

THE ASSIDUOUS WEDGE: WOMAN SUFFRAGE AND THE OKLAHOMA CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION

By James R. Wright, Jr.*

"Undoubtedly the most radical organic law ever adopted in the Union" was the way Lyman Abbott, famed clergyman-editor of *The Outlook*, described the Oklahoma Constitution shortly after it was ratified in September, 1907.¹ And Oklahoma's latter-day historians have continued to concur. Victor E. Harlow pronounced the Sooner State's fundamental law "one of the most progressive ever enacted by any state."² James S. Buchanan and Edward Everett Dale added that "it was even almost radical for its time."³ To Keith L. Bryant, Jr., biographer of the president of the constitutional convention, William H. Murray, the constitution "was a living testimonial to the continuation of Populist ideology after 1896 and the blending of this philosophy with progressivism."⁴ Like Abbott before them, these modern chroniclers cited the constitution's innovative provisions for the control of corporations, for the mandatory primary and for the initiative and referendum to support their conclusions. But unlike Abbott, they overlooked one seemingly anomalous limitation in the nearly 50,000-word document. "Of the other multitudinous provisions of the Constitution," wrote the astute old New Englander, "it may be noted as odd that so radical an instrument should have restricted woman's suffrage to school elections."⁵

However, was the restriction on the right to vote really so odd? Or did it only appear odd? After all, what Abbott was attempting to describe was the work of men with whom he had little in common. If most of the delegates to the Oklahoma Constitutional Convention could be said to share with Abbott the label "progressive," they certainly did not share his background. Two-thirds of them were born in the South; and their brand of progressivism was distinctly regional.

In 1915, a young New York University professor, Benjamin Parke De

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¹ Lyman Abbott, "Oklahoma's Radical Constitution," *The Outlook*, Vol. LXXXVII, No. 5 (October 5, 1907), p. 229.

² Victor E. Harlow, *Oklahoma: Its Origin and Development* (Oklahoma City: Harlow Publishing Company, 1925), p. 304.

³ James S. Buchanan and Edward E. Dale, *A History of Oklahoma* (New York: Row, Peterson and Company, 1935), p. 285.

⁴ Keith L. Bryant, Jr., *Alfalfa Bill Murray* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1968), p. 71.

⁵ Abbott, "Oklahoma's Radical Constitution," *The Outlook*, Vol. LXXXVIII, p. 230.

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Witt, called attention to the three tendencies in American politics which, "because of their universality and definiteness, . . . may be said to constitute the real progressive movement."⁶

The first of these tendencies is found in the insistence by the best men in all political parties that special, minority, and corrupt influence in government—national, state, and city—be removed; the second tendency is found in the demand that the structure or machinery of government, which has hitherto been admirably adapted to control by the few, be so changed and modified that it will be more difficult for the few, and easier for the many, to control; and, finally, the third tendency is found in the rapidly growing conviction that the functions of government at present are too restricted and that they must be increased and extended to relieve social and economic distress.

"In advocating greater control by the people over government," De Witt elaborated:⁷

the progressive movement has in view not only an increase in the influence exercised by voters in politics, but also an increase in the number of those who exercise it. The theory of democracy upon which the entire progressive movement is based is that every normal citizen who is mentally and morally fit not only has the right, but is also under a duty to participate in the solution of political problems. Holding this point of view, those who believe in the movement can find no logical reason why women should not, and every logical reason why they should, have the right to vote.

Even though a "real" progressive like De Witt could find no reason for refusing to grant women equal suffrage, the majority of the delegates to the Oklahoma Constitutional Convention could; and their reasons, however illogical, reveal the true nature and peculiar limitations of Southern progressivism.

Equal suffrage had been demanded initially by a small handful of New England women at Seneca Falls, New York, in 1848. A quarter century after the Civil War it had become a plank in the platforms of liberal reformers everywhere. In May, 1891, the delegates to the first national convention of the People's party, meeting in Cincinnati, Ohio, had concluded that the idea of votes for women was so clearly in line with the doctrine of popular rule that it could not logically be denied a place in their reform package. They had, therefore, resolved "that the question of universal suffrage be recommended to the favorable consideration of the various states and territories."⁸

⁶ Benjamin P. De Witt, *The Progressive Movement* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1915), pp. 4-5.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 190.

⁸ John D. Hicks, *The Populist Revolt* (6th ed., Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1961), Appendix D, "Cincinnati Platform, May, 1891," p. 434.

It should be noted, however, that few of the delegates who attended the Cincinnati Convention were from the South.⁹ In that region, in succeeding years, the fact that the demand for woman suffrage was never completely disassociated from its Northern sources created obstacles to its fulfillment that were not encountered elsewhere.

In that part of the South which was to become Oklahoma, the movement for woman suffrage began on March 10, 1890, with the founding, by Mrs. Margaret O. Rhodes, of Oklahoma Territory's charter chapter of the Women's Christian Temperance Union at Guthrie, the territorial capital.¹⁰ Because membership in the Women's Christian Temperance Union provided a social outlet for the gregarious pioneer woman, the organization grew rapidly. By the end of the spring, ten other chapters had been formed and welded into a territorial society with Mrs. Rhodes at its head. In October, 1890, while the First Territorial Legislature was busily engaged in adopting a code of laws for the territory, representatives of the various Women's Christian Temperance Union locals assembled in the capital to lobby for legislation in favor of prohibition and woman suffrage. The campaign achieved only limited success. Although women were granted the right to vote in school elections, a proposal to strike the word "male" from the general franchise law failed to pass the Territorial House of Representatives by three votes.

Nipped in the bud by the legislature's frosty reception, the suffrage movement remained more or less dormant in Oklahoma Territory until October, 1895, when Mrs. Carrie Chapman Catt, chairwoman of the newly appointed Organization Committee of the National-American Woman Suffrage Association, dispatched Laura A. Gregg to organize the territory. Fresh from the Kansas association's unsuccessful campaign of 1894, Miss Gregg spent more than a month lecturing at the major towns along the route of the Rock Island and Santa Fe railroads. The lovely suffragette climaxed her tour at Guthrie on November 11 and 12 by organizing a dozen National-American Woman Suffrage Association locals into a territorial auxiliary with Margaret Rees as president. Disseminated by Misses Gregg and Rees and another national organizer, Mrs. Julia B. Nelson, who visited Oklahoma Territory in the summer of 1896, the doctrines of the organization, like those of the Women's Christian Temperance Union, quickly met with favor among Oklahoma women. The second annual convention of the territorial

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 283.

