



THE
EGALITARIANISM
OF *FLORENCE*
CRAWFORD

Florence Crawford

- Arguably one of the most **overlooked**
- **Undervalued** early pioneers
- And **shapers** of Pentecostalism



Florence Louise Crawford

(1871-1936)

- One of six original female members of the Azusa Street administrative board
- Crawford helped to direct the Pentecostal revival within the Azusa Street Mission
- She proved instrumental in propagating its message
- Through evangelization and publishing
- She shaped its egalitarian message



Diversity and Early Pentecostalism



- Florence Louise Crawford (1871-1936) founded her own denomination, **the Apostolic Faith Church**, in 1907.
- Crawford came to the mission as an accomplished and proven leader.

Early Organizational Leadership

- Crawford served as president of the Los Angeles and state chapters of the WCTU: Women's Christian Temperance Union (or League)



Women's Christian Temperance Union



- She was the ONLY original Azusa member with national leadership experience

Florence Crawford's egalitarianism

- Her contribution is overlooked and/or marginalized
- As Los Angeles president of the WCTU under the leadership of Frances Willard
- The WCTU was committed to biblical egalitarianism (Katharine Bushnell)
- Crawford would have been deeply committed to gender egalitarianism.
- Forming a bridge to embrace egalitarianism in other forms, unheard of for most at that time
- Including racial, socio-political, and cultural egalitarianism.

The WCTU



Carrie Nation used a hatchet to smash 19th-century bars.

"WET" OR "DRY"

"VOTE WET FOR MY SAKE!"

"VOTE DRY FOR MINE!"

Shall the Mothers and Children be Sacrificed to the Financial Greed of the Liquor Traffic?

IT IS UP TO YOU, VOTER, TO DECIDE

VOTE. DRY.

Frances Willard



- Methodist, Frances Willard, responded to Phoebe Palmer's teachings.
- In 1866, Willard experienced "entire sanctification" under Palmer's ministry.
- As a child, Willard had sat for five years under the ministry of Charles Finney while her parents attended Oberlin College.

Willard and the WCTU



- In 1874, she resigned her post to become the National Corresponding Secretary of the recently formed Woman's Temperance Union
- The WCTU was an organization founded in Cleveland, OH, in November of 1874, that had grown out of the "Woman's Crusade" to confront the damage of alcohol being wreaked upon Christian homes.
- Why alcohol?
- It quickly became the largest woman's organization in the United States.

Protest by women

- “The crusade against alcohol was a protest by women in part of their lack of civil rights.
- Women could not vote.
- In most states women could not have control of their property or custody of their children in cases of divorce.
- There were no legal protections for women and children, prosecutions for rape were rare, and the state-regulated ‘age of consent’ was as low as seven.”

WTU



How beautiful
it is to be
with God."



1839 - 1898

Sept. 28

Feb. 17

Frances E. Willard

National Congress of Mothers

- In 1902 Crawford served as the first president of the Los Angeles chapter of the National Congress of Mothers
- The organization later renamed the PTA, Parent-Teacher Association.



