



From Parlors to Polling Places: Women's Suffrage in Fort Collins



Prepared by Leslie Moore

SUBMITTED TO THE CITY OF FORT COLLINS

HISTORIC PRESERVATION SERVICES

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FROM PARLORS TO POLLING PLACES: WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE IN FORT COLLINS

PREPARED BY LESLIE MOORE

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

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Cover Image: Celia May Southworth, a local suffragette (date unknown). Photo Courtesy of the Fort Collins Museum of Discovery, ID: H14555.

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INTRODUCTION

"Has anyone heard of a single woman going off and getting drunk over the victory for equal suffrage?"¹ Fort Collins women, many of whom were strong supporters of the temperance movement, finally won the opportunity to cast a vote in 1893 after more than a decade of campaigning. Local women immediately took advantage of their new political power by frequenting polling places, running for office,

starting political magazines, and advocating for national women's suffrage. Tracking the early political life of Fort Collins women reveals that their hardships and successes took place in the buildings where people in the city currently live, work, and pass by every day. By exposing the places where local women first fought for and demonstrated their political power, the city of Fort Collins connects residents in the present to the people of the past whose efforts helped women gain their voting rights.²

Fort Collins Sites associated w/ Women's Suffrage 1893-1920

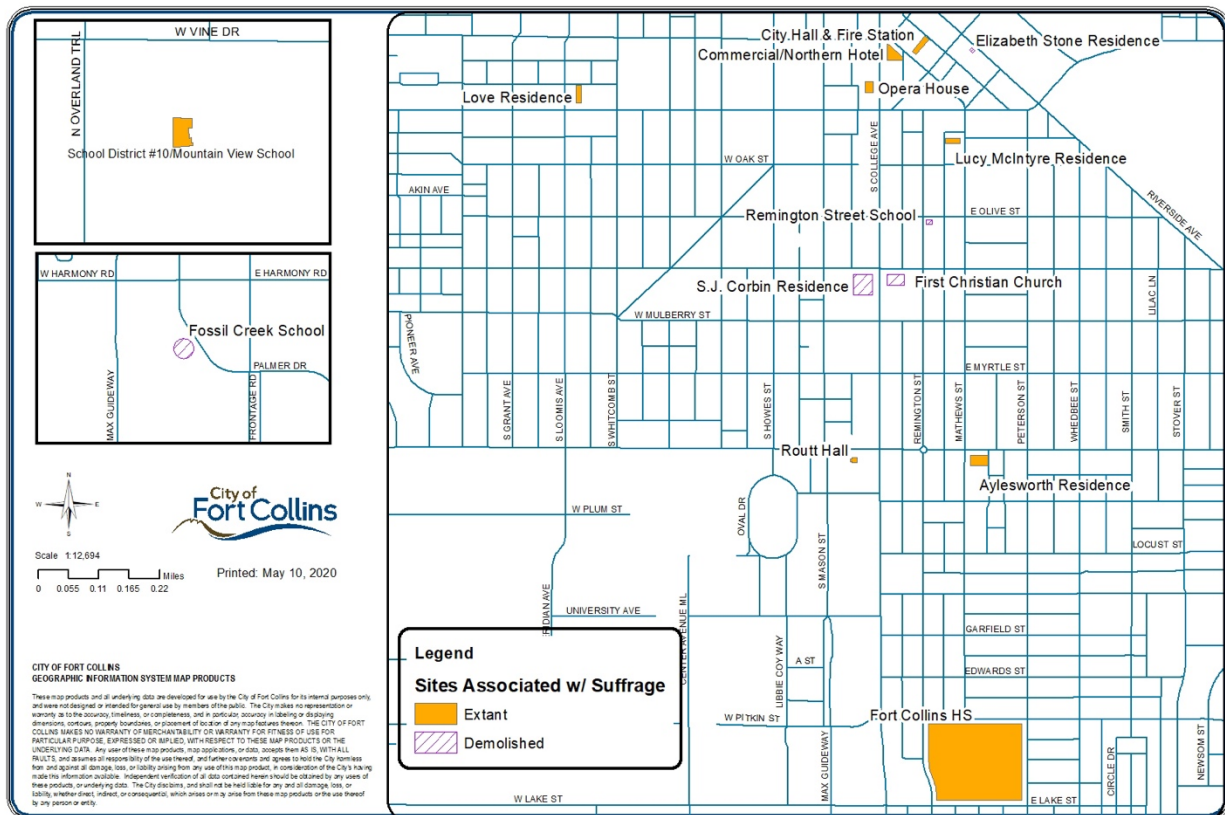


FIGURE 1. EXTANT AND DEMOLISHED SITES ASSOCIATED WITH WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

¹ "Has anyone heard of a single woman going off...", City and Country, *Fort Collins Courier*, November 16, 1893, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.

² I began the research for this historic context just as the country shut down in response to the COVID 19 pandemic in the Spring of 2020. Consequently, I was unable to access the local Fort Collins archives at the Fort Collins Museum of Discovery.

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PART I: PROHIBITION FROM PARLORS

The Fort Collins women's suffrage movement began with some assistance from a well-known feminist publisher from Denver.³ Caroline Nichols Churchill ran a paper called the *Queen Bee* that advocated for "Women's Political Equality and Individuality."⁴ Churchill urged Colorado women to demand their equal rights and colorfully ridiculed other publishers opposed to women's suffrage.⁵ She also apparently traveled to Fort Collins in March 1881 to help establish a women's suffrage organization in the small city of 1,300 people.⁶ Churchill advertised in the *Fort Collins Courier* that any ladies interested in women's suffrage should attend a meeting at the Grange Hall to discuss creating a Fort Collins suffrage organization.⁷ The result of their efforts was the creation of the Fort Collins Equal Suffrage Association.

While membership to the Fort Collins Equal Suffrage Association was originally small, it grew quickly.⁸ The first local woman to host



FIGURE 2. DOWNTOWN FORT COLLINS IN 1880. PHOTO COURTESY OF THE FORT COLLINS MUSEUM OF DISCOVERY, ID: H01507B.

an association meeting was the town's beloved founding mother, Elizabeth "Auntie" Stone.⁹ Stone was 80 years old in 1881 but, according to Churchill, was "the most radical woman suffragist in the whole community" and likely a persuasive voice on behalf of the movement.¹⁰ Stone's decision to host the Equal Suffrage

Instead I found a wealth of information from digitized newspapers available through the Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection, as well as from the Theodosia Ammons Papers housed at Colorado State University's Archives and Special Collections. I encourage future researchers to delve into the documents that I could not access and learn even more about the exceptional people who were involved in the local women's suffrage movement.

³ Some scholars refer to the movement as "women's suffrage" and others use "woman suffrage." I chose to use "women's suffrage" because it is the more common usage, but both are appropriate.

⁴ Beverly Beeton, "How the West Was Won for Women's Suffrage," in *One Woman, One Vote: Rediscovering the Woman Suffrage Movement*, edited by Marjorie Spruill Wheeler (Troutdale, OR: NewSage Press, 1995), 110.

⁵ Stephen J. Leonard, "Bristling for Their Rights: Colorado's Women and the Mandate of 1893," *Colorado Heritage* (Spring 1993): 9. For more information about Churchill's life and political stances, see Rebecca Mead's "Early Suffragists as Organic Intellectuals" chapter in *How the Vote Was Won*.

⁶ "Population Trends," Fort Collins History Connection. Accessed May 2, 2020. <https://history.fcgov.com/contexts/table1>

⁷ C. M. Churchill, "Ladies interested in Woman Suffrage...," *Fort Collins Courier*, March 10, 1881, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection. The meeting was held at the hall of Fort Collins Grange No. 7. The exact location of the hall is unknown but was built sometime between 1875 and 1878, and likely no longer standing. See "COLLINS GRANGE NO. 7 P. OF H.," *Fort Collins Courier*, July 20, 1878, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.

⁸ "A Woman's Suffrage organization...," *Fort Collins Courier*, March 31, 1881, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.

⁹ "The woman's suffrage club will meet Mrs. E. Stone's parlor...," March 17, 1881. *Fort Collins Courier*, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.; Evadene Burris Swanson, *Fort Collins Yesterdays* (Fort Collins, CO: George and Hildegard Morgan, 1993), 101-104. Elizabeth Stone and Caroline Churchill were well acquainted, probably due to their mutual suffrage work.

¹⁰ "Mrs. Elizabeth Stone of Fort Collins...," *Queen Bee*, June 6, 1883, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.

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Association in her parlor at her home on 327 Jefferson Street was not unusual for the nineteenth century.¹¹ It was common for middle- and upper-class women to establish all-female clubs that met regularly in members' homes. Thanks to the assistance of domestic servants and the growing abundance of factory-prepared foods and items in the 1880s, middleclass Colorado housewives had more free time for charity work and to seek out intellectual stimulation from their peers.¹² These clubs met in members' parlors because public spaces such as courtrooms, business offices, and street corners were considered by Victorian society to be male spaces. This concept, known as the "Cult of Domesticity," stemmed from the idea that women's innate morality and virtuousness would be harmed if exposed to the public sphere. Any harm to a woman's morality could have detrimental effects on her children and thus the next generation of Americans. Consequently, middleclass Victorian women were confined to the household and family life.¹³ Front parlors like Elizabeth Stone's were places where women could comfortably exchange ideas with each other without the judgement or disapproval of men. They are also where political movements started.

