of Fifty Years,” 25 Mackin Papers, JOPA, GU.

\textsuperscript{277} Charles Mackin, undated letter to Fr. Weible, Mackin Papers, JOPA, GU. The 1900 Federal Census
listed eleven nuns, fifteen students and seventy-two orphans, with a total of 99 occupants in the
Orphanage, \textit{The Census of 1900}, Washington, enumeration district 73, sheet 27, 28, U.S. Census
Bureau, 1902.
During this period the lady managers of the Home of the Friendless regularly took in fewer residents.\textsuperscript{278} After getting out of the hospital business in the spring of 1891 they had transformed a large portion of the Home's seven wards into dormitory style bedrooms, so they had room for a number of children. But the pragmatics of making functional a temporary building, which had been designed to provide a myriad of services and erected quickly in 1890, complicated matters. For example, they only had one bathroom in the building.\textsuperscript{279}

The benevolent ladies' conceptions of domesticity were also important factors in determining how many charges to take in. Like clubwomen across the United States Spokane's charitable women aimed to provide a home, and prided themselves on not having created an institution.\textsuperscript{280}

But the Home's potential to house additional children challenged the women for more than a decade. For example, in 1897 Lucy Ide, a prominent benevolent lady, told a reporter that the Home had 42 children, but she added that with sufficient financial resources, the charity could accommodate an additional 75.\textsuperscript{281} The 1900 census, however, listed just 31 children living there.\textsuperscript{282} From 1903-1905 the matron reported to

\textsuperscript{278} This study uncovered no rosters generated by the managers of either St. Joseph's Orphanage or the Home of the Friendless. In later years, a few monthly reports to the city and county have been preserved but no such documentation seems to have survived from the institutions between 1890 and 1903 or after 1905. The reports filed listed numbers of children cared for, admitted, dismissed, and those who were entirely dependent on charity. They distinguished between orphans, half orphans, and those deserted by parents. City Clerk Box 6, item 30. WSARERB.

\textsuperscript{279} Report to City Council, 4 November 1901, Box 4, Item 16. WSAERB.

\textsuperscript{280} For an analysis of the home ideology and its impact on evangelical reformers of the period see, Kunzel, 28.

\textsuperscript{281} "Were Hopping Mad" \textit{Spokane Falls Review}, 5 February 1897, 5:1.

\textsuperscript{282} \textit{The Census of 1900}, Washington, enumeration district 72, sheet 5. In the autumn of 1909 nearly twenty years after they had opened the original Home, the lady managers renamed the institution the Spokane
City Council that between 50 and 60 children were in the home each month. When they finally moved into a new building in October of 1909, they had nearly 100 children. But they still had approximately 60 fewer charges than St. Joseph's Orphanage had at the same time.

Table 3-1. Estimated Numbers of Children per Institution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>St. Joseph’s Orphanage</th>
<th>Home of the Friendless</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1891</td>
<td>70-100</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1897</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, the numbers that an individual charity posted at any one time should not be taken to imply anything about the respective institutions' successfulness. By 1910 both organizations had been in existence 20 years. In the meantime each had carved out a role for their institutions in helping Spokane's needy children and their families. In the process, both had become established--although not altogether indispensable--agents of local government bodies and both had a steady minimum income. Ironically, the institutional respectability that the benevolent ladies sought led them to take steps toward transforming their Home into a progressive style institution, dependent to a large extent on municipal and county funding.

However, one should not underestimate the impact of these institutions on Spokane. Even though they were charitable, they were economically stable. The women who ran them managed property, oversaw the construction of buildings, employed

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283 City Clerk Box 6, item 30, WSAERB.
284 That year St. Joseph's Orphanage had 160 residents listed. The Census of 1910, Washington, enumeration district 206, sheet 16, 17, B.
contractors and maintenance workers, as well as purchasing food, dry goods and clothing for the occupants of their institution. The nuns of St. Joseph's Orphanage did most of their own work in the 1890s; they still put more than $1125 into the local economy annually. In addition to providing room and board expenses, the lady managers of the Home of the Friendless employed a matron, cook, nurses, and laundresses. In other words, the money they received as sustenance ended up back in Spokane's growing economy.

Being in the "boomtown" helped both institutions flourish. The city's rapid population growth helped bring a constant stream of needy children to the doors of each institution. The least established people in Spokane, mostly recent immigrants, provided the two institutions with a constantly growing number of temporary residents. For example, both homes helped many a single parent--usually a mother--who needed shelter for her offspring while she looked for work. Likewise, children whose parents who were so ill they could not support a family found refuge there, sometimes only until the parent recovered.

But the transient portion of Spokane's population proved larger and more complicated than either could manage. Thus, despite the existence of two orphanages in Spokane, some children and their families were left without help. Sometimes this was because neither institution would accept new charges. At other times, families in Spokane found other ways to care for their neediest children.

For example, census records from both 1900 and 1910 indicate that neither institution had any black children, although the region had had black settlers as early as

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1878.\textsuperscript{286} They were never a large percentage of the local population, only 1% in 1910. Despite this low number, Spokane's black community was the second largest in the state of Washington.\textsuperscript{287} During Spokane's boom years, the community may well have spawned an institution to help its needy children, one similar to those documented by Glenda Gilmore in North Carolina, but however they did it, they took care of their own children.\textsuperscript{288}

Although most black women were making fewer public contributions to the city, Celia Rogers was a well-known exception. Besides being the city's most colorful laundress, "Aunty" Rogers, as many local whites referred to her, made her biggest contribution to Spokane through her avocation. She and her husband James took unwanted children into the shacks they called home when no one else would. Although it was always a struggle to put food on the table, they shared their meager provisions.

In retrospect, one must speculate as to why Celia took in children. She was providing a place for unwanted waifs to stay. Many were babies when she took them in, but she kept some of them beyond infancy. When they got big enough, they could help with small jobs, such as collecting trash, helping wash clothes, or perhaps even begging at times, although if they did the latter the historical record is silent about it.

\textsuperscript{286} The 1890 census for Spokane is not extant. The Twelfth U.S. Census 1900, Spokane Washington, enumeration district #72 indicated that the Home of the Friendless had 32 charges, all white. The thirteenth U.S. Census 1910, Spokane Washington, enumeration district #181 listed 100 charges in the Home, all white. Similarly, the U.S. Census 1900, enumeration district 73 indicated that St. Joseph's Orphanage had 71 children, all white, and in 1910 they had 160 children, all white.


\textsuperscript{288} Glenda Gilmore, Gender and Jim Crow: Women and the Politics of White Supremacy, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996.)
More important to this study, however, the Rogers' story provides a way to begin identifying the limitations, both external and those self-imposed, of the Home of the Friendless and St. Joseph's Orphanage. For example, although the Ladies Benevolent Society gave their institution the sweeping name of the "Home of the Friendless," they did not take in all poor waifs. Their budget was tight enough that they had difficulty caring for more than a few children who were wholly dependent on charity. The lady managers strongly encouraged the adults who placed a child in the Home of the Friendless to earn at least a portion of her keep.\(^{289}\) They were less willing to take in children whose parents could not support them, unless local governments would foot part of the bill. And if they could have done so, they would have refused to accept any children born out of wedlock.\(^{290}\)

For desperate parents of any race, Celia Rogers provided an attractive alternative. She would not ask too many questions and she would not disclose to anyone from whom she had gotten the children. It is possible; however, to speculate about the kinds of people who found her services attractive. She lived downtown, and was well acquainted with people living and working in what local leaders referred to as the "tenderloin" district. Women living and working there who gave birth to unwanted babies would have found leaving a child with Celia attractive. They may not have even known what official channels might be available to them. Even if they did, however, they were accustomed to seeing Celia and her children on the streets and they would have been more likely to turn to her for help.


\(^{290}\) Report to City Council, 4 November 1901, Box 4, Item 16. WSAERB.
Some otherwise "respectable" families, to which unwanted children had been born, would have wanted to avoid seeking official assistance to get a child placed in the Home. Most often these were extended families into which a single young woman had a child out of wedlock. Some would not consider infanticide but still had no desire to stand before local officials requesting help. More to their liking would have been a less formal process. Leaving a child for Celia Rogers to care for was as easy as finding her doorstep and this big-hearted washerwoman did not ask for any continuing financial commitment.

Single women working in the local red light district; poor unmarried mothers, or an occasional father, working and living downtown; and wayward daughters from "respectable" families constituted a whole range of people who were not served by the formal institutions in the city. And while there were probably some exceptions, these were people who had no interest in becoming part of the cooperative process that was being developed between Spokane's formal orphanages and local government's leaders. They saw themselves better served by individuals than neoprogressive institutions.

Celia Rogers met the needs of a variety of people, and did it well. Shortly before she passed away in 1902, she told friends that she had taken 179 children from Spokane into her home. Although city directories document her presence there for only 8 years, obituaries published in 1902 speculated that she had been in the city for 15 years.

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291 Jerrelene Williamson, whose has shared her knowledge of Spokane's pioneering blacks with many others, first suggested that respectable white families with unwanted children born out of wedlock would have found Celia Rogers' willingness to adopt a child very useful. Oral interview in April 2002.


293 Cecilia Rogers first appeared in City Directories in 1896. She was listed thereafter until the year she died, 1902. Spokane City Directory, vols. 6-11, (Spokane: R. L. Polk and Company, 1896-1902.)
Assuming the newspapers were correct, she would have had to take in more than eleven children each year. But averages do not leave room for short-term fluctuations, and Celia Rogers' life was one with many difficulties.

Born into slavery, perhaps in Virginia, her parents had purchased the family's freedom, and moved to Washington D.C. During the Civil War she worked as a domestic in the national capitol. Sometime afterwards she migrated West, without any of her relatives, in the employ of a former senator. This journey brought her to the Pacific Northwest.

Celia eventually settled in Spokane, but struggled to make ends meet. At first she worked as a servant, continuing to do so until 1896, when the City Directory listed her occupation as a domestic. But soon afterward, she decided to become a laundress. The work was difficult, and her hands suffered from long hours of scrubbing clothes on wash boards in tubs of soap and water. She earned a little extra money each year by marketing a brand of soap that had been locally produced. During the County's popular annual Fruit Fair, she would fill a big tub with water, letting the soap bubbles overflow. She would then demonstrate the merits of her product, using her reputation as a laundress to convince her listeners they should buy it. Yet when not hawking her goods, she spiced up the ambiance of the fair by singing "hallelujah hymns" at the top of her voice.

Although she was relatively uneducated, the personal charisma that helped her play such a dramatic role at the fair made Celia Rogers a public figure at a time when few

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294 A news article published at the time of her death said the soap she sold had been produced locally. Perhaps she had made her own. "Their Toil is Ended" Spokane Daily Chronicle, 8 July 1902, 1:5.

other women in Spokane commanded such a presence.\footnote{No extant documentation on Celia indicates whether she was literate. Her husband, James was not. \textit{The United States Census}, 1900, enumeration district 58. It is likely, however, that she could read at least a little. Joseph Franklin estimated that all but 9\% of blacks in Spokane in 1900 were literate. Joseph Franklin, \textit{All Through the Night the History of Spokane Black Americans, 1860-1940}, (Fairfield, Washington: Ye Galleon Press, 1989), 31.} Moreover, her personal compassion for street waifs and her seemingly limitless ability to take in another child endeared her to a wide range of different people. Her commitment to hiding the identity of the parents of her foster children also won her supporters. Most importantly, she met needs in Spokane.

Nevertheless, she herself had little to call her own. For example, during the five years she was listed in the Spokane's City Directory, 1886-1901, she had a different address each time. And although she was not listed in 1902, the year that she died, a published obituary reported that she had been living at a sixth address. At the same time, the meager places she called home provided few comforts. In 1900 the structure she lived in was so unconventional--perhaps set off the street--that the census agent failed to enumerate her, and the house number was not listed on an insurance map published two years later.\footnote{Sanborn Insurance Map, 1902.}

What is more, everyday life got significantly harder in 1899 when her husband, who had shined shoes and driven a team of horses, became too ill to work. For more than four months the Rogers family name appeared regularly on county assistance lists.\footnote{For example, see RCCP, Book K, 23 January 1899, 14. See also pages, 22, 48, 57, 67, 73, 76, 77, 80, 101, 109, 110, 111, and 130. WSAERB.} First James and then Celia purchased a few groceries, once and sometimes twice a week,
on a county expense account. At the same time the family began accepting deliveries of free wood.

In April of that year county commissioners intervened, placing her children in the Home of the Friendless.\footnote{This was the Home of the Friendless, located on Boone Avenue. It had been established in 1890 and was managed by members of the Ladies Benevolent Society, who were all white and economically comfortable society women. See Chapter 2.} Adding another note of sadness to her life, Denny Rogers, one of her foster children, died of diphtheria in the month after he had been taken into the Home.\footnote{Ladies Benevolent Society Minutes, book 2, 9 May 1899, 1897-1903. MAC, EWSHS.} Soon after, her husband was transported to the County Poor Farm, where he could be under the care of the County physician.

This sudden change for the worse forced Celia to depend more heavily on others for help. Besides having gotten County assistance to buy food, in June she got $2.00 worth of groceries from Lucy Ide a prominent member of the Ladies Benevolent Society.\footnote{The Secretaries' Minutes do not give a first name for the Mrs. Rogers who Ide gave groceries to, but the coincidence of this entry makes it a highly likely scenario. Ladies Benevolent Society Minutes, 5 June 1899, MAC, EWSHS.} Such difficult circumstances did not seem to have broken her will to go on, however. In a reference that might have included Rogers, the matron of the Home had complained in to the managers in early April that some parents were creating a nuisance, often visiting in the Home until bedtime.\footnote{Ladies Benevolent Society Minutes 3 April 1899, MAC, EWSHS.}

Although she did not continue to stay on county support lists, Celia depended on the Home for help with her charges. For example, by November 1901 an exasperated Mattie Shaw, the matron informed visiting city representatives that "Aunty Rogers" brought to the Home an average of 6 infants a year. She went on to assert that the

\footnote{Ladies Benevolent Society Minutes 3 April 1899, MAC, EWSHS.}
children, aged 3 weeks to six months were "perfect wrecks" when they arrived, all having been given "drugs or opiates" to make them sleep. After asking for an investigation, she launched into a diatribe that illustrated her prejudices against the children, their birth parents, and their black caretaker. She complained, "... the home should be relieved from becoming a haven for bastard children of the miscellaneous public via Aunty Rogers' Door step Route."

Lucy Ide's brief mention of a Mrs. Rogers that she had given grocery money to may be indication that distance from the laundress helped the benevolent ladies maintain the facade of having a more accommodating attitude toward her. But the matron, who tended to their "front line" when dealing with parents and children, expressed the limits of the charity in one sweeping sentence. Thus, Shaw clearly demonstrated the benevolent ladies limits defined by moral and racial prejudice.

The Rogers' case demonstrates some of the management's shortcomings and errors. When possible, they refused admission to children they considered illegitimate. Their moral condemnation of women who participated in sex outside of marriage seemed more important than the fate of the offspring produced in such unions. In other words, the


304 Emphasis mine. Committee Report to City Council, 4 November 1901, Spokane Washington. Box 4 item 16, WSAERB.

305 Report to City Council, 4 November 1901, Box 4 item 16. WSAERB.
children of women who had lost their female respectability appeared to them as less deserving.\textsuperscript{306}

City Council did not intervene in Rogers' case, but allowed her to keep taking in children. They may have recognized that whatever she did for poor waifs would save them money. Or they may have simply not been interested in the plight of the parties involved to mount a formal investigation.

Whatever the reason, a little more than six months later when Celia Rogers collapsed on the street with her final illness, two children clung to her, a seven-year-old and a five-month-old baby--one white and the other of Japanese descent. The three family members had been on an errand to purchase potatoes and coffee using the first county voucher Celia had gotten since the spring of 1900.

She died at Sacred Heart Hospital on the evening of July 7, 1902. Her husband, James, passed away less than twelve hours later in the shack they had shared with the two foster children in downtown Spokane.\textsuperscript{307} At 7:00 the next morning Salvation Army representatives found him dead, lying on a cot without so much as a blanket covering him.

Although they died as paupers, Celia and James had become easily recognizable figures in a white-dominated city that discriminated against blacks. This was the case in Spokane, even though local blacks sometimes claimed that discrimination was not so

\textsuperscript{306}Regina Kunzel has argued that restoring female respectability was an important motivation of Crittenton Homes and some Salvation Army rescue workers. Kunzel, 19.

\textsuperscript{307}Their residence was on Riverside Drive at the time of their death. The 1900 Federal Census did not enumerate Celia Rogers, but her husband, James, was listed as an "inmate" at the Spokane County Poor Farm. He was an illiterate son of parents who had been born in old Virginia. They were probably former slaves, who had escaped to Canada in the 1840s. James was born there in 1846. The Census of 1900, Washington, Enumeration District 58.
prevalent in the Far West as it had been in the South. But subtle prejudices still existed. For example, County Commissioners acknowledged Celia's contributions to the community, yet still referred to her in official documents as "Aunty Rogers," denying her the more respectful title of Mrs.

But racial discrimination in Spokane coexisted with a genuine appreciation for Cecilia and James. After the two died in 1902, whites collected more than $65.00 to fund a sizeable funeral. Mourners then escorted the two pine boxes to the cemetery in separate carts. But this outpouring of respect stopped short of buying headstones, and the two were buried in one unmarked plot.

City Council members' efforts to find homes for the two children who had been Celia's charges provides a further comparison point between the flexibility she brought to foster parenting and the limitations faced by local governments and the charitable institutions they depended on. Five months after her death, on November 5, 1902, Council members inquired of the managers of the Home of the Friendless and the Sister Superior of St. Joseph's Orphanage why the institutions had refused to take the Rogers children. Each responded that their facility had been under quarantine at the time of request; the former had had cases of measles and whooping cough, and the latter had had scarlet fever.

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308 Cornelia Flowers, who emigrated with her husband, to Spokane Falls in 1886, said that discrimination was less pronounced in Spokane than it had been in the South. Franklin, 30.

309 This study found no instance in which County Commissioners referred to Celia as Mrs. Rogers, but many references to Aunty Rogers. For one example, see RCCP, Book K, 23 January 1899, 14.


311 "Their Toil is Ended" *Spokane Daily Chronicle*, 8 July 1902, 1:5.

312 City Council Minutes, 5 November 1902, 736. WSAERB.
As the plight of the Rogers children demonstrated, the Home of the Friendless, and St. Joseph's Orphanage, could not always fulfill official requests. The illnesses of charges already in the institution occasionally prevented the lady managers from taking in additional waifs. But this was less an error of commission than it was a characteristic of managing an institution for children at the time. The nature of communicable diseases meant that they could not reschedule quarantine for a more convenient time, nor could they have completely banished scarlet fever or whooping cough from their institutions. This had been especially true in the 1890s before vaccines were safe and antibiotics were readily available.

At the same time, managing a sound institution over a long period of time required that they use good business practices. Their need to survive economically may well have added to their reluctance to take the children of unwed mothers, who as a group were the least likely to provide any monthly contributions to their offspring's support. Even if some of the lady managers had looked beyond their moral aversion to unwed motherhood, their finances could limit their ability to help.

The competition in the early 1890s between charitable organizations further helped demonstrate that the benevolent ladies did not always live up to their own expectations. One example comes from early 1890, during the winter before they opened the Home of the Friendless. At that time the ladies had not yet made their brief foray into the business of managing a hospital.

A few days after Christmas of 1899, Annie Olsen, a Norwegian domestic, died of typhoid fever.313 In November of that year members of the Ladies Benevolent Society

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313 If not specifically cited, detail about the incident involving Olsen's body comes from the initial newspaper article on the story, "She Rests at Last" Spokane Falls Review, 8 January 1890, 4:1.
had taken her in. When it had become apparent that she needed more medical treatment, Mary Todd, the Society's President had turned to the nuns for assistance.\textsuperscript{314}

After arranging with Sacred Heart Hospital to admit Olsen, Todd assumed that the nuns would keep her informed about her condition. But she learned of the young woman's death when an undertaker, Mr. J. P. Webster visited her, inquiring who was going to pay for the burial. Todd informed him that it was not the Society's practice to absorb that expense, but that she would ask a city representative to issue a permit. She was hoping--and probably at least hinted as much--that the undertaker would absorb the expense. What transpired next is unclear, but Todd went about her business thinking the undertaker would pay.

Whatever he had agreed to on Tuesday morning, December 31, Webster did not rush to bury Olsen. One thing he did do that week, however, was to get married.\textsuperscript{315} If that was not distracting enough, the cold winter weather that Spokane was enduring discouraged all outdoor activities. He was out of town four days later when two benevolent ladies stopped by the competing undertaker's office on unrelated business and learned from an aid that the body had not yet been buried. They hurried to check out the story, and Webster's partner, B.W. Bicksler assured them that it had been done the previous day.

Lingering doubts and a call to Webster's place of business when neither of the partners were there, led Mr. E. L. Swarts, husband of one of the ladies, to take a buggy

\textsuperscript{314}In 1890 she was Mrs. John Todd, she was divorced, and later remarried W. H. Ludden. This is the same Mary Todd Ludden whose recollections about the first days of the Ladies Benevolent Society are featured in Chapter 2.

ride out to the cemetery on the morning of the fifth day. There he found a sexton digging a grave for Olsen's body, although he had no burial permit. Swarts claimed to be a friend of the deceased and took the corpse and pine box coffin from the cemetery to the competing undertaker's office. There, in the presence of several benevolent ladies and a Scandinavian minister, they opened the casket.

The ladies later described to a reporter their shock at finding Olsen's body covered with dirt and blood, "almost nude," with cuts running from the thighs to the neck. The two gowns, which the benevolent ladies had taken with Olsen to the hospital, were missing. A shirt pulled up on one side was the only thing covering the body. To make matters worse, one of the ladies added, "there was not even a head rest in the coffin."316 Todd and her associates were so horrified they drafted an official statement for a local paper. They urged the Scandinavian community to stand up against this "insult to their nationality," and called for the courts to punish the perpetrators of this outrageous "crime." Finally they criticized the hospital, asking why the nuns had not notified the ladies of Olsen's death. They were implying, of course, that the nuns had not taken proper care of this woman, because she was poor.

