PART THREE

The Later Commissioner Period
(1913-40)

Folks have dogs but don’t buy tags. A crowd collects to watch the chase. A little colored fellow runs up to the house. “They’re after yo’ dawg, Mis’ Caroline,” he yells. (Evening Star, 3 Aug 1924, p. 11)

The first half of the twentieth century saw two important developments in the District’s (and probably nation’s) animal-control situation (wandering farm animals having already largely disappeared):

- The regular threat, or at least fear, of rabies outbreaks largely disappeared, converting homeless dogs from dangers to pitiable waifs in need of help;

- Citizen-organized shelters, oriented more to the welfare than control of strays, bred and flourished. These shelters cared for cats as well as dogs.

These trends grew in urbanized Washington until they overwhelmed the traditional pound operations and ultimately subsumed them. Important official studies and new laws and regulations of the late 1930s and early ‘40s cemented these changes.

Sources: For this period our sources remain the same as the previous one but generally become scantier. Commissioners Annual Reports shrank back to one volume by the early 1920s and WHS annual reports have been lost. Many local newspapers are not available on-line (and therefore searchable) because of copyright restrictions.
CHAPTER TWENTY

The Pound Under Later Poundmasters

Samuel Einstein died on 9 July 1911, succeeded as poundmaster by Emil Kuhn on 13 July.¹ His appointment seems to have been a patronage effort; Kuhn was an active Republican, earlier employed by the Pittsburg “department of charities” (sic), but for the previous three years an elevator operator in the House of Representatives office building until a change of administration there. His acknowledged inexperience with the work and ignorance of such issues as rabies and muzzling (“He said he never had paid much attention to the question”) led to skepticism of his abilities. In spite of this unportentous start, press references picture pound operations continuing smoothly and we have no reason to think that Kuhn performed unsatisfactorily. In 1914 Kuhn resigned and moved to New York.²

Kuhn’s successor, George W. Rae,³ had worked as a Health Department inspector since 1896 and had just been appointed master carpenter at the Capitol when he was recommended for the position by Health Officer Woodward, the Postmaster General and a number of Congressional and business heavyweights. He was an active Democrat and belonged to the Shrine and Knights Templar. Rae was “the kindliest of persons, who will put down a little gray kitten that has clamored upon his shoulder and . . . tell you about the pound.”⁴

Rae died on 16 February 1920 when the pound truck was broadsided near Dupont Circle by a speeding Army truck. (Several poundmen were injured in this accident; Joe Burrell, the longest-serving man at the pound, could not return to street duty and was made on-site manager of the facility.) Rae, both professionally and socially popular, was much mourned. The city provided a pension for his widow, for he had died on duty. In all his years of public service he had taken only one day of annual leave. “Mr. Rae’s death came as a shock to employees and officials at the health department, who had been laughing and joking with him . . . only an hour before the accident.”⁵

Upon Rae’s tragic death the Health Department assigned an inspector (Walter Smith, below) to oversee pound operations before appointing local veterinarian Edgar R. Sando (often “Dr. Sando”, noted as the first licensed veterinarian to hold the post) poundmaster on 1 March 1920. “A strong advocate of

¹ Kuhn’s picture will be found in Wash. Times, 14 July 1911, p. 18; Evening Star, 27 Aug 1911, pt. 4 p. 3. Inspector C. H. Welsh, of the Health Department, filled in as poundmaster in the intervening week; his photo appeared in Wash. Times, 29 Oct 1922, p. 7. There were twelve applicants for the vacancy.
² Evening Star, 13 July 1911, p. 5; Wash. Times, 14 July 1911, p. 8; Wash. Post, 15 July 1911, p. 14; 4 Jan 1914, p. 16. Testimony relating to the District’s 1913 budget capsulized Kuhn’s situation: “There was not any man in the pound service who was competent to succeed the late very capable poundmaster. The present poundmaster has proved to be a very efficient man” (Hearings . . . 1913 (House), 11 Dec 1911, pp. 163-164).
³ Sometimes misspelled Ray. The courtly Rae’s image is in Wash. Times, 21 June 1914, p. 8; Evening Star, 16 Feb 1920, p. 2.
⁴ Wash. Post, 4 Jan 1914, p. 16; Wash. Times, 21 June 1914, p. 8. His appointment began on 3 January 1914 (Comm Minutes/Orders, 3 Jan 1914) and he was reported as “doing good work” at Congressional budget hearings in 1916 (Hearings . . . 1917 (House), 5 Jan 1916, p. 391).
⁵ Wash. Herald, 17 Feb 1920, p. 2; Evening Star, 16 Feb 1920, p. 2; 17 Feb 1920, p. 2; 18 Feb 1920, p. 7.
handling impounded animals in the most humane manner,” Sando stayed on the job only two months, resigning on 4 May for reasons not now known.6

Sando was succeeded immediately upon his resignation (perhaps because the Health Department knew the vacancy was coming) by Walter R. Smith,7 an inspector in the Department since 1905.8 A farm boy from Virginia “raised with dogs and horses,” he combined a sincere love of his animal wards (as he viewed them) with a strict enforcement of the law reminiscent of his predecessor Einstein.9 His tenure seems to have been a successful, well-managed period publicized mostly when he gave dogs to children and civic groups at Christmas or advised citizens on good pet care.

Smith was “a civilized human being,” a “friend of dogs,” “a genial man [who] gives both the dog and owner the benefit of the doubt when any one accuses him of unrightfully holding a dog.”10 His salary was raised in 1930 “in recognition of his knowledge and interest in dog lore.” Smith died after several months of failing health in 1936. “A kindly faced, elderly man, with graying hair and twinkling eyes died here yesterday and all the dogs whose ribs are spare, whose eyes are stark with hunger, lost the best friend they’ll ever know.”11

The vacancy drew 21 applicants “and each has a series of endorsements,” probably because of the now-generous salary. The Commissioners vowed that political support would not sway their decision – that they were looking for a cynophilist (dog-lover), preferably one already within the District government – and in July chose Frank B. Marks, a native Baltimorean who had most recently served as Chief of Watchmen at the District Building.12

In Marks the city found the ultimate dog-lover: “My chief aim in life is to help dogs,” he declared; “the District’s most militant dog lover,” as the Evening Star called him. He is the only poundmaster on record disparaging his predecessor: “When I took over the pound . . . it was the dirtiest, filthiest mess I ever saw . . . I rebuilt [it] and made it so the dogs had a little comfort.” Whatever the pound’s condition in 1936, a visitor in 1953 reported the place “clean and orderly . . . and Mr. Frank Marks . . . politeness itself.”13

In fact, over the years Poundmaster Marks became the darling of local animal-lovers and an annoyance to his District employer. He publicly complained about supervision of the pound by MPDC,

6 Wash. Herald, 17 Feb 1920, p. 2; Evening Star, 29 Mar 1920, p. 2; 4 May 1920, p. 1. A “Dr. Edgar R. Sando, District dairy farm inspector” died in 1933 at age 35. It is possible that at age 22 this was the same man in 1920 (Wash. Post, 21 Apr 1933, p. 3).
8 Evening Star, 16 May 1905, p. 16. Articles reporting his death say 1907 but this earlier notice seems decisive.
9 (Kindness) Evening Star, 2 July 1933, p. 17; (enforcement) Evening Star, 6 May 1921, p. 1; 27 June 1928, p. 39; 30 July 1931, p. 10. Smith had his adventures: he was once “arrested in line of duty” for as an apparent dog thief (Wash. Times, 6 May 1921, p. 1).
10 “The late W. R. Smith . . . brought a tiny, new puppy to [his friend C. M.] Towers in the palm of his hand one day. The terrier had been born at the pound without part of a leg. ‘I can’t put this puppy in the gas chamber,’ Smith said.” Tower adopted it (Evening Star, 15 Aug 1936, p. 7).
11 (Quotes, respectively) Evening Star, 2 July 1933, p. 17; Wash. Post, 16 May 1936, p. 26; 16 Dec 1933, p. 27; Evening Star, 15 May 1936, p. 14; for an earlier paean, see Evening Star, 20 Mar 1922, p. 2. The 1930 Congressional act raising the poundmaster’s salary also reinstated his status as an MPDC special officer.
gummed up the works of the Animal Allocation Board (of which he was a member; both these developments are discussed briefly in the Afterword), quarreled with the principal of neighboring Randall Junior High School, and vociferously allied himself with all anti-vivisectionists. His mandated retirement in 1953 (because of age) was withheld for four successive years due to enthusiastic support from the public. On 30 June 1958 Marks retired, leaving behind daily stress from his 22 years work and the recent requirement that some of his cherished dog friends be turned over to medical laboratories (“It has been an emotional strain to face daily this difficult situation”), succeeded by his assistant, John R. King.14

The poundmasters of this later period all, as far as we can tell today, handled their responsibilities competently and with sensitivity. Compare this record to the collection of thieves and non-entities appointed by the Corporations and Territorial Government to operate the contractor pounds. A striking point of each, beginning with Rae, was his well-publicized love of dogs. It is hard to think that earlier Health Officers specified “dog-lover” as a job requisite, as was done in 1936 – “dog-hunter” was then the more desired qualification.15

The larger shifts in Washington society that enabled this new posture have been already indicated and will be summarized again, but in speaking specifically of these 20th-century poundmasters we must acknowledge their enormous debt to their progenitor, Einstein. The worthy Einstein likewise appreciated animals, but he also knew his duty to the human population of the District. His successors worked upon a structure that he had built patiently and carefully over 39 years, and they inherited established procedures and standards to guide them, a luxury Einstein had not enjoyed. It was his stern enforcement of District laws over many years and the inevitable urbanization of Washington that permitted the softer, more loveable personas of Rae, Smith and Marks.

Before investigating the pound and its activities in this later period it would be good to review the key legal document relating to animal control in the District after the turn of the century, a special committee report from 1939.16 In October 1938 the Commissioners, responding to continued citizens’ complaints of “barking dogs, cackling chickens, etc.” (as one letter-writer put it), appointed a select committee to review police regulations regarding “so-called nuisance conditions arising from keeping of dogs, fowls and pigeons in the District,” composed of an Assistant Corporation Counsel, the Director of the Bureau of Sanitary Inspection, and the Assistant Superintendent of Police. This blue-ribbon group studied the legalities of District policy and received public opinion in a series of hearings, issuing its report on 23 January 1939. The report made comprehensive and very specific recommendations regarding dogs, fowl, pigeons, wild animals and bees, all of which were enacted on 24 February and will be described below.

The particular interest of the committee’s work regarding the city’s ordinances up to its own time is its close legal analysis of their foundation and authority, which helps explain a certain persistent looseness

14 Above references, and (“emotional strain”) letter, Commissioners to Rep. George Andrews, 16 Apr 1958 (National Archives, RG 351, Entry 21 “District General Files”, folder 1-105 “D.C. Pound Master”), which continues: “This [record] is unprecedented in the history of the District . . . Government and is a tribute to the high regard in which Mr. Marks is held.” This file contains many letters testifying to the admiration and support of local animal-support organizations (“I believe that Mr. Marks has made one of the finest and most unanimously-liked pound masters in the United States”; letter, John L. McMillan to Commissioners, 28 Mar 1956). He was “the embodiment of Commissioner Hazen’s ideal of a dogcatcher” (Wash. Post, 16 Oct 1936, p. X19).

15 In further contrast to Hoover et al., the Health Officer specified in 1912 that the new poundmaster must be “a man of industry, intelligence, and courtesy in dealing with the public” and have some knowledge of dog breeding (Hearings . . . 1913 (Senate), 16 Feb 1912, pp. 81-82).

16 National Archives (RG 351, Entry 21 “District General Files”, folder 1-100 “Animals, Fowl & Wildlife”). A copy has been deposited with the Washingtoniana Division. The Commissioners appointed the committee on 22 July 1938 and approved its recommendations on 24 Feb 1939.
that runs through the successive regulations. “The difficulty encountered by the committee on this question [control of dogs] arose from the fact that Congress itself has withdrawn from the Commissioners all but a general power to carry into effect the former’s own specific enactments on this subject.” That is, the Commissioners could not initiate regulations of broader import than those already approved by Congress, a handicap doubtless felt throughout District governance. Nonetheless, the committee in its recommendation on leashing took city regulations into new territory, as shall be seen.