Many of the women involved in the women's suffrage movement in Fort Collins, were also strong supporters of prohibition. They viewed alcohol abuse as a serious problem that

was detrimental to family and community life. Saloons that served alcohol attracted other unsavory activities that proper Victorian women disapproved of like prostitution and gambling. Fort Collins women also believed the consumption of alcohol led to violence and crime.¹⁴ These prohibitionists increasingly saw alcohol as the root cause of domestic abuse, abandonment, and extreme poverty.¹⁵ However, challenging American society's alcohol issues was not an easy task to accomplish from within the female sphere. Nineteenth-century women were expected to create comforting and moral homes for the sake of the American family, but they could not stop men from bringing alcohol consumption and alcoholism into their houses.¹⁶ American women had very few social privileges or legal protections at the time—they could not testify in court, own property, keep their own wages, or serve on juries.¹⁷ Confronting male family members about alcohol use was a legal, financial, and physical risk for women, and men, as the heads of households, had the final say. Frustrated that their husbands, fathers, and brothers dismissed their concerns, women realized they needed a new strategy to pass prohibition reforms: suffrage.

Frances Willard, president of the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), publicly announced in 1879 that women's suffrage was the key to finally passing

¹¹ Stone's house on 327 Jefferson Street is no longer extant. However, the cabin that she first lived in when she moved to Fort Collins in 1864 still exists. The cabin was relocated multiple times over the years, but now is located in Library Park at 200 Mathews Street. See Swanson, *Fort Collins Yesterdays*, 104-105.

¹² Carolyn J. Stefanco, "Pathways to Power: Women and Voluntary Associations in Denver, Colorado, 1876-1893" (PhD diss., Duke University, 1987), 53-58. Stefanco also points out that the arrival of public utilities lightened the workloads of housewives. The electric utility arrived in Fort Collins in 1887, freeing up more time for local middleclass women to participate in organizations like the WCTU.

¹³ Cathleen Nista Rauterkus, *Go Get Mother's Sign: Crossing Spheres with the Material Culture of Suffrage* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, Inc., 2010), 3.

¹⁴ Stefanco, "Pathways to Power," 106.

¹⁵ Stefanco, "Pathways to Power," 108.

¹⁶ Carolyn De Swarte Gifford, "Frances Willard and the Woman's Christian Temperance Union's Conversion to Woman Suffrage," in *One Woman, One Vote: Rediscovering the Woman Suffrage Movement*, edited by Marjorie Spruill Wheeler (Troutdale, OK: NewSage Press, 1995), 124.

¹⁷ Rauterkus, *Go Get Mother's Sign*, 3.

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prohibition.¹⁸ Women around the nation who were concerned about temperance or prohibition soon referred to themselves as suffragists. Several Fort Collins women, including Alice E. Edwards and Ella M. Courtney, started a local WCTU branch in 1880.¹⁹ The Fort Collins' Board of Trustees had banned the sale of alcohol in 1873 but repealed the law just two years later after sixty-eight residents signed a petition in protest.²⁰ The local WCTU wanted to reinstate that ban. In addition to being concerned about the health and safety of their families, Fort Collins women also worried that the rough saloons in town would discourage new families from settling in the city.²¹ It was no coincidence that local women established an equal suffrage association just seven months after forming a WCTU branch. Like Frances Willard, Fort Collins women saw equal suffrage as a means of ending the societal damage of alcohol. The two movements were closely intertwined.

Most of the leaders of the Fort Collins temperance and women's suffrage movements were white, middle-class women. Lucy Richards McIntyre was one of the founding members of the WCTU and an adamant supporter of women's suffrage.²² Like many Fort Collins residents at the end of the nineteenth century, McIntyre grew up in the east and moved to Fort Collins as an adult.²³ She was a teacher in Pennsylvania as a young woman, but dedicated her time to the WCTU after moving to Fort Collins. While her family certainly faced hardships, her husband's career in law insulated



FIGURE 3. LUCY MCINTYRE (C.1911) WAS A LOCAL LEADER OF THE WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE AND TEMPERANCE MOVEMENTS. PHOTO COURTESY OF THE FORT COLLINS MUSEUM OF DISCOVERY, ID: MCINTY_MRS.

¹⁸ Gifford, "Frances Willard," 118.

¹⁹ Swanson, *Fort Collins Yesterdays*, 242.; "The Ladies' Christian Temperance Union...", *Fort Collins Courier*, August 12, 1880, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.

²⁰ Swanson, *Fort Collins Yesterdays*, 241.; "Fort Collins Detailed Time Line 1870," Fort Collins History Connection. Accessed May 2, 2020. <https://history.fcgov.com/timeline/1870>

²¹ Swanson, *Fort Collins Yesterdays*, 241.

²² Ansel Watrous, *History of Larimer County, Colorado* (Fort Collins, CO: The Courier Printing and Publishing Company, 1911), 410-411.

²³ McIntyre was born on November 11, 1844 in Erie, Pennsylvania. She married her husband, Josiah McIntyre, in September 1862 before he left to serve in the Union Army. After the war, the couple moved to Missouri where Josiah studied law and was elected a county judge for two terms. They relocated to Fort Collins in 1878. See Watrous, *History of Larimer County*, 410.

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the McIntyres from the financial challenges faced by many other families in Fort Collins.²⁴ McIntyre served as both president and secretary of the WCTU and hosted club meetings at her home on 137 Mathews Street up until 1920.²⁵ In addition to organizing the temperance movement from her front parlor, McIntyre published opinion pieces in the local paper to promote the movement's political agenda. In 1893 she wrote a letter to the editor of the *Fort Collins Courier* asserting that it is tyrannical that "women must live under the laws and yet have no voice in making them."²⁶ McIntyre also complained that men from the "ignorant and debauched class" could vote while educated women still could not.²⁷ This argument was not uncommon for the time and demonstrates how wealthy Colorado suffragists played on class fears for their own political benefit. McIntyre remained dedicated to her political work for the rest of her long life—she died in 1940 at the age of 96.²⁸

Another leader of the overlapping Fort Collins temperance and suffrage movements was Sarah Jane Leffingwell Corbin. Corbin also grew up in Pennsylvania and moved to Fort Collins in 1880.²⁹ Her second husband, Twiford Corbin, ran a successful lumber company at 243

North College Avenue and the couple and their son lived at 227 College Avenue throughout most of the 1880s.³⁰ The family was wealthy enough to build a grand Italianate home at 402 Remington Street in 1888. Like McIntyre, Corbin served multiple terms as president of the local WCTU.³¹ She also hosted many organization meetings at her house from 1890 until 1896 when her husband died.³² This house, perhaps more than any other in Fort Collins, was the setting for the advancements that local women made throughout the 1890s. When Corbin died in 1903 her obituary noted that she was "an



FIGURE 4. CORBIN RESIDENCE AT 402 REMINGTON STREET, DATE UNKNOWN. PHOTO COURTESY OF THE FORT COLLINS MUSEUM OF DISCOVERY, ID: H19350.

²⁴ Swanson, *Fort Collins Yesterdays*, 192. Josiah McIntyre went completely blind in the 1880s from a poorly healed war injury, but still received a law degree from the University of Michigan in 1889. The McIntyres also dealt with the death of most of their children. They had seven children, but only Clyde McIntyre was still alive in 1911. See Watrous, *History of Larimer County*, 411.

²⁵ "Reading Room-Open day and evening...," Society Notice, *Fort Collins Courier*, August 28, 1884, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.; "Women in Convention," *Fort Collins Courier*, May 4, 1893, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.; "The W.C.T.U. will meet Tuesday...," Society, *Fort Collins Courier*, July 24, 1920, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.

²⁶ L. N. McIntyre, "Equal Suffrage," *Fort Collins Courier*, July 13, 1893, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.

²⁷ McIntyre, "Equal Suffrage," July 13, 1893.

²⁸ Swanson, *Fort Collins Yesterdays*, 192. According to Swanson, McIntyre's gravestone in the Grandview Cemetery identifies her as "the last of the crusaders."

²⁹ "Death of Mrs. S. J. Corbin," *Weekly Courier*, October 28, 1903, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.

³⁰ Two years after Twiford Corbin died of tuberculosis in 1896, Sarah Jane Corbin was listed as president of the Corbin and Black Lumber Company. Perhaps she held the position until her son, Frank, graduated from CAC the following year. See "Died," *Fort Collins Courier*, December 24, 1896, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection and "The Corbin & Black Lumber Co," Advertisement, *Fort Collins Courier*, August 25, 1898, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.

³¹ "Free Reading Room.—," Society Notices, *Fort Collins Courier*, February 27, 1890, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.

³² "Woman's Christian Temperance Union...," Society Notices, *Fort Collins Courier*, May 22, 1890, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.

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active and unceasing worker in the temperance cause." The house was demolished in 1976 to make way for an office building.³³

McIntyre, Corbin, and other white, middle-class women's involvement with the local suffrage and temperance movements is well documented in local historical newspapers. What working-class women and women of color felt about or contributed to the movements is much harder to determine from the written record. These women often lacked the education, social connections, or resources to share their opinions and meeting schedules in the local newspapers. Research on the movements in Denver provides some clues to how working-class women and women of color in Fort Collins might have been involved. Nearly half of all Denver WCTU members were from working-class families.³⁴ We do not know if the same proportions applied to the WCTU in Fort Collins, but clearly Colorado's working-class women were invested in bringing about temperance laws, if not outright prohibition, and were actively involved in the Denver labor movement in the 1880s and 90s.³⁵ Trade unions supported equal suffrage and women voted and ran for office in union elections. It appears that working-class suffragists gained activism skills from union mobilization at the same time that

middle-class suffragists started organizing through club meetings.³⁶ The economic and social dynamics of Fort Collins and Denver were by no means identical at the end of the nineteenth century, but the events in Denver suggest that working-class women in Fort Collins could also have had an invested interest in women's suffrage.

