

Temperance and Beyond:  
The Oregon Woman's Christian Temperance Union and Progressive Reform  
during the First World War

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*“You are now a member of the largest organization of women in the world, and its ‘do everything policy’ provides a niche for every lover of humanity to work for God and Home and Native Land.” —Lucia H. Faxon Additon<sup>1</sup>*

The Progressive Era, from 1890 to 1920, was a time in America’s history when people formed numerous organizations to solve society’s perceived evils. One of the many social ills was the problem of alcohol consumption. By some, alcohol, and its accompanying vices of prostitution and domestic violence, was viewed as a moral vice to be banned in order to purify society. Others held that alcohol was directly related to the abuse and misuse of women and children and should be dispensed with for the protection of the weak through either encouraging temperance or instituting prohibition. Some felt that promoting temperance, the idea of moderation and self-control, was an appropriate solution, while others saw prohibition, a legal ban on consumption, as the ultimate solution. Regardless of the driving sentiments about it, women in particular began to crusade against alcohol and appealed for its prohibition. To face the issue of alcohol consumption, the Woman’s Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) formed during the 1870s, beginning with a spontaneous women’s crusade against saloons and liquor retailers in Ohio and rapidly spreading throughout the nation from 1873 to 1874.<sup>2</sup> The WCTU became a powerful organization whose influence swept nationwide, fueled originally by the principles of the “Social Gospel” and deriving its support from churches and other conservative organizations. The WCTU’s impact was felt on local, regional, national, and international levels.

To fully comprehend the WCTU’s impact one must understand the terms that defined the organization itself. First, the WCTU was at its heart a “woman’s” organization. As historian

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<sup>1</sup>Lucia H. Faxon Additon, *Twenty Eventful Years of Oregon Woman's Christian Temperance Union, 1880-1900. Statistical, Historical and Biographical. Portraits of Prominent Pioneer Workers* (Portland, OR: Gotshall Printing Company, 1904), 79.

<sup>2</sup>Ruth Bordin, *Woman and Temperance: The Quest for Power and Liberty, 1873-1900* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1990), 15.

Ruth Bordin stated, “Women joined the Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, the major temperance organization for women, in numbers that far surpassed their participation in any other women’s organization in the nineteenth century and that made the WCTU the first women’s mass movement.”<sup>3</sup> The WCTU was distinctively and intentionally a women’s campaign against alcohol. Some historians, such as Dale Soden, have gone as far to term the movement a proto-feminist movement as it was the beginnings of organized activism by women in an attempt to shape the culture created by men. In Soden’s view, the WCTU represented the beginnings of a feminist movement as it afforded women the opportunity to hold leadership positions, engage in public speaking, lobby legislatures, and otherwise challenge the traditional role of women to stay within the domestic sphere.<sup>4</sup> Bordin’s characterization of the WCTU as the women’s quest for liberty and power suggests this idea as well. As will be discussed later, during the First World War, women of the WCTU asserted authority by initially opposing the war and preparedness campaigns.

However, equally important to the Union was its second distinction—that it was “Christian.” The WCTU at its foundation was centered on and motivated by principles of Protestant Christianity<sup>5</sup> and the “Social Gospel” theory which sought to apply Christian ethics to social problems. Its ideal was to preserve Christian morality by ridding society of vice, namely, by restricting alcohol consumption and its related sins of prostitution and abuse of women and children. Third, the Union’s named goal was “Temperance.” The movement was for this idea of

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<sup>3</sup>Bordin, 3.

<sup>4</sup>Dale E. Soden, “The Woman’s Christian Temperance Union in the Pacific Northwest: The Battle for Cultural Control,” *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* Vol. 94 No. 4 (Fall 2003): 197-198.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid. The term “Protestant Christianity” is a generalization used by most historians in discussing the traditional religious background of WCTU members. However, it should be recognized that while most Protestant denominations supported temperance, not all supported prohibition. Some Protestant denominations followed the tradition of using alcohol as part of their communion rituals, and therefore, would not have sought complete prohibition. Ruth Bordin discusses the breakdown of denominational support on page 54 of *Woman and Temperance*.

temperance, which has been defined as living tempered (self-controlled) lives by not partaking in social vices like alcohol consumption and its accompanying saloons and brothels. Lastly, the WCTU was an organized “Union.” It was a group that had local, regional, national, and international chapters and thus a broad sphere of influence. The WCTU was unified under common goals and confident leadership, but came to have differing emphases depending on the region, leaders, and given vices being attacked at given times.

The Pacific Northwest was a leading progressive region of the United States. The presence and power of the WCTU dramatically impacted the region during the progressive period and after. In the west, women engaged in a variety of forms of activism through the clubs they formed, and the WCTU was one of the earliest with its first Oregon union established on March 22, 1881 in Portland.<sup>6</sup> The activities the Union participated in, such as distributing education materials, hosting traveling lecturers, and marching on saloons have been described by historians as successful attempts to shape and change culture. The Oregon WCTU gained momentum following a speaking campaign in 1883 by Francis Willard, second president of the national WCTU, and eventually joined with the suffrage movement and other progressive social causes to expand their power and influence beyond addressing the issues of temperance.<sup>7</sup> By 1914, Oregon had achieved both woman suffrage and state-wide prohibition. Keeping national prohibition in mind, the Oregon WCTU turned to address a variety of other social issues in their region and the world. With the momentum of the 1914 victory of state prohibition, and then the beginning of World War I, the Oregon WCTU began to expand its vision to oppose the use of cigarettes, alcohol, and other substances in military camps as well as provide care to the soldiers. During World War I, the Oregon WCTU continued to fight for national prohibition while also

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<sup>6</sup>Additon, 2.

<sup>7</sup>Soden, 199.

extending its reach to care for the soldiers and sailors. This was in spite of the fact that they initially opposed the war and military preparedness. Though fundamentally opposed to World War I, the Oregon WCTU advocated for the care and protection of their boys away from home.

In the study and analysis of the WCTU, chroniclers have not always had a broad perspective on the Union's nature and impact. In fact, from the Union's formative years, participant historians created historical narratives that focused on heroic individuals and groups at state or national levels. It was not until the revolution in women's historical studies during the late 1960s and 1970s that historians began to see linkages between the WCTU and other social movements. Today, the perspective has even expanded to see how the WCTU's missionaries took their ideas and shared them with the world. As contemporary historians have noted, the WCTU expanded its influence during the Progressive Era from local to international levels and fought for social reform by addressing the issue of temperance and other related social issues like domestic violence, tobacco and cigarette use, and prostitution.