Pound work after about 1900 centered largely on pets, *farm animals* having largely disappeared from the District. Capture of these animals fell steadily from 105 in 1896 to 17 in 1905 and stayed at about that number into 1940 (Appendix C3). Such events became a matter of curiosity rather than routine, meriting occasional brief filler articles in the local papers. This condition was reflected in District regulations also; a review of Commissioners orders and police regulations after the 1890s shows no new rules regarding larger animals, and the important 1939 District-government review of animal laws did not mention them.

The only new regulations issued related to smaller animals, specifically the continuing issue of *chickens*. (Note the increasing number of registered “chicken houses” recorded in Appendix C1 – from 1,232 in 1915 to 2,424 in 1923, not a development expected by modern readers.) These rules saw seven revisions in 1939-40 and others into the 1950s, always further restricting their latitude, but in 1939 dropping restrictions for *homing pigeons*. The pigeon question carried unique considerations. As early as 1896 the Police Court (which seems to have regularly issued eccentric rulings) declared that the “fowl” of standing restrictions “means the common domestic chicken or hen, and does not apply to pigeons,” although in fact the birds remained under the regulations. Furthermore, these birds had a small but intense circle of owner-supporters, and the military trained them in its Washington facilities for its own

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17 For an illuminating analysis of the tangled results caused by conflicting authorities as they applied to dog-related regulations, see Evening Star, 31 Oct 1943, p. 42.
18 We must record that the pound took a coyote in 1916 (Poundmaster Ann Rpt, 1916), and in 1937 a monkey and an alligator (Hearings . . . 1938 (Senate), 18 May 1937, pp. 4-5). The bag for 1945 consisted of three rabbits, two goats and four pigs (Evening Star, 23 Dec 1945, p. 8).
19 Quite unexpectedly, the Corporation Counsel was asked in 1944 whether the pound could charge a fee for redeemed “stray horses and other animals.” What prompted this query – from the poundmaster himself – we do not know; perhaps a few horses still pulled milk carts through the city. The Counsel responded that this long-practiced fee was not justified by local law and that such charges were only legal if levied by MPDC for its holding of the animal. Surely the question was moot by this time, and the practice itself seems to have gone out of memory (Counsel Opinions 17 Mar 1944; Vol. 54, p. 762).
20 At least one cote – used for breeding squabs – still stands in the District, at the Tudor Place mansion in Georgetown.
21 Much interesting background material on the chicken question will be found in the National Archives (RG 351, Entry 21 “District General Files”, folder 1-113 “Fowls”), including a summary of the legal questions involved, citizen input pro and con on proposed restrictions in 1926, and a full set of papers relating to the case of a resident keeping fowls at his residence in the 3700 block of Northampton Street NW covering 1931-38. There is also record of a 1955 discussion on the conditions of chicks kept in pet stores.
22 Cited in Counsel Opinions, 3 Oct 1896 (Vol. 7, p. 137). This curious document equivocates on the question under review – whether the neighbor of a pigeon-owner was culpable for putting out poison on his own property to permanently quiet the birds’ annoying cooing. The Counsel had declared in favor of another neighbor-poisoner in a similar contretemps involving murdered chickens in 1897 (Counsel Opinions, 16 Nov 1897; Vol. 8, p. 222).
use (“The 25-foot [proposed restriction] might have [a] disastrous effect upon the flying of pigeons belonging to the U.S. Army”).  

In 1939 the Commissioners issued an order prohibiting the keeping of “captured wild animal[s]” as pets without a permit.  

The tale of the city’s dogs in this later period continued as before but with less passion, the rabies/muzzling/get-your-license/catch-dogs pattern set since 1900 persisting, and would be tedious to recount here year by year. Annually, after new testimony from the Health Officer describing the danger of rabies and the number of people bitten, the Commissioners extended their muzzling edict – for full years in 1911-20, July-September in the next five years, June-September from 1926 until 1934, and May-September then to 1944.  

A scan of typical headlines through the period shows the continuity of the dog question in Washington:

1911: “Muzzle Law Not Well Enforced”; “[Experts] Raises Doubts of Rabies”
1912: “Crusade Upon Dogs”
1913: “Rabies Suspect Cases Are on the Increase”
1914: “Order Muzzling Dogs Is Extended for Year”
1916: “Dog-Bite Epidemic Rouses Authorities to Seek Cure”
1917: “Failure to Muzzle Dogs Means Arrest”
1918: “Police to Enforce D.C. Law Against Unmuzzled Dogs”
1919: “D.C. Dogs Bite 208 Persons in Year”
1921: “Pets Free to Bite for 9 Months”
1924: “Police Kept Busy by Vicious Dogs”
1925: “Dr. Fowler to Urge Muzzling of Dogs”
1926: “Extra Dog-Catcher Force Advocated”
1930: “Muzzling of Dogs Is Opposed by [WHS]”
1931: “Saturday Deadline for Licensing Dogs”
1933: “Dog Owners Warned to Obtain Muzzles”; “‘Mad Dog’ Cry Seldom Justified, Records Show”

Against the background of this familiar routine, the pound’s operations showed some differences from Einstein’s time. With the intense pressure to take in illegal canines generated by continuous publicity of bites and rabies but the pound force back down to four men and one wagon, the Health Officer declared that the poundmen could do no better than their best and pleaded for police help. MPDC Superintendent Sylvester ordered his men to arrest owners of unmuzzled mutts in 1912 but they also

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24 Ibid. Echoed a representative of the clubs: “Homing and carrier pigeons serve [a] useful purpose. Other pigeons are [a] nuisance” (from the 1926 testimony cited above).
25 The first victim of this regulation was a legless news vendor, Eddie Bernstein, who lost his attention-grabbing monkey Gypsy (Evening Star, 30 June 1939, p. 20; for a good profile of Bernstein and Gypsy see John Kelly’s columns in Wash Post, 18 Aug 2019, p. C3, and 25 Aug, p. C3). The District’s General Files (National Archives, RG 351, Entry 21 “District General Files”, folder 1-109 “Animals in Public Space”) contain a 1958 letter from a downtown resident asking permission to walk his pet ocelot along M Street NW “in the same manner as any dog . . . owner would want to do” – turned down.
26 National Archives (RG 351, Entry 21 “District General Files”, folder 1-118 “Keeping of Bees and Hives”).
27 The shortened period was ordered over objections of Health Officer William C. Fowler. Explained Commissioner Rudolph: “We feel that the poor bow-wows lead a curtailed life for three months and that they should be allowed to run free the other nine months” (Wash. Times, 20 June 1921, p. 9).
28 Blame for this decrease was always assigned to an indifferent Congress.
faced limits on what could be accomplished. Soon authorities began encouraging private citizens to bring civil suits against owners in cases of attack.  

Other proposals floated (without resulting action) included: prohibiting dogs from running at large overnight, as was then common practice; and requiring owners to justify possession of such pets. The Health Officer also took a new tack in fixing blame for these perennial problems on a new culprit: “There are two causes of dog bites – vicious dogs and vicious children.” That youngsters regularly teased dogs was shown by the preponderance of injuries among children, he pointed out. “A dog is bound to resent too severe mauling and may bite,” agreed MPDC Superintendent Raymond Pullman. 

The muzzle problem reappeared in the guise of the “figure-eight muzzle” – “which is merely a strap passing over the nose and under the mouth.” “Entirely inadequate,” according to authorities. The absence of lobbying on these various issues by citizens’ groups, as had earlier happened, is striking.

Leashing remained an uncertain area because, as seen above, the District could not extend regulations beyond that allowed by Congressional fiat, and established laws only required restraint of vicious dogs. The District Corporation Counsel’s 1908 declaration that dogs “in leash” were not “at large” and therefore not required to wear muzzles during emergency periods was written into the muzzling orders of 1923 and thereafter. Leashing as a required year-round restraint was finally codified in 1939, at the suggestion of the special committee, but absence of any reference to the practice in the 1878 Congressional law made it ineffective until the 1945 legislation. 

During this same period leashing on the street became the norm of respectable society (hunters had long known it). Newspaper articles referring to pedestrians with their leashed pets increasingly appeared, and also complaints of dogs not restrained, beginning about 1910 and seemingly the standard practice after 1920 (although ads for leads never reached the number of muzzle ads).

To take this story of city canines to its end, in 1941 the Commissioners authorized the Health Department to seize any dog suspected of rabies for observation, and two years later leashed dogs were

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29 Evening Star, 26 May 1912, p. 5 is the earliest instance of this suggestion that I find. Woodward: “If some of the people bitten by vicious dogs would sue owners . . . it would be a great step in preventing future cases” (Wash. Times, 27 Sept 1916, p. 5).

30 A “pernicious practice . . . followed to considerable extent in this city” (Woodward; Evening Star, 5 June 1911, p. 1). It was difficult for the poundmen to take them in the dark (Evening Star, 26 May 1912, p. 5).

31 Was Woodward serious in this, or simply expressing his frustration? He complained furthermore that they ate food fit for humans (Wash. Times, 30 Oct 1917, p. 4).


34 The Safety-First Association supported muzzling in 1917 (Wash. Times, 13 Dec 1917, p. 8).

35 See Evening Star, 29 Mar 1920, p. 2; Wash. Herald, 10 June 1922, p. 4, et al. for later references to the new practice.

36 This glitch is explained in Evening Star, 24 Oct 1943, p. 19; and 31 Oct 1943, p. 42. And even after that – see the Afterword, in which Congress again tackled this momentous question in 1961.

37 On the odd side of leashing: Two fashionable New York ladies were reported in 1907 thus accessorized: “A little gold clamp fastened to the bottom of the skirt at one side is snapped into the rings of the dog collar . . . A good many persons wondered what would happen if two of the skirt-leashed dogs took a notion to mix it up” (Wash. Times, 21 Apr 1907, Woman’s Magazine p. 8); 1922 saw a new fashion trend: the “dog-collars belt” or “dog-leash belt”, which was quite thin (Evening Star, 12 Apr 1922, p. 30); and for “the latest freak of society,” the baby leash, see Wash. Times, 4 Aug 1909, p. 7. (I cannot resist passing on this tidbit: In 1922 Parisian ladies dyed their pets to match their ensembles; Wash. Times, 6 Aug 1922, Magazine p. 5.)
made exempt from the muzzling requirement during the annual rabies emergency.\(^{38}\) (The 1943-45 period was the last major rabies scare. Inoculation of dogs had become common by then.) At the urging of Health Officer George Ruhland, the Commissioners sent to Congress proposed *amendments* to the 1878 law requiring vaccination for issuance of dog licenses and authorizing leashing in public places. This act passed on 5 July 1945. Leashing became compulsory on 23 July 1945 and muzzling ended in the District on the same day. Vaccination against rabies entered the city’s regimen with the same legislation, bringing dog-control regulations largely to those of today.\(^{39}\)

Judging from the occasional references to passengers taking their pets on streetcars and trains there was no restriction in this regard. A Corporation Counsel memo of 1944 tells us that the District itself had no regulations on the question at that time but that the Capital Transit Company allowed animals to ride only if restrained (held, leashed, muzzled or in a carrier), to the annoyance of many passengers.\(^{40}\) The 1939 act banned dogs from private property without the proprietor’s permission. And for the inevitable doggie habit of chasing cars, the only notice I find is a 1939 amendment to the District’s traffic regulations (suggested by the special committee) exempting drivers from dog-injury claims involving unrestrained pursuers.\(^{41}\)

We should note that as the urban fabric grew the problem of rabies and dogs became an inter-jurisdictional concern. Alexandria, Arlington and Staunton (in Virginia), and Chevy Chase, Takoma Park and Prince George’s County (Maryland), all reported similar efforts between 1907 and 1926.\(^{42}\) Statistics from the 1910s show that about half those taking the Pasteur cure at the Marine Hospital lived outside of DC.\(^{43}\)

Just how many provable cases of rabies occurred remained a matter of debate. Newspapers continued to write of the “rabies season” and the Health Officer and Police Superintendent (strongly supported by Commissioner W. Glynn Gardiner) warned regularly of “the continued presence of rabies in the District.” Increasingly, neighboring jurisdictions with looser muzzling laws were blamed for this problem.\(^{44}\)

The Health Officer’s meticulous statistics (Appendix C6) included in the Commissioners annual reports show only a handful of actual deaths from rabies before 1917 and none after then. Of course, Dr. Pasteur’s treatment presumably saved many bite victims. The more salient figures are the number of animals and humans found to have actually contracted the disease, a determination made by the Department of Agriculture’s Bureau of Animal Industry laboratory (for animals) and the Marine Hospital

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38 During an exceptional winter rabies emergency of 1943, dogs were required to wear both muzzles and leashes on the street; those brought into the District without a veterinarian’s certificate of health were quarantined; Marks suspended sales at the pound (Evening Star, 24 Oct 1943, p. 19).