It is also a challenge to determine how women of color in Fort Collins felt about women's suffrage. By the 1870s, the majority of Fort Collins residents were white, but Hispanic, African American, and Chinese Americans also lived in the city.³⁷ Their voices are even harder to track in the historical record than white, working-class women. The heavily Latinx counties of southern Colorado had the lowest support for a statewide women's suffrage measure in 1877 (it did not pass), though historians suspect that is due to the influence of Joseph Machebeuf, the Catholic bishop of Colorado, who adamantly opposed women's suffrage.³⁸ That being said, those votes would only be reflective of Latino men and should not be assumed to represent the opinion of Latina women.³⁹ Slightly more is known about how African American women in Colorado felt about women's suffrage. Women in Denver organized a Colored Woman's Suffrage Association in the

³³ "Death of Mrs. S. J. Corbin," October 28, 1903.; City of Fort Collins Building Inspection Division, "402 Remington," demolition permit, February 13, 1976, City of Fort Collins Records Database. Accessed May 2, 2020. <https://citydocs.fcgov.com/?vid=2&cmd=search&scope=doctype&dt=PERMITS&dn=Neighborhood+%26+Building+Services%2FZoning&q=402+Remington+>

³⁴ Stefanco, "Pathways to Power," 106.

³⁵ Rebecca J. Mead, *How the Vote Was Won: Woman Suffrage in the Western United States, 1869-1914* (New York: New York University Press, 2004), 60.

³⁶ Mead, *How the Vote Was Won*, 61.

³⁷ 1880 United States Census, Larimer County, Colorado, Census Online. Accessed May 2, 2020. <https://www.census-online.com/links/CO/Larimer/>. The 1880 census takers for Larimer County did not record the race of the residents they spoke with, but they did ask people where they were born. Three men, Chong Lay, George Garvey, and Ling Chuny, responded that they and their parents were born in China. Another man, whose name was recorded as Mostoc Srnch, listed his birthplace as "(New) Mexico." Most of the 1890 census, including the portion covering Larimer County, burned in a fire in 1921. Census records are useful to get an idea of a region's demographics, but factors such as language barriers and transient lifestyles affected the accuracy of the records.

³⁸ Mead, *How the Vote Was Won*, 58.

³⁹ For more information about the history of the Latinx community in Fort Collins, see Adam Thomas, *Hang Your Wagon to a Star: Hispanics in Fort Collins, 1900-2000* (Fort Collins, CO: SWCA Environmental Consultants, August 2003). Accessed April 30, 2020. <https://www.fcgov.com/historicpreservation/pdf/hispanics.pdf?1582661629>.

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1870s and Elizabeth Piper Ensley acted as the treasurer of the integrated Non-Partisan Colorado Equal Suffrage Association in the early 1890s.⁴⁰ Many African American suffragists felt frustrated with their white counterparts' racism and disinterest in addressing Jim Crow laws that denied African American men's enfranchisement in the south.⁴¹ How exactly women of color and working-class women in Fort Collins felt about women's suffrage is unknown, but it is likely that racism and nativism in Colorado's suffrage movement contributed to their involvement, or lack thereof.

Race and racism were factors in Colorado's suffrage movement going as far back to the failed referendum of 1877, in the early days of Colorado's statehood. Lawmakers resisted suffragists' petitions in 1877 because they were worried about the potential consequences of enfranchising African American and Chinese women. Perhaps remembering this racist resistance, white Colorado suffragists in the following decades reassured men that educated white women's votes would far outnumber the votes of African Americans in the state. An influx of eastern and southern European immigrants to the United States in the late 1800s also triggered a rise in American nativism and a fear of the voting power of immigrant men.⁴² Mrs. M. H. Wrigley, the state superintendent of franchise of the WCTU, wrote an article published in the *Fort Collins Courier* that promised readers that "it has been proven that women's ballot will in a great measure counteract the illiterate foreign

vote" and that white female voters in the southern states would outnumber African American men and women combined.⁴³ Even if women of color or working-class immigrant women in Fort Collins wanted to be involved in the local suffrage movement that does not necessarily mean they were welcomed with open arms. Lucy McIntyre's 1893 letter to the editor demonstrates a clear disdain for the working class and suggests that the leaders of the Fort Collins suffrage movement shared some of the same bigoted stances of their colleagues around the state.⁴⁴ These leaders, however, embraced the assistance of white men and national leadership when a new referendum for women's suffrage was added to the Colorado's 1893 ballot. In the process, the movement started outgrowing parlors and spreading into local public buildings.

PART II: CAMPAIGNING IN SCHOOLS AND ON STAGE

The suffrage referendum in 1893 presented Colorado women with an opportunity to gain their enfranchisement, but it would not be easy. Instead of trying to add an equal suffrage amendment to the state constitution themselves, the Colorado legislature left the question up to the voting public—men. In March, the legislature added a referendum to the November ballot asking voters if women should be granted the vote or not.⁴⁵ Colorado suffragists had seven months to

⁴⁰ Mead, *How the Vote Was Won*, 58.; Sylvia Lambe, "Elizabeth Piper Ensley and the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment," History Colorado, last modified February 18, 2020. <https://www.historycolorado.org/story/womens-history/2020/02/18/elizabeth-piper-ensley-and-100th-anniversary-19th-amendment>

⁴¹ Rosalyn Terborg-Penn, *African American Women in the Struggle for the Vote, 1850-1920* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1998), 160.

⁴² Stephen J. Leonard, "Bristling for Their Rights," 12.

⁴³ M.E. Wrigley, "The Suffrage Campaign," *Fort Collins Courier*, October 12, 1893, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.

⁴⁴ McIntyre, "Equal Suffrage," July 13, 1893.

⁴⁵ Billie Barnes Jensen, "The Woman Suffrage Movement in Colorado" (MA Thesis, University of Colorado, 1959), 71. For more details about the Colorado legislature's approval of the women's suffrage bill, see Chapter IV of Jensen's thesis.

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persuade men to give them the vote for local and state elections.

At some point in the decade before 1893 the original Fort Collins Equal Suffrage Association had disbanded, perhaps because the local WCTU could advocate for both temperance and women's suffrage.⁴⁶ The temperance organization remained popular through the decade and continued to be a major supporter of women's suffrage. Fort Collins hosted the Northern District Convention of the WCTU in May 1893 and suffrage was the main topic of discussion.⁴⁷ Mrs. M. H. Wrigley gave an impassioned speech at the conference to rally enthusiasm for the referendum. She challenged all Colorado women to join in the campaign for equal suffrage, exclaiming that women "are not afraid to ask for what they want, and they are going to keep right on asking until they do get what they are sure they ought to have."⁴⁸ She encouraged WCTU members to enter the public sphere to give lectures, write articles, and participate in as many debates as possible to advocate for the vote.⁴⁹

Exactly how broadly Fort Collins women heeded Wrigley's call for involvement is difficult to determine. Over the next few months multiple people did write letters to the editor of the *Fort Collins Courier* on behalf of women's suffrage, but most of letters were either anonymous or signed only with initials, which makes it challenging to determine the gender of the author. The exceptions are McIntyre's letter written in August and a letter from Mrs. Fawcett reassuring readers that suffragists do

not want to "convert women into men," but instead to bring womanly goodness and honesty to public affairs.⁵⁰ Except for writing the occasional newspaper article, Fort Collins women seem to have avoided giving speeches and participating in debates throughout the 1893 suffrage campaign. Instead they aligned themselves with local men who were sympathetic to the movement and comfortable taking part in public forums.

As a result, when locals formed a new Equal Suffrage Association in September, men were welcomed as members.⁵¹ That same month, the local newspaper printed the names of seventeen men giving speeches around Larimer County in favor of women's suffrage.⁵² Whether or not Fort Collins women arranged for these men to campaign on their behalf is



FIGURE 5. FORT COLLINS MEN GAVE A SPEECH IN FAVOR OF WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE AT FOSSIL CREEK SCHOOL HOUSE IN 1893 (C. 1930). PHOTO COURTESY OF THE FORT COLLINS MUSEUM OF DISCOVERY, ID: H05693.

⁴⁶ "An Equal Suffrage club has been organized...", *Fort Collins Courier*, August 10, 1893, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.

⁴⁷ "Resolved, That Woman Shall Vote," *Fort Collins Courier*, May 18, 1893, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.

⁴⁸ "Resolved, That Woman Shall Vote," May 18, 1893.

⁴⁹ "Resolved, That Woman Shall Vote," May 18, 1893.

⁵⁰ McIntyre, "Equal Suffrage," July 13, 1893.; Fawcett, "Let no man or woman be mistaken..." *Fort Collins Courier*, September 28, 1893, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.

⁵¹ "The Equal Suffrage association will meet at 7:30...", *City and Country, Fort Collins Courier*, September 14, 1893, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.

⁵² "The following named local speakers will address...", *Fort Collins Courier*, September 14, 1893, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.

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FIGURE 6. LOCALS ALSO GAVE SUFFRAGE SPEECHES AT THE SCHOOL HOUSE IN DISTRICT NO. 10/MOUNTAIN VIEW SCHOOL (C. 2010). PHOTO COURTESY OF THE FORT COLLINS MUSEUM OF DISCOVERY, ID: H26562.

unknown, but it is not outside the realm of possibility. Leaders of the National Woman Suffrage Association strategically deployed well-connected men to lobby politicians in the 1910s.⁵³ The Fort Collins “suffragents” traveled to local schoolhouses throughout the fall to give their speeches. They spoke at the Fossil Creek School House, Leonard School House, and the schoolhouses in districts 10 (3039 West Vine Drive) and 101.⁵⁴

One of the more prolific speakers was a young student and architect attending Colorado Agricultural College (CAC), later Colorado State University. Harlan Thomas moved to Fort Collins as a boy and lived at 170 Meldrum Street with his family before enrolling at the college in 1886 at the age of 16.⁵⁵ When his father died suddenly, Thomas withdrew from the college

and moved to Denver to become a carpenter.⁵⁶ Thomas won a competition hosted by the Colorado Association of Architects in 1891 and CAC decided to hire the local boy to design the Agricultural Hall and Mechanic Shop, now known as the Industrial Arts building. Thomas used the opportunity to reenroll at the college in 1893 and was soon campaigning on behalf of



FIGURE 7. HARLAN THOMAS WHILE ATTENDING COLORADO AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE C. 1894. PHOTO COURTESY OF THE FORT COLLINS MUSEUM OF DISCOVERY, ID: THOMAS_H.