The first writers of WCTU history either participated in the events they wrote about or gathered information from eyewitnesses to craft their stories of the recent past. They were limited in objectivity because they were wrapped up in the temperance movement—they lived and breathed for prohibiting the sale and consumption of alcohol. Thus, any fight or success was heroic and monumental for the cause. These “participant historian” narratives, written mostly by women, recall the heroic deeds of those whom they looked up to as models or exemplars of godly and courageous femininity. Two writers, Annie Wittenmyer, President of the WCTU from 1874-1879, and Lucia H. Faxon Additon, fifth Oregon WCTU President, wrote detailed accounts of National WCTU and Oregon WCTU actions.

One of the earliest histories, *History of the Woman's Temperance Crusade* which was compiled by Annie Wittenmyer in 1878, documented the events which took place nationwide during the Woman's Temperance Crusade.<sup>8</sup> Written before the Progressive Era, she provides accounts of various individuals' experiences, discusses local crusades against havens of liquor consumption, or saloons, and emphasizes the overall theme of alcohol as a moral vice and corruptor of good society. She and her counterparts believed that alcohol consumption and its related abuses threatened to destroy the American home unless women came to its defense.

In 1904, Lucia H. Faxon Additon published her history of the White Ribbon Sisterhood in Oregon, *Twenty Eventful Years of the Oregon Woman's Christian Temperance Union: 1880-1900*. Unlike Wittenmyer, Additon desired to record the history of the Union in Oregon, and to discuss the key events with objectivity. As president, she had great access to documents and witnesses of the era that she was still living through, but her position within the movement may have limited her objectivity as she described what took place. Additon's central argument is that the WCTU's work in Oregon was the most significant one to that time period (1880-1900). As she stated in her introduction, it was "the grandest movement among women this state has yet had writ on the pages of her history."<sup>9</sup>

The pre-Prohibition, participant historians like Wittenmyer and Additon, differed from their post-Prohibition WCTU writers. Later authors note that after the initial success of the Eighteenth Amendment that created national prohibition in 1919 and the Nineteenth Amendment that provided for woman suffrage in 1920, the fight tapered off and the focus of deifying the women of the WCTU became less imperative. The victory of the Prohibition Amendment was

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<sup>8</sup>Annie Wittenmyer, *History of the Woman's Temperance Crusade: A Complete Official History of the Wonderful Uprising of the Christian Women of the United States against the Liquor Traffic, which culminated in the Gospel Temperance Movement*. (Philadelphia: The Office the Christian Woman, 1878), 30.

<sup>9</sup>Additon, 1.

short-lived with its repeal in 1933 due to issues of enforcement and states' cooperation.<sup>10</sup>

Though losing what they had gained through national prohibition, WCTU members still wrote their own histories, just in a different form. In 1980, delegated members of the Oregon WCTU collected historical accounts and compiled their findings in the *90 Year Highlights*.<sup>11</sup> The collection excludes the emotion and dramatic flair of Wittenmyer or Additon's accounts.

Post World War II historians of U.S. reforms such as Richard Hofstadter in *The Age of Reform: From Bryan to F.D.R.* saw the WCTU as a narrowly-focused organization when compared to the New Deal reforms and reformers that followed.<sup>12</sup> Hofstadter distinguished the reformers of the Progressive Era from those during the New Deal by emphasizing that the former were made up largely of middle class protestants whereas the latter was made up of the members of more diverse working class and ethnic groups. However, with the expansion of women's history as a discipline in the 1970s and beyond, historians revised this view to consider the way that the WCTU functioned not only as a woman's activist group for temperance, but also for issues like woman suffrage, exploitation of women, the eight hour day, and other progressive topics. The trend in historical writing moved away from the traditions of participant histories and incomplete compilations to this new era of thought and analysis.

As historians began to contemplate gender-specific issues of history during the middle of the twentieth century, and women's history grew during the 1960s and 1970s, Ruth Bordin, a historian and biographer, was one of the first to provide an analysis of the WCTU as a national woman's movement. Framing the WCTU in the context of pre- to early Progressive Era history,

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<sup>10</sup>Norman H. Clark, *Deliver Us from Evil: An Interpretation of American Prohibition*. (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1976), 202.

<sup>11</sup>Helen Crawford, *90 year Highlights: Oregon Woman's Christian Temperance Union*. (Portland? OR.: Oregon Woman's Christian Temperance Union, 1973?).

<sup>12</sup>Richard Hofstadter, *The Age of Reform: From Bryan to F.D.R.* (New York: Knopf, 1955), 287-288.

her monograph provides important details on the background of the WCTU and its foundation. It includes chapters on the organization's tactics, leadership, and publications. Additionally it provides an analysis of the WCTU as a whole and assesses the impacts of the social gospel theory as it was applied to the issue of alcohol consumption.

Bordin argued that the WCTU functioned as both a woman's activist group for temperance and for other social causes such as woman suffrage, Sabbath observance, social purity, tobacco use, and narcotics education. Her book characterizes the movement for temperance specifically as a woman's fight for home protection against the dominant patriarchal society of the time. The fight against man's "demon rum" was an integral part of the woman's quest for "liberty and power" during the Progressive Era.<sup>13</sup> Bordin argues that the WCTU laid the foundation for women's movements that followed by enabling female empowerment. For example, Bordin links the woman suffrage movement, which achieved great success in the later part of the Progressive Era,<sup>14</sup> to the WCTU and its support by Frances Willard and other prominent leaders who supported suffrage as "home protection"—a tool for achieving temperance reform.

Ian Tyrrell takes Bordin's broad analysis of the temperance movement in the United States during the Progressive Era a step further. With the majority of WCTU histories focusing on either national or local activities, Tyrrell explores the wave of international work conducted by the WCTU from the 1880s by Mary Clement Leavitt<sup>15</sup> to the 1930s and beyond. His monograph, focusing on the WCTU's impact on the international level, discusses the missionary mindset of the WCTUers from the 1880s to the 1930s showing that they were some of the first

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<sup>13</sup>Bordin, 5.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., 13.