39 Evening Star, 12 Jan 1941, p. 3; 8 Feb 1945, p. 17; 19 Apr 1945, p. 32; 13 July 1945, p. 1; 23 July 1945, p. 16 (for an illustration of the difficulty of implementing new procedures in a town full of lawyers); Wash. Post, 2 Dec 1943, p. B1. Evening Star, 14 July 1945, p. 17 describes the vaccination plans in detail, including the difficulty of obtaining sufficient vaccine. District-sponsored vaccination clinics became common at this time, including at the pound (see, e.g., Wash. Post, 7 July 1948, p. B2).

40 Counsel Opinions, 29 July 1944 (Vol. 55, p. 65). Seeing-eye dogs were exempted by the company from muzzling.

41 Comm Minutes/Orders, 24 Feb 1939.


43 These are given in Appendix C6. As with all rabies-related statistics, the numbers are confused; for conflicting figures see Wash. Times, 30 Oct 1917, p. 4.

44 Reminding one of the present debate over illegal guns in the city. The continuing crisis also fueled a constant demand for more money for pound operations. A useful summary of local dog-regulations will be found in Wash. Post, 22 Mar 1972, p. C1.
Suspicious animals caught on the street were quarantined at the pound under observation by a Health Department veterinarian. If found healthy but tagless they then entered the standard holding-execution process, while those taken directly from owners were returned to their masters.

The Health Officer made painstaking compilations of “suspected rabid”, “confirmed rabid”, “bitten by suspected rabid”, “. . . by confirmed” and so forth under the title “Communicable Diseases Among Animals”. Newspapers also often reported such statistics, generally accompanied by accounts of recent attacks. In spite of this documentation it is difficult to get a feel of the rabies situation in Washington for the period with any confidence. This is due to the unpredictable fluctuations in official statistics, compounded by direct contradictions between these figures and those cited (on attribution to the Health Officer) in contemporary newspaper accounts.

Why was the number of patients given the Pasteur treatment nearly twice that of reported bite victims in 1912? Why did Woodward claim two deaths from rabies in 1915 when his own report for that year shows none? Or that in 1914, 67 District residents were treated when the official report showed 16? And many more of the same. Probably the safest thing to say is that a good number of persons – in the several hundreds – were bitten by dogs every year, that a disproportionate share submitted to the painful Pasteur treatment (it was given on any suspicion of rabies), and that fortunately very few actually died. The public and official fear was probably exaggerated but certainly real. “Washington has been virtually free of rabies since 1931,” we read from a later article, and the last authenticated case occurred in 1946, although minor, localized scares occurred for years. Only occasional reports of bites by rabid cats appeared.

Licensing procedures, longer established than muzzling, proceeded smoothly in this later period. The Police Court in 1911 unhelpfully ruled that tags need only be worn when off the owner’s property, a view challenged by the Corporation Counsel in 1911 and again in 1914. We have no information on how this affected impoundment. Otherwise the licensing process, handled by the Tax Office, continued with no interruption until 1931, when the Auditor (overseeing tax collection) tried to foist the duty onto the District Assessor, unsuccessfully. The ensuing confusion led to a short period of non-issuance due to lack of proper forms. Poor management of the work led to dismissal of several staff in the late 1930s.

45 Some sources say the Hygienic Laboratory, U.S. Public Health Service (Health Officers Ann Rpt, 1912, p. 35; Wash. Times, 30 June 1919, p. 13).
46 “This service requires the greater part of the time of a veterinarian, who is also detailed to the inspection of dairy farms” (Health Dept Ann Rpt, 1935).
47 Wash. Times, 30 Oct 1917, p. 4; Evening Star, 28 June 1922, p. 6. Eighteen were returned to their owners in 1913 (Wash. Post, 4 Jan 1914, p. 16); see Appendix C3. There was no charge for properly licensed animals returned.
49 Especially after the Marine Hospital Service began offering it for free in 1909. “Many persons have availed themselves of the opportunity of receiving treatment” (HO Ann Rpt, 1909).
50 See Wash. Post, 25 Sept 1933, p. 18 for a brief rebuttal of the scare.
51 Evening Star, 15 Aug 1936, p. 7; 13 Apr 1971, p. 1. “No dogs were found to be suffering from rabies during . . . 1932. Rabies has been steadily declining for several years past and at present seems to have practically disappeared in the District of Columbia” (Health Dept Ann Rpt, 1933). Indeed, after 1938 the Health Officer ceased to report on rabies at all, describing examination of suspect canines under the rubric of “duties of the laboratory staff” rather than investigation of communicable diseases. Rabies after the 1940s were believed carried by foxes and other wild animals rather than dogs (testimony, Paul L. Romig, 8 May 1973; National Archives, RG 351, Entry 45 “Hearing Files, 1967-1974”, “Dogs, Stray”); this testimony is very interesting – Romig headed Animal Disease Control for the District’s Department of Human Resources and gave many useful details.
52 Counsel Opinions, 25 Sept 1911 (Vol. 22, p. 43); 17 Oct 1914 (Vol. 25, p. 65).
(An article of 1936 tells us that during the Harding administration the District Collector of Taxes, C. M. Towers, began holding the first 100 licenses for prominent Washingtonians, #1 being gold-dipped and reserved for the president, if he had a dog.)

The only change in licensing procedure during this time is that by 1936 these funds were deposited into the U.S. Treasury. The 1945 law revised the dog tax to $3.

The number of dogs impounded annually by Smith was actually greater than by Einstein – while the latter took curs in the range of 2,500-3,000 (other than the exceptional years of muzzling or licensing campaigns), Smith’s haul averaged 4,500-5,500 yearly. About 25% of these were brought in voluntarily by owners. How many dogs did the District hold in these years? The number of licensed dogs in 1921 was 10,947, and in 1931, 19,123; it reportedly doubled in one year (1936) to 25,000, and the 1939 committee report estimated 40,000 total, of which about 10,000 were unlicensed. “This . . . figure is not believed to be an overstatement in view of the present population here of over 600,000.” Marks pessimistically estimated 65-70,000 dogs in Washington in 1941, of which only 25,000 had tags.

The matter of cats showed very little change after 1913; all cats at the pound had been captured by citizens or delivered directly by their owners. “The District has no authority to capture stray cats, so residents are denied the fun of seeing a perspiring man with a long-handled net scale fences and climb trees after elusive cats.” Every cat reaching the pound went into the gas chamber, as before. The total number impounded rose from about 500 in 1904 to over 4,000 in 1915 and then declined steadily to 1,200 by the end of our study period.

One innovation in cat-catching was the introduction of traps, described by the Washington Times in 1914: “An ingenious device called a cat trap has recently made an appearance . . . It is an oblong wooden box fitted with a trap door, and when the inquiring cat enters for a tempting morsel . . . the door is sprung.” The pound supplied these devices to homeowners upon request and then picked up the captured tom. 183 cats were taken this way in 1914 and 231 and 204 the following two years.

The 1939 committee found no public interest in instituting cat laws or legal foundation to do so.

Basic **pound operations** continued after Einstein much as they had under him; a brief – and rare – description of a pound run from 1937 could have been written in 1900 except that the wagon was

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54 Memo, National Archives, RG 351, Entry 21 “District General Files”, folder 1-104 “Dog Tags”.
55 Evening Star, 15 Aug 1936, p. 7. We have no information whether the President paid the tax but can guess not.
56 Ibid.
57 It is difficult to compare this rate with that of Einstein’s time – we only have figures from his last years, but the various written accounts of earlier pound operations seldom speak of voluntary surrender of dogs. Marks gave the same proportion as Smith. He also said the pound held about 50 dogs on the average day (Hearings . . . 1938 (House), 9 Feb 1937, pp. 88-91).
58 Evening Star, 4 Oct 1921, p. 2; 12 July 1931, p. 1; 15 May 1936, p. 14; Hearings . . . 1942 (House), 22 May 1941, pp. 55-59 . “The Nation’s Capital, being a spot where the unmarried, childless and itinerant are likely to yearn for a dog about the apartment” (Evening Star, 15 Aug 1936, p. 7). Dr. Milton Bosley, a prominent local veterinarian, estimated there to be 100,000 pet owners throughout the metropolitan area in 1936 (Wash. Times, Jan 1936, date unclear, file clipping Wash. Div).
59 Wash. Times, 2 July 1920, p. 13, a very wittily-written article (“Cats Lead ‘Dog’s Life’ Here – 30 Tons of ‘Em Made into Soap”). In fact the Commissioners order of 1912 required such (amusing) procedures; the writer should have said “has no capacity to capture”. Poundmaster Kuhn’s take on District cat policy is given in Appendix D8.
60 Summarized Health Officer Woodward: “We put them in a covered cage, turn on a little poison gas, and it’s goodbye cat.” In 1917 the DC Congress of Mothers and the District PTA proposed the charming little campaign: “Kill a Cat for Your Country,” saying felines gave children mange (Wash. Herald, 24 Apr 1917, p. 5).
motorized and at least one of the poundmen appears to be white.\(^{62}\) The labor force available remained a persistent question. Although in Einstein’s last years his workers had been increased spasmodically as rabies scares/muzzling enforcement ebbed and flowed, his successor Kuhn had dropped back to one wagon (from two)\(^{63}\) and four – and at times three – poundmen. Health Officers and succeeding poundmasters complained energetically to a stingy Congress, which cut funding for the poundmen from $3,000 to $2,000 in 1912, and in 1937 slashed the poundmaster’s salary. “With our present equipment, we can never hope to overtake the work,” moaned Woodward. In 1914 the poundmaster operated three wagons, but this surely was temporary, since he had only three men two years later.\(^{64}\)

Several factors besides the growing number of Washington dogs in the city and repeated muzzling edicts contributed to the distress of Kuhn and Rae. Reported the Washington Post in 1912: “The new pound now being built . . . will require a larger force of men than the old one,” without explaining why.\(^{65}\) A very measurable burden was the obligation to pick up unwanted pets and captured cats from residences. “The removal of animals in this way . . . imposes an enormous amount of labor on the [Health] department, 4,573 visits having been made during the year . . . As the requests that come in during one day are . . . scattered over the entire District . . . and as all require reasonably prompt attention, the time consumed in . . . such visits can readily be conceived.”\(^{66}\)

The Health Officer, in his 1936 annual report, recorded that “inasmuch as the dog pound is not primarily a health service,” the Commissioners had removed the service from his jurisdiction and placed it directly under their own supervision. This threw more clerical work on the poundmaster, work which had previously been done by Health Department staff.\(^{67}\)

Woodward’s 1914 annual report made three specific recommendations to improve the pound service: appointment of an assistant poundmaster\(^{68}\) and night watchman; higher wages for the force; and purchase of “a proper motor vehicle” to replace the horse-drawn wagons. With the increasingly scanty records of this period it is difficult to know what became of the first idea, although we have noted earlier that in 1920 the disabled Joe Burrell was made “Keeper of the Pound”, the highest level an African-American achieved at the pound in our study period. By 1926 the pound staff included a chauffeur and watchman.

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\(^{63}\) The pound owned two wagons (heavy and light teams), “but we have only horses enough to haul one team at a time.” With this restriction the poundmaster sent the heavy team out in the mornings and evenings and the light team in mid-day (Wash. Herald, 26 May 1911, p. 6; Evening Star, 29 May 1913, p. 5). Hearings . . . 1914 (House), 3 Jan 1913, p. 193, has a good description of the street operations: the heavy wagon (worked by a driver and two runners) handled captures from the street; the lighter one (one or two men) made pick-ups from houses.