'MOTHER' OF NATION'S ORGANIZED MOTHERS OPPOSES 'MILITARY DRAFT' FOR CHILDREN



Civil War Boys





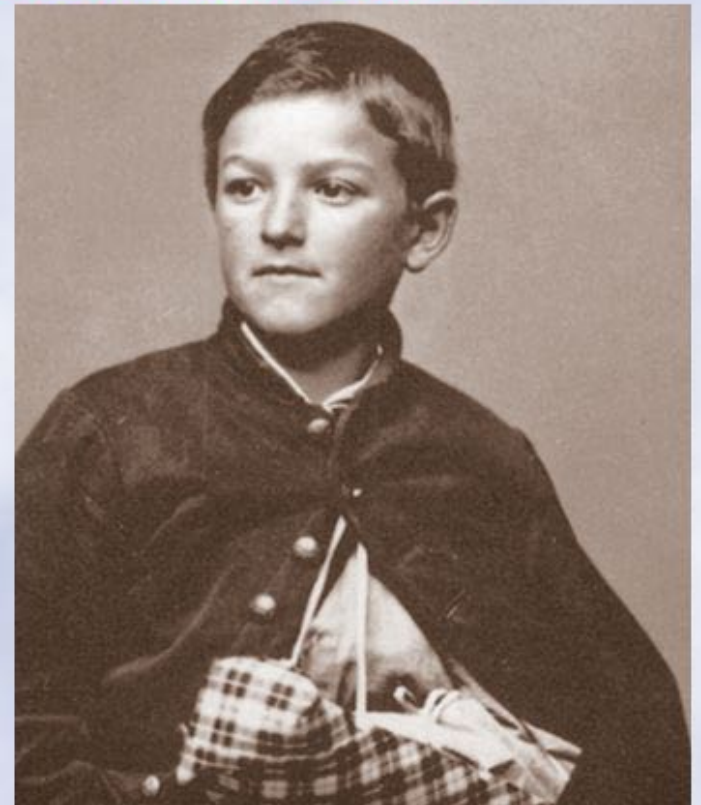
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From Uncle Alfred

Children During the War

- Most did chores at home to help their families or contribute to the war effort
- Children in the South had basically no public schools (due to school supplies were needed for the war effort and school buildings were used for soldiers); wealthy families could continue with private tutoring
- Boys as young as 10 served in both armies; thousands of soldiers were between 14- and 16-years-old
- Twelve-year-old drummer boy William Black is considered to be the youngest wounded soldier in the Civil War.



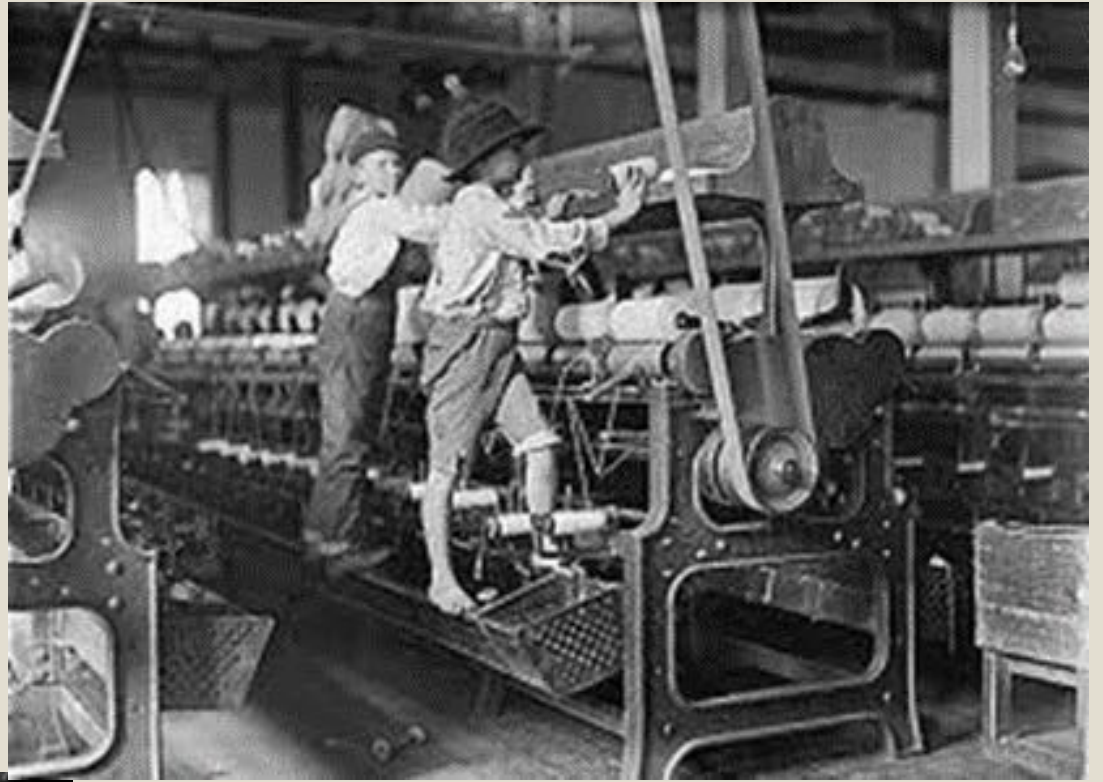
Endangered Children at Work

- During this time, immigrants were arriving in waves and often “children worked in factories, in mines, and in the streets of the cities.