<sup>15</sup>Ian R. Tyrrell, *Woman's World/Woman's Empire: The Woman's Christian Temperance Union in International Perspective, 1800-1930* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1991), 1.



round-the-world missionaries of the social gospel, which applied Christian moral principles to solve social problems. Tyrrell presents a criticism of historians before him as only studying the WCTU from their secular ties. He argued, “This influence was often exerted in unexpected ways that have been missed by historians because the WCTU has not been put into an intelligible context of religion and reform. They were, in fact, part of a much larger outreach of American power and culture. A large part of American expansion took the form not of political or even economic penetration but of the spread of institutions and cultural values.”<sup>16</sup> Like Bordin, Tyrrell studies the WCTU within the context of the trends nationally, but then recognizes that the national trend was to expand power and influence internationally. The WCTU, he argued, followed suit with its vision of the millennial kingdom.<sup>17</sup> He did not see the WCTU as merely a reactionary force to social upheaval, but as an agency for peace in the world and the idealistic struggle for new internationalism.<sup>18</sup> Historians have argued that the WCTU’s role in this was more complex. Though they were an organized force against militarization and imperialistic policy during the prewar era, the WCTU’s actions internationally could be seen as an extension of American imperialism during the Great War. As women sought to “civilize” the world, they were following President Wilson’s ideology of “making the world safe for democracy” by expanding the American way of life—the temperance way—to the world.<sup>19</sup>

Following Bordin and Tyrrell, historians shifted to look at the WCTU on local and regional levels. In the context of Oregon history, David Peterson del Mar’s *Oregon’s Promise*, written in 2003, describes the WCTU’s role as being primarily concerned with drunkenness, but

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<sup>16</sup>Tyrrell, 2.

<sup>17</sup>Tyrrell., 284.

<sup>18</sup>Tyrrell., 287.

<sup>19</sup>Nancy Bristow, *Making Men Moral: Social Engineering during the Great War* (New York: New York University Press, 1996), 6.

it promoted a variety of other social reforms through their numerous departments.<sup>20</sup> Dale Soden saw the WCTU as a major force in “civilizing” the male dominated culture emerging in the Pacific Northwest.<sup>21</sup> While they were actively engaged in shaping culture through social reforms, Carli Crozier Schiffner’s 2004 Ph. D. dissertation, “Continuing to ‘Do Everything’ in Oregon: The Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, 1900-1945 and Beyond,” provides a fresh perspective on the Oregon WCTU’s impacts politically and socially.<sup>22</sup> Unlike Wittenmyer and Additon, Schiffner analyzes the union beyond its formative years. Her central argument is evident in the title: Women continue to “do everything” from 1900 to 1945. Schiffner analyzes the evolving emphasis of the WCTU in Oregon politics throughout the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. When discussing the reforms and goals of the WCTU, Schiffner makes the argument that the WCTU does not fit neatly into a time period, but that it had vast political and social impact in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>23</sup>

During the Progressive Era, she argues, the Oregon WCTU originally fought for prohibition and woman suffrage. Already organized by the start of the century, it campaigned widely to make Oregon dry. With the help of the Oregon System of initiative passed in 1902 that made it possible for citizens to place measures on the ballot and Oregon woman suffrage which passed in 1912, women gained political power to further their cause for temperance. By 1914 voters passed statewide prohibition.<sup>24</sup> Schiffner argues that the “do everything” policy of the WCTU continued into wartime as well.

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<sup>20</sup>David Peterson del Mar, *Oregon’s Promise: An Interpretive History* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2003), 114, 146.

<sup>21</sup>Soden, 197.

<sup>22</sup>Carli Crozier Schiffner, “Continuing to “Do Everything” in Oregon: the Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, 1900-1945 and Beyond” (Ph.D. diss., Washington State University, 2004), 1.

<sup>23</sup>Schiffner, 1.

<sup>24</sup>*Ibid.*, 50.

According to Schiffner, when World War I arrived, the WCTU actively supported the Allies. Oregon WCTU members distributed “Comfort bags” to the soldiers which included temperance literature,<sup>25</sup> and they sent telegrams to the president that pled for national prohibition as a war measure. They also became involved with the Red Cross as “comforting members of society during the country’s time of need,”<sup>26</sup> and joined the movement for conservation of food.<sup>27</sup> Keeping their primary goal of national prohibition in the forefront, they campaigned to keep alcohol and tobacco from American soldiers.<sup>28</sup> As Schiffner concludes, the national WCTU’s Progressive Era efforts during the war years culminated in the achievement of national prohibition in 1919, but the Oregon WCTU’s social reforms did not stop there.

Historians of the First World War also address the activities of the WCTU. Schiffner, as seen above, characterizes the Oregon W.C.T.U.’s war work as part of the continuing temperance movement with a variety of practical war efforts as well. Historian Kimberly Jensen, in *Mobilizing Minerva* written in 2008, characterizes the WCTU pre-World War as focusing on “the sexual behaviors of ‘respectable’ native-born white men and boys and woman suffrage as a tool for “home protection so they could prohibit alcohol and fight against domestic violence.”<sup>29</sup> Jensen emphasizes that women saw World War I as an opportunity to claim more political power to expand female citizenship.<sup>30</sup> Wartime gave women of the WCTU the unique opportunity to mobilize around the idea of “home protection” and push their reform as a war measure.

Historians looking at the WCTU in World War I have also characterized it as part of a larger move for Americanization. Alan Dawley’s book *Changing the World*, written in 2003,

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<sup>25</sup>Ibid., 77.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., 81.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., 85.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., 88.

<sup>29</sup>Kimberly Jensen, *Mobilizing Minerva: American Women in the First World War* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2008), 12, 22.