\(^{64}\) Wash. Post, 1 Sept, 1911, p. 2; 23 June 1912, p. 9; Wash. Herald, 26 May 1911, p. 6; Wash. Times, 21 June 1914, p. 8; 27 Sept 1916, p. 5; Evening Star, 30 Mar 1937, p. 6. Unfortunately the Health Officer and Poundmaster annual reports begin to lose their detail at about this time, so we have to rely more on chance newspaper notices.


\(^{66}\) Poundmaster Ann Rpts, 1913, 1914. The 4,573 trips of 1914 retrieved 7,042 animals, to give an idea of how tedious these many one-stop runs must have been. They averaged 5,000 in the late 1930s (see Appendix C3). Marks testified in 1941 that about 25 such runs were made daily, covering on average 50 miles (Hearings . . . 1942 (House), 22 May 1941, pp. 55-59). The Animal Rescue league had the same complaint (below).

\(^{67}\) This was a recommendation of the U.S. Public Health Service. Health Dept Ann Rpt, 1936; Comm Minutes/Orders, 23 June 1936. From this point on the meager Poundmaster Annual Reports appear as independent items at the very end of the Commissioners Annual Reports.

\(^{68}\) Whose salary was proposed at $720 annually in the 1917 District budget request (Hearings . . . 1917 (Senate), 31 May 1916, pp. 118-119).
(paid $1,020 annually between the two; $1,320 and $1,260 respectively in 1936). A clerk was paid $1,260 in 1936. Health Department financial reports show that salaries for poundmen stayed at $510 yearly to at least 1920, and had risen to about $1,100 by 1936.

The poundmaster’s pay rose from $1,500 to $1,680 in 1917, and to $3,080 by act of Congress in 1930 after an extremely flattering report by the Senate Committee on the District (below). However, the 1938 budget dropped his salary by over one-third to $2,000. This drastic decrease originated partly from the separation of the pound and its budget from that of the Health Department; now the pound’s expenses came under detailed scrutiny of Congress, and the poundmaster’s salary was seen to be near that of even high-ranking MPDC officers. But Marks’ rough handling by Rep. Ross Collins in the 1937 hearings is inexplicable:

Collins: What are your qualifications for this job, Mr. Marks?
Marks: I think --
C: We do not want any thinking.
M: I mean I feel the bill --
C: We do not want your opinion of it. We want to know what your qualifications are.

The Commissioners bemoaned this decision every year thereafter and Committee members in 1941 could not explain it (Rep. Young: “I understand his salary for some reason . . . was reduced.”). Marks continued his work conscientiously but naturally resented the loss (“He is complaining very much, Senator”). Perhaps his later antagonistic relationship with the District had some roots here. By a sort of financial legerdemain the poundmaster’s salary increased a pitiful $200 in 1941.

As for the motorized pound truck (“an old [1914] Cadillac chassis with a body put on it”), it was included in the District’s FY1918 appropriations and entered service in the summer of 1917. Alas! No advance comes without its own problems: by the end of that year the pound had expended its gasoline funds and threatened to shut down all runs for want of fuel, something that never occurred with the horses. It also had mechanical trouble: “It breaks down nearly every time it goes out,” complained Fowler in Congressional testimony of 1921.

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69 The watchman made $600 in 1917, when Health Officer Fowler pleaded with Congress for a raise: “It has been very difficult to keep anybody there at all” (Hearings . . . 1919 (House), 14 Dec 1917, p. 265). The 1910 WHS report on pound conditions referred to a “caretaker” with a bed at the facility (“Report of the Special Committee Appointed to Visit the City Pound”, 6 Dec 1910; filed with WHS Exec Comm minutes).

70 Perhaps this is the “assistant poundmaster” whose position was upgraded by the Commissioners in 1937 (Comm Minutes/Orders, 15 Oct 1937).


72 Hearings . . . 1938 (House), 9 Feb 1937, pp. 88-91. Collins was particularly upset that Marks was not a veterinarian, something that had never been required.

73 Sen. Thomas: “Do you mean you cannot get a dog-catcher for $2,000 a year?” Harry F. Wender (President of the Southwest Citizens’ Association): “You can get a man for $1,000 . . . because times are such that you could get a man to work for almost anything, but that man [Marks] is worth $3,080 for the type of work that he does. The efficient work that he performs . . . is worth the additional $1,080” (Hearings . . . 1939 (Senate), 8 Feb 1938, pp. 456-457).

74 Hearings . . . 1939 (Senate), 8 Feb 1938, pp. 78-82; Hearings . . . 1942 (House), 22 May 1941, pp. 55-59. Both explain how this was accomplished.

75 The new 1940 truck was a 1½ ton Chevrolet model with a special body (Comm Minutes/Orders, 11 Oct 1940).

76 Hearings . . . 1923 (House), 12 Dec 1921, p. 474. Hearings . . . 1914 (House), 3 Jan 1913, pp. 193-194 – the earliest incidence of this proposal – gives a detailed discussion, including Woodward’s assurance that the new
A few minor changes in procedure might be noted: Food for the pound dogs now came from the National Zoo—"all their bones and scraps," an expense figured at $637 in FY 1940; dogs redeemed or purchased from the pound had to have tags and vaccinations to be taken (per the 1945 act); newspapers advertised pound pooches gratis, as they perhaps did also for shelters; the pound service received a two-way radio in 1944. On the other hand, complaints about too-few men and breaking-down trucks continued as before.77

The Senate District Committee’s 1930 report on the proposed raise of the poundmaster’s salary78 painted a picture of that gentleman’s duties that Einstein would have immediately recognized:

“The qualifications for the position are tact, judgment, administrative ability, and knowledge of the diseases of dogs.” – “He is frequently called upon to perform dangerous tasks and on numerous occasions has been attacked.” – “If several claimants appear for the same animal, the PM must act as judge and jury in ascertaining the true owner.” – “The PM has supervision [of] seven employees and the pound comprises a group of buildings covering almost a quarter of a city block. To do his work well [he] must possess administrative ability.” – “The PM [has] the duty of enforcing the pound laws. An error of judgment may involve him as well as the District in a court action.” – “The PM is practically always on duty. He is subject to calls at all hours, and is practically a 24-hour man. The clerical work must frequently be done at home at nights or on Sundays.” – “If no claimant appears the animal is killed or sold. In case of public sale the poundmaster acts as auctioneer—a quite frequent occurrence.” – “The field duties of the [PM] are frequently more hazardous than those of the police. [He] is given neither a pistol nor a pension. The present incumbent has on several occasions been assaulted and injured.”79 – “The PM must render daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly and yearly reports. A report of fees collected must be made every day.”80 – “The PM is twice a bonded officer. Yet [he] must pay the premiums for both bonds out of his meager salary.”

The report continued that in spite of these onerous tasks Poundmaster Smith had steadily increased the number of animals taken, fees collected and dogs licensed, all this “in large measure, attributable to the activity of the poundmaster . . . and . . . accomplished without additional facilities or cost to the Government and only after a hard fight against stern opposition from the public.”

The separation of the District pound service from the Health Department in 1936 led to appearances by Poundmaster Marks at annual Congressional hearings on the proposed DC budget, and this testimony gives us our first direct view of any poundmaster since Einstein wrote his own reports thirty years earlier. In preparation for hearings on the 1942 budget (in May 1941) Marks prepared a précis of his duties, followed by requests (and justifications) for increases in support. As a final nod to one focus of this long research— the District poundmaster— I copy verbatim his very brief and, I think, incomplete job description.81

vehicle could not be used “for pleasure” by off-duty employees; Hearings . . . 1923 (Senate), 13 Feb 1922, p. 137; Wash. Times, 18 Dec 1917, p. 3 has a good photo. The District bought a replacement in 1928.


78 Senate Comm on DC, “Giving Police Power”.

79 The Commissioners rejected (on legal grounds) Poundmaster Marks’ request that his men be given the same police powers that he carried (Comm Minutes/Orders, 30 Mar 1937). The poundmaster’s MPDC Commission, suspended at some earlier time, had been re-instated with the 1930 pay raise.

80 These procedures were revised in 1941. Comm Minutes/Orders, 26 Mar 1941 gives all specifics.

81 Hearings . . . 1942 (House), 22 May 1941, pp. 55-59. Several of the hearing transcripts cited in this section include Marks’ verbal descriptions of his work.
• Enforcement of laws relative to impounding of domestic animals at large in the District of Columbia;
• Supervision and responsibility for administration of work of the pound, maintaining all records, actively
directing the operating activities, handling of correspondence, preparation of annual and other reports, budget
estimates, etc.;
• Supervises investigations concerning complaints regarding vicious animals and in his discretion directs the
impounding of all such animals;
• Collects and captures unlicensed and unlawful stray dogs and impounds for redemption, sale or disposal. All
known vicious animals or those suspected of having rabies are held in quarantine in the pound for examination
by a District of Columbia veterinarian.

Rep. Karl Stefan kindly added remarks to the poundmaster’s testimony that would have much
gratified Einstein so many years earlier: “I want to remark here, Mr. Chairman, that . . . an ordinary
layman looks at a poundmaster as the old-fashioned dog-catcher. That work has been really raised to a
very high level in recent years in that the dog-catcher now has become the boys’ friends instead of the
boys’ enemy. They have got to be highly scientific men today where they really teach the public to be not
only kind to animals but make the animals useful to the public. And . . . they can eliminate an epidemic
here – look at this man handling 60,000 dogs in this community ten miles square, and innumerable cats
and other animals . . . And you know he really becomes a very important man in our community rather
than the old-fashioned dog-catcher with the iron hoop that we all used to see.”

And so the District pound after Einstein, with some modernizations (new building, motor truck), in its
basic procedures (mechanics of runs, method of holding and killing animals, rabies protocols) looked very
much like the pound under Einstein, certainly in his last years. But a more basic transformation was
changing the pound both in its own outlook and its perception by the public: the pound was gradually
moving from a stern enforcer of laws and executioner of unwanted animals to a friendly place where
happy if unfortunate four-legs and kind-hearted two-legs came together.

We have seen that poundmasters from Rae on were publicized for their warm love of animals. Beginning with the 1920s the pound itself took on this image. What factors brought about this
transformation?

• Farm animals had essentially disappeared from the District. Those that remained (it is safe to
conjecture) were confined to proper farms, such as the Soldier’s Home, and no longer bothered
average citizens, certainly not on city streets and their front yards;
• Gradually the reality and perception of rabies subsided, and with it the fear of unfamiliar dogs and
cats;
• Public habits changed: the custom of turning dogs outdoors overnight and while on vacations slowly
disappeared, and the popular and legal acceptance of leashing on the street allowed people to keep
dogs without seeming to threaten others or inadvertently add to the stray population. We can assume
also that the increased traffic and density of the city made owners less inclined to allow dogs to run
free;
• Most importantly, the number of loose mutts living in alleys and fields had greatly diminished, to the
point that most residents probably were unused to seeing the packs of “mangy curs” which their

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82 Discussed at more length below in the section on WARL. The 1939 regulations requiring leashing on-street
would have made this (in theory) illegal. How would you turn out a dog overnight from a large apartment building?
grandparents had accepted—perhaps resignedly—as normal. Einstein himself had declared that the stray population had been largely brought under control. In 1897 Einstein estimated the ratio of licensed to unlicensed dogs to be 7:6; the 1939 committee estimated it at 3:1.

The broad effect of these developments was that by the 1920s the general populace of the District no longer looked upon animals a source of food or work (farm animals and street horses), or a common nuisance (loose dogs and cats), or dangerous (rabies). Increasingly animals in the city played the role of lovable pets, and as such generally deserving of the public’s—and poundmaster’s—care rather than control.

Over these years the pound morphed from “the Gehenna of the city’s dogs” to a cheery place to buy a pooch, and even an object of charity. In the early 1930s claims appeared in the local press that virtually all pound dogs were adopted. “The public thinks of the establishment as a death house. But...it really is a house of life. Only those dogs that are incurably diseased are destroyed. For others found to be ill cared for, nursing and medical treatment are arranged, while dogs in unimpaired health [find] new homes...Some are sold and some are practically given away, but the great majority are placed...Thus the trip to the pound is the beginning of a new lease on life.”