⁵³ Brooke Kroeger, *The Suffragents: How Women Used Men to Get the Vote*. (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2017).

⁵⁴ “Equal Suffrage Meetings,” *Fort Collins Courier*, October 5, 1893, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.; “Equal Suffrage Meetings,” *Fort Collins Courier*, October 12, 1893, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.; “Suffrage Meetings,” *Fort Collins Courier*, October 19, 1893, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection. Fossil Creek School House was located near the corner of Harmony Road and College Avenue but is no longer extant. The exact location of the Leonard School is unknown, but apparently was six miles south of Fort Collins. The schoolhouse in district 10 was also called Mountain View School and is currently a private residence located at 3039 West Vine Drive. Where exactly the district 101 schoolhouse was also unknown, but the October 19, 1893 *Fort Collins Courier* article described its location as nine miles east and one mile south of the city.

⁵⁵ 1880 United States Census, Larimer County, Colorado.

⁵⁶ Swanson, *Fort Collins Yesterdays*, 176.

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women's suffrage while also attending classes in the buildings that he designed.⁵⁷ Why Thomas dedicated his time to the movement is not clear, but he vigorously committed to the campaign. He gave speeches advocating for equal suffrage on at least three different occasions and came across as "thoroughly in earnest."⁵⁸ Thomas also participated in a lively debate over equal suffrage with other male college students. The members of the Fort Collins Equal Suffrage Association who attended the debate "appeared to be highly entertained by the boy's efforts in their behalf."⁵⁹ Thanks to men like Thomas, local voter support for women's suffrage continued to grow, but it was a woman who provided the final and most dramatic push before election day.⁶⁰

When leaders of the Colorado movement found out that the question of women's suffrage would be on the ballot in 1893, they worried that the state was unprepared to wage a successful campaign. It seems they had a right to worry. The Non-Partisan Equal Suffrage Association of Colorado had less than twenty-five dollars in their treasury and fewer than one hundred official members across the state.⁶¹ Suffrage leaders based out of Denver reached out to the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA) for help. National organizers, still smarting from Colorado's failure to pass the referendum of 1877, were initially skeptical that intervention was worth their time.⁶² The rapid spread of outreach programs around the state changed their mind. Carrie Chapman Catt arrived in Colorado on Labor Day and started



FIGURE 8. CARRIE CHAPMAN CATT (DATE UNKNOWN) WAS A NATIONAL LEADER OF THE WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE MOVEMENT. IMAGE COURTESY OF PHOTO COURTESY OF THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, MANUSCRIPT DIVISION, CARRIE CHAPMAN CATT PAPERS.

traveling around the state to organize more municipal women's suffrage organizations.⁶³ Catt's notoriety for giving excellent speeches drew large crowds. She addressed 1,500 people in Denver's Coliseum Hall when she first arrived in Colorado.⁶⁴ Catt did not overlook Fort Collins on her tour.

Fort Collins suffragists started advertising Catt's visit in the newspapers two

⁵⁷ Swanson, *Fort Collins Yesterdays*, 177.

⁵⁸ "Messrs. Cowen and Thomas of the college...", *Fort Collins Courier*, September 14, 1893, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.

⁵⁹ "The Sons of Veterans are on the Crest," *Fort Collins Courier*, September 21, 1893, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.

⁶⁰ "If there is any opposition to woman suffrage...", *City and Country, Fort Collins Courier*, October 12, 1893, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.

⁶¹ Mead, *How the Vote Was Won*, 63.

⁶² Mead, *How the Vote Was Won*, 64.

⁶³ Jensen, "The Woman Suffrage Movement in Colorado," 74.

⁶⁴ "Mrs. Carrie Lane Chapman," *Fort Collins Courier*, October 19, 1893, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.

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FIGURE 9. OPERA HOUSE (C. 1903) WHERE CATT SPOKE IN OCTOBER 1893. PHOTO COURTESY OF THE FORT COLLINS MUSEUM OF DISCOVERY, ID: H15877.

weeks ahead of her arrival. They encouraged residents from all over the region to “turn out en masse and hear this gifted speaker.”⁶⁵ Locals crowded into the Fort Collins Opera House at 123 North College Avenue on a Monday evening at the end of October to hear her speech. The audience was impressed by her eloquent address and felt that it had strengthened local support for equal suffrage.⁶⁶ The *Fort Collins Courier* surveyed several residents about women’s suffrage a week ahead of the election day and a consensus emerged that seemed to bode well for the suffragists. The newspaper quoted C. Golding-Dwyre as saying, “In favor of woman suffrage? Certainly I am, especially in the great west, and

more particularly in Colorado, where women, so far as intelligence and education are concerned, are fully equal to men.”⁶⁷ D. C. Threlkeld felt that equal suffrage would result in a more “intelligent paternal government.”⁶⁸ Celia May Southworth, a student at CAC, pointed out that votes for women would also help men. She exclaimed that “the ballot placed in the hands of woman [sic] will double the power of every laboring man.”⁶⁹ When election day arrived on November 7, Colorado women had to wait anxiously to find out if men had finally given them the vote.

The next day the Colorado governor released the final results: equal suffrage passed, handily. When tallied statewide, 35,798 men voted in favor of enfranchising women, and only 29,451 opposed it.⁷⁰ Larimer County approved women’s suffrage with an even wider margin—1,049 votes for and only 480 against.⁷¹ The newspaper wrote that “the women feel better over this election than anybody else. It is really and truly their time to rejoice.”⁷² And they did. Once again, the Fort Collins Opera House filled with local suffragists. The Fort Collins Equal Suffrage Association hosted a “grand ratification” celebration in mid-December and invited anyone interested to

⁶⁵ “Mrs. Carrie Lane Chapman,” October 19, 1893.

⁶⁶ “The opera house was crowded last Monday evening...,” *Fort Collins Courier*, November 2, 1893, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collections.

⁶⁷ “Reasons for the Faith that Is in Them,” *Fort Collins Courier*, November 2, 1893, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.

⁶⁸ “Reasons for the Faith that Is in Them,” November 2, 1893. According to a Rocky Mountain Collegian article from May 1, 1894, Southworth was born in Odell, IL in 1872 and moved to northern Denver as a toddler. She originally started at CAC in 1886 but had to return home for family reasons. Instead, she attended East Denver High School and became the librarian of the State Board of Agriculture in 1892 before reenrolling at CAC.

⁶⁹ “Reasons for the Faith that Is in Them,” November 2, 1893. See “Class of ‘94,” *Rocky Mountain Collegian*, May 1, 1894, Colorado historic Newspapers Collection.

⁷⁰ Mead, *How the Vote Was Won*, 67. Historians link the passage of the 1893 referendum to the rise of the Populist Party in Colorado. For more information about the political and economic context of the referendum, see Mead’s *How the Vote Was Won*, Beeton’s “How the West Was Won for Women’s Suffrage,” and Jensen’s “The Woman Suffrage Movement in Colorado.”

⁷¹ “Not in It,” *Fort Collins Courier*, November 9, 1893, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.

⁷² “The women feel better over this election...,” *Fort Collins Courier*, November 9, 1893, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.

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attend.⁷³ In between musical performances, local leaders of the movement gave speeches and prayers of gratitude. Lucy McIntyre thanked all the male speakers who campaigned on behalf of women's suffrage. Miss Meade spoke of all the congratulatory telegrams and letters sent by women from across the nation and



FIGURE 10. CELIA MAY SOUTHWORTH AT HER GRADUATION FROM COLORADO AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE, C. 1894. PHOTO COURTESY OF THE FORT COLLINS MUSEUM OF DISCOVERY, ID: H01472.

world. Even young Celia May Southworth gave a speech. Already thinking ahead, she discussed all the opportunities that women now had as a responsibility to address. The final speech came from Judge McAnelly, who reminded women that they still needed to register to vote, even if they were reluctant to share their ages.⁷⁴ While the women of Fort Collins certainly enjoyed their moment of jubilee (presumably without any alcohol involved), they also had very serious plans for their new civic responsibilities. They now a legal right to enter polling places and serve in city halls and took advantage of these new opportunities.

PART III: "PRACTICING" POLITICS IN VOTING BOOTHS AND CITY HALLS

Fort Collins suffragists knew that they still had work ahead of them almost as soon as the election results came through. Women were eager to practice their new political rights but did not have any previous experience on how to do so. If Colorado women were going to live up to their word that they would be educated, thoughtful, and virtuous voters, they needed to learn more about how the political system functioned. To address this need, the Fort Collins Equal Suffrage Association offered a four-week course at the First Christian Church to educate local women about politics. In 1894, the First Christian Church was not actually a building, but a large floored tent called the "Tabernacle."⁷⁵ The open space and mostly female congregation made it an ideal spot for local women to gather for lessons. The curriculum of the course included lessons on

⁷³ "The governor's proclamation is out...", *City and Country. Fort Collins Courier*, December 7, 1893, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collections.

⁷⁴ "The Woman Jubililate," *Fort Collins Courier*, December 21, 1893, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.

⁷⁵ The First Christian Church first formed in 1890. The majority of the original 30 members were women, including Sarah Corbin. The church met in a tent for eight years because the female congregants had little financial freedom to donate money for the construction of a new building. By 1898, Reverend S. R. Wilson raised enough funds to build a brick and sandstone church at 400 South College Avenue on the corner of College Avenue and Magnolia Street, which has since been demolished. See Watrous, *History of Larimer County, Colorado*, 261, 309.