The Olsen controversy occupied local papers for approximately two weeks, but the resulting court proceedings lingered, still carrying on at least through late March.317


317 The case went before a justice for a preliminary hearing on 22 January 1890. "Annie Olsen's Body," *The Spokane Falls Review*, 24 January 1890. Both Bicksler and Webster continued to do business as undertakers in Spokane after the incident, but Webster proved to be much more successful than his former partner was in the initiative. Webster had been slated to go to trial on the first Monday in March, but by that time the story was of little interest to the local press. On March 23 the case against Webster was discharged. Bicksler was charged with indecent exposure, and Herrick with mutilation of the body. "H Baer Indicted," *Spokane Falls Review*, 23 March 1890, 5:1. Shortly after the incident Bicksler disappeared from City Directories. However, he stayed in the area. This study found him appealing to City Council to open a boarding house in March 1891, CCM, Book C, 11 March 1891. As late as 1894
Three men were arraigned for mutilating the body. An alleged doctor and recent arrival in the city, H. A. Herrick, admitted that he had dissected the corpse, but insisted it had been "for scientific purposes." The undertaker Bicksler, who had by this time sold his interests, suggested that perhaps Mr. Swarts had mutilated the body after he had taken it from the cemetery. He then asserted that the scandal had been fueled by an attempt to force him to sell, and thus fix undertaking prices. Lending credence to this claim, J. P. Webster had already joined the competition.

City Council members appointed a committee to investigate. During the discussion that followed, an especially loquacious councilman Frank Bettis declared that the rumors about Sacred Heart appeared to be well founded, and requested that the committee look into the hospital's treatment of "paupers" in general. A public sparring match followed between the councilman and the hospital's chaplain, Father P. Poaps, who had taken up the Sisters' side in the dispute. Bettis eventually backpedaled on his insinuations about the nuns, but in the process told fellow council members and any reporters listening that the priest was "an imported jackass."

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318 A county newspaper asserted that Herrick had been associated with a rival city paper, the Chronicle. See also "Body Snatching" Northwest Tribune, 10 January 1890, 5:2. Issues of the Chronicle printed during the Olsen scandal are not extant. Both the Tribune and the Review, however, suggest that the Chronicle followed the scandal closely, perhaps even being the first publication to discuss the controversy.


321 "Sacred Heart Hospital" The Spokane Falls Review, 11 January 1890, 5.

322 Father Poaps complained that Bettis's remarks had received applause and promised that he would check the US laws to find out if there "is a law in the United States protecting poor, defenseless women [the
The Councilman Bettis's unfortunate and bigoted remarks were not the only indication of local prejudices, the benevolent ladies themselves had not lived up to their own standards of care. Mary Todd had not bothered to attend the funeral, even though Annie's only relative was too sick to attend. She had apparently decided to allow two ministers, one of whom was the local Scandinavian clergy--a Mr. Stangeland, who had been with the benevolent ladies while they watched the coffin being opened--be the sole citizens of Spokane to accompany the body to its final place of interment. Mrs. Todd, or one of the other benevolent ladies may even had been her former employer, yet they had not visited her in the hospital often enough to know that Olsen was dying. In this case, Todd and the other charitable women had fallen short of their ideals of service.

While alive, the domestic Annie Olsen had had few friends in Spokane, and after her death her body was a mere focal point for the controversy. Tempers flashed over charitable reputations, Protestant/Catholic rivalries, and prejudices against non-native-born immigrants. Economic competition between undertakers brought the situation to light, and added fuel to the fire. Assumptions about what a proper burial included, and expectations about how women should be dressed, whether alive or dead, intensified the

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323 News articles referred to Stangeland as a "Norwegian-Danish" minister. For example see "She Rests at Last," 8 January 1890, 4. The 1890 Spokane City Directory listed him as Rev. Egert M. Stangeland, pastor of the Norwegian Danish Methodist Episcopal Church. He was editor of The Spokane Falls Echo, a small presumably Scandinavian weekly. He was not listed in the directories for 1889 nor in 1892.

324 Olsen may have worked in one of the benevolent ladies' homes, but if so, her former employer did not officially identify herself during the uproar.

benevolent ladies' reactions. The presence of a body simply brought pre-existing
presumptions and irritations to the surface.

The uproar had apparently cooled by March, however, as evidenced in Lady
Albion's breezy remark about the fine work done by Sacred Heart Hospital. But her
article makes it clear that the Protestant Ladies still claimed to be the local charitable
authorities. In 1890 many others in Spokane would have supported the position.

However, other charities were gaining some prominence, and the benevolent ladies
were finding that local leaders sometimes dismissed their recommendations. A
controversy that arose in May 1892 over the county Poor Farm illustrates this.
Responding to complaints from the people they were trying to help, Mary Todd, along
with a delegation of five benevolent ladies, appeared unannounced at the farm.326 The
ladies returned home concerned over the unswept floors, full slop buckets, and the filthy,
uncovered beds. For some reason, however, they waited some time before they went
public with their complaints. Perhaps they were seeking allies. When they did tell a
reporter six weeks later, they found a sympathetic ear. After asserting that the place was
unfit for human habitation, the ladies promised to push local authorities for immediate
action.

Two days later, a county commissioner joined two reporters investigating the
matter. The men found sanitary conditions lacking, although they thought some rooms
seemed quite respectable. They concluded that if the county would invest a few hundred

326 "A Poor Farm Scandal: Ugly Reports come From the County Institution at Spangle," The Spokane
Review, 26 May 1892: 5:3.
dollars in "plumbing, and [take] more rigid sanitary precautions" the problems could be solved.327

On the same day a handful of other people made public their grievances against the Poor Farm. A woman charged that the manager and his wife were supplementing their own groceries with food meant for the residents. A man asserted the superintendent was illiterate, and not qualified for his job. Some local butchers went public accusing him and county employees of indulging in a type of insider trading that used the farm budget to enrich their own pockets.

In response commissioners appointed an official committee of six to investigate. The group visited the poor farm, interviewed "inmates" and neighbors, then ate a meal prepared in the kitchen before heading back to the city. They found things tolerable, but suggested the resident manager and his wife could use some additional help. Back in Spokane they furthered their inquiry by conducting interviews. The continuing investigation involved more testimony from the benevolent ladies, input from former inmates and the farm administrator himself, along with its doctor.329 But these last minute statements apparently did not change the final analysis.

The committee admitted that improvements could be made. First, members suggested isolating the most undesirable residents--those who were exhibiting advanced symptoms of venereal disease. Then with an eye on the County's economic wellbeing,


328 "Dishonesty Suspected" and "Illiterate and Overbearing" The Spokane Review, 28 May 1890:2.

they recommended increasing the farm's property holdings so it would have more room for producing crops.

But unlike the benevolent ladies, the committee thought the farm adequately provided for poor people. It went further, concluding that the cleanliness of the institution was all a matter of "opinion and judgement." The members reasoned that the ladies could not have understood what would be acceptable to poor people, because they depended on the help of servants to keep their own homes clean.

This assertion that the benevolent ladies did not always understand the people they were trying to help was perceptive. But the committee's expectations that the poor should care for their sick demonstrates their own inability to recognize their class-based shortsightedness. They failed to see that it would have been even more difficult for the needy to care for someone in the advanced stages of syphilis than it was for the Poor Farm to do so.

Although they did not publicly acknowledge it, the men who made the final decision had more in common, in terms of economic interest, with the benevolent ladies than they did with the inmates at the Poor farm. Indeed the month they spent investigating the ladies' accusations indicates that they understood the charges were potentially serious. And despite a final decision that made the ladies appear superfluous

330 "Called it a Good One: Gilt-Edged Report of the Poor Farm Committee Accepted," The Spokane Review, 21 June 1892: 3.

331 For a study of the relationships between domestic employees and their employers see, Judith Rollins, Between Women: Domestics and Their Employers, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1985.)
and somewhat meddlesome, Commissioners quietly drew up a resolution to give the Home of the Friendless $40 a month.332

The 1892 resolution on the Poor Farm tells more about the County Commissioner's interests than it reveals about attitudes in Spokane. The evening paper took the decision for granted, and happily reported on June 15 "The Poor Farm [is] All Right." But the morning paper, which had first printed the ladies' accusations, was skeptical. On June 17 it reaffirmed its support for Mrs. Todd and her associates with a long article on page one, transcribing for readers the ladies' further testimony.334 The next day it recognized the decision with an article entitled, "Looks Like Whitewash."335

Besides the varying newspaper's positions, a number of individuals had testified introducing new angles to the controversy. These ranged from discussions about whether the institution should be a hospital or a home, to implying that the Farm's finances were poorly managed. The variety of concerns may be indicative of a general discomfort level with the presence of poor people in the city. Clearly, the mood in Spokane in 1892 was less settled on the issue than the County Commissioner's final report intimated.

The county's decision made efficient management a priority. Commissioners bought new bedclothes and asked the current Poor Farm residents to clean up a bit. Then they began the process that would purchase land for the farm--so that it could increase

332 RCCP Book E, 20 June 1892, p. 366, WSAERB.

333 "The Poor Farm All Right, The Spokane DailyChronicle, 15 June 1892, 8.

334 "With Their Own Eyes" The Spokane Review, 17 June 1892, 1:7.

335 "Looks Like Whitewash" The Spokane Review, 18 June 1892, 3:1.
production and market the excess. The solutions they chose were easier and cheaper than siding with the ladies and admitting that the poor farm had been mismanaged.

City leaders had been more receptive to the ladies' concerns during the body-mutilation scandal of 1890. Although official's reluctance to pay for pauper burials was an important factor in fueling the controversy, the stakes were not so high for local governments. Sacred Heart Hospital, as well as the undertaking firm Bicksler and Webster were not owned nor managed by the city. This gave government leaders a cushion of immunity because the two private businesses could have been discredited without any serious incrimination of the city.

As the 1890s wore on the Protestant charitable ladies found themselves more distanced from local leaders. They were being confined to a narrowed niche in which they had city support for caring for needy children. But even that space was not necessarily reserved for them. This situation set the stage for the rise of progressive style institutions managed by men who were government appointees.

For example, in January 1897 the benevolent ladies had a difficult reminder that they were not the region's uncontested charitable authorities. Late in the month, a duo of official visitors showed up unannounced at the doors of the Home of the Friendless. They had been charged with investigating the condition of the charities to which the county and city gave money on a monthly basis.336

After checking out both the Home and St. Joseph's Orphanage, the committee members reported that the Catholic institution was well managed and predicted that the

336 "No Police Court" Spokesman-Review, 3 February 1897.
children there would become "honorable members of society in future years."\textsuperscript{337} While leaving the Orphanage, the investigators had asked the nuns to report at least \textit{quarterly}, giving the number of children and the approximate cost to keep one child for a week.

On the other hand, the Home of the Friendless had 42 children and operated on $105 per month. But the books the investigators had looked at had not given them anything to reassure them of the Home's financial stability. With heightened concern, they asked the managers of the Home to make a \textit{monthly} report of receipts and expenditures, thereby communicating to officials three times more often than they had asked the nuns to do so.

The visits had been ordered when at least one of the institutions denied admittance to a child whom officials were attempting to place. The investigation did not reassure local leaders that the existing facilities would be adequate for future needs. Apparently the difficulties they had encountered in evaluating the Home led Council members to conclude they would be better off controlling an institution for children. Committee members recommended establishing a new one, which would "be under the exclusive control of the county and city."\textsuperscript{338}

The lady managers of the Home were "hopping mad."\textsuperscript{339} In an official statement, which they supplied to a reporter, they questioned the authority of the committee members because the women said they could not have been representative of Spokane's two "honorable" bodies of government. They then declared that the report had done a

\textsuperscript{337} CCM, Book F, 2 February 1897, 320-21WSAERB.

\textsuperscript{338} Italics mine. CCM, Book F 2 February 1897, 329. WSAERB.

\textsuperscript{339} "Were Hopping Mad" \textit{The Spokesman-Review}, 5 February 1897, 5:1.
"great injustice" to the Home of the Friendless and its leaders. The investigators, they continued, had failed to look at the official books kept by the managing secretary and treasurer. And finally, the indignant ladies decried the fact that the county had asked them to report monthly, while their opposition had been asked to submit updates quarterly.

The differences that the committee perceived in the two institutions stemmed in part from their misunderstanding of the way each was administrated. Indeed, what the investigators had done was show up unannounced at the Home of the Friendless and talk to the Matron, who had given them numbers of the children housed there and discussed day to day management concerns. But what they had really wanted to see were the accounting books, which provided a clear picture of the Home's income and expenditures. They had not found them on site because these were kept in the possession of the lady managers, none of whom lived on the premises. Thus, the investigators had not found any managers when they visited the Home.

In contrast, the unannounced visit to the Sisters of St. Francis had been less of a problem. St. Joseph's Orphanage's managers resided there, and their books were more easily accessible to the impromptu visitors. Thus, the committee members could quickly glance over the books. Then, reassured about the orphanage's financial stability, they could focus their attention on the children there whom they thought would prove to be such able members of society.

As it turned out, County Commissioners had no interest in joining the city in administering an orphanage and thus the new institution did not materialize. At the same time, the Home of the Friendless was still operating below its building's capacity and the
ladies' assurances that they could take more children, if they had more money, may have eased the pressure city council members felt to provide for needy children. But the decision not to pursue the government-sponsored orphanage did not wipe the Home's slate clean. The incident clearly demonstrated to the benevolent ladies that they were not necessarily insiders, at best, and they were not so influential over Spokane's political leaders as they had been earlier.

Despite Lady Albion's claims back in 1890, by 1897 City and County leaders had found they still had plenty of "troublesome charges." And, although charitable agents had established cooperative relationships between local governmental bodies, Spokane's leaders sometimes wished they had more control over the institutions. Likewise, the women who managed the institutions found that maintaining their influence over city administrators got harder as the city became more established. The benevolent ladies had struggled to refine their charitable organization, and developing in the process good business practices. But they were easily sidelined when leaders found it expedient to do so.

Indeed, the men who ran the city allowed women to establish orphanages, and care for poor waifs. They even tolerated clubwomen's collective approach to social reform, although their clubs did not uphold the individual action so prized in liberalism. As long as the women's initiatives stayed within certain social parameters and did not cost governments too much there were only occasional conflicts between the booster women and men. But when clubwomen moved away from traditionally female bastions to advocate placing women within the local police department, they encountered more

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resistance. The tension between clubwomen and the city leaders was an early indication of the way that later progressive style institutions would ultimately marginalize women keeping them outside of positions of power.
CHAPTER 4
CHANGING WOMEN: CREATING PUBLIC ROLES

The police matron controversy in Spokane took so long to be realized because of differences in how women perceived men and how their male counterparts thought they should be viewed. It was a third and longer path that women pursued in their effort to meld women's concerns with, as well as match their abilities to the effort to make the city respectable. While the controversy surrounding this initiative had been brewing for years, it came to a head in late 1909.

Released on bail from the Spokane County Jail in early December 1909, Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, the nationally known International Workers of the World (IWW) speaker and organizer, charged local prison officials with exploiting female inmates. This politically savvy labor organizer had not personally been sexually molested, but she saw in the situation an opportunity to discredit Spokane authorities. Following her one night's incarceration, this pregnant nineteen-year-old reported that jail employees had personally escorted a female prisoner out of the cell several times in one night. Flynn charged that local jailers were enabling prostitution to continue behind bars.

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A labor leader first and foremost, Flynn believed that women could never enjoy equal rights under a capitalist system.\textsuperscript{343} But she was sympathetic to women's desire for equality, and she understood the powerful hold that assumptions about gender had on Americans, whether they were union members or not. Thus, she willingly discussed gender conventions that had been violated when she thought doing so could gain sympathy for her cause.

Thus, the politically savvy Flynn took her accusations to Spokane's leading clubwomen. There she found sympathetic ears, as she had expected. But she had had no idea how the issue would play out in Spokane. Thus, although she sparked the 1909/1910 debate on the subject, the resulting fight reflected both its origin among labor circles and local clubwomen's extended effort to have a matron appointed. The resulting confluence assimilated ideological points from both sides. Thus, a number of upstanding clubwomen came to share the cause with some unlikely partners. It did not turn any clubwomen into labor activists, but it stretched the thinking of many. The Spokane twist on the Police Matron controversy that Flynn sparked gave the controversy a spin that she had never intended for it.

Flynn convinced some in Spokane that the city leaders were unprincipled in their treatment of women prisoners, but instead of gaining sympathy for the union's cause the controversy would eventually play into the hands of local woman suffragists. Because of their disdain for her political position, local leaders dismissed Flynn as an unimportant critic of the local police department. But the local discussion among a variety of interests in Spokane, which boiled up in the wake of Flynn's charges, was not so easily dismissed.

\textsuperscript{343} Flynn, \textit{The Rebel Girl}, 55-60. See also, Helen Camp, \textit{Iron In Her Soul}, (Pullman, Washington: Washington State University Press, 1995.)
However, before such an ungainly movement could attain enough momentum to wield real political pressure on the city of Spokane, clubwomen had to invest many years in learning how to organize themselves and working with city leaders on less controversial issues.\footnote{For a classic study of what she described as clubwomen's involvement in domestic feminism, see Karen Blair, \textit{The Clubwoman as Feminist: True Womanhood Redefined, 1868-1914}, (New York: Holmes and Meier Publishers, Inc., 1980.)} Similarly, local ethnic and labor interest groups had to achieve a measure of maturity.\footnote{For an exploration of the labor interests in Spokane, see Jonathan David Knight, "The Spokane and Fresno Free Speech Fights of the Industrial Workers of the World," unpublished master's thesis, (Pullman: Washington State University, 1991.)} In 1909 when these two factions combined efforts they successfully pushed the city police department to make room for two resident matrons, even though the jail facility was taxed to the limit. Women, nevertheless, had officially launched the effort to make Spokane police more responsive to their interests twenty years earlier. In August of 1889 members of the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU,) had filed a request with City Council. They asked that a woman be appointed to search women prisoners.\footnote{City Council Minutes, vol., C, 28 August 1889, p. 148. WSAERB.}

The possibility that a woman might find herself in jail was not unheard of. Spokane's city jail had already had its first female inmate. In September 1887, Seattle resident Mattie Macklin had been jailed for grand larceny.\footnote{Howard S. Arnold, \textit{Spokane Police Department, 1879-1976} (Napa, California: Walsworth Publishing Co., Inc., 1977), 49.} For ten months she had lived in an overwhelmingly male environment, occupying a bed in what had been a hospital room for inmates. It was located above the dining area between two cell wings.
Macklin probably did not complain about the treatment that she received. At least clubwomen did not take up her cause.

In 1889 City Council members may well have remembered that Macklin had been in jail only a year earlier, but they saw little reason to make provision for women, whom they assumed would all be disresectable and perhaps even prostitutes, who might be imprisoned in the future. They did refer the temperance ladies' petition to the Committee on Health and Police. That token response, however, did not even generate a comment in an otherwise extensive report of the meeting that appeared in the following day's paper.\(^{348}\) The subcommittee filed the request, and then forgot about it.\(^{349}\) Thus began clubwomen's effort to get a police matron in Spokane.

City Council's reluctance to grant the temperance women's request stemmed, in part, from assumptions that there would be few women prisoners. The local jail had been operating long before Macklin appeared on the scene. City leaders saw little need to spend money protecting the occasional woman who landed in jail. They further thought that any woman who found herself confined in prison did not merit any special care.

Even a formerly reputable woman who ended up on the wrong side of the law, lost a measure of female respectability. In the eyes of the more upstanding residents in Spokane, the process of being incarcerated both physically and symbolically melded the women prisoners into "bad women."\(^{350}\) Much as in other cities across the nation, popular

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\(^{349}\) During the period of this study, City Council put many requests on file. The clerk kept a record of the documents "on file." Officials even occasionally pulled out old requests to be reconsidered. But more often than not, filing a petition killed it. The ubiquitous "file" is not extant now, but for evidence of local politicians attempting to kill an initiative by filing it, see CCM Book I, 3 September 1901, 53 and 54.

\(^{350}\) For an in-depth study of women in prisons in the West, see Anne M. Butler, *Gendered Justice In the American West: Women Prisoners in Men's Penitentiaries*, (Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Press,
images recognized two types of women, the lady and the wench. Macklin had been incarcerated for thievery and thus may or may not have been a prostitute. Sitting in jail for nearly a year, however, made her appear to be one.

Prostitutes were the largest group of "disreputable" women in Spokane, but it was not a given that they would be the only women in prison. First, their profession was not illegal in the city until after 1889. Even then, officials allowed the practice to continue as long as it was restricted to sectors of the city to which "respectable" women would not have to go. Further, prostitutes were free to work as long as they made weekly payments to the city. For example, by 1894 between forty and fifty prostitutes voluntarily paid monthly fines. This system created an alternative legal space in which "sportin" women could still practice their trade.\footnote{A fine system that allowed Prostitution to exist in Spokane had been in place as early as 1888. \textit{Morning Review}, 13 October 1888, 3:4. For an 1895 reference to disreputable women in Spokane see "Twin Tempters of Men," \textit{The Chronicle}, 4 January 1895, 4:1. See also Jay Moynahan, \textit{Spokane's Sportin Women}, (Spokane: Chickadee Publishing, 2001), 15-17. Jef Rettmann analyzes the city's efforts to regulate prostitution in "Prostitution in Spokane, 1880-1910," unpublished master's thesis, (Cheney: Eastern Washington University, 1995), 88-109.} Several reformers attempted to change the fine system, but it remained in place until 1911.\footnote{Rettmann, 112.}

Nevertheless, many of the women who were arrested during Spokane's boom years had some connection to prostitution. For example, in November 1890 the police department reported that 47 prostitutes had been arrested.\footnote{\textit{Spokane Falls Review}, 1 November 1890, 3:2.} As time went on, especially after the turn of the twentieth century, the city began attempting to move law

enforcement's attention away from the prostitutes and prosecute the pimps and madams. The connection to sex crimes continued, however. On December 26, 1899 Mary Roddy and her husband were charged with pandering.354

Despite the reputation of Spokane's female inmates, WCTU women sought to help them. The temperance women probably did not trust the male prisoners and the men hired to superintend them. They believed that men needed to be guided by what Peggy Pascoe has described as women's "female moral authority."355 Of course, few of these ladies, if any, viewed the incarcerated women as their equals. The WCTU members were mission-minded enough, however, that redeeming prostitutes seemed a feasible goal. But their request to have a woman search female prisoners revealed a distrust of any male official who might perform that duty. They believed that women alone should determine what was the moral thing to do. Finally, they understood what Regina Kunzel has described as the precariousness of female respectability. They hoped to find women who might still be retrieved from the moral abyss, cultivating whatever portion of that valuable characteristic remained.356 By so doing, they believed they would be improving the town for all women, plus helping make the city respectable.