When dogs remained untaken in late 1933 Smith broadcast an appeal by radio which “about cleaned the pound of stray dogs”; a generous businessman chipped in $20 so that “ten dog-loving children...could each get a pet.”

The pound saw a run of purchases each December for Christmas gifts: “We would like to accumulate as many as possible to meet the Christmas demand,” declared Smith in 1933.

The growing demand for pets and the evolving views of successive poundmasters of their responsibilities toward their furry wards brought a change in sales practices that would have astonished Einstein: “Persons purchasing dogs from the poundmaster are required to give satisfactory evidence that the animal will be properly cared for” (1920). Warned Poundmaster Marks in 1948: “Prospective purchasers must pass a rigid inspection...We are as careful in putting out our dogs as if they were babies offered for adoption.”

By 1930 animal lovers began to donate funds to the pound in touching if rather sentimental ways. In that year “a kindly-disposed woman of Vermont” provided Thanksgiving dinner for the inmates: “a menu fit for a king—of dogs...liver, pork and sausage, [and] extra rations of milk” for pups. Smith erected a (donated) Christmas tree at the pound annually, decorated with sausages and cakes for each dog (“provided by a local dog lover”). Local radio station WMAL’s Jim McGrath broadcast live from a

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83 Evening Star, 2 July 1933, p. 17. The article says that Poundmaster Smith had a waiting list for some breeds and sent dogs as far as to Arizona!
84 Evening Star, 22 Dec 1933, p. 17. “Good dogs are never destroyed at the pound, purchasers being numerous. In fact charming stray mongrels find homes when the pound exhibits them” (Evening Star, 15 Aug 1936, p. 7). The claim that almost all dogs were placed seems incredible and is not borne out by the annual reports (see Appendix C3); perhaps this applies only to those taken on the street, surrendered animals being destroyed with no waiting period.
85 Wash. Post, 16 Dec 1933, p. 27. “Poundmaster W. R. Smith said Cabinet officers, senators, socially prominent women and troops of boys and girls are among those demanding dogs for Christmas gifts.” Rep. Frank Boykin once purchased 100 pups for his friends in Alabama, where there apparently was a shortage (Evening Star, 15 June 1958, p. 17). See also Evening Star, 22 Dec 1926, p. 3; 14 Oct 1928, p. 3.
86 Evening Star, 29 Mar 1920, p. 2 (this included proper licensing and a signed statement that the animal would not be used for “scientific or experimental purposes”); Wash. Post, 7 May 1948, p. B2. By the way, the writers of this time had not yet taken on the word “adopt”, as is commonly used today; the earliest use of the word I have found is from 1948.
pound run in 1936. When the Post reported on two pound dogs apparently dead from heat the following year an “avalanche of calls and offers of aid” flooded Marks, allowing him to purchase sun-shading awnings.\textsuperscript{87}

In intent (and in publicity) the pound was moving toward the Shelter model then coming of age.

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

The Washington Humane Society
(Continued)

When we last left the Humane Society (1912) it had beaten off a series of legal and legislative challenges by various enraged animal-owner associations and seemed at the peak of its influence. In fact, the organization was beginning a long period of stagnation.

From the moment that the Society turned over its street work to paid agents (with gratifying results) it tied itself to a relentless fund-raising regimen. Although WHS regularly portrayed itself as dependent solely on donations, court fines from successful prosecutions actually provided a substantial if decreasing part of its income. With the numbers of both horses and its own agents decreasing, this was a dead end, as acknowledged by WHS Secretary, John P. Heap, in 1923: “Owing to the advent of the automobile . . . the work of the Society has been greatly lessened, and its income curtailed to such an extent that it now employs only two agents . . . This is unfortunate, but the Society has no money to spend in advertising either itself or its needs.”

In response, several lady members planned to form a “Women’s Auxiliary” from among their friends (“some of the best-known social leaders will be on the ‘force’”) to protect horses on the street. Nothing came of this, but it did produce some amusing caricatures in the local press.

In the late 1910s WHS began greater outreach, mostly to raise funds but also to increase membership. Its traditional grass-roots projects continued – 1912 saw the effective revitalization of elementary school-based Bands of Mercy, and in 1916 a plan to enroll all local Boy Scouts as junior members. New efforts included a Christmas candy sale (1919); an annual Thanksgiving appeal (from 1919); a “musical fairy play” (beginning 1920, which became for a few years a major society event); and

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1 1901 – $3,064 (= 60% of that year’s income); 1911 – $4,114 (48%); 1917 – $2,453 (30%); 1925 – $85 (sic; 3%).
2 Heap, “History”, pp. 64-65. “According to [President James P.] Briggs, the fines have greatly diminished during the last few years as a result of the decline of the horse as a medium of transportation” (Evening Star, 23 Nov 1919, p. 5).
3 As for the claims of all-voluntary financial support, see for example the statement of President Smith in declaring the annual Thanksgiving appeal in 1923: “the Society, which received support only from public contributions” (Evening Star, 17 Nov 1923, p. 30), although there continued a thin trickle of court fines coming in.
4 Wash. Times, 12 Mar 1914, p. 3. A faint echo of this plan was a later dust-up between a group of WHS ladies and Poundmaster Smith, who they accused of roughness to dogs (“If you beat them, we’ll beat you; if you choke them, you’ll get choked”; clipping labelled Wash. Times, 27 June 1922 but apparently mismarked, in a Health Department Scrapbook, D.C. Archives).
5 (Schools) Evening Star, 6 Jan 1912, p. 18 and many other after that; (Scouts) Wash. Times, 2 Mar 1916, p. 16. Re-establishment of the Bands began in 1910 but the first stable group only formed in 1912 (Evening Star, 24 Mar 1912, p. 26).
a vaudeville show (1922). The Society joined its colleague-organizations in celebrating “Be Kind to Animals” week every April from 1916 on. 

Throughout this period membership statistics for WHS remained reasonably stable (285 in 1917, rising to 413 in 1921, and then drifting downward to 356 in 1925, and 285 in 1932). Available funds reported by the Treasurer in the first half of the 1920s also show healthy if varying levels (1919 – $7,347; 1922 – $10,722, to give the parameters). Nonetheless, newspapers of the early 1930s carried pathetic pleas from the Society’s members for funds (“As a friend of all animals, . . . I appeal for aid in behalf of the Washington Humane Society in its efforts to secure new members now, acutely feeling the effects of the general business depression in its rapidly decreasing funds”). In 1936 WHS began to place general ads in the papers trolling for members (“The Society invites and carefully investigates . . . complaints of cruelty to children or animals. It is dependent upon dues of members and gifts to carry on its work. Membership Invited”).

The number of horses in Washington dropped rapidly in this period. Heap estimated the population at 13,050 in 1911 and 4,350 in 1921. WHS agents killed 315 irredeemable animals in 1911 but only 45 in 1919 and 27 in 1923, almost all horses. The number of stables, liveries and other horse-related business in the District fell from 68 in 1900 to 19 twenty years later; the last commercial stable closed in 1932. Nonetheless, it was only in the early 1930s that dog-work definitely replaced horse-work as the focus of WHS.

An ancillary casualty of the dwindling number of horses was the increasing disuse/misuse of the Society’s precious drinking troughs, which dropped from a high of 145 in 1923 to 108 in 1938 – “which the [District’s] Water Division feels is 108 too many.” Widened streets, new streetcar tracks, careless motorists, neglect and age all took their toll. And, of course, they had fewer equine customers. Press accounts listed other, more contemporary uses of the installations: “Handy footrest . . . supply of water to wash the car . . . ammunition for children’s squirt-guns . . . water to fill radiators with” and so forth.

WHS had always pursued issues beyond those of draught animals; as the post-World War I period progressed the organization was forced to look to these for a new raison d’etre. The most obvious was the anti-vivisection movement, which commanded much of its efforts in the 1920s, working with the Society for the Humane Regulation of Vivisection. (WHS President Smith was also president of the International Conference for the Investigation of Vivisection.) The Society’s great foe in this question was the Friends of Medical Progress.

Sporadic campaigns included: feeding birds and squirrels during winter months; opposition to sale of chicks and baby rabbits at Eastertime; the annual muzzling orders, of which WHS disapproved but

5 (Thanksgiving) Wash. Post, 30 Nov 1919, p. E15, and later years; (candy) Evening Star, 23 Dec 1919, p. 2; (play) 17 Apr 1920, p. 5, and later years; (vaudeville) 6 Nov 1922, p. 3; (Be Kind) 26 Feb 1916, p. 12. Newspaper articles about the organization drop noticeably after 1913.


7 Evening Star, 12 Jan 1932, p. 8, et al. For an example of the ad, see Evening Star, 20 June 1937, p. 13. This decline of interest was a nationwide trend even in 1921, according to President Smith (WHS Ann Rpt, 1921).

8 Extrapolated from Heap, “History”; WHS Ann Rpts. In 1919 all animals so killed were horses (Wash. Times, 22 Mar 1920, p. 9). The WARC Executive Committee stated the obvious at its 31 May 1939 meeting: “There are very few old horses seen on the street at the present time.”


10 (Intl Conf) Evening Star, 14 Nov 1926, p. 27. See WHS Ann Rpt, 1922 for an excoriating account of the opposing group.
acquiesced to; and a few less sustained interests such as the shooting of dogs by thieves (WHS called for gun control); hit-and-run drivers “who fail to stop after injuring animals”\textsuperscript{11},\textsuperscript{13} branding of police horses; the condition of bald eagles displayed in institutions such as the National Zoo; cropping dogs’ ears; and care for animals stranded by a marooned rodeo. In 1940 the Society offered free identification tags to “all animal owners.”\textsuperscript{12}

The Society realized its long-held goal of purchasing a motorized ambulance in 1917.\textsuperscript{13}

This gradual change of focus led a letter-writer of 1932 to point out that much cruelty to horses continued in the city (citing the Highway Bridge over the Potomac and the Horse Bazaar), concluding: “The activities of the Society seem to be confined to pet cats and dogs. No notice seems to be taken of the faithful and long-suffering horse. Before the Humane Society asks for help let it help the horse.”\textsuperscript{14}

In 1919 WHS proposed to revive its work with abused children, revisiting its role in that issue discarded several years earlier. The Society did indeed hire a children’s agent in 1925 (William J. Moore, of the New York Society, who seems to have acted as a legal counselor rather than a street agent) while noting that virtually all cases of child abuse were handled by the District’s Board of Children’s Guardians (the same situation that had taken the Society out of the matter earlier). This effort must have been fairly anemic — the lack of later annual reports does not allow us to study statistics but it never made the local papers. WHS still advertised this service in 1936.\textsuperscript{15}

As the Humane Society struggled to find its way in the evolving cityscape of motorized Washington, the organization entered a stormy period of unhelpful internal squabbles typical of decaying volunteer groups.

One sign of WHS’s basic weakness was its increasing reliance on its paid secretary and (volunteer) treasurer, John P. Heap,\textsuperscript{16} who served in one or both of these capacities from 1905 to his final illness in 1936. Through his constant writing (he edited the Society’s newsletter) and public testimony Heap was the steadying force and public face of WHS through its troubles of the 1927-33 period, and in that way a great benefactor. Nonetheless, when an organization comes to depend for such a long time on the presence (and direction) of one (salaried) individual it indicates a rot in both its ostensible governing body and general membership, whose roles he has come to fill.

In 1927 WHS began a series of internecine battles that left much blood on the floor. I will outline these here without too many specifics, more to illustrate the dynamics of Washington’s humane movement at the time than to record the full history of the Humane Society (which is not my purpose anyway). The sister organizations mentioned are described in the next section.