Cheap Labor





Wide-Spread Exploitation of Children



Long hours at slave wages



No labor laws protecting children



The WCTU's agenda

- As with similar socio-political action, large groups tend to form around a number of related issues and not just one.
- These work to form a particular religious/socio-political paradigm that other like-minded individuals come to share and embrace.
- Willard became the president of the WCTU in 1879 and broadened the scope of the organization's officially stated agenda
- To include issues such as the promotion of protections for women at home and work
- *women's right to vote*
- *shelters for abused women and children*
- *equal pay for equal work,*
- *eight-hour workdays*
- *assistance for the founding of the PTA [Parents and Teachers Association]*
- *federal aid for education*
- *stiffer penalties for sex crimes against women and girls*
- *uniform marriage and divorce laws*
- *dress reform, prison reform*
- *women police officers and police matrons*
- *homes and education for wayward girls*
- *army brothels*
- *child labor*
- *and drug and alcohol trafficking and use*



Egalitarian Roots

- Crawford brought egalitarianism into the Azusa Revival with her.



Azusa Mission



- She arrived in the early weeks of the mission's launch when only about 20 people were in attendance.
- “How I thank God that when I heard of the outpouring of the Holy Ghost, He led me to a little mission. It was not a fine hall, but just an old barn-like building with an old board laid on two chairs for an altar. I had found a people who had the experience I wanted.”
- She sought God all week, and at a Friday afternoon service, the preacher—stopped in his sermon and announced, “Somebody in this place wants something from God.”

