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THE PECULIAR HISTORY OF WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE IN JASPER COUNTY  
MISSOURI

A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate School  
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for the Degree of  
Master of Arts

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30 April 2014

THE PECULIAR HISTORY OF WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE IN JASPER COUNTY  
MISSOURI

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# THE PECULIAR HISTORY OF WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE IN JASPER COUNTY MISSOURI

An Abstract of the Thesis by  
Mark A. Van Es

The women's suffrage movement in Jasper County Missouri was unlike the same movement anywhere else in the state. The election of 1890 began a series of events that made the county one of the most important places in Missouri for the suffrage movement. Jasper County strongly supported women's suffrage, and its citizens were not afraid to demonstrate their support through letters, newspapers, and public events. Once Tennessee ratified the Nineteenth Amendment on 18 August 1920, men and women alike joined in celebrating its passage in all of the cities of the county, and finally a battle that had raged on for over seventy years in the United States came to a close.

This thesis uses primary and secondary sources to tell the history of the suffrage movement in Jasper County and how its citizens influenced the state and national suffrage movement. Personal letters between Ella Harrison and the women of Jasper County displayed the political tactics suffragists used to gain many supporters. Speeches from local legislators demonstrated how important the question of suffrage was to these leaders and their constituents. Minutes from the League of Women Voters in Joplin gave first-hand accounts of what women were doing to promote suffrage on the local level. Local newspapers were critical in telling the story of how suffrage was important to the county citizens. Finally, secondary sources revealed the demographics of the region and helped to illustrate the history of the state and federal suffrage movement.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

AERA	American Equal Rights Association
AWSA	American Woman Suffrage Association
DNC	Democratic National Committee
ERA	Equal Rights Amendment
GOP	Grand Old Party
LUAS	Ladies Union Aid Society of St. Louis
MESA	Missouri Equal Suffrage Association
MFWC	Missouri Federation of Women's Clubs
NAOWS	National Association Opposed to Woman Suffrage
NAWSA	National American Woman Suffrage Association
NWSA	National Woman Suffrage Association
RNC	Republican National Committee
WCTU	Women's Christian Temperance Union
WSA	Woman's Suffrage Association



## Chapter I

### Introduction

Although Women's History developed as an important topic in the 1970s, the history of the fight for women's suffrage remains incomplete. The national story is well known, but local and regional stories still need additional research. Nowhere is this more evident than in the history of women's suffrage in Jasper County, Missouri. In general, historians have overlooked the southwestern corner of Missouri in favor of Columbia, the location of Missouri's flagship university, and the larger metropolitan areas surrounding St. Louis and Kansas City.

The history of suffrage in southwest Missouri is a fascinating tale that has yet to be uncovered. Margot McMillen—an adjunct professor at Westminster College and the author of multiple books on women's suffrage in Missouri—recently argued that historians need to explore the role women suffragists played in western Missouri.<sup>1</sup> This thesis will be groundbreaking in its research because it is the first time a historian has focused on the suffrage movement in Jasper County to this extent.

The study of women's history flourished in the late 1960s and early 1970s after the publication of Betty Freidan's *The Feminine Mystique*. Groundbreaking authors such as Aileen Kraditor, Nancy Cott, and Ellen Carol DuBois carefully analyzed the significance of the movement and its origins. As the field of women's history expanded, authors like Anne Firor Scott, who wrote *The Southern Lady: From Pedestal to Politics, 1830-1930*, researched the suffrage movement from the perspective of southern

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<sup>1</sup> "Women's Suffrage in Missouri," C-SPAN Video, 49:58. Posted by "C-SPAN," 23 August 2012. <http://www.c-span.org/video/?307551-1/womens-suffrage-missouri> (accessed on 12 March 2014).

suffragists. By the early 1990s, the field of women's history continued to develop into many different areas of analysis. Suffrage historians realized that their predecessors had made mistakes in their initial analysis of the movement. Early historians believed suffrage was a movement largely organized and fought for by upper class women. This misunderstanding was due in part to the fact that early historians focused on primary sources such as diaries, letters, and journals, all of which heavily favored the upper class women's viewpoint. It was not until historians began to look at court records, newspapers, and government documents did they realized that women from the middle and working classes played a significant role in advocating suffrage.

Historians of the 1990s such as Jane Jerome Camhi, Susan E. Marshall, and Rosalyn Terborg Penn also revised what historians from the 1960s and 70s wrote about the idea of a "sisterhood" bond among women in first wave feminism—often another term used to describe the suffrage movement. In part, the mythology of "sisterhood" asserted that women were wholly unified in the suffrage cause, yet Camhi and Marshall both refuted this claim with their books on the anti-suffrage movement and how women, not men, led many organizations that were anti-suffrage. Penn also used her book to argue that suffragists in both the North and South used racism in an effort to gain suffrage for white women, while ignoring the conditions of African-American women.

As the field of gender history continues to evolve, one key focus in its growth is local history. Jasper County's suffrage history is peculiar because of how progressive the movement was in Missouri and the United States. The region had an unusual number of suffragists who played a key role in the state and national suffrage movement, including Emily Newell Blair, Ella Harrison, and Martha Taaffe. The county also had multiple

dynamics that contributed to its progressive status. Not one factor caused the peculiarity of women's suffrage in Jasper County, but rather it was the combination of four important events: women's clubs, wealthy influential women, the support of local newspapers, and a large, supportive women's working class.

Another aspect of the effort that made Jasper County unique was its strategy to gain support. Jasper County followed neither a northern nor a southern model of suffrage activism, but rather it followed a type of "border-state" strategy. The northern suffrage movement centered its efforts on supporting a federal amendment to the Constitution to give women the right to the ballot. These activists kept all command staff and finances in one centralized place, and they focused on finding support for suffrage in large cities.

The southern strategy focused on a state-by-state movement. Southerners believed the key to gaining the woman's vote was by passing legislation with state led referendums, and they rejected the idea of a federal amendment. Laura Clay and Kate Gordon—both ardent southern suffragists—argued that they would rather not have suffrage than suffrage be "forced" upon them via a federal amendment. Southern suffragists also focused their movement on rural areas and maintained a grassroots strategy. They focused on recruiting local women who would garner support from their local communities.

Led by Ella Harrison, Jasper County used its own type of suffrage strategy in merging the northern and southern models. It followed the northern strategy of vying for a federal amendment, while at the same time it reached out to women in urban and rural settings using a grassroots movement. Harrison's idea of a border-state strategy was directly linked to the culture of Jasper County. During the Civil War, Jasper County

residents were torn between North and South, reflecting a cultural divide in the region. Even after the war, residents continued this divide, which was reflected in purely northern or southern political positions. As the national suffrage movements matured, this became an advantage as the efforts complemented each other instead of creating further division.

Jasper County influenced the Missouri suffrage movement in this “border-state” strategy because local resident Ella Harrison served as the President of the Missouri Equal Suffrage Association (MESA). Harrison worked to recruit women within a rural and urban grassroots movement, but at the same time she urged Missourians to support a federal amendment. She also worked to gain support for a state sponsored bill to gain suffrage within Missouri.

Jasper County influenced the national suffrage movement through the efforts of Emily Newell Blair and Congressman Perl Decker. Blair spent most of her adult life fighting for women’s suffrage, and after the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment, she continued to fight for women’s rights. She was a founding member of the League of Women Voters and served as the Vice President of the Democratic National Committee. Congressman Perl Decker of Joplin served in the Fifteenth Congressional District, which encompassed Jasper County. Decker was a staunch supporter of women’s rights and proposed a federal amendment for suffrage.

The history of suffrage does not end in Jasper County, or the United States, with the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment. Once women gained the right to the ballot box, many logistical barriers needed to be overcome. Local municipalities needed to print more ballots since the electorate had doubled, and local governments had to hire

additional staff to count and certify the ballots. Anti-suffragists did not give up their fight to stop women from voting until the Supreme Court settled the case in 1922.

Unfortunately towards the end of the 1920s, women had lost political power because they failed to unite as a voting bloc. It would not be until the 1970s when large numbers of American women once again united to fight for women's rights.

The history of Jasper County's suffrage movement is unique. Its residents united not only to gain suffrage for women in the area, but its culture was also unusually progressive. Local women served in roles that were usually only held by men in other parts of the United States. Fannie Williams, for example, was a physician in Joplin who treated men, women, and children. Lucy B. Lindsey was an ordained minister who preached in Jasper County in 1895. In 1913, Webb City constable Mrs. F.W. Blair arrested a man and took him to jail. Only three years earlier Los Angeles, California hired Alice Wells as the first female police officer in the United States. Annie Baxter won the county clerk election in 1890, thirty years prior to the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment. Women from the upper class of society called for reforms to help middle and working class women improve their working conditions and healthcare. Finally, local records indicate that Jasper County never had a formal anti-suffrage movement in any of the cities in the county. With all of these factors contributing to the culture of Jasper County and women uniting to make things better for their sex, one thing is clear: Jasper County has a peculiar history in regards to women's role in society and the fight for suffrage.

## Chapter II

### The National Stage is Set

“The true republic- men, their rights and nothing more; women, their rights and nothing less.”- Susan B. Anthony

On 2 November 1920, Mrs. Manera Johnston woke up to a cold and sunny morning at her home on Forest Street in Carthage, Missouri. She went through her daily routine of eating breakfast and dressed herself for her trip into town. As she stepped out of her home, she insisted upon using her cane to walk to the fifth ward’s voting location instead of using an automobile. Mrs. Johnston slowly made her way down the street towards what would be one of her proudest moments in her life; for the first time in her 106 years, she was able to cast her first vote in a general election.<sup>2</sup> The women of Jasper County who were able to have full suffrage in the 1920 presidential election were forever indebted to the suffrage movement on the state and federal level, and to the activists who engaged in the difficult process it took for women to gain the right to vote.

The story of how women finally won universal suffrage in the United States is one of a long and hard journey that has its origins in the Second Great Awakening. Early colonial women were entitled to more freedoms than women in European countries because they were a small minority and held power in the American colonies. They were physicians and attorneys, and some women were entitled to property and voting rights. In 1790, New Jersey was the first state to grant women the right to the ballot in the newly

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<sup>2</sup>“Her First Vote at 106,” *Carthage Press*, 4 November 1920.

formed republic. The state constitution granted, “all free inhabitants the right to vote.”<sup>3</sup> As more women came to the colonies and the gender ratio began to even out, they began to lose power. State governments passed laws mandating physicians be trained and certified by universities, and most universities barred women from medical school. In 1807, the New Jersey state legislature barred women the right to vote, fearing they gained too much political power. By the beginning of the nineteenth century, women in the United States had lost a significant amount of social and political power.<sup>4</sup>

The Second Great Awakening changed American culture, especially in the 1820s.<sup>5</sup> Women became religious leaders in Sunday school classes and church choirs, and they assisted in leading their congregations to help the local poor and sick. As women’s responsibilities grew in the community, they created bonds with other women, became active in political matters, and worked towards social change.<sup>6</sup> Northern women believed it was their moral duty to assist men in organizing abolitionist groups and to become involved in temperance. As the Second Great Awakening and abolitionism spread across the North, women around the United States quietly began contemplating the notion of expanding their own rights. This increase in women’s political fervor built up to the pivotal Seneca Falls Convention.

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<sup>3</sup> Marcia Amidon Lusted, *The Fight for Women’s Suffrage* (Edina, Minnesota: ABDO Publishing Company, 2011), 22.

<sup>4</sup> Gerda Lerner, *The Majority Finds Its Past: Placing Women in History* (New York, New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), 38.

<sup>5</sup> Nancy F. Cott, *The Bonds of Womanhood: “Woman’s Sphere” in New England, 1780-1835* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1977), 132.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 59.

Seneca Falls, New York was the home of this convention held on 19 and 20 July 1848. Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, two of the most significant women in attendance at the meeting, lectured on what rights women should be entitled to, and they encouraged other attendees to push for reforms in their communities and states. Stanton proposed a “Declaration of Sentiments” that explained what rights women were denied and what rights they demanded. The convention voted on each individual sentiment, the most controversial of which was if the Declaration should include voting rights for women. After much debate, Frederick Douglass, the only African-American in attendance, argued that women should be entitled the right to vote, and he argued for its inclusion in the list of other rights and demands. As the convention ended, Stanton and Mott both began to engage in a strategy to promote women’s rights and suffrage with speeches and solicitations throughout the country.

Within a short period of time, the suffrage campaign gathered momentum. In the spring of 1851, Stanton met a schoolteacher, Susan B. Anthony, who became one of her dearest friends as well as a strong suffragist.<sup>7</sup> The same year, Sojourner Truth delivered her infamous speech “Ain’t I a Woman?” before a crowd in Akron, Ohio, demanding that suffragists also focus their suffrage movement on black women.<sup>8</sup> By 1852, Lucy Stone joined the cause for women’s rights and proved to be an exceptional orator. Through the 1850s, Anthony, Stanton, and Stone addressed crowds of men and women promoting property rights, changes in divorce laws, and the right of women to have control over their own inheritance. Most historians agree that the suffrage movement transformed in

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<sup>7</sup> Faye E. Dudden, *Fighting Chance: The Struggle over Woman Suffrage and Black Suffrage in Reconstruction America* (New York, New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 5.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 19.



the 1850s from a movement based on social change to a movement strongly based in the political arena. With this transformation in the suffrage movement, women witnessed their first major legislative victory in 1860, when the New York General Assembly granted women property rights and the right to have guardianship over their children.<sup>9</sup> As women slowly gained rights in state legislatures, the outbreak of the Civil War once again changed the dynamics for the fight over women's rights and their pursuit of suffrage.

As the war commenced, women in both the Union and Confederacy sprang into action to help the war effort in any way they could. Women canned food for soldiers, made clothing, became spies, and led campaigns to recruit young women into the field of nursing. They put aside class distinctions and their fight for women's rights in an effort to band together and support the war efforts. As they banded together, they also took on leadership roles in nursing. Sally Louisa Tompkins, for example, was a nurse for the Confederacy, who was so proficient at her work that out of 1,300 patients she had in her hospital, only seventy-three died.<sup>10</sup> Because of Tompkins' valiant efforts, Jefferson Davis commissioned her as a Captain, making her the only known female officer during the Civil War.<sup>11</sup> Throughout the war, women demonstrated they were as valuable as men were to the war effort, but their desire for political equality was about to be tested, in particular in the state of Kansas.

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 28.

<sup>10</sup> Anne Firor Scott, *The Southern Lady: From Pedestal to Politics, 1830-1930* (University of Virginia Press, 1970), 85.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 85.

In 1866, African-Americans and women suffragists joined forces to create the American Equal Rights Association (AERA). The primary objective of the association was to promote equality for all Americans, regardless of race or sex. In the same year, Congress proposed the Fourteenth Amendment to give black men the right to vote. Prior to the proposal of the Fourteenth Amendment, the word “male” was never used in the Constitution, yet with its proposal only men could vote.<sup>12</sup> Suffragists and some abolitionists were outraged at this discrimination based on sex, and they quickly planned a campaign to gain women and black suffrage in Kansas. They focused on Kansas because it was Republican and therefore more progressive than other states, and suffragists believed that if this bellwether state passed suffrage, women could begin a process of winning suffrage across the United States state-by-state. The AERA established a massive state campaign to promote suffrage for all citizens in early 1867. Initially, activists for women and black suffrage appeared to be unified in the campaign, but by the early spring, tension grew between the two groups.

By summer, some in the campaign doubted that both measures would pass. Wendell Phillips, an ardent abolitionist and supporter of women’s suffrage, proposed that AERA should postpone their push for the women’s vote in Kansas and only support the black vote. He dubbed Kansas as the “negro’s hour” for the vote.<sup>13</sup> Stanton and Anthony were astonished at Phillips proposal to abandon women’s suffrage, and both women refused to abandon their own cause. At first the Republican Party in Kansas supported suffrage for both blacks and women, but an ultra-conservative faction within the state

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<sup>12</sup> Ellen DuBois, *Feminism and Suffrage: The Emergence of an Independent Women’s Movement, 1848-1869* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1978), 53.

<sup>13</sup> Dudden, 191.

party sided with Phillips and established a state anti-suffrage movement.<sup>14</sup> Feeling betrayed by the Kansas Republican Party, Anthony and Stanton took their case for women's suffrage directly to the people. Since the Republican Party betrayed Anthony and Stanton, they focused their efforts on the state Democrats, who numbered around twenty-five percent of registered Kansas voters. From early September through the 7 November election, Stanton and Anthony both rode in an open carriage from town to town speaking before crowds of people in support of suffrage.<sup>15</sup> They focused heavily on the border towns near Missouri, including towns near Jasper County, since most of the Kansas border towns tended to be more Democratic.

The split between women and black suffrage became worse when Stanton and Anthony agreed to align themselves with Democratic Presidential candidate George Francis Train, who agreed to travel around Kansas and campaign for women's suffrage. Train was an avid racist, and many in the AERA saw this as a betrayal by Stanton and Anthony in their support for black suffrage. Just one year before the Kansas referendum, Stanton had warned that suppressing the black vote in order to promote the white women's vote in the South was unacceptable.<sup>16</sup> Immediately prior to the 1867 referendum, however, Stanton began to write racist papers in an effort to gain support from Democrats in Kansas and gain momentum for women's suffrage. In that election, black suffrage lost in a three to one vote, and women had lost by an additional 2,000

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<sup>14</sup> Dubois, 91.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 92.

<sup>16</sup> Dudden, 11.

votes.<sup>17</sup> The campaign in Kansas was an utter failure, and the women's suffrage movement had also adopted a terrible path in supporting a racist argument. In part, this problematic strategy continued through the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment.

Racism became prominent in the women's suffrage movement in both the North and the South, especially after the Kansas referendum. Early historians in women's history failed to write about this racism because either they did not find the evidence or they simply ignored the evidence because it did not present a positive image for suffragists. Suffrage leaders prohibited black women from speaking before crowds and attending suffrage conventions. Elizabeth Cady Stanton once commented she did not want "ignorant Negroes and foreigners to make laws she would have to abide by."<sup>18</sup> As racism continued to flourish in the movement, Stanton and Anthony turned away from supporting the black vote and focused their attention solely on campaigning for women's suffrage. By 1869, internal conflicts within the AERA caused a split within the organization. Lucy Stone and Henry Blackwell created the American Woman Suffrage Association (AWSA) to promote universal suffrage and equality for women and blacks. Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton created the National Woman Suffrage Association (NWSA) to support only women's suffrage.<sup>19</sup> In four short years, internal conflicts had divided the suffrage movement, rendering it nearly inoperable.

On 10 December 1869, Wyoming became the first territory of the United States to retain full suffrage for women. Citizens of the territory had argued that this issue was

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<sup>17</sup> Dubois, 96.

<sup>18</sup> Rosalyn Terborg-Penn, *African American Women in the Struggle for the Vote, 1850-1920* (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1998), 33.

<sup>19</sup> Dudden, 8.

critical to the creation of their state, and in 1896—when Congress debated Wyoming’s statehood—Congressional leaders sent a telegram to Cheyenne addressing their concerns over allowing women to vote. In response, the Governor sternly replied in his telegram to Washington that, “Wyoming would remain out of the Union 100 years rather than join without woman suffrage.” In 1896, Congress admitted Wyoming into the Union with the inclusion of women’s suffrage in its state constitution.<sup>20</sup> Aside from the victory in Wyoming and another in Utah, the suffrage movement was stagnant throughout the 1870s and early 1880s because of internal conflicts. The NWSA and AWSA had separate conventions and were constantly attacking one another in the press. By the late 1880s, Lucy Stone realized neither organization was successfully promoting women’s suffrage, so she extended an invitation to Stanton and Anthony to meet on a possible unification of the organizations. After a lengthy compromise and much discussion, Anthony and Stanton accepted, and in 1890, the NWSA and AWSA unified as the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA). This combined organization eventually led suffragists to victory.

While NAWSA was unifying, the southern states began to take more interest in suffrage. The South had prolific suffragists, such as the Grimké sisters, but the movement had not gained popularity in the region until the late 1880s, an entire generation after women in the North began fighting for the cause. Southern suffrage took longer to generate because antebellum abolition promoted women’s suffrage in the North, and that movement was nearly non-existent in the South. In addition, the South was more rural than the North, so women did not meet as frequently. Furthermore,

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<sup>20</sup> Donna L. Dickerson, *The Reconstruction Era: Primary Documents on Events from 1865-1877* (Westport, Connecticut: The Greenwood Press, 2003), 223.

dominating male figures in the family and in the church focused more closely on women's activities. Southern men believed it was necessary to monitor women's activities closely in order to uphold southern honor. Two important changes in southern culture pushed women's suffrage into the forefront. Women gained influence in the church and slowly gained leadership roles in Sunday schools and church choirs. In the 1880s, Progressivism came to the South and began to challenge the everyday culture of the region. Progressivism allotted women the opportunity to gain leadership roles in school reforms and health reforms while networking and building leadership bonds with other southern women. As these women built bonds with each other, they began to define their progressive work as a type of maternalism. They deemed this maternalism as a way for women to help improve society through social reforms, which led many women to begin thinking about suffrage as an important cause.