¹⁰ The following account of the initial phase of the woman suffrage movement in Oklahoma Territory is taken from Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, Matilda Joselyn Gage and Ida Husted Harper, eds. *History of Woman Suffrage* (6 vols., Rochester, New York: Woman Suffrage Publishing Company, 1887-1922), Vol. IV, pp. 646-647, 836-887.

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auxiliary, held in Guthrie, June 7 and 8, 1896, noted a sharp increase in membership.¹¹

Between 1890, when the First Oklahoma Territorial Legislature rejected the suffragettes' initial bid for the franchise, and 1896, four states had given women the vote. Wyoming in 1890 and Utah in 1896 had guaranteed equal suffrage in the constitutions under which they had entered statehood, while Colorado in 1893 and Idaho in 1896 had extended the franchise to women by constitutional amendment.¹² In the spring of 1897, heartened by the movement's two most recent triumphs in the West, and hoping to take advantage of the victory in the previous winter's territorial elections of the reform-minded Populist-Democratic "fusionists," Miss Rees drafted a bill, which was introduced in the Oklahoma Territorial House of Representatives, granting full voting rights to women. Following an exhaustive campaign, in which Miss Rees's own efforts were augmented by those of Mrs. Laura M. Johns, a National-American Woman Suffrage Association organizer from Kansas, the bill passed by a vote of thirteen to nine, only to be killed in the Oklahoma Territorial Council.

The suffragettes, rather than being discouraged by this second setback, were buoyed by prospects of imminent victory. They determined to launch an even larger drive the following year. In September, 1898, Mrs. Catt ordered Mary G. Hay to the territory to arrange the campaign. A month later, the chairwoman of the National-American Woman Suffrage Association's Organization Committee came herself to see that meetings were held in every town and local committees appointed to circulate petitions. Plans for the coming crusade were completed in November during the National-American Woman Suffrage Association Auxiliary's fourth annual convention at Oklahoma City, where Mrs. Rhodes, founder of the Territorial Women's Christian Temperance Union, was elected president. Miss Gregg, who had been summoned by Mrs. Catt to replace Miss Hay as the association's chief propagandist, was sent to Guthrie to establish headquarters.

The Territorial Legislature convened the first week in January, 1899, and was immediately deluged by a flood of pro-suffrage petitions. "The strongest and best men espoused our cause," Mrs. Catt reported later, "and the outlook seemed propitious."¹³ However, the chairwoman had failed to reckon with the vagaries of politicians. Because of an "unfortunate quarrel" which

¹¹ Miss Rees and her sister, together with their mother, Mrs. Rachel Rees Griffith, were later lauded as the "Mothers of Equal Suffrage in Oklahoma."

¹² Stanton, Anthony, Gage and Hoopes, eds., *History of Woman Suffrage*, Vol. IV, pp. xxi-xxii.

¹³ From Mrs. Catt's report to the Thirty-first Annual Convention of the National-American Woman Suffrage Association, *ibid.*, p. 888.

arose between the territorial governor and the legislature, the work of the latter was seriously slowed. Only a week remained in the session when a woman suffrage bill finally passed the Territorial House of Representatives by a vote of fourteen to ten. The suffragettes immediately focused their attention on the Territorial Council. But there, in spite of Mrs. Catt's subsequent assertion that "a majority were pledged to support our measure," opponents of equal suffrage carried out a week-long filibuster which prevented the bill from coming to a vote.¹⁴

If the narrow defeat, by itself, merely dismayed the suffragettes, the knowledge that they had been betrayed by a councilman "who for thirty years, in a neighboring State, had been an avowed friend of suffrage," and whom "even the enemies" of equal suffrage had expected to champion the proposal, was enough to raise them to the height of womanly wrath. "Why did he fail us?" wailed Mrs. Catt. Asking did "he renounce the faith of a lifetime? No. Did the suffragists offend him? No," Mrs. Catt stated that, "even if they had done so a man of character does not change his views in a moment for a personal whim. Why, then, this change? Any member of the Legislature, for or against suffrage, if he would speak as frankly to others as he did to us, would tell you it was for money." As for the source of the bribe, "rumor was plentiful," declared Mrs. Catt, the "saloons all over Oklahoma, with a remarkable unanimity of knowledge, boasted beforehand that the bill was killed and that this man was the instrument which they had used." "We had won the victory," she concluded, "but a crime robbed us of it."¹⁵

The refusal of the 1899 Territorial Legislature to pass a woman suffrage bill marked the beginning of another five-year hiatus in the progress of the woman suffrage movement in Oklahoma Territory. The suffragists realized that without the endorsement of at least one of the major political parties, further attempts to gain the franchise would prove fruitless. Only a significant change in the territorial political climate would justify a renewed effort.

Fortunately, in 1904, such an alteration occurred. With the passage by the lower house of the Fifty-eighth Congress of the Hamilton Bill providing for the admission to statehood of Oklahoma, Indian, Arizona and New Mexico territories under the names of Oklahoma and Arizona, the suffragettes once again began to stir.¹⁶

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 888-889.

¹⁶ The following brief account of the "statehood process" precipitated by United States House of Representatives passage of the Hamilton Bill is taken from *ibid.*, Vol. V, pp. 129-130.



One clause in the Hamilton Bill, that declaring that the "State shall never enact any law restricting or abridging the rights of suffrage save and except on account of illiteracy, minority, sex, conviction of felony, mental condition or residence," was especially upsetting to the suffragettes.¹⁷ The leaders of the National-American Woman Suffrage Association launched a nationwide protest against the objectionable passage. In September, a circular letter denouncing the Hamilton Bill and signed by the presidents of such organizations as the National-American Woman Suffrage Association, the Women's Christian Temperance Union, the Council of Jewish Women, the Teachers' Federation, the Catholic Women's League and the Ladies of the Grand Army of the Republic, was mailed to more than 34,000 suffragettes. The Business Committee of the National-American Woman Suffrage Association reported later that "perhaps no more spontaneous response was ever given to anything than to this letter. All sorts of societies, not of women only, but of men and of women, protested."¹⁸ Hundreds of letters praying

¹⁷ Quoted in *Proceedings of the Thirty-Seventh Annual Convention of the National-American Woman Suffrage Association Held at Portland, Oregon, June 28th to July 5th, Inclusive, 1905* (Warren, Ohio: The Tribune Company, 1905?), p. 31. Hereafter cited as *National-American Woman Suffrage Association Proceedings, 1905*.