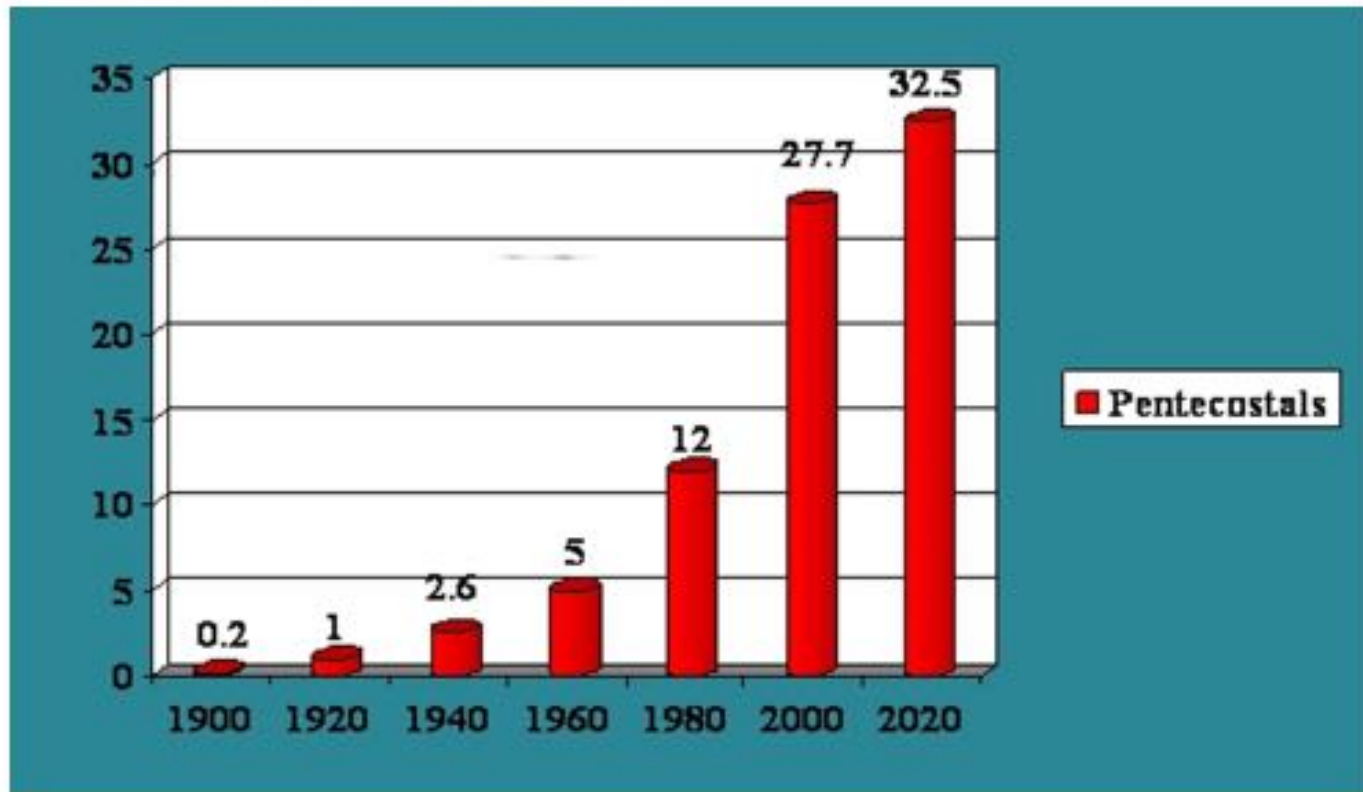
Azusa Street Mission



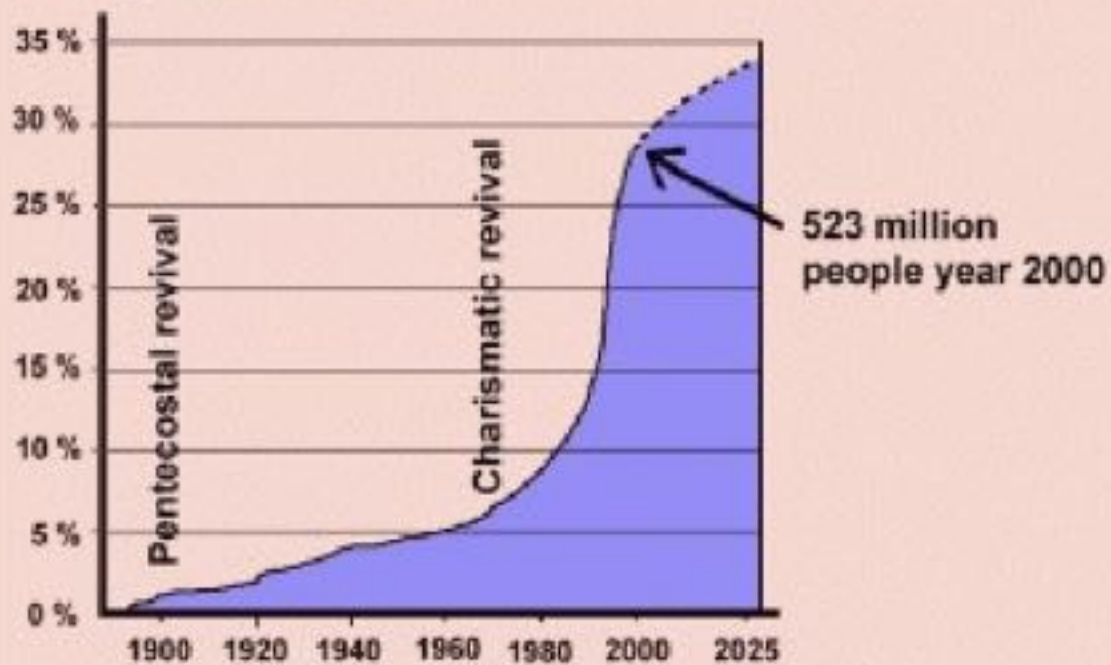
Azusa Street Mission Board



Pentecostals – Growth



Pentecostal/Charismatic revival as a percent of the total number of Christians



Altar Worker

During the worship services, she worked the altar, praying with those who needed healing or wanted salvation, sanctification, and the baptism of the Holy Spirit.