Most suffrage activists in the South were middle and upper class women. In contrast to the North's centralized suffrage organizational strategy, they organized their movement based on a grassroots strategy.<sup>21</sup> For years, southern men used the argument that women did not need the vote because men already voted for legislation that was important to women. By the end of the 1880s, women were lobbying for labor laws to protect women and children in the work force; however, male legislators refused to pass reforms. At this point, southern women realized they needed the ballot box in order to promote their own reforms.

The southern suffrage movement had two distinct periods of growth with the first beginning in the early 1890s after the creation of NAWSA. Suffrage leaders from

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<sup>21</sup> Elna C. Green, *Southern Strategies: Southern Women and the Women Suffrage Question* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 5.

NAWSA recruited women from both southern and border states to travel through the South and promote suffrage in local communities while building a grassroots movement. One of the most important women that promoted this grassroots movement was Miss Ella Harrison from Carthage, Missouri, the county seat of Jasper County. Throughout most of 1897, Harrison travelled through small communities in Louisiana and Mississippi advocating suffrage. Harrison reported to NAWSA that the effort was going to be difficult in the South because most women simply did not want the vote.<sup>22</sup> The second wave of growth occurred around 1900, when NAWSA shifted the focus of suffrage from a local grassroots effort to promoting the creation of state led suffrage organizations. This second period of growth in southern suffrage continued through to the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment.

As NAWSA continued to send women to the South to promote suffrage during the 1890s, influential upper class women began to join small suffrage societies. By the end of the nineteenth century, multiple suffrage societies existed across the entire region. The most influential leader to bridge the national suffrage movement with these small southern societies was Laura Clay of Kentucky. As an officer for NAWSA from 1895-1911, Clay encouraged southern women to join the national movement.<sup>23</sup> She urged NAWSA to hold its national convention in the deep South to gain support for the suffrage movement, and in 1895 NAWSA held its first national convention outside of

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 8.

<sup>23</sup> Marjorie Spruill Wheeler, *New Women of the New South: The Leaders of the Woman Suffrage Movement in the Southern States* (New York, New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), xvii.

Washington, D.C. in Atlanta, Georgia.<sup>24</sup> Clay's knowledge of the effort in the South was invaluable to the national movement, and while she supported the national movement, she was an avid promoter of the state-by-state strategy. Clay understood that in order for suffrage to work in the South, it had to come from the state legislatures. One of the most influential southern state-by-state organizations was the Kentucky Equal Rights Association, which she created and led. Clay helped groom another influential leader in the suffrage movement, Madeline McDowell Breckinridge, and together they worked to spread the fight across the South. By 1913, Breckinridge rose to be the Vice President of NAWSA.<sup>25</sup> Thanks to Breckinridge and Clay's efforts, the South's two suffrage groups in 1910 had expanded to over eighty-one separate organizations in the region by 1917.<sup>26</sup>

While the suffrage strategy looked promising, suffragists had many obstacles to overcome. The first in a series of internal conflicts that challenged the movement was the "Doldrums Period." During this period, which lasted from 1896 to 1909, the suffrage movement lost most of its momentum and went through a vast revamping and reorganizing. No state in the Union passed suffrage during the Doldrums, and many women lost interest while the anti-suffragists gained support. The Doldrums began when a majority of the first-generation suffragists were too ill or aged to continue their support for the movement, and others, such as Elizabeth Cady Stanton (1902) and Susan B. Anthony (1906), died. Soon, second generation activists began to take the vacated positions. From 1890 until 1892, Elizabeth Cady Stanton was the first president of NAWSA, and Anthony assumed the role from 1892 until 1900. In 1900 NAWSA elected

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 21.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., xviii.

<sup>26</sup> Scott, 179.



Carrie Chapman Catt as president; she was the first of the second-generation women to lead the movement. As they assumed leadership roles, this generation began to reorganize NAWSA and create new strategies. They lost the support of many women during this reorganization because NAWSA failed to focus on maintaining membership. The reorganization of NAWSA was ultimately successful, however, and the Doldrums finally ended in 1910 when Washington State passed women's suffrage.<sup>27</sup>

Prior to the 1990s, historians largely overlooked the anti-suffrage movement as a sporadic and insignificant movement, yet recent discoveries on the topic reveal that anti-suffragists [hereafter Antis] were a powerful force suffragists had to reckon with. The Antis of the North were wealthy, protestant, urban, native-born, white Republicans who felt that if immigrant women received the ballot, they would become demoralized by the "evil" of politics and this would lead to the eternal moral decay of American society. Antis in the South were wealthy and middle-class, Protestant, rural and urban, native-born, white Democrats who believed if women received suffrage, especially black women, the South would face the destruction of white supremacy.<sup>28</sup> Originally, the anti-suffrage movement began in the 1870s with small informal meetings. As the movement grew, Antis created regional and state led organizations, largely led by women, to campaign against suffrage. As these campaigns grew, women held meetings to promote anti-suffrage and formed a massive campaign to send out flyers and letters to promote

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<sup>27</sup> Scott, 22.

<sup>28</sup> Jane Jerome Camhi, *Women against Women: American Anti-Suffragism, 1880-1920* (Brooklyn, New York: Carlson Publishing, 1994), 2-4.

their position. By the end of the nineteenth century, Antis had successfully created a significant campaign.<sup>29</sup>

In 1911, Antis created a national organization, the National Association Opposed to Woman Suffrage (NAOWS), to promote their interest throughout the nation. Its primary goals were to nationalize the movement and to have a centralized organization to take on NAWSA. NAOWS held national conventions while distributing flyers and holding rallies.<sup>30</sup> Southern Antis argued that if black women received the ballot, this could end white supremacy in the southern states: it would, after all be unacceptable to use intimidation and physical violence against women as was done with black men if they attempted to vote.<sup>31</sup> Antis and men in several of the southern state legislatures argued that the majority of the vote would come from black women since the 1910 census showed 59.2 percent of women in the South were blacks.<sup>32</sup> Even though they presented a formidable adversary to suffrage, Antis eventually went on to lose their campaign due to lack of funds and a lack of strong leadership.

The old rivalry between northern and southern suffragists continued to present a significant challenge within the movement. In 1904, Anna Howard Shaw assumed the role as President of NAWSA. She promoted a national amendment but believed the real key to success in suffrage was with a state-by-state strategy. Some of the southern

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<sup>29</sup> Susan E. Marshall, *Splintered Sisterhood: Gender and Class in the Campaign against Woman Suffrage* (Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1997), 185-92.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 203.

<sup>31</sup> Green, 99.

<sup>32</sup> Wheeler, 127.

suffragists became concerned about the power NAWSA was building and were concerned that it was taking control away from southern state led organizations.

As the movement continued to grow after the Doldrums, supporters and detractors used racism as a weapon in their arsenals. In 1906, for example, Belle Kearney, a well-known southern suffragist, asked NAWSA to support a resolution calling for suffrage so that women in the South could use the vote to rid the region of the “Negro Problem.” The “Negro Problem” was the mythology that blacks in the South caused most of the lawlessness, and a paternalistic white supremacy had to continue in the South in order to maintain stability. Ultimately, the delegates of NAWSA soundly defeated the measure.<sup>33</sup>

After the failure of Kearney’s resolution, southern suffragists turned their strategy to pleading with northern suffragists to promote only white suffrage; again, most northern suffragists ignored this request. NAWSA urged southern suffragists to end their quest to continue disenfranchisement of black women and instead support universal suffrage. Kate Gordon, a well-known activist from Louisiana, and Laura Clay, refused to give up their push for white only suffrage.<sup>34</sup> The internal conflicts between North and South elevated when southern suffragists held their own convention in New Orleans in November of 1914 to discuss their approach. Kate Gordon proposed the creation of the Southern States Woman Suffrage Conference (SSWSC) to gain suffrage through state amendments and to circumvent NAWSA. By 1 May 1914, SSWSC established its headquarters in New Orleans and had elected Kate Gordon as President and Laura Clay

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 121.

<sup>34</sup> Jean H. Baker, *Votes for Women: The Struggle for Suffrage Revisited* (New York, New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 109.

as Vice President.<sup>35</sup> The two most important topics of SSWSC were to promote white only women's suffrage and to have suffrage passed by state amendments. Overall, the split between NAWSA and SSWSC created multiple problems and continued to be a challenge until 1920.

Southern suffragists' worst fears came true when Carrie Chapman Catt was re-elected as President of NAWSA in 1915. Catt believed the only path for success was through a federal amendment. Southerners were outraged that NAWSA had ignored their requests for state only suffrage.<sup>36</sup> Clay pleaded with Catt that just as women of the North and West understood the culture in their regions, NAWSA needed to extend the same respect to southern women.<sup>37</sup> Catt ignored these pleas and continued to push for a federal amendment, and in response, Kate Gordon publicly condemned any support of a federal amendment. Although NAWSA pleaded with southern suffragists to join their cause to show a consolidated support for a federal amendment, many of the southern suffragists still refused to join the national cause.

Suffragists continued to have internal conflicts that slowed their path to the vote, but by 1915 universal suffrage gained popularity with a majority of Americans. In 1893, NAWSA had just over 13,150 members, and by 1917, the membership had grown to over two million.<sup>38</sup> Catt's reorganization of NAWSA helped to gain membership and interest in the movement, and her push for a federal amendment gained national attention. Many

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<sup>35</sup> Wheeler, 142-4.

<sup>36</sup> Green, 5.

<sup>37</sup> Aileen Kraditor, *The Ideas of the Woman Suffrage Movement 1890-1920* (New York, New York: W.W. Norton, 1965), 186.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

political leaders in state and federal legislative bodies began to support universal women's suffrage because several states in the northeast and west passed at least partial if not full suffrage, and they feared they would lose elections in their own districts if they did not support the national movement.<sup>39</sup> The only region of the United States that was staunchly against women's suffrage was the South. Southern politicians felt secure in their districts to oppose women's suffrage, and they were particularly against a federal amendment that would impede on states' rights. In an effort to fight against southern politicians and Antis, Catt sent women throughout the United States to begin a nationwide campaign.

One of the women Catt recruited to help fight the national movement was Emily Newell Blair of Jasper County, who began her fight for the movement in 1909 with her first publication in *Woman's Home Companion*. By 1915, Blair was heavily involved in the national scene and was a founding member of the League of Women Voters. Blair's grassroots strategy helped to pass suffrage in many of the Midwestern states. Later in her career, she became the Vice President of the Democratic National Committee, the first woman to hold an office in the party leadership.

Money issues had always plagued the movement, especially for NAWSA; even though its members were from wealthy families, many family members refused to allow suffragists to donate funds to their cause. In 1914, Mrs. Frank Leslie, the widow of a wealthy New York publisher, donated one million dollars to NAWSA to help finish the fight. Catt immediately appropriated the money by allotting \$200,000 towards increasing the staff and pay at NAWSA. She then set aside \$400,000 for publications, and the remaining \$400,000 was to be budgeted into a slush fund. With this large donation,

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 6.

NAWSA finally had adequate funds to finish the final push.<sup>40</sup> Catt also created a “winning plan,” which lobbied Congress for a federal amendment—against the wishes of southern suffragists—and increased the power of the movement to a more centralized organization within NAWSA. Emily Newell Blair and Ella Harrison both supported Catt’s “winning plan” strategy and helped to promote it throughout the country.<sup>41</sup> At the outbreak of World War I, Catt threw her support behind the war efforts, even though she was a strong supporter of the Woman’s Peace Party and in private was hesitant on American entrance into the European conflict. She feared that if NAWSA took a stance against the war, this would destroy support for the movement. The American news media, after all, supported the United States entrance into World War I, and public opinion strongly favored this action.

On 26 September 1918, President Woodrow Wilson appealed to the United States Senate to pass a suffrage amendment. After much debate and multiple failed votes in Congress, on 4 June 1919 Congress submitted the Nineteenth Amendment, also known as the “Anthony Amendment,” for ratification by the states.<sup>42</sup> For over seventy years women had worked hard to gain their right to vote. Now they were only thirty-six states away from finally having the ballot; the national stage was set.

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<sup>40</sup> Baker, 138-40.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 140.

<sup>42</sup> Wheeler, 162, 172.

## Chapter III

### Show-Me Votes for Women

“It is impossible that this can be a republican government, in which one-half the citizens thereof are forever disenfranchised.”<sup>43</sup> - Virginia Minor

Historians overlook Missouri when writing about the history of suffrage and instead focus on the Northeastern part of the United States, but Missouri was important to the cause. Even though the majority of Missouri suffrage history focuses on St. Louis, Kansas City, and Columbia, each region of the state contributed to the fight. Missouri was part of the original western frontier, so its cultural views of women were different from that of the North and South. In addition, women played a more progressive role in society and family life with more freedoms, even though state politics often ignored this condition. The suffrage movement in Missouri has its origins in the Second Great Awakening, but political efforts truly began during the Civil War. Missouri remained in the Union at the outbreak of the war, but it also retained the institution of slavery. Missourians disagreed on remaining in the Union; a large portion of southern counties in the state wanted to secede with the Confederacy, while the majority of northern counties in the state wanted to stay loyal to the Union. Some parts of the state still had anomalies with Confederate leaning counties in northern Missouri and Union leaning counties in southern Missouri. This regional split between North and South not only occurred during the Civil War, but it also reflected how women from northern and southern Missouri approached the suffrage question.

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<sup>43</sup> *The National Park Service*, “Virginia Minor and Women’s Right to Vote,” <http://www.nps.gov/jeff/historyculture/the-virginia-minor-case.htm> (accessed 9 January 2014).

During the Civil War, Missouri women joined in the war effort to become spies and nurses, and they assisted in making equipment for the soldiers. One nursing auxiliary that was significant during the war was the Ladies Union Aid Society of St. Louis (LUAS), which was composed of women who joined the Union as nurses to aid wounded soldiers. After the end of the war, these women continued their important work by refocusing on women's issues. On 8 May 1867, the LUAS became the Woman Suffrage Association of St. Louis (WSA).<sup>44</sup> As it was the fourth largest city in the United States and included many influential residents, St. Louis was an important city to Missouri in the fight for suffrage. Suffragists knew that if they could persuade influential people to support their cause, they would be successful overall.

Many of the women who joined the WSA came from families with political power and wealth from St. Louis and its immediate metropolitan municipalities. For example, Adaline and Phoebe Cousins, who established and led the organization, were the wife and daughter of the St. Louis Police Chief. The success of the WSA caught the attention of Susan B. Anthony, who visited the organization in 1867 and encouraged it to continue to fight for women in the Show-Me state. She also encouraged the WSA to fight for the woman's vote on the state level when the Fourteenth Amendment was ratified. The WSA took Anthony's advice and collected over 350 signatures to ask the Missouri General Assembly to extend the vote to women in the state. The legislature ignored the WSA and voted down the bill, but the suffragists did not give up their fight.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Linda K. Kerber, *No Constitutional Right to be Ladies* (New York, New York: Hill and Wang, 1998), 102.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 102.



While the WSA continued its fight with the legislature, another member of the organization was about to take her fight through the American court system.

Virginia Louisa Minor was born on 27 March 1824 in Caroline County, Virginia; when she was still young, her family moved to St. Louis. At the age of twenty-two, she married her cousin Francis Minor, who was educated at Princeton and received his law degree from the University of Virginia. Virginia and Francis both enjoyed politics and were deeply involved in the Missouri Republican Party. Francis was the clerk for the Missouri State Supreme Court and had many connections within state politics.<sup>46</sup> The couple both believed in universal suffrage, and on 15 October 1872, Virginia decided to go to the voting registrar in St. Louis to register to vote under the Fourteenth Amendment. When the registrar refused, Francis took up his wife's case in the court system. As the couple battled through the court system, they held rallies and sent out flyers supporting suffrage. The couple also reached out to working class and immigrant women to gain support for their cause, which was an unheard-of strategy in the suffrage movement, since most suffragists focused solely on white middle and upper class native-born Americans.<sup>47</sup> The Minors argued that women should not have to pay taxes since they were not able to vote. Even though they lost their court case in both the local court and Missouri State Supreme Court, they continued their battle. They took their final appeal to the Supreme Court where Virginia Minor argued that the state and federal legislators had failed to secure women the right to vote, so she and her husband looked to the Supreme Court to gain women the ballot. They argued if the Supreme Court failed to

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<sup>46</sup> Margot McMillen, *The Golden Lane: How Missouri Women Gained the Vote and Changed History* (Charleston, South Carolina: The History Press, 2011.), 25-8.

<sup>47</sup> Kerber., 102.

give women the right to the ballot, then women needed to have the same rights as Native Americans and be exempt from taxation.<sup>48</sup> The Supreme Court unanimously sided with the State of Missouri and argued that voting laws were solely the responsibility of the legislative branch of government.<sup>49</sup>

Throughout the 1870s and early 1880s, suffrage efforts spread through Missouri with the emergence of women's clubs. Wealthy women who wanted a way to come together and create a community with other females, began to establish women's clubs as a way to discuss books and local events. As the women's clubs progressed through the 1880s, members began to discuss politics and became involved in political debates. Many of these women's clubs were the beginning of the state's suffrage movement, because participating women were involved in political matters and wanted to have the same political opportunities as men.<sup>50</sup>

Two of the most influential clubs were the Wednesday Club of St. Louis and a women's club founded at Congregational Church in Kansas City. The Wednesday Club was organized in 1890 by author Kate Chopin, known as an early feminist author, and Charlotte Eliot, mother of T.S. Eliot. Originally, it was a book club, but it soon evolved into an organization that recruited influential women to support the suffrage cause in the state. The Congregational Church Club, formed in 1892, quickly turned into the Equal

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<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 103.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 89.

<sup>50</sup> Karen J. Blair, *The Clubwoman as Feminist: True Womanhood Redefined, 1868-1914* (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1980), 5.

Suffrage Association of Kansas City, led by Kersey Coates, and it campaigned for suffrage throughout Kansas City.<sup>51</sup>

While northern and southeastern Missouri had several different women's clubs, Southwest Missouri, primarily Jasper County, had an unusually large number of women's clubs for the state. Local historians agree that it is impossible to know the exact number of clubs in the county, but the city of Carthage alone had dozens of different women's clubs. The number of clubs in Jasper County made the area quite progressive on women's suffrage.

With the emergence of women's clubs and their active roles in politics, the suffrage movement exploded in the state through the 1880s and early 1890s. However, Missouri suffragists noticed that by the end of the 1890s, women were losing interest in the movement. Suffragists appealed to the western side of Missouri in an attempt to encourage more women to join the effort. They held state conventions in St. Joseph in 1898 and in Kansas City the following year, but just as the national movement was facing the Doldrums, so did the state of Missouri. Missouri suffragists labeled the Doldrums as the "Middle Ages" of suffrage and compared it to the medieval times in Europe.<sup>52</sup> Women continued to leave the movement as NAWSA reorganized its leadership. It would not be until 1910 when Missouri suffrage took on a type of renaissance.

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<sup>51</sup> Saunders, John. "The Women of the Clubs: 1890-1920." *Preservation Issues* 6, no. 2 (July 1995): 281.

<sup>52</sup> Marie B. Ames, Emily Newell Blair, Christine Oorick Fordyce, "History of Woman Suffrage in Missouri," *The Missouri Historical Review* 14, no. 3-4 (April-July 1920): 299.

Missouri's three prominent suffrage organizations united on 14 February 1911 to create the Missouri Equal Suffrage Association (MESA).<sup>53</sup> With one united organization, the activists were able to combine their resources and money to promote an agenda throughout the entire state. Traditional divisions caused state suffragists to be at odds with each other on how to push the state suffrage agenda. Women from the northern part of Missouri believed it more logical to have MESA push the agenda by holding statewide rallies and lobbying the General Assembly in Jefferson City. Southern Missouri suffragists feared that MESA would only hold rallies in larger cities and ignore the suffrage movement in their part of the state. The southern part of the state wanted suffrage passed through a grassroots effort by mobilizing local communities to lobby their state senators and representatives and to hold local rallies. By 1914, a majority of the state modeled the push for suffrage after Jasper County Missouri's strategy to infuse a grassroots movement into statewide lobbying.