The first great battle in this Time of Troubles occurred at WHS annual meeting of 1927, when former president Hutchins, supported by Heap and Mrs. Truman G. Palmer, president of WARL, deposed Smith in a disputed election (Palmer taking his place) and then declared a union of the two organizations,

\textsuperscript{11} Also a concern of WARL (Evening Star, 26 Aug 1939, p. 9).
\textsuperscript{12} (Birds/squirrels) Wash. Times, 16 Jan 1912, p. 3 (MPDC officers were pressed into service); Evening Star, 10 Jan 1930, p. 8; (chicks) 18 Apr 1922, p. 14; 19 Apr 1935, p. 16; (muzzling) 6 June 1930, p. 3 (an annual announcement); 11 June 1930, p. 8; (shooting) 26 Apr 1933, p. 8; (drivers) 16 Feb 1927, p. 3; (branding) Wash. Post, 16 May 1915, p. 12; (eagles) Evening Star, 13 May 1924, p. 4; (ears) 12 July 1925, p. 56; (rodeo) 16 Apr 1931, p. 3 (see also Wash. Post, 27 May 1923, p. 2); (tags) Evening Star, 17 Oct 1940, p. 35.
\textsuperscript{13} WHS Ann Rpt, 1917.
\textsuperscript{14} Wash. Post, 13 Jan 1932, p. 6.
\textsuperscript{15} WHS Ann Rpts, 1921, 1925; Wash. Herald, 23 Oct 1919, p. 3; Evening Star, 11 June 1925, p. 25. Remember that the earlier agent for children had been on the MPDC payroll, while Moore – as long as he remained on staff – further drained the organization’s straitened resources.
\textsuperscript{16} For his obituary, see Evening Star, 19 July 1936, p. 10.
neither of which was in particularly good shape. “The activities of the Humane Society . . . have been diminishing for several years and there has been inefficient duplication of work [between the two organizations].” Smith objected that a merger put the Society’s greater treasury at risk; more importantly, he strongly disapproved of WARL’s practice of killing animals it could not place.17

It is a pity that we don’t have the 1927 annual report, for Smith opened the meeting with a great blast at his opponents. The published exchange between Smith and Hutchins seems amusing to us today but surely saddened those of their time:

Smith: We are going to lose our trust funds.
Hutchins: Kindly put my motion.
S: Kindly stop interrupting.
H: I’m going to keep on interrupting as long as you keep on talking.
S: I’m going to keep on talking as long as I wish.
H: I’m sick of your insinuations.18

Smith’s friend James P. Briggs, vice president and former acting president of the Society took the new officers to court as illegally elected. After some legal shoving the court apparently agreed with Briggs, since Smith was listed as president in later articles. Incoming President George Barnett proposed a cooperative arrangement with WARL the following year, admitting that the Humane Society “was not justified in asking the public for financial support because ‘the results obtained are not equal to the expenses’ [Barnett’s words].” One year after that, Smith’s supporter Briggs was arraigned in Police Court for mistreating dogs in his care.19

The next battle occurred solely within WHS, in 1930, when then-President Victorine Elmore accused the same Briggs (a vice-president) and ten members of the Executive Committee (including John Heap) of improperly transferring Society funds to Briggs’ other organization, the Humane Education Society, and other similar causes. Needless to say Briggs et al. objected; all were eventually cleared.20

Mrs. Elmore continued as president of WHS to 1943 (with one year out). Ernest Smith returned as first vice-president in 1933. No further disturbances were reported, but in a sad last look at WHS the organization’s secretary reported to the 1940 annual meeting that fewer complaints of cruelty reached the office “largely [due] to the fact that the Society did not continue to advertize its efforts.”21

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17 But who didn’t execute them at this time? The Humane Society itself put down unwanted cats at its earlier Barber Refuge.
18 Evening Star, 13 Apr 1927, p. 2; 29 June 1927, p. 2; 24 July 1927, p. 41; Wash. Post, 29 June 1927, p. 1; 19 July 1927, p. 18. This affair is well documented in the minutes of the WHS Executive Committee.
20 Evening Star, 14 Nov 1930, p. 3; 22 Nov 1930, p. 4; 20 Feb 1931, p. 17.
21 Evening Star, 14 Apr 1932, p. 54; 13 Apr 1933, p. 11; Wash. Post, 11 Apr 1940, p. 25.
One of the charities of which the women of wealth in Washington interest themselves is in caring for homeless and friendless cats and dogs. (Nat. Tribune, 19 Mar 1903, p. 7).

Until 1897 the only institution in the District that actually took in homeless or stray animals was the pound, which handled all kinds. Of course, it also disposed of them one way or the other. Beginning in 1897 a variety of kindly organizations and individuals organized private homes for strays with a more animal-oriented approach. These shelters (as we shall call them)\(^1\) differed from the pound in that they operated without the city institution’s legal underpinning or financial backing and that, except for the WARL animal farm, they concerned themselves solely with dogs and cats. The obvious rationale for this second factor is that the pound had both the mandate and resources to take in farm animals and could almost always place them with their old or new owners; the less obvious cause is that the citified organizers were basically pet-oriented. All of these groups except poor Sarah Beckley reveled in their upper-class make-up.

Before working through a succession of animal shelters it would be good to lay out their virtually non-existent legal framework. Until 1908 there were no effective regulations of private (human) hospitals at all.\(^2\) (See the Health Officer annual report of 1907 for a discussion of this.) In that year Congress authorized the District Commissioners to institute a licensing regimen for hospitals and asylums intended for either “human beings or domestic animals.” The Commissioners approved such procedures the following year. Regarding animal asylums, this order required the approval of 2/3 of neighbors within 100 feet of the facility and attendance of a licensed veterinarian.

A memo from the Corporation Counsel in 1936\(^3\) discussed “whether an institution for the housing of pet cats and dogs may be established in the residential use district,” referring specifically to charitable efforts. The Counsel concluded that as an eleemosynary (charitable) project it could locate as a matter of right, but added that inasmuch as “an institution for the care of animals . . . is likely to become very objectionable in a residential district” the Zoning Commission might consider establishing restrictions.

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\(^1\) In their earliest years they went under the names of Refuge, Asylum, Station, Home, Farm (if rural) and colloquially Animal Poorhouse. “Animal hospital” frequently appears in records and newspapers (seven in the Health Officer’s annual report of 1911) but these were veterinary clinics, which sometimes also boarded pets.

\(^2\) Licensing of veterinarians was established about the same time – the first annual report of the Board of Examiners in Veterinary Medicine is in the 1909 Commissioners annual report. For a very detailed account of the District’s chief animal hospital, with much other interesting information, somewhat before this period see Wash. Times, 15 Aug 1897, pt. 2 p. 18.

\(^3\) Counsel Opinions, 31 Dec 1936 (Vol. 47, p. 344). The Commissioners instructed the Zoning Commission to prepare a “suitable amendment to the Zoning Regulations to prevent the establishment of homes of this character [in a residential area] in the future” (Comm Minutes/Orders, 15 Jan 1937).
(Current zoning regulations – effective 13 Mar 2015 – require that shelter buildings be at least 25 feet from any residence, external facilities 200 feet removed, and include provisions for hygienic maintenance.)

Cat Shelters

In 1896 the Washington Humane Society began plans to establish “a home for lost and starving animals” and the following year inaugurated the **Bertha Langdon Barber Refuge for Animals** in refitted property at 19th Street and Columbia Road NW recently willed the Society by Maria S. Stoddard. (Barber was the daughter of a project supporter.) The shelter dealt almost exclusively with cats (19 dogs were received in 1899 compared to 1,791 cats) and, like the pound, put down virtually all of them immediately. (“Many are under the impression that this is a hospital or home for cats. This is not the case.”) In 1898 the shelter ceased accepting cats unless “sick or disabled . . . to do justice to the animals at that place.” As at the pound, “those of fancy breed are retained with the hope of finding homes or the owner.” The shelter also offered a paid boarding service. The boarding and (very infrequent) sale of cats and dogs produced a small income, but in fact it was “totally dependent” on donations from WHS and individuals. The salaried caretakers, **Mr. and Mrs. Frank J. Buckley** (“cat papa and mama”) lived at no charge in the old Stoddard house (“a poor one and small”).

The Buckleys became a regular component of charitable shelters for the rest of this early period. Frank Buckley, so generously described by that friend of animal causes the Washington Times in 1901, seems a tenderer version of Samuel Einstein: “a small man with rough clothing but a kindly face that is all smiles and a manner that is all softness and gentleness.” But when duty demanded the execution of unloved toms Buckley did his work manfully. In the second WHS shelter he also made cat pick-ups from houses, operated a small dispensary, vetted would-be purchasers, and organized the boarding service (perhaps keeping the fees). Judging from his disappearance from the city directory in 1904 he died about that time and, as noted below, his widow assumed his duties.

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4 “Similar to those in New York, Philadelphia, Indianapolis, [also Boston] and various cities in Europe” (WHS Ann Rpt, 1897).
5 This name created an unexpected problem for the institution: when its agent appeared at a house to pick up an unwanted animal the owners, seeing the name of the wealthy Miss Barber, would conclude the shelter was well endowed and refuse to pay the 25 cent charge!
6 Including all kittens, by chloroform followed by drowning, according to WHS annual reports. The replacement shelter used an asphyxiating chamber similar to the pound’s and chloroformed only the kittens (Wash. Times, 7 Apr 1901, pt. 2 p. 17; a fairly gruesome account).
7 This was not a new idea: “The summer ‘home’ for the pet bow-wow and the gentle tabby, where they could be left during vacation time with a feeling of absolute assurance that they would be well cared for, is an institution of long standing” (Evening Star, 8 Apr 1903, p. 20). See also Evening Star, 16 May 1891, p. 7 for many specifics of the business.
The Society severed its connection with the Barber Refuge in 1899, in view of the imminent widening of 19th Street through the property, but it continued operations into early 1900 “on account of its having become nearly self-supporting,” a claim that was not explained. After that, the Society continued to euthanize animals on request until 1905. (There was a 10-cent charge after 1902.)

A replacement shelter opened in upper Georgetown (2007 32nd Street NW, also a donated property) by 1901. Operations there proceeded largely as at the Barber Refuge, including the death of most charity inmates. Society boarders (usually during the summer vacation season) had separate quarters and ate very well indeed. Although it was a WHS project the Society’s annual reports never mentioned it and perhaps it was some sort of auxiliary or semi-private effort. Buckley, managing the new facility, became a salaried agent of WHS. The shelter closed sometime after 1905 “for want of funds.” WHS discussed re-establishing its shelter occasionally in the 1910s but without obvious enthusiasm or means.

As early as 1902 the newly-established Washington Cat Club expressed its interest in taking over the Humane Society’s faltering cat shelter. Washington, it claimed, was almost the only large American city without such a place. Socialite Maria Peet had earlier (1898) offered WHS land “a little outside of the city” (the Brookland neighborhood) to transplant the Barber Refuge, and this is probably where the Washington Cat Club began construction of an unrealized facility in 1902. However, in spite of regular talk and sporadic fund-raising nothing came of the project.

The redoubtable Mrs. West could not be happy with this lack and about 1907 she and Mary A. Peet (daughter of Maria) established a private cat shelter in “an old frame structure” at 126 D Street SW. To manage the venture she hired “an old negro aunty” away from the Friends of Homeless Dogs (below), Sarah L. Beckley.

Among the society names of the Friends’ shelter one notices “Mrs. Sarah Beckley” of 505 Twentieth Street NW, who “will gladly receive any stray dogs for the shelter, or can be communicated with in regard to them.” Beckley demands our attention as an interesting outlier in the Washington humane movement of her time – a working-class mulatto accepted by so many fine ladies apparently on the basis of her complete devotion to the cause. The 1905 city directory listed Lewis Beckley (at the 20th Street address) as “laborer”. Two years later the couple moved to 126 D Street SW where Lewis was a waiter and Sarah dressmaker.