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parliamentary law, the adoption of the state constitution, political economy, and “debate and decorum.”⁷⁶ The organizers specifically chose to highlight Colorado laws relating to “women, children, property, schools, etc.” and encouraged mothers to share what they learned with their children.⁷⁷ The Equal Suffrage Association also organized mock caucuses and party conventions that local women could participate in.⁷⁸ Men who were more familiar with local politics, like Judge McAnelly and George W. Bailey, helped run the events at the Christian Church. Participation numbers were high. Around forty women attended the mock caucus and the organizers thought a bout of poor weather that coincided with these classes had detained even more from attending.⁷⁹ Local suffragists were determined to build women’s excitement and confidence for the city elections coming up in April.

Fort Collins women did not disappoint on their first election day. A total of 439 women showed up to vote in the city elections, making up 46% of the total voters that day.⁸⁰ They cast their ballots in four different locations around the city. Three of the polling stations were located on College Avenue—the Commercial Hotel at 166-180 North College (better known now as the Northern Hotel), the Opera House, and the “Office, formerly occupied by C. Golding-Dwyre, College ave.”⁸¹ The fourth polling station was located in the



FIGURE 11. REMINGTON STREET SCHOOL (DATE UNKNOWN) WAS ONE OF THE POLLING PLACES WHERE FORT COLLINS WOMEN VOTED FOR THE FIRST TIME IN 1894. PHOTO COURTESY OF THE FORT COLLINS MUSEUM OF DISCOVERY, ID: H05501.

Remington Street School at the southeast corner of Olive and Remington Streets.⁸² Those opposed to women’s suffrage had argued that polling places were too rowdy for the female character, but there were no instances of violence or unseemly behavior that day, just the excited buzz of a new opportunity.⁸³ Fort Collins women traveled up and down College Avenue in carriages to campaign for their preferred candidates, giving “the men more pointers on practical politics than they ever dreamed of.”⁸⁴ The local newspapers reported that women’s enthusiasm made the election the “most spirited and exciting held in Fort Collins for years.”⁸⁵ But Colorado women did not limit their political participation to polling places after gaining enfranchisement in 1893.

⁷⁶ “Program of Study for the Month of December,” *Fort Collins Courier*, December 7, 1893, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.

⁷⁷ “Program of Study for the Month of December,” December 7, 1893.

⁷⁸ R. Q. Tenney, “Lessons in Politics,” *Fort Collins Courier*, January 25, 1894, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.; J. M. Simms, “Notice,” *Fort Collins Courier*, February 8, 1894, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.

⁷⁹ Tenney, “Lessons in Politics,” January 25, 1894.

⁸⁰ “The City Election,” *Fort Collins Courier*, April 5, 1894, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.

⁸¹ “Election Proclamation,” *Fort Collins Courier*, March 22, 1894, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection. In 1902, Golding-Dwyre’s office was located at 124 South College Avenue, which is now addressed as 120 South College Avenue. It is unclear if that is the same office that he occupied before the 1894 elections.

⁸² *Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps from Fort Collins, Larimer County, Colorado*, Sanborn Map Company, January 1901, Map. Accessed May 2, 2020. https://www.loc.gov/item/sanborn00996_004/

⁸³ “The City Election,” April 5, 1894.

⁸⁴ “The City Election,” April 5, 1894.

⁸⁵ “The City Election,” April 5, 1894.

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Fort Collins women applied what they had learned at the mock equal suffrage association convention to actual party conventions later in 1894. Multiple local women took on leadership roles during the convention for the Prohibition Party of Larimer County held at the Loveland Opera House in August.⁸⁶ Lucy McIntyre gave a speech and Caroline Leech Simms, a former Fort Collins teacher and author of children's stories, took on secretarial duties at the event.⁸⁷ The convention attendees chose Mrs. L. M. Kenyon and Mrs. E. M. Tanner, along with the ever-earnest Harlan Thomas, to be the Fort Collins delegates to the upcoming Prohibition Party's state convention.⁸⁸ Most impressively, the convention nominated Kenyon as representative for the county ticket. Fort Collins women did not stop orchestrating



FIGURE 12. THE OLD CITY HALL/FIREHOUSE (C. 1882) WHERE ALICE EDWARDS SERVED AS ALDERWOMAN IN 1895. PHOTO COURTESY OF THE FORT COLLINS MUSEUM OF DISCOVERY, ID: H00188.

politics from their living room either. The WCTU continued to meet regularly at Sarah Corbin's house on Remington for years, as more and more women like Kenyon started inserting themselves in the public sphere, including elected office.

Temperance supporters successfully took over the Fort Collins City Council in 1895, thanks to the support of female voters. Alice Edwards was one of the winning anti-license candidates and credited by contemporary newspapers as the first woman in Colorado to be elected to municipal office.⁸⁹ She beat her opponent, T. H. Robertson, by two votes to become the alderwoman representing the second ward.⁹⁰ The anti-license candidates hoped to end the local licensing system that allowed hotels and saloons to sell liquor. Little else is known about Edwards' life, but her success was announced around Colorado.⁹¹ The *Boulder Daily Camera* reported that Edwards "was the first woman to hold that position in the state."⁹² As alderwoman, Edwards sat on committees that managed streets, alleys, bridges and regulated fire protection boundaries and inspections.⁹³ These committees likely met in the Old City Hall, also known as the Old Firehouse, at 232-238 Walnut Street. Edwards may have sat at one of the solid cherry desks provided for city aldermen back in 1888.⁹⁴ Her tenure was short lived, however. She moved to another ward the following year and had to give up her elected position. That same year the Fort Collins City Council passed

⁸⁶ "First in the Field," *Fort Collins Courier*, August 30, 1894, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.

⁸⁷ "First in the Field," August 30, 1894.; "Golden Days, for November 25...," *Fort Collins Courier*, December 28, 1893, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.; "Death of Mrs. James M. Simms," *Fort Collins Courier*, December 30, 1897, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.

⁸⁸ "First in the Field," August 30, 1894.

⁸⁹ Not to be confused with Alice E. Edwards who helped found the local WCTU back in 1880.

⁹⁰ Swanson, *Fort Collins Yesterdays*, 242.

⁹¹ Swanson, *Fort Collins Yesterdays*, 242. Alice was married to Robert Edwards. Robert's mother, Calista Edwards, was one of the original founders of the Fort Collins WCTU. There are no digitized records of Fort Collins newspapers from the year 1895, making it challenge to judge local public opinion about Alderwoman Edward's election.

⁹² "The Elections," *Boulder Daily Camera*, April 3, 1895, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.

⁹³ Swanson, *Fort Collins Yesterdays*, 242.

⁹⁴ Swanson, *Fort Collins Yesterdays*, 238.

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an ordinance that prohibited the sale of liquor; this ordinance stayed in effect until 1968.⁹⁵ Through Alice Edwards' efforts, the prediction made by Frances Willard that only women's suffrage would bring about prohibition came true in Fort Collins.

Another Fort Collins suffragist who boldly placed herself in the public limelight was Professor Grace Espy Patton. Patton was born in Pennsylvania but moved to Fort Collins as a child with her family.⁹⁶ The family settled in a house on 210 College Avenue.⁹⁷ Politics and community service was a part of Patton's life by the time she was 14 years old. In 1880, her father, David Patton, was elected mayor of Fort Collins, and Grace worked as the librarian of the Presbyterian Church.⁹⁸ Like Harlan Thomas, Patton enrolled in CAC when she was only 16 and quickly identified herself as an opinionated suffragist. She gave a speech during a student exhibition about looking forward to the day when woman gained the vote and "the robes of government are laid over her shoulders."⁹⁹ The college hired Patton as an instructor not long after she graduated in 1885. She taught a variety of courses including chemistry, logic, and stenography; however, writing remained her passion.¹⁰⁰

Patton's strong writing skills and critical eye did not go unnoticed. The *Denver Times* hired her in 1890 to visit and report on all of the leading mining camps in both Colorado and California.¹⁰¹ Seemingly impressed by the writing she had done for the *Denver Times* the year before, CAC created the chair of English and Stenography and hired Patton to fill the position.¹⁰² The new professor continued to advocate for women's political participation. Patton was one of the first women to register to vote after the referendum of 1893 passed.¹⁰³ In 1894 she became head editor and co-founder of *The Tourney*, a monthly magazine based out of Fort Collins that was dedicated to literary, political, and educational matters of the American West.¹⁰⁴ *The Tourney* only published a few editions before Patton took over management alongside Denver suffragette, Mary C. C. Bradford. The two women moved the magazine's production to Denver and remarketed it as a women's magazine, renaming it *The Colorado Woman*.¹⁰⁵ The first edition of *The Colorado Woman* included articles titled "The Purifying Process vs. The New Voters" and "An Equal Suffrage Romance."¹⁰⁶ The magazine had a wide circulation and Patton soon "instilled her sentiments into the minds of thousands of

⁹⁵ Swanson, *Fort Collins Yesterdays*, 242-243.

⁹⁶ "Remarkable Woman Dies," *Denver Post*, July 24, 1904, NewsBank: Access World News.

⁹⁷ 1880 United States Census, Larimer County, Colorado.

⁹⁸ Swanson, *Fort Collins Yesterdays*, 254.; "Church Directory," *Fort Collins Courier*, December 9, 1880, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.

⁹⁹ "Junior Exhibition," *Fort Collins Courier*, June 14, 1883, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.

¹⁰⁰ "Miss Grace Patton, instructor in chemistry...," Events at Home, *Fort Collins Courier*, April 14, 1887, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.; "Agricultural College," *Fort Collins Courier*, February 9, 1888, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.; "In his very excellent report...," *Fort Collins Courier*, June 13, 1889, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.