Other parts of Missouri recruited women to the suffrage movement in different ways. Cape Girardeau—in the southeastern part of the state—had a large anti-suffrage movement. In response, suffragists invited Antis to political debates in many of the local communities to persuade people to their side. Joplin and Carthage were almost completely pro-suffrage, and politicians from the region had lobbied for years to gain universal suffrage at both the state and federal level with little progress. Women from the region rose to the state and national ranks with the suffrage movement, including Ella Harrison, Emily Newell Blair, and Annie Baxter. In the northwestern part of Missouri, Maryville sent its all-women's musical band—the only one in the United States—to play at NAWSA's Women's National Suffrage Rally held on 3 March 1913 in Washington, D.C.

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<sup>53</sup> McMillen, 55.

The Maryville Women's Band actually helped detour some men who were rushing into the streets to attack the suffragists because they were shocked at the sight of women playing such "wonderful music."<sup>54</sup> Kansas City continued to expand its movement by holding large rallies in the city. The women around Jefferson City continued to lobby the General Assembly for suffrage. St. Louis held two important events that helped to gain traction for women's rights. The first was on 30 September 1913 when women suffragists held a parade in the city and used thirty cars to travel down the streets. Women captured the attention of the national media when they walked along the parade route with banners saying "Votes for Women."<sup>55</sup> The second event took place on 2 May 1914 when St. Louis suffragists held a rally on National Suffrage Day in an effort to promote the movement with city leaders. Kate Richards O'Hare—a leading suffragist—addressed a group of men near the St. Louis Courthouse demanding women gain the right to vote. (See Figure 1) O'Hare was passionate about her belief in suffrage, and was not afraid to voice her opinions on why women deserved the ballot. She, like many suffragists, was tired of men denying them the ballot, even though suffragists offered every logical explanation to gain the right to vote.<sup>56</sup>

In the spring of 1913, MESA gathered over 14,000 signatures from people across the state in support of a bill for suffrage. Women believed this to be their strongest position yet to gain suffrage. Representative Roney of Jasper County submitted the petition to the General Assembly and proposed a bill in support for women's suffrage. Initially the bill appeared to have enough votes to pass, but after a long debate on the

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<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 65.

<sup>55</sup> Ames, Blair, Fordyce, 304.

Senate floor, the measure was defeated.<sup>57</sup> After the defeat of the bill, women throughout the state became discouraged at their lack of progress. They needed something that would capture the attention of their cause and gain support for the suffrage movement. Emily Newell Blair—a native of Jasper County—came up with an idea in 1916 that changed the dynamics of suffrage in Missouri and across the nation.

On 14 June 1916, the Democratic National Committee held its Presidential convention in St. Louis at the Jefferson Hotel to nominate Woodrow Wilson for a second term as President. During his first term in office, he did not support women's suffrage. In February of 1916, Emily Newell Blair met with state and national suffrage leaders who were frustrated with the lack of support suffrage had received.<sup>58</sup> Blair proposed that women needed to protest the Democratic Convention not by being vocal, but rather by lining up silently and staring at the delegates as they exited the Jefferson Hotel. On 14 June at ten o'clock, women from across the entire United States descended upon Locust Street in St. Louis and lined up for over one mile on each side of the street waiting for the delegates to exit the convention. The suffragists wore golden sashes that read "Votes for Women."<sup>59</sup> As the delegates came walking out of the convention, all they could see for blocks were women lined up silently staring at them. The media went into a frenzy with the story, and multiple papers across the nation printed a jingle about the Golden Lane Protest:

Citizen and Democrat Marching down the Golden Lane, Marching out to  
nominate Wilson for a candidate. How the Democrats did hate Marching down

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<sup>57</sup> Ibid., 307-8.

<sup>58</sup> McMillen, 77.

<sup>59</sup> McMillen, 13.

the Golden Lane. Silence! My, but it did talk Marching down the Golden Lane. Fast the delegates did walk, Marching down the Golden Lane? But they couldn't get away from the "Women's Votes" display. They'll all recall for many a day Marching down the Golden Lane.<sup>60</sup>

Blair's strategy worked; the protesters gained national attention. The movement in Missouri was about to experience success, but first women had to align in support of another war.

When the United States entered World War I, Missouri suffragists sprang into action and supported the military. They helped to collect food for the soldiers and they knitted clothing and sewed uniforms. At the same time, they also helped to write and distribute pamphlets that demonstrated how suffragists in Missouri were involved in the war effort. These activities caught the attention of state politicians as well as women in the leadership of NAWSA. In 1918, Carrie Chapman Catt requested that NAWSA hold its national convention in St. Louis to promote suffrage in the state and give thanks to the hard work Missourians had performed for the cause. MESA was ecstatic to have the national NAWSA convention in Missouri in March 1919. Catt informed the women of Missouri that the 1919 convention was one of the best any state had hosted for NAWSA.<sup>61</sup>

On 8 January 1919, Missouri women were cautiously optimistic about a bill that was to come before the General Assembly. The first bill introduced in the newly constructed Missouri State Capital—called "Bill One"—was to give women the right to vote in presidential elections. Walter E. Bailey, Republican from Joplin, proposed the bill to the House of Representatives. After several hours of debate on the House floor,

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<sup>60</sup> Ames, Blair, Fordyce, 303.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., 322.

the speaker called for a vote. The suffrage bill passed the House by a margin of 122-8.<sup>62</sup> Suffragists knew the real battle, however, was to take place in the Senate. The Senate brought the bill before the floor and debated for hours. Anti-Suffrage Senators made two attempts to kill the bill, both of which were held off by Senator Howard Gray of Jasper County. Suffragist Senators were not confident that they had the vote, so they tabled the bill for the next two months.<sup>63</sup>

When NAWSA held its convention in St. Louis, Senators who supported suffrage believed this was their opportunity to gain women the right to vote for President. On 27 March, they quietly agreed to propose the bill the following day. As they went through the list of Senators who were present to vote, only Senator Howard Gray was missing from the list. Senator Gray was in the Bootheel of Missouri on business, and due to the conditions of the roads from Caruthersville to Jefferson City, it was impossible to get him to the Senate on time. Without his vote, the bill would not pass. Edward F. Goltra, committeeperson for the Democratic National Committee, offered to commandeer a special train to transport the Republican Senator from St. Louis to Jefferson City.<sup>64</sup> On the morning of 28 March, the Senate called for a vote on the Presidential Suffrage Bill. Anti-Suffrage Senators believed they had the votes to bring down the bill until Senator Howard Gray stepped onto the floor of the Senate and cast the deciding vote.<sup>65</sup> When the NAWSA convention received a telegraph about the passage of the suffrage bill, the

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid., 338-9.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., 340.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., 341.

<sup>65</sup> "Suff Rally a Big Affair," *Carthage Press*, 26 August 1920.



attendees were ecstatic. On 5 April 1919, Governor Frederick D. Gardner signed the bill giving women the right to vote in a presidential election. Missouri women were one-step closer to full suffrage.

In June of 1919, Missouri women had more to celebrate when Congress passed the Nineteenth Amendment and sent it to the states for ratification. There was a race among the states to be the first to ratify. Missouri wanted to be the tenth state but was in a race with its neighbor to the north, Iowa. Governor Gardner called a special session of the General Assembly to vote for on 2 July, but the Senate postponed for one day because Senator Clark Wix of Butler County, who was an ardent supporter for suffrage had died. The Senate passed a resolution to honor the Senator and the vote was set for 3 July.<sup>66</sup> The next day the General Assembly voted on and ratified the Nineteenth Amendment. A telegram arrived in the General Assembly notifying the Legislation that Iowa had ratified the Anthony Amendment just minutes before, making Missouri the eleventh state to ratify.<sup>67</sup> On the same day, Governor Gardner signed off on Missouri's ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment.<sup>68</sup> (See Figure 2)

Women across the state rejoiced at the fact that the Show-Me state had finally recognized Missouri women's right to vote. Missouri women had fought for over fifty years to secure this right and were close to seeing their dreams come true. Women in the Show-Me state and in the rest of the country were only twenty-five states away from their goal.

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<sup>66</sup>McMillen, 110.

<sup>67</sup>McMillen, 110.

## Chapter IV

### The Origins of Suffrage in Jasper County

“Is there a man here who does not realize that no battle in the history of the world has ever been fought in which the women did not bear the burdens equally with the men ... The women who work and toil and bear the burdens with the men who carry on the war should have the right to vote.”<sup>69</sup> - Congressman Perl Decker, Missouri 15<sup>th</sup> Congressional District

Women’s history is a developing field that needs additional research focused on local movements, and this is especially true in southwest Missouri. Jasper County was peculiar compared to the rest of the state because it was unusually progressive towards its stance on suffrage and women’s rights. While St. Louis and Kansas City had large populations that supported suffrage, the majority of those supporters were women; in Jasper County, the majority of women and *men* supported suffrage. One can turn to the local newspapers to see the staunch support the county citizens had for women’s suffrage. In addition, many politicians from the region adamantly supported women’s suffrage on the local, state, and national level.

Jasper County’s unusually progressive position was the result of many factors: a large working class, a significant number of women’s clubs, women who supported suffrage who were influential in county politics, being part of the western frontier, and the lingering influence of the Second Great Awakening. Jasper County was also unique because its approach to suffrage was neither a model for northern or southern suffrage, but rather a combination of both; this was the strategy the Missouri Equal Suffrage Association later adopted to win suffrage throughout the state. The women and men of

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<sup>69</sup> Perl Decker, 1917 “Woman Suffrage,” Papers of Congressman Decker, F.16-20 Missouri State Historical Society: Columbia, Missouri, p. 588.

the county were also involved in the suffrage movement on a local, state, and national level. With both sexes working together in an effort to push the suffragist agenda, the county produced a unique culture during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In order to understand how Jasper County developed into a progressive region for women, one must understand the earliest history of the county.

The county has five distinct periods in its history that influenced the suffrage movement: the pioneer era; conflict during the Civil War; Reconstruction; the Mining Era; and the development of Jasper County during the Progressive Era. Prior to European settlement, the Osage Tribe lived and controlled the region. In 1831, the first known settler came to the area, and there is evidence that by 1834, the county was experiencing the Second Great Awakening. The first known local church was the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, at which women soon acquired leadership roles. Historical accounts from the early 1840s show that local women knew how to shoot and work alongside men on the farm. In part because the gender ratio was unequal, those local women experienced more power and freedom relative to women from the established parts of the United States.<sup>70</sup>

In 1855, women throughout southwest Missouri secured an important opportunity with the creation of the Carthage Female Academy. Local communities believed education was important for their young women, so they decided to explore the possibility of opening a school. In 1860, five years after the charter was approved, the school opened its doors where female students learned homemaking, reading,

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<sup>70</sup> Livingston, 9.

mathematics, and writing.<sup>71</sup> At the same time, the population was beginning to increase because of the discovery of zinc, iron, lead, limestone, and ore. Burgeoning mining operations caused the creation of a large male working-class population; many of these miners brought families into the area, leading to a significant female demographic.

At the outbreak of the Civil War, women placed their suffrage cause on hold and immediately went to assist in the war efforts in any way possible. The majority of Jasper County wanted to secede with the Confederacy, but some of the residents, primarily along the Kansas state line, wanted to remain loyal to the Union. The war led to an embittered internal conflict between northern and southern sympathizers in the county. Union loyalists from Kansas named Jayhawkers, and Confederate sympathizers from Missouri named Bushwhackers descended on the area; the clash between these two groups of violent radicals led to the destruction of many towns in Jasper County.<sup>72</sup> The turmoil expanded when Union soldiers burned down the city of Sherwood after discovering a band of Bushwhackers who had attacked and killed a regiment of local Kansas blacks. In 1863, guerillas burned the courthouse in Carthage, and many county residents left the area. By war's end, the county was almost completely deserted.

Jasper County did not witness a return of population until the early 1870s, when the mining business once again flourished. The development of a large working class through the 1870s and into the 1880s led directly to the increase in women's rights in local communities. Women gained power as they once had prior to the Civil War, and they worked to establish their rights as county citizens. The first known publication in

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<sup>71</sup> Ibid., 26.

<sup>72</sup> Bruce Nichols, *Guerilla Warfare in Civil Missouri, 1863* (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company, 2007), 57-9.

the county to support women's suffrage came in December of 1866 when an unnamed local woman wrote to the *Carthage Weekly Banner* arguing that women should have the right to vote. The author went on to say, "The widow bears the burden of society, pays taxes, and is a specimen of taxation without representation."<sup>73</sup> This article appeared only eighteen years after Seneca Falls and when women's issues were not so openly discussed in the East, much less on the western frontier. The paper carried no corresponding stories, editorials, or letters that were vindictive towards female suffrage. The first woman in Jasper County had publicly asked for her right to the ballot.

Local communities in the 1870s and 80s developed with differing demographics and wealth; this led to unique political distinctions between women in each settlement. By the early 1880s, Joplin was composed of a large working class, with a small number of wealthy women living in the city; the city had little political clout in county politics. The lack of political power in Joplin was directly linked to it being a mining town with few political connections. Webb City, Sarcoxie, and Cartersville also had a large working class, but unlike Joplin, these three cities had a larger female middle class of women and comparatively more wealthy women, so women did have some political power in the area by uniting on social issues for their sex and pressuring men to side with them politically. The county seat was Carthage, which had the largest population of upper class women and held most of the political power in the county. Female residents of Carthage and Webb City were the strongest proponents for pushing reforms for the poor and working class in their communities; these two cities eventually pushed the hardest for suffrage. Joplin joined that fight in early 1912 with the formation of the first female suffrage organization in the county.

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<sup>73</sup>"Woman Asks for Vote," *Carthage Weekly Banner*, 29 December 1866.

The source of revenue for this powerful women's alliance was mining, which led to vast economic growth. One of the most important minerals quarried in the region was limestone, which contributed significantly to the development of wealth in Jasper County, especially in Carthage. The limestone used to build the Missouri State Capitol originated from quarries outside of Carthage. The increase of wealth led to the development of a female upper class that was involved in serving local communities. Many of these wealthy women gained community respect and admiration for their involvement in local churches that established poor houses and provided clothing and food for the needy.

As they continued to gain power through helping the poor, wealthy and influential women formed local clubs, the earliest of which originated in the late 1870s and early 1880s. Originally many of these clubs were composed of both men and women from the Carthage area, and only the most elite received invitations to join. As the clubs developed, they split into sex-segregated clubs. For upper class women, the original purpose for joining clubs was to gain knowledge through reading literature and sharing what they learned. For example, clubwomen shared articles and books on science and medicine. Soon, however, the meetings evolved into a venue at which women could come together and begin talking about local politics. Slowly these influential women started to formally organize in an effort to become involved in and support local political endeavors. As clubs became important, large groups of women gathered for political purposes, and first wave feminism in the county began.

Jasper County was unique compared to the rest of the state because women had professional jobs in several of the local communities. One of these women, in particular,

was Fannie E. Williams, a physician who had a practice in Joplin from 1877-1885. Few facts about Dr. Williams and information about her practice in Joplin remain in the historical record. She attended medical school at the University of Iowa and became certified as a physician through the University in 1876. Her practice focused on family medicine, which included the treatment of injuries and illnesses in men, women, and children.<sup>74</sup> It was unusual at that time for women to practice medicine on men; they primarily focused on health problems of women and children. It was more socially acceptable to treat women and children, especially in working class families, because female physicians could be seen as motherly.<sup>75</sup> Yet many locals placed their trust in Dr. Williams, another clear sign that the status of women in Jasper County was peculiar in comparison to other areas of the United States.

Influential women continued to gain power through gaining leadership roles in women's clubs and helping the community. At the same time, local working class women began to look for jobs in the 1870s and early 1880s. Entrepreneurs realized that this was an untapped workforce that did not have to be paid much compared to the male working class.

Historical records indicate hundreds of women participated in a large working class in Jasper County. One of the largest employers for women in the area was William B. Myers, who realized there was a large number of unemployed women. He knew that women's wages were lower, a fact he took advantage of when he built the Carthage

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<sup>74</sup> 10 January 1989, "Dr. Fannie E. Williams," Letter from the University of Iowa Powers Museum Archives: Carthage, Missouri.

<sup>75</sup> Regina Morantz-Sanchez, *Science, Health Reform, and the Woman Physician* (Boston, Massachusetts: Houghton Mifflin, 2001), 157.

Woolen Mills. The mill, which opened its doors on 21 July 1870, manufactured yarn and spun wool. It was quite successful and quickly became an important part of the local and regional economy.<sup>76</sup> Estimates show that the Carthage Woolen Mill employed almost 80 women from Carthage and the surrounding communities. Fire destroyed the original factory on 28 January 1882, but the owner quickly rebuilt the factory and employed an even larger number of women at its completion.<sup>77</sup> With such a large component of the working class and influential upper class, women quickly gained power and influence in politics during the 1880s by pushing for reforms at the county level. Upper class reformers also took notice of the working class and pushed for workplace reforms, like shorter working hours, that would protect factory women.

As women gained power, they obtained opportunities in the region to gain influence through education. In September of 1883, Dr. Reverend Knight of Carthage approached Jasper County to build a college. The college was to be a place where county residents could receive an advanced education instead of having to leave the area for other schools. What was unusual about the school was it encouraged both men and *women* to enroll to further their education. After negotiations with the local government and commissioners, the college received approval to build.<sup>78</sup> On 2 February 1885, construction was completed, and soon afterward, the school opened its doors. In November of 1886, Dr. Reverend J.G. Reeser of Westminster College in Fulton, Missouri assumed the role as President of Carthage College. The school encouraged young men

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<sup>76</sup> Livingston, 234.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., 234.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid., 236.



and women to gain an education in a variety of degrees and at the same time employed a large staff of female teachers.<sup>79</sup>

Jasper County women gained power through the activities of an influential upper class that involved itself in community reform, the establishment of poorhouses, and the push for reforms that would protect working class women and children. Wealthy women also continued to gain community respect through the education they gained from Carthage College and in the creation of women's clubs that engaged in literature and later on in politics. Finally, they gained respect by working as professionals in the local communities. While the progress for women's suffrage was slow, that was about to change in the 1890 election. Jasper County men were about to do something that had never occurred in Missouri. They were about to elect the first woman to political office in the state.

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<sup>79</sup> Ibid., 237.

## Chapter V

### What Happened in Jasper County did not Stay in Jasper County

“One cannot convey to the reader of today the sense of great endeavor that these suffrage campaigns had for us women of that time.”<sup>80</sup> - Emily Newell Blair

Annie White Baxter was born on 2 March 1864 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

When she was thirteen, her family moved to Carthage, Missouri where she attended high school. She excelled in school and, according to her teachers, paid close attention to detail in her schoolwork; in 1882 she graduated with honors. The following July she was hired by the county clerk’s office to perform various tasks.<sup>81</sup> From 1882 through 1885, she worked for several different county offices, and in November of 1885, Baxter came back to the county clerk’s office to work, eventually as the deputy clerk. On 19 January 1888, Annie married Chas W. Baxter, who was an accounting clerk for one of the local department stores in Carthage.<sup>82</sup> In the early part of 1890, the Jasper County Clerk confided to Baxter that his health was failing and he had decided not to run for political office again. He mentioned in passing that perhaps she should run for the office. After a long discussion with her family and friends, Annie Baxter agreed to run for political office.<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> Emily Newell Blair, *Bridging Two Eras: The Autobiography of Emily Newell Blair, 1877-1951* (Columbia, Missouri: University of Columbia Press, 1999), 157.

<sup>81</sup> Christensen, Lawrence O., William E. Foley, Gary R. Kremer, and Kenneth H. Winn, *Dictionary of Missouri Biography* (Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri Press, 1999), 179.

<sup>82</sup> “Mrs. Annie W. Baxter,” *Carthage Press*, 14 January 1892.

<sup>83</sup> “1<sup>st</sup> Woman Elected to County Office Couldn’t Even Vote,” *Joplin Globe*, 25 May 1989.

Throughout the next few months, Annie Baxter and several of the other Democratic candidates went across the area asking for support. They gave speeches, held rallies, and rode on trolley cars through all of the local communities. On 4 November 1890, local men went to the polls to decide the fate of Baxter's campaign. The next morning the vote tallies were in from across the region, and to the surprise of some, Annie Baxter was the first woman in Missouri elected to political office and the first woman in the United States elected as a county clerk.<sup>84</sup> She beat her Republican challenger, Julius Fischer, by a margin of 468 votes.<sup>85</sup> Not only had a woman won in a county election, but also the local newspapers did not emphasize that she was a woman, and reported her election victory as a typical event. Julius Fischer was outraged that he lost the election to a woman, and based on Baxter's sex, he challenged the results in local court. News reports revealed that the county citizens were irate about the election—not the fact that a woman had won but that Fischer challenged the vote. The local press was outraged that Fischer had questioned a majority of the voters, and the papers ran several stories denouncing him and the local Republican Party. The *Joplin Herald* ran a story titled "She Shall be Seated," and wrote an article explaining that the Republicans risked damaging their reputation by attacking her election. The editor argued that she was chosen by an overwhelming majority of voters and that "If the law says that county clerks must be masculine, we say she is masculine enough for county clerk." The paper

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<sup>84</sup> Bob Priddy, "Across our wide Missouri, God Bless Annie Baxter!" *Missouri Life* no. 10 (May-June 1982): 20-22.

