Biographical Database of NAWSA Suffragists, 1890-1920

Note: These are the other female jurors (besides Stewart, who has an entry of her own), on the grand jury convened in 1870. Men served on that jury, as well.

**Biography of Amelia Hatcher Heath, September 9, 1842- October 16, 1921**

By Kim Viner, independent historian, September 2017

Amelia Hatcher (later Heath) was born in England in 1842 of Scottish parents. The 1870 census shows that she was in Laramie and living in the house of her father Robert Galbraith with her 8-year-old son Robert. That year she was called by Sheriff N.K. Boswell to serve on the first formal jury in the world to seat women. She served with five other women on the March 1870 grand jury convened in Laramie, Wyoming Territory.

Her father was the pioneer master mechanic of the Wyoming division of the Union Pacific Railroad. She moved here after the death of her first husband. Little is known of her life before arriving in Laramie. While in Laramie, she was the owner of a millinery store in Laramie which was located on Second Street. She listed $1000 as the value of her estate in the 1870 census, making her one of the wealthiest women in town. She owned the shop through the summer of 1871.

Mrs. Hatcher married Nathan A. Heath not long after she concluded her jury duties. He was a conductor on the Union Pacific Railroad for many years and thereafter ran the drug store at the corner of Second and Thornburgh streets (now Ivinson Avenue). They lived at the corner of Fremont and Third streets. In December 1871, she was one of 30 women to sign a petition addressed to the Wyoming Territory Legislative Assembly arguing that the 1869 Suffrage Act should be preserved in the face of an attempt by the assembly to overturn the act. Their stance prevailed as Governor John Campbell vetoed the assembly’s actions.

The family left Laramie in the late 1880’s and moved to Hebron, Nebraska, where Mr. Heath was a banker. From Hebron they moved to Ogden, Utah, where he died in March 1921. Amelia died that same year on 17 October, also in Ogden. She was the last of the original women jurors to pass from the Scene.

Sources:

1870, 1880, 1910 and 1920 U.S. Census at [https://www.familysearch.org/](https://www.familysearch.org/)

Utah Death Certificates 1904-1964 at [https://www.familysearch.org/](https://www.familysearch.org/)

Find a Grave at [https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/126098348](https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/126098348)


Biography of Mary Mackel, 1847-?

By Kim Viner, independent historian, September 2017

Mary Mackel (often spelled Mackle) was born in New York about 1847. She was the wife of Joseph Mackel, a clerk at Fort Sanders which was located 3 miles south of Laramie. March 1870 she was called by Sheriff N.K. Boswell to serve on the first formal jury in the world to seat women. She served with five other women on the March 1870 grand jury convened in Laramie, Wyoming Territory. Although she did serve, little is known about her or her family. Both Mackels appear in the census of the fort in June 1870, and The Laramie Sentinel newspaper listed Mr. Mackel as serving on a jury in March 1871. After that date both of the Mackels disappear from all available records.

Sources:
1870 U.S. Census at https://www.familysearch.org/
Laramie Boomerang “Women on the Jury” October 17, 1889, pg 1 at http://newspapers.wyo.gov/
Laramie Daily Sentinel “Albany County Circuit Court” March 3, 1871, p. 2 http://newspapers.wyo.gov/

Biography of Jane Hilton, 1829-1884?

By Kim Viner, independent historian, September 2017

Jane Hilton was born 1829 in New York. In 1870 she was living with her husband George F. Hilton and daughter Nellie Hilton in Laramie. They had arrived in 1868 and her husband, who was a physician, was also a minister and organized the Methodist church in Laramie. In March 1870 she was called by Sheriff N.K. Boswell to serve on the first formal jury in the world to seat women. She served with five other women on the grand jury convened in Laramie, Wyoming Territory. She served again on a grand jury in Laramie in February 1871.

Her husband also ran a drug store in town through 1873 but then the family drops out of local newspaper accounts. It appears that they may have moved on to California just after that. A very brief obituary was published in the Laramie Boomerang on May 24, 1883. It mentioned that news from “elsewhere” noted that she had passed away. No details of her life were given but an even briefer announcement in the Laramie Sentinel noted she died in San Francisco.

Sources:
1870 U.S. Census at https://www.familysearch.org/
Laramie Boomerang “Women on the Jury” October 17, 1889, pg 1 at http://newspapers.wyo.gov/
Laramie Weekly Boomerang no title. May 24, 1883, pg 8 at http://newspapers.wyo.gov/
Laramie Sentinel, no title. May 26, 1883, pg 2 at http://newspapers.wyo.gov/
Sarah Pease moved to Laramie from Crystal Lake, Illinois, in 1869 with her husband Lorenzo Dow Pease whom she had married in 1867. Mr. Pease was a prominent attorney and judge during his time in Laramie and was deputy clerk of district court. In 1870 she was called by Sheriff N.K. Boswell to serve on the first formal jury in the world to seat women. She served with five other women on the grand jury convened in Laramie, Wyoming Territory. When Sarah was called to jury duty in March 1870 she was a replacement for Mrs. Baker who asked to be excused.

Sarah’s interest in public service was again noted in 1884 when she ran for superintendent of public schools on the Democratic ticket. She was defeated by Helen Bradshaw. However, shortly after the death of her husband, she was nominated again in 1892 on both the Democratic and Populist tickets and won a two-year term. She ran again as a Democrat in 1894 and was re-elected. Of note, her election in 1892 resulted in a lawsuit brought by her defeated opponent, Mrs. Lizzie Sawin, because Mrs. Pease received votes as both a Democrat and a Populist. The case was eventually heard by Wyoming Supreme Court which rejected Mrs. Sawin’s complaint.

After completing her last term, Sarah moved to Battle Creek, Michigan in 1900. There she was also elected superintendent of schools. She died in April 1909. Mrs. Pease was the only member of the original grand jury who wrote an extended firsthand account of those momentous events that was printed in the *Laramie Boomerang*. It is through that account that historians can accurately judge the tenor of the community and the nation as the women served their community. Mrs. Pease made it clear that the women took their charge seriously, despite the ridicule and rancor that they faced. She noted that the women carefully studied the laws that they were asked to rule on and were not reluctant to correct the jury foreman, Mr. Frederick Laycock, when he misinterpreted the territorial statutes.

Sources:

1870 U.S. Census at [https://www.familysearch.org/](https://www.familysearch.org/)


Sarah Wallace Pease [https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/15328106/sarah-pease](https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/15328106/sarah-pease)

By Kim Viner, independent historian, September 2017

Mrs. Annie Monehan was born in Ireland in 1845. Although not listed in all reports of the first women on the grand jury, in her very detailed 1889 personal remembrance of the jury, Mrs. Sarah Pease stated that she looked up the court record of the jury proceeding and found Mrs. Monehan as one of those who served. It is possible that this is the Anna Monnahan listed in the 1870 census as living in Laramie with her two-year-old daughter, Frances, in the household of John and Louisa Franz. In March 1870 she was called by Sheriff N.K. Boswell to serve on the first formal jury in the world to seat women. She served with five other women on the grand jury convened in Laramie, Wyoming Territory. No further information on Mrs. Monehan has been found.

Sources:

1870 U.S. Census at [https://www.familysearch.org/](https://www.familysearch.org/)