<sup>30</sup>Jensen, 21.

argues that the WCTU was made of “protestant moralists and Anglo-Saxon elites” who welcomed prohibition during the war as a way to get demon rum out of homes. “Yet the impulse [to join the WCTU] was less a reflection of feminism than of the class and ethnic makeup of the leading women’s organizations. Their opposition to the saloon reflected the attitudes and values of the overwhelmingly white, middle-class, Protestant social milieu from which most of them came.”<sup>31</sup> Nancy Bristow, in her book *Making Men Moral*, written in 1996, argues that Progressive organizations like the WCTU saw World War I as a tool for achieving their social reform objectives of creating “cultural nationalism.” She stated, “A society mobilizing for war, reformers maintained, could not afford to be flexible in delineating acceptable behavior.”<sup>32</sup> In discussing the Commission of Training Camp Activities, established by President Woodrow Wilson 1917, in particular, Bristow points to the program’s reflection of progressive reform goals—a preoccupation with efficiency, morality, and social justice.<sup>33</sup> She states: “Embracing what I will term *cultural nationalism* these reformers hoped to use the fluid circumstances of wartime to create a single national culture, based in the progressive social vision.”<sup>34</sup>

The prewar and then World War I periods certainly created a complex climate in which the WCTU would operate. The national WCTU continued to press for federal prohibition and issued directives to the state unions to act for this primary goal. A study of the Oregon WCTU’s documents of the period reveals that the state and local unions followed the national organization, but took initiative to act on their own as well. During World War I, the Oregon WCTU continued its progressive reforms by seeking to halt National Preparedness and

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<sup>31</sup>Alan Dawley, *Changing the World: American Progressives in War and Revolution*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), 289.

<sup>32</sup>Bristow, xviii.

<sup>33</sup>Bristow, 11.

<sup>34</sup>*Ibid.*, 14.

militarization, sending comfort bags and practical support to soldiers, restricting alcohol and tobacco use in the military, and petitioning President Wilson to pass National Prohibition as a war measure. What historians generally overlook in analysis of the WCTU during the First World War is the distinction between their prewar and postwar efforts. In the period before the United States entered the conflict from 1914-1916, the Oregon WCTU was focused primarily on anti-cigarette laws, national prohibition, and anti-militarization. It also engaged in sending support to sailors and soldiers during this time. However, once the United States entered the war in April of 1917, members shifted their overall focus to the idea of home protectionism and sought to preserve the morals of their boys as they went off to train and then fight in Europe. The war became extremely personal to the women of the WCTU as many were mothers of soldiers and sailors. Other contributing factors to this shift in support were the ideas of patriotic service and potential danger to those who dissented. Historian Kathleen Kennedy notes that women who opposed the war were vulnerable to prosecution as “disloyal mothers and scurrilous citizens.”<sup>35</sup> Perhaps due, in part, to this fear of prosecution, the women of the WCTU, rather than continuing to voice their opposition to the war, turned to support the people involved instead. Their work in support of the war involved sending forms of care and encouragement to specific home companies. They also engaged actively with organizations like the Red Cross to help with the war effort on local levels.

From 1915 to 1916, as they observed the war in Europe, members of the Oregon WCTU opposed militarism on state and local levels, and demonstrated their opposition by writing letters, issuing resolutions, distributing literature, and petitioning members of congress. As they had just

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<sup>35</sup>Kathleen Kennedy, *Disloyal Mothers and Scurrilous Citizens: Women and Subversion during World War I* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999).

passed statewide prohibition the year before, they eagerly took the initiative to spread their success to other areas of work. The state WCTU urged that in light of terrible wars, the United States should seek peace rather than train for war. They were outspoken on issues of training in schools in particular. In 1915, Oregon Senator George Chamberlain proposed a bill to the U.S. Congress for national military preparedness. In 1916, Chamberlain also helped draft bill for the reorganization of the army which included selective service.<sup>36</sup> The relationship between Chamberlain and the Oregon WCTU was complex and demonstrates the strength of the WCTU's sentiments regarding militarization. WCTU members, as Schiffner describes, refused to align themselves with political parties and often voted for candidates regardless of party affiliation.<sup>37</sup> Chamberlain was a progressive Democrat who had supported both temperance and woman suffrage during his time as governor in 1902. In 1909, he was elected to the United States Senate where he proposed the bill calling for military preparedness. As an article in the *New York Times* on the preparedness bill stated, "One feature of this bill will be the requirement for military instruction in all the public schools of the country. The aim is to use text books adapted to the various grades that will teach the military art, and instruction will be compulsory."<sup>38</sup> From the perspective of the Oregon WCTU members, military preparedness was at odds with their belief system as they stood for international peace and believed that the only way to achieve it was to fight social injustice with arbitration rather than war. Thus, they could not continue to support

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<sup>36</sup>"226,000 in New Army: Secretary Baker Says Bill Is the Best Ever Passed by Congress," *New York Times*, 28 May 1916, n.p.

<sup>37</sup>Schiffner, 82.

<sup>38</sup>"Chamberlain Wants War Drill in Schools: Senator Has Bill for Universal Military Training—Indorses Defense Program," *New York Times*, 28 October 1915, n.p.

even their own former political ally. This anti-war and militarism sentiment was repeated on numerous occasions in the prewar period.<sup>39</sup>

As an activist group, the WCTU did more than just discuss the issue at its conventions. Specific committees, or “departments,” were established to address different issues, and they were urged to send letters to members of congress to halt the preparedness bill. The Peace and Arbitration Department of the Oregon WCTU was headed by Mrs. L.P. Round during the World War I era. In 1915, she reported at a mid-year executive meeting that women had increased interest in the WCTU because of “the terrible wars.” She urged the local unions to hold peace contests.<sup>40</sup> A year later, she continued to implore the local unions to participate in opposing the involvement in the war. According to the state minute book, she believed that under the current conditions the Peace and Arbitration Department was one of the most important WCTU departments. In February, Round urged greater effort in her department against military training in schools.<sup>41</sup> By March of 1916, WCTU members sent out literature, published several articles in the local press, and wrote to members of Congress protesting military training.<sup>42</sup> That mid-year executive meeting closed with the following resolution: “We believe that arbitration as the only way to settle disputes and that social injustice must give way to social justice before wars shall

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<sup>39</sup>For more on Chamberlain see William Robbins, *Oregon: This Storied Land* (Portland: Oregon Historical Society Press, 2005), 89-90.

<sup>40</sup>Oregon State Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, Minute Book, 1914-1915, Mid Year Executive Meeting, March 18, 1915, n.p. Box 1, Folder 2, Woman’s Christian Temperance Union of Oregon, Records, 1881-1990, MSS 2535, Oregon Historical Society, Portland, Oregon (hereafter WCTU Records).