¹⁰¹ "Personal," *Fort Collins Courier*, June 12, 1890, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.; "Miss Grace Patton is the Fort Collins...," *Queen Bee*, October 29, 1890, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.

¹⁰² "An Important Meeting," *Fort Collins Courier*, April 23, 1891, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.

¹⁰³ Charlene Tresner, "The 1893 issue, right to vote," *Fort Collins Triangle Review*, November 12, 1980, located in Women's Suffrage Folder, Local History Archive at the Fort Collins Museum of Discovery, Fort Collins, CO.

¹⁰⁴ "A Colorado Magazine," *Fort Collins Courier*, February 1, 1894, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.

¹⁰⁵ "The Tourney, the publication...," *Fort Collins Courier*, November 22, 1894, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.; "The Tourney Under the New Management," *Fort Collins Courier*, November 29, 1894, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.; Swanson, *Fort Collins Yesterdays*, 237.

¹⁰⁶ "The Tourney Under the New Management," November 29, 1894.

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people.”¹⁰⁷ Beyond producing a feminist magazine, Patton still had bigger political ambitions.

She ran for, and won, the position for State Superintendent of Public Instruction in 1896, only the second woman in the state's history to hold the position. Her students at CAC simultaneously applauded her win and lamented the loss of their “Little Prof” around campus.¹⁰⁸ During her time in office, Patton addressed questions about whether women who smoked cigars should be allowed to teach and if the state's teacher qualifying exam was too strenuous.¹⁰⁹ Some scholars suggest that Patton was the first LGBT student and professor at CAC, but she nonetheless eloped with a former colleague, Lieutenant Warren Hayden Cowles, while still in office.¹¹⁰ Her marriage triggered a public debate about whether she should be referred to as “Grace Espy Patton” or “Mrs. Warren Cowles.” The state attorney general decided that Patton should continue to use the name that she ran under while performing official responsibilities.¹¹¹ At the end of 1898, Patton chose not to run for a second term and moved to the Philippines where her husband was stationed during the Spanish-American War.¹¹² She died suddenly in 1904 when she was just 37 years old. The *Denver Post* wrote in her obituary that “no woman of Colorado has left a more indelible impression upon the people, their laws and sentiments.”¹¹³ But as Grace Espy Patton, Alice Edwards, and L. M. Kenyon embraced their new civic responsibilities and political power, other



FIGURE 13. GRACE ESPY PATTON (C. 1900) RAN A WOMEN'S MAGAZINE AND WAS ELECTED STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION IN 1896. PHOTO COURTESY OF THE FORT COLLINS MUSEUM OF DISCOVERY, ID: H09911.

Colorado women still found themselves without the right to vote.

National laws restricted many minority women's enfranchisement even if they lived in Colorado. The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 barred anyone of Chinese descent from gaining citizenship and thus voting.¹¹⁴ It is not clear if there were any Chinese or Chinese American

¹⁰⁷ “Remarkable Woman Dies,” July 24, 1904.

¹⁰⁸ “Grace Espy Patton,” *Rocky Mountain Collegian*, November 1, 1896, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.

¹⁰⁹ Mark Luebker, “Grace Espy Patton: ‘Better still to be a Colorado woman,’” Colorado State University, last modified April 6, 2020. <https://chhs.source.colostate.edu/grace-espy-patton-better-still-to-be-a-colorado-woman/>

¹¹⁰ “Grace Patton Married,” *Fort Collins Courier*, April 14, 1898, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.; Luebker, “Grace Espy Patton.” Luebker points to Patton's cohabitation with Mary Holland Kinkaid and habit of donning masculine attire as possible evidence of her sexuality and/or gender identity.

¹¹¹ Luebker, “Grace Espy Patton.” Hence, why I also choose to refer to Patton by her public name.

¹¹² Luebker, “Grace Espy Patton.”; “The popular Grace Patton Cowles...,” *Fort Collins Courier*, December 29, 1898. Colorado Historical Newspapers Collection.

¹¹³ “Remarkable Woman Dies,” July 24, 1904.

¹¹⁴ Terborg-Penn, *African American Women in the Struggle for the Vote*, 48.

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women in Fort Collins during the 1894 city elections, but there was a Chinese laundry company in town in 1891 and 1895, and western towns and cities with railroad connections often had a Chinese community, so it is a likelihood.¹¹⁵ Native American women living in Colorado also would have faced significant challenges to casting a ballot. The Indian Naturalization Act of 1890 required Indigenous Americans to apply for citizenship in a process similar to immigrant naturalization. Native Americans were not guaranteed enfranchisement under federal law until the Snyder Act passed in 1924. While “Auntie” Stone submitted her first ballot in Fort Collins at the age of 93, many Chinese and Indigenous women had to wait decades longer before they got the opportunity to do the same.¹¹⁶

Legally, African American women in Colorado had also earned the right to vote from the referendum of 1893. Elizabeth Ensley, the treasurer of the Non-Partisan Colorado Equal Suffrage Association, and any black women living in Fort Collins probably cast their first votes in 1894.¹¹⁷ African American women in Colorado took advantage of the right that so many black men in the South were denied from Jim Crow laws. In 1906, the Colorado State Federation of Colored Women's Clubs encouraged its members to vote for candidates who supported justice for black Americans.¹¹⁸ However, African Americans' participation in politics grew more threatened when the Ku Klux Klan came to power in the Colorado in the early 1920s and exploited local ethnic divisions.¹¹⁹ Jim Crow laws were never enacted at the state level, but clan membership was broad at this

time and de facto segregation and discrimination were common throughout Colorado. Just as Colorado's black women saw their enfranchisement threatened, most other women in the state voted for the first time in national elections.

Colorado women cast their ballots in state and local elections for 27 years before the Nineteenth Amendment granted national suffrage. In that time, the rest of the nation scrutinized Colorado and other western states, waiting for reports about whether equal suffrage was a major success or utter failure. Most Fort Collins women continued on with their domestic lives, visiting voting booths whenever there was an election, and demonstrating to the rest of the nation that women can move back and forth between the household and public sphere without dire consequences.

PART IV: SETTING A GOOD EXAMPLE FROM HOME

Fort Collins women voted and ran for office because they wanted their voices to be a part of the political process, but they were also aware that the country was observing their every action. Women from Wyoming, who gained their suffrage far earlier in 1869, warned the new Colorado voters about the pressure. Theresa Jenkins, a well-known suffragist from Colorado's neighboring state, did not beat around the bush. She bluntly told Colorado women, “the eyes of the nation are upon you.

¹¹⁵ *Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps from Fort Collins, Larimer County, Colorado*. Sanborn Map Company, January 1891, map. Accessed May 2, 2020. <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/g4314fm.g009961891>; *Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps from Fort Collins, Larimer County, Colorado*, Sanborn Map Company, January 1896, map. Accessed May 2, 2020. <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/g4314fm.g009961895>

¹¹⁶ “Two Aged Voters,” *Fort Collins Courier*, November 8, 1894, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.

¹¹⁷ The Black American West Museum and Heritage Center has additional records that might be able to confirm black women's early voting records in Colorado.

¹¹⁸ Terborg-Penn, *African American Women in the Struggle for the Vote*, 98.

¹¹⁹ Elenie Louvaris, “Ku Klux Klan in Colorado,” *Colorado Encyclopedia*, last modified January 12, 2020. <https://coloradoencyclopedia.org/article/ku-klux-klan-colorado>.

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The opponents of equal suffrage are praying for failure, and the friends of equal suffrage are fearful lest some rash move will throw ridicule upon you...May you be as wise as serpents and harmless as doves."¹²⁰ Colorado women faced the tremendous responsibility of setting a positive example so that the rest of the states in the union would extend equal suffrage to women who lived within their boundaries.¹²¹ Colorado women also had to make sure that men in their own state did not regret their decision.

Despite, or perhaps because of, Colorado women's impressive participation in elections, some male politicians were quick to blame women voters for the state's political troubles.¹²² Davis Waite, the former Populist governor, said that female voters caused his reelection bid in 1894 to fail. In reality, Waite's behavior was so erratic that many in his own party rejected his campaign.¹²³ Critics also condemned Colorado women for not eliminating prostitution.¹²⁴ Despite these internal criticisms, the 12th General Assembly of the State of Colorado passed a resolution in 1898 declaring to the rest of the nation that women's suffrage had proven to be a success.¹²⁵ The resolution stated that five years of equal suffrage had resulted in better candidates holding office and less corruption in elections. Additionally, they declared that Colorado women had also benefited from civic responsibility. The General Assembly encouraged the legislatures of all other states to follow Colorado's example.¹²⁶



FIGURE 14. THEODOSIA AMMONS (C. 1900) ENCOURAGED COLORADO WOMEN TO ADVOCATE FOR NATIONAL SUFFRAGE. PHOTO COURTESY OF FORT COLLINS MUSEUM OF DISCOVERY, ID: H00143.

In some cases, western women became public voices in favor of national suffrage, advocating for what would become the Nineteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Dean Theodosia Ammons moved to Denver in 1871 when she was nine years old. She graduated from East Denver High School in 1883 but could not afford college and instead became a teacher. Ammons was involved in Denver's suffrage movement in the early 1890s and through that work became friendly with

¹²⁰ Theresa Jenkins, "Women in Wyoming," *Fort Collins Courier*, March 15, 1894, Colorado Historic Newspapers.

¹²¹ Jensen, "The Woman Suffrage Movement in Colorado," 84.

¹²² Mead, *How the Vote Was Won*, 70.

¹²³ Mead, *How the Vote Was Won*, 71.

¹²⁴ Mead, *How the Vote Was Won*, 69.