¹⁸ Stanton, Anthony, Gage and Harper, eds., *History of Woman Suffrage*, Vol. V, p. 129.



Members of the Oklahoma Constitutional Convention who heard the report of the Suffrage Committee which classed women with "felons, paupers, lunatics and idiots" as unqualified to vote.

for the defeat of the Hamilton Bill in the United States Senate poured into the office of Senator Albert J. Beveridge of Indiana, chairman of the Committee on Territories. Finally, near the end of the second week in December, Senator Beveridge notified the National-American Woman Suffrage Association headquarters that the United States Senate, "in accordance with your very reasonable request," had voted unanimously to strike the word "sex" from the qualifying clause.¹⁹

While the Hamilton Bill was still being debated in Congress, the National-American Woman Suffrage Association "in response to letters sent from Oklahoma," ordered the ever-willing Miss Gregg to reorganize the territory.²⁰ Early in March, 1904, Miss Gregg arrived in Guthrie, where she established headquarters. There "she found things in a chaotic condition," Mrs. Biggers, one of the territory's leading suffragettes, subsequently stated, "for though twice before Territorial Associations had been organized, the usual difficulties in the way of keeping alive an organization in a new country were encountered."²¹ Miss Gregg began at once to correspond with past members and to organize new clubs in Guthrie, Oklahoma City and

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 130.

²⁰ *National-American Woman Suffrage Association Proceedings, 1903*, p. 124.

²¹ *Ibid.*

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the other principal towns. Mrs. Julia L. Woodworth, president of the Oklahoma City club, arranged a tour for Miss Gregg and during the next eight months the indefatigable organizer lectured at Women's Christian Temperance Union conventions, Grand Army of the Republic encampments, teachers' institutes, women's clubs, business colleges and country school house meetings. Early in December, Dr. Anna Howard Shaw, president of the National-American Woman Suffrage Association, joined Miss Gregg for a two-week series of conferences in the larger towns.

On December 15, 1904, delegates from Oklahoma and Indian territories met in Oklahoma City for a two-day convention. Dr. Shaw opened the first session by reading a newspaper report announcing that the United States Senate had stricken the sex qualification from the Hamilton Bill. Also read was a letter from Susan B. Anthony, honorary president of the National-American Woman Suffrage Association, warning that "no stone should be left unturned to secure suffrage for the women while Oklahoma is yet a Territory, for if it comes into the Union without this in its constitution it will take a long time and a great deal of hard work to convert over one-half of the men to vote for it."²² In response to this warning, the convention organized the Twin Territorial Woman Suffrage Association, with Mrs. Biggers as president. The convention closed with the adoption of a resolution declaring that there should never be enacted "any law restricting the right of suffrage on account of sex, race, color or previous condition of servitude."²³

Although the Hamilton Bill was eventually defeated in the United States Senate, three other statehood bills, each containing the Hamilton Bill sex clause, were introduced in the Oklahoma Territorial Legislature. One of the bills was reported favorably. Notwithstanding their "dismay at the thought of the time and labor which another general protest would involve," the leaders of the Twin Territorial Woman Suffrage Association promptly called a conference with the officers of the Territorial Women's Christian Temperance Union, and soon hundreds of letters flooded the legislature. Mrs. Biggers disclosed later that "one of the Senators, though opposed to woman suffrage, declared that the clause must go to save the Legislature from being buried in letters from women." Another young man wrote suffrage headquarters, declaring that "if there are not men enough in the Capital City to prevent the Legislature from heaping such insults upon Oklahoma womanhood, call upon the young men of the Territory, and we will come in our might, and fight that bill, with our fists, if need be." For-

²² Stanton, Anthony, Gage and Harper, eds., *History of Woman Suffrage*, Vol. VI, p. 530.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 521.

unfortunately, the need to resort to violence proved unnecessary. Although the bill passed the Territorial House of Representatives, it was killed in the Territorial Council. Mrs. Biggers stated subsequently, "The storm of protests opened the eyes of men who supposed that women were indifferent about the suffrage."²⁴

Such a belief may have stemmed in part from awareness of the apathetic reception given the equal suffrage movement in Indian Territory. Certainly, passage of the Hamilton Bill by the United States House of Representatives had revealed to the National-American Woman Suffrage Association the need for organizing the Indian Territory women. Early in January, 1905, Dr. Frances Woods was delegated to begin that work. Together with Miss Gregg, Dr. Woods addressed the meetings of scores of organizations all over the territory. These lectures, "which afforded no opportunity to organize clubs," were nevertheless "a powerful means of creating sentiment."²⁵ At the same time, pro-suffrage articles were mailed to nearly all the newspapers in the two territories, and it was later reported that about seventy-five of the papers published them. One issue of the *Oklahoma Messenger*, the Women's Christian Temperance Union organ, was devoted solely to woman suffrage. At the end of the year, Mrs. Biggers reported to the National-American Woman Suffrage Association, "We have had a most successful year, and offer our report in profound gratitude to the National Association for its generous help, and pledge our faithful service and loyal co-operation for the coming year."²⁶

In 1906, as the prospects for statehood brightened, interest in woman suffrage grew phenomenally. At the end of the year, the president of the Twin Territorial Woman Suffrage Association reported a thirty-one percent gain in membership. Much of the increase was due, of course, to the continued organizational work of Dr. Woods and Miss Gregg. But local suffragettes also contributed their share. It was they who placed small packages containing pro-suffrage literature in farmers' wagons on Saturdays; it was they who built the float that won first prize in the Labor Day parade at Tulsa in the Creek Nation; it was they who set up a rest tent at the agricultural fair at Chickasha in the Chickasaw Nation. Indeed, one of the highlights of the year's work was provided by the Oklahoma City club. To answer the oft-repeated charge that most women really cared little about voting, the Oklahoma City suffragettes conducted an extensive campaign to get women to register and vote in the city school election. Meetings were held in every ward and lecturers were sent to address the women teachers