While Spokane's WCTU did not monopolize the concepts of female moral authority nor the desire to protect women's respectability, they led the initiative for the hiring of a matron for many years. For example, their first official request had come only

354 Spokesman-Review, 26 December 1899, 8:2.

355 Peggy Pascoe, Relations of Rescue: The Search for Female Moral Authority, (Oxford University Press, 1990.)

three weeks after the August 1889 fire. This bid to protect women prisoners must be interpreted within the context of the great conflagration.

In the fire's aftermath, more than 60 soldiers had patrolled the burned area, guarding property from potential looters. The commanding officer, General A. P. Curry had spent the first two days writing passes for people with what he deemed to be legitimate business in the district. At the same time, victims of the fire milled about, as well as hordes of spectators. Hundreds of women, men and children, including members of Spokane's Chinese community, had camped beneath the pines that stood on the sparsely populated north bank of the River.

Although local authorities tabled the initiative, the temperance ladies' bid to protect women prisoners should be viewed as part of a larger effort to control this segment of the population and rebuild the city. The WCTU women were one part of a larger movement of people who did not simply want to see new buildings arise from the ashes. They sought to restrict Spokane's disreputable elements, while shaping what the city would become.357

At the same time, the city was creating a modern American police department, a crucial element in remaking the burned city. As Eric Monkonnen has pointed out, doing so required a movement against tradition, along with a real effort to raise the necessary revenues.358 The August 1889 request for a woman to search female prisoners was an

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357 For an analysis of this phenomenon in Chicago, see Karen Sawislak, Smoldering City, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995.)

attempt by women to contribute to an ongoing debate over the role law enforcement would play in the city.

This discussion was more like an ongoing experiment that had begun with the appointment of the first Town Marshal many years before. The fire convinced city leaders that they should depend less upon volunteer marshals.\textsuperscript{359} For example, in November 1890 city council members formally discussed the personal qualifications they sought in a police officer; honesty, sobriety, and integrity seemed most important.\textsuperscript{360} Although they did not say so at the time, the underlying assumption was that officers would be men.

The WCTU members were not suggesting that women should be eligible to be police officers. But the temperance ladies understood that jails were a domain for men, and any woman that might become a prisoner would be out of place and vulnerable. They further believed that the city needed to ensure that its law enforcement facility would not preside over any further violation of an inmate's female respectability. To their way of thinking, an all-male jail staff could never reach that moral goal. Spokane's women ardently supported the postfire move toward "urban progress," but their perspective on what would constitute a "progressive" police department differed from that of their male counterparts. At that time they were not significantly revising the role of police. The WCTU request demonstrates that the women believed any close association between women prisoners and their male caretakers would be less moral than if women provided the front line of care for women prisoners.


\textsuperscript{360} City Clerk Records, 11 November 1890, Committee on Health, Fire and Police Folder, Box 5, WSAERB.
This notion, predicated on the concept of women's difference, would only grow in strength as club women were becoming more involved in "women's work." In the region, the earliest national women's organization to be active had been the WCTU, organizing as early as 1880 in Colfax. A little more than two years later, thirty women from the small settlement beside Spokane Falls, had joined the ranks.361 In August 1883, Frances Willard toured the area, and met Mrs. Lucy Cowley, president of the union in what Willard thought was the "prettiest town in the Northwest."362 Throughout the 1880s, Cowley and her associates sought a presence in local politics. They circulated petitions, published items in local papers, and by the end of the decade, had dabbled in publishing a territorial newspaper.363

Charlotte Pinkham Hamblen, who had moved to the city from Minnesota in 1887, quickly involved herself in the local WCTU. A short time thereafter she was making candy for one of her daughters to sell at a temperance social, and helping her eldest son prepare for his acting debut in a drama at the same event. By April 1888 she was manager and janitor of a building in north Spokane that the Eastern Washington WCTU was renting for its headquarters, and putting in long hours to clean and prepare for the regional temperance meeting to be held there that spring.

By the time of the Great Fire Hamblen and her associates had gained a measure of confidence in their ability to make political observations. For example, a September 19,


362 Frances E. Willard, *Union Signal*, 23 August 1883, 2. Lucy Abigail Cowley, whom Willard mentioned in correspondence with the editor of the *Union Signal*, was married to the pioneering minister, Henry T. Cowley.

363 See the *Northwest Temperance Advocate*, 26 April 1888, NWR SPL.
1889 *Union Signal* complained about the political flip-flops in Spokane and Seattle. It noted that both cities had closed their saloons following large fires, then went on to complain that each had allowed them opened again shortly after, "as soon as things were settled." That was, the journal explained, as soon as "people were recovering from the shock . . .."364 To illustrate this point, the editors followed with a proclamation by Mayor Fred Furth, explaining why the city was reopening saloons. The temperance women pronounced it a "curiosity worth preserving, for its ingenuous inconsistency."365

The *Union Signal* was a national journal, and the above quotation appeared on the front page without any reference to a contributing author, but the editors depended on local correspondents to get such specific copy. They may have obtained it from Miss H. Maria Peet, a resident of Spokane Falls who served as the Corresponding Secretary for the Eastern Washington Branch of the WCTU between 1888 and 1890.366 Another possible source of the information was Lucy A. Switzer, a resident of nearby Cheney. She was the founder or facilitator of most of Eastern Washington's unions.367 Switzer had been responsible for a weekly temperance column that appeared in the *Northwest Tribune* as early as 1883. A third possibility was Lucy Cowley, first president of the Spokane Falls' WCTU, although she was no longer very active in the WCTU by the late 1880s. Whichever one passed along her perspective on the power of local saloon interests, the example demonstrates that women were paying attention to politics in the city. Very

364 *Union Signal*, 19 September 1889, 1.

365 *Union Signal*, 19 September 1889, 1.

366 *East Washington's Woman's Christian Temperance Union, 1883-1953*, 22, SPL NWR.

367 *East Washington's Woman's Christian Temperance Union, 1883-1953*, 9, SPL, NWR.
quickly they learned, however, that having a measure of understanding did not necessarily give them the power they needed to participate in formative discussions about some city services.

This was especially true when it came to securing police matrons. As long as clubwomen put their energies into operating charities that aided women and children, their opposition came mostly from competing charitable interests. But when they argued that the police department needed a woman to fill even a limited roll, the businessmen who ran the city as well its law enforcement arm either dismissed their requests, or opposed them vigorously.368

In February 1893 lawmakers from the West Side of the state took up the issue, passing a Washington State law requiring the appointment of police matrons in cities larger than 10,000.369 Governor John H. McGraw signed it into law on February 20, 1893. In June, Spokane Mayor, Edward L. Powell referred to the measure in a letter to City Council. He assumed that Spokane, with its estimated population of more than 36,000 would put the provisions of the law into effect.370 He stated that it seemed necessary to "pass an ordinance authorizing the Board of Police to act on the matter."371 Accompanying his letter, Powell passed along a WCTU petition. Powell's wife had served as treasurer of a new WCTU union organized on the North Side of the city in

368 WCTU members submitted another failed request in 1891. CCM Book C, 4 September 1891, p. 173. WSAERB.

369 The John R. Kinnear, Republican from King County (Seattle) and chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee introduced the bill to the Senate, then a Western Washington contingent in the Judiciary Committee approved the bill. Journal of the Senate, State of Washington, 1893, 94, 138, 170, 182, 244, 254-256, 283, 364.

370 "Spokane--Population" vertical file folder SPL, NWR.

371 CCM Book D, 10 June 1893, 646, WSAERB.
1890, she later became an active member of the Cultus Club, one of the city’s earliest and most popular social clubs for women. But the mayor was not so supportive as his cover letter implied.

The petition explained why the ladies thought it necessary to appoint a police matron. It then went on to recommend, in glowing terms, Miss P. A. Parkinson, a teacher and former missionary to the province of Manitoba. Among other qualifications, the ladies emphasized that their candidate for matron was "thoroughly identified with reform work."  

A newspaper article reporting the WCTU petition also explained the city's position on the question. It noted that the issue had been raised soon after the bill had become law. But it had been deemed "impracticable" for Spokane. The article explained that city employees worked eight hour shifts, making it necessary to hire not one, but three police matrons, thereby significantly increasing the expense of having resident matrons. This expense seemed even more unreasonable when taking into consideration the number of women in jail, because a matron's services were "not required once a month."  

Footnotes:
372 For the number of unions Spokane had in 1891 see "Eastern Washington" Union Signal, 12 November 1891, 11. For Mrs. E. L. Powell's role in the WCTU see "Items of Temperance Interest," Union Signal, 23 October 1890, 10. This study located no membership lists for the Cultus club before 1894, but it had been organized in 1892. Mrs. E. L. Powell was not recognized as a charter member, but her husband appeared in city directories as early as 1889, and she probably joined the club during its second year, 1893. She was listed as a member in club literature as early as 1894. She served as the president of the club for the year 1899-1900. Cultus Club Papers, Northwest Room, Spokane Public Library.


374 This study found no evidence that Spokane's City Council members officially discussed the matter, after the governor had signed it on 20 February 1893.

Mayor Powell had suggested appointing two or three "special matrons," much as the city currently enlisted the help of extra "police" when needed.

City Council members responded to Powell's letter by referring the matter to the Committee on Health and Police. At the same time they sent a message to Frank T. Post, Corporation Counsel, a lawyer retained by the city, to give his legal opinion on the matter. Clearly, the city council members were reluctant to hire a matron, and they sought professional advice on whether or not they had to fulfill the law. Nearly three weeks later the Committee on Health and Police responded to the referral by recommending that the petition be denied. It went on to explain that the city could not afford to increase its force.376 City leaders had decided that hiring police matrons, and thus fulfilling the State law, would be more costly than risking a lawsuit arising from their failure to comply.

If they decided that local clubwomen were not likely to resort to legal action in the matter, they guessed correctly. Neither did anyone else in Washington until years later.377 Not even state legislators from Spokane, such as the Republican Representative William H. Ludden, thought the initiative that he had supported in Olympia was worth expending much effort on at home. Ludden had even chaired the House Committee on Municipal Corporations, which had proposed to add an emergency clause to the bill's title.378

376 CCM Book D, 27 June 1893, p. 677, WSAERB.

377 A lawsuit stemming from this 1893 law was eventually filed in 1938 in Spokane by a woman who had served as a police sub-matron. Gladys Isham vs. City of Spokane, case file #27482, 1940. Held in the Washington State Archives, Central Regional Branch, Ellensburg, Washington.

Six months after city leaders had decided it would be unnecessary to comply with the law, WCTU members complained that female inmates in the county jail had not been given any clean underwear. Local officials, including the jailer, a deputy marshal, and the sheriff responded by shuffling the ladies' requests between themselves. Finally, one of the ladies, whom the newspaper left unidentified, used a city phone line to contact Judge Hanford in Olympia. She read a list of the items needed forcefully enough that a nearby reporter speculated that the judge had been impressed. Perhaps, the reporter went on, he recognized that she represented the WCTU, which "had been able to manipulate legislatures" until all but six states and territories had "scientific temperance instruction incorporated in their laws." The writer concluded that if such an influential organization "wanted a few pairs of socks for some prisoners, [the judge had decided that] he had better issue the order." Three days later Spokane's Deputy Marshall received the proper purchase requisition.

Following this success, WCTU members began enlisting allies in the cause. In January 1895, they had cosigners from the Door of Hope Society, Sorosis, and Cultus Club. In so doing the temperance women formed alliances with some of the city's most prominent clubwomen.

The resulting negotiations elicited the most heated opposition of the two decade long struggle to gain a police matron. Mrs. Norman Buck, wife of a judge, Mrs. Harry C. Ashenfelter, who was married to a mill operator, and Mrs. Esther A. Jobes, a grocer, led a

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379 The newspaper account is vague enough on the dates that it is unclear how long the women had been wearing dirty unmentionables. "Judge Hanford Came to Taw" The Spokane Review, 23 January 1894, 4.

380 "Judge Hanford Came to Taw" The Spokane Review, 23 January 1894, 4.

381 CCM Book E, 8 January 1895, 660, WSAERB.
delegation meeting with Police Commissioners. Francena M. Buck charged that the city prison was not kept properly clean. Commissioners took offense and a "spirited discussion [raged] across the rails." The men dismissed the possibility that these women might have personally seen conditions in the jail. One even asserted that Buck's informant had been unreliable.382

Before the ladies left, one of the women attempted to coax commissioners into doing everything they could for the cause. But the city leaders responded that they could not support a measure that involved so great an additional expense. There had been so few times, they went on to explain, when jailers had to search female prisoners. When it had been necessary, the chief had sent out for a woman and paid her $2.50 per visit. On February 19, 1895, the Board of Police recommended that a Police Matron not be appointed. The Board members argued that the women could not possibly know more than they themselves did about what the police needed.383

Between 1895 and 1901 the WCTU submitted only one request for a matron.384 The sporadic effort may have reflected a membership slump in the WCTU.385 Yet the issue surfaced again in 1901, when the local WCTU was making a comeback. At the same time a bipartisan coalition of voters was attempting to free city politics from the

382 "The Police Matron Measure," The Spokesman-Review, Tuesday, 5 February 1895.

383 CCM Book E, 19 February 1895, 707, see also CCM Book E, 5 March 1895, 722, WSAERB.

384 CCM Book F, 11 January 1898, 661, WSAERB. See also "City in Brief" Chronicle, 6 July 1898, 5.

385 Some members moved to other regions, like Mrs. A. P. Crystal. "Eastern Washington" Union Signal, 12 November 1891, 11. Minnie Beard O'Neill resigned to devote her time to the Marie Beard Deaconess Home, named for her mother. Eastern Washington" Union Signal, 7 May 1891, 12 Charlotte Pinkham Hamblen, suddenly widowed in 1890, soon stopped taking leadership roles in the organization. "C. E. Hamblen Dead" Spokane Falls Review, 30 November 1889, 3:1. The last time the Union Signal mentioned Hamblen as an officer of the WCTU was in May 1890, Union Signal, 22 May 1890, 11.
control of liquor interests. Both occurrences were part of a growing social purity movement.

In the spring of 1901 the Republicans controlled the City Council, and the Spokane County Republican convention nominated Dr. C. G. Brown for mayor. His opponent was a Democrat, Dr. P. S. Byrne. The race was hotly contested. Byrne won with 37% of the vote, earning only 99 more votes than his closest opponent had polled. Further signifying voter dissatisfaction, the prohibitionist candidate John Anderson polled a surprising 27%.

In mid May the newly sworn in Mayor Byrne announced that he planned to recommend Mrs. E. Tanner to become the first police matron. He himself had gotten the name from prominent clubwomen, although he would not divulge the names of the women who supported the cause. He did, however, give the letter of recommendation that he had received to a reporter.

Twenty ladies had signed the letter to Byrne suggesting that he recommend Tanner, but only two were willing that their names be made public. Francena M. Buck, a longtime advocate of the cause who was currently serving as leader of the local WCTU, and Mrs. H. A. Spicer were the only two whose names appeared in a newspaper that published the letter. Their letter, which arrived on Byrne's desk only hours after he had been elected mayor, referred to an earlier time when WCTU representatives had been in

386 "Organizer's Corner," Union Signal, 22 June 1899, 13, 14.

387 "Dr. P. S. Byrne, Spokane's Next Mayor," Spokesman Review, 8 May 1901, 1:1.

contact with Byrne. The first time had been a week before the election when the ladies had personally presented the need for a police matron to Byrne.

Byrne probably met with the temperance women because he was looking for a way to deflect some criticism.\(^{389}\) On the day before his meeting with them a group of "citizens" had announced their dissatisfaction with the main party candidates. Mr. A. S. Dibble, a spokesperson for the group, explained to reporters that Brown and Byrne were both "too much under the influence of the liquor element for the good of Spokane."\(^{390}\) A few days later, this coalition would endorse Anderson, the prohibitionist.\(^{391}\)

Byrne was searching for a way to distance himself from Brown, the candidate who had won the Republican nomination with the support of local liquor interests.\(^{392}\) Thus, a meeting with WCTU members would have been a good way to identify an anti-liquor issue that he could support. Endorsing the women's idea for a police matron could convince critics that sided with Dibble of Byrne's independence from local liquor interests, without forcing him to take a strong prohibitionist stand.

Although speculative, this suspicion becomes more believable when Byrne's family situation is examined. He had no relatives who were in the WCTU. The son of Irish immigrants, Byrne was Catholic and his wife, a southerner, was also a parishioner.\(^{393}\) In the spring of 1901 the couple had five children, three of which were under age ten.

\(^{389}\) The WCTU ladies referred to the meeting in their letter to Dr. Byrne recommending Mrs. Tanner. "Dr. Byrne by Acclamation," \textit{The Spokesman-Review}, 21 April 1901, 2:2.


\(^{391}\) "Citizen's League Chose a Ticket" \textit{The Spokesman-Review}, 30 April 1901, 1:5.

\(^{392}\) "Dr. C. B. Brown for Mayor" \textit{Spokesman-Review}, 26 April 1901, 1:3.

Besides being busy with her family, Ida was most likely to have been involved in charitable groups based in her local parish, not in the Protestant dominated WCTU.

Byrne was preparing to position himself as "mayor to the whole city of Spokane, not [pledged] to any clique, party or faction." To do so, he proposed the appointment of a police matron and made a brief gesture addressing the concerns of blacks. A former member of the People's Party, his populist sympathies helped broaden his political perspective beyond what the local Democratic platform called for. At the same time, he had served in the early 1890s as the County physician and in that capacity had been closely associated with a Salvation Army home in which a large number of poor "unfortunate girls" had been confined. These young women, who were probably single and unmarried, were also deemed to be more likely to get in trouble with the law.

In addition, Byrne may have noted a newspaper article demonstrating that local interest in protecting women went beyond the WCTU members. Only a day after he had won the Democratic nomination for mayor, Rev. O. W. Van Osdel, of the First Baptist Church had launched a popularly requested six part sermon series focused on the "perilous temptations of women and girls." Describing how easily some women yielded to temptation, the clergyman pulled out what he thought was his strongest demonstration of the dangers that they faced--it had been "stated" that 1000 women and

394 "Dr. P. S. Byrne, Spokane's Next Mayor," Spokesman-Review, 8 May 1901, 1:1.

395 This was the Salvation Army's Rescue Home, which had been in Spokane for nearly a decade by 1901.

396 "Dr. Byrne Replies to Charges of Extravagance," Spokesman-Review, 4 May 1901, 1:1.

girls had been arrested during the previous year. The evangelical Baptist minister and his parishioners shared with the WCTU members a concern for female-respectability.

Less easily identifiable are Byrne's motives in espousing a cause that he thought Blacks would want. It may have been a simple case that Byrne's winning margin was smaller than the number of local black voters at the time. In 1900 the total black population in Spokane was less than 400, with an estimated 100 men eligible to vote. But the inner city precincts where many blacks lived overwhelmingly supported other candidates.  

Furthermore, Byrne's overture to blacks did little to change their status in Spokane. For example, he advocated employing one black man to be a member of the police force. But the city had had a black officer since 1892; thus this was simply a recommendation to maintain the status quo. He also suggested hiring a black janitor for City Hall. Blacks had not been previously employed for such purposes so his proposal would have translated into one new job. But Byrne's initiative left in tact the economic restrictions that limited most of the city's blacks to low paying service jobs.

Byrne's efforts to represent women and blacks, both groups which were often relegated to the sidelines on Spokane's political process, quickly faded in a power

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398 The 1900 US census counted 376 Blacks, or 1% of Spokane's 36,848 population. U. S. Bureau of the Census, Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900, vol. 1 Population part 1 (Washington D.C.: United States Census Office, 1901,) 609-646. The vote tally published on the day following the election showed that Byrne lost in all but two of the downtown precincts, but won in most of the precincts in North of the River where he was one of the area's most prominent developers. "Dr. P. S. Byrne, Spokane's Next Mayor" Spokesman-Review, 8 May 1901, 1:2. For the location of the Precincts see Gary Adams, 1910 Election Precincts Map, Northwest Room, Spokane Public Library.


400 Quintard Taylor has demonstrated that Blacks in the West enjoyed more social equality than they would have in other places in the US, but they were restricted to the same economic limitations they experienced elsewhere. Taylor, 196.
struggle between the incoming reform minded Byrne and the incumbent Republican
controlled City Council. The mayor was pushing an agenda that had been set by a group
of prominent voters who called themselves the "Spokane Taxpayers' League".401 This
organization had generated enough political clout in the weeks immediately preceding the
election that it had convinced local Democrats to incorporate its initiatives into their
platform.402

Thus, during the summer months of 1901 Byrne found himself pushing a reduction
of the police and fire department personnel each by 14 men as well as attempting to place
Democrats in key city positions. The Republican-controlled City Council refused to
replace the Police chief, Board of Health officer, and a Corporation Counsel, all of whom
had been placed there by their party. In the fracas, the police matron recommendation
stalled.403

The next time that the City Council officially discussed the matter it was late
September. Councilman James T. Omo introduced an ordinance creating the office of
Police Matron.404 Omo, who was serving as City Council President, was a prominent art
dealer who had made his home in Spokane as early as 1889. In April of that year, he had
had the support of the local "saloon element" to become the Republican mayoral

401 This group had some of the city's most prominent businessmen, and it differed from the citizens group
that had endorsed the prohibitionist candidate.