<sup>85</sup> "At the State and County Election held Tuesday, Nov. 4<sup>th</sup>, 1890," *Carthage Press*, 6 November 1890.

concluded its article stating that if it took the entire Democratic Party of Missouri to seat Annie Baxter they were prepared to fight for her and her seat.<sup>86</sup>

The *Joplin Globe* also commented on the story and argued that Fischer and the Republicans were simply using the attention of the Annie Baxter election as a way to cover up another election fraud that occurred in Carterville. Finally, it concluded by saying that none but the “blindest partisan” believed Annie Baxter did not deserve her seat as county clerk.<sup>87</sup> Annie White Baxter finally had her day in court to argue against the attacks from Fischer, and on 7 January 1892, the Circuit Court in Greene County sided with Annie Baxter. The court ruled she had all the rights and responsibilities of serving as the county clerk, regardless of her sex.<sup>88</sup>

Annie Baxter commanded the respect she deserved, and the local press and citizens noted the exceptional job she performed as the county clerk. Newspapers called her by her first name, instead of referring to her as Mrs. Chas Baxter. Some papers referred to her as Colonel Annie Baxter, which was an honorary title the Governor of Missouri gave her. She was proficient at her job and certified several important documents for the county including that of an election held in 1892. (See Figure 3) In 1894, the local Democratic Party unanimously nominated Baxter for a second term as the county clerk. The *Carthage Press* published an article reporting about the local Democratic Convention in which one of the Democratic delegates named William Carter proclaimed that Annie Baxter deserved a second term as county clerk. He argued that not

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<sup>86</sup> “She Shall Be Seated,” *Joplin Herald*, 16 November 1890.

<sup>87</sup> *The Joplin Globe*, 17 November 1890.

<sup>88</sup> “1<sup>st</sup> woman elected to county office couldn’t even vote,” *The Joplin Globe*, 25 May 1889.

only did the election of Baxter “ratify” Democracy at its finest, but also that her election represented equal rights to all citizens in the United States. Her nomination was unanimous at the request of A.L. Thomas amid “great cheering.”<sup>89</sup>

Baxter lost the election in 1894, along with most county Democrats, due to a Republican sweep across the nation. The United States was in an economic depression, and many voters defected from the Democratic Party to the Republicans. No records indicate that she pushed for suffrage in the years that followed her election, nor do they indicate that she was active in any local suffrage movement. What was surprising about the Annie Baxter election was it showed that men in the area were more progressive in regards to women in the political arena, versus other men around the United States. The election also showed that women in the area did not believe their sole purpose in life was to serve as a homemaker. Finally, it was a quiet beginning of the modern suffrage movement in Jasper County.

Throughout the 1880s and 1890s, women’s clubs flourished in Carthage, Joplin, and Webb City. Many of these were the gateway for women to become active in politics, especially on the local level, and to push the issue of suffrage in Jasper County. The county had several reading clubs in the region, an unusual number compared to the rest of the state. Overall, the number of members in the clubs was large, so as a result, women’s clubs were one of the most important factors that pushed suffrage in the county. The clubs garnered respect for women through the local newspapers, as the papers highlighted important projects and provided positive attention. Moreover, many of these women involved in the clubs had wealth and political connections to promote suffrage in the area.

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<sup>89</sup> “Democratic Convention,” *Carthage Press*, 13 September 1894.

One of the most influential women's clubs in Jasper County was the Chautauqua Reading Club. Local historians are unsure when the club first organized, but a *Carthage Press* dated the clubs' origins to 11 March 1897. Its primary purpose was to promote philosophical thinking, reading, and new ideas on science and religion, all while discussing political matters. Membership was by invitation only, and the club was considered the most prestigious in the region.<sup>90</sup> The club believed it important to promote its image and importance in the community, and on 25 June 1897, it convinced former Presidential candidate William Jennings Bryan to speak. Crowds from all around the region flocked to hear Bryan, which further helped to publicize the Chautauqua Club.

Women's clubs continued to grow in the area, and on 3 March 1897, Carthage organized the City Federation of Women's Clubs in an effort to organize and manage all of the clubs in the city.<sup>91</sup> As the influence of the clubs grew, several of the local newspapers ran stories on the clubs. The *Carthage Press* ran an article titled "The New Woman," which discussed how young women in the area joined clubs and established their own belief system in society. The article continued by stating that women whose children had left the home were taking part in the local women's clubs to grow in intelligence and establish their own rightful place in local communities.<sup>92</sup> Other local newspapers argued that the growth of women's clubs in the late nineteenth century had the possibility of challenging old belief systems in a new manner. Women's clubs became important throughout Missouri; Martha Taaffe of Carthage was partly

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<sup>90</sup> "Local Clubs," *Carthage Press*, 2 July 1898.

<sup>91</sup> "City Organizes Women's Clubs," *Carthage Press*, 4 March 1897.

<sup>92</sup> *Carthage Press*, 10 October 1895.

responsible for this statewide movement. Taaffe graduated from Carthage High School and later joined the Missouri Federation of Women's Clubs (MFWC). She was a board member of the MFWC, and through the years she served in all office positions except for President. She played an important role for MFWC by traveling around the state promoting and organizing local clubs. Later in life, Taaffe played an influential role in creating a suffrage league in Carthage.<sup>93</sup>

As the clubs gained momentum in the push for women's issues, another important figure from Jasper County, Ella Harrison, rose to national prominence in the suffrage fight. Born on 18 April 1859 in Sandusky, Ohio, Harrison was the youngest of eight children. Her family moved to a small farm just outside of Carthage when she was still young. Upon completion of school, she became a schoolteacher and taught in schools around Jasper and Carthage. In 1889, she left the area to study law in Iowa, but later she attended Stanford University to study English. While she was away from the area, she made personal connections with people from across the United States and began to build a network of contacts for her future. By the early 1890s, she came back to Carthage, received an invitation to join the Chautauqua Club, and resumed teaching in the area to promote suffrage to local women. Harrison had no children and never married, so she dedicated most of her personal time to promoting suffrage.<sup>94</sup> As she gained respect in the community, she implemented her experience of networking and took on roles of leadership with suffrage. She created the all-female Century Club, which specifically

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<sup>93</sup> "Obituaries," *Carthage Evening Press*, 11 September 1957.

<sup>94</sup> *Bethany Democrat*, 9 December 1897.

focused on women's roles in government. With the establishment of the Century Club, women in Jasper County were on the path to fight for suffrage.<sup>95</sup>

Harrison continued to promote suffrage on the local level and rose through the ranks of leadership in Missouri, eventually assuming the presidency of the Missouri Equal Suffrage Association from 1896 until 1897. When she was president, she implemented two important strategies. She knew she had to build a better network with the national suffrage organization, so she set out to befriend national leaders. She created a personal friendship with Carrie Chapman Catt and Susan B. Anthony. As a result of her friendship with women in the national movement, Missouri had the potential of hosting future NAWSA meetings and receiving funds from the national movement. The most important strategy Harrison deployed was to combine southern and northern techniques. She realized that northern suffragists had an effective suffrage strategy in keeping a centralized power for the movement. She knew this meant all decisions came from one place, so the leadership appeared unified and the message of suffrage was unilateral. A northern approach to suffrage also kept costs down since all of the money for the movement stayed in one place. Yet she knew the only way to get the issue passed in the county was not by asking for suffrage in the large cities, but rather by using the southern strategy of reaching out to rural voters. She implemented a grassroots effort that focused on winning over rural areas and using local women to promote suffrage in their own regions, since they understood the dynamics of their communities. Her strategy helped MESA win presidential suffrage in Missouri, and it eventually helped to influence the Missouri General Assembly's ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment.

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<sup>95</sup> "Ella Harrison," *Powers Museum* <http://powersmuseum.com/exhibits/past-exhibits/carthage-women-in-history/ella-harrison.html> (accessed 11 January 2014).



By 1897, Harrison had created a close friendship with Carrie Chapman Catt and Susan B. Anthony. Several letters between Anthony and Harrison show the close relationship the two women created. (See Figure 4) Because of Harrison's winning strategy and relationship with the NAWSA leadership, Anthony and Catt asked her to travel through the South to promote suffrage in the region. Catt wrote to Harrison asking for her help, "Ella, I think you are the person to do the advance work for the association; you have the courage and never give up."<sup>96</sup> Initially she had reservations about leaving her post in Missouri, yet after several exchanges with Catt, she finally accepted to travel through the South to promote the suffrage movement. In April of 1897, she wrote that Mrs. Catt asked that she "plant the suffrage seed in the South that would bear fruit."<sup>97</sup> She was one of the first suffragists to come into Mississippi and promote suffrage in the state. Unfortunately she was stunned at the reaction she received in the state and wrote back to her father in the spring of 1897 that the women she encountered in Port Gibson were opposed not only to the vote but even to the most simple of things such as literary clubs. She also wrote that women received minimal education in the area, and if a woman decided to continue her education, she was not considered "womanly." Harrison believed education was necessary in order to take on political issues. Miss Ida Mary—an editor in Jackson, Mississippi—believed women were "too ignorant" for the ballot, which shocked Harrison.<sup>98</sup> Her initial attitude in the South was far less than admirable, but compared to the progressive attitude she was accustomed to in Jasper County, this was a

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<sup>96</sup> Carrie Chapman Catt, 6 March 1896 Letter to Ella Harrison, Powers Museum: Carthage, Missouri.

<sup>97</sup> Ella Harrison, 7 April 1897 Entry in Ella Harrison's Diary, Powers Museum: Carthage, Missouri.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

cultural shock for Harrison. Eventually she returned to Missouri to continue her suffrage fight in her hometown area. Her proven efforts and winning strategy helped to gain women the right to vote throughout the entire United States.

While Harrison was obtaining national prominence in her role with MESA and NAWSA, Jasper County had another important achievement. On 26 December 1895, Lucy B. Lindsey was ordained as a minister in Carthage – the second known woman in Missouri to achieve this, she was part of the Christian Church, and had much respect from her local congregation. On the following Sunday, she preached her first sermon.<sup>99</sup> The local media and citizens welcomed the addition of a woman serving as a preacher. This addition of a female spiritual leader in the Christian religion was another example of how Jasper County was forward-thinking compared to the rest of the state regarding women's issues.

The role of progressive women continued in the area when in October of 1895 construction on the Jasper County courthouse was completed. The *Carthage Evening Press* ran a special edition about the courthouse and significant events around the county. What made this edition of the paper special was that the women of Carthage edited the entire paper, which focused on important historical events in the county's history as well as people who were important in the progression of Jasper County. One particular section of the paper, entitled "What Women are Doing," explained how women around the area were leaders. The paper focused on three important women from Joplin: Mrs. H.C. Cosgrove, Mrs. E.M. Preston, and Mrs. M.C. Allen. Mrs. Cosgrove was the president of a mining company in Joplin while Mrs. Allen and Mrs. Preston both owned

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<sup>99</sup> "Local Church Ordains Woman Preacher," *Carthage Press*, 26 December 1895.

area mines.<sup>100</sup> Women who were successful business owners like these three were another key to the strength of women's rights that was unique to Jasper County. Two weeks later the *Carthage Weekly Press* ran a story wrote by a local Carthage man who had lived in Wyoming. He had lived among women voters and expressed that they deserved the right to the vote just the same as men. He argued that Wyoming was no different from anywhere else in the United States, and he described election day in Wyoming as "pleasant and peaceful." Women and men alike in the county were actively promoting women's right to vote by the end of the nineteenth century.<sup>101</sup>

Women throughout Jasper County were making great strides for equality. The upper class gained media attention for its work using women's clubs and publicity tactics, which in turn helped to promote equality for their sex. In 1911, they opened female bathrooms in the courthouse so that all women were welcome to enjoy the courthouse, and in 1913, the Seventh District Women's Federation Club organized several meetings to help remodel and build poorhouses around the area designed specifically for women and children.<sup>102</sup>

Women in Carthage helped to attract attention regionally when several of the local clubs came together and overtook one of the hospital beds in the newly constructed Carthage hospital. They provided financing for the hospital bed and paid for medical care for poor patients who were in desperate need of medical attention.<sup>103</sup> While women

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<sup>100</sup> "Women in the Area," *Carthage Evening Press*, 9 October 1895.

<sup>101</sup> "Champion of Women," *Carthage Weekly Press*, 23 August 1894.

<sup>102</sup> "Permanent Accomplishments by the Women of Carthage," *The Open Gate to the Ozarks*, 11 July 1924, Carthage, Missouri.

<sup>103</sup> "Permanent Accomplishments," *The Open Gate*, 1924.

created the path to suffrage in the county, one woman from Joplin was about to contribute to the movement not only on the local level but the national scene; her name was Emily Newell Blair.

As one of the first modern feminists, Emily Newell Blair's name is synonymous with the fight for suffrage. She was born on 9 January 1877 in the city of Joplin. At an early age, her family noticed that she was an avid reader, and her writing abilities were far superior to other children from her age group. Joplin was a town in the midst of the wild west that had a significant amount of crime, and her family did not want to continue to expose their children to that level of violence, so they moved to Carthage.<sup>104</sup> Blair excelled in school and caught the attention of many of her teachers; she graduated with honors from Carthage in 1894 and entered Groucher College, later transferring to the University of Missouri in Columbia.<sup>105</sup> When her father passed away, she went home to care for her siblings and never returned to graduate. Hired as a schoolteacher in Sarcoxie, she quietly began to make contacts with prominent women in the area and joined several of the local clubs. The local network later helped to build her career in the suffrage movement.

On 24 December 1900, Emily married Harry Wallace Blair, a prominent lawyer from Joplin. The two settled down in Jasper County, and Emily began her career as a homemaker when she gave birth to two children. She continued to take an interest in local matters, but focused on her family. Later in life, she recalled that she wanted to do more, and in 1909, she submitted an article for publication to *Woman's Home*

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<sup>104</sup> Blair, 25.

<sup>105</sup> Christensen, Foley, Kremer, Winn, 223.

*Companion* titled “Our Cooperative Kitchen.”<sup>106</sup> The magazine editor quickly realized Blair’s talents and requested more articles. By the end of 1910, Blair wrote for several different magazines including, *Forum*, *Century*, *Cosmopolitan*, and *Ladies Home Journal*.<sup>107</sup> Her talents were noticed throughout the entire region, but in 1914 Blair was about to find that her true passion in life was politics.

In 1913, Jasper County’s Almshouse, which was for the county’s poor, had slowly dilapidated into a pitiful excuse for a house for the needy, so local women requested the county commission to provide finances for remodeling. The county government, however, refused to allot funds for the poor. Angered that their requests had been ignored, the women’s clubs united together to push for a levy to help remodel the Almshouse. Blair took the role as leader for the movement and gave her first public speech promoting that issue before a group of men at the Connor Hotel in Joplin on 3 February 1914. By the end of 1914, Jasper County women succeeded in getting the tax levy passed. Blair commented that not only was this the event that struck her interest in politics, but the Almshouse campaign was truly the issue that united women in Jasper County to begin the fight for suffrage.<sup>108</sup>

Blair quickly rose to the prominent role of a leader not only in Jasper County, but also in the state of Missouri in the fight for suffrage. In 1914, she gave her first speech in support of suffrage during a banquet held in St. Louis that honored William Jennings Bryan. The leadership at MESA noticed Blair’s talents in writing and speaking, so the

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<sup>106</sup> McMillen, 73.

<sup>107</sup> Christensen, Foley, Kremer, Winn, 223. .

<sup>108</sup> Blair, 157.

organization quickly placed her as head of the press. In 1914, MESA asked her to be the editor of a new paper named *The Missouri Woman*, which would promote suffrage throughout the entire state of Missouri and be a central source for movement information.<sup>109</sup> Blair edited the paper in Monett, Missouri, near Jasper County. She highlighted stories about women who were making great strides in the suffrage movement, and she encouraged women to keep fighting for suffrage in other parts of the state that were not so supportive. Blair was the leader that attempted to gain support for Representative Roney's Amendment to the Missouri Constitution. She used *The Missouri Woman* to gain 14,000 signatures that supported the amendment and to highlight how women needed to unite to pass suffrage.<sup>110</sup> As Blair promoted this issue, the *Carthage Press* wrote that large numbers of men from across the county were also supporting the measure.<sup>111</sup> One of *The Missouri Woman's* issues highlighted the important work of Martha Taaffe and her role in the Missouri Federation of Women's Clubs.<sup>112</sup>

Taaffe also helped to gain name recognition for Blair by complimenting her work on *The Missouri Woman* during a Missouri State General Federation Committee meeting.<sup>113</sup> Blair's power and influence garnered attention from national suffragists such

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<sup>109</sup> Christensen, Foley, Kremer, Winn, 224.

<sup>110</sup> "Carthaginian Emily Newell Blair Synonymous with Suffrage," *Carthage Press*, 7 May 1915.

<sup>111</sup> "Women Seek The Ballot," *Carthage Evening Press*, 30 January 1914.

<sup>112</sup> Emily Newell Blair, *Martha C. Taaffe*, "The Missouri Woman" Volume 1, no. 1, p. 2. 17 March 1915

<sup>113</sup> 6-9 May 1919 Minutes from Missouri Women on the General Federation Committees, Powers Museum: Carthage, Missouri p. 54.

as Anna Howard Shaw and Carrie Chapman Catt. She continued her fight for suffrage on the national level and was one of the original founders of the League of Women's Voters. She eventually became the Vice President of the Democratic National Committee—the first woman elected as an officer for the DNC. Blair's status in the Democratic Party eventually led to her becoming close friends with Eleanor and Franklin Roosevelt. Moreover, while Blair was making significant changes for suffrage on the state and national level, women in Jasper County continued to gain unusual influence. Joplin had one of the first known female embalmers, Estella Lynch, who worked for the Frank and Sievers Undertaking Company.<sup>114</sup> Mrs. F.W. Blair of Webb City became a commissioned deputy constable in Webb City.<sup>115</sup>

The citizens of Jasper County formally organized and began their fight for suffrage in Joplin on 30 November 1912. They met at the Connor Hotel to discuss what a suffrage group meant to the community and how to gain support for a suffrage organization.<sup>116</sup> Bertha Rambo, who had recently returned from England after doing work as a suffragist, was the keynote speaker at the event. She argued that while she applauded the determination of suffragists in England, she was concerned at the violent approach suffragists had taken. Rather than gaining support, suffragists who chose the violent approach were actually losing support. She also commented that through peace

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<sup>114</sup> "Lady Embalmer is Procured by Frank-Sievers," *Joplin Morning Tribune*, 1 December 1912.

<sup>115</sup> "Woman Jails Prisoner," *Webb City Sentinel*, 2 May 1913. In 1913, Blair arrested a man by the name of "Skinks" Hoover for petit larceny. She transported her prisoner to the county jail in Carthage, where Hoover was booked and eventually found guilty of his crimes. Hoover received a sentence of sixty days in jail and fined one dollar.

<sup>116</sup> "Equal Suffrage League Meeting," *Joplin Morning Tribune*, 1 December 1912.

and compromise, suffrage was obtainable in the United States.<sup>117</sup> The first suffrage organization in Jasper County decided to affiliate itself with the Women's Equal Suffrage League, and eight women of the thirty-five present joined the organization. These eight elected officers helped write local by-laws and were in charge of recruiting more women into the organization.<sup>118</sup> Suffrage leagues quickly organized across communities in Jasper County as women and men in the area were visibly taking action to support suffrage.

In the spring of 1914, the Carthage Equal Suffrage League observed the National Suffrage Day with a large festival in the city. People from across the county came to Carthage to show their support for suffrage and participate in the festivities of the day. The League organized games and an outdoor barbeque for everyone who came to show their support for the suffrage movement. At five o'clock in the afternoon, the festival paused for the "Battle Hymn of the Republic" and sang the "Suffrage Hymn of Faith." In the late evening hours as the event ended, women from across the region gave public speeches.<sup>119</sup>

The women continued to push for suffrage within their communities. In Sarcoxie, women went as far as calling for a "woman's ticket" to take on the challenges of the city's local problems. They argued the city government failed to pass reforms to better the city, and they organized an exploratory committee to investigate if a political ticket only composed of women could win an election in the city. The Hawthorne Women's

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<sup>117</sup> "Equal Suffrage League Meeting, *Joplin Morning Tribune*, 1 December 1912.

<sup>118</sup> "Equal Suffrage League Meeting," *Joplin Herald*, 1 December 1912.

<sup>119</sup> "Will Observe Suffrage Day," *Carthage Evening Press*, 30 April 1914.