<sup>41</sup>Oregon State Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, Minute Book, 1916-1917, Executive Meeting, February 7, 1916, 23. Box 1, Folder 4, WCTU Records.

<sup>42</sup>Oregon State Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, Minute Book, 1915-1916, Mid-Year Executive Meeting, March 7, 1916, 20. Box 1, Folder 3, WCTU Records.

cease; we are opposed to military training in the public schools and instruct our General Officers to send a protest to our representatives in Congress against militarism in all its forms.”<sup>43</sup>

Local unions reflected the sentiments of the statewide WCTU. The Benton County Unions (made up of several smaller local unions) and the Central Union (located within Multnomah County) on numerous occasions declared their opposition to joining the war and militarization. At the Benton County convention in 1915, the resolution committee made the following declaration: “That we as a county union are united in thanks to Almighty God for the preservation of peace in our nation and we do commend the action of our President in preserving peace and neutrality amidst this time of turmoil and strife. We are in hearty sympathy with the great peace movement that has recently been inaugurated and pledge our support to the same.”<sup>44</sup> Likewise, at a Central Union meeting, the women discussed hopes of gaining international peace and asked for a petition to be sent to the president regarding peace efforts.<sup>45</sup> The following year, in February of 1916, just three days following the state superintendant Mrs. Round’s direction, they issued an official statement against Chamberlain’s Bill that stated, “The Woman’s Christian Temperance Union of Benton Co. wished to go on record as being opposed to preparedness....That we do not believe in war, or preparation for war, that it is unchristian-like, uncalled for and unnecessary. We are opposed to military training and that Senator Chamberlain’s Bill on Military training in our public schools does not meet with our approval.”<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>43</sup>Oregon State Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, Minute Book, 1916-1917, Mid-Year Executive Meeting Resolution, February 7, 1916, 32. Box 1, Folder 4, WCTU Records.

<sup>44</sup>Benton County Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, Benton Minute Book, 1909-1926, Scrapbook, County Convention, September 16, 1915, 20. Box 6, Folder 16, WCTU Records.

<sup>45</sup>Central Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, Central Union Minute Book, 1914-1916, Central Union Meeting, November 3, 1915, n.p. Box 6, Folder 27, WCTU Records.

<sup>46</sup>Benton County Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, Benton Minute Book, 1909-1926, Scrapbook, Institute, February 10, 1916, 23. Box 6, Folder 16, WCTU Records.



Not only did they oppose the bill of their own senator who had been a supporter of women's causes in the past, but they fundamentally disagreed with war itself.

Though the Oregon WCTU disagreed with war and the militarization of society, it began supporting soldiers and sailors even before the war started, and then strengthened efforts when the United States entered World War I in April of 1917. Their Work Among Soldiers and Sailors Department was the primary funnel through which WCTU efforts flowed in support of the military. As early as 1915, local unions were preparing comfort bags for soldiers. According to Schiffner, these bags typically included temperance literature, a letter from a WCTU member, sewn items like handkerchiefs and hand towels, sewing kits, and sweets of some kind.<sup>47</sup> As with the Peace and Arbitration Department, a superintendent oversaw the efforts statewide and urged greater participation from the local unions. Mrs. Elizabeth Dagleish of Portland chaired the committee during the era. In March of 1915, she reported eighteen comfort bags from the Chehalem Center, six from Plainview, and nine from Eugene.<sup>48</sup> A year later, she reported that few ships were coming in to the port of Portland so not much could be done in her area. However, she did note that the one ship that did come was supplied with a comfort bag to all on board.<sup>49</sup> In March of 1916, Dagleish stated at a mid-year executive meeting that everyone should have some part in the work of supporting the soldiers and sailors. She reported having received forty-four comfort bags since the state convention earlier that year, and affirmed the

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<sup>47</sup>Schiffner, 77.

<sup>48</sup>Oregon State Woman's Christian Temperance Union, Minute Book, 1914-1915, Mid-Year Executive Meeting, March 18, 1915, n.p. Box 1, Folder 2, WCTU Records.

<sup>49</sup>Oregon State Woman's Christian Temperance Union, Minute Book, 1916-1917, Executive Meeting, February 7, 1916, 25. Box 1, Folder 4, WCTU Records.

necessity of the work by stating that “the boys are so appreciative of their bags and many more could be used.”<sup>50</sup>

In the case of supporting the soldiers and sailors, the state superintendent, Dalgleish, issued pleas for participation, and then the local unions responded as they were able. In addition to being superintendent of the statewide department for work among soldiers and sailors, Dalgleish also oversaw her own local union’s department for that work. Thus, Portland’s Central Union began working to support soldiers and sailors in December of 1915. Her leadership in that capacity is probably what prompted the Central Union to join in support of the military and seamen so early. Under her direction, the Central Union WCTUers took comfort bags home to make at the cost of 50 cents. They wanted to be sure and have them ready for Christmas that year.<sup>51</sup> At a meeting later that month, she continued the campaign to support work among sailors in particular as a mission for seamen was to be established in Portland in the following year. She also read an article on American Motherhood telling them of the good done by writing letters to “lonesome sailors.”<sup>52</sup> The Central Union continued its work among sailors by sending comfort bags into 1916.<sup>53</sup> In March, the Portland Seaman Mission was completed and opened.<sup>54</sup> When World War I began, the Central Union expanded their vision to provide comfort bags to soldiers

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<sup>50</sup>Oregon State Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, Minute Book, 1915-1916, Mid-Year Executive Meeting, March 7, 1916, 22. Box 1, Folder 3, WCTU Records.

<sup>51</sup>Central Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, Central Union Minute Book, 1914-1916, Central Union Meeting, December 1, 1915, n.p. Box 6, Folder 27, WCTU Records.

<sup>52</sup>Central Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, Central Union Minute Book, 1914-1916, Central Union Meeting, December 22, 1915, n.p. Box 6, Folder 27, WCTU Records.

<sup>53</sup>Central Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, Central Union Minute Book, 1914-1916, Central Union Meeting, January 19, 1916, n.p. Box 6, Folder 27, WCTU Records.