²⁴ *National-American Woman Suffrage Association Proceedings*, 1905, p. 126.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ *Ibid.*

in each of the city's schools. More than 600 women responded to the suffragettes' plea by registering. Due to an election day storm, only about 400 women actually cast their votes. Still, the campaign was deemed a complete success. Mrs. Biggers herself believed "this was a practical reply to [the] statement . . . that women did not want the ballot."²⁷

In the summer of 1906, the suffragettes finally began to reap the rewards of their strenuous efforts. On June 16, President Theodore Roosevelt signed into law the Oklahoma Enabling Act, providing for joint statehood for Oklahoma and Indian territories, and throughout the area dozens of organizations, encouraged by the absence from the act of any sex qualification, immediately passed resolutions endorsing woman suffrage.²⁸ By far the most important of these endorsements was that secured by Mrs. Biggers from a joint convention of the Twin Territorial Federation of Labor and the Indian Farmers' Educational and Co-operative Union, held at Shawnee, Oklahoma Territory, on August 21-23.²⁹

As Pete Hancaty, president of District Number Twenty-One of the United Mine Workers of America as well as of the Twin Territorial Federation of Labor, reported later, the territories' two most powerful interest groups had met together at Shawnee to draw up a plan for "concerted action in getting articles in the State Constitution for the new state of Oklahoma that will be for our mutual benefit and welfare."³⁰ Woman suffrage was only one of the "causes" that the farmers and laborers espoused. On September 10, less than three weeks after the Shawnee Convention had adjourned, the Hancaty-headed Joint Legislative Board of the Federation of Labor and the Farmers' Union, which had been appointed by the convention to draft a set of measures to be submitted to all the candidates for delegate to the constitutional convention, published a list of twenty-six "demands." Included in this list in addition to equal suffrage were such "popular" proposals as the initiative, referendum, recall, an elective corporation commission and the blanket primary.³¹ Most of the candidates for the 112 dele-

²⁷ *Proceedings of the Thirty-Ninth Annual Convention of the National American Woman Suffrage Association Held at Chicago, February 14th to 19th, Inclusion, 1907* (Warren, Ohio: The Tribune Company, 1907?), p. 88. Hereafter cited as *National American Woman Suffrage Association Proceedings, 1907*.

²⁸ "Enabling Act," *Oklahoma Red Book*, Seth K. Gordon and W. B. Richards, comp. (2 vols., Oklahoma City: Oklahoma Historical Society, 1912), Vol. I, pp. 27-39.

²⁹ For a good newspaper account of this convention, see the *Shawnee Herald*, August 21-23, 1906.

³⁰ *Proceedings of the Fourth Annual Convention of the Twin Territorial Federation of Labor, 1907*, Manuscript Division, University of Oklahoma Library, Norman, Oklahoma, p. 4. Hereafter cited as *Federation of Labor Proceedings, 1907*.

³¹ A list of twenty-four of the "demands" can be found in *ibid.*, pp. 4-5, and in Albert H. Ellis, *A History of the Constitutional Convention of the State of Oklahoma* (Muskogee, Okla-

gate seats succumbed to the combined pressure of the farmer-laborites and suffragettes; after the election it was discovered that 71 of the winners had endorsed the entire list.²²

Among the delegates who refused to subscribe to all the "Shawnee demands," however, was William H. Murray, self-proclaimed "Author of the 'Blue Print' of the Constitution."²³ Born in Texas, in 1869, and pressed during his formative years into the standard Democratic mold by his opposition to populism, Murray had moved in 1898 to Tishomingo, capital of the Chickasaw Nation. There he established a law practice and resumed his political activities, soon becoming a familiar figure at local Democratic gatherings.²⁴ In 1905, as the agitation for statehood increased, Murray had joined Charles N. Haskell, a railroad promoter from Muskogee in the Creek Nation, in calling an unauthorized convention to draft a constitution for a separate state of Sequoyah, to comprise only Indian Territory.²⁵ That the separate statehood movement eventually proved abortive bothered neither Murray nor Haskell. As Haskell subsequently admitted, the delegates to the Sequoyah Convention had not been "actuated altogether by lofty and patriotic motives." "It was largely a struggle for political power and supremacy," he recalled later, "and the welfare of both territories was sacrificed by those who were seeking political position and power in a new state."²⁶

Thomas Economy Printing Company, 1953), pp. 45-48. Ellis, who was the second vice-president of the Oklahoma Constitutional Convention, apparently copied the Federation of Labor list, and because the laborites liked to know that all their "demands" had been incorporated into the constitution, there is some reason to believe that their published list is incomplete. The president of the convention, William H. Murray, consistently wrote of "26 demands," the Joint Legislative Board's list plus woman suffrage and "one other" that he could not recall. See William H. Murray, "The Constitutional Convention," *The Chronicle of Oklahoma*, Vol. IX, No. 2 (June, 1931), p. 138 and William H. Murray, *Memoirs of Governor Murray and True History of Oklahoma* (3 vols., Boston: Meador Publishing Company, 1945), Vol. II, p. 30.

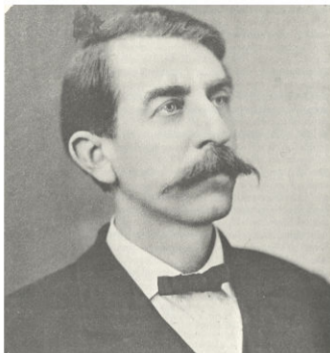
²² *Ibid.*, p. 12, and Murray, "The Constitutional Convention," *The Chronicle of Oklahoma*, Vol. IX, p. 130. The Twin Territorial Federation of Labor claimed only seventy delegates altogether, sixty-seven Democrats and three Republicans. See *Federation of Labor Proceedings*, 1907, p. 7. On November 19, 1906, the day before the convention opened, S. O. Daws, ex-president of the Indianola Farmers' Union, told a Guthrie newspaper reporter that "about seventy delegates were elected through the efforts of our organization and they promise to give us what we demand." See *Oklahoma State Capital* (Guthrie), November 20, 1906.

²³ Murray, *Memoirs of Governor Murray and True History of Oklahoma*, Vol. II, p. 43.

²⁴ Bryant, *Alfalfa Bill Murray*, p. 4.

²⁵ For the best account of the separate statehood movement, see Amos D. Maxwell, *The Sequoyah Constitutional Convention* (Boston: Meador Publishing Company, 1953); for a biography of Haskell, see Oscar Fensley Fowler, *The Haskell Regime: The Intimate Life of Charles Nathaniel Haskell* (Oklahoma City: Bates Printing Company, 1935); and for a copy of the Sequoyah Constitution, see Corden and Richards, *comp.*, *Oklahoma Red Book*, Vol. I, pp. 613-674.