Club headed the exploratory committee and concluded that women could win an election in the city, and if they won the election, the reforms they wanted would benefit the local committee. The local newspapers also argued women had a chance to win the elections if they chose to run. It decided against running an all-female political ticket primarily due to finances and the belief it may cause more harm than good for the community.<sup>120</sup>

While suffrage was an important part of the culture in Jasper County, a distinct strategy for the movement gained traction in the region due in part to Ella Harrison. The movement did not use the northern or southern strategy but rather adopted a combination of both styles. During the Civil War, Jasper County's culture was both northern and southern. Post-war, the people who lived in the area still had this internal division. The combined northern and southern strategy Harrison adopted helped to make suffrage a strong movement in the region. The southern strategy of a grassroots effort gained support from working, middle, and upper classes, as did the southern strategy of pushing for a state led suffrage amendment. Yet unlike suffragists of the South, women in Jasper County also believed it necessary to gain suffrage for the entire nation via a Federal Amendment to the Constitution. This clearly northern strategy was successful for Jasper County, so Ella Harrison used it to gain support for suffrage on the state level through the Missouri Equal Suffrage Association. Emily Newell Blair was also a proponent of this strategy, and she continued to promote it on the local and state level. Jasper County residents believed it was more important to gain the ballot for women via a federal amendment than to adhere to the southern mentality of foregoing the right to vote unless it came from state legislatures.

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<sup>120</sup> "Progressive Women of Sarcoxie are Thinking of Putting City Ticket in Field-Probably Candidates," *Sarcoxie Record*, 15 March 1918.

Local suffragists began to hold dinners and rallies, especially in Joplin and Carthage, to gain funding for the movement. (See Figure 5) Women knew that if they were able to gain support from important local organizations, they would also gain large donations. By the end of 1917, suffrage in Jasper County was a popular local movement. Women gained support through significant donations and through local political leaders who also supported the cause.

One of the most adamant supporters for the suffrage movement was Congressman Perl Decker of Joplin. Born in 1875 in Ohio, Decker moved to Kansas with his family while he was still young. He attended law school at the University of Kansas and upon graduation established a law practice in Joplin. Decker was active in local politics and networked with several prominent local leaders to gain influence in the area. In 1902, he became the city attorney for Joplin. As his political influence grew in the area, he took an interest in two movements: women's suffrage and the temperance movement.<sup>121</sup> In 1911, local Democrats approached him to run for political office, and after conversing with his family, he decided to run for the Fifteenth Congressional District.

Decker won political office and served the citizens of his district for three terms. While in Congress, he lobbied for Prohibition and adamantly supported a Federal Amendment for women's suffrage.<sup>122</sup> One debate in particular stands out in his career as passionately making the case for women's suffrage. While the date of the speech is unknown, indications are that it occurred during early 1917 when Congress was debating

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<sup>121</sup> *Congressman Perl Decker*, "University of Missouri" <http://shs.umsystem.edu/manuscripts/invent/0092.pdf>, accessed 20 January 2014.

<sup>122</sup> *Decker, Perl D.*, "Biographical Directory of the United States Congress" <http://bioguide.congress.gov/scripts/biodisplay.pl?index=D000184> accessed 18 January 2014.

U.S. participation in World War I. Decker debated on the House floor with an anti-suffrage Congressman from Ohio and argued that Antis believed women did not deserve the vote because it would unsex them and eventually lead to the moral decay of society. He presented the Antis with examples of women who crossed over the prairies into the Wild West right alongside with men and women who took care of the homestead while men were off to war. Decker argued that none of these tasks unsexed women, and he added that if women received the ballot, they would not forget to love their husbands and children.<sup>123</sup> Women were already directly involved in the government, he argued; the vote would merely allow them the freedom to “not have to persuade some man to vote” for their sentiments.<sup>124</sup>

Local suffragists and newspapers praised Decker for his defense of women in Congress, and he continued through the end of his term to fight for women’s suffrage in both Jasper County and throughout the United States. The war changed all of that. Shortly after Decker voted against the U.S. entry into World War I along with forty-nine other members of Congress, he lost his seat. Returning to Joplin, he resumed his law practice and continued to fight for women’s suffrage until its passage.<sup>125</sup>

Locally, activists organized with both Republican and Democratic leaders in an effort to sway women to join their respective parties. Emily Newell Blair later argued, however, the alignment with the two national parties actually hurt women’s rights after the passage of suffrage. Local Republican women in Joplin worked to gain members for

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<sup>123</sup> Decker, 589-90.

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*, 620.

<sup>125</sup> *Congressman Perl Decker*, “University of Missouri” <http://shs.umsystem.edu/manuscripts/invent/0092.pdf>, accessed 20 January 2014.

the G.O.P. by holding nightly meetings in April of 1920. The Republicans deployed thirty-five women in all of the precincts in the city to gain more votes. These women went door-to-door recruiting women to support and eventually vote for their party. These women were also looking for people to work the local polls once women received the right to vote. As summer came in southwest Missouri, the county's women gained much support for the G.O.P. and fewer women joined the Democratic Party. This was because many of the influential women in the area affiliated themselves with the G.O.P. because either their spouse or their family was Republican. Women also tended to vote for the political parties their husbands or family had voted for instead of supporting a movement or party that supported women's issues.<sup>126</sup>

In 1920, MESA asked Joplin to host its state suffrage convention, which took place from 18 to 19 May 1920 at the First Presbyterian Church in downtown Joplin. More than 150 women from across the state gathered in Joplin to discuss how to strategize for the final push in women's suffrage. The convention had 125 visitors that came to listen to speeches and attend workshops related to the suffrage movement. The three candidates who were running for Governor in Missouri also attended, expressed their support for suffrage, and urged the crowd to support reforms on alcohol.<sup>127</sup>

The convention focused not only on women's suffrage but also for reforms on female- and child labor. It also urged local politicians to call for reforms for the mining

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<sup>126</sup> "G.O.P. Women are Rapidly Completing Joplin Organization," *Joplin Herald*, 18 April 1920.

<sup>127</sup> *Joplin Herald*, 18 May 1920.

industry and increase safety regulations.<sup>128</sup> Two of the workshops at the convention discussed educational reforms for the state, while another described how women played an important role in achieving reforms in the field of medicine. The state delegates elected six women to represent Missouri at the upcoming NAWSA convention; two of the delegates were from Jasper County. On the final night of the MESA convention, they opened the closing keynote address to the public and held it at the Joplin High School auditorium. According to local newspapers, hundreds of citizens from the city and surrounding area arrived to listen to the keynote address on how women in Missouri needed to fight for suffrage.<sup>129</sup>

When Congress passed the Nineteenth Amendment in June of 1919 and Missouri ratified it in July, Jasper County residents celebrated throughout most of the small towns in the area. Thanks to local efforts, these residents, including Walter E. Bailey, Martha Taaffe, and Howard Gray, had influenced the fight on the state level. In addition, the region's unusually resolute fight also played a prominent role on the national scene with Ella Harrison, Emily Newell Blair, and Perl Decker. Suffragists did all of the work they could do to fight for women's right to the ballot. Now they had to wait and see if other states were going to follow suit and allow women the equality of voting.

After Missouri ratified the Nineteenth Amendment, other states followed in the West and North, yet southern state legislatures resisted federally mandated women's suffrage. Some southern suffragists argued that they too would rather not accept a federal amendment, believing as before that suffrage had to come from state capitals.

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<sup>128</sup> "League Of Women Voters Convention Opens Here Today," *Joplin Globe*, 18 May 1920.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*

Several of those states officially voted to reject the amendment, but Texas, Arkansas, and Kentucky voted to ratify, bringing the total to thirty-five by the summer of 1920. The Anthony Amendment was but one state away from ratification when in August of 1920 Tennessee's State Senate took it up.

During the previous few weeks, the Volunteer State had already captured the nationwide attention of Antis and pro-suffragists alike. NAWSA deployed all of its resources to the state in an effort to gather enough votes for ratification, while state and local anti-suffrage organizations went to individual counties trying to stop the amendment. Antis believed if they focused on the individual counties, they could influence local citizens to urge their state politicians to vote against ratification. In August of 1920, the Tennessee State Senate called for a vote on suffrage, and it easily passed twenty-five to four. Preparing for a last ditch defense, anti-suffragists passed out red roses to their supporters in the lower house, and the debate that commenced their on 18 August 1920 was as vibrant as anyone had predicted. Suffragists and Antis filled the viewing gallery of the House as their representatives traded volleys for several hours. Some may not have realized the dilemma facing Speaker of the House Seth Walker, who then closed the floor and asked for a vote to table the Anthony Amendment until the next legislative session. The fall elections were quickly approaching, and he did not want to vote for such a politically charged issue as suffrage until safely re-elected. When the first vote to table deadlocked forty-eight to forty-eight, the Anthony Amendment remained on the House floor. The Speaker then called for a vote on the Amendment as a simple Aye or Nay vote.<sup>130</sup>

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<sup>130</sup> *Teach American History*, "Don't Forget to be a Good Boy" [http://www.teach-americanhistory.org/File/Harry\\_T.\\_Burn.pdf](http://www.teach-americanhistory.org/File/Harry_T._Burn.pdf) accessed on 28 December 2013.

For over seventy years, women had fought for the right to gain the ballot box. Many women had dedicated their entire lives for the suffrage cause. Some of them had foregone motherhood, while others remained outcasts from their communities and families. The moment had finally come, and the fate of the Nineteenth Amendment rested on the shoulders of the youngest person ever elected to the Tennessee House of Representatives: a twenty-four year old Representative from McMinn County whose name was Harry T. Burn.

## Chapter VI

### The Nineteenth Amendment Wins

“That we have the vote means nothing. That we use it in the right way means everything.”-Lou Henry Hoover<sup>131</sup>

Harry T. Burn won his political seat at just twenty-two years old, which made him the youngest person ever elected to the Tennessee House of Representatives. When the question of suffrage came before the young Representative, he never believed that his vote was going to make the deciding difference on the issue. He was a proud supporter of the anti-suffrage movement and wore a red rose on his suit. Burn later recalled in life that he was close to his mother, and she had remained silent on the issue of suffrage any time he asked her opinion of it.<sup>132</sup> Burn arrived at the State Capitol to continue business before the end of the legislative year. After completing a few necessary meetings and finishing paperwork, he received a letter just prior to the vote on the Anthony Amendment. Burn opened the seven-page letter and was astonished at what his mother had written:

Dear Son,...Hurrah and vote for Suffrage and don't keep them in doubt. I noticed Chandlers' speech, it was very bitter. I've been waiting to see how you stood but have not seen anything yet...Don't forget to be a good boy and help Mrs. Catt put the "rat" in ratification. Is she the one that put in ratification, Ha! No more from mama this time. With lots of love, Mama.<sup>133</sup>

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<sup>131</sup> Timothy Walch, *Uncommon Americans: The Lives and Legacies of Herbert and Lou Henry Hoover* (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger, 2003), 22.

<sup>132</sup> Pietrusza, David, *1920: The Year of the Six Presidents* (New York, New York: Basic Books, 2008), 42.

<sup>133</sup> *Remember the Ladies! Women Struggle for an Equal Voice*, <http://tennessee.gov/tsla/exhibits/suffrage/beginning.htm> accessed 15 January 2014.



His mother's letter referenced Congressman Chandler's blistering verbal assault on Carrie Chapman-Catt as she testified for women's suffrage before Congress. Burn took his seat in the General Assembly that day and voted twice to postpone ratification. As he sat in his chair, he kept thinking about his mother's letter. When Speaker Walker called for the third vote—this time as an up or down vote to pass or reject the Anthony Amendment—Burn clutched the letter from his mother in his breast pocket and as he stood to announce his vote, he yelled “Aye.” House members were stunned when he changed his vote, and some thought he had called out the wrong vote by mistake. Yet Burn knew exactly what he had done, and when the Speaker of the House received the vote tallies, it was forty-nine to forty-seven in favor of the Nineteenth Amendment. Harry T. Burn had cast the deciding vote to finally give women the ballot. After seventy years of fighting, women across the United States were able to celebrate.<sup>134</sup>

After Burn had cast his deciding vote, Antis were outraged at his actions and threatened the young Representative. He had to leave his hotel in Nashville and continued to receive insults and verbal threats while walking down the streets; soon he hired a bodyguard. He said that he had changed his vote both because of his mother's letter and a need to support the Republican Party. But the short term bloodletting was immediate: Antis targeted all of the politicians who voted for suffrage, and they unseated pro-suffrage politicians in some of the local elections. The Governor of Tennessee—who supported the Nineteenth Amendment—lost his seat to an anti-suffrage candidate. But the Antis who flocked into McMinn County to try to unseat the Representative, met

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<sup>134</sup> Pietrusza, 43.

defeat. Winning another term in the House, the young legislator continued his life in government, never regretting his vote in favor of women's suffrage.<sup>135</sup>

Even after the Tennessee House passed the Nineteenth Amendment, anti-suffrage lawmakers continued to challenge the vote. Speaker Walker, an ardent Anti, moved for a motion to reconsider the vote on suffrage and rescind the passage of the Anthony Amendment.<sup>136</sup> Walker delayed the motion when he realized he did not have enough votes. On 20 August 1920, Judge C.C. Wallace called a grand jury to investigate allegations that suffragists had bribed several representatives to vote for the Nineteenth Amendment. Allegations arose that Harry Burn received a payoff from a suffragist named Joe Hanover, but no evidence surfaced to back up this claim. Antis accused other legislators of accepting bribes and threatened them with lawsuits or criminal charges, but again no evidence ever surfaced.<sup>137</sup> The final push from Antis came on 21 August when Speaker Walker brought a motion to reconsider the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment and move to rescind the vote. Speaker Walker again declined to bring the motion before the floor when he realized he did not have enough votes to overturn, and the Tennessee House retained its vote at forty-nine to forty-seven.<sup>138</sup> After the immediate passage of the Nineteenth Amendment, several state legislatures and citizens were confused as to how women could vote when state constitutions and local laws explicitly stated that only men could vote. Former Supreme Court Justice Charles E. Hughes wrote

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<sup>135</sup> Pietrusza, 42-3.

<sup>136</sup> "36<sup>th</sup> State Ratifies," *Sarcoxie Record*, 19 August 1920.

<sup>137</sup> "Women to Unite in Celebrating Suffrage Tonight," *Joplin Globe*, 20 August 1920.

<sup>138</sup> "Suffrage Passes," *Joplin Globe*, 21 August 1920.

to the Associated Press that the word male in any state constitution or local law became void, and women automatically received the vote.<sup>139</sup> Missouri Attorney General Frank McAllister argued that an amendment to the Constitution automatically trumped any local or state law since it was the supreme law of the land, so women automatically received the vote. He went further to say that the state of Missouri needed to rewrite its Constitution to strike the word male from it so its language would conform to the United States Constitution.<sup>140</sup>

On 26 August 1920, Secretary of State Bainbridge Colby officially certified the Nineteenth Amendment to the Constitution, officially doubling the electorate and forever changing the political landscape in the United States. Across the nation, gatherings erupted to celebrate the passage of the Anthony Amendment, but American women knew a lot of work needed to occur logistically to prepare for the 1920 Presidential Election. Soon after the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment, many local municipalities prepared to hold elections so they could claim to be the first cities to allow women to vote in the United States. While several different sources claim that South St. Paul, Minnesota allowed women to vote on a water bond issue on 27 August—one day after the certification of the Nineteenth Amendment—this cannot be verified. The first known woman to vote after the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment was Marie Ruoff Byrum of Hannibal, Missouri. Mrs. Byrum arrived early at the polling place to cast her vote, despite the pouring rain, to take part in casting the first vote as a woman.<sup>141</sup> In Missouri,

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<sup>139</sup> “Suffrage is Automatic,” *Webb City Sentinel*, 20 August 1920.

<sup>140</sup> “Suffrage in Missouri,” *Webb City Sentinel*, 21 August 1920.

<sup>141</sup> McMillen, 111.

members of MESA held celebrations throughout several different cities across the State. St. Louis and Kansas City held large parades, and women in local chapters celebrated in homes and local community venues for winning their right to full suffrage.

In Jasper County, women were celebrating in all the local communities. Webb City and Carterville united to celebrate with one demonstration. Women from the two local chapters of the League of Women Voters organized to have a large celebration that began at 7:30 p.m. in Webb City and ended in Carterville. Local newspapers requested anyone who had an automobile to come to the corner of Allen Street and Pennsylvania Avenue and be part of the parade.<sup>142</sup> The league decorated cars with American flags and placed suffragist yellow bunting around the vehicles; two Webb City fire engines led the parade and twenty-five automobiles participated.<sup>143</sup> The celebration featured several different politicians from the area, with guest speakers from around the region who spoke on the success of suffrage and the continued need for women to unite for change. The Women's Leagues of Carterville and Webb City both wanted to increase membership and believed this event might help to gain more women into the organization. Immediately following the parade and celebration, ten women joined the local voting league.<sup>144</sup>

Citizens of Carthage had a large gathering of people from across the city and surrounding towns to celebrate the suffrage victory. Near the high school, women and men gathered for speeches to promote the victory and to describe how the experience influenced them. Martha Taaffe was one of the keynote speakers for the event. Marion

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<sup>142</sup> "Two Cities Join in Jubilee," *Joplin Globe*, 20 August 1920.

<sup>143</sup> "Suffrage Jubilee Parade Last Night," *Webb City Sentinel*, 21 August 1920.

<sup>144</sup> "Celebrate Suffrage Ratification with a Big Parade," *Webb City Sentinel*, 20 August 1920.

Wright Powers also attended the meeting and led many of the local bands in song. Local leaders from the Women's Christian Temperance Union chapter were also onsite celebrating the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment. Women's League leaders organized a large crowd of women to sing the National Anthem and "God Bless America." A large parade started at the Carthage High School and drove through town until it reached its final destination at the city square. Upon arrival at the city square, local leaders stood in front of the crowd as more women described the long fight it took to gain suffrage rights in the area. As the celebration ended, hundreds of men formed in a parade to escort and celebrate the suffragists from the city square back to the high school. The closing of the celebration ended with women in the city standing united and singing "Battle Hymn of the Republic" while local church bells and whistles from factories sounded to commemorate the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment.<sup>145</sup>

The city of Joplin had the largest celebration of any city in Jasper County. It held two separate events, one hosted by the Democratic Women of Jasper County and the other by the League of Women Voters. On 19 August at 8:00 p.m., the local Women's Democratic Committee celebrated the passage of the Anthony Amendment by inviting all women from the area to Fourth and Main Street. As it began to rain, the event was moved to the top of the Connor Hotel. Margaret Crandle of Pittsburg, Kansas who was the chair for the Women's State Committee, addressed the crowd on how women now had the opportunity to change public policy. The celebration closed with singing.<sup>146</sup>

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<sup>145</sup> "Suff Rally A Big Affair," *Carthage Press*, 26 August 1920.

<sup>146</sup> "Women Unite in Celebrating Suffrage Tonight," *Joplin Globe*, 19 August 1920.

The largest organized event occurred on 20 August. The event sponsors, the Joplin League of Women Voters, planned a “Jubilee” for the evening. At 8:00 p.m. on 20 August, over 1,000 women and men from across the city braved rain to travel to Schifferdecker Park to celebrate. The American Legion band played music during the Jubilee.<sup>147</sup> The keynote speakers at the event were Emily Newell Blair and Mrs. Howard Gray, the wife of Senator Gray from Joplin, who cast the deciding vote in the Missouri General Assembly.<sup>148</sup>

Across the nation, NAWSA created one last celebration to commemorate the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment. On 2 September 1920, Carrie Chapman Catt asked that all church bells and whistles in the United States sound at noon. Women in Jasper County organized this effort by contacting all churches, local businesses, and railroads to blow their whistles and ring their bells at noon.<sup>149</sup>

Women fought hard for their right to the vote and deserved to celebrate their win, but now they had a long and hard fight to prepare for the 1920 Presidential Election. They realized that now they had the ability to unify and push for reforms important to their sex and political agenda. Important political strategists like Emily Newell Blair and Carrie Chapman Catt realized that unless women unified as one voting bloc, their influence would be severely limited. But while this was an important strategy for women in the long-term, more pressing matters were at hand for the 1920 election. As local municipalities and state governments printed more ballots and hired additional personnel

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<sup>147</sup> “Joplin Women Meeting of Suffrage,” *Joplin Globe*, 21 August 1920.

<sup>148</sup> “Hundreds of Women to Celebrate Vote Victory at Park Here Tonight,” *Joplin Herald*, 20 August 1920.

<sup>149</sup> “Women Will Celebrate,” *Carthage Press*, 2 September 1920.

to work the polls, state election laws and local election procedures needed modification as well. Former suffragists encouraged women to register to vote in order to exercise their new right, while local political organizations courted them. A twofold increase in the electorate brought with it a change in tactics, and nobody truly knew how this change might pan out.