402 The Republicans and Prohibitionists did not espouse the taxpayer's initiatives, but the mayoral
candidates for each party had both promised to look into the taxpayer's charge that the Police Department
had been padded at the expense of taxpayers. "New Mayor's Views" Spokesman-Review, 1 May 1901,
5:3.

403 Byrne did not mention any initiatives on behalf of blacks in this speech. CCM Book I, 17 May 1901,
661, WSAERB.

404 CCM Book I, 23 September 1901, 53-4. WSAERB.
candidate, but had lost the nomination to Brown. At the time he served on City Council his wife was the secretary of the Spokane Art League, and she would remain an active member of that organization throughout the decade. She probably was not a member of the WCTU. At least she was never listed as an officer in the City Directories nor in the *Union Signal*.

In Spokane's earliest years other women's clubs had not been so exclusive that WCTU members could not belong. For example, in the late 1880s, Charlotte Pinkham Hamblen served as a trustee for the Ladies Benevolent Society at the same time that she was heavily involved in the Crystal Union. Throughout the 1890s Lida M. Ashenfelter served as a leader in the Central Union. In the last years of that decade she also held officer positions in Cultus, a prominent social club, and in the Spokane Kindergarten Association. However, by 1910 Spokane clubwomen would be more exclusive.

Nevertheless, in 1901 Mrs. Omo's ties with clubwomen probably helped encourage her husband's initiative on the police matron. He was an opponent of Byrne. Thus, he had no political motivation to see that Bryne's personal agenda got the attention of City Council members.

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405 “Dr. C. G. Brown for Mayor” *Spokesman-Review*, 26 April 1901, 1:3.

406 Mrs. Omo would play a prominent role among Spokane's Club women for the next ten years. Spokane City Directory, (Spokane: R. L. Polk and Co., 1901).

407 The local Sorosis Club limited membership to 25. Most others did not. See article on Adelaid Sutton Gilbert.

408 Charlotte Pinkham Hamblen Diaries. EWSHS MAC.

409 For example, see Spokane City Directory, R. L. Polk and Company, 1893, 1899.
Whatever his motivation, Councilman Omo's move to appoint a police matron ended in defeat at the hands of the judiciary committee.\(^{410}\) The matter would have to wait until Democrats interested in social purity had a majority on City Council.\(^{411}\) After the election in the spring of 1901, Democrats knew they would gain control of City Council in June of the following year. It is quite plausible that Byrne, having seen one of his post-election promises defeated turned to future Democratic council members to solicit their support. It also seems likely that the temperance women were doing some quiet campaigning in favor of a matron. But none of the men who eventually voted for the initiative were married to WCTU members or prominent clubwomen.\(^{412}\) Thus, whatever the women did, it was not a simple matter of convincing their husbands on the measure. In November 1902, the Democratic-controlled City Council voted unanimously to pass an ordinance requiring the hiring of a police matron.\(^{413}\) This time three Republicans joined seven Democrats to pass the bill. A local newspaper reported in one short sentence that the initiative to appoint a matron had been passed.\(^{414}\)

Thus, Spokane became the first--also the most populous--city in Eastern Washington to comply with an "emergency" state law requiring police matrons in large

\(^{410}\) CCM Book I, p. Tuesday 3 September 1901, 53-54. See also September 17, 1901, 69, and 15 October 1901, 100, WSAERB.

\(^{411}\) For example, they closed, wine rooms, side doors, and eliminated all beds or couches in saloons. CCM Book I, 26 December 1901, 235.

\(^{412}\) Leonard Funk, F. E. Baldwin, John E. Foster, Frank Johnson, Lyman F. Boyd, and E. M. Woydt, George W. Burch, S. Phillips, N. S. Pratt, and E. W. Hand supported the initiative unanimously. But this study found no evidence that their wives were leaders of local women's clubs. CCM Book I, 11 November 1902, 750-1, WSAERB.

\(^{413}\) CCM Book I, 11 November 1902, 750-5, WSAERB.

\(^{414}\) "To Cut the Salary of the Police Judge, The [Spokane Daily] Chronicle, 11 November 1902, 7:1."
cities which had been passed nine years earlier. But the initiative did not spread through the Inland Empire quickly. Five years later temperance women were still predicting hopefully that other cities in the region would soon follow Spokane's lead.

Spokane's "leadership" on the issue was minimal. City leaders expected the matron to perform her duties when the police decided that a woman was needed. This situation continued as late as December 1909, when the Salvation Army's Captain Bertha Smith doubled as Spokane's Police Matron for which she got paid a meager $15 per month.

The decade following 1900 saw a change in the women who were the most prominent supporters of the initiative. In 1905 the WCTU became the first group to officially request that the city hire a resident police matron. More prominent clubwomen would soon come to the forefront on the issue. These reformers wanted to help other women, but their efforts were also self-serving. They viewed disreputable women as a threat to their own standing. For example, in 1905 leaders of the City Federation of Women's Clubs launched a campaign against theater managers who allowed "immoral women" to "occupy conspicuous seats in theaters." They complained that those who did so allowed the city's tenderloin residents to "thrust themselves into touch with the respectable people at the plays." The clubwomen

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416 Washington" Union Signal, 14 March 1907, 13.
417 "Plans for Destitute Girls" Spokesman-Review, 10 December 1909, 18. In November City Council had gotten a request from the YWCA to pay a women $95 a month for protective work. CCM Book Q, 23 November 1909, 344, WSAERB.
418 CCM Book L, 25 July 1905, p. 106, WSAERB.
requested that managers "seat these creatures in places less conspicuous and more apart from the respectable patrons . . .." Finally, they threatened to boycott theaters that persisted in allowing disrespectful women to sit in such prominent positions.

Implicit in both the WCTU request for a resident police matron, and the clubwomens' efforts to distance themselves from disreputable women is the assumption that women should take the initiative in protecting female respectability. Men, who were traditionally perceived to be the protectors in their roles as husbands and fathers, became threats as businessmen, jailers, and at least suspects as politicians. This interpretation of gender roles became more obvious in 1909. In late November YWCA members asked the city for $95 per month to pay a woman they would select to take charge of "city protective work."420

The City Council did not immediately move on the YWCA initiative, but the cause of protecting women took center stage soon afterward because of Flynn's arrest. On November 30, 1909 the nationally known labor leader was arrested and charged with criminal conspiracy.421 Local officials booked her into the County jail. Flynn had spent the summer in Spokane, then returned again in the fall to help shore up the local IWW in its Free Speech fight.422 Her arrest came while city administrators were attempting to break the will of the union, by incarcerating its leaders. In this effort, local fire

420 CCM Book L, 23 November 1909, 344, WSAERB.


department personnel, law enforcement officials, newspaper editors, politicians, and judges had joined in trying to quell the unrest.\textsuperscript{423}

Flynn's experiences in the County jail that night--combined with her ability to tell about it afterward--gave new energy to the local campaign for a police matron. Her story brought more socially prominent women into the effort to get Spokane's leaders to protect the female respectability of inmates. She sparked a renewed initiative to appoint a police matron.

After being pushed to talk for hours, a process that Flynn later described as getting the "third degree," she was taken at 11 p.m. to a cell shared by two other women.\textsuperscript{424} Her cellmates were still awake, even though the hour was late. This was because, she asserted, these women were on terms of "disgusting familiarity" with the jailers.\textsuperscript{425} The younger of the two, had left with the jailer and remained a long time. When she returned she said she had been to visit a "sweetheart." That same night, she had left again, and Flynn got the impression that the jailer would have brought "Jake" up to the women's room if the IWW leader had not been there. Flynn later charged there was a "\textit{putrid state of morals} inside the county jail . . ."\textsuperscript{426}

Even more damning in terms of its implications concerning jail officials was an incident that had involved Agnes Thecla Fair. She was a writer for the \textit{Industrial Worker} who had been arrested for speaking on the streets of Spokane during early November.

\textsuperscript{423}Knight, 100-111.

\textsuperscript{424} Flynn Papers, Box 1, folder 21, p. 6. Tamiment Library Collection.

\textsuperscript{425} Flynn Papers, Box 1, folder 21, pp. 8-9. Tamiment Library Collection.

\textsuperscript{426} Emphasis Flynn's. Flynn Papers, Box 1 Folder 221, p. 10. Tamiment Library Collection.
While being interrogated in a darkened cell, she had refused to answer any questions. A man said, "F__k her and she'll talk," while another officer began unbuttoning her blouse. She went into convulsions. Later, while Fair was trying to sleep, a man who was dressed as a woman sneaked into her cell under the cover of darkness, and touched her. Fair screamed, sending the intruder away, and then refused to eat or sleep. Three days later the county physician ruled that her physical condition required that she be released.427

At best, the city's male leaders denied and dismissed the allegations made by Flynn and Fair. Pugh, the prosecuting attorney in Flynn's case, said they were false. Police Justice S. A. Mann implied that these outsider women were fabricating the stories in order to gain the sympathies of Spokane's citizens. Acting Police Chief, John A. Sullivan questioned the character of the women who brought charges, arguing that women with any decency would have been dealt with in ways other than incarceration. Even the reform Mayor Nelson S. Pratt implied that Flynn's assertion should not be taken seriously.428

However not all of Spokane's residents sided with the city authorities. For example, Emma A Stalford, Mr. and Mrs. A. E. House, and Fred H. Moore, Flynn's defense attorney, pulled together a $5000 bond that released her on December 1.429 Stalford, a widow who may also have been a socialist, had lived in Spokane since

427 Spokane Daily Chronicle, 6 November 1909, 2; The Spokane Press, 7 November 1909, 2; Agnes Thecla Fair, "Miss Fair's Letter" Workingman's Paper, 20 November 1909, 1. For an analysis of this incident from a labor perspective, see Jonathan David Knight, 115-16.

428 Knight, 115. For background on the reform mayor, Nelson S. Pratt, see Knight, 22, 23.

1908.\textsuperscript{430} Arthur E. House, a railway postal clerk had been a resident of the city since 1892.\textsuperscript{431}

Local clubwomen were also not so easily dissuaded from Flynn's charges. Ethel Stalford, daughter-in-law of Emma Stalford who had contributed a portion of Flynn's bail, was a member of the Spokane Woman's Club. The president of that organization, Laura House, was sympathetic, along with another active member Rose Moore.\textsuperscript{432} Their sympathies made it easy for Flynn to personally present her story about her night in a Spokane jail, to at least a few of the city's most prominent clubwomen.\textsuperscript{433}

The specter of prostitution thriving in Spokane's jails appalled clubwomen. They were upset by the implication that local officials were not only sanctioning the practice, but also enabling it, and even participating in it. Moreover, these booster women were horrified that someone with the nationwide audience that Flynn enjoyed could be criticizing the morals of Spokane's officials. Their concern for their fair city's respectability convinced them that a woman needed to be part of the local police department. They knew that a matron who was not present all the time might never learn of clandestine nighttime rendezvous.

\textsuperscript{430} Spokane Postal Guide, 1908. Knight says Emma Stalford was a socialist. She associated with other local socialists, but this study has not documented her position on the ideology. Knight, 114.

\textsuperscript{431} Spokane City Directories, R. L. Polk & Co.

\textsuperscript{432} Laura was married to Authur E. House, one of the local bond holders of Flynn. And Rose was married to Fred H. Moore, also a bondholder.

Four days after Flynn had been released from jail, May Arkwright Hutton introduced a resolution to the Spokane Woman's Club.\textsuperscript{434} It decried the absence of a resident matron in the Spokane City jail, stressing the "many stories afloat" about the "indignities" that women suffered there. It predicted that these stories, "whether or not they be true," would continue to arise as long as men were in charge of female prisoners. Hutton concluded by alluding to the women's interest in making sure that Spokane was respectable, arguing that such stories hurt the reputation of the city.

Members of the Woman's Club supported the resolution unanimously. Their shared opinion with regard to a police matron belied the diversity among clubwomen. Laura M. House, the president was 39 years old and a mother of two teenagers.\textsuperscript{435} Ethel M. Stalford was the 25 year-old wife of a newly established dentist.\textsuperscript{436} May Arkwright Hutton, wife of L. W. Hutton, was 50 years old, and although a millionairess, had spent more than twenty years working as a cook in North Idaho mining camps.\textsuperscript{437} Helen LaReine Baker was 27 years old, college-educated and wealthy.\textsuperscript{438} Rose A. Moore was married to a socialist attorney. Mrs. Z. Wesley Commerford, also closely associated with local Socialists, was an ardent suffragist and the wife of an insurance agent.\textsuperscript{439} Sarah

\textsuperscript{434} "Secretaries Minutes" Book 2, 5 December 1909, Spokane Woman's Club, Spokane Washington, 85.

\textsuperscript{435} U. S. Census Bureau, \textit{The Census of 1900}, U. S. Government Office, 1902.


\textsuperscript{439} Sarah Commerford may have been related by marriage to Matt Comerford, president in 1909 of the American Brotherhood of Steam Engineers, and a vice president in the American Federation of Labor. "Wants Better License Law," \textit{The Chronicle}, 23 February 1909.
Coates was married to David C. Coates, one of the city's most prominent socialists and an influential suffragist.

Ethel Stalford, represented the complex relationship that clubwomen had with the more radical elements in Spokane. A third vice-president of the Woman's Club and chair of its press committee, she was a talented speaker who testified at Flynn's trial. She denied having ties to the IWW, averred that she had heard Flynn speak and claimed there had been nothing wrong with her remarks. She later told reporters that she had spoken on Flynn's behalf because she had been subpoenaed and asked to describe to the court what the IWW leader had told the clubwomen.

Stalford's connections to Flynn were more complicated than she publicly admitted. Her mother-in-law, Emma Stalford, who owned the home in which Ethel and her husband Philip lived, was one of Flynn's bond holders. Introduced by the elder woman, the younger Stalford, along with Hutton and perhaps some other representatives of the club, probably heard the labor leader's charges first hand. Extant Woman's Club documents give no indication that Flynn attended a formal club meeting. There had been only three days between December 1, when Flynn had been released from jail, and December 5, when the club next met and Hutton presented the Police Matron resolution. What is more, Laura House, the Woman's Club president, had been subpoenaed by Flynn's defense, but she had not been allowed to testify because she had not heard Flynn's story first hand.


441 “Mrs. P. P. Stalford Denies Rumors” Spokane Daily Chronicle, 26 February 1910, Hutton Scrapbook 2, 26, MAC, EWSHS.

442 “Girl Conspirator Sentenced to Jail” Spokesman-Review,12 December 1909, 9.
Stalford's relations to some less conservative people in Spokane symbolized the tangled relationship between clubwomen and the city's more radical elements. Officially the club talked with union leaders only when its members hoped to gain support for a cause, such as getting a resident police matron appointed. But some of the members willingly mingled with supporters of the Free Speech movement.

In early November, the appearance of collaboration between clubwomen and local union members had been strong enough for a newspaper editor to warn the women to stay out of the fray. Soon after, the chair of the Woman's Club's Social Economics Department, Rose B. Moore and Mrs. Z. W. Commerford, president of the College Equal Suffrage Association, ignored the warnings and openly fraternized with the free speech leaders.

The two had been with a group of socialists in Fred Moore's office when reporters followed detectives to the attorney's workplace in search of E. J. Foote, an I.W.W. organizer from Portland who had arrived in town the previous day. Initially the women told authorities there was no one in the inner office. When the investigators pushed in and found someone inside the women excitedly lectured them for attempting to arrest a sick man. The man they were hiding later admitted that he was Foote. The following day these women were among the speakers in a Free Speech meeting held in the open air.


because the union had been pushed out of the Carpenter's Union Hall and blocked from using the Masonic Temple.446

November and early December 1909 marked the height of the Free Speech activity in Spokane, and it was the time when clubwomen were the most obviously involved. But the appearance of cooperation between local women and the leaders of the Free Speech effort was strong enough that as late as March, Stalford was still attempting to distance herself from the I.W.W. This tension among Woman's Club leaders regarding their positions on the Free Speech controversy was a constant characteristic of the police matron controversy in early 1910. It demonstrated that labor interests made at least a few more inroads into the city's social leaders than the women themselves as well as local politicians were ready to admit.

The Club's police matron committee got busy early in the New Year. First the clubwomen sent a request for a hearing to City Council. Then on January 11, Club President, Mrs. A. E. House and a former president, Mrs. H. M. Prager, presented a petition asking that the city hire a resident police matron.447 On the petition appeared the signatures of several hundred church members and schoolteachers. City leaders approved the initiative, and prepared to have an ordinance drafted. Although they did not give the women the three matrons they had requested, they agreed that if the experiment turned out to be successful they would consider appointing three matrons to serve eight-


447 "Women are Given Matron for Jail" 12 January 1910, Spokane Police Scrapbook 2, 276, EWSHS MAC.
hour shifts.\textsuperscript{448} A paper published the next day announced that one Council member favored the matter and he had successfully defeated attempts to file the request.

Three days after the visit an ordinance was read, appointing one matron, fixing her salary, and declaring an emergency.\textsuperscript{449} Council members agreed to the initiative with no objections then sent it to the finance committee. Everything appeared to be moving forward.

On January 16 Mrs. Blanch Mason, the Assistant State Labor Commissioner, charged that two "young girls" who were currently confined in the city jail, were in surroundings that would make a "hardened criminal shudder." She criticized the sanitary conditions, especially the cigarette butts lying on the floor, and reported that the available reading material included "trashy novels," one of which was entitled \textit{Why Women Sin}.\textsuperscript{450}

As if inspired by the Commissioner's criticisms, a newspaper reported that same week that union leaders believed "One woman in jail is worth one hundred men."\textsuperscript{451} Accordingly, ten women were prepared to "go [to jail] if necessary." The article predicted that the union planned to "work public sentiment in just that manner."

By that time, acting city police Chief John H. Sullivan had apparently had enough of the charges. He announced, "I don't take [the state labor commissioner's] proposal

\textsuperscript{448} Ibid. See also CCM Book Q, 11 January 1910, 479, WSAERB.

\textsuperscript{449} CCM Book Q, 14 January 1910, 524, WSA ERB.

\textsuperscript{450} "Says Spokane Jail Debases Women," 17 January 1910, Spokane Police Scrapbook 2, 279. EWSHS MAC.

\textsuperscript{451} "Sent Women to Bastille," 18 January 1910, Spokane Police Scrapbook 2, 279. EWSHS MAC.
seriously." Then went on to say he would not hire a woman, and added "we don't intend to take advice about the department from women, either."452

In a striking contrast to Sullivan's dismissive reaction, Sheriff F. K. Pugh quietly announced that the County jail, where Flynn had been incarcerated, would benefit from having a matron. He blamed the absence of one on County Commissioners for not having approved the expense.453 His quick support for the idea may explain why clubwomen paid little attention to the county jail while they invested much energy into convincing city officials of their error. Within a week, Sullivan had convinced members of the city's Finance Committee to file the Police Matron initiative.454 His arguments this time, however, demonstrated less emotion. The Police Department, he asserted had no additional money, thus the $90 a month would have to come from the city's General Fund. He then pointed out that there was neither office space nor furniture available for women in the current jail.

Instead, the acting police chief proposed a $25 monthly appropriation, with $15 paying for an additional night sergeant and a $10 raise for the Salvation Army woman who served as police matron when needed. By February 3 Sullivan was vowing publicly to fight the initiative, and he raised the stakes, suggesting to increase the matron's pay to $40 a month, more than twice the amount it had been only six weeks earlier.455

452 'Scouts Woman "Cop" Idea,' 17 January 1910, Police Scrapbook, 2, 278. EWSHS MAC.


454 "Council Kills Plan for Matron" 15 January 1910, Police Scrapbook 2, 281. EWSHS MAC.

455 "Sullivan will Fight," 3 February 1910, Spokane Daily Chronicle. Police Scrapbook 2, 284. EWSHS MAC.
The clubwomen, on the other hand, were enlisting allies. For example, the local graduate nurses association and the Elks Lodge both endorsed the idea. Then, on February 10, the women visited the Chamber of Commerce.

Harvey L. Moody, a longtime real estate agent and a mine owner, chaired a Chamber committee established to consider the request. He was apparently more concerned about the city's reputation than the police were. After promising to support the measure, Moody left on a business trip, during which he planned to "investigate jail conditions in" Seattle "where regular matrons" were employed.456

When not seeking allies, the clubwomen were busily investigating conditions that women prisoners encountered. Then on February 22, a number of clubwomen attended a banquet at the Hotel Spokane for the inaugural meeting of the Free Forum Fraternity. There, Helen LaReine Baker asserted that the women were too easily "put off with promises" from City Council. Instead she recommended they "go to the city jail, prepared to stay" until their requests were granted. She argued, "temporizing will do no good, . . . . Aggressive action is what is needed."457

The following morning, a newspaper displayed a large photo of Ethel Stalford, announcing she would lead a demonstration that night.458 An impressive number of women planned to congregate at the city jail, pay a visit to John Sullivan, and then

456 "Still Fight for Matron," Police Scrapbook 2, 287, MAC, EWSHS. Moody had lived in Spokane as early is 1887. In 1899 his wife had been president of the Central Christian Church's Ladies' Aid Society. This study did not find any other times she was listed as a club officer, but he clearly was accustomed to the interests of club women.