²⁶ Quoted in Paul Nesbit, "Haskell Tells of Two Conventions," *Chronicle of Oklahoma*, Vol. XIV, No. 2 (June, 1936), pp. 197-198.



William H. Murray, an ardent opponent to the woman suffrage movement, at the Oklahoma Constitutional Convention.

While accompanying Murray to the railroad station at the close of the Sequoyah Convention, Haskell had asked him if he thought the separate statehood movement would serve to hasten single statehood. Murray had answered that he did. Haskell had then said, "I want you in the event of the Enabling Act, to keep tab on all the delegates elected from both Territories. Note their politics and their peculiar leanings. You know the farmers and they know you."⁸⁷ Although, at the time, he had been in Oklahoma Territory only once, on a hunting trip, "Alfalfa Bill" was a charter member of

⁸⁷ Murray, *Memories of Governor Murray and True History of Oklahoma*, Vol. I, p. 259.

the Indian Territory Farmers' Union. "The farmers in both Territories knew who I was," he later boasted, "and those that were not communistically inclined had regard for my leadership."²⁸

Only a few years before Murray had helped organize the first Farmers' Union local in Indian Territory, there had been founded in that territory a branch of the Socialist party, ideological successor to the then nearly defunct People's party. The Socialists drew their chief support from the wage laborers in the coal mining district in the southern half of Indian Territory, many of whom, like Hanratty, belonged to the radical Twin Territorial Federation of Labor. But more in keeping with their populist heritage, the Socialists also appealed to the farmers in both territories who in ever mounting numbers were falling victims to tenancy. Because many of these farmers were members of the Farmers' Union, there was a strong tendency for that organization, too, to become involved actively in radical politics.²⁹ Indeed, Murray was convinced that the joint convention of the Federation of Labor and the Farmers' Union held at Shawnee "had been largely worked up by an off-cast element in politics, anti-Democratic, anti-Republican," and, along with other regular Democrats, he had been greatly disturbed when Farmers' Union officials "began to connive with and aid that political 'side-show.'"³⁰

If Murray had attended the Shawnee Convention in order to prevent the subversion of the Union by the Socialists and preserve his own power base, he was almost thwarted in that endeavor by his own inattentiveness. For when Pete Hanratty introduced the resolution calling for the appointment of a Joint Legislative Board to draft a set of "demands," Murray was occupied in a committee meeting. Rushing to the floor just as a vote on the proposition was about to begin, he announced that he was "unalterably opposed to the resolution, that it was dangerous, and that they themselves would find it out in 12 months." After the delegates passed the resolution over his objection, Murray again rose to speak. Knowing that the radicals "had 'stacked' the convention," he reviewed their "peculiar scheme and how it would work out and how dangerous it was to the organization." Although Murray's argument came too late to influence the vote on the resolution, it

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 296.

²⁹ For more on socialism in Oklahoma, see Oscar Ameringer, *If You Don't Speak* (New York: H. Holt and Company, 1946); H. L. Meredith, "Oscar Ameringer and the Concept of Agrarian Socialism," *The Chronicles of Oklahoma*, Vol. XLV, No. 1 (Spring, 1967), pp. 77-83; Donald Kenneth Pickens, "Oklahoma Populism and Historical Interpretation," *The Chronicles of Oklahoma*, Vol. XLIII, No. 3 (Autumn, 1965), pp. 275-283. Although there is no evidence that Hanratty was himself ever a member of the Socialist party, it is known that he was an avid collector of Socialist pamphlets and newspapers. See Frederick Lynn Ryan, *The Rehabilitation of Oklahoma Coal Mining Communities* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1935), p. 87.

³⁰ Murray, *Memoirs of Governor Murray and True History of Oklahoma*, Vol. I, pp. 296-297.

did have a significant effect on the delegates. "That speech and my membership of the Sequoyah Constitutional Convention," he later observed, "was the cause of my election to the Presidency of the [Oklahoma] Constitutional Convention." He admitted, "In both, in a way, I was leading a minority." Yet, he had had no fear "of getting in the van of a righteous minority, because after the people find out, they will approve and applaud that independent action."⁴¹

Murray's faith in the people was well founded. A little less than three months later, following his own election on November 6, as "District 104's" representative to the Oklahoma Constitutional Convention, he remembered his pledge to Haskell "to keep tab on all the delegates elected from both Territories." A quick count showed that, of the 112 men elected, 99 were Democrats, 12 Republicans and 1 an Independent, and, moreover, that 75 had been born in the South and 37 in the North or in foreign countries.⁴² But while Murray must have realized that many of his Southern Democratic cohorts were among the seventy-one delegates who had signed all the "Shawnee demands," thereby endorsing woman suffrage, he also was aware that their support had not been secured without a certain degree of coercion. From his own calculations, he knew that thirty-four of the delegates elected had earlier attended the Sequoyah Convention and that thirty more were Farmers' Union men who had joined his camp after his speech at the Shawnee Convention opposing the radicals. If these sixty-four had been afraid to voice their true sentiments during the campaign, Murray nevertheless was convinced that with a strong leader at their head they would take a stand for moderation in the convention. As he afterwards related, "I knew at once that I could poll every one of them and that I could be President of the Convention."⁴³

Murray's insight into the composition of the convention was not apparent to the suffragettes; however, it was to his fellow delegate Haskell, who, after urging him to "[g]et in the race for the Presidency," began making plans for the campaign. Under the terms of the Enabling Act, the Oklahoma Constitutional Convention was to open in Guthrie on November 20, 1906.⁴⁴ To assure Murray's election, Haskell preceded him to the territorial capital where he met with Robert L. Williams of Durant in the

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² For a list of the delegates with their political affiliations, see Irvin Hurt, *The 66th Star: A History of Oklahoma's Constitutional Convention and Early Statehood* (Oklahoma City: Seneca Cedar Press, 1957), Appendix I. For the origins of the delegates, see Blue Clark, "Delegates to the Constitutional Convention," *The Chronicles of Oklahoma*, Vol. XLVIII, No. 4 (Winter, 1970-1971), pp. 400-415.