While women in the North celebrated their right, southern women had a more difficult time exercising their right to the vote. Several of the southern states rejected the idea of the federal government “forcing women’s right to the ballot upon the sovereign southern states,” and some local municipalities barred women from voting in the 1920 election. Just as Kate Gordon and Laura Clay had warned, southern legislatures did not willingly accept the Nineteenth Amendment. While women in the South struggled for the vote, a majority of the female electorate celebrated the Nineteenth Amendment.

## Chapter VII

### Life after Suffrage

“If the first woman God ever made was strong enough to turn the world upside down all alone, these women together ought to be able to turn it back, and get it right side up again!”- Sojourner Truth

Too often historians stop their research with the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment, yet much of the story of suffrage continued after August of 1920, especially in regards to local history. Certain groups of women struggled to gain the vote in parts of the United States, while others turned on their own sex to gain political power for themselves. The fight for the validity of the Nineteenth Amendment continued until 1922 with a ruling from the Supreme Court. One of the greatest struggles women and men encountered after the passage of the Anthony Amendment involved the organization, logistics, and preparation for doubling the American electorate. Even though women had finally gained the right to vote, the details had yet to be worked out.

The day Tennessee ratified the Nineteenth Amendment, citizens who had fought for suffrage organized to begin attracting female voters. Local newspapers ran stories to persuade women to vote in the November elections. (See Figure 6) Across Jasper County, local Republican women organized to prepare for the fall election and ensure the Republican Party was victorious.<sup>150</sup> Republicans sent word to its female members that they should elect women from each voting ward to represent the district, and a countywide meeting was set for 25 August in Carthage. Republican women in Joplin met at the Red Cross office at 2:30 p.m. on 22 August to organize an election of women from

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<sup>150</sup> “Republican Women Prepare for Organization Meeting,” *Webb City Sentinel*, 18 August 1920



across the city to send to the Carthage meeting. Several men attended the meeting, and J.S. Williams addressed the crowd arguing that women deserved equality not only in the voting booth but also in society. He went on to say that women from the area should run for political office and deserved to hold any political office they chose.<sup>151</sup> Other G.O.P. women in Carl Junction, Webb City, Carterville, Sarcoxie, and Carthage also came together that day to elect female representatives in each of their voting wards to attend the countywide convention.

Three days later, over fifty women from across Jasper County's local cities organized a Women's G.O.P. committee whose primary goal was to recruit women into the G.O.P. and assist them in preparing for the 1920 presidential election.<sup>152</sup> A lengthy discussion about by-laws and planning strategies to gain women in the G.O.P. preceded a more philosophical agreement: a grassroots push was as essential for attracting women to the party as it had been for the suffrage movement. The committee members decided to go on a door-to-door membership drive and unanimously elected Mrs. Hal Wise chairperson. Mrs. Wise believed it necessary to recruit women from all social classes into the party.<sup>153</sup> In September, Ella Harrison followed suit, organizing a large meeting of Republican women in Sarcoxie to push for the vote there. Harrison organized a door-to-door registration drive that would also encourage women to join the party, theoretically promoting a strong vote for G.O.P. candidates in Jasper County. Addressing a local crowd, she stated that women only had sixty days to make a difference in the

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<sup>151</sup> "Small Crowd Attends G.O.P. Women's Meeting," *Joplin Globe*, 20 August 1920.

<sup>152</sup> "County G.O.P. Women's Committee Organizes," *Carthage Press*, 26 August 1920.

<sup>153</sup> "G.O.P. Women Name Mrs. Hal Wise Chairman," *Joplin Herald*, 25 August 1920.

upcoming election, so it was critical for them to gather as much support for the G.O.P. as possible.<sup>154</sup>

While local women traveled throughout the area to gain votes, Jasper County election officials quickly worked to prepare for the massive influx of new voters. In the 1916 Presidential Election, Jasper County cast 21,000 votes, but after the passage of the Anthony Amendment, the vote margin increased by nearly 12,000. This required funding from other departments to cover the extra costs of the election.<sup>155</sup> Joplin, Webb City, and Carthage hired additional polling staff to watch over the precincts with the increased voting population, and the county hired additional clerks and election judges to count and certify the ballots. There was an added problem, however: the state's Presidential Election Law of 1919 mandated pink ballots for women. Jasper County officials believed that the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment nullified the requirement to use a different ballot. They also believed that many women might contest this sort of discrimination. There would be additional ballots, but county officials ignored state law and issued white ballots exclusively. Local precincts also believed it necessary to place women as election clerks and vote counters at the polling places, since the local laws specifically stated the only stipulation for the job was to be a qualified voter.<sup>156</sup>

While women and men in the area prepared for the vote, local newspapers ran positive stories to urge women to go to the polls and exercise their new rights. On 2 November 1920, women across the nation went to the polls to cast their votes. For some

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<sup>154</sup> "G.O.P. Women Meet," *Sarcoxie Press*, 3 September 1920.

<sup>155</sup> "Total Woman Vote in County About 12,000," *Carthage Press*, 19 August 1920.

<sup>156</sup> "Special Session of Legislature May Become Necessary-Additional County Judges Needed," *Webb City Sentinel*, 19 August 1920.

it was their first time, like Miss Manera Johnston of Carthage who was 106 years old. In Jasper County, election officials did not throw out a single female ballot. Mrs. Wise, chair of the county Women's Republican Committee, stated she was happy with the results of the election and believed this was the first step to more rights for women. She continued by explaining that the election turnout for women in Jasper County was quite large.<sup>157</sup> The local newspapers ran cartoons depicting how women were excited to vote for the first time, and the women were anxious to hear the results of their first election. (See Figures 7 and 8)

Less than one month after the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment, Judge J.D. Perkins of the Jasper County Circuit Court created a controversy when he argued that women had no right to serve on a jury. He argued that the Nineteenth Amendment only gave women the right to vote and nothing else. He went as far as to say that women should not serve on a jury because it was illegal. According to the judge, the only way a woman could serve on a jury was if the state passed laws specifically allowing women to serve. The *Webb City Sentinel* rebutted his comments by arguing that Annie Baxter and Della Sharp served as elected officials before the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment. At the time, no law stated women could serve as jurors, yet they received the opportunity to do so.<sup>158</sup> Just days after the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment, Jasper County appointed its first all-female jury in Joplin. The case involved a dairyman charged with violating dairy laws. The jury found him guilty and sentenced him to pay a fifty-dollar

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<sup>157</sup> "No Woman's Vote Thrown out in Webb City Ballot," *Webb City Sentinel*, 3 November 1920.

<sup>158</sup> "Jurors is the Opinion of Judge Perkins," *Webb City Sentinel*, 6 September 1920.

fine.<sup>159</sup> The courts believed that the female jury had every right to grant the punishment and there was no challenge to the jury.

Although women across the nation were now voting, the anti-suffrage movement was not finished. On 12 October 1920, Cecilia Streett Waters and Mary D. Randolph of Maryland registered to vote in Baltimore City. Oscar Leser, a well-known Anti, sued the city in *Leser v. Garnett*, arguing that women's voter registration was unlawful in Maryland even though the Nineteenth Amendment had assured female suffrage. When a local court ruled against Leser, he appealed and again lost. Finally, before the United States Supreme Court, Leser argued that the Nineteenth Amendment was not valid on three principles. First, it violated the Constitution by not allowing for the sovereignty of state laws. Maryland had refused to ratify the Nineteenth Amendment, and he believed the federal government could not force it upon the states. Second, several state constitutions were in conflict with the amendment because they explicitly barred women from voting. Finally, he argued that the West Virginia and Tennessee legislatures had voided their ratifications of the Nineteenth Amendment by failing to follow their own parliamentary rules.

On 27 February 1922, the Supreme Court unanimously decided that the Nineteenth Amendment was Constitutional. The Fifteenth Amendment (1870) had also been in direct violation of the Maryland State Constitution, noted the opinion, and as nobody in the state had challenged its legality in fifty years, it was now the law. The court also invoked the Supreme Law of the Land clause and noted that even in the actions of West Virginia and Tennessee had been nullified on procedural grounds, the next two

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<sup>159</sup> The J List: Five Women Instrumental in Joplin's Development," *J Magazine* (August 2010): 35.

states to ratify, Connecticut and Vermont, would have provided the necessary three quarters.

Women in Jasper County continued to play a significant role in politics through the 1920s. In 1926, the Democrat and Republican Parties nominated two women to run for the Missouri State House of Representatives. The Democrats asked Martha Taaffe to run for their party, as she had continued her work for women's clubs throughout the state while involving herself in local Democratic politics. After the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment, she became more involved in politics and strategy for the state Democratic Party.<sup>160</sup> The Republicans nominated Emma Knell of Carthage. Knell's father was the first undertaker in southwest Missouri and only the seventh licensed in the state. Emma had attended embalming school and received her license in 1898; working at her family's funeral home. By 1916, she was active in local politics in the Republican Party, and she was a suffragist for Jasper County. When the local Republican Party asked Knell to run for office, she enthusiastically accepted the offer. Jasper County was one of the first areas in the state to have two women representing both national parties running for the same office. Knell and Taaffe both fought a difficult campaign for the house seat. When eastern Jasper County residents went to the polls, they chose Knell as their representative—the first Republican female to serve in the Missouri General Assembly. She continued to be a representative for the east side of Jasper County for three terms, before retiring from the House. As a representative, she wrote legislation for funds to build a county tuberculosis hospital. She also sponsored the bill that created the Missouri

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<sup>160</sup> "Obituaries," *Carthage Evening Press*, 11 September 1957.

State Highway Patrol. Knell continued her fight for women's rights until her death in September of 1963.<sup>161</sup>

Once suffrage passed, many women in the Progressive Movement believed they could pass the social reform legislation they supported. Child labor, improved working conditions for men and women, and improved conditions for prisons were a few of the reforms Progressives wanted implemented on a national level. Reformers also wanted to gain equal pay for equal work in the workplace. On the national political scene, women like Emily Newell Blair believed women voters would come together after the Nineteenth Amendment and vote as a bloc of voters for politicians who supported women's issues. Many believed women would also form voting groups as they did with suffrage groups, to push for reforms in their local and state communities. As women became more involved in voting and politics through the 1920s, it became obvious that they did not come together to vote for issues, but rather they tended to vote the way their husbands or men in their family had voted.<sup>162</sup>

By 1922, Blair was the vice president of the Democratic National Committee and the first woman to hold one of its elected offices.<sup>163</sup> Many had assumed with Blair's election that women might gain power through both political parties, yet as Blair quickly learned, party politics was more important than women's rights to the DNC. Blair studied data from across the United States and noticed that women were not voting as a bloc. She believed women were not making strides in political affairs because of a

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<sup>161</sup> "Emma Knell Dies After Long Illness," *Carthage Evening Press*, 19 September 1963.

<sup>162</sup> Kristi Andersen, *After Suffrage: Women in Partisan and Electoral Politics before the New Deal* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1996), 3 and 13.

<sup>163</sup> Blair, 278.

phenomena she coined “Program Method:” the naïve tendency for women to ignore the fact that many political deals were made in cloak rooms for reasons that had little to do with ideology. Men, she argued, used back channels and secret negotiations far more often, and in preference to proper legal procedure.<sup>164</sup> Only by aligning themselves in voting blocs and upholding their moral standards, would women stand a chance of neutralizing the corruption and gaining power.

But when Blair employed her strategy, many conservative women resisted the change, fearing that male political leaders might completely disregard any future legislation beneficial to women. Her second attempt to gain rights for women occurred when she encouraged other women to run for political office and win local elections. The consequent influence on state legislatures, she reasoned, promised to promote bills that supported women’s rights.<sup>165</sup> Neither of her strategies gained traction with the female voting population, and by the end of the 1920s, Blair—an ardent Democrat—had become certain that both major political parties failed her sex.<sup>166</sup> Women’s self-interest and factionalism were culprits, she argued, and had undermined their political power; so much so that women had indeed lost political influence in the ten years following the Anthony Amendment.

Internal conflicts among women’s groups stalled many reforms for women after 1920. Historians throughout the 1970s and early 1980s wrote that women unified in a type of sisterhood bond prior to the passage of and in the years following the Nineteenth

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<sup>164</sup> Anderson, 38.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid., 106.

<sup>166</sup> Ibid., 107-8.

Amendment. As women's history developed into the 1990s, historians began to uncover evidence that much of that unity was illusory and that internal conflicts had instead splintered the suffrage movement. Glaring evidence of white suffragist racism supports the latter interpretation, as does the condescension and bigotry aimed at working class and immigrant women during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Further, the Southern suffragists' willingness to take away the black male vote and continue the disenfranchisement of African-American women has given the "universal sisterhood" school an indelibly black eye. Even after all women gained the ballot, southern suffragists Madeline McDowell Breckenridge, Kate Gordon, and Belle Kearney discriminated against black women in the South instead of building larger bi-racial coalitions.<sup>167</sup> Black women continued to struggle for voting rights in most rural and urban settings until the early 1930s, and most of the disenfranchisement efforts came from other women. By decade's end, black women in the South had lost the right to vote once again. In the North and Midwest, suffragists did not help black women out of poverty and the discrimination they faced in large urban areas like Chicago during the First Great Migration. In just one decade, black women were disenfranchised across the nation.<sup>168</sup>

Just as former suffragists victimized black women, immigrant and working class women also endured discrimination. In the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, middle class women targeted immigrant and native working class women as sexual delinquents.

Many of these middle class Progressives argued that women who grew up in poverty or

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<sup>167</sup> Rosalyn Terborg-Penn, *African American Women in the Struggle for the Vote, 1850-1920* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998), 151.

<sup>168</sup> *Ibid.*, 156.



who were not used to the freedoms of the United States were more likely to fall into sexual delinquency. They used delinquency cases against their fellow women to professionalize the field of social work and build more working opportunities for middle class women.<sup>169</sup> Even if immigrant or working class women had not committed crimes, social workers attacked them for staying out too late or socializing with too many men. When women committed crimes, the courts often sided with the social workers, and men often times received fines or minimal jail sentences for having sex with prostitutes, while the prostitutes received long terms in jail or mandated time in reformatories—some terms in reformatories lasted up to two years. Many of these harsh punishments came from women who ran reformatories in an effort to “purify” misguided immigrant women or working class girls.<sup>170</sup> Women continued to turn on their own gender in relation to these crimes until the early 1940s.

By the 1930s, internal conflicts among women contributed to a loss of political power and a failure of women to lobby for legislation to help gain rights for their gender. Women in Jasper County had also lost a great deal of power in politics with the beginning of the Great Depression. Upper class women in Jasper County contributed significantly to the progressive achievements of all women in the county, yet by the 1930s, many wealthy women had lost more influence and wealth than successful reformers could afford to lose. Women in the middle class that devoted so much time to the cause had minimal time or money to put towards gaining women’s rights. Even after economic recovery occasioned by World War II, women in Jasper County and the rest of

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<sup>169</sup> Regina G. Kunzel, *Fallen Women, Problem Girls: Unmarried Mothers and the Professionalization of Social Work, 1890-1945* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1995), 151.

<sup>170</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

the United States failed to mobilize for women's rights. Only with the 1960s and Second Wave Feminism did women once again unite to make a difference.

Emily Newell Blair and others continued their fight for women's rights long after the passage of the Anthony Amendment. During the 1940s, President Franklin D. Roosevelt appointed her to several different committees that dealt with women's issues, and Eleanor Roosevelt, Blair's connection to the White House, asked her for advice on how a First Lady should deal with women in the media.<sup>171</sup> Meanwhile, Jasper County remained as much a stronghold for the Republican Party in the 1950s as it had been at the end of the nineteenth century. As the Republicans lost their progressive planks, so too did southwest Missouri become more conservative. Area women were less politically active, and it would not be until the 1970s that Joplin elected its first female mayor.

One of the many causes that led to women uniting in Second Wave Feminism was Betty Friedan's 1963 book *The Feminine Mystique*. Friedan conducted a survey of former classmates and the results stunned her when she realized many of them were unhappy with their lives as homemakers. Soon she began additional research into this question and realized a large majority of women in the United States wanted careers and were not happy when limited to the roles of mother and wife. Women across America—primarily white, suburban women—read her book and slowly began to come together to fight for reproductive rights, pay equality, spousal rape laws, better medical services for women, and parental rights. By the mid-1970s, women from all lifestyles united to fight sexism. Like the suffrage movement, Second Wave Feminism united women on a large scale, and, by the end of the decade, anti-feminists reacted just as anti-suffragists had

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<sup>171</sup> Mary K. Dains, *Show Me Missouri Women: Selected Biographies* (Kirksville, Missouri: Thomas Jefferson University Press, 1989), 224.

forty years earlier. One of the most well-known ant-feminists was St. Louisian Phyllis Schlafly, a leader in the fight against the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), which was passed by Congress in 1972 and sent to the states for ratification. It declared that both sexes were equal under the laws of the United States and outlawed discrimination against women. Schlafly's involvement with the STOP ERA campaign stemmed from the belief that ERA would extend conscription to women, make separate bathrooms unconstitutional, and generally worsen American womanhood's lot. By 1982, she and other anti-feminists succeeded where anti-suffragists had not: ratification failed. When the 1980s ushered in another period of broadly based mainstream conservatism in the United States, women's rights once again stalled. It would not be until the 1990s, with Third Wave Feminism, that women once again pushed for rights in the workplace and attempted to break the glass ceiling.

The fight for women's rights continues to this day with the 2011 case *Wal-Mart v. Dukes*, which claimed that thousands of women did not receive pay increases and promotions based on their sex from the Wal-Mart cooperation. The Supreme Court ruled in favor of Wal-Mart, causing rippling effects on sexual discrimination cases across the country. In 2007, the administration at College of the Ozarks located in Branson, Missouri, refused to allow female fire fighters to be promoted to captain in the student-led fire department. After a campaign led by the entire college fire department, the administration overturned its ruling and allowed Amber Verwey-Benton to serve as the first female captain. Jasper County, a once progressive region on women's rights, now largely tends to focus less on promoting women's issues. The Joplin Fire Department

only has one female who serves on the department and the Joplin Police Department has only promoted one female police officer to its administrative ranks.

Feminism as a movement is currently transforming once again with a change in its tactics. A combination of conservative feminism and progressive feminism is coming together to push women's issues in a more moderate way. From the 1970s through the 1990s, women who chose the lifestyle as a homemaker were considered ridiculous by some Progressive feminists. Yet over the past two decades, some women's rights groups have embraced women staying at home, while other groups have promoted women going to school later in life and following a career path once their children have reached a certain age. Feminist groups continue to change their strategies to gain additional rights for women while trying to include a large majority of women in their cause. The new age of fighting for women's rights has once again changed with the introduction of the millennial generation. Women from the millennial generation focus their efforts on pushing for reforms for women in the work place. Unlike past generations, men are also joining the fight to promote women's rights in the United States. Some men are even opting to assume the traditionally feminine role of homemaker. While women continue to fight for their rights of equality across the United States and the rest of the world, one thing is clear, the women of today have to look back and thank suffragists for the changes they fought so hard for, which have been some of the main contributions in providing women today with greater equality.

## EPILOGUE

Women's suffrage was one of the longest and hardest fought movements in American history. Although it originated during the Second Great Awakening, women would not see universal suffrage in the United States until 1920. Even after its passage, anti-suffragists continued to resist the Anthony Amendment. Women faced many obstacles during their fight for the ballot, and not only did they have to fight external problems from men and state legislation, but they also encountered internal conflicts from anti-suffragists, southern suffragists, and racism. These factors all slowed the progression of suffrage, as did the split between NWSA and AWSA. Women's suffrage slowly occurred in the West, but it was not until the unification of the movement into one organization, NAWSA, that this reform truly had a fighting chance.

Jasper County's role in the suffrage movement is more important than historians realize. Not only had the women and men from the region influenced it on the state level, but residents of Jasper County also helped to win suffrage on the national scene. Ella Harrison brought the suffrage cause to the South by fearlessly traveling through Mississippi and Louisiana and urging women to campaign for more rights, including the right to vote. Once Harrison moved back to Jasper County, she served as a justice of the peace in Jasper, Missouri, and assisted her brother in his Carthage law practice. She continued her fight for suffrage until her death in 1933 from heart disease.<sup>172</sup>

The 1890 election of Annie Baxter demonstrated that Jasper County's views towards women were more progressive than those of the nation as a whole. Many sources name Baxter as the second known woman elected to political office in the United

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<sup>172</sup> "Miss Ella Harrison Dies," *The Carthage Press*, 17 December 1933.