10 (Closing) WHS Ann Rpt, 1899; Wash. Times, 3 May 1899, p. 8; (euthanasia) Wash. Post, 25 Nov 1905, p. 12 (the Audubon Society considered taking up this task, for the protection of birds). Agents occasionally put down rabbits also (Wash. Times, 1 Nov 1903, Magazine p. 2, which gives useful statistics). “The Society has a plant on 32nd Street where these animals are killed if . . . it [is] impossible to get homes for them” (Wash. Times, 30 July 1905, Magazine p. 6). Special agent Frank Buckley, Collector of Small Animals, had this assignment. In 1899, 2,128 animals were collected and 2,135 humanely killed [sic]; in 1904, the comparable numbers were 4,866 collected and 3,677 killed. It was noted that after it stopped euthanizing animals itself, WHS failed to publicize that the pound still performed this service (Wash. Post, 22 Apr 1908, p. 12).
11 Good descriptions, including photos of the house and Buckleys, and an unexpected account of the killing chamber, will be found in Wash. Times, 13 Apr 1902, p. 8; 7 Apr 1901, pt. 2 p. 17; see also Evening Star, 10 Feb 1903, p. 1; 10 Feb 1907, p. 16.
14 Evening Star, 20 Sept 1908, p. 46, the only account that specifies its origins; Wash. Post, 1 Feb 1912, p. 2. Regularly misspelled Berkley, even in the Bee’s tribute. Wash. Post, 18 Oct 1908, p. SM3 has a very appealing picture of her with feline friends.
Although under the initial supervision of West and Peet, Beckley became so identified with the shelter ("This woman has become very much attached to her charges") that it was commonly referred to as Mrs. Beckley’s cat shelter. The institution opened in 1907, was licensed under the new regulations in 1911 and finally saw its license revoked in 1916.\textsuperscript{15} Her shelter was modeled on the earlier cat and dog operations – homeless strays and paid, upper-class boarders with separate quarters and provisions, animals gratis to good homes, and shaky finances. She did put down unwanted pets on request (how difficult this must have been for her!) for “a nominal fee” of 25-50 cents. The home was licensed to accommodate 50 cats and 10 dogs, but the 1908 Post profile reports “well-nigh a hundred cats of all social grades,” of which 40 were charity cases.\textsuperscript{16}

As had the pound for dogs, Beckley’s shelter gained a loyal following of concerned cat-aficionados (“To her place come the cat devotees from all over the city. Some of them . . . ride up in their automobiles [wealthy ones – this was 1908], and in company with Mrs. Beckley, gloat in joy over the multitude of cats”). Beckley was “the head of cat propaganda in Washington.” The Washington Cat Club routinely referred inquiries to her, and no printed reference condescended to mention her race.\textsuperscript{17}

Although we want to admire Beckley’s dedication to animal welfare, it is impossible to overlook its obsessive quality. The Post’s description (somewhat snide but no more so than most newspaper articles about animal-related matters) gives the general feel of her operation: “Here is a comfortable inn, wherein cozy beds ensconced in comfortable corners await the weary feline; even the most irritable cat must needs gurgle a purr of utter content when it finds itself housed in these comfortable quarters.” When we read that the cats ate better than her waiter-husband one wonders how the couple stayed together. A longer extract of this profile, paired with a somewhat syrupy appreciation of the lady, are given in Appendix D10.

The cat shelter suffered a disastrous fire in 1912, during which Beckley, at considerable risk, rescued all her wards but two fearful dogs. It did not appear in local newspapers after that date. We read that in 1929 Sarah Beckley, “a colored servant” of Mary Peet (who like her mother left much of her estate to humane organizations), inherited $2,000 from her deceased mistress. She was still living in 1935 when she attended a friend’s funeral.\textsuperscript{18}

(A similar, individual-operated and informal cat shelter was reported by the Evening Times in 1899 at Ellicott City, Maryland, at the country home of an unnamed “kind-hearted women.” “Persons who know of her humane treatment of stray cats have for years imposed up on her good nature by dropping their superfluous felines on the public road as they drive past her home until now the lady finds herself sorely taxed to provide for the expatriated animals.” She fed them “gallons of milk” through “a feeding trough out in the back yard.”\textsuperscript{19})

\textsuperscript{15} Comm Minutes/Orders of 19 Apr 1911 and 19 May 1916 respectively. It was listed in the Health Officer annual reports for 1911-15; no other shelter appeared in these lists.

\textsuperscript{16} “The institution is not self-supporting, but many cat lovers voluntarily contribute and these enable Mrs. Beckley to sustain the hobo branch of her hotel” (Wash. Post, 18 Oct 1908, p. SM3, which gives specifics on the place); (fee) Wash. Post, 19 Aug 1911, p. 2. There is no evidence of how involved West and Peet were at this point; they both were forming the new Friendly Hand by 1908 and had perhaps spun off Beckley to operate independently.

\textsuperscript{17} I only learned this from the Washington Bee article (a colored newspaper). The 1929 notice of her inheritance -- this not in the context of her cat-work -- also gives her race, as was customary at the time.

\textsuperscript{18} Wash. Post, 1 Feb 1912, p. 2; 14 Mar 1929, p. 22; Evening Star, 14 Apr 1935, p. 9.

\textsuperscript{19} Evening Times, 5 July 1899, p. 5. Note also Mr. R. H. Montgomery, a “scenic painter”, whose wife left him in 1921 “saying the painter seldom came home at night and tried to turn the house into an animal rescue yard” (Wash. Times, 6 May 1921, p. 5).
Undaunted by the regular demise of earlier cat shelters, the ladies of Washington met once again – in 1908 at the New Willard Hotel – and formed yet another cat-centric organization, The Friendly Hand Society, with the stated purpose of establishing a lasting shelter. The Washington Herald made no attempt to disguise its opinion in one of the funniest bits of writing encountered in this research (abridged):

> O felines, chant peons of thanksgivings and praise! Lift your melodious chorus to hail your champions!
> Assemble, both worthies and hoi-polloi of the cat world. Convene en masse today, aye, every day, and particularly every night, proceed to the peaceful abodes of your defenders and there beneath their windows evidence your appreciation of their devotion to your cause, and serenade them as only cat can.
> Retreat never till your song be sung, even though the night air be thick with bootjacks, alarm clocks, hair and tooth brushes, bottles and other missiles, armed by those who love neither your song nor your being.
> Thus will you grasp the glad mitt, tendered you by “The Friendly Hand”.

West was the president of this organization also, and Peet the treasurer. Locating the proposed shelter was much discussed (“Everyone knows that if any neighborhood hears a cat home is to be established . . . there will be a great hue and cry”). The question hardly mattered – nothing was heard of the society after that. To add insult to injury, Peet, who had started keeping cats (about 40) at her property in Cherrydale, Virginia, was evicted by complaints of her sleepless neighbors (“The loud talking of the cats at unreasonable hours is objectionable, the neighbors declare”).

**Dog Shelters**

When Mr. W. B. Biddle of Cincinnati wrote the Commissioners in 1901 asking how the District dealt with its loose canine population he was informed “that there has never been any provision made in this city for the care of homeless dogs in the manner that he [Biddle] doubtless has in mind – a place of refuge, where they are cared for and kept indefinitely.” And this was true – at that time only cats received such attention.

Humane shelters for dogs began in Washington the following year (1902) when a committee of prominent ladies – many of them already familiar to us (Macfarland, Chandler, Cassini) – formed the Society for Friendless Dogs. Frank Buckley, WHS agent and manager of the Society’s cat shelter, found a property at 2025 32nd Street NW (part of the cat shelter site at 2007). The goal of the Society was to house homeless mutts until they could be placed (free to the original owner or sold “at a minimal sum” to a suitable family, who were carefully screened), but of course “in case of incurable disease or...
injury” the dogs would be “painlessly put to sleep in the gas-box.” In fact, this last happened surprisingly few times. “Vivisectionists [are] specially guarded against.” The facility also boarded pets for a fee.25

Within three months “some crank” nearby filed suit complaining of the noise and Mrs. Macfarland began to desperately look for an alternate location. “No neighborhood has been found that is willing to tolerate a dog chorus.” The shelter housed about 30 strays at the time. In October 1902, after three months of “complete paralysis,” the fencing and sheds were moved to donated land in the Brookland suburb (another account says Mt. Ranier, Maryland, which is fairly near Brookland).26

The Society initiated a series of fund-raising home concerts/dramatic readings (for “a fashionable crowd of women”); Miss Alice Thaw, “the fiancée of Lord Yarmouth,” donated $5; owners took out memberships for their pets. For a time “the Society [was] becoming quite a fad . . . The movement has appealed very strongly to the better class of people of the District.”27

The Society lost its shelter again when the Brookland/Mt. Ranier property was sold, probably in 1904. It had only been a “summer home” there anyway. The Board re-organized, changed its name (confusingly, to us modern readers) to the Animal Rescue League of Washington “in view of the widened scope of the work,” and the following year found new property on Tenleytown Road (Wisconsin Avenue) in Bethesda, Maryland. (An earlier plan to move to Hyattsville, Maryland, apparently fell through.)28

This final shelter also took in paid boarders, and so had separate kennels and runways,29 under the care of a live-in manager (who may or may not have been Mrs. Buckley).30 “Pets for nothing to good homes” – the heading of its classified ads – indicates the shelter’s laudable intent. The last public notice of the place appeared in 1907, and it closed in early 1908. “Interest in the enterprise was on the wane, and . . . funds to continue . . . were lacking . . . Twenty-three dogs were in the shelter when the fiat went forth: homes were found for thirteen. Ten just ‘skiddoed.’” The last press notice of the Society appeared in 1909 referring to its opposition to muzzling two years earlier, when Mrs. Henry L. West served as president.31

And with this, the first period of efforts to establish humane shelters for homeless animals in the District of Columbia came to an end.

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25 Evening Star, 9 Apr 1902, p. 16 (the first notice); Wash. Post, 29 Apr 1902, p. 12; 2 June 1902, p. 10.
28 Wash. Post, 8 May 1904, p. 12; 5 June 1905, p. 9;
29 “Made attractive by the trees, shrubs and vines with which they are surrounded”; “pet dogs may here find a pleasant home until sought by their owners.”
CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

Washington Animal Rescue League¹

Don’t let little animals suffer when there is a place for them. This [WARL] is not the pound. Women run this place. (Wash. Post, 23 Oct 1916, p. 7)

The Animal Rescue League works with the object of treating the stray animal along humane lines. The District pound believes in protecting the citizen from the dangers that travel along with the homeless, half-starved animal. Both institutions are doing splendid work in the same direction while working in different directions. (Wash. Times, 29 Oct 1922, p. 7)

The shelter movement in Washington lay dormant for a few years after the demise of these early efforts. Here is the genesis of its later and more successful stage, taken from an account of June 1914:

Several months ago two Washington society women, seeing horses mistreated on the streets of the National Capital, had their owners taken into court, where they appeared personally against them. From this action they interested their friends in the misfortunes of cats, dogs and horses in the District.²

One of these determined ladies was Mrs. Peter Goelet Gerry,³ who became the leading force in the renewed effort at its beginning. The group of friends invited Mrs. Huntington (Anna Harris) Smith, founder of Boston’s Animal Rescue League and crusader for the movement, to meet them informally and outline the possibilities. Smith served as the keynote speaker at the public organizing meeting of the new Washington Animal Rescue League held at the Woodward & Lothrop Department Store auditorium on 31 March 1914.

If the earlier shelter societies had been high-society clubs the WARL organizing meeting was a veritable Congress of Vienna for the Washington upper-crust. Newspapers gushed their awe: “many of the most prominent society women in Washington”; “100 women and a score of men prominent in Congressional, diplomatic and social circles”; “Washington’s most exclusive social set.” Smith outlined the goals and activities of the Boston League and challenged Washingtonians to raise $2,000 to establish their own effort. WHS President Hutchins promised his organization’s sincere cooperation while explaining why his Society needed help eradicating cruelty to the city’s animals (using the usual rather

¹ I express my deep appreciation to Ms. Susan Strange, archivist of WARL, for her provision of so much unpublished material used in this section.
² Evening Star, 20 June 1914, p. 9.
³ Sometimes erroneously written Goelet-Gerry. She was a local beauty (Matilde Townsend) married to Rep. Gerry of Rhode Island, and later to diplomat Sumner Welles. See her interesting interview and very attractive photo in Wash. Herald, 9 Apr 1914, p. 2, and another photo in Wash. Times, 31 Mar 1914, p. 1. She was not a League charter member, however.
unsatisfying arguments – lack of public and police cooperation – found in his annual addresses). The meeting adopted resolutions of basic purpose and future actions and appointed an organizing committee.