⁴³ Murray, *Memoirs of Governor Murray and True History of Oklahoma*, Vol. 1, pp. 319-320.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

Choctaw Nation, and persuaded the unreconstructed Bourbon leader of Indian Territory Democrats to throw his weight behind the delegate from Tishomingo.⁴⁵ When Murray himself arrived at Guthrie a few days later, it was, just as Haskell had predicted, "all over but the shouting."⁴⁶ The Democrats caucused on Monday, November 19, and Williams nominated Murray as the party's candidate for president. Pete Hanratty was nominated by the radicals. But Murray, with the backing of Williams and of such prominent Oklahoma Territory Democrats as Charles H. Pitman of Enid, D. S. Rose of Blackwell and Henry S. Johnston of Perry, easily defeated the suffragettes' favorite, sixty-two to twenty-six.⁴⁷ Murray's election to the presidency and Haskell's subsequent elevation to the post of majority floor leader marked the beginning of the end of their quest for "political position and power in a new state." As the Republican *Oklahoma State Capital* confirmed when the Democratic slate was elected the next day in a strictly partisan vote, "the Sequoyah constitutional convention advocates have captured the convention."⁴⁸ Observed the *Capital*, "There is just about as much chance for a northern democrat in this convention, and with the democracy of Oklahoma [Territory] as there is for the proverbial snowball in a bake oven."⁴⁹

With the Indian Territory triumvirate of Murray, Haskell and Williams solidly entrenched in power, the convention set to work to draft a consti-



Pete Hanratty who was the suffragettes' favorite candidate in the election for the president of Oklahoma's Constitutional Convention.

⁴⁵ Nabitz, "Haskell Tells of Two Conventions," *The Chronicles of Oklahoma*, Vol. XIV, pp. 206-207. For a biography of Williams, see Edward Everett Dale and James D. Morrison, *Pioneer Judge: The Life of Robert Lee Williams* (Cedar Rapids, Iowa: The Torch Press, 1958).

⁴⁶ Quoted in Murray, *Memoirs of Governor Murray and True History of Oklahoma*, Vol. 1, p. 312.

⁴⁷ *Proceedings and Debates of the Constitutional Convention of Oklahoma*, November 20, 1906, manuscript, Law School Library, University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma. Hereafter cited as *Proceedings and Debates*.

⁴⁸ *Oklahoma State Capital*, November 22, 1906.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, November 24, 1906.

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tution. Naturally, in this endeavor the suffragettes were only too eager to help. Having transferred their headquarters to Guthrie with the opening of the convention, they began the task of "interviewing" those delegates who had not yet signed the "Shawnee demands."⁸⁰ To aid in this effort the suffragettes enlisted Robert L. Owen, who, though not a delegate, was destined to be one of the first United States Senators from Oklahoma. "Early in the convention," Murray recalled later:⁸¹

Senator Owen, parading everywhere for Woman's Suffrage, called a meeting in a room that had no seats, and it was filled with supporters of that provision. I wanted to see what their arguments were. I slipped into the meeting and squatted in a corner of the room unobserved. After some bit of discussion, one of the clerks we called 'Dad Boydston,' a 'Labor Leader,' a splendid well-qualified man, carpenter by trade, got up and made a speech. He said: 'I have got 71 members pledged to woman's suffrage and I want to see the color of the hair of any Delegate who dare oppose it.' When he quit, O. G. Harper, also a Clerk, rose and replied to him.

The unseemly behavior of Boydston and Harper angered Murray, who upon appointing the clerks of the convention had warned them that lobbying on their part for or against any proposal before the convention would result in immediate dismissal. As he remembered:⁸²

I called them in next morning and told them that I was present and said: 'You fellows have violated the rules. I am not going to tolerate it; you are both fired. Boydston what you said was unbecoming a member, to threaten one another about their vote, nor do I endorse your sentiments. Harper, I endorse your sentiments, but I cannot tolerate the violation of the rules,' and dismissed them.

Whether or not the suffragettes ever discovered why Boydston was discharged, they nevertheless were well acquainted with Murray's position on the question of equal suffrage. No provision for extending the franchise had been included in the Sequoyah Constitution of which Murray was the chief author, and although he had not referred specifically to woman suffrage in his speech before the farmer-laborites at the Shawnee Convention, his objection to their "demands" clearly had been prompted in part by his opposition to women voting. When the "demands" later had been submitted to him for his signature, rather than endorse them collectively, he pointed out, "I answered 'yes,' or 'no' to each of them," adding, "I said 'no' to the 'recall' and 'universal suffrage.'"⁸³ Furthermore, where it was a gross breach of pro-

⁸⁰ *National American Women Suffrage Association Proceedings, 1907*, p. 80.

⁸¹ Murray, *Memoirs of Governor Murray and True History of Oklahoma*, Vol. II, p. 82.

⁸² *Ibid.*

⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

priety for an employee of the convention to lobby for or against a proposal before the convention, it was not for a member. While the suffragettes were trying to secure additional endorsements, Murray was busy cornering the previous signers. "A majority of those Delegates did not believe in [the Shawnee demands], but were afraid to give their position," he believed. Only in response to the pressure applied during the election campaign by the Farmers' Union and the Federation of Labor as well as the suffragettes had "they signed on the dotted line."⁶⁴ In impromptu discussions with the seventy-one delegates who had thus evinced their support of equal suffrage, Murray succeeded in convincing several of them that their acquiescence had been ill-advised. By far the most influential of the previous signers was Williams. Although inherently opposed to women voting, the conservative Alabamian initially had agreed to endorse the whole list of "demands." It was only after a long talk with Murray that he was persuaded to abandon his opportunistic position. But even Murray was unable to dispel all of Williams's doubts about the advisability of opposing the farmer-laborites and suffragettes. For when the question of woman suffrage finally was raised on the floor, Williams retired to the cloak room, thereby illustrating graphically the uncertainty and confusion that continued to be occasioned by suffrage propaganda.⁶⁵

When the report of the Suffrage Committee, presented to the convention on the morning of February 5, 1907, inferentially classed women with "felons, paupers, lunatics and idiots" as unqualified to be electors, Murray promptly offered an amendment extending the franchise to members of the fairer sex.⁶⁶ William T. Dalton of Broken Arrow, in the Creek Nation, offered a similar amendment.⁶⁷ What was to become the "most heated debate of the convention" had begun.⁶⁸ Although the suffrage movement's appeal to human rights, its promise of political virtue and social justice all should have harmonized with the delegates' progressive instincts, potent taboos militated against its advocacy by most of the members of the convention's Southern Democratic majority. These included the chivalric concern for keeping women in their domestic sphere and out of the mire of politics, a standard charge that Socialists directed the movement from outside and the fear that woman suffrage would somehow legitimize Negro suffrage.