¹²⁵ Jensen, "The Woman Suffrage Movement in Colorado," 85.

¹²⁶ Jensen, "The Woman Suffrage Movement in Colorado," 85.

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Eliza Routt, the first lady of Colorado.¹²⁷ The two suffragists cofounded the Department of Domestic Economy at CAC in 1895 to provide more educational and occupational opportunities for Colorado women. The college hired Ammons as an instructor for the new department, and in 1902 she became the first female dean in the school's history.¹²⁸ Ammons spent most of her time in the Botanical and Horticultural Laboratory at 151 West Laurel Street.¹²⁹ The building was originally constructed in 1890 as a laboratory but the college refurbished it to house the new Domestic Economy program and renamed it in honor of Eliza Routt.¹³⁰ When Ammons was not in Routt Hall researching and teaching about the chemistry of cooking, the scientific method of hygiene, and the architecture of homes, she continued her suffrage work.¹³¹

In her role as secretary of the Colorado Equal Suffrage Association, Ammons

encouraged Colorado suffragists not to become apathetic about the cause, reminding them that most women in the United States still did not have the right to vote. She argued that any indifference in Colorado would be a detriment to national suffrage efforts.¹³² Ammons' leadership skills led to her election as president of the association in 1902, a position she held for two years.¹³³ In addition to representing Colorado twice at the annual National Convention of Delegates of Woman Suffrage, Ammons also answered multiple requests for more information about the status of equal suffrage in Colorado.¹³⁴ In 1902, the secretary of NAWSA forwarded Ammons a list of questions from a man in Belgium who wanted to discuss Colorado in a pamphlet he was writing to encourage the passage of equal suffrage in his country.¹³⁵ Ammons also answered a letter from a mother in Pennsylvania whose 15-year-old daughter had an upcoming school debate over women's

¹²⁷ Matthew S. Mungai, "Theodosia Ammons," *Colorado Encyclopedia*, last modified April 20, 2020. <https://coloradoencyclopedia.org/article/theodosia-ammons>.

¹²⁸ Colleen M. McCorkell, "Guide to the Papers of Theodosia G. Ammons," Colorado State University Archives and Special Collections, last modified 2008. <https://lib2.colostate.edu/archives/findingaids/university/uamm.html#idm45598836104528>.

¹²⁹ Ammons lived in several different places around the city, including 202 West Olive Street in 1902, 122 West Magnolia Street in 1903, and 531 Remington Street in 1904. The house at 531 Remington is the only one still standing. *1902 Fort Collins City Directory* (Fort Collins, CO: Kelley & Carroll, March 1902). Accessed May 3, 2020. <https://fchc.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/cid/id/34270/rec/>; *1903 Fort Collins City Directory*. Fort Collins, CO: Kelley & Carroll, July 1903. Accessed May 3, 2020. <https://fchc.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/cid/id/34268/rec/2/>; *1904 Fort Collins City Directory*. Fort Collins, CO: G. A. Killam, 1904. Accessed May 3, 2020. <https://fchc.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/cid/id/34269/rec/3>

¹³⁰ The Botanical and Horticultural Laboratory/Routt Hall was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1978. Miriam T. Hoff, "Botanical and Horticultural Laboratory," National Register of Historic Places Inventory/Nomination Form, Colorado State Historic Preservation Office, Denver, CO, March 1, 1977. Accessed May 3, 2020. <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/84131408>

¹³¹ Mungai, "Theodosia Ammons."

¹³² "The Non-Partisan Colorado Equal Suffrage Association," *Fort Collins Courier*, December 30, 1897, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.

¹³³ "Miss Theodosia G. Ammons, professor...," *Weekly Courier*, January 23, 1902, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.; "Miss Theodosia G. Ammons of the department...," *City and Country, Weekly Courier*, February 4, 1903, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.

¹³⁴ "Miss Ammons of the college...," *City and Country. Weekly Courier*, March 18, 1903, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.; McCorkell, "Guide to the Papers of Theodosia G. Ammons."

¹³⁵ Kate M. Gordon to Theodosia Ammons, March 19, 1902, located in Folder Incoming: Gordon, Kate M. in UAMM Box 2 in Series 1: Correspondence, 1890-1907, Papers of Theodosia G. Ammons, Archives and Special Collections, Colorado State University.; Kate M. Gordon to Theodosia Ammons, April 14, 1902, located in Folder Incoming: Gordon, Kate M. in UAMM Box 2 in Series 1: Correspondence, 1890-1907, Papers of Theodosia G. Ammons, Archives and Special Collections, Colorado State University.

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suffrage and wanted to include facts about Colorado in her argument.¹³⁶ Additionally, she reassured a man from Montana that equal suffrage in Colorado had very much been a “good thing.”¹³⁷ Ammons struggled with poor health for several years before dying in 1907. Her obituary noted that “a state weeps” upon hearing of her death and drew attention to Ammons’ tireless work on behalf of all Colorado women.¹³⁸ While Ammons’ time to advocate for national suffrage was over, she would not be on the only CAC faculty member to advocate for national suffrage.

Dr. Barton O. Aylesworth grew up on a farm in Illinois but became a minister as a young man. After a decade of preaching around the Midwest, Aylesworth was hired as the president of Drake University. In 1897, he moved to Denver to become the pastor of the Central Christian Church, but soon found that he missed academic life. Two years later, the Colorado State Board of Agriculture hired Aylesworth to be CAC’s fourth president.¹³⁹ The new president and his family initially moved into Sarah Corbin’s former house at 402 Remington Street, before hiring Harlan Thomas to design them a sandstone and wood shingle cottage at 704 Mathews Street in 1903.¹⁴⁰ Aylesworth remained president of the college until the spring of 1909 when he left due to internal



FIGURE 15. AYLESWORTH RESIDENCE (DATE UNKNOWN) AT 704 MATHEWS STREET WAS DESIGNED BY HARLAN THOMAS. PHOTO COURTESY OF THE FORT COLLINS MUSEUM OF DISCOVERY, ID: H08100.

disagreements over curriculum priorities.¹⁴¹ Leaving the college freed up Aylesworth’s time to contribute to the national suffrage movement.

The November after his last semester at CAC, Aylesworth signed a speaking contract with NAWSA. The national suffrage organization hired him to deliver a series of speeches to encourage millions of Americans to sign a petition for Congress to pass equal suffrage.¹⁴² By July 1910, Aylesworth had delivered over 200 lectures in 107 cities and told a local Fort Collins paper that he liked the work better than

¹³⁶ Ellen H. E. Price to Theodosia Ammons, March 13, 1902, located in Folder Incoming: Price, Ellen H. E. in UAMM Box 2 in Series 1: Correspondence, 1890-1907, Papers of Theodosia G. Ammons, Archives and Special Collections, Colorado State University.; Ellen H. E. Price to Theodosia Ammons, August 24, 1902, located in Folder Incoming: Price, Ellen H. E. in UAMM Box 2 in Series 1: Correspondence, 1890-1907, Papers of Theodosia G. Ammons, Archives and Special Collections, Colorado State University.

¹³⁷ Theodosia Ammons to Unknown, February 3, 1903, located in Folder: General A-Z, folder 3 of 4 in UAMM Box 3 in Series 1: Correspondence 1890-1907, Papers of Theodosia G. Ammons, Archives and Special Collections, Colorado State University.

¹³⁸ “Loving Tribute to Memory of Theodosia,” *Fort Collins Courier*, September 25, 1907, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.; Rev. I. N. Monroe, “In Memorium Dean Theodosia Ammons,” *The Beacon*, July 24, 1907, located in Folder: Newspaper Clippings in UAMM Box 5 in Series 1: Correspondence, 190-1907, Papers of Theodosia G. Ammons, Archives and Special Collections, Colorado State University.

¹³⁹ “History of the Presidents,” Colorado State University Libraries. Accessed April 27, 2020. <https://libguides.colostate.edu/universityhistory/presidents#s-lg-box-20674347>

¹⁴⁰ “Work has been commenced on...,” *Weekly Courier*, January 28, 1903, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.

¹⁴¹ Colorado State University Libraries, “History of the Presidents.”

¹⁴² “Doctor Aylesworth Will Lecture on Woman Suffrage,” *Weekly Courier*, November 17, 1909. Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.

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anything else he had ever done before.¹⁴³ Aylesworth was undeniably an appealing orator for the national suffrage movement. First, he had exceptional public speaking skills, second, his participation demonstrated that equal suffrage was not just a women's concern, and lastly, Aylesworth could speak to Colorado's experience since the passage of the 1893 referendum. In an interview with the *Weekly Courier*, Aylesworth discussed how the national women's suffrage movement was bound to succeed within next decade because more and more men's leagues were supporting the cause.¹⁴⁴ The former college president also often referenced the women of Fort Collins in his public lectures. He spoke about how Fort Collins women had turned voting day into a respectable holiday without excessive drinking and swearing.¹⁴⁵ Aylesworth reassured listeners around the country that women's suffrage had brought nothing but good to Colorado. He pointed out that Colorado had the best laws in place to protect women and children thanks to female voters but was also quick to note that Colorado women were still feminine in manner and had little interest in holding political office themselves.¹⁴⁶ A common argument against the national suffrage movement was that women could not enter the public sphere without leaving behind a void in the home.