The correspondence office



- News of the revival spread
- In part, through negative press
- Curious and spiritually hungry readers sent letters
- Crawford capitalized upon this phenomenon
- An office was opened on the second floor to handle the mail

Newspaper Editor

- Crawford's next role at the mission has been disputed by several leading historians.
- Vinson Synan records her as the editor of the newspaper, *The Apostolic Faith*.
- Amos Morgan agrees, and writes: "With the help of Clara Lum and Glenn Cook, and perhaps others, she began publishing a church paper, the first issue bore the date of September 1906, and was called 'The Apostolic Faith.'"



The Apostolic Faith



- The first edition of *The Apostolic Faith* was circulated in September, 1906,
- With neither funds nor supporters, Crawford and the original leadership team stepped out in faith.
- Crawford was a key driving force in the planning, creation, publishing, and promotion of the paper.
- The revival spread through it

The Apostolic Faith Newspaper

- Morgan says,
- “Clara Lum knew shorthand
- “Glenn Cook was a newspaperman
- “Florence Crawford was an entrepreneur
- “Seymour was the unquestioned leader as well as pastor, but it appears he was not directly involved in the project other than his sermons were used in the paper
- “Florence Crawford was copy editor and publisher.
- “Some say that Seymour was the editor, but nothing seems to support that opinion.”



Launching out

- Within months of her initial involvement at the Azusa Street Mission, Crawford launched her own ministry as an evangelist under Seymour's leadership,
- She was the first to spread the message abroad through evangelism.
- Seymour appointed Crawford as state overseer of California four months after her arrival at the mission.
- In this role, she oversaw evangelism and missionary efforts and opening new works





Going Northwest

- Crawford ventured out to the Northwest
- “In so doing, Crawford became the most influential female from the Azusa Street Revival with the widest influence beyond the initial period of the Pentecostal movement.”

Power

- organizational power (the power given through an organization)
- expert power (expertise)
- tenure power (time in)
- communication power (ability and means to communicate)
- positional power (position that offers influence and exposure)
- Informational (knowledge)
- instrumental power (authority of government, law, rules, bylaws etc.)
- opportunity power



Crawford's Influence

- **Crawford's influence was rivaled only by Seymour's. She held:**
- **Power**=organizational power, expert power, tenure power
- **Power**=communication power, positional power, informational
- **Power**=instrumental power and opportunity power

Power/Authority Discussion

- Provide examples of these various forms of power as you have seen them in action
- Which categories are most important?
- Why?
- Which are least important?
- Why?
- Which categories are women most likely to hold?
- Why?
- Give examples of using one type of power when another is lacking
- How/why? Explain how Crawford held these various categories of power/authority.

The Fire Spreads

- In early November 1906 Crawford was named the state director and began lending oversight to the launching of fledgling missionary efforts.
- The first missionary venture involved taking a team to the San Francisco Bay area.





New Mission Sites

- She also established new Apostolic Faith congregations.
- In Oakland, Crawford preached at independent missions, the Salvation Army, and the Household of God.
- She oversaw a five-week meeting at William F. Manley's Household of God, which would become a center for the Apostolic Faith movement in the area.

Oregon



- Martin L. Ryan, a holiness pastor from Salem, OR, had visited the Azusa Street Mission during the late summer of 1906 and was baptized in the Holy Spirit.
- After he returned to his church he began writing to the mission's workers requesting that they come and lead his congregation into revival.
- Ophelia Wiley was sent on ahead to meet Ryan, and she participated in highly publicized meetings that began November 16, 1906.
- Crawford and her daughter, Mildred, arrived a month later.

Portland



- On Christmas, 1906, Crawford arrived in Portland.
- Later, while holding evangelistic meetings in Minneapolis, Minnesota, God spoke to her and revealed that He wanted her to establish a headquarters in Portland.”
- She would remain in Portland for the following thirty years.

The Apostolic Faith news...

- I stay in the mission. It's humble quarters, but Jesus is here.
- Every minute of my time is given to God. I get tired sometimes. ...
Oh, I am learning the wondrous secret:
- It is letting Jesus do the work and carry all of the load.
- Oh I am so happy in His love and service. People from all over are coming. ...
- How glad I am I ever found my way into the dear old mission on Azusa St.
- Love to all the saints – Florence Crawford.

Portland Mission



Headlines...