458 "Club Leaders will Meet at Jail Tonight," 23 February 1910, The Inland Herald, Hutton Scrapbook 2, 23, MAC, EWSHS.
"storm" a City Council meeting where they would fill all available space.⁴⁵⁹ There they would tell Council members what "the women of Spokane want."⁴⁶⁰

Although she shared the stage with Helen LaReine Baker and Laura House, the young, verbally talented and college educated Ethel Stalford set the mood of the presentation. She asserted that City Council was so much under the control of big businesses that Acting Chief Sullivan could predominate despite the wishes of the thousands of taxpayers seeking a police matron. What is more, she claimed that clubwomen had identified "unquestioned sources" demonstrating that women were being mistreated in jail. She threatened to go public with the information if City Council decided not to hire three police matrons.⁴⁶¹ Declaring that conditions at the city jail for women prisoners, were "indecent and a blot upon the fair name of the City."⁴⁶²

The pre-meeting publicity had given opponents of the initiative advance warning but they were unprepared for the storm that the women brought to City Hall. Individual councilmen, including Charles Mohr, attempted to head off the wave of words, but Stalford always had a ready answer. Finally her listeners conceded to the barrage, and unanimously passed a bill that would hire three matrons, paying each $75 per month.

On February 23, immediately prior to the "storm" that hit city council, Acting Police Chief, Sullivan had refrained from outright criticism of the women's initiative, but

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⁴⁵⁹ Thirty-five women attended the city council meeting that night. "Astonishing Spectacle at Council Meeting," Inland Herald, 24 February 1910, 1:2.

⁴⁶⁰ "Club Leaders will meet at Jail Tonight," Spokesman-Review [check], Hutton Scrapbook 2, 23, MAC, EWSHS.


he warned that the women would only be welcome to visit the jail during visiting hours. After he heard Stalford's assertions, he stepped up his opposition. On the following day he appeared before the City Council and urged them to create a committee charged with investigating the situation.

Sullivan apparently had more pointed things to say, but those did not get recorded in City Council minutes. Newspapers quoted him saying that the women's statements were "utterly false" and challenging them to prove their assertions or "shut up." What is more, he promised to urge the jailers to sue Stalford. She had, he believed, attacked their personal as well as their professional reputations.

The clubwomen's solid front began showing cracks the following day. LaReine Baker, the Free Forum Fraternity speaker who had only two days earlier urged "aggressive action" told a reporter that Stalford's charge was a "disgrace to the city." She went on to assert, incorrectly, that the speaker who had electrified the City Council meeting the night before had been a bondholder for Elizabeth Gurley Flynn and was an IWW sympathizer. She further claimed that labor interests had orchestrated Stalford's attack.

Precisely why Baker thought she needed to rescue the Women's Club is unclear. But she sought to restore the "good name of Spokane," as well as to distance herself and

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464 CCM Book Q, 24 February 1910, 632, WSAERB.
467 Emma Stalford, Ethel's mother-in-law had been a bondswoman on behalf of Flynn.
others from Stalford. Clearly, it was easier for Baker and the other clubwomen to agree that the city jail needed a resident police matron than it was for them to address the political and economic issues raised during the local free speech controversy.

Baker found uncomfortable the position in which she had been placed during Stalford's remarks to City Council. Although still in her late twenties, she was wealthy and so well known in Spokane that a local paper described her, and not her husband, as Washington's largest taxpayer. Since 1907 she had been placing weekly articles about suffrage in newspapers throughout the region. She was also established as a speaker, so it was not unusual for her to play an important role the night the women visited City Council.

Although prominent, Baker was not as active in the Woman's Club as she was in suffrage organizations. Thus, she had not been informed on the specifics of the Woman's Club's position. That may have irritated her, and she may also have been unhappy about having been upstaged by Stalford.

In contrast, the club's Police Matron committee had selected Stalford to be their main speaker that night. Their support for her became more pronounced when Sullivan, Baker and others began charging that she was an I.W.W. sympathizer. The incensed


469 May Arkwright Hutton to Cora Smith Eaton, 5 November 1908, Hutton Papers, MAC, EWSHS.

470 Baker may have unofficially assumed a speaker's role during 23 February Council Meeting. Or one of the club women who had attended the Free Forum fraternity dinner may have unofficially solicited Baker's assistance. President Laura House told reporters that the club had never asked Baker to be a spokesperson for the club. "Famous Suffragette May be Asked to Resign from Woman's Club," Hutton Scrapbook 2, 29, MAC, EWSHS.

clubwomen promised to demonstrate that Sullivan's Police Department was not as
spotless as he had said it was.472

However, real and imagined differences between clubwomen threatened the effort.
On one extreme there were Sarah Commerford, Rose Moore, and Sarah Coates, all wives
of locally prominent Socialists who openly associated with supporters of the I.W.W., and
even spoke at some of their gatherings. Another group of clubwomen were more
moderate, but not anti-union. For example, one unidentified woman mused, "If the I. W.
W. people stand for what is moral and decent then I, for one, do not know but what I am
in sympathy with it."473

At the opposite end of the spectrum, were LaReine Helen Baker and a handful of
other society women. Approximately a week after the City Council meeting, a local
paper reported that Baker along with Mrs. F. F. Emery, a clubwoman, and Mrs. E.
Axelson discussed another way to provide a Police Matron for the jail. They all said they
were willing to be volunteer matrons, serving for one-week intervals.474 Thus they would
fill a need, save the city money, and avoid crowding the jail further.

Many women feared that the controversy would embroil them in unwanted legal
battles. On February 26, *The Spokane Press*, a muckraking newspaper, announced that
the wealthy suffragist May Arkwright Hutton had promised to help with Ethel Stalford's
attorney's fees while she prepared to sue the *Spokesman-Review* and Acting Police Chief

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472 "Famous Suffragette May be Asked to Resign from Woman's Club" *The Evening Chronicle*, 25 February 1910, 7:1.

473 "Mrs. E. P. Carleton Asks Jail Matron" *Spokesman-Review*, 24 February 1910, 10:3.

John Sullivan. On the same day, a third newspaper, *The Inland Herald* announced that the City Hall visit had split the club. The article quoted a letter signed by Mrs. John R. Cassin, Corresponding Secretary, endorsing Baker's position, then listing the names of the "conservative" members of the club whom she assumed would join her.

Although Cassin's letter clearly indicated that the majority of the women whose names appeared in the article had not yet been contacted, Stalford's supporters labeled the letter a "rank fake." One critic had apparently not read the article carefully, because she countered it by saying that some of the women had been out of town when the article had appeared, thus they could not have signed "the petition." In the same article, the President, Laura House asserted that club life was going on as usual and that no members would be asked to resign. Finally, she claimed that the factions within the Women's Club only existed in the newspapers.

While society women squirmed uncomfortably under the scrutiny of eager reporters, various other supporters of the initiative had time to rethink their position. Sometime in January the local ministerial association had agreed to support the cause, but after the controversy took on new life in late February the ministers recapitulated. Likewise, the Chamber of Commerce Committee that had taken up the initiative announced that they would drop the matter. Although Mayor Pratt had been elected on a reform ticket, he refrained from taking a position on the issue. But his reaction to the

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479 "Chamber Drops Fight for Matron," Hutton Scrapbook 2, 34, EWSHS MAC.
idea of having a volunteer matron revealed much. He said he would support an offer from society women to help out, explaining that he thought it could teach the women a few things so that they might "assume a different attitude about the situation."^480

Members of less mainstream organizations were more willing to stick with the issue. At a central Labor Union meeting, House, Hutton, Stalford and Rose Moore gave "verbal bouquets" to the people gathered there. House told them the women appreciated the "action of men who will stand for what we believe is right."^481 The prominent socialist and husband of a clubwoman, D. C. Coates, told reporters in early March that his organization intended to support the police matron initiative "until it is done."^482

The combined pressure helped City Council decide to act. On March 8 in a closed meeting they had pulled the previous resolution for three matrons out of the file, and quietly passed it.^483 The next day a coalition of Woman's Club members, organized labor representatives, and the leaders of the city's five German Societies, went to city hall seeking the combined initiatives of wage increases and the appointment of three Police matrons.^484 When Laura House brought up the subject of police matrons, Council members nonchalantly informed her that they had already passed the measure.

^480 "Society Women Willing to Be Police Matrons," Chronicle, Hutton Scrapbook 2, 34, MAC, EWSHS.

^481 "Women Thank Trades Unionists for Stand in Favor of Three Jail Matrons," Hutton Scrapbook 2, 33, MAC, EWSHS.

^482 "Labor Unions will help the Woman's club to Gain Three for City Jail," Hutton Scrapbook 2, 40, MAC, EWSHS.

^483 CCM Book R, 8 March 1910, 2, 37, But this decision would also be reversed a few days later. See CCM Book R, 15 March 1910, 52, WSAERB.

^484 "Thousands March on City Hall Tonight Demand Wage Increase and Matrons," Hutton Scrapbook 2, 47, MAC, EWSHS.
Nevertheless, they deferred the initiative to an investigating committee charged with evaluating current jail conditions. Attention then switched to the composition of the committee, and the question of whether or not its meetings should be private. Unhappy that the city would not simply appoint a matron, Woman's Club members wanted to be consulted on the composition of the committee. The clubwomen initially recommended Dr. George K. McDowell, a longtime board member of the Florence Crittenton Mission. They also pushed for private hearings because they asserted that women critics of the jailers and police would not feel free to be forthright in public meetings. Their opponent Sullivan was arguing that the meetings be opened to all. Further complicating the matter, McDowell resigned soon after the first meeting, stating that he did not want to be part of an effort that "white-washed the police department."

Mayor Pratt responded by expanding the committee from three to seven members, making sure that two of the members were clubwomen. One was Miss Inez De Lashmutt, and the other was Mrs. F. F. Emery, one of the ladies who had said she would volunteer to be a matron. Still attempting to avoid extremes, he gave the committee power to decide whether to hold public or private meetings. Committee chair, Dr. T. L. Catterson, Mayor Pratt's appointee, left most of the meetings open, but did have one closed door session during which they appointed two sub-committees charged with

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485 Spokane City Directories, Polk, 1907-1910, SPL, NWR.

486 "Mrs. L. M. House Explains the Situation," Hutton Scrapbook 2, MAC, EWSHS.

487 "Heeds Demand of Women for Secret Meetings," Hutton Scrapbook 2, 52, MAC, EWSHS.

488 Mrs. H. W. Allen, wife of a physician and a former president of the Washington Federation of Women's Clubs had been initially appointed to that committee. Apparently De Lashmutt later took her place.
interviewing witnesses. These held private meetings and interviewed witnesses, eventually producing a document of nearly 300 pages.

Some witnesses were women who had been jailed. For example, a twenty-nine year old prostitute who went by the name of Stella Brown said she had not been mistreated while in jail. She had been incarcerated a few hours, charged with blackmail, but thought that nobody had dared touch her because she had such a bad temper. She said she had heard other women complaining about being mistreated, but refused to elaborate because she did not want to get into "trouble."

Maggie Cunnigham, a German immigrant who had been arrested twice, once for vagrancy and once for running a disorderly house, insisted she had not been mistreated. She was most upset by a madam who would "persecute girls" that she did not like, by sending them to jail. But she saw no reason why any woman might be afraid to testify to the committee investigating the police department.

On May 10, 1910 the committee submitted its official report to the City Council. It did not sustain the charges of impropriety against Sullivan and the jailers, but it sanctioned two police officers for keeping a nurse in their home long after her services were unnecessary. They thought the jail was tolerably clean, but thought the women's bathroom needed a blanket hung over its open doorway, and recommended that female prisoners be issued clean bedding when they arrived. The committee argued that

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489 "See Prisoners on Jail Treatment" Hutton Scrapbook 2, 57, MAC, EWSHS.

490 "Investigation of the Spokane Police Department, 1910" WSAERB.

491 Investigation, 91.

492 Investigation, 109-12.
common decency required the appointment of a matron, but suggested that the city continue to rely on the efforts of the Salvation Army women, until new facilities would be available. With regard to the clubwomen's assertions, the committee concluded that Mrs. Stalford's original claims on February 23 had not been based on any documentation. Finally, with the exception of one woman, the committee had been unable to locate any signers of the affidavits that the clubwomen had provided to back up their charges.

During the police matron controversy, the clubwomen had been so concerned over the allegations that they were I.W.W. supporters that they weakened their position. When Stalford made her February 23 presentation to City Council she was basing her criticism of the Police Department on Fair's and Flynn's allegations. But the public assertions that they were I.W.W. sympathizers led the clubwomen to abandon those accounts, and search elsewhere for women to sign the affidavits. Their effort to prove misconduct among the police jail employees failed.

Although critical and dismissive of the position that Woman's Club members had taken throughout the controversy, the report did not seriously hurt the clubwomen. For example, while this controversy was winding to a close, members were raising money for

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493 The investigation included an interview of Inez De Lashmutt, a committee member who described a conversation she had had with Sarah Commerford on the street. Commerford insisted that clubwomen had good affidavits of women who had been mistreated, but she sent De Lashmutt to a woman with the YWCA who in turn responded that she had no experience with women who fit that category. Investigation, 66-7 WSAERB.

494 CCM Book R, 27 May 1910, 250-252, WSAERB.

495 When Laura House was up for reelection as president of the Woman's club, only two women refused to support her because they thought she was too closely connected to IWW supporters. "I.W.W. Jar Club Woman's Meeting," Hutton Scrapbook 1, 15, MAC, EWSHS.
a new building that they were erecting on the South Hill. Its cornerstone was put in place in 1910, only months after Spokane appointed its first police matron.

Moreover, the clubwomen could even claim victory for their efforts. The Police Department did not continue to rely on a Salvation Army employee to serve as an occasional matron. But neither did they select women who had been recommended by the clubwomen. They appointed instead Mrs. Ella Jones and Mrs. Allender, a member of Volunteers of America. And although a third matron had been approved by City Council, it would be three more years before the new jail facility would provide the necessary room. In May 1913 when the new jail facility was ready for operation, the city employed three working class women as police matrons, Ella Jones, Nora Hudspeth, and Mary Seymour.

The successful bid to appoint a police matron in 1910 did not represent a unified effort by clubwomen. For example, in early 1910 YWCA representatives were petitioning the city to hire a woman for protective work, but Woman's Club members opposed them. Similarly, the society leaders of the movement never recognized that the WCTU had taken the lead in advocating police matrons long before they got

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496 May Arkwright Hutton was elected chair of the club's building committee on 2 May 1910. Secretary's Scrapbook 7, 12. Spokane Woman's Club Papers.

497 Nearly a century later, the Spokane Woman's Club still uses the building the 1910 clubwomen erected on 9th and Walnut on Spokane's South Hill.


499 For the contract for 2 police matrons to served in 1911 see CCM Book S, 25 October 1910, 295. The new city jail facility, with room for a third matron, was ready for occupancy in 1913.

500 Photograph files, Police, EWSHS MAC.

involved. And, although they enlisted the support of many different organizations, they never solicited the help of the temperance women. Likewise, although the WCTU was keeping a careful eye on local politics, its members did not get involved in the final Police Matron controversy. 502

The two decades long police matron drive drew clubwomen more overtly into one sector of the local political process than any previous reform efforts had. The clubwomen had set out to change disreputable women, but during the long process discovered that they themselves had changed. Respectable clubwomen could make public speeches, "storm" City Council meetings, and form superficial alliances with groups of a different political persuasion. Women were becoming political actors in Spokane. Even their "private" discussions over lunch at a local restaurant could sometimes turn into the next day's front-page news. Assumptions about gender were changing in Spokane. The police matron controversy brought to light differences that divided clubwomen, but demonstrated that their interpretation of women's "needs" inspired attempts to cross class lines. What is more, the polyglot alliance that had coalesced around the matron issue became an effective democratic coalition. Neither idyllic nor perfect, it was one, nevertheless, that was quintessentially urban American. 503

However, clubwomen had asked for and gotten a protective measure, not a matron that was integrated into the local police department. 504

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502 For an illustration of the distance between the Woman's Club members and the WCTU see "Women Listen only to Favorite," Spokesman-Review, 3 November 1909, 10.

503 For a link between urban America and democracy see Mary P. Ryan, Civic Wars: Democracy and Public Life in the American City during the Nineteenth Century, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997.)

504 A law suit filed by an assistant police matron in Spokane in 1938 illustrated the special category that was created to establish the position of the police matron. Washington State Supreme Court case, Gladys
gender roles in future years to appoint women as police officers. The lengthy efforts to gain a police matron in Spokane provide an example of how they created for themselves a narrow voice in local politics. Not only did they find some success at last; this success set the stage for the final drive to give women the right to vote in Spokane and in Washington.

Isham vs. City of Sopkane, et al, case # 27482, 23 January 1940. Washington State Archives, Central Regional Branch. In this case Isham lost her bid to become the Police Matron because the court ruled that her position was not covered by Spokane's civil service rules, rather it was under the original police matron provisions, passed in 1893, which prohibited her from holding the position after the age of 40. This case determined that the police matron did not hold one of the city's civil service positions. In other words, she was a legal anomaly among city employees.

505 For a description of the path that women took toward becoming integrated into modern police departments see Dorothy Moses Schultz, From Social Worker to Crimefighter: Women in United States Municipal Policing. (West Point Connecticut: Praeger), 1995.
CHAPTER 5
"SO WE ARE FOR AND AGAINST WOMAN SUFFRAGE"

Although it was one of the oldest initiatives in Washington, suffrage was the fourth path that progressive women found success in as they sought influential roles in Spokane. In supporting the cause, women advocated making room for themselves in polling places—a decidedly male bastion. Doing so threatened many people's interpretations of what respectable women should do, and the movement challenged perceptions of both male and female gender roles. The stakes were high in this “boomtown,” because boosters of all types sought to convince people, both in the Inland Northwest and beyond, that Spokane was a respectable city. Thus, the local drive for suffrage stretched over decades.

In early 1887 a newspaper editor put into words Spokane's collective ambivalence toward woman suffrage when he penned, "So we are for and against woman suffrage."¹ Women had been allowed to vote in Washington territory since 1883, but there were many residents in the city that believed voting was an activity in which proper women should not be involved. That was the editor's opinion. He asserted that the "cackling sisters" who wanted to vote should be permitted to do so, while the "gentle and retiring" female should be allowed to "reign" at home.

There were, to be sure, women and men in the city who supported suffrage. In the spring of 1885, during a time when Washington Territory allowed women to vote, Lucy

Cowley had served with four or five other women as a member of the city election board.\(^2\) This wife of the pioneering minister H. T. Cowley had been legally permitted to vote during the 1880s when Washington Territory was experimenting with woman suffrage.\(^3\) She was most likely one of the earliest advocates of woman suffrage in Spokane, although she was best known for her considerable church work. She had served as the president of the earliest WCTU union, an organization that had among its members some of the most prominent local suffragists during the 1880s and 1890s.\(^4\) After her death in 1900, Lydia Ashenfelter, a fellow Congregationalist, clubwoman, and suffragist helped write a resolution in Cowley's memory, further suggesting she had close ties to supporters of women gaining the right to vote.\(^5\)

As Cowley and Ashenfelter both knew, there were links between early clubwomen in Spokane and suffrage. Although for two decades the most publicly vocal suffragists in Spokane were temperance advocates, the lines between membership in the WCTU and other women's clubs were blurred. The smaller numbers of clubwomen active in the city meant that charitable clubs as well as most of those dedicated to self-improvement could not be so exclusive. Before the turn of the twentieth century temperance women could


\(^3\) Lucy married Henry T. Cowley while they were both seniors at Oberlin College. Edith Cowley Stillman, "Recollections of Henry T. and Lucy A. Peet Cowley," in Mary Knox Pope, et. al., *The First Fifty Years, Westminster (First) Congregational Church, 1879-1929*, (Spokane: Empire Printing Company, 1929), 25, 31, 32.


\(^5\) Joel Davis observes that Cowley's legacy was not in suffrage, but in more conventional women's activities, such as church voluntary work. "Remembering Two of Spokane's First Mothers," *The Spokane Community Press*, 9 May 1979, sec. A, 11.
sometimes be quite prominent in other clubs. It is, therefore, quite likely that there were at least a few members sympathetic to suffragists in most of the women's clubs.

If suffragists were scattered throughout women's local clubs, they were a minority. There were many more in Spokane who opposed the concept. Thus in 1887 when the editor who described suffragists as "male females" and "cackling sisters", he was speaking to a significant portion of the city's population, both male and female.

In this context, many suffragists felt compelled to defend their femininity. Accordingly, some attempted to keep their opinions about suffrage away from the public eye. Others recognizing that silent support for any cause could not be very influential favored conducting a "still hunt" for suffrage.

The "still hunt" was a term commonly used to describe an effort, usually mounted by a group of people attempting to gain some political or economic advantage by preparing in secret, then relying on the factor of surprise to draw attention to their cause. For example, in 1898 a daily paper announced that Mr. and Mrs. M. J. Wessels of Lewiston, Idaho had been waging a "still hunt" on behalf of that city. The couple had been working all summer to prepare a fine display of fruits and vegetables from that region, to show at Spokane's next annual International Fruit Fair. In early September, some Spokane citizens who had happened upon a preliminary exhibit in the Lewiston Court House, returned home to state that the exhibition stood a good chance of capturing the "capital prize cup," $200, along with the right to select the following year's "goddess of plenty."7

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In contrast to Lewiston's exhibit at Spokane's 1898 Fruit Fair, the still hunt for suffrage promoted a cause much broader in scope, and thus more abstract. Further complicating the effort, interpretations of "good" citizenship depended on an individual's sex. Men were viewed as citizens when they voted, served on juries, and held political offices, but popular interpretations of womanhood taught that women were fulfilling their highest duties when they served privately within their own homes. Thus, a woman who decided that she wanted to vote was not only violating popular assumptions about what she should be doing, she was unsexing herself.8

In this context, a "still hunt" provided a way that a woman could promote suffrage, yet still demonstrate that she was lady-like.9 On the other hand, it was amorphous enough that anyone who participated in a still hunt interpreted it differently. For example, opponents of the cause could and did claim they were using still hunt methods. They could criticize the suffrage movement to their family members and friends during private moments, and recruit men to provide the public opposition to the cause.

Accordingly, the local "still hunt" for or against suffrage is especially difficult to document in retrospect. For example, in 1888 only one woman who attended what was advertised in the local press as a "mass meeting" for suffrage mentioned the event in her diary, then preserved it for posterity.10 Two others, a prominent WCTU leader, Mrs. A.