Antisuffragists claimed that giving women the vote would detrimentally impact the traditional American structure of marriage and family life.¹⁴⁷ Aylesworth, like many other leaders of the NAWSA, responded to these criticisms by arguing that women could occupy both spheres simultaneously. They asserted that women needed the right to vote in order to better protect their families and households; voting was a motherly and feminine thing to do.¹⁴⁸

While Aylesworth and Ammons were the most prominent Fort Collins residents to campaign for national suffrage, most Fort Collins women continued to use their vote locally and watched the fight from afar. A handful of Fort Collins women shared their experiences voting with acquaintances across the country. Mrs. Louis G. Carpenter wrote to a friend in Ann Arbor, Michigan explaining that while she was personally never involved in the suffrage movement, she nonetheless voted religiously and carefully.¹⁴⁹ The local newspapers provided regular updates on other states trying to pass equal suffrage so that readers could keep track of the suffrage movement's slow progress.¹⁵⁰ The papers also covered the various tactics used by the NAWSA to gain the attention of Congress and Presidents Taft and Wilson.¹⁵¹ For decades, women tried

¹⁴³ "Equal Suffrage Gaining Rapidly Says Aylesworth," *Weekly Courier*, July 28, 1910, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.

¹⁴⁴ "Equal Suffrage Gaining Rapidly Says Aylesworth," July 28, 1910.

¹⁴⁵ "New York Takes Kindly to Former Fort Collins Man," *Weekly Courier*, November 24, 1909, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.

¹⁴⁶ "New York Takes Kindly to Former Fort Collins Man," November 24, 1909.

¹⁴⁷ Rauterkus, *Go Get Mother's Sign*, 1.

¹⁴⁸ Rauterkus, *Go Get Mother's Sign*, 8.

¹⁴⁹ "Equal Suffrage in Colorado," *Weekly Courier*, December 29, 1910, Colorado historic Newspapers Collection.

¹⁵⁰ "The woman suffrage amendment to...," *Fort Collins Courier*, November 12, 1896, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.; "The women of Idaho...," *Fort Collins Courier*, December 24, 1896, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.; "Western News Notes," *Fort Collins Courier*, February 18, 1897, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.; "News and Industrial Notes," *Weekly Courier*, March 20, 1902, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.; "Women Enfranchised in State of Washington," *Weekly Courier*, November 1, 1910. Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.

¹⁵¹ "Suffragists Meet at Washington," *Weekly Courier*, April 14, 1910, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.; "The National American Woman Suffrage association..." *Weekly Courier*, September 22, 1910, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.; "Women to Pin President Down to Suffrage Question," *Weekly Courier*, February 6, 1914, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.; "President Wilson Snubs 700 Women Pleading for Suffrage," *Weekly Courier*, July 3, 1914, Colorado

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FIGURE 16. SUFFRAGETTE PARADE IN NEW YORK CITY IN 1912. PHOTO COURTESY OF THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS AND PHOTOS DIVISION.

to gain national suffrage by winning over one state at a time, a slower and more practical approach than trying to push for an amendment to the U.S. Constitution. However, as the number of suffrage states grew in the 1910s, an amendment suddenly seemed far more achievable.¹⁵² When President Wilson finally supported an amendment in 1918 as a gesture of thanks for American women's contributions during World War I, national women's suffrage seemed on the cusp of

realization. Yet it took another year for both the Senate and House of Representatives to approve the women's suffrage amendment.¹⁵³

In order for a new amendment to be added to the Constitution, three-fourths of the states had to ratify it via their state legislatures. Illinois, Michigan, and Wisconsin became the first states to ratify the amendment on June 10,

Historic Newspapers Collection.; "Democrats Must Pass Bill for Suffrage Say Women," *Weekly Courier*, June 16, 1916, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.

¹⁵² Marjorie Spruill Wheeler, *One Woman, One Vote: Rediscovering the Woman Suffrage Movement* (Troutdale, OR: NewSage Press, 1995), 333.

¹⁵³ Wheeler, *One Woman, One Vote: Rediscovering the Woman Suffrage Movement*, 333.

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1919.¹⁵⁴ In the wake of these initial ratifications, Fort Collins women grew increasingly excited about the prospects of national women's suffrage finally happening and soon being able to vote in presidential elections. Clara and Helen Love hosted a women's club meeting at their house at 622 West Mountain Avenue to listen to a lecture about the "Progress of Equal Suffrage" given by Mrs. Carrie McCormick.¹⁵⁵ The local newspaper also reported that a Fort Collins High School teacher "became very excited about the rights of women in class the other day" and started ranting about the importance of the amendment's ratification. She only stopped lecturing about the topic when the class broke out in laughter over her extreme eagerness.¹⁵⁶ Slowly, more and more states approved the amendment, though a few rejected it too. Colorado ratified the amendment on December 15, 1919, with little fanfare. At that point, women's suffrage was a decades old norm for the state. But the wait for final ratification continued well into 1920. The Nineteenth Amendment was finally ratified by the state of Tennessee during a tie-breaking vote on August 18, 1920. The amendment was formally added to the Constitution a week later and the news was announced in a bold headline on the front page of the *Fort Collins Courier*.¹⁵⁷ Nearly four decades had passed since Caroline Nichols Churchill and "Auntie" Stone first organized a local suffrage association, but Fort Collins women finally had their full voting rights.

CONCLUSION

Starting in the early 1880s, Fort Collins women, and many men, fought hard for women to earn the rights owed to them as American citizens. Local residents pushed for equal suffrage so that they could make a difference in their community, whether that was passing temperance and prohibition ordinances, having a say in the state's education system, or spreading feminist thought. Sadly, racism and nativism restricted some women's participation in the campaign for equal suffrage, a shortcoming that would not be resolved clearly until the middle of the twentieth century. Women used the spaces available to them to organize the local suffrage and temperance movements, most notably their front parlors. But after earning their enfranchisement in 1893, Colorado women charged into the public spaces that they now had a right to occupy. Most women visited polling places, while others also claimed seats in city halls, and lectured at party conventions. Their struggles and achievements took place in houses and public buildings around the city of Fort Collins. In protecting these remaining buildings that Fort Collins suffragists used to further women's suffrage, the city recognizes the ambition, resourcefulness, prejudices, and determination of the Fort Collins women who battled for decades to earn their suffrage.

¹⁵⁴ "State-by-State Race to Ratification of the 19th Amendment," National Park Service. Accessed on April 27, 2020. <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/womenshistory/womens-suffrage-timeline.htm>

¹⁵⁵ "P. E. O. Meeting," Society, Clubs and Churches, *Fort Collins Courier*, March 22, 1919, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.

¹⁵⁶ "High School Notes," *Fort Collins Courier*, April 14, 1919, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.

¹⁵⁷ "Suffrage Amendment Proclaimed Ratified," *Fort Collins Courier*, August 26, 1920, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Investigating the history of the local women's suffrage movement is a jumping off point for the City of Fort Collins to discover, protect, and share even more stories of residents who have previously been unrecognized. This historic context highlights people and places whose stories could be tracked in digitized newspapers, but there is plenty more to learn. For one, the COVID 19 pandemic restricted access to records available in the local archive housed at the Fort Collins Museum of Discovery. Future research should take into consideration the materials that could not be accessed in the unique circumstances of 2020. Second, the digitized newspapers provided hints on some additional individuals who were involved in the local women's suffrage movement. More research should be conducted on Miss Barrows, Miss Whitaker, Mrs. S. E. Smith, and Mrs. E. D. Armstrong, all of whom hosted suffrage meetings in 1881.¹⁵⁸ Furthermore, Miss Meade and Carrie Moore both spoke at the jubilee celebrating the passage of the 1893 referendum, but nothing else is known about their political or personal lives.¹⁵⁹ This research into the women's suffrage movement also revealed how much more there is to know about local women's clubs and labor movements at the end of the nineteenth century. Tracking the history of both club culture and early labor movements could dig up more stories of politically and socially ambitious local women. Lastly this project unexpectedly exposed the early career of architect Harlan Thomas. Thomas designed some of the most recognizable buildings in Fort Collins before becoming a nationally respected architect and academic.¹⁶⁰ Future researchers

should consider how his designs impacted the aesthetic of the city.

Exploring Fort Collins' landscape and architecture is an excellent tool to learn more about local history. The City of Fort Collins created a self-guided walking tour so residents can discover the stories of the women's suffrage movement while standing in front of the parlors and polling places where it took place. A digital map of all the places linked to the local women's suffrage movement is an additional tool that the public, including school children, can use to engage with this local history. The walking tour and digital map will include both the extant and demolished places where the suffrage movement took place.

Several of the buildings associated with the movement still exist, but many others were torn down as the city expanded throughout the twentieth century. Protecting the remaining structures is one way to make sure that locals recognize the accomplishments and struggles of Fort Collins women in the past. The School House in District No. 10 (3039 W. Vine Drive), Opera House (123 N. College Avenue), Commercial/Northern Hotel (166-180 N. College Avenue), and Old City Hall/Firehouse (232-238 Walnut Street) are all individually eligible for local landmark status because they hosted important events related to the local women's suffrage movement. The McIntyre Residence (137 Mathews Street), Botanical and Horticultural Lab/Routt Hall (151 W. Laurel Street), and Aylesworth Residence (704 Mathews Street) could earn that same status because of their association with significant locals who were involved in the movement. Additionally, preservationists need to update the nominations for the buildings already listed

¹⁵⁸ "The 'Equal Suffrage Association' will meet...," *Fort Collins Courier*, April 21, 1881, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.; "The Fort Collins Equal Suffrage association will meet...," *Fort Collins Courier*, June 16, 1881, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.; "The Ft. Collins Equal Suffrage Association will meet...," *Fort Collins Courier*, September 15, 1881, Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection.

¹⁵⁹ "The Woman Jubililate," December 21, 1893.

¹⁶⁰ Swanson, *Fort Collins Yesterdays*, 178.

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on the Colorado and/or National Register of Historic Properties (either individually or in a district) to include the significance of the property's connection to the local women's suffrage movement. These buildings include the Opera House, Commercial/Northern Hotel, Old

City Hall/Firehouse, Botanical and Horticultural Lab/Routt Hall, and Aylesworth Residence. Preserving these places helps to recognize the long story of how women gained their voting rights.

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