<sup>54</sup>Central Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, Central Union Minute Book, 1914-1916, Central Union Meeting, March 1, 1916, n.p. Box 6, Folder 27, WCTU Records.

and sailors in the military and joined the Red Cross work from their homes by making bandages and other supplies needed for medical units.<sup>55</sup>

When the war began in 1917, the Benton County Unions actively supported the soldiers and sailors. The shift from total opposition to militarism to support of military personnel is, again, complex. Though fundamentally disagreeing with the war itself, many of the WCTU members had sons serving. As “American mothers” the WCTU members, at least on local levels, saw their support to soldiers as a way to care for their boys away from home. Benton County created a committee in August and appointed Mrs. Jessie B. Darnell of Philomath to be superintendant.<sup>56</sup> The committee followed the national trend of making and sending supplies to soldiers. A report given by the College Hill Union at the 1917 Benton County Convention stated that they “made and filled 33 comfort bags and sent [them] to state superintendent.” They also sent “137 dish towels, 179 utensil holders, old cotton, rolls of bandages, and rolls of old linen and cotton” to “Wm. S. Gilbert Chaplin of Third Oregon Infantry with request that Company K be supplied first.” Additionally, the union sent two telegrams, two petitions, 50 personal letters, and secured two public appeals through public press for personal letters in campaign for National Prohibition.”<sup>57</sup> The Benton County Minute Books from 1917 on are filled with copious lists of supplies and contributions to the war effort given by all the local chapters within the county. Some of these supplies included: tea towels, tray cloths, napkins, tailored bandages, washcloths, wipes, gun cloths, and handkerchiefs. In fulfillment of their temperance mission, the comfort bags for the soldiers often included temperance literature.

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<sup>55</sup>Central Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, Central Union Minute Book, 1916-1917, Central Union Meeting, November 3, 1915, 69. Box 6, Folder 28, WCTU Records.

<sup>56</sup>Benton County Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, Benton Minute Book, 1909-1926, Scrapbook, Executive Meeting, August 21, 1917, 48. Box 6, Folder 16, WCTU Records.

<sup>57</sup>Benton County Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, Benton Minute Book, 1909-1926, Scrapbook, Benton County WCTU Convention, September 7, 1917, 50. Box 6, Folder 16, WCTU Records.

As stated previously, the war was personal for many of the WCTU women as they had sons and relatives who had enlisted. The Benton County Unions recorded when their own young men joined the service in addition to detailed lists of materials contributed. It was a source of pride and motivation for them in their work. For example, at the County Convention, the Soldiers and Sailors committee reported that “Bellfountain held two meetings, expended \$1.20, gave away one testament, 18 tea towels, 6 tray cloths, 6 napkins, 87 tailored bandages, 6 washcloths, 2 wipes, 24 gun cloths, 18 handkerchiefs. Young men enlisted from WCTU homes- 2, and from community 4.”<sup>58</sup> In addition to recording the numbers who enlisted, they commemorated it in some cases by dedicating flags with stars to honor their sons. For instance, the Philomath Union created a “beautiful service flag...bearing 11 stars representing sons of the members of the Philomath Union.”<sup>59</sup>

On another personal level, the Oregon WCTU supported local military companies. For example, the Benton County Minute Books note that their supplies were given to the Oregon Third Infantry Company K in Clackamas and also sent to Fort Lewis. The College Hill Union reported at a County Convention that they had made and filled 33 comfort bags for the “navy boys,” sent 18 tailored bandages and rolls of cotton and linen to headquarters. They also furnished 138 dish towels, 181 holders to the soldiers at Clackamas requesting that Company K be supplied first. In addition, members gave 23 pairs of bed socks to the local chapter of the Red Cross.”<sup>60</sup> At a meeting one week later, the first topic of focus was the “patriotic war work.” This included a report by the Bellfountain Union that mentioned different towels and bandages, arm

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<sup>58</sup>Benton County Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, Benton Minute Book, 1909-1926, Scrapbook, Benton County WCTU Convention, September 7, 1917, 61. Box 6, Folder 16, WCTU Records.

<sup>59</sup>Benton County Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, Benton Minute Book, 1909-1926, Scrapbook, Benton County WCTU Meeting, September 13, 1918, 68. Box 6, Folder 16, WCTU Records.

<sup>60</sup>Benton County Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, Benton Minute Book, 1909-1926, Scrapbook, Benton County WCTU Convention, September 7, 1917, 62. Box 6, Folder 16, WCTU Records.

slings, and magazines being sent to Camp Lewis. In addition to Camp Lewis, members sent many magazines through the mail to soldiers and sailors.<sup>61</sup> College Hill reported sending games to Camp Lewis.<sup>62</sup> The Corvallis Union sent trench caps, housewives, gun wipes, and many other items to the homes at Camp Lewis including baby coats, bibs, dresses, pillows, slips, and blankets. The Philomath Union donated similar supplies to the military and items for the Belgian Relief including quilts, shoes, slippers, caps, baby clothes, shirts, coats, vests, pants, and baby flannel.<sup>63</sup>

As seen in the earlier noted actions of Central Union, the Oregon WCTU rallied in support of the Red Cross work during the war. The Benton County Unions donated to Red Cross work with money and time. The Corvallis Union reported at County Convention in 1917 that “Members of the Corvallis Union donated \$12 to Red Cross work.” They also set aside one meeting each month to work with Red Cross members.<sup>64</sup> The Resolution Committee at that convention adopted the following motion that stated, “...Resolved that we members of Benton Co. WCTU cooperate with the Red Cross for the relief of our boys on the battle field and in hospitals.”<sup>65</sup> Their participation with the Red Cross demonstrates that the local Oregon unions were active in supporting national war relief efforts.

In addition to providing relief and supplies to the military, the Oregon WCTU members did not forget their original purpose—temperance. As protectors of the home, and mothers of

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<sup>61</sup>Benton County Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, Benton Minute Book, 1909-1926, Scrapbook, Benton County WCTU Meeting, September 13, 1918, 69. Box 6, Folder 16, WCTU Records.

<sup>62</sup>Benton County Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, Benton Minute Book, 1909-1926, Scrapbook, Benton County WCTU Meeting, September 13, 1918, 70. Box 6, Folder 16, WCTU Records.

<sup>63</sup>Benton County Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, Benton Minute Book, 1909-1926, Scrapbook, Benton County WCTU Meeting, September 13, 1918, 69-70. Box 6, Folder 16, WCTU Records. The term “housewives,” as Schiffner notes on page 90 of her dissertation, usually meant sewing kits that included a needle, thread, and cloth for patches, not actual women.