With Murray in the chair and Williams conveniently absent, the task of

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 84.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ Stinson, Anthony, Gage and Harper, eds., *History of Woman Suffrage*, Vol. II, p. 523.

⁶⁷ *Proceedings and Debates*, February 5, 1907.

⁶⁸ Stinson, Anthony, Gage and Harper, eds., *History of Woman Suffrage*, Vol. VI, pp. 522-523.

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directing the fight on the floor of the convention against the revision descended upon the third member of the Indian Territory triumvirate, Charles N. Haskell. After supporting Murray at the Sequoyah Convention in opposing any kind of electoral reform, Haskell had adopted a rather conciliatory attitude toward the suffragettes, even appearing at times to favor their cause. Prior to the opening of the convention debate, however, there had occurred an event that caused the delegate from Muskogee in the Creek Nation to cease his vacillation. "At the time that Robert Owen was striving to adopt Woman's Suffrage," Murray later wrote:⁵⁸

I was in Haskell's apartment talking to him, Mrs. Haskell being present. Owen came in and asked Haskell how he stood. Haskell said: 'I haven't made up my mind yet.' Mrs. Haskell, who really was his mentor, spoke up immediately and said: 'I know how he is; he will be against it.' Owen asked her why? Mrs. Haskell said: 'Women vote for love or hate; that is the thing that moves them. They have got to do it in self-defense.' Well he rather denied that, and she said: 'I will give an example: I had an old teacher that was very strict and he made me study, as he ought to, but I hated him. After he retired from the profession, he ran in that town in Ohio for School Trustee, and a saloon 'burn' ran against him. I voted for the saloon burn.'

However illogical, Mrs. Haskell's argument was irrefutable. "On the floor of the Convention," Murray concluded, "Haskell took the lead to oppose."⁶⁰

In his opening remarks Haskell attempted to appease the suffragettes.⁶¹ Observing that "good men place women on a pedestal far above themselves," he belied the demeaning language of the Suffrage Committee report by stating that the delegate who opposed equal suffrage for the woman did so only "out of a feeling of greater respect for her kind than he could bear to have for his own." The majority leader went on to say that while he did not object to the Hanratty Amendment in principle, he feared that as a practical matter many women would not vote, the very ones, in fact, who should "to make the average right." Similar opinions were expressed by D. S. Rose, Charles H. Pittman and O. P. Brewer, whose assertion that ninety per cent of the women in Indian Territory opposed equal suffrage was greeted with loud applause. At the same time it was left to delegate David Hogg to carry Haskell's argument one step farther. In a none too circumspect appeal to Southern sympathies, he cited the results of the experiment in Idaho, Utah, Colorado and Wyoming to demonstrate that broadening the electorate had been "especially disastrous to women themselves in blunting their finer

⁵⁸ MURRAY, *Memoirs of Governor Murray and True History of Oklahoma*, Vol. II, p. 84.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶¹ *Proceedings and Debates*, February 5, 1907.

sensibilities, and in bringing to the front a political type of woman, whose conduct and characteristics are repellant to those who cherish conservative and reverend ideals of womanhood." However, when Hogg also insisted that the ordinary woman did not want to vote, a plaintive dissent issued from the gallery: "Yes, I do, Mr. Hogg. I want to vote the worst kind."⁴²

Their appeal to chivalry thwarted, the anti-suffragists next attacked the main source of male support for equal suffrage, the radical Twin Territorial Federation of Labor. Shortly before the debate opened, Hanratty had offered some indication of the strength of that organization's patronage by presenting 83 petitions, signed by more than 24,000 members of trade unions in Oklahoma and Indian territories, in favor of extending the franchise. As was true in other instances, however, the support of the women's cause by the labor men carried with it distinct disadvantages, the foremost of which was the unions' connection in the minds of many with the Socialist party. "Strip your labor organizations of the Socialistic element therein," declared J. B. Harrison of Sayre, Oklahoma Territory, "and I tell you you will have no advocate of woman suffrage in it." A conservative Kentuckian from a small town famous for its large number of resident Socialists, Harrison was well aware of the efforts which had been made in behalf of the women's crusade by the "radical and extreme class, who would overthrow absolutely the existing institutions, including marriage." Passage of the Hanratty Amendment, he warned, would "eventually mean Socialism, and Socialism means the destruction of the home, the destruction of the marriage relations and the marriage vows, and the adoption of the horrible doctrine of free love."⁴³

Hanratty rose to defend labor's stand on the question. Contending that he was "in this fight," not so much for the wife and mother who was already represented at the polls by her husband and son, but for the unmarried woman who was "thrown out to make her own living," the president of the Twin Territorial Federation of Labor went on to point out the ominous implications, for the working man, of her disfranchisement. "Denied the right to vote," he explained, the single woman "must work for a cheap wage, and when she works for that cheap wage, she takes my job; that is what I kick against." Several other delegates also expressed doubt that mingling with men at the polls would in any manner harm the woman. "I don't believe it will take from her the power and the desire to educate her child along Christian lines," said Republican Henry Asp, a corporation lawyer and stranger of the radicals' political bedfellows. He stated, "I don't believe that giving the woman the right to vote means that you are

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ *Ibid.*

going to unsex her." Finally, William Dalton accused Harrison of deliberately having tried "to create a prejudice and a wrongful impression on the members of this body, when he united [woman suffrage] with socialism, free love, and those questions that are so extremely unpopular in this country and to the people of this enlightened day and time."⁴⁴

That the members of the Murray machine had introduced the anti-radical argument in order to disguise their betrayal of the farmers and laborers who comprised the party's rank and file was the conclusion reached by those who favored the Hanratty Amendment. If such an assumption served to explain Harrison's attack on the labor unions, it also threw some light on Murray's own ambivalent stance with respect to the farmers of the two territories. While Murray credited the Farmers' Union men with having elected him president of the convention, he readily dismissed the suffrage appeal as nothing more than Socialist propaganda. Still, had he not attended the meeting at which the Joint Legislative Board had adopted the twenty-six "demands"? asked Hanratty. "I know that the men whose names are signed to those demands are just as much for woman suffrage as I am," the labor leader insisted. Murray, however, refused to be trapped. "So far as your board as the representatives of the Federation of Labor is concerned," he replied, "I was present when you adopted your demands; but the board . . . is not representative of the farmers union." According to Murray, the Farmers' Union, like the Federation of Labor, had succumbed to the machinations of Socialist infiltrators. Reminding the delegates of his speech before the farmer-laborites at the Shawnee Convention, he informed them that he felt no obligation to respond to the suffrage demand.⁴⁵