- Vol. I. No. 9 Los Angeles, Cal., June to September, 1907
Subscription Free
- IN THE LAST DAYS
- **“And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith the Lord, I will pour out of My Spirit upon all flesh.” —Acts 2: 17.**
- **The Revival in Portland.**
- One of the mightiest revivals that Portland ever knew has taken place in that city. The devil raged, shots were fired, some were arrested and brought up before the judges, but the Lord worked on and healed all manner of diseases that were brought, baptized and saved many precious souls.

Early Meetings

- Some of the early meetings in Portland were held in a remodeled blacksmith shop. One attendee described the experience:
- *That hall was not a fancy-looking place.*
- *What windows there were in front were soon broken out by the rowdy element, and were boarded up. During one meeting an egg was thrown in.*
- *It struck the organ and broke, but made little disturbance, as we seemed to expect such things in those days. Rocks and vegetables were hurled through the windows.*
- *Sister Crawford had a deep scar on her forehead, from a gash she received when a glass bottle was through a window.*
- **The crowds were so large that the people would fill the hall and jam the aisles and be standing way out into the street.**

Denomination launched

- She started the Apostolic Faith Church in 1907
- The Portland revival launched a denomination with a global impact.
- As one of the initial auxiliary outreaches of the Azusa Mission, the mission at Portland has continued sharing the name Apostolic Faith
- It succeeded the work by nearly one hundred years.



Persecution

- In part, egalitarianism inflamed much of what the ministry called “serious” persecution.
- The free mixing of races scandalized many. Portland’s *Evening Telegram* published articles mocking the meetings and bringing absurd accusations.
- ***Sometimes antagonists resorted to violent means to disrupt the meetings. ... Persecutions were terrible.***
- ***They would throw snowballs, bottles, tin cans, and rotten eggs.***
- ***Every window in the Mission front was broken out and the glass in the doors and transoms. It was a regular battlefield.***



Camp Meetings

- The large membership gathered together in camping style
- New believers were taught, children were instructed, everyone ate meals together and spent the precious warm Northwestern summer days devoting themselves to prayer, teaching, preaching, and fellowship
- The camp meetings ended with the entire group singing and praying at the water's edge while hundreds were baptized.

3-Month-Long Meetings

- The first camp meetings lasted for three solid months.
- In time, a campsite was purchased and missionaries from around the world traveled to spend several weeks together with the entire church body.
- “Many were added to the congregation during the camp meetings, as people from various walks of life assembled to hear the preaching of the old-time religion.”



Egalitarian Community



- The long summers together had an equalizing effect on the congregation that gathered.
- Here old and young, rich and poor, white and black, and a mixture of many cultures and ethnic groups lived together side by side in the same quarters, sharing meals and stories, songs, and prayers.

Discussion Question

- What creative ways might be introduced to introduce egalitarian community into a church or group?

Growth



- In the 1920s, the camp meetings had grown to the extent that an eleven-acre grove was purchased and a tabernacle measuring 100 x 125 feet was erected at a height of 50 feet.
- It seated 2,000 worshippers.

Evangelism

- Over the years, the heartbeat of the denomination has continued to be evangelism
- birthing 122 churches around the world
- 50 congregations in the United States
- 15 congregations in Nigeria
- 11 in Canada
- 19 in Asia, eight in Europe
- 17 in the West Indies
- 2 in Australia



Challenges our understanding

- According to Alexander, “Females dominated the organization from the very beginning.”
- Vivian Deno characterizes Crawford's position in this way:
- “As other Pentecostals urged women to return home and submit themselves to the authority of their husband and pastor, she refused to relinquish her spiritual autonomy or to defer to the authority of men, be they her pastor, local magistrates, fellow Pentecostals, or even her husband.
- **Strong willed and fiercely independent, Crawford in many ways challenges our understanding of Pentecostal ...women.”**

Egalitarian vision

- The congregations have held true to Crawford's original egalitarian vision.
- Many of the churches in the United States and abroad are led by African-Americans and indigenous cultures.
- **“To this day, the commitment of the Apostolic Faith Church to diversity amongst its constituents and leadership is unprecedented among Pentecostal denominations.”**