<sup>64</sup>Benton County Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, Benton Minute Book, 1909-1926, Scrapbook, Benton County WCTU Convention, September 7, 1917, 62. Box 6, Folder 16, WCTU Records.

<sup>65</sup>Benton County Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, Benton Minute Book, 1909-1926, Scrapbook, Benton County WCTU Convention, September 7, 1917, 63. Box 6, Folder 16, WCTU Records.

soldiers abroad, they were naturally concerned with the well-being of their soldiers. During the war, they extended their vision to prohibition of alcohol and tobacco in the military camps to protect their boys away from home. On the state level, they worked along side agencies like the Oregon Social Hygiene Society to contain the spread of venereal disease in the camps. As early as April 20, 1917, just two weeks after war was declared, Oregon's WCTU President Mrs. Jennie Kemp began to address the issue of Prohibition and commercialized vice in the army camps. She argued, "Our work includes the Prohibition of Alcoholic drink and vice in all army camps."<sup>66</sup>

The extension of the WCTU's work to military camps also followed the national trends described by Nancy Bristow. The national concern for the conditions in military training camps began prior to the war as an early investigation in 1916 revealed that many training camps were surrounded by brothels and saloons, and that soldiers were ill with venereal disease and morally corrupted by prostitution and alcohol.<sup>67</sup> Following his war message to Congress on April 2, 1917, President Wilson issued a declaration stating that "The Federal Government has pledged its word that as far as care and vigilance can accomplish the result, the men committed to its charge will be returned to the homes and communities that so generously gave them with no scars except those won in honorable conflict."<sup>68</sup> On April 17, 1917, shortly after the declaration of war, the War Department created a federal Commission of Training Camp Activities to ensure that Wilson's promise would be kept.<sup>69</sup>

The local unions followed suit, but their efforts in this regard were not recorded nearly as frequently as their donations of supplies. The Central Union minutes from an April meeting note

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<sup>66</sup>Oregon State Woman's Christian Temperance Union, Minute Book, 1916-1917, General Officers Meeting, April 20, 1917, 31-32. Box 1, Folder 4, WCTU Records.

<sup>67</sup>Bristow, 5.

<sup>68</sup>Ibid., 7.

<sup>69</sup>Ibid., 8.

that a letter from Patriotic Conservative League and a letter regarding conditions in army camps were read, in addition to a report on Red Cross work.<sup>70</sup> They also note that in May, members wrote a letter to President Wilson regarding “our Soldier Boys.”<sup>71</sup> In September, at a Benton County Convention, the Legislation and Law-Enforcement Department from the Philomath Union stated that their corresponding secretary had written two or three letters to members of Congress in favor of national prohibition and anti-vice measures for the army. Their president also wrote a letter to President Wilson concerning vice measures.<sup>72</sup> The College Hill Union reported sending a letter to President Wilson asking for protection from vice and alcohol for our boys in the army.<sup>73</sup>

Perhaps the most obvious and discussed of the WCTU’s works during the First World War was to continue the fight for national prohibition. The records in Oregon, however, suggest that while it was a priority, the work for soldiers and sailors took preeminence for most local Oregon unions. This may have been due to the fact that prohibition in Oregon had been passed in 1914. However, the WCTU operated as a top to bottom hierarchy with the national WCTU issuing directives to the state unions. Following the national WCTU’s vision of using the wartime prohibition as what Schiffner calls a “stepping stone” for permanent national prohibition,<sup>74</sup> the Oregon WCTU did make some efforts towards achieving those ends. For example, on April 20, 1917, the Oregon state officers received a telegram from Anna Gordon, fourth president of the National WCTU, “asking for message to be sent Pres. Wilson petitioning

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<sup>70</sup>Central Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, Central Union Minute Book, 1914-1916, Central Union Meeting, April 25, 1917, 71. Box 6, Folder 28, WCTU Records.

<sup>71</sup>Central Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, Central Union Minute Book, 1914-1916, Central Union Meeting, May 9, 1917, 74. Box 6, Folder 28, WCTU Records.

<sup>72</sup>Benton County Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, Benton Minute Book, 1909-1926, Scrapbook, Benton County WCTU Convention, September 7, 1917, 58. Box 6, Folder 16, WCTU Records.

<sup>73</sup>Ibid.

<sup>74</sup>Schiffner, 91.

him to pass the bill for the Prohibition of the liquor traffic as a war measure. The officers ordered the message sent. They also decided to put appeal in the papers urging the local unions to send such messages also.”<sup>75</sup>

The local unions received the message and responded accordingly. In September, Benton County included in its resolutions a pledge of its allegiance and support for national prohibition.<sup>76</sup> Members sent over thirty letters to the president on this topic.<sup>77</sup> The College Hill Union wrote to Senator Chamberlain in regard to national prohibition and sent letters to the president.<sup>78</sup> The report from a Benton County executive meeting held in January stated, “The following resolution offered by President Starr to be sent to President Wilson was adopted. Resolution: In order to secure the highest conservation of man power and material resource, we urge the complete prohibition of the liquor traffic during the period of the War. And as Mothers of America we plead for the same protection against liquor and vice accorded to our soldiers and sailors at home be extended to them abroad and earnestly protest against drink being furnished them while they are in the Army of the United States.”<sup>79</sup> The women of the WCTU, at least in Benton County, presented arguments for passing national prohibition that were both logical and emotional. They pled for conservation of manpower and resources as well as protection for their sons out in the world. At a later meeting of the Benton County Unions in 1918, College Hill

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<sup>75</sup>Oregon State Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, Minute Book, 1916-1917, General Officers Meeting, April 20, 1917, 30. Box 1, Folder 4, WCTU Records.

<sup>76</sup>Benton County Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, Benton Minute Book, 1909-1926, Scrapbook, Benton County WCTU Convention, September 7, 1917, 63. Box 6, Folder 16, WCTU Records.

<sup>77</sup>Benton County Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, Benton Minute Book, 1909-1926, Scrapbook, Benton County WCTU Convention, September 7, 1917, 58. Box 6, Folder 16, WCTU Records.

<sup>78</sup>Ibid.