States, but other sources deny this claim, so it is difficult to argue this point with accuracy. On the other hand, Baxter was the first woman elected to political office in Missouri and the first female county clerk in the United States. She was also recognized as an exceptional public servant who oversaw the construction of Jasper County's courthouse. When Baxter lost her reelection bid in 1894, she moved to Jefferson City and became the direct assistant to the Missouri Secretary of State, a job she held from 1908 until 1916. While working for the Secretary of State, she excelled at her job and caught the attention of many state political leaders as a hard worker. Later in life, Baxter decided to get out of politics and took a job at the University of Missouri working for the Dean of the Fine Arts Department. She passed away in 1944.<sup>173</sup> No records indicate that Baxter helped to push the women's suffrage movement in Jasper County, nor do historical documents claim she helped to push for suffrage on the state level either. Yet Baxter's election gave women hope that if a woman was elected to political office in the county, then someday women may receive the ballot.

Of all the women who influenced the suffrage movement in Jasper County, Emily Newell Blair was the most influential. She used Ella Harrison's strategy to unite area women in the suffrage cause. Blair's role in suffrage continued in Missouri by editing *The Missouri Woman* and working for MESA as its public relations officer. Her work also influenced the suffrage movement on the national scene with the organization of the Golden Lane Protest, becoming a founding member of the League of Women Voters, and directly influencing policy with NAWSA. Even after the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment, Blair continued to push for women's rights by strategizing with Eleanor Roosevelt to seek additional legislation. President Franklin D. Roosevelt appointed Blair

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<sup>173</sup>Priddy, 22.

as Chair of the Consumers' Advisory Board of the National Recovery Act during the Great Depression. While Blair was disappointed at the progress women had made in gaining rights for their sex, she continued her fight for women's rights until 1951 when she died from complications of a stroke.<sup>174</sup>

Besides the women and men who influenced the suffrage movement in Jasper County, the strategy used by the area was unique and helped to push for suffrage in Missouri. Jasper County's conflicting loyalties between North and South during the Civil War eventually influenced its suffrage strategy. Ella Harrison helped to create this strategy by using the tactics she developed while living in Jasper County and working closely with NAWSA. Using a southern-style grassroots model, she pushed for the federal amendment sought by northern suffragists, ultimately creating a third type of suffrage strategy. Throughout, Jasper County exerted significant influence on the passage of the Presidential suffrage bill and the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment in the state of Missouri.

The suffrage movement in the western part of the United States was more progressive towards women's voting and their rights as individuals than the established eastern portion of America, because women were viewed more equally on the western frontier. During the 1880s, Jasper County was not far removed from the frontier, and although some have argued that since Jasper County was culturally "Western," its progressive stance on women's issues is easy to understand. This argument is not logical. Kansas, Arkansas, Oklahoma, and other surrounding counties in Missouri all held significantly more conservative views of women's roles in society and did not support the

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<sup>174</sup> Dains,, 223.

suffrage movement until the 1910s. No single factor caused the singularity of women's suffrage in Jasper County; four did. It was the numerous women's clubs, wealthy influential women, supportive local newspaper editors, and a working class of women that set the county apart. Women in the wealthy class of society influenced women's rights significantly by donating money and founding clubs. This influence, in turn, promoted reforms for their working class sisters and attracted many of them to the suffrage movement. All of this occurred at a time when the local newspapers were on board with the movement.

Jasper County's progressive leanings and influence on the suffrage movement have amazed local historians. Nationally known historian Margot McMillen argues additional research is needed in order to understand the true extent of the influence these women exerted on Missouri history. Indeed, too much of this important story has been obscured or forgotten.



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Ames, Blair, and Oorick wrote a concise history of the women's suffrage movement in Missouri. The article was important to the thesis because the authors were actual participants in the suffrage movement in Missouri. Each of these women contributed articles about the suffrage movement beginning in the 1860s through Missouri's ratification of the 19th Amendment.

Billington-Greig, Tresa. "The Rebellion of Woman." *American Journal of Sociology* 14, no. 2 (July 1908): 276-7.

The Billington-Greig article was a valuable piece to use since its publication date was 1908; during the incarceration of women in reformatory hospitals. The article argued how men suppressed women in their fight for equality. The piece demonstrated how women during the turn of the century were not afraid to voice their opinion in opposition to men and how women were being accused of delinquent acts on the count of false grounds. Tresa Billington-Greig pointed out in her article women were beginning to rebel against men and the current generation (the generation during 1908) would see major changes in women's rights.

Blair, Emily Newell. *Bridging Two Eras: The Autobiography of Emily Newell Blair, 1877-1951*. Columbia, Missouri: University of Columbia Press, 1999.

The autobiography of Emily Newell Blair allows the reader to understand what influenced her to join the fight for suffrage. The book also gave insight to how she rose to power and the important people who came into her life and influenced her to become one of the most prolific suffragists in the modern movement. Finally, the reader understands the personal struggles Blair overcame in her life.

Decker, Perl. "Woman Suffrage," Papers of Congressman Decker. F.16-20, Missouri State Historical Society: Columbia, Missouri, 1917.

Perl Decker delivered this speech before Congress in support of a suffrage Amendment. The Congressman was an avid suffragist and prohibitionist in the sixty-fifth Congress. His speech boldly argued for women's rights and he proudly defended the idea of a national suffrage movement.

"Dr. Fannie E. Williams," Letter from the University of Iowa Powers Museum Archives: Carthage, Missouri, 1989.

This was a letter sent to the Powers Museum explaining that Joplin had a female physician, Fannie E. Williams, who practiced in the city. Dr. Williams graduated from the University of Iowa Medical School in 1876.

Henderson, C.R. "Social Cost of Accident, Ignorance and Exhaustion." *American Journal of Sociology* 14, no. 2 (July 1908): 276.

C.R. Henderson wrote his article during the period in which women were institutionalized for acts of sexual and social delinquency. Henderson argued women were delinquent due to not having a stable upbringing. The author believed that if children did not have to work outside the home at such an early age, but rather attend school, these delinquent adolescents would have been productive members of society.

Minutes from Missouri Women on the General Federation Committees, Powers Museum: Carthage, Missouri, 1919.

This was the original minutes from a meeting of the Missouri Women's Federation Committee. Martha Taaffe is cited in these minutes as describing the hard work Emily Newell Blair and the women of Jasper County provided for the suffrage movement in the state. Additional lines in the minutes also gave detailed plans on how women in Missouri needed to unite in order to pass a full suffrage bill.

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This is the official record for the state of Missouri published from the Secretary of State's office. The "Blue Book," as it is nicknamed, compiles multiple historical facts throughout Missouri. The book discussed how women in Missouri made a difference, including Marie Ruoff Byrum, the first woman known to vote after the passage of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment.

Alexander, Ruth M. *The Girl Problem: Female Sexual Delinquency in New York, 1900-1930*. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1995.

Ruth Alexander focused her book on one-hundred women incarcerated at two separate reformatory hospitals in New York. She wrote about the personal stories of the women housed in the reformatories and how these women interacted with each other. The book also focused on how these women reacted after their release from the reformatories. Alexander argued the incarceration of minorities and working class women was the most common. Alexander also discussed New York suffragists and their tactics at reforming social problems.

Andersen, Kristi. *After Suffrage: Women in Partisan and Electoral Politics before the New Deal*. Chicago, Illinois: University of Chicago, 1996.

Kristi Andersen argued that after the passage of the Anthony Amendment, internal conflicts stalled the reforms women proposed in society. Andersen argued that instead of voting in blocs after the passage of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment, women actually tended to vote as their husbands voted.

Anzalone, Christopher A. *Supreme Court Cases on Gender and Sexual Equality, 1787-2001*. New York, New York: M.E. Sharpe, 2002.

Anzalone compiled several court cases the Supreme Court ruled on in regards to gender and sex equality in the United States. The book also focused on the final court case that anti-suffragists challenged against the Nineteenth Amendment.

Baker, Jean H. *Votes for Women: The Struggle for Suffrage Revisited*. New York, New York: Oxford University Press, 2002.

Baker focused her book on the modern national suffrage movement beginning around 1900. She focused on important dates and people who helped to form the national movement. The one disadvantage Baker had with her book was that she rarely discussed the suffrage movement in the South.

Benson, Susan Porter. *Counter Cultures: Saleswomen, Managers, and Customers in American Department Stores, 1890-1940*. Chicago, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1986.

Susan Benson explains how consumption, the rise of the Industrial Revolution, and department stores completely changed the American society. Because of this change, women from all classes of society began to intermingle, and upper class women demanded reforms for working class women. Finally, Benson argued that women empowered themselves by being able to rise through the ranks of department stores and become managers and floor supervisors over large groups of employees for the first time. Benson's work is useful in explaining divisions in native-born middle-class women's culture as well as divisions between middle-class and working-class women.

Berry, Mary Frances. *Why ERA Failed: Politics, Women's Rights, and the Amending Process of the Constitution*. Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1986.

Mary Frances Berry wrote her book only four years after the expiration of the ERA Amendment. Her book gave an in depth description of why women did not unite to pass the ERA. She argued internal forces from other women's groups stopped the passage of the Amendment and that while women could have united for change, too many conflicts between women prevented this from happening.

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Karen Blair is a pioneer in studying the origins of the suffrage movement in relations to how women's clubs influenced the modern suffrage movement. Blair emphasized how women's clubs were also the origins of the feminist movement for women.

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In this journal article, Charlotte Bright argued the penalties for girls and young women were harsher than those for boys because delinquent girls violated society's view of morality. Bright used court documents to support her argument; they demonstrated that women were overwhelmingly sent to reformatory schools while boys received probation for guilt of the exact same crimes. "Gender and Justice in the Progressive Era" provides perspective on female reformers in the Midwest.

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Camhi along with Susan Marshall were pioneer historians who reevaluated the historical mythology of sisterhood that historians of the 1970s proposed. Camhi's book exposed that women's suffrage was not a united movement, but rather it had internal conflicts from racism to anti-suffrage.

Congressman Perl Decker. "University of Missouri. <http://shs.umsystem.edu/manuscripts/invent/0092.pdf>. (accessed 20 January 2014).

This online entry from the Missouri State Historical Society gave a brief biography on Congressman Perl Decker. The website provided information on his early childhood and eventual election to Congress.

Cott, Nancy F. *The Bonds of Womanhood: "Woman's Sphere" in New England, 1780-1835*. New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1977.

Nancy Cott took an interesting approach towards the topic of women uniting under the idea of sisterhood. She argued that women united in an effort to take on social issues because of changes in the educational system and a corresponding increase in the literacy rate in the United States. Cott also argued that suffrage did not begin at Seneca Falls but had origins in the late colonial period.

Cox, Karen L. *Dreaming of Dixie: How the South was Created in American Popular Culture*. Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina, 2011.

Cox explained how the national media portrayed the South between Reconstruction and the 1950s. Cox argued that advertising companies and, in particular, northerners established the mythology of Dixie. Cox focused a great deal on the portrayal of women in the South during this period. Cox explains the national image of southern women before, during, and after the fight for suffrage.

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*Reconstruction in Retrospect* examined how the South coped with Reconstruction. The book explained how Jim Crow Laws created a worse environment for African-Americans than the institution of slavery itself. Current revealed the ramifications of Reconstruction as being detrimental to southern women in all classes.

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Richard Current wrote *Those Terrible Carpetbaggers* to try to correct the mythology of the carpetbaggers. He argued that the majority of carpetbaggers were not bad people, but they actually came to the South in an effort to reform their society. Current explained that many northern women traveled to the South in order to help rebuild the society and teach African-Americans how to read and write. Although northern women lived in the South for many years, the approach to the fight for women's suffrage was still distinctly northern.

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Dains wrote her book to highlight women in Missouri who were significant in Missouri history. The author focused on several women from the state, including Annie Baxter and Emily Newell Blair. Her book provided many details into the personal lives of these women and the influence they had in the Missouri suffrage movement.

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Dubois argued the original suffrage movement began at Seneca Falls, but that abolitionists were the reason why it was successful. Dubois wrote her book during second wave feminism, and this movement influenced many of her writings. She also included valuable information about local activism within the national movement.

Dudden, Faye E. *Fighting Chance: The Struggle over Woman Suffrage and Black Suffrage in Reconstruction America*. New York, New York: Oxford University Press, 2011.

Faye Dudden approached the topic of suffrage as a comparison between the tactics of Caucasian women and those of African-American men. She explained how at first women's suffrage leaders and African-American men came together in the fight for voting rights. As time progressed, these suffrage activists began to fight internally in order to try and advance their own agendas for voting rights.

Edwards, Rebecca. *New Spirits: Americans in the Gilded Age*. New York, New York: Oxford, 2011.

*New Spirits* presents American history during the Gilded Age. Edwards analyzed suffrage by looking at legislation, individuals, and movements on the national and regional levels.

"Ella Harrison." *Powers Museum*. <http://powersmuseum.com/exhibits/past-exhibits/carthage-women-in-history/ella-harrison.html> (accessed 14 January 2014).

The Powers Museum website helped immensely when looking up local information on women from around Jasper County. The website also helped to find additional information on local facts about Jasper County. The Ella Harrison information gave detailed facts about her personal life and experiences.

Foley, E. Gary R. Kremer and Kenneth H. Winn. *Dictionary of Missouri Biography*. Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri Press, 1999.

This is a wonderful source to look up information on various citizens from Missouri who made an impact on the state in several different ways. The book helped in finding basic information on women who influenced the suffrage movement in Missouri and Jasper County. It also referenced additional resources so the reader could find more information on the person they were interested in looking up.

Genovese, Eugene D. *Roll Jordan Roll: The World the Slaves Made*. New York, New York: Vintage Books, 1972.

Eugene Genovese presents an in depth explanation of the slave culture in the South. He included a great deal of information about the culture of southern white women and slave women as well as their influence on the southern society.

Green, Elna C. *Southern Strategies: Southern Women and the Women Suffrage Question*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1997.

Elna Green described how southern women fought for suffrage by focusing on a state-by-state strategy. She explained the conflicts between the pro- and anti-suffrage movements. Green argued that internal conflicts among women's suffrage groups led to the collapse of the movement in the South.

Johnson, Paul E. *The Early American Republic, 1789-1829*. New York, New York: The Oxford Press, 2006.

Johnson explained the origins of the American political system while focusing heavily on politics in the early republic. He discussed the festering clash between northern and southern politics, and described how women in upper class America became an influential part of society.

Kerber, Linda K. *No Constitutional Right to be Ladies*. New York, New York: Hill and Wang, 1998.

Linda Kerber explained how women united to pass suffrage, and described conditions for women in the years following the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment. She argued that women united for suffrage because they wanted to create social change for the United States. After the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment, they did not unite as a single bloc of voters, but rather they began voting with either their husbands or the political party they supported before the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment. Kerber argued that women would not again unite to help themselves, until the 1960s.

Klatch, Rebecca. *Women of the New Right*. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Temple University Press, 1987.

*Women of the New Right* described how Conservative feminists fought for their rights in the 1980s. Klatch followed the personal stories of many women involved in the anti-ERA campaign and showed how women united under the Conservative movement.

Kraditor, Aileen. *The Ideas of the Woman Suffrage Movement 1890-1920*. New York, New York: W.W. Norton, 1965.

Aileen Kraditor wrote her book only two years after the publication of Betty Friedan's, *The Feminine Mystique*. This work was one of the few books in the 1960s that covered the suffrage movement. Kraditor argued that women united for suffrage because of a sisterhood, and she explained the influence of upper class women who helped those in the working class. Her perspective in the book was unique; in part, because she wrote her book before second wave feminism was a large movement in the United States.

Kunzel, Regina G. *Fallen Women, Problem Girls: Unmarried Mothers and the Professionalization of Social Work, 1890-1945*. New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1995.



Dr. Kunzel's work focused less on the penalty and incarceration of sexual delinquents and more on which groups were behind the establishment of the reformatory hospitals. She argued that reformers believed female pregnancy out of wedlock was the biggest threat to society during the Gilded Age.

Lagemann, Ellen Condliffe. *A Generation of Women: Education in the Lives of Progressive Reformers*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1979.

Lagemann followed the lives of five influential women in the New York metropolitan area, and in doing so; she clarified how women bonded during the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment. She explained that all five of these women united under the idea of education, and because of this education, these women led the way for the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment.

Lerner, Gerda. *The Majority Finds Its Past: Placing Women in History*. New York, New York: Oxford University Press, 1979.

Lerner's book focused on the origins of the suffrage movement from its early years through the passage of the 19th Amendment. Lerner was a pioneer in women's history, and focused heavily on how feminism influenced the suffrage movement. Lerner was also one of the first historians to focus on black women in the suffrage movement, and the racism they encountered by white suffragists.

Link, William A. *The Paradox of Southern Progressivism, 1880-1930*. Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 1992.

William Link's book *The Paradox of Southern Progressivism* was a classic book written in the 1990s. Link focused on the treatment of minorities in the South and the important influence Progressive women had on reforms in medicine and education. His book argued that women's suffrage was directly linked with the Progressive reforms southern women were involved in.

Livingston, Joel T. *A History of Jasper County Missouri and Its People*. Chicago, Illinois: Lewis Publishing Company, 1912.

Joel Livingston wrote an in-depth history of Jasper County Missouri. His book covered the origins of the first settlers in the region through early 1910. He focused on several different topics regarding women in the county and their significant contributions to the region.

Lusted, Marcia Amidon. *The Fight for Women's Suffrage*. Edina, Minnesota: ABDO Publishing Company, 2011.

Lusted wrote an in-depth analysis of women's suffrage in the United States from women arriving in colonial America to the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment. She

was one of the few authors who wrote about the voting rights women were granted briefly in New Jersey in the first years of the United States.

Marshall, Susan E. *Splintered Sisterhood: Gender and Class in the Campaign against Woman Suffrage*. Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1997.

Marshall described how anti-suffrage was not a sporadic movement. Instead, she defined anti-suffrage as a credible force against women's suffrage. Marshall explained that the majority of women involved in the anti-suffrage movement derived from the northeastern part of the United States and tended to come from the upper class of society.

McMillen, Margot. *The Golden Lane: How Missouri Women Gained the Vote and Changed History*. Charleston, South Carolina: The History Press, 2011.

McMillen's book was important to this thesis because she provided many details on the suffrage movement in Missouri. She also focused on an important topic that history has forgotten to write about, "The Golden Lane" protest that occurred in 1916 during the Democratic National Convention in St. Louis, Missouri. Finally, her book explained to the reader how women in Missouri helped to change the suffrage movement strategy on a national level.

Morantz-Sanchez, Regina. *Science, Health Reform, and the Woman Physician*. Boston, Massachusetts: Houghton Mifflin, 2001.

Regina Morantz-Sanchez focused her book on women in the medical field during the Colonial Period through the early twentieth century. She also provided information on female physicians on the Western Frontier.

Nichols, Bruce. *Guerilla Warfare in Civil Missouri, 1863*. Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company, 2007.

Bruce Nichols wrote his book to give the reader an in-depth analysis of guerilla militias that organized in Missouri and fought in many of the statewide skirmishes. The author provided detailed analysis and focused part of this book on the conflicts of Jasper County. He also provided information on Jasper County's split as a northern and southern county during the Civil War.

"Permanent Accomplishments by the Women of Carthage," *The Open Gate to the Ozarks*, 11 July 1924, Carthage, Missouri

*The Open Gate to the Ozarks* was a pamphlet wrote in 1924 that told local history about the area and helped to attract people to visit Jasper County to create revenue and tourism to the region. The pamphlet gave details on the success of women from around the area, and how their success made Jasper County a wonderful place to visit.

Pietrusza, David. *1920: The Year of the Six Presidents*. New York, New York: Basic Books, 2008.

Pietrusza wrote an amazing book that tells the significant events of the early 1920s. His book was important to the thesis because he wrote on Harry T. Burn, the Representative who casted the deciding vote for the Nineteenth Amendment in Tennessee.

Priddy, Bob. "Across our wide Missouri, God Bless Annie Baxter!" *Missouri Life* no. 10 (May-June 1982): 20-22.

This article gave a brief biography of Annie Baxter and her eventual election as county clerk in Jasper County Missouri. The article provided insight about where to find additional materials referring to Mrs. Baxter.

Rosen, Ruth: *The World Split Open: How the Modern Women's Movement Changed America*. New York, New York: Viking Publishing, 2000.

Ruth Rosen's book *The World Split Open* looked at the cultural impact of second wave feminism from all different points of view. Rosen did not shy away from pointing out the divisions between women during second wave feminism.

Rymph, Catherine E. *Republican Women: Feminism and Conservatism from Suffrage through the Rise of the New Right*. Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina, 2006.

Catherine Rymph eloquently examined how women in the GOP established their own bloc within the party. She explored the separate factions in the GOP and how these women integrated into a unified party platform. Rymph's work is valuable in explaining the aftermath of the passage of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment.

Saunders, John. "The Women of the Clubs: 1890-1920." *Preservation Issues* 6, no. 2 (July 1995): 281.