8 "Woman Suffrage" The Morning Review, 26 January 1888.


10 Charlotte Pinkham Hamblen Diaries, 19 November 1888, MAC, EWSHS.
P. Crystal, and a woman serving as pastor of the local Baptist Church, May C. Jones, took leading roles during the meeting. Crystal helped draft a resolution on suffrage, and Jones gave a "very pleasant and effective speech."\(^{11}\) The rest of the women and most of the men who attended the mass meeting did not have their reflections of the event preserved, but they were actors nonetheless, in the still hunt for suffrage.

More numerous during the early years, and even less visible publicly were the antisuffragists. But their collective existence in Washington from its territorial days is unmistakable. As early as 1854 Washington Territorial legislators first considered giving women the right to vote. It eventually granted it to them twenty-nine years later, in 1883.\(^{12}\) But even this move turned out to be an experiment, which did not last after the territory became a state in 1889.

The first blow to this Territorial experiment came in early 1887 when the Supreme Court freed Jeff Harland, convicted of stealing $160 with a loaded dice in a Pierce County gambling saloon.\(^{13}\) The attorney in the case argued that women who had been serving on the Grand Jury were not legal jurors, because Washington's 1883 suffrage act had not given that responsibility to them.

Territorial Supreme Court justices, who opposed giving women the vote, passed over the question of women's rights to serve on juries, and instead used the Harland case to declare the 1883 act unconstitutional. It claimed the legislators who had written it had

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\(^{11}\) "Mass Meeting at the Opera House," *The Morning Review*, 19 November 1888. Immediately following this article describing the meeting, H. T. Brown, editor of the *Review* charged the author of this article, an unidentified clergyman, with disgracing the cloth with his sympathetic portrayal of the speakers at the meeting.


\(^{13}\) "Woman Suffrage In Washington Territory," *The Union Signal*, 3 March 1887, 3, MAC, EWSHS.
erred by referring to the bill by number, rather than drafting a title that explained its contents. The local angle in this decision became clear on February 9, 1887.

On that day, George Turner, a Territorial Supreme Court Associate Justice returned to Spokane from Olympia amidst "many congratulations."14 Local antisuffragists credited him with the decision. A newspaper editor joined in the jubilation, but speculated that the attorney was probably being deeply cursed in other quarters.

Businessmen with economic interests in neighboring northern Idaho were anti-suffragists, but had little reason to act on their convictions until more than a year later. In January 1888 the Washington legislators passed a revised suffrage bill.15 Motivated by news of the corrected suffrage bill, some prominent businessmen in Spokane called a Board of Trade meeting for the next evening. There, they devised a plan designed to prevent the "re-enactment of women's suffrage."16 These imperial-minded boosters were worried that if the soon-to-be-state of Washington gave voting privileges to women, mining interests in nearby North Idaho would be openly "hostile to annexation."17

The group circulated petitions, especially targeting women, which urged the governor to veto the revised suffrage bill. They were apparently successful, because two

14 The Morning Review, 10 February 1887, 4:1.


16 The men included J. B. Holley and Fred H. Mason, prominent business leaders, and Mayor W. H. Taylor, who was married to a member of the Ladies Benevolent Society. Holley died unexpectedly in November 1888, but Fred H. Mason carried on the Holley Mason business until he died in 1913. His obituary described him as one of Spokane's "merchant princes." "F. H. Mason, Merchant, Stricken, Dies on Country Club Golf Course" The Spokesman-Review, 21 June 1913, 6:1.

days later a newspaper reported that large numbers of the ladies, "God bless all of them", were siding with their imperialist husbands and business leaders. They wanted to free Washington of woman suffrage.\footnote{The Morning Review, 18 January 1888, 4:2.}

While signatures mounted up on the Board of Trade's petition, local suffragists got busy. They posted notices around Spokane calling for a mass meeting. Mrs. A. P. Crystal, a prominent WCTU leader and namesake of the union on the north side of the river, coordinated the effort.

At the same time Board of Trade members Frank E. Curtis and Alexander L. Davies went public accusing their leaders of abusing their privileges when they had orchestrated the campaign against woman suffrage. The two had refused to sign the resolution, and described the Monday night meeting as "slimly attended."\footnote{"Mass Meeting" and "A Protest" Spokane Falls Review, 18 January 1888, 4.} Davies and Curtis may have been suffragists, but they argued simply that the Board should not be involved in politics.

The editor of the Morning Review had been so openly against women voting that it drew the ire of the suffragists. In a speech at the mass meeting, Col. W. D. Turner described that daily as a "puny newspaper."\footnote{W. D. Turner had been a colonel in the Union Army. He and his younger brother, George Turner, were both attorneys and they had a joint practice in Spokane.} He also criticized his brother and fellow attorney, George Turner, for his role in the Harland decision.\footnote{Emphasis mine. The Morning Review, 19 January 1888, 1:3.}

Sharing Col. Turner's irritation with the Morning Review were a number of women. One unnamed lady, who lived on the North side of the river canceled her subscription to
that paper and ordered its carrier off her property. The Review refused to call her a woman, then warned its readers that females of her stamp would be sure to "make the most of" voting if granted the opportunity.

If not the one who canceled her paper, Charlotte Pinkham Hamblen shared her sentiments. This member of the Crystal Union WCTU and trustee of the Ladies Benevolent Society lived on the North Side. She attended the Wednesday evening meeting along with her eleven-year-old son, Laurence. On Thursday she grumbled to her diary that that day's Review had been filled with "downright lies regarding the mass meeting last night." She went on to declare that only the "most unprincipled editor" could print such falsehoods.22

By the time that Hamblen wrote this, it already appeared that she had been on the winning side. Sometime during the previous night, Spokane had received word that Governor Semple had signed the new woman suffrage bill. Alongside its criticisms of the meeting the night before, the Review unrepentantly apologized to local suffragists, saying, "If we have said anything on the subject that we are sorry for we are glad of it."23

In a similar vein, the Governor's signature on the suffrage bill failed to discourage Spokane's antisuffragist boosters. The Board of Trade group happily announced that the signatures they had collected represented a cross section of Spokane's political and economic interests. It held 2,600 signatures, not including the names on petitions that had been burned when individual canvassers had heard about the governor's "untimely

22 Charlotte Pinkham Hamblen Diary, 19 November 1888, MAC, EWSHS.

23 The Morning Review, 19 January 1888, 1:3.
2118 signers were men, and 482 were women, ninety percent of the latter category were married. The committee happily concluded that the names represented more than 2000 qualified voters, thus suggesting that the opponents of woman suffrage in Spokane would enjoy more than a two-thirds vote on the matter.

In its bid to represent Spokane's position on woman suffrage the Board of Trade took pains to inform the city that it had no ties with "saloon keepers or saloons." Clearly, the businessmen were attempting to claim a wide support base for their cause. This was because Spokane residents already recognized the links between advocates of temperance and those who wanted to give women the right to vote.

As early as 1885, during a time when the Territory had allowed women to vote, more than 200 ladies had petitioned City Council to hold municipal elections in "suitable places." Coordinated by the local WCTU, they offered to arrange and control the voting places, so that respectable women to vote without entering saloons. The city responded by appointing eight women, one judge and one clerk for each of four wards but left the polling sites in saloons.

This relationship between temperance women and suffragists was clear again only six weeks after the 1889 fire. Boldly, The Union Signal criticized Spokane's "ingenious inconsistency", complaining that the mayor had reopened saloons in the city too quickly following the fire. Officials had briefly imposed martial law following the August 4


27 Union Signal, 19 September 1889, 1:3.
conflagration, but when it had been lifted a few days later, they had left saloons closed. With barely a month after the fire, however, and much of the downtown businesses still in tents, the temperance women accused the mayor of being hasty in declaring that all danger of disturbance was over.

The converse was also true in Spokane. Anti suffragists included a healthy element of saloon interests. For an early example, during city elections held on the morning of April 3, 1888, Nevada Bloomer went to the fourth ward polling place.28 There, election judges, including one John A. Todd, manager of the Milwaukee Bottling Company, denied Nevada the opportunity to vote.29 The following day George M. Forster, attorney for the defendants, promised to "carry the case to the Supreme Court," and assured reporters that it would invalidate the Territory's January 1888 suffrage law. Less than two weeks after the election Bloomer filed a lawsuit against Todd and the other fourth ward election judges requesting $5,000 plus legal costs. Forster, the defense attorney, by this time had joined forces with J. M. Kinnard and George Turner, the antisuffragist judge whose term with the Territorial Supreme Court had just ended.

Thus began the case that caught the attention of suffragists across the nation. Ironically, however, all parties from Spokane who were involved were antisuffragists. Nevada Bloomer was married to a saloon owner, and she filed a lawsuit that was stacked with male antisuffragists. Even more damning, when her case was docketed for the


29 Charles E. Reeves, Directory of the City of Spokane Falls, 1888. At the time, Todd was married to Mary K. Todd, one of the founders of the Ladies Benevolent Society. See Chapter 2.
United States Supreme Court, she had no interest in pursuing it. She had gone beyond lady-like bounds simply to file the lawsuit. Thus, in 1891 when it was slated to appear before the highest court in the land, Bloomer's lawyers agreed to dismiss the case without an opinion.\textsuperscript{30} In her estimation, the case had already done what it needed to do. It had tied up suffrage in Washington Courts thereby preventing it from becoming part of the new state constitution, which had been formalized in late 1889.

The connection between local anti suffragists and saloon interests in Washington would survive many years after the Bloomer case. In 1898 when another Constitutional Amendment to give women suffrage in Washington was on the ballot. A brief note from Spokane that appeared in the March 23, 1899 issue of the \textit{Union Signal} illustrates this. Woman suffragists reported that they had worked diligently promoting the previous year's amendment. Their proof was in signs that had appeared in saloon windows on Election Day reading "Vote against the amendment! The W.C.T.U wants it. What they want, we don't want!"\textsuperscript{31}

Clearly, anti-suffragists abounded in Spokane up through the turn of the 20\textsuperscript{th} century. They were men and women who thought, for a myriad of reasons, that life in Washington would be more respectable if women were not allowed to vote or serve on juries. To cite a previously mentioned example, Nevada Bloomer had probably been both an anti-suffragist and an obedient wife. She seems to have filed a lawsuit that her husband and his friends devised to prevent Washington from becoming a suffragist state.

\textsuperscript{30} Fahey, "The Nevada Bloomer Case", 45.

\textsuperscript{31} "East Washington," \textit{Union Signal}, 23 March 1899, 12, MAC, EWSHS.
In 1891 an eccentric attorney, Arthur Austin, who had taken up the case, described it as a "put up job to disfranchise the women . . .".  

However, Nevada Bloomer never officially stated her opinion on the matter, and she illustrates the difficulty of documenting in retrospect the women who were anti-suffragists. Many in Spokane, especially during the early years, strove to keep their views on the subject private. The antis were traditionalists in their interpretation of women's roles, and they felt that expressing themselves publicly on the issue was inappropriate. 

Even Spokane's women's clubs had their share of anti-suffragist members. For example, in 1891 Mrs. Dr. Curtis A. Hughes presented a paper to the newly formed Spokane Sorosis Club, entitled, "Duties of Mothers." She asserted that women were responsible for the destiny of the nation, not because they held political positions, but because they were mothers. "Why" she then asked, "should we desire the paltry ballot, when a mightier power is ours?" Instead, she argued she and her fellow clubwomen should strive to be great mothers, who brought up their sons to be great men.

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Although the local Sorosis branch was quite new at the time she spoke, Hughes was neither an officer nor charter member of the club, but she was active enough among clubwomen to be selected to present a paper.\textsuperscript{36} Her interpretation of women's roles challenged her listeners to achieve, yet did not ask them to step beyond the activities traditionally ascribed to their sphere. Probably a good percentage of the twenty-five Sorosis members shared her views on suffrage.

Seven years later, however, a handful of women who had been among the charter members of Sorosis were taking a lead in the campaign to promote suffrage. In 1897 a Fusionist state legislature and the state's Populist governor had proposed a constitutional amendment, which would give women the right to vote.\textsuperscript{37} In 1898 Spokane suffragists coordinated a whirlwind attempt to promote their cause in each ward of the city. Active among these were Josephine Brinkerhoff, Esther A. Jobes, and Josephine Dunning. Brinkerhoff was married to Moses, a collector for the Northern Pacific Railroad. Dunning's husband, Charles B. was an attorney and judge, and Esther Allen Jobes, was the wife of William V., a mining investor. All three were active among clubwomen, and had been charter Sorosis members.

The founding members of Sorosis who were most likely antis included Harriet Ross, Mrs. W. A. Mears, and Mrs. Isaac S. Kaufman. These women were prominent clubwomen, but they never involved themselves in suffrage activities. Ross, who was very active as a charitable worker during the 1880s, was an early member of the Ladies

\textsuperscript{36} Spokane Sorosis was organized on 24 January 1891 it was the first women's club not specifically organized for charitable purposes in the city. \textit{History of Spokane Clubs}, 241, NWR, SPL.

Benevolent Society. Mears, also a member of both organizations, authored articles for the newspaper under the pen name, "Lady Albion." Mrs. Isaac S. Kaufman, a Jewish woman, had been president of the local G.A.R. post in 1887. She later became a leader in the Florence Crittenton Circle and as late as 1905 she presided over the Ross Park Twentieth Century Club. Perhaps the most obvious possible anti-suffragist was Mrs. George Turner, wife of the anti-suffragist judge. She did not take many leadership positions in the women's clubs, but in July of 1898 she held a lawn party on the Turner estate for the local chapter of the American Red Cross.

However, during the summer of 1898, Mears no longer resided in Spokane. Ross's husband, A. J. Ross was suffering in his last illness, and she was not as active among clubwomen as she had been in earlier years. Of the three Mrs. Isaac Kaufman was the one most likely to have been involved in anti-suffrage work in 1898. But even this identification comes from the absence of her name appearing among those who favored suffrage, contrasted with her continued leadership role among club women in Spokane as late as 1906.

If in retrospect we must turn to speculation about the names of anti-suffragists in Spokane, it is because the women were so careful to wage a still hunt. In 1898 clubwomen knew who was for and who was against the proposed constitutional amendment. Memories of the sides drawn were vivid enough to linger until 1910, when a relative newcomer to the city, May Arkwright Hutton, would write to the prominent

38 See chapter two for more information on Ross, and chapter three for more on Mears.
39 See Polk, Spokane City Directories, 1887, 1901, and 1906.
40 "Society is Awake Again," The Chronicle, 19 July 1898, 8:1.
Oregon suffragist Abigail Scott Duniway telling her what had happened to three of the local opponents of suffrage.\textsuperscript{41} Two of the women, the ones who had been secretary and treasurer in 1898, had both died in the intervening years. The former president had apparently experienced a change of heart because she had recently given $25 to Hutton's suffrage organization.\textsuperscript{42}

In 1898 the opposing sides had been drawn so distinctly that one early historian stated that the "burning issue" of woman suffrage shattered a citywide federation of women's clubs.\textsuperscript{43} The move to federate began in late March, when representatives of several clubs met to plan a mid-June welcome to delegates attending the annual meeting of the Washington State Federation of Women's Clubs.\textsuperscript{44} Representatives of at least nine different clubs, including Sorosis and the Ross Park Twentieth Century Club joined a coalition and went to work. The cooperation held together until the meeting, but dissipated soon after.

Although the State Federation took pains to not require member clubs to take a stand of suffrage, several regionally prominent suffragists attended the meeting in Spokane. These included Duniway, Mrs. Homer Hill of Seattle, and Mrs. Bessie Isaac Savage, of Olympia.\textsuperscript{45} Before the meetings had concluded, Hill gave a lengthy interview


\textsuperscript{42} Hutton Scrapbook 1, 70, MAC, EWSHS.

\textsuperscript{43} Orville Pratt, \textit{The Story of Spokane} (Spokane: 1935.)

\textsuperscript{44} "Spokane's Fair Hostesses," \textit{The Chronicle}, 29 March 1898, 5.

\textsuperscript{45} May Arkwright Hutton attended, but she still lived in Idaho and was only then beginning to make herself known as a suffragist in Washington. "Spokane Women will Organize," \textit{The Chronicle}, 17 June 1898, 5.
to one of the daily papers. Then, on the morning following the closing exercises, she and other women helped suffragist clubwomen in Spokane to plan their campaign.

Eastern anti-suffragists, who had their eyes on Washington, responded when the editor of *The Chronicle* asserted that there were no local remonstrants. Anna Parker Pruyn, a New Yorker, wrote to say they were considering sending an anti-suffragist speaker to Washington. Although she asked the editors to reply, it is possible that local anti-suffragists had contacted the New York organization with an invitation for them to come west. At least that is what Elizabeth Crannell claimed when she appeared in Spokane the following autumn.

A nationally prominent anti-suffragist from New York, Mrs. W. Winslow Crannell breezed into the editorial offices of Spokane's newspapers in late October. She was making what turned out to be the first stop of a whirlwind trip through Washington giving newspaper interviews and rallying women against the upcoming amendment. If local women had invited her to Spokane, her hostesses had not bothered to give her any tips on the geography of Washington. She told an editor that she had supposed that the westbound train would arrive in Seattle first, but when she arrived in Spokane almost immediately after entering Washington, she decided to start her campaign there.

Shortly after, she claimed that she was "more than pleased" with the "attitudes of women in Spokane," but she refused to give out the names of those who shared her views. She insisted, however, that they had been "doing a vigorous work" locally, "in

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the quiet, unostentatious way that we, who oppose suffrage, approve of."48 Although she did not specify what that had involved, she may have been referring to an unidentified circular that had been sent to voters in early September urging them to defeat the amendment because nature had not prepared women to assume men's roles.49

Four days after she had arrived, Crannell headed west again, promising that local antis would organize officially soon. While she had been rallying the antis, suffragists were canvassing homes in the city. They organized by wards, like Hill had suggested they do.

To say the least, suffragists had kept a low profile during July and August, months when many of the economically comfortable in Spokane left the city for summer excursions at nearby lakes.50 In late August, they had established two ward clubs, and began to knock on doors. They soon reported that most of the ladies that they had talked to were for suffrage.51 After one week a canvasser happily announced that she had found 224 women for, 3 who didn't care, and 6 opposed.52

But the progress was not easy, especially in the third ward, where a working class section of town was lumped in with an area where the newly rich lived in fine new homes. Mrs. Esther A. Jobes, who had once been a grocer, was the only one who lived in


49 This had been printed and mass mailed, so it may have come from someone outside of Spokane with a bigger budget. But local women may well have been instrumental in gathering addresses and seeing that the flyers were mailed to voters in Spokane. "Do Women Want to Vote?" *The Chronicle*, 6 September 1898, 6.

50 This is a custom that a fair number of Spokane residents continue in the early 21st century.


52 "Do Women want to Vote?" *The Chronicle*, 6 September 1898, 6:1.
that ward who was willing to work.\textsuperscript{53} In 1898 the ranks of Spokane suffragists were filled with economically comfortable women, but this group did not include many working class or newly wealthy women.

However, some of the woman suffragists were quite prominent. Mrs. L. H. Prather, the wife of a judge and prominent Populist chaired the committee in the first ward. In the second, Miss Lillie Steeper organized the suffragists. She had lived in Spokane since 1892 and was the daughter of a widow who may have relocated to the city after her husband died. In the fourth ward, the one in which the Bloomer case had originated ten years earlier, Mrs. Sarah A. McKay, a woman in her early 70s, chaired the suffragists.\textsuperscript{54} Two other ladies, who may not have been involved with women's clubs at all, assisted her. Mrs. C. B. Dunning, active in the Sorosis as well as a number of other women's clubs presided over the fifth ward group.\textsuperscript{55}

In September, each ward organization collected signatures on a petition that was then presented to a member of the local delegation to the State Republican convention.\textsuperscript{56} But by Election Day only the second ward had reported the results of its suffrage canvass in the local paper. Three other ward clubs had done some work, but they did not give reporters the numbers of supporters they had found. They probably had had more disappointing results, and may also have not done as much work as Steeper and her second ward volunteers had.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{53} "Do Women Want to Vote?" \textit{The Chronicle}, 6 September 1898, 6:1.
\item \textsuperscript{54} Federal Census, 1900 Soundex.
\item \textsuperscript{55} "For Equal Suffrage," \textit{The Chronicle}, 22 September 1898, 8:1.
\item \textsuperscript{56} "Equal Suffrage," \textit{The Chronicle}, 20 September 1898, 8.
\end{itemize}
Nevertheless, the poll of women in the second ward did not accurately predict what voters there would do. Out of 753 votes on the suffrage amendment, only 217, or less than 29% supported it. In the third ward, where only one woman had been interested enough to volunteer for a suffrage club, only 18% of the votes cast supported giving women the vote. The first, fourth, and fifth wards, gave between 32-38% to the initiative.57

Overall Spokane County had given only 35% of its votes to woman suffrage, and that number fell to 31% within the city limits. Although its population had tripled in the previous nine years, Spokane gave approximately 200 votes less to suffrage than it had given it during the 1889 referendum.58 In 1898 only six small precincts lying outside the city had given a majority of their votes to woman suffrage. In at least one of these precincts, Rockford, the 53 votes supporting suffrage out of 93 cast may represent a lingering Populist impulse.59 In 1896 that precinct in Southeast Spokane County had favored People's Party candidates 50 to 26.60 But in 1898 that precinct also defeated 86-16 a single tax initiative that had been proposed in the Fusionist plank.61

Overall Spokane County had sided with Republicans. Even the outlying precincts, such as Rockford, that had been expected to support Fusionist candidates, had voted for Republicans. Out of 48 precincts reporting by early November 9, only six had gone for

57 "No Ballot for Women," The Chronicle, 9 November 1898, 1:5.

58 "Suffrage Again," The Chronicle, 8 December 1898, 8.

59 Mt. Hope Precinct also approved suffrage, and it was one that had gone heavily Populist in 1896.

60 "In a Political Way," The Chronicle, 26 September 1898, 4.