<sup>79</sup>Benton County Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, Benton Minute Book, 1909-1926, Scrapbook, Executive Meeting, January 8, 1918, 65. Box 6, Folder 16, WCTU Records.



reported that they had sent appeals to representatives for war time prohibition.<sup>80</sup> According to Dawley, the support for national prohibition came also from “southern elites who had pioneered prohibition in their home states, managerial elites seeking to impose efficiency in the factory and undermine immigrant political machines in the North, and small-town Yankee Protestants seeking to impose their evangelical values of sinful cities.”<sup>81</sup> The WCTU, though differing in motivation and methodology, was joined by other powerful groups in fighting for national prohibition during the war. And as Dawley and others suggest, such efforts demonstrate a variety of attempts at social control.

The Oregon WCTU state convention resolutions of 1917 summarize the twin goals of the WCTU during the World War I: the protection of soldiers’ morals and passage of national prohibition. It says the following:

Resolved that while we are willing to lay our best upon the alter of sacrifice, if then, by the world may be purged of militarism and made safe for democracy, we also deem it the mission of our organization to make democracy safe for the tempted and oppressed and we believe no democracy is safe unless saturated with the spirit of the Gospel. Believing tobacco to be a narcotic poison that lessens the efficiency of its nerve we deplore the fact that 90 percent of our enlisted men are so addicted to its use...that the government and many good people consider it a necessary part of a soldier’s ration.

Whereas this universal use of cigarettes, tobacco in its worst form is having a tremendous influence upon the little lads, who are so quick to copy the example of the man in uniform, be it resolved that we will re-double our efforts to prevent the illegal sale of cigarettes to minors, and continue our efforts to obtain a better law at the next legislature.

We most heartily endorse the passage by the United States Senate of the Prohibition Constitutional Amendment and urge the House to the same, first eliminating the six years clause. Whereas the United States Brewery Association prevented complete war prohibition by threatening to provoke industrial draft and race riots....We brand said association as Pro-German-Anti-American, and a dangerous enemy.

As patriotic American women, we ask Woodrow Wilson, President of the United States, to exercise the authority placed in his hands, and prohibit the manufacturer of

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<sup>80</sup>Benton County Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, Benton Minute Book, 1909-1926, Scrapbook, Benton County WCTU Meeting, September 13, 1918, 70. Box 6, Folder 16, WCTU Records.

<sup>81</sup>Dawley, 289.

Beer as a war measure, for the Conservation of grain, increase of efficiency and release of manpower for real war service.<sup>82</sup>

The Oregon WCTU emphasized several key points in their resolutions, and evidence of the strength of emotion regarding these issues is evident in the language used. First, they added to President Wilson's political rhetoric of "taking democracy to the world" by suggesting that their organization's goal was to make democracy safe for people who were "tempted and oppressed," and that no democracy would be safe without the "spirit of the Gospel" permeating it, indicating again, their religious motivation for reform. They also included their anti-tobacco sentiment and stated argued that facts indicate a problem of addictions in the military and the result of inefficiency. They also argued that the addiction of soldiers to drugs would negatively influence the nation's youth who idolize military personnel, again following what they believed was their duty to protect the American home as mothers. The Oregon WCTU also professed hearty support for the Prohibition Amendment and pled with President Wilson to use the powers "placed in his hands" during the war to pass it while simultaneously naming the Brewery Association as a "dangerous enemy" and "anti-American" for threatening to disturb domestic peace as protest to the measure. In calling the Brewery Association an anti-American enemy, the WCTU followed the national wartime trend of creating a spirit of conformity and total Americanism which historian Jensen identifies.<sup>83</sup> It is interesting to note that though members of the WCTU were initially anti-war themselves, they actively labeled other groups as anti-American.

The efforts of the Oregon WCTU in supporting the national WCTU's drive for national prohibition were ultimately successful. The fighting of World War I ended when the Armistice

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<sup>82</sup>Oregon State Woman's Christian Temperance Union, Minute Book, 1916-1917, Resolutions of the 1917 Convention, 72-74. Box 1, Folder 4, WCTU Records.

<sup>83</sup>Jensen, viii.

was signed on November 11, 1918. On January 16, 1919, the U.S. Congress ratified the Eighteenth Amendment, establishing national prohibition. With the war ended and national prohibition achieved, members of the Oregon WCTU went back to their role of recruiting new members. As College Hill reported, “The past year attention was turned to war work, and other interest given up to a large extent, until near close of the year when a house to house canvas was undertaken and new members secured...”<sup>84</sup> For the WCTU, it was business as usual.

In conclusion, members of the Oregon WCTU and local unions continued their social reforms of the Progressive Era in World War I by seeking to stop military preparedness and militarization, sending comfort bags and practical support to soldiers and sailors, restricting “commercialized vice” in the military, and petitioning President Wilson to pass National Prohibition as a war measure. Viewing war as immoral, the Oregon WCTU actively opposed preparedness in all forms by distributing literature and petitioning their elected officials. They were particularly against military training in schools, which was a provision of the bill their own senator and temperance supporter George Chamberlain had proposed.

Though following national directives regarding national prohibition, Oregon WCTU members defined some of their own activism as well. With the reality of the United States entering the war in 1917, Oregon WCTU efforts changed to identify and meet wartime needs. Though remaining opposed to America’s participation in the war, the Oregon WCTU members shifted from their prewar period strategies of opposition to fulfilling their prescribed roles as patriotic American mothers by both supporting and protecting their “boys” who were serving. During World War I, the local unions prepared tangible items for the soldiers’ comfort, joined

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<sup>84</sup>Benton County Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, Benton Minute Book, 1909-1926, Scrapbook, Benton County WCTU Convention, September 8, 1920, 80. Box 6, Folder 16, WCTU Records.

with other national movements like the Red Cross to provide aid, and campaigned for the removal of vice from military camps. They also continued to petition President Wilson to have prohibition passed as a war measure to protect their boys away from home. Through their activism during the First World War on both local and state levels, the women of the Oregon WCTU successfully achieved their overall national aim which was to protect the home front from the dangers of alcohol consumption through passage of national prohibition. The women of the Oregon WCTU used the war as an opportunity to expand their citizenship through activism and further the reform causes they believed in through their involvement in the war effort and the push for national prohibition. In this respect, they joined with the larger movement of women in World War I to shape culture and expand their power.

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