Saunders article described how women's clubs in Missouri, primarily St. Louis, influenced the suffrage movement beginning in the 1880s until the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment.

Scott, Anne Firor. *The Southern Lady: From Pedestal to Politics, 1830-1930*. University of Virginia Press, 1970.

In the 1970s, Anne Firor Scott was the leading expert on the southern women's suffrage movement, as she wrote one of the first books on the topic. Scott used firsthand accounts from women's personal diaries and letters to argue that southern women supported the strategy of gaining suffrage through a federal amendment. Multiple latter

historians disagreed with Scott's argument, arguing instead that southern women supported states' rights even in their fight for suffrage.

*Teach American History*. Don't Forget to be a Good Boy." [http://www.teachamericanhistory.org/File/Harry\\_T.\\_Burn.pdf](http://www.teachamericanhistory.org/File/Harry_T._Burn.pdf) accessed on 28 December 2013.

This website provided additional details to the Harry T. Burn story on suffrage. The website also provided the infamous lines Mrs. Burn wrote to her son in the letter that convinced him to change his mind for suffrage.

Terborg-Penn, Rosalyn. *African American Women in the Struggle for the Vote, 1850-1920*. Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1998.

Terborg-Penn wrote an in-depth book on the discrimination black women encountered during the fight for suffrage. She exposed to the reader that women's suffrage not only had internal conflicts with the anti-suffrage movement, but also had conflict with race in both the North and South.

"The J List: Five Women Instrumental in Joplin's Development." *J Magazine* (August 2010): 35.

This article focused on five important people who influenced the suffrage movement in Jasper County. The article highlighted Annie Baxter and Emily Newell Blair's fight for women's rights and the suffrage movement.

Turner, Elizabeth Hayes. *Women, Culture, and Community: Religion and Reform in Galveston, 1880-1920*. New York, New York: Oxford University Press, 1997.

Elizabeth Hayes Turner explored women's suffrage from the view of southern, middle class, evangelical, white women. She argued that suffrage shifted in Galveston from being an upper class issue to a middle class issue because of the Galveston hurricane, which destroyed most of the city. Turner explained that women in the middle class united in churches to help their community. Once these women unified in helping their community, they began to push for equality and the right to vote. Turner argued that a majority of these women supported a state-by-state strategy for suffrage, not a national amendment.

Van Woodward, C. *Origins of the New South, 1877-1913*. Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Louisiana State University Press, 1951.

Van Woodward's book provides a concise history of the post-Civil War South. He explained that women played an integral part of the southern culture by reshaping the educational system and influencing local politicians.

“Virginia Minor and Women’s Right to Vote,” *The National Park Service*  
<http://www.nps.gov/jeff/historyculture/the-virginia-minor-case.htm> (accessed 9  
January 2014).

The Virginia Minor case is the pivotal moment that women in Missouri united for suffrage. The National Park Service website provided wonderful information on the personal life of Virginia and her court case she took to the Supreme Court to try and change the voting laws of Missouri and for women across the United States.

Walch, Timothy. *Uncommon Americans: The Lives and Legacies of Herbert and Lou Henry Hoover*. Westport, Connecticut: Praeger, 2003.

This book is a collection of essays and letters from the Hoovers. Walch tries to discredit the idea that Herbert and Lou Henry Hoover ignored the problems of common Americans at the start of the Great Depression. The book also gave insight on Lou Henry Hoover’s support for suffrage and women’s newly found role in American politics.

Ward, Kyle. *History in the Making: An Absorbing Look at How American History has changed in the Telling over the last 200 Years*. London, England: The New Press, 2006.

Kyle Ward explored how the historiography of American history has changed over time. He provided examples of how early textbooks generally ignored the fight for women’s suffrage. As time progressed, especially in the 1970s and 1990s, women’s suffrage became an important topic for history students.

Watson, Harry L. *Liberty and Power*. New York, New York: Hill and Wang, 2006.

Harry Watson focused on the creation of the American experiment of democracy and the struggles that the newly created nation had to overcome. Two important topics Watson discussed in his book were the Seneca Falls Convention, and how northern and southern women differed in their concept of what was American.

Wheeler, Marjorie Spruill. *New Women of the New South: The Leaders of the Woman Suffrage Movement in the Southern States*. New York, New York: Oxford University Press, 1993.

Marjorie Spruill Wheeler took a fresh look at the women’s suffrage movement in the South and explained how women in the upper, middle, and working classes reacted to the suffrage issue. Wheeler explained how conflict developed between northern and southern suffrage movements.

“Women’s Suffrage in Missouri,” C-SPAN Video, 49:58. Posted by “C-SPAN,” 23  
August 2012. <http://www.c-span.org/video/?307551-1/womens-suffrage-missouri>  
(accessed on 12 March 2014).

This is a video from the archives of C-SPAN. It is of a seminar, question, and answer forum hosted by Margot McMillen on women during the Golden Lane Protest. McMillen explains how women in Missouri helped to gain suffrage for the rest of the nation by hosting the Golden Lane Protest at the 1916 Democratic National Convention held in St. Louis.

Wyatt-Brown, Bertram. *Southern Honor: Ethics & Behavior in the Old South*. New York, New York: Oxford University Press, 1982.

Wyatt-Brown explained the impact that honor had on southern culture. He argued that southern women were not just stay at home mothers but were instead an important part of the community. Wyatt-Brown also refuted the claim that southern women were submissive and meek.

## Images

*Library of Congress*. "Governor Gardner Signs the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment." <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/cph.3c32969/> (accessed 3 January 2014.)

This image was on the Library of Congress website of Governor Gardner signing Missouri's ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment. Prominent women in the fight for Missouri suffrage surround the Governor. Governor Gardner was headed to the golf course after the signing of the ratification bill, hence why he is wearing golf shoes in the photograph.

*Webb City Sentinel*, Webb City, Missouri. "A Little Inside Dope," 27 October 1920.

This image showed a woman showing her husband who to vote for on a ballot. The cartoon represents the influence women in Jasper County had over politics in the region, and showed the importance of the female vote to the county.

*Webb City Sentinel*, Webb City, Missouri. "Introducing the Missus," 2 November 1920.

This picture shows a man introducing his wife to Uncle Sam and explaining how she was going to help choose the right man for the job. The picture showed how men in the area believed women were important to the Jasper County culture.

*Webb City Sentinel*, Webb City, Missouri. "Election Results," 3 November 1920.

The "Election Results" article depicts a female asking a man if "their" man won the election. This image was a wonderful depiction of how women and men united in the county to vote.

*Women's History*. "Kate Richards O'Hare Addressing the Crowd," <http://womenshistoryblog.tumblr.com/post/60355769492/kate-richards-ohare-addresses-crowd-in-front-of>, (accessed 11 January 14).

The image provided shows Kate Richards O'Hare addressing a crowd before the St. Louis Courthouse. O'Hare's personality was displayed in this photo and showed how she was not afraid to stand up for what she believed in. This image shows the passion and commitment women had for the suffrage movement. It also displayed the frustration women had in getting passage of a suffrage Amendment. They had argued every logical reason for the vote, and still men ignored their pleas.

## FIGURES



Figure 1

Pictured above is Kate Richards O'Hare addressing a crowd of men in St. Louis during the National Suffrage Day held on 2 May 1914. This image represents the determination woman had on gaining their right to the ballot.<sup>175</sup>

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<sup>175</sup> *Women's History*, "Kate Richards O'Hare" <http://womenshistoryblog.tumblr.com/post/60355769492/kate-richards-ohare-addresses-crowd-in-front-of> (accessed 11 January 2014).





Figure 2

Governor Gardner signs off on Missouri's ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment. The women who surround the Governor were influential in lobbying the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment. The shoes the Governor wore for the signing were white golf shoes. After the signing of the legislation, the Governor planned on taking off the afternoon to go to the course.<sup>176</sup>

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<sup>176</sup> *Library of Congress*, "Governor Gardner Signs the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment," <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/cph.3c32969/> (accessed on 3 January 2014).

# CERTIFICATE OF ELECTION.

REV. STATUTES, SECS. 4684, 4686.

STATE OF  
MISSOURI.



COUNTY OF  
JASPER.

This is to Certify, That at a General Election held in the County aforesaid, on the First Tuesday after the First Monday in November A. D. 1892, being the Eighth day of said Month, Robert T. Stickney having received a higher number of Votes for the Office hereinafter named than were cast for any other person for said Office at said Election, was duly Elected to the Office of Rep-resentative in the Legislature within and for the Eastern District and further, that said Robert T. Stickney has produced to me, the Receipt of the Tax Collector, for the payment of a State & County Tax, within One Year, next preceding his Election within and for the County and State aforesaid.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I, Annie M. Baxter

Clerk of the County Court of said County, have hereunto subscribed my name and affixed the Seal of said Court.

Done at office in City of Carthage, this Fifteenth day of November A. D. 1892

Annie M. Baxter  
County Clerk.

By \_\_\_\_\_ D. C.

Figure 3

This is a copy of an original document Annie Baxter signed as county clerk. It is the certification of a local election held in 1892. Courtesy Jasper County Archives

National American  
Woman Suffrage  
Association.

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS,  
107 WORLD BUILDING,  
NEW YORK.

Honorary President, ELIZABETH CADY STANTON, 46 West 61st Street, New York.

President, SUSAN B. ANTHONY,  
17 Madison Street, Rochester, New York.

Vice-President-at-Large, REV. ANNA H. SHAW,  
1830 Diamond Street, Philadelphia, Pa.

Corresponding Secretary, RACHEL FOSTER AVERY,  
1090 Race Street, Philadelphia, Pa.

Chairman Committee on Organization, CARRIE CHAPMAN CATT, 107 World Building, New York.

Recording Secretary, ALICE STONE BLACKWELL,  
3 Park Street, Boston, Mass.

Treasurer, HARRIET TAYLOR UPTON,  
WATTS, Ohio.

Auditors: LAURA CLAY, Lexington, Ky.  
CATHERINE WAUGH McCULLOUGH, Chicago, Ill.

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT.

ROCHESTER, N. Y., September 1, 1897.

Miss Ella Harrison,  
Carthage Mo.

My dear friend;- I have been trying to think about the postponement of your annual meeting made at Kansas City when Miss Shaw and I were there last November. Was it not to this autumn? You will soon see that we of the National have resolved to hold a series of ten or twelve National Conferences in as many large cities of as many states and I have just written Mrs. Chapman Catt to say that I want one of them should be held in St. Louis in order that the National with its very best speakers may throw the weight of its influence on the side of the state Association and so help the people who are really our friends to see and understand that the National is not represented by the president of the society, that it is not auxiliary to it, and now I bethink me that you are to hold your <sup>State Annual</sup> National meeting somewhere this autumn and I want to ask you if you do not think that it would be a good time and a good place for you to hold it when and where we do our National Conference? Now please do not talk about this until you hear from either Mrs. Catt or myself, that is, do not talk about it publicly in the newspapers or to anybody that will carry it to the parties who would like to make a public noise about it. Please tell me by return mail, if you possibly can, when and where you do propose to hold your <sup>State</sup> National meeting and whether if we decide best to have a National Conference in St. Louis sometime in November, you would think it wise to have it just before or just after the Conference but, as I said, do not let this go out until we have decided and matured plans.

Hoping you are well and ready for good work,

I am very sincerely yours,

*Susan B. Anthony*

*P.S. - I have a new stenographer & she has made a mix of my sentences - but guess you can make them - so as to tell me whether you think it best to hold either*

Figure 4

This was a letter from Susan B. Anthony addressed to Ella Harrison. Anthony was asking Harrison's opinion about holding the national suffrage meeting at the same place as the Missouri state meeting. This letter shows the influence Harrison had on the national suffrage leaders. *Courtesy of the Powers Museum*

# Suffrage League Dinner

MOTHERS' CONGRESS AND PARENT-  
TEACHER ASSOCIATIONS

MAY 9, 1917



## THE NEW COLUMBIA

Oh Columbia, the star of the Nations!  
The hope of the brave and the free,  
The shrine of the wide world's devotion,  
Thy daughters give homage to thee.  
Thy mandates make heroes assemble  
When Liberty's form stands in view.  
Thy daughters here answer the summons,  
And cheer for the red, white and blue.

### CHORUS :

Three cheers for the red, white and blue!  
Three cheers for the red, white and blue!  
Thy daughters thus answer the summons  
And cheer for the red, white and blue!

Though War wages wide desolation,  
And threatens fair Peace to destroy;  
Columbia is freedom's foundation,  
And tyrants can only annoy.  
With Justice to stand on her right hand  
No longer her daughters will sue,  
And "Freedom" indeed is the message  
That floats from the red, white and blue!

CARTHAGE, MISSOURI  
ELKS CLUB HOUSE

Figure 5

This was a bookmark handed out to members of the Elks Lodge who attended a Suffrage Dinner held in Carthage on 9 May 1917. *Courtesy of the Powers Museum*

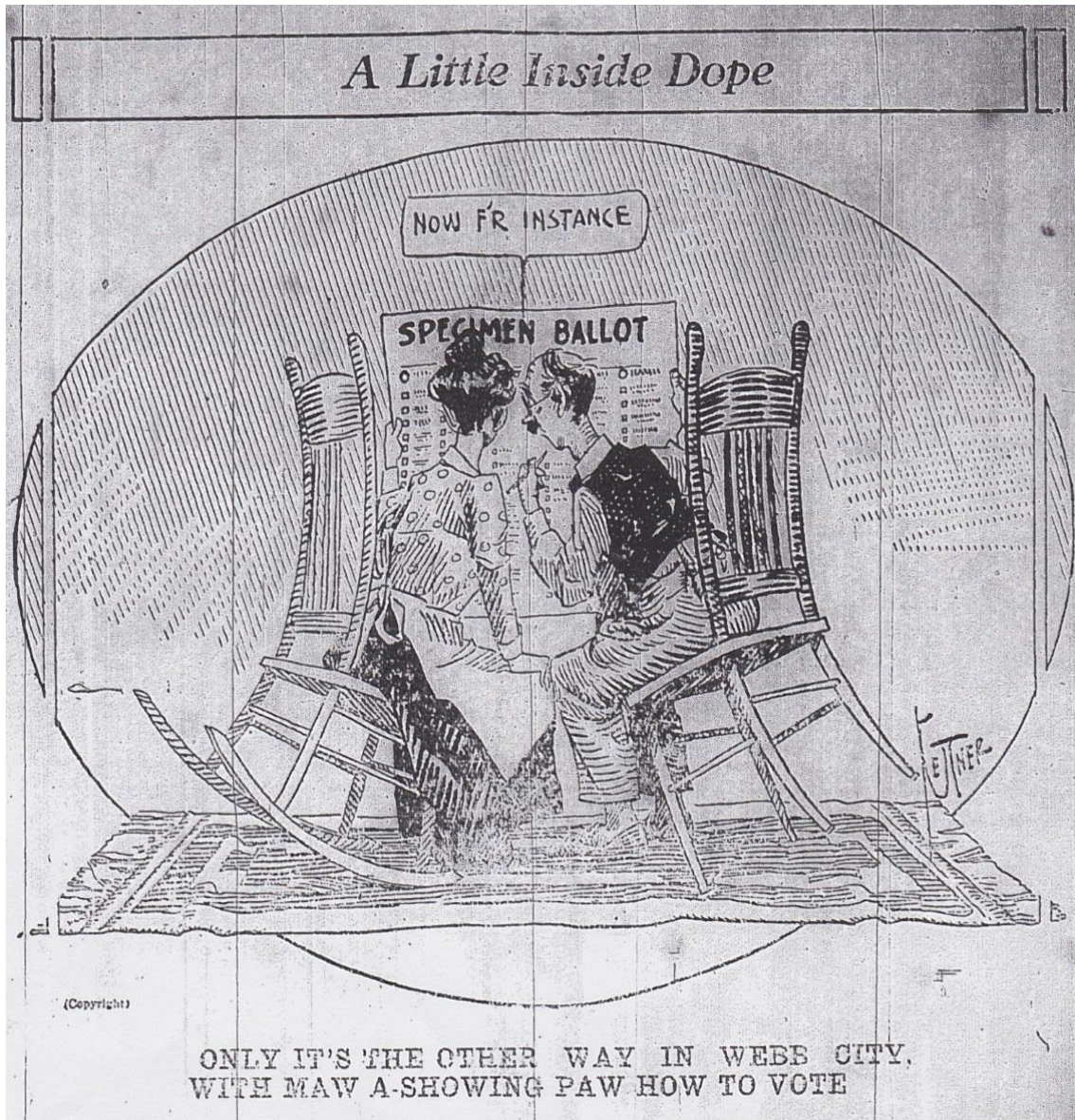


Figure 6

This newspaper clipping shows how much influence women had in the local communities in politics. It represents how men trusted women with the ballot in Jasper County.<sup>177</sup>

<sup>177</sup> *Webb City Sentinel*, 27 October 1920.



Figure 7

This cartoon shows how much men valued women and their right to vote in Jasper County. The caption below reveals how men not only supported women's rights to vote in the area, but local newspapers encouraged women to exercise their right to the ballot.<sup>178</sup>

<sup>178</sup> *Webb City Sentinel*, 2 November 1920.

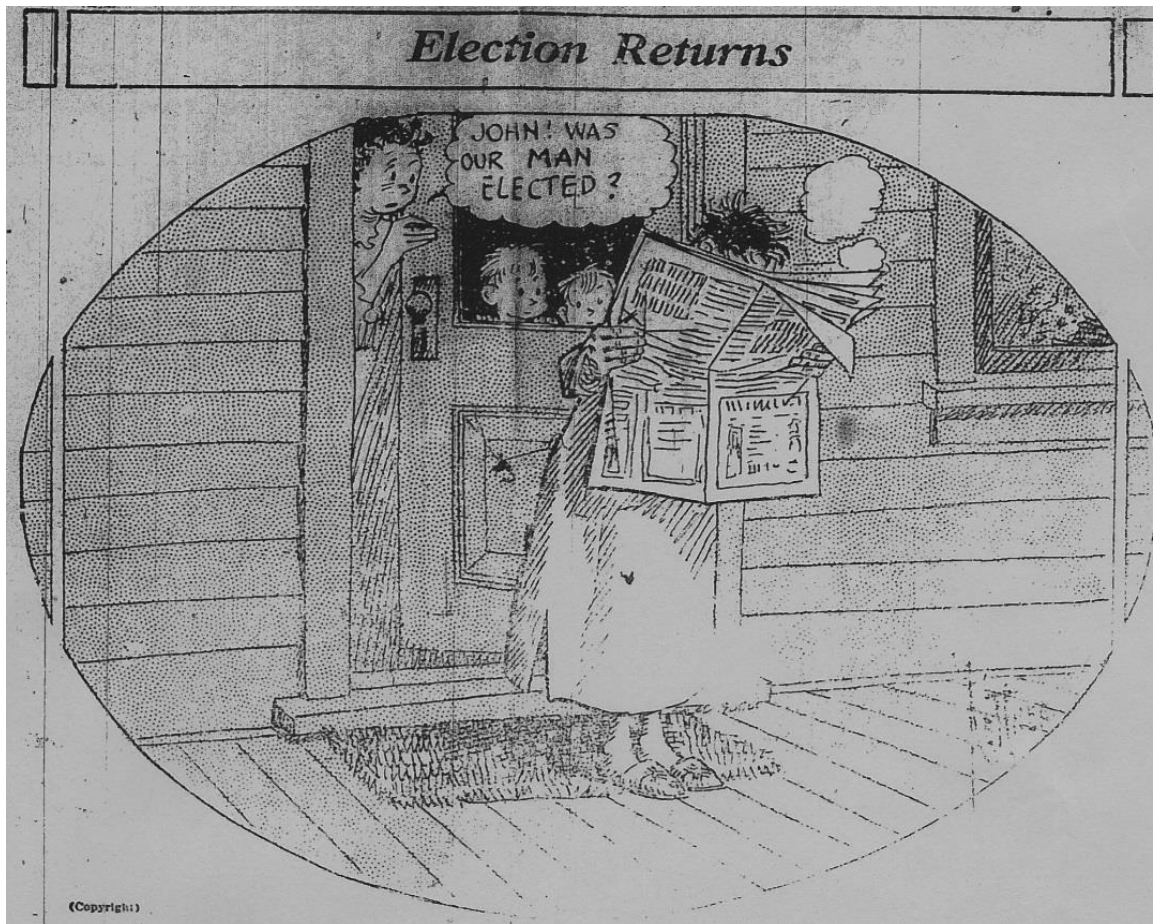


Figure 8

The image above depicts how both women and men were involved in the election process, but both sexes were anxious to see if “their” candidates won. This also reflects the arguments of Emily Newell Blair when she argued most women voted the same way their husbands voted.<sup>179</sup>

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<sup>179</sup> *Webb City Sentinel*, 3 November 1920.