61 Only one precinct, Mt. Hope gave a majority to the fusionist tax amendment. "No Ballot for Women," The Chronicle, 9 November 1898, 1:5.
suffrage, one had split its ballots on the amendment while 40 had defeated it. That all the
precincts supporting the amendment came from outlying areas says something about the
city's mindset on suffrage in 1898. But this does not unequivocally tie populism at the
time to suffrage.\textsuperscript{62} Populism had attracted a number of prominent politicians during
earlier years, but in 1898 Fusion had lost its hold on voters, especially in the city.\textsuperscript{63}

The antis had managed to keep their names out of the press, yet had still seen the
vote go in their favor by 2000 ballots. Their campaign had been a reactionary one,
matching their opponents' energy in carrying out a respectable "still hunt." If they had
invited Crannell to come to Spokane, they did so, because they were concerned about the
apparent progress of suffragists.\textsuperscript{64} They benefited from Spokane voters' interest in getting
back to business and politics as usual after the long and rather traumatic Panic of 1893.

The suffragists had been working for change, something that Spokane voters found
unappealing in 1898. At the same time, however, they had to balance their objectives
with maintaining their own respectability. They still felt pushed to defend their
femininity. For example, Crannell had praised the quiet way that the local remonstrants
had been working, but she criticized the still hunt for suffrage. She claimed the
suffragists "are afraid that the home women . . . will awake to the fact that [the
amendment] only requires" a simple majority of the votes cast.\textsuperscript{65} She believed that

\textsuperscript{62} Susan Armitage has suggested that the 1896 vote in Idaho was connected to Populism. Sue Armitage,
University of Washington Press, 2001), 14-16.

\textsuperscript{63} For a general history of populism see. For women in Populism see Michael Lewis Goldberg, \textit{An Army of
Women: Gender and Politics in Gilded Age Kansas}, (Baltimore: John's Hopkins University Press, 1997.)

\textsuperscript{64}"Shall Women Vote?" \textit{The Chronicle}, 4 November 1898, 5.

\textsuperscript{65} "That Equal Suffrage Club," \textit{The Chronicle}, 4 November 1898, 8. For an anti-suffragist editor's take on
the proposed amendment see, "In the Arena," \textit{The Spokesman-Review}, 7 November 1898, 4:3.
advocating suffrage was such an unwomanly thing to do that suffragists could not possibly be ladylike.

Her critics in the Inland Northwest recognized the irony. They were especially irritated that Elizabeth Crannell, a New Yorker, had left her home in order to "save" the homes and families of Western women. A prominent woman from north Idaho asked, "what has become of her home while she is drifting so sadly away from it, way out West?" A female pastor in Spokane admonished voters not to be influenced by Crannell's "illogical reasoning, even if it does come from the East." Noting that the remonstrant had gone on to the Puget Sound region, a pioneer and member of the WCTU added, "Where is Mrs. Crannell, who thought Seattle on the eastern boundary of Washington?"

Although she had said she would return to Spokane to assist the anti-suffragists there, Crannell left for Portland, Oregon only a week after the suffrage amendment had been defeated in Washington. If she had returned to eastern Washington, the suffrage/anti-suffrage debate that had heated up quickly during the months preceding the election might have continued.

After the 1898 election the antis had nothing to fight against. On the other hand, local suffragists may have still wanted to vote, but both sides turned to other work. For example, members of the WCTU were circulating petitions, holding evangelistic

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68 "Mrs. Winslow Crannell has Gone to Oregon," The Chronicle, 14 November 1898, 5.
meetings, and meeting with mothers.69 A number of other clubwomen were preparing for a performance of the comedy drama, "A Scrap of Paper," to be held in February.70

In late January, Mrs. Homer Hill issued a statewide call for suffragists to meet in Seattle.71 Perhaps women in Spokane were so busy with other things that they chose not to attend. The expense of getting to Seattle may well have deterred others. One local editor speculated that there were hundreds of suffragists in Spokane, but thought they lacked aggressive leaders.72

Despite what the Chronicle editor had asserted, other women's organizations in Spokane still enjoyed good leadership. For example, Esther A. Jobes, a member of both WCTU and Sorosis, had served as secretary of the General Federation of Women's Clubs in 1896. She had been instrumental in forming the Washington Federation of Women's Clubs that same year, and served as the correspondence chair for Washington.73

Another factor that helped stall the local suffrage campaign may have been because the local WCTU, which included the most vocal suffragists, was apparently experiencing a decline in membership. For example, in the spring of 1899, Mattie N. Graves, of Centralia, Washington, took an organizing trip through the East Side of the state. As she traveled from Leavenworth to Davenport, she mentioned holding large temperance meetings, and organizing unions. But when she got to Spokane, which had only a small

69 "East Washington," Union Signal, 23 March 1899, 12.


73 Croly, 1136-1150. See also History of Spokane Clubs, 241-45, NWR, SPL. Jobes had been the potential chair for the 3rd ward suffrage club that failed to materialize in 1898.
union, she spent an evening at the home of Francena M. Buck, the city's most prominent advocate of appointing a police matron. Graves described Buck as one "whose best energies are ever given to our beloved cause."  

This may help explain why no one represented Spokane at the February 3, 1899 statewide suffrage meeting. More likely than a lack of strong leadership, the 1898 wave for suffrage that had heated up in the weeks prior to the November election gave way to other activities. This was especially true for the WCTU women who were struggling to maintain their union.

Other kinds of women's organizations flourished in the city between 1899 and 1910. Those that were self-help in nature, such as Sorosis and the Women's Club, would enjoy the most prestige. But many clubs were electing second and third vice presidents, indicating the complexity of their organizations and the depth of leadership talent among their members.

Of course it is possible that the still hunt for suffrage continued in Spokane, but its intensity would not be revived again until late in the next decade. In the meantime, women's organizations operated charities, watched local politicians, advocated restricting prostitutes from attending local theaters, and supported the city's move to appoint matrons to supervise juveniles and women in jail. In general they watched over the city's respectability.

The local campaign for suffrage changed shortly after May Arkwright Hutton moved to Spokane in 1907. She had already taken a stand for suffrage in the city during

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74 "Organizers Corner," Union Signal, 22 June 1899, 13.

75 For example see the Spokane Art League, Spokane City Directory, Polk, 1901.
the summer of 1898. Then she had been a cook in a mining camp in North Idaho. Now she was the forty-seven year old millionairess, who moved with her husband, Levi W., into a luxurious fourth floor apartment in the downtown Hutton Building.\textsuperscript{76}

In the 1880s May Arkwright had migrated as a poor single woman to the North Idaho mining region where she eventually established a boardinghouse. There in 1887 she married one of her customers, Levi W. Hutton. After their marriage, she kept her job as a cook and Levi ran the Northern Pacific Locomotive.\textsuperscript{77}

In 1899 Levi ended up in the center of the mining unrest surrounding the Bunker Hill and Sullivan mines. Masked miners forced him at gunpoint to drive his train to the two mines, which they dynamited. Federal troops called by Governor Frank Steunenberg, and charged with settling the uprising, threw Levi and more than a hundred others, into a stockade for twelve days.

May, never one to suppress her opinions, poured her intense anger at the mine owners and the government into a 1900 book entitled, \textit{The Coeur d'Alenes, or A Tale of the Modern Inquisition in Idaho}. Approximately a year after she had published it, she suddenly became a mine owner herself, and the book became a personal embarrassment.


\textsuperscript{77} For a good summary of Hutton's life in the Inland Northwest prior to moving to Spokane see, Connie Poten, "May Arkwright Hutton: Miner to Millionaire," Wilderness Women Project, University of Montana, Missoula, Montana. Hutton Settlement Papers, 1:4, MAC, EWSHS.
for her.78 But she always remained proud to say she had once earned a living wage, and the experience left her with an interest in women who worked for wages.

In 1896, Hutton had been part of the successful campaign to give women the right to vote in Idaho. In 1904 she ran for the Idaho State Legislature as a Democrat, coming within 80 votes of winning. In the process she had found personal fulfillment in the cause of suffrage, and politics became a definitive part of her life. In 1905 she joined the National American Woman Suffrage Association.

Before moving to Spokane, Hutton considered maintaining a residence in Idaho, so that she could still feel the satisfaction of being eligible to vote. But her husband Levi vetoed that idea.79 In her new home state May found that sitting by as the elections happened galled her. For example, on the November 1908 Election Day she gathered together a carload of women, who had previously lived in Idaho, and took them on a drive into the country. She explained, "I never felt as small in my life."80

In February of that year, Emma Smith DeVoe, a former Illinois resident and one of the leading suffragists in Washington, arrived.81 She was traversing the state on an organizing trip, and launched in Spokane what a local editor described as a new

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78 After she had moved to Spokane booksellers said that she had paid overly large sums of money for the book. She was very successful. When the reporter, Dorothy Powers, did a story on Hutton in the 1970s she only found one extant copy of the book, which was held in the collection of Charles Gonser, a longtime employee of Levi Hutton's. Dorothy Powers, "May Arkwright Hutton: from Mine Cook to Millionairess," Sunday Magazine, Spokesman Review, 28 March 1976.

79 Lucile Fargo, "Mrs. Hercules," 170, 171, SPL, NWR.

80 May Arkwright Hutton, Spokane, to Ella Green, Wallace, Idaho, 10 November 1908, Hutton Papers, MAC, EWSHS.

81 "Ask Voters to Give Women the Ballot," The Evening Chronicle, 20 February 1908, 5:1
movement.\textsuperscript{82} She appointed Hutton, whom she had worked with in Idaho, president of Spokane's new suffrage organization, and a delegate to speak to Congress on Washington women's behalf.\textsuperscript{83} Before she left at least 75 people, including ten men had signed up, and she told reporters she hoped that Spokane would reach 100, thus bringing the statewide membership up to 1000.\textsuperscript{84}

The Spokane Woman's Club sponsored the 1908 drive, lending to local suffragists some of its prestige. Many of the officers selected, for example, Mrs. H. W. Allen, E. Phyllis Carleton, Jessie Emery, and Mrs. J. G. Cunningham, were active clubwomen. What is more, they were leaders in their respective clubs.

Miss Nellie Colburn, the secretary, and May Arkwright Hutton, the president were less well established among the ranks of clubwomen. Colburn was single and living with her widowed mother. She worked as a saleslady at the fashionable department store, The Crescent.\textsuperscript{85} Hutton had been living in the city less than a year. Her ties to Emma Smith DeVoe no doubt helped put her into the presidency of the new suffrage organization. But she would not become a member of the Woman's Club until May 1909.\textsuperscript{86}

Relocating a household and getting established in Spokane took a considerable amount of time. Similarly, Hutton probably had to work to be recognized among the clubwomen in Spokane. In Idaho the wives of mine owners had snubbed her. Besides

\textsuperscript{82} "Would Seek the Ballot in a Womanly Way," \textit{The Evening Chronicle}, 22 February 1908, 9.

\textsuperscript{83} "Spokane Woman to Plead with Congress," \textit{The Evening Chronicle}, 25 February 1908, 1. The visit to congress apparently did not happen until 1910.

\textsuperscript{84} "Would Seek the Ballot in a Womanly Way," \textit{The Evening Chronicle}, 22 February 1908, 9.

\textsuperscript{85} The Colburns appear in city Directories in 1905 and later. Nell is listed as the secretary for the suffrage organization, but is not listed in any other women's clubs.

\textsuperscript{86} "Secretaries Minutes" 9 May 1909, Book 2, 78. Spokane Woman's Club Papers.
being newly wealthy, she weighed approximately 300 pounds and thus did not fit the description of a fashionable lady. Poorly educated, her words and conversations were usually unpolished. She could, in addition, act flamboyantly and topped all this off by frequently wearing outrageous clothes.

Nevertheless Hutton's charitable inclinations coincided with some of the most prominent clubwomen in Spokane. Her favorite people to help were children and women. This, coupled with her money, helped her develop a working relationship with members of the Ladies Benevolent Society. For example, in December 1908 she took the children from that institution in an automobile ride to attend a play.87

Hutton could be generous with her money, when it suited her purposes to be so. For example, she was a member of the Board of the local Florence Crittenton Mission. And since she herself had been born out of wedlock, she decided that finding homes for the young women there would be a perfect way to help their children. She happily took on the task of finding potential husbands for these unwed mothers, then proceeded to fund everything that the couple needed for a wedding as well as for their new domestic life. She even provided the materials for the bride's trousseau and opened her luxurious apartment in the Hutton building for their weddings.

When it suited her purposes, she did not mind using her money to get attention. For example, when all other ladies applied to join the Woman's Club, they first had to find three members willing to endorse them. Hutton, submitted no names of endorsement, but bowled the executive committee over by enclosing with her application the usual fee plus an entire year's dues. An amazed Board quickly voted to endorse her

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87 Ladies Benevolent Society, Secretaries Minutes, 1908; MAC, EWSHS.
application. A year later, she would be appointed the chair of the Building Committee, charged with managing the clubs' effort to find property and raise the money for a new Club Cottage.\textsuperscript{88}

Although Hutton lavished her time and sometimes her wealth on the causes she advocated, she was very careful, ensuring that others did not make her their unending monetary source. This tendency was especially pronounced if the people seeking assistance did not live in Spokane. She would give money to outside organizations, but they were never her priority.

Suffragists in Seattle at the head of the state organization were irritated by this characteristic of Hutton's. They had long struggled to finance their efforts. For example, in 1899 just months after the 1898 suffrage amendment had been defeated, Mrs. Homer Hill had informed other suffragists that they must raise more money, in order to confront the "most serious" problem the organization faced.\textsuperscript{89}

When Hutton became part of the Washington suffrage scene, no doubt many suffragists across Washington had eyed her wealth with eager anticipation of how they might use it. Thus, her attitude regarding money strained her relationship with many suffragists living on the western side of the state. It was not that she refused to pay for any statewide initiatives, but she was very selective. For example during January 1909, she and LaReine Helen Baker rented the lower floor of a mansion in Olympia to be used

\textsuperscript{88} In 2003 the Spokane Woman’s Club was still using the building, which Hutton raised money for. It was entered in the historic register in 2002.

\textsuperscript{89} "Equal Rights Clubs Silent," \textit{The Chronicle}, 3 February 1899, 7.
as headquarters for a suffragists lobbying the legislators while in session. But only six weeks earlier, she had informed Dr. Cora Smith Eaton that "we will conduct our campaign on the East Side along entirely different lines than the Seattle women are pursuing." The rest of the letter focused on the expenses she was already taking care of, and letting Eaton know that she intended to make her own financial decisions, based on what she described as "years of experience in suffrage and politics."

After the suffragists had successfully lobbied the Washington legislature for an amendment pending voter approval, an exhausted Hutton returned home preparing to convince Spokane residents that women should have the right to vote. The last two months had been a turning point in Hutton's activism, she returned home ready to step up her efforts in Spokane, and less willing to be subservient to the suffragist leaders on the western side of the state.

With a newly defined Hutton version of the still hunt, she stepped up her activities. She traveled to Walla Walla to speak to an American Federation of Labor convention. She began organizing debates on woman suffrage, and offered prizes for the best essays promoting suffrage written by local high school students.

At the same time LaReine Helen Baker, Hutton's friend, confidante, and associate in suffrage, stepped up her own efforts. Publicity loving, wealthy, childless and married

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91 May Arkwright Hutton, Spokane, to Dr. Cora Smith Eaton, Seattle, 5 November 1908, Hutton Papers Box 1, MAC, EWSHS. For an example of Eaton's irritation with Hutton's position on money, see Cora Smith Eaton to J. H. DeVoe, 4 June 1909, as cited in Horner, 31.

92 Horner, 29-30.
to a quiet, but supportive husband, Baker was in many other ways Hutton's opposite.\textsuperscript{93} Not yet thirty years old, she was slender, small in stature, and attractive. College educated, she had a way with words, both written and verbal. By 1909 clubwomen and other prominent citizens were recognizing her skill with words. She was even beginning to seek publishers for her writings on eugenics.\textsuperscript{94} In 1912 she would publish a small book entitled \textit{Race Improvement}, with the publishers Dodd and Meade.\textsuperscript{95}

Hutton leaned on Baker to help her step away from her dependence on Seattle suffragists. For starters, she knew that her own language skills could not measure up to her friend's. By November 1908, she had happily informed Eaton that her friend was contributing to 15 weekly papers published throughout the region. In October of that year Baker's first suffrage article had appeared in the local paper, the \textit{Spokesman-Review}.\textsuperscript{96} By November she had 20 papers publishing her columns.\textsuperscript{97}

In early 1909 Baker accompanied Hutton to the AFL meeting in Walla Walla.\textsuperscript{98} She assisted with lobbying the state legislature, then shortly thereafter, left on an extended trip to London, where she was a delegate to that year's Woman's Congress of

\textsuperscript{93} \textit{The Chronicle} estimated that Baker was the wealthiest woman in Washington, and one of the wealthiest in the West. "Spokane Woman Plans New Feat," \textit{The Chronicle}, 3 November 1909, 3:6.


\textsuperscript{95} LaReine Helen Baker, \textit{Race Improvement}, New York: Dodd Meade, 1912.


\textsuperscript{97} May Arkwright Hutton, Spokane, to Miss May Grinnell, Seattle, 16 November 1908, Hutton Papers, Box 1:3, MAC, EWSHS.

\textsuperscript{98} May Arkwright Hutton, Spokane, to Emma Smith DeVoe, Seattle 9 January 1909, Hutton Papers, Box 1, MAC, EWSHS.
the World. In route to England, she met with Abigail Scott Duniway, the prominent suffragist from Portland, and made a speech in Los Angeles.\textsuperscript{99}

Baker returned to Spokane in June, with an idea for promoting suffrage that eventually led to a split between Hutton and herself. She wanted to hold open-air meetings in local parks. Hutton was not sold on the idea, so Baker took it to the College Suffrage Club, which had been organized two weeks before she got home.\textsuperscript{100}

For holding open air meetings in Spokane the timing could not have been worse. The free speech controversy between the I.W.W. and Spokane Police Department was heating up.\textsuperscript{101} That summer all other requests to do open air meetings were being denied. But women had supported the newly elected reform Mayor, Nelson Pratt, and he was sympathetic to suffrage. Baker went to him to get permission for her meetings.\textsuperscript{102} But this did not convince Hutton of the value of open-air meetings.

Although Baker was educated, and happily found a place for her talents and money in the College suffrage club, Hutton, with very little formal schooling was not eligible to join that organization. What is more, she had recently argued that college educated women were the most difficult group of women to persuade for suffrage.\textsuperscript{103} Hutton could

\textsuperscript{99} Unidentified newspaper article published in Los Angeles, Hutton Scrapbook 1, 57. See also May Arkwright Hutton, Spokane, to Mrs. Elise Moore, Los Angeles, 23 February 1909, Hutton Papers, Box 1, MAC, EWSHS.

\textsuperscript{100} May Arkwright Hutton, Spokane, to LaReine Helen Baker, London, 31 May 1909, Hutton Papers, Box 1, MAC, EWSHS.


\textsuperscript{102} May Arkwright Hutton, Spokane, to Mrs. Homer Hill, Seattle, 27 July 1909, Hutton Papers, Box 1, MAC, EWSHS.

\textsuperscript{103} Inserted in a letter, May Arkwright Hutton, Spokane to Rev. Anna Howard Shaw, 14 June 1909, Hutton Papers, Box 1, MAC, EWSHS.
do little to control the group Baker joined. She explained her dilemma, "How to repress the young women who are new to the work and bubbling over with enthusiasm . . . especially when they pay their own expenses."104

She found some way to do it, however.105 On September 23, a relieved Hutton wrote that she had "put the kibosh" on any more street meetings in Spokane, and she hoped that what she had done would set a useful precedent throughout Washington suffrage circles. She believed that Baker's European style of street meetings were an "insult to American manhood."106

LaReine Helen Baker's suffrage efforts during the summer of 1909 offended Hutton's definition of the still hunt. The younger suffragist was planning, coordinating and funding the meetings, spending what Hutton estimated to be at least $400 per month from her own pocket.107 The entertainment included bands. Some of the speakers were local and some were not. South Dakota's Governor Varsey spoke at one for thirty minutes. Baker and another local suffragist, Sarah Commerford, were frequent speakers.

Hutton thought Baker was offending the "men who do real things, political and otherwise" because they disproved of "any kind of spectacular demonstrations."108 What

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104 May Arkwright Hutton, to Mrs. Homer Hill, Seattle, 13 August 1909, Hutton Papers, Box 1, MAC, EWSHS.

105 This study found no documentation on what Hutton did to stop the street meetings. Perhaps she pushed local authorities to revoke their permit.

106 May Arkwright Hutton to Mrs. Homer Hill, Seattle, 23 September 1909, Hutton Papers, Box 1, MAC, EWSHS.

107 May Arkwright Hutton to Mrs. Homer Hill, Seattle, 13 August 1909, Hutton Papers, Box 1, MAC, EWSHS.

108 May Arkwright Hutton to Mrs. Homer Hill, Seattle, 13 August 1909, Hutton Papers, Box 1, MAC, EWSHS.
is more—she believed, with some justification, that the younger woman was a bit publicity hungry, doing "anything to keep herself before the public". Such spectacles, she feared, would invite the opposition of anti-suffragists.

Shortly before this falling out with Baker, Hutton had had what turned into a very public dispute with Emma Smith DeVoe. DeVoe, an Illinois native, had been appointed by the National American Woman Suffrage Association to lead the Washington suffrage movement. The two had worked together in 1908, primarily because Hutton let DeVoe lead, but by 1909 Hutton was defining the still hunt for suffrage in Eastern Washington.