But most of the delegates were interested less in the precise origins of the "Shawnee demands" than in what effect, if any, equal suffrage would have



Henry Asp who was one of the few suffragette supporters present at the Oklahoma Constitutional Convention.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

on the new state's balance of power. Although the Enabling Act, in compliance with the Fifteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution, prohibited future legislatures from enacting "any law restricting or abridging the right of suffrage on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude," many of the Southern-born delegates, in particular, hesitated to come to the defense of the Hareny Amendment because it threatened to grant the right to vote to Negro women as well as white.⁶⁶ In a speech before the convention on January 8, Miss Laura Clay of Kentucky, daughter of the famed anti-slavery leader, Cassius M. Clay, and a representative of the National-American Woman Suffrage Association, had admitted that the race problem continued to be a "great question in all of the Southern states." But rather than a menace, woman suffrage was the only "righteous solution" to the question. South of the Mason-Dixon line, she had revealed, the number of white women exceeded by more than 600,000 the combined total of black men and women. "By enfranchising the white women of the south," she had advised, "the white race will be put in such numerical majority as to do away with the necessity for any doubtful expediency."⁶⁷

Doubtlessly, this was not the first time that Murray and the other delegates had heard such a claim made. In previous years, the theory had enjoyed a wide circulation among suffragettes in the South.⁶⁸ It was in part, at least, to counteract the effects of Miss Clay's argument that the president of the convention had held up the report of the Suffrage Committee while "hoping that something would occur to indicate to the delegates what should be done."⁶⁹ On February 5, 1907, as it turned out, a school board election was being conducted in Guthrie, a town with a large black population. In such elections, under the law enacted by the First Oklahoma Territorial Legislature, women were permitted to vote. Throughout the day, while the debate over equal suffrage wore on, individual delegates frequently strode to the windows of the convention hall and gazed out upon the long queue in front of the polling booth. By late afternoon the results were in—of the 758 women who had cast their ballots, only 7 were white.⁷⁰ Murray then took the opportunity to submit the question for final determination, saying, "If the Northern women won't vote what do you expect of the Southern woman, and particularly an Indian woman? If you adopt this provision, it will mean giving balance of power over to the Negro vote."⁷¹ A motion to

⁶⁶ "Enabling Act," *Oklahoma Red Book*, Gordon and Richards, compilers, Vol. I, pp. 27-39.

⁶⁷ *Proceedings and Debates*, January 8, 1907. For more on the "statistical argument," see Aileen S. Kraditor, *Ideas of the Woman Suffrage Movement, 1890-1930* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1965), pp. 168-169.

⁶⁸ Stanton, Anthony, Gage and Harper, eds., *History of Woman Suffrage*, Vol. V, p. 59.

⁶⁹ Murray, *Memoirs of Governor Murray and True History of Oklahoma*, Vol. II, p. 30.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

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table the Hanratty Amendment was approved by a majority of fifty-four to thirty-seven, with twenty-one members absent or not voting.⁷²

So lopsided a victory for the anti-suffragists came as something of a surprise to most observers. Even the morning edition of the *Guthrie Daily Leader*, the local Democratic newspaper, had predicted that the balloting would be close.⁷³ The suffragettes, also had underestimated Murray's persuasiveness. The *Daily Leader* disclosed that they were "very much disappointed" over the outcome.⁷⁴ A careful analysis of the vote revealed the source of their chagrin. Of the thirty-seven Northern, or foreign-born delegates who voted on the question, nineteen voted against tabling the Hanratty Amendment and eighteen for. On the other hand, of the fifty-four Southerners who voted on the motion, only eighteen voted against tabling while thirty-six cast their ballots against revising the Suffrage Committee report. Of these thirty-six Southerners who opposed woman suffrage, one was a Republican. Clearly, it was by the Southern Democrats that the issue had been decided.

As for the cause of the suffragettes' defeat, two different explanations were offered. According to the *Daily Leader*, "the arguments that the innovation [sic] of woman suffrage was a 'socialistic propaganda' dealt them a death blow."⁷⁵ On the other hand, the Republican *Oklahoma State Capital*, in an editorial by Frank Greer, suggested that the Southern Democrats turned down equal suffrage "just because the colored women in Guthrie registered and the white women did not."⁷⁶ Lending support to this interpretation was the claim made later by the second vice-president of the convention, Albert H. Ellis, that "the Delegates from counties that had no negroes were nearly all in favor of women suffrage, while the Delegates from those counties having a great number of negroes were almost unanimously opposed to it."⁷⁷ Whichever construction best fit the facts, the reactionary basis of the Southern Democrats' opposition to woman suffrage was obvious.

As early as 1857, George Fitzhugh, an ardent racist and conservative, had admonished his fellow Southerners not to heed the propaganda then being circulated by the New England-based "Abolition School of Socialists." He had asserted that the "materials, as well as the proceedings of the infidel, woman's rights, negro's rights, free-everythings, anti-every school, headed and conducted in Boston, by Garrison, Parker, Phillips, and their associate

⁷² *Guthrie Daily Leader*, February 6, 1907.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, February 5, 1907.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, February 6, 1907.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

⁷⁶ *Oklahoma State Capital*, March 22, 1907.

⁷⁷ Ellis, *A History of the Constitutional Convention of the State of Oklahoma*, p. 162.

women and negroes, show that they too are busy with 'assiduous wedges' in loosening the whole frame of society, and preparing for the glorious advent of Free Love and No-Government."²⁸ In 1907, a half century later, Murray, along with the rest of the Southern Democrats in the Oklahoma Constitutional Convention, continued to view woman suffrage, socialism and the doctrine of racial equality as simply different manifestations of the same evil.

²⁸ George Fitzhugh, *Cannibals All or Slaves Without Masters*, C. Vann Woodward, ed. (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1960), pp. 213-214.