The split stemmed, in part, from the nearly 300 miles and a mountain range dividing Spokane from Seattle. Western Washington women had long dominated the state's suffrage campaign. National suffragists had duplicated the pattern when they sent DeVoe to Seattle. With the population on the West Side twice that on the East Side, this balance of power was not unreasonable, but Spokane residents had long thought their city merited more recognition than it received. For Hutton this distribution of power seemed to deny Spokane the resources that Seattle enjoyed, including supplies that had come for the national organization. Further augmenting the imbalance that Hutton perceived, she had invested money into the statewide campaign, both in 1908 and 1909, and thought she had gotten little in return. Finally, she viewed DeVoe as an outsider from the East.

This tendency became more pronounced as Hutton established herself in Spokane. She had worked with DeVoe's team in January 1909, even though they did not follow all

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110 May Arkwright Hutton, Spokane to Mrs. Elizabeth Hauser, 27 July 1909, Hutton Papers, Box 1, MAC, EWSHS.
of her suggestions. She had been part of the group that was lobbying the wives of legislators in Olympia for an amendment. But by April 3 Hutton was referring to DeVoe as the "Big Noise" in a letter she wrote to the Seattle resident Mrs. Cora Mallott, Secretary of the King County Suffrage Association. She soon reduced the label to B.N.

Nevertheless, Hutton was not alone in her criticism of DeVoe. LaReine Baker knew something of the brewing disagreement before she left on her trip to London. Similarly, Mallott and Edith DeLong Jarmuth, both young suffragists from Seattle, and Mrs. Homer Hill were refusing to acquiesce to DeVoe's campaign for reelection. In mid April Hutton met almost clandestinely with Mallot and Jarmuth for a week of rest and strategizing in a hot springs on the Green River, Washington.

Relations between Hutton and the DeVoe faction deteriorated when Dr. Cora Eaton, a Seattle suffragist informed Hutton that if she did not shape up, she would be eliminated from the ranks of suffragists in the state. Determined to demonstrate her effectiveness as an organizer in Spokane by recruiting members, Hutton began holding parlor meetings up to five times per week. In addition she offered a free trip to Seattle

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111 May Arkwright Hutton, Spokane, to Mrs. Cora Mallott, 3 April 1909, Hutton Papers, Box 1, MAC, EWSHS.

112 Baker was not as upset with DeVoe as Hutton was. The College Club would later work both with the Seattle suffragists, as well as give financial support to Hutton's organization. See “Suffrage Fight Ends in Harmony,” The Spokesman-Review, 9 October 1909, 7:1.

113 May Arkwright Hutton Scrapbook 1, 58. MAC, EWSHS.

114 May Arkwright Hutton, Spokane, to Mrs. LaReine Baker, London, 7 April 1909, Hutton Papers Box 1, MAC, EWSHS.

115 May Arkwright Hutton, Spokane to Mrs. LaReine Baker, London, 3 May 1909, Hutton Papers Box 1, MAC, EWSHS.
for anyone who recruited fifty members, and several young people took her up on the offer.116

In a similar vein, Hutton withheld the information from state leaders on the number of members that they were recruiting, as well as their dues. She determined they were far too valuable to trust with anyone or anything else, and held them until just before she arrived in Seattle for the statewide suffrage convention in June. Hutton knew that the Washington Suffrage Association's constitution required only four members to form a club, and thereby be entitled to send one delegate to the state suffrage meeting.117 If she could recruit enough members, the Spokane delegates could dominate the upcoming convention, and thus allow Hutton to remain in the association.

At the same time, Hutton made plans to improve her standing among prominent suffragists outside of Washington. The state Equal Suffrage convention was scheduled to begin in late June in Seattle. Immediately thereafter, the annual meeting of the National Woman Suffrage Association was to be held in the same city. Delegates to the national meeting were due to travel through Spokane on June 28, riding a special suffrage train.

Hutton, along with her husband Levi W., turned to the local chamber of Commerce for help. Al, as May called him, was a member of that body, and helped convince them to earmark $500 to entertain the eastern delegates. They put her in charge of making the arrangements.

The "special train" arrived at 9:30 a.m. bearing, among others, Anna Howard Shaw, Florence Kelley, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, and Henry Brown Blackwell. Emma Smith

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116 Seattle was hosting that summer the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition.

117 Horner, 31.
DeVoe and Abigail Scott Duniway represented suffragists in the Northwest. Hutton took the group on a tour of the city, escorted them to numerous speeches, and took them swimming at the normally all male Spokane Athletic Club. The assembly moved on to a six-course banquet in the Hall of the Doges, in the city's most prominent hotel, the Davenport. There, Mayor N. S. Pratt provided the evening's highlight by declaring himself a suffragist. The Spokesman-Review, which was still critical of woman suffrage, proclaimed the day an outstanding success and declared Spokane's clubwomen exceptional boosters.  

Hutton joined the Suffrage Special as it pulled out at 2:00 the following morning and headed to Seattle. For her, and the rest of Spokane's delegates it was a quick trip from the top of the suffrage bandwagon to its bottom. On June 30, delegates to the Washington Equal Suffrage Association unseated Hutton and most of the Spokane delegates, claiming that Hutton had padded the membership list, and secured it with bribes. Once Dr. Cora Smith Eaton had pushed her primary opponents out of the way, the remaining delegates reelected DeVoe to another term.

Anna Howard Shaw and the national representatives left the state decision intact, but refused to allow either the Hutton or the DeVoe factions to participate in their meeting. Thus, Hutton and her delegates came home from the meetings, a displaced faction of suffragists. They could either "clean house," as Eaton had ordered that they do, or they could establish their own organization.

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Upon her return home, Hutton immediately set in motion plans to found the Washington Political Equality League. Although the publicity in Seattle had not been kind to the warring factions, she thought that the incident had given Spokane suffragists a boost. She had taken 52 phone calls in one day.\footnote{May Arkwright Hutton, Spokane, to Mrs. Homer Hill, Seattle, Hutton Papers, Box 1, MAC, EWSHS.} It gave at least some energy to the antis, as well. Someone got a copy of her membership list, and published it in the \textit{Spokesman-Review}. Hutton believed this worked out well though, because no one complained that they had been put on the list without their consent.

Eaton's charges did have some basis in fact. For example, Hutton did pay the membership dues for people other than herself. When LaReine Baker was in London, Hutton informed her in a letter that she had paid for her and her husband, because she wanted to make sure they that they would continue to be members in good standing.\footnote{May Arkwright Hutton, Spokane to Mrs. LaReine Baker, London, 31 May 1909, Hutton Papers, Box 1, MAC, EWSHS.} Likewise, she paid dues for a Mr. and Mrs. Wessels, as well as their daughter, in Seattle, and asked them to be delegates to the state meeting.\footnote{May Arkwright Hutton, Spokane, to Mr. and Mrs. Wessle, Seattle, 28 May 1910, Hutton Box 1, EWSHS MAC.} But these seem to be people that she knew well, and she was not urging them to do something they did not want to do, and thereby padding the list. She was, however, using her own money to make it easy for them to be members.

Likewise, the charges that Hutton bribed members had some basis in her actions. She did pay for some trips to Seattle for young people who signed up 50 individuals to be members of her organization. But there were probably only two or three people who
earned the free tickets. Further the members that they recruited were not getting paid to join, and even Eaton herself had noted earlier that the task was not an easy one.\footnote{Horner, 31.}

What is more, this was not the Seattle suffragists' first effort to oust Hutton. For example, Eaton had written to Hutton earlier informing her that her own membership was invalid because the Spokane suffragist used obscene language.\footnote{Horner, 32.} When Hutton appeared in Seattle with delegates representing 250 members her opponents had to resort to bigger measures. The June 1909 shut out was simply their most successful effort to get rid of Hutton.

But this success did not last long. In October Hutton, along with suffragists from Spokane and Seattle such as Mallot, Jarmuth, and Hill, met in Spokane's Masonic Temple for a convention. The group created the Washington Equal Suffrage Association and elected Hutton President. A Seattle resident became first vice president with the "nominal power of president in all territory West of the Cascade Mountains."\footnote{Leonora Brown was first elected to the to West Side's top position, but Mrs. Homer Hill was apparently the one in charge. "Suffrage Fight Ends in Harmony," The Spokesman-Review, October 9, 1909, 7:1.}

In effect, this move created three suffrage clubs in the state. Hutton's organization on the East Side of Washington, DeVoe's faction in part of the West, with Mrs. Homer Hill supervising the dissidents on that side. This suited Spokane's preeminent suffragist fine, she and Hill had like minds when it came to methods of promoting suffrage, and she even thought that DeVoe would be politically savvy enough to recognize when her
methods were outnumbered. Hutton could be "magnanimous" because she felt she had "been completely vindicated by the people who know me best—my home women."\footnote{May Arkwright Hutton, Spokane, to Mrs. Harriet Taylor Upton, Seattle, 28 October 1909, Hutton Papers, Box 1, MAC, EWSHS.}

In their squabbles between leading suffragists, Washington's advocates of giving women the right to vote were not alone. As early as the late 1860s, the nation's leading suffragists had parted the ranks and created two organizations: the more conservative American Woman Suffrage Association, and the National Woman Suffrage Association.\footnote{Nancy Woloch, \\textit{Women and the American Experience}, (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1994), 306.} Washington women had company at the state level, as well. For example, Steven Buechler demonstrated that Illinois suffrage leaders in the late nineteenth early 20\textsuperscript{th} centuries were more often divided among themselves than they were united in the cause of suffrage.\footnote{Steven M. Buechler, \\textit{The Transformation of the Woman Suffrage Movement, The Case in Illinois, 1850-1920}, (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1986.)}

Just as the contest between Washington's leading suffragists was cooling down, the Free Speech Fight in Spokane was reaching a fevered pitch. During the unrest in November two female labor activists charged that they had been mistreated while being held in local jails.\footnote{Activists at the turn of the twenty-first century would have described their cases as sexual harassment. For an analysis of the Police Matron controversy in Spokane, see chapter 4.} The resulting controversy provides an opportunity to explore the connections between suffragists, prominent clubwomen, and working class advocates.

In December, only days after one of the women had been released, Hutton introduced a police matron initiative at a meeting of the Woman's Club.\footnote{See chapter 4. Woman's Club Secretary's Minutes, Book 2, 6 December 1909, p. 85, Spokane Woman's Club Papers.} From that
point on, her fellow suffragists, who were also clubwomen, took a prominent role in the resulting fight with local authorities.

From Ethel Stalford and LaReine Baker, who made the first most public request for police matrons, to Laura House, the Woman's Club President, suffragist clubwomen, took leading roles in the police matron initiative. Sarah Commerford, the soon to be president of the College Equal Suffrage Association and Rose Moore, an officer of the Woman's Club, took two of the least conservative positions on the matron controversy.131 These suffragists argued that City and County jails should protect women and thus improve their own respectability.

But this seeming unity among the women who espoused the cause of a resident police matron, belies the diversity among suffragists concerning this issue. Although LaReine Baker told clubwomen they were initially too timid in their efforts to convince City Hall of their cause, she was offended by Stalford's public charges against local police. Baker soon took upon herself the task of defending the city's respectability, as well as that of the Woman's Club against the wrong as she perceived it.132

This stand by Baker elicited Hutton's public criticism of her former best friend and associate. A few days after the initial uproar, a conversation regarding the Police Matron issue over lunch at the Silver Grill between Baker, Jessie Emery and several other prominent society women further illustrated the differences among suffragists.133

131 Commerford was president of the College Suffrage Club, formed in the Spring of 1909. Rose Moore was married to Fred Moore, the Spokane attorney who had represented Elizabeth Gurley Flynn in her December trial. Both Commerford and Moore publicly demonstrated their personal ties to local socialists. See Chapter 4.

132 Hutton Scrapbook 2, 34, EWSHS MAC.

133 Emery, Mrs. Francis F. Emery was a member of the Woman's Club, and she had long been a prominent leader among clubwomen in Spokane. See Spokane City Directories, Polk, 1899-1910.
who was also a suffragist, shared Baker's concern that the Woman's Club representatives had gone too far in their demand for police matrons. These two women thought the police could depend on volunteer matrons until they got a new jail facility.134

An irritated Hutton scolded the society women for taking no consideration of working class women who would be happy for a job as a Police Matron. She went on to be especially critical of Emery, whom she said employed in her own household a Chinese servant who was sending most of the money that she paid him back to his homeland. In Hutton's estimation, although these society women were clubwomen and suffragists, they had too little concern for women of the working class, and Emery had doubled the offense by not caring whether the money she spent as an employer stayed in the local economy or not.135

Although the above incident hinted at Hutton's prejudices against Chinese laborers, Hutton stands apart from many of the other suffragists she was contemporary with on her concern for working class women. By 1910 she was wealthy, and careful to distance herself from broader labor issues, such as free speech.136 But back in Idaho, she had been a working woman who benefited from suffrage in that state, and in Spokane she worked to convince other working women of the value of voting. She enjoyed at least some success in this effort. For example, the diverse Spokane crowd that greeted the national suffragists in June of 1909 had included members of the working class.137 Likewise,

134 "Society Women Willing to be Police Matrons," Hutton Scrapbook 2, 34, 35, MAC, EWSHS.

135 "Mrs. Hutton Gives View," Hutton Scrapbook 2, 35, MAC, EWSHS.

136 Although Hutton sometimes claimed otherwise, she tried to distance herself from the prolabor volume on the Coeur D'Alenes. See "Coeur D'Alenes Rarest of Books," and "Mrs. Hutton Proud of It," Hutton Scrapbook 2, 62, MAC, EWSHS.

Hutton asked labor unions to support the cause, and encouraged other local suffragists to do the same.\textsuperscript{138}

In the end, however, the Police Matron Controversy, which was partially settled during the summer of 1910, boosted the local suffrage campaign. The women had been highly offended that the businessmen who ran City Hall were so unwilling to give them what they wanted. The controversy demonstrated to clubwomen what it was like to push for a civic reform that pitted them against men in the city, during a time when they still did not enjoy the power of the vote to back their requests.

The confluence in Spokane of clubwomen's initiative to appoint a police matron with a nationwide labor movement gave local suffragists an unusual opportunity to expand their base of support to a large block of voters, men who were members of labor unions. In this respect they worked within local conditions. At the same time, they benefited from a statewide wave of Progressivism, which would soon give women in Washington the right to vote.

By November of 1910, there were still opponents of the issue in the city, but the collective attitude toward suffrage in Spokane was much more accepting than it had been at any previous time. Even the very recently critical editor of the \textit{Spokesman-Review}, appeared to assume that the proposed amendment would pass. On November 9, 1910, sufficient numbers of men in Spokane joined many in Washington's other major cities to

\textsuperscript{138} May Arkwright Hutton, Spokane, to Miss May Grinnell, Seattle, 8 November 1908, Hutton Papers, Box 1, MAC, EWSHS. See also "Seeks Jail Matron Place," Hutton Scrapbook 2, 36, and "Complains of Long Hours," Hutton Scrapbook 1, 61, MAC, EWSHS. Hutton may have influenced other clubwomen in Spokane to seek labor support for suffrage, although she was not the only local suffragist with ties to labor activists. In 1910 Sarah Commerford and Ethel Stalford went to union meetings to ask for their support on suffrage.
pass the suffrage amendment. Across the state in 1910 Progressive voters supported progressive clubwomen's request for suffrage.\footnote{Miles Poindexter, the Spokane lawyer and judge elected to the U.S. Senate 1910 was an important figurehead for the tide of Progressivism in Washington that peaked in 1912. Carlos Schwantes, *The Pacific Northwest*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1989), 345-51.}

Hutton's efforts since 1908 had been an important part of the process. But she was not alone. She led the final wave of suffrage in Spokane, but many other women had adopted the cause before her and a number joined her to make the final wave a success. Local clubwomen started out in moralistic reform efforts, in charities and with the WCTU. Many moved on from there to join self-help clubs. By 1908 Clubwomen had become so central to what Spokane had become that many were ready to listen when Hutton's wave came to town. Some of those who were still not convinced had a second opportunity to change their minds during the Police Matron controversy. Thus in 1910 enough voters in Spokane supported suffrage. The "fors" helped make Washington the fifth state in the nation to give women the right to vote.\footnote{"Washington is Banner Republican State," *The Spokesman-Review*, 10 November 1910, 3:1.}
CHAPTER 6
CONCLUSION

To suggest that suffrage was the ultimate goal for the women who involved themselves in reform in eastern Washington is misleading. The women who founded institutions in the late 1880s in Spokane were not embarking on a path that they hoped would eventually bring to them the right to vote. Nor did they unwittingly set the city's clubwomen on such a trajectory. Besides the police matron effort, which was so intertwined with the local suffrage movement, the organized woman's movement in Spokane made women's contributions to the city seem more acceptable to conservative women. Finally, it gave women, including future suffrage leaders, the experience they would need to branch out to more unconventional reforms.¹

Rather, building badly-needed human service institutions in the 1880s; creating neoprogressive city services in the 1890s; embarking on a campaign to protect the city's reputation by advocating the appointment of police matrons; and ultimately gaining individual voices in local, state, and national politics, were steps that local women took during the Progressive era as they helped form Spokane's version of what would become the twentieth century style of local, state and national government. They were women interested in establishing and maintaining the city's respectability, while applying their increasing skills to help others as well as working to make a contribution to their community. They were actors on a city stage, which they shared with a wide variety of actors.

people. Although everyone was not equal on that stage, all could play a role. They sought to meld clubwomen's interests with the city's needs as their adopted boomtown grew and matured. Yet their progressivism tied them to the larger national movement toward twentieth century urban America.

"Benefiting a City" demonstrates that women found ways to participate in formative discussions about Spokane. The most visible women were members of clubs who used progressive tactics as they sought to meet needs in the city. In the process, they attempted to make their adopted western boomtown a respectable city. In so doing, they functioned as boosters intent on minding the city's reputation while their male counterparts focused on more economic matters.

Although the women of means worked from privileged positions, which could and did sometimes limit their own effectiveness, they sought to address the complexity of human circumstances that they saw around them. In attempting to describe that diversity in retrospect, "Benefiting a City" explores the most prominent clubwomen's institutions, as well as the organizations and charities that competed with them. Although the privileged women styled themselves as the city's charitable authorities, they faced some formidable competition.

Catholic institutions were the Protestant social leaders’ most notable and successful opponents. They struggled financially during the earliest years, but founded enduring charities, ranging from hospitals to orphanages. Their success revealed that there were people in the city and surrounding region who were not getting assistance from the benevolent ladies. If Catholic charities could grow to become stable institutions in Spokane, then the Protestant women clearly were not as all sufficient as they liked to
think they were. Thus Spokane became a city whose human service institutions reflected a portion of the diversity in its population.

By the turn of the twentieth century, however, the window of opportunity for women to be influential as they built institutions had narrowed significantly. Spokane entered the new century, having left behind its roughest years. And, as the city matured, women were not so likely to form institutions, because the existing ones were sufficient. Yet they still sought to increase the city's place in the urban world. Some clubwomen who were not already committed to managing institutions looked into other ways to contribute to social amelioration.

Two of these other initiatives elicited such opposition that the effort to see them through lasted throughout the city's boom years. The first to be resolved according to clubwomen's wishes was the quest to gain a police matron. In this case, women were asking men to give at least some women a role in managing the local jail. These women were mistrusted the character of the male jail authorities with women inmates. On the other hand, those who functioned as police and jailers in Spokane were comfortable with the gendered world of Spokane's penal institutions. For more than twenty years they resisted adding women to their ranks.

The local opponents to appointing a police matron finally gave up the fight during 1910, not because they sought to give equity to women in the management of prisons, but because progressive supporters of the cause had successfully made the initiative one of civic respectability. When a significant block of voters sided with the women seeking a police matron, the negative publicity, combined with political pressure ensured that the city jail would employ some women.
Although more sporadic than enduring, the effort in Spokane to give women the right to vote took even more time to realize fruition. A relatively small number of Spokane's pioneer women had lived in the region early enough to enjoy the right to vote which Washington Territory had given its women beginning in 1883. During that decade, local WCTU members had sought and won roles for women at the polling places on election days. But in 1890 when the Territory became a state, Washington voters soundly defeated a suffrage amendment. Thus women residing there had no voting privileges, and lost whatever official political positions they had enjoyed during territorial days. And another twenty years would pass before they would regain the right.

After Washington joined the union as a state, Spokane underwent a series of suffrage waves. Local suffragists watched the movement at the national level, and sometimes more actively promoted the cause when statewide events looked favorable. In the city, the final swell for suffrage began roughly in late 1908, then lasted until voters in the state gave women the right to vote in late 1910.

However, both of these initiatives only culminated at the end of Spokane’s boom years. In the early years WCTU members had taken the lead in advocating both issues. Their requests for protecting women prisoners as well as giving their sex the ballot were appeals tinged with the convictions of religion and temperance. They sought to shape the city’s moral character. As time passed, a more broad-based coalition of clubwomen took the lead in both movements. Some of these new suffragists were advocates of social purity and even eugenics, yet their efforts could still be imbued with a moral component, but they were less overtly religious. By 1910 clubwomen had become progressive
reformers, who realized some successes, even while they continued to live within the limits to their municipal influence.

At the end of its most expansive years Spokane had become a democracy, typical of the twentieth century urban America. By that time clubwomen could, and did manage to persuade city leaders to address at least some of their concerns. This was largely owing to their ability to forge bonds with other interest groups in the city. By 1910 their reform efforts, which had on marked occasions put them at odds with other reformers, could also connect them with a variety of different people.

The most remarkable aspect of the clubwomen's experiences in Spokane was in the brief and informal alliances formed between themselves and other influential people, most notably local labor union members and Elizabeth Gurley Flynn. These associations at times were so tenuous, that they were more dalliances than true alliances. But they were strong enough to convince the city to hire two resident police matrons at a time when its jail was extremely crowded.

In terms of their progression from being members of women's clubs to becoming progressive reformers their experiences mirrored the path that women were taking across the nation. The progressive movement promised to solve many problems, and Spokane's women found it gave them a few successes. But it left the battle for women's equality to be fought another time.

Similarly, the long-term results of gaining woman suffrage differed little in Spokane from those that were seen elsewhere. Local gender restrictions eventually bent enough to approve giving women the right to vote. But attitudes that kept women subordinated remained.
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