A second meeting the following month formally enrolled members and elected officers, and the organization adopted by-laws and incorporated in the District of Columbia on 14 April. The goal of the initial resolutions was “that an animal hospital and shelter be established in Washington,” which work was vigorously begun, but let us first turn to some underlying fundamentals of the new WARL:

Three assumptions guided WARL at its beginning:

• That the League would be primarily concerned with horses: “My love of all animals has drawn me into this work but particularly my great devotion to horses, and they will be the primary and first care of the League,” stated Gerry, a noted horsewoman. The earliest League record gives its purpose as “the proper disposition of decrepit and injured horses and other animals.” But in fact this was never the case – dogs and cats provided the bulk of the League’s work; horses were already disappearing from Washington streets. This development spared WARL from the dead-end that rendered WHS nearly irrelevant in the same period;

• That the League would be largely an organization of women: The organizers had specified a “mixed board of men and women to assure business-like management,” and were “especially anxious to have representative men as vice-presidents . . . to assure standing in the community”. Nonetheless, the by-laws always referred to the president as “She”. Gerry indicated this truth in the same Herald interview when she expressed her hope that “every woman – and man, too – in Washington . . . should become a member of the League.” Although men were generally represented among WARL officers the preponderance was always female, and there were years in which every officer and the entire Board of Directors were women;

• That the League was an effort of the affluent and socially well-connected: This is clear from reading the oft-published lists of event organizers and attenders, of officers and members, of the prestigious venues of meetings and fund-raisers. Nowhere do we read of any approach even to the city’s middle-class, not to mention the laboring population.

4 “Scores of members were registered on the spot and cash was freely given . . . Several women were kept busy for an hour after the meeting enrolling members.” Evening Star, 1 Apr 1914, p. 10; 20 June 1914, p. 9; Wash. Post, 1 Apr 1914, p. 4; Wash. Herald, 1 Apr 1914, p. 2; Wash. Times, 1 Apr 1914, p. 3; WARL Ann Rpt, 1919. Both speeches and the resolutions will be found in these sources. The first ARL – Boston – had been established in 1899. Smith stated that before that there had been such shelters in Philadelphia and in Brighton, Massachusetts. “Washington is the only large city in which such a society does not exist” (WARL General Meeting minutes, 31 Mar 1914).

Use of the acronym began after our study period (i.e., after 1940) – in its earliest years the organization used the short name “the Rescue” replaced in the 1930s by “the League”.


6 Said Hutchins at the March meeting: “The men of Washington . . . could not bring this matter to a successful conclusion. So I put the matter up to the women. This afternoon you see the result” (Wash. Times, 1 Apr 1914, p. 3). There was a special Men’s Advisory Committee in 1932, which provided much useful service the ladies could not (WARL Sec Ann Rpt, 1932). (Quote) WARL Directors minutes, 28 Mar 1914.

7 We seem to be entering a period in which ladies of social standing no longer felt that a public life centered on parties, clothing and home decoration was adequate, and that some beneficial cause needed to be part of the mix, but this is the subject of a different study. Note also the beginning of celebrity endorsements (even more pronounced for the Tail-Waggers’ Club, below), heralding the wide-spread practice of today.
We might also say here something about the League’s relationship with its older sibling, WHS. That Society’s opinionated president of the 1900s, Chester Snow, had been much opposed to the very idea of humane shelters, at least for dogs and cats (animals he seems to have detested). “We should . . . avoid the mistake of cruel kindness. Those who impound dogs or cats together in so-called homes regardless of the fact that they are not gregarious and where the weaker live in terror . . . have doubtless the best of intentions but . . . the habits and tastes of these animals [make] the homes so-called [a] prison.” And again: “It is impossible either economically or humanely to maintain asylums for cats or dogs or even for horses.”

A change of leadership brought a change of attitude. Succeeding President Hutchins spoke encouragingly at WARL’s organizing meeting and told his own group at its annual meeting of 1915: “It [WARL] should be encouraged in all possible ways and its membership rolls enlarged by the addition of every one . . . whose desire to extirpate cruelty to dumb animals is expressed in something more practical than sighs and groans.” Indeed, WHS presidents Snow, Hutchins, Smith all served at some time as officers or benefactors of the League and (at least in its earliest years) often strove to bring WHS issues and attitudes into WARL. The two organizations worked together closely in various publicity/outreach projects (such as Be Kind to Animals Week) and lobbying for humane causes (horse protection, for example). WARL President Palmer re-stated “the friendly relations now existing” between the two groups in 1924’s annual meeting. The League’s unsuccessful attempt to merge with WHS is discussed in the previous chapter.

The primary object of the new League was the rescue of friendless horses, dogs and cats from city streets, or – in the case of horses – from abusive owners, usually by direct purchase. It would see their injuries treated and then return them to their original or new, suitable owners. The organization was clear from the beginning that irredeemable or unwanted wards (generally meaning mongrels) would be humanely put down. “It is our plan, instead of sending the poor dears [that is, dogs] to the pound, to have a humane method by which we will chloroform them,” said Gerry.

From its earliest time the WARL shelter also operated a (contractor) medical clinic – initially open one hour every morning and geared toward horses, free for minor services and at “moderate charge . . . for medicines and for surgical operations.” A boarding service was also envisioned, as had been done at its predecessors. More ambitious plans considered at the March meeting included purchase of “a horse ambulance and a dog ambulance,” an automobile, and “a special bicycle” (“for carrying injured cats”) and a rest home “for run-down horses.”

It is worth considering just why these well-intentioned people felt the need for a new organization at all – the pound not only humanely disposed of unwanted animals but actively took them off the streets. Anyone wanting a pet could – and often did – travel to South Capitol Street and bought one. It is true that cats could not be adopted from the pound, but WARL organizers were frankly concerned primarily with horses, and consistently treated cats as an afterthought; Gerry admitted in her Herald interview that she

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8 WHS Ann Rpts, 1905, 1906; see also 1907.
10 (Horses) Wash. Times, 12 May 1914, p. 4 – there are many other examples; (Palmer) Evening Star, 13 May 1924, p. 4.
12 Evening Star, 27 May 1914, p. 24; Wash. Times, 1 Apr 1914, p. 3, with quite unflattering caricatures of some founding personalities.
had little sympathy for them. The simple answer is that they had little confidence in the pound without being quite able to articulate why. Organizers promised to hold animals longer than the pound and to advertise orphans, but in fact simply and vaguely assumed that they would handle things in a nicer way. Said Smith in her rousing speech: “[A humane shelter] must be something more than the ordinary ill-conducted dog pound.”

The new League made a quick start on its work. A shelter opened “in a few rooms [the hay loft] over a stable” at 20 Decatur St., NE (between N and O) on 10 May with Mary E. Coursey as manager. Coursey, a capable and kind lady, had run the Boston shelter for fifteen years. She was joined by an assistant, Joseph Parker, in June and some time later by another assistant, Mrs. Sacrey. A large box earlier used for grain served as office furnishing. Mrs. Mundrum R. Blumenberg, a WARL vice-president, was an important and constant volunteer. Even in its first full month of operation (June 1914) the shelter took in 19 dogs, 365 cats and two horses. The dogs and cats all met a chloroformed end either at the shelter or on site; the horses were sent to new owners or, if decrepit, disposed of.

Clearly many people agreed with WARL founders that their shelter offered some improvement over the District pound. “As soon as the public learned that the station was caring for cats and other animals, notification by telephone poured in [and] Miss Coursey . . . has been a very busy woman collecting the stray cats and kittens.” Undoubtedly the prominent names attached to the organization bolstered this confidence: Mrs. Henry L. West of the Washington Cat Club and Mdm. Hussein Bey, wife of the Turkish ambassador, were members. So was Mrs. Woodrow Wilson and her daughter, initiating a line of First Lady supporters. Prominent actor George Arliss championed participation by men but feared (how different from today!) that “people wouldn’t listen to an actor off the stage.” There was reported to be work in the Takoma suburb “done along this line.”

With business booming (so to speak) the League needed larger quarters and moved to a rented “small house” (for a rather expensive $25/month) at 1355 Ohio Avenue, NW, in December 1914. Here operations continued as before but on an increased scale. In the single month of August 1915 the shelter took in 743 dogs and cats. The large number of these continued to be chloroformed but League reports increasingly spoke of animals given to new homes. Unsurprisingly, there was a distinct preference for

13 “The object of the organization is to provide painless deaths for stray animals, principally cats” (Evening Star, 6 Aug 1914, p. 15).
14 “The object of the League is to rescue cats, dogs, etc. from starvation, and to dispose of them instead of having the dog pound outfit do it” (letter, Wash. Times, 10 Mar 1915, p. 8). No one ever explained how being killed at WARL was better than being killed at the pound.
15 “On meager pay, Miss Coursey plunged into her work. Because of her self-sacrificing devotion, her disregard to her own personal comfort and her straightforward common sense and clear headedness [WARL] today is a monument to the devotion, leadership and vision of its founders” (Evening Star, 25 Oct 1931, p. 14). She returned to Boston in 1920 with a gift of $65 from the grateful League (WARL Directors minutes, 8 May 1920). Coursey’s photo is in Evening Star, 20 June 1914, p. 9, and perhaps is the lady in Wash. Post, 30 Mar 1919, p. S13.
17 Evening Star, 20 June 1914, p. 9; 5 Mar 1916, p. 8; Wash. Herald, 2 July 1914, p. 10; Wash. Post, 6 Aug 1914, p. 14; WARL Ann Rpt, 1919. Arliss continued his remarks by suggesting, with disarming innocence, that “some politician be asked to make an appeal for the League [as if the populace held politicians in higher esteem than celebrities] but he was told by some of the women . . . that ‘a politician in Washington’ was more or less an everyday ‘occurrence’”. Arliss was an active member for many years and later made an honorary WARL Vice-President (Evening Star, 27 Apr 1933, p. 2). Another celebrity supporter was actress Minnie Maddern Fiske.
animals of good breed: “None of the dogs . . . have been at all valuable, and so have been chloroformed at once.” Occasionally, as at the pound, a particularly fetching inmate won the matron’s heart and stayed on as a mascot – Nellie, a temperamental dog, merited a photo in the 1919 annual report in this way. Another, Mickey, appeared in the 1924 report.\(^\text{18}\)

The smallish Ohio Avenue facility housed cats on its second floor and dogs on its first, but the modest number of horses taken in had to be placed at nearby commercial stables. These received medical care and then, ironically, were put down.\(^\text{19}\) Purchase of “a small country farm” would have alleviated this situation but was beyond the organization’s means. Horses commonly came to the League by purchase, negligent owners offered $1-10 for worn out nags; 69 were bought in 1915. This practice, laudable as it was, opened the possibility of hucksters buying broken-down animals and then taking them to WARL as a sort of hostage, a misuse the group promised “was well provided for; . . . no such deception could be practiced.”\(^\text{20}\)

Other efforts during this earliest period included the provision of “a kind of carpet slipper” allowing horses to get traction on snow-covered streets,\(^\text{21}\) and encouraging MPDC officers to report abused animals to the shelter. In general, operation of the shelter remained the focus of WARL’s work.\(^\text{22}\)

A visitor of 1915 wrote: “The system is remarkable . . . I was so impressed by the place that I feel every man, woman and child should visit.” Nonetheless, a headline of two years later tells the usual story: “Residents of Ohio Avenue Opposed to Rescued Animals in Neighborhood”. Among other complaints in the residents’ petition to local government was that dead animals were not taken up for days “and that it is impossible to keep out the sickening odors from the homes in the vicinity. The lives and pleasures of human beings should be considered before animals.”\(^\text{23}\) Both its own growth and neighborhood opposition soon brought about a move to WARL’s third shelter.

In July 1917 WARL purchased “a roomy old mansion” at 349 Maryland Avenue, SW\(^\text{24}\) for $14,000, a four-story brick building with a two-story rear extension then serving as a dispensary of the Miner Institute. This substantial expense was generously covered by Chester A. Snow (the former WHS president formerly so opposed to animal shelters) and Miss Martha C. Codman. Codman, “a member of a distinguished old Massachusetts family . . . well known in Washington, New York and Newport society,” and at that time only “a winter resident” of Washington, also donated the new heating system ($2,100)

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\(^\text{19}\) WARL members in 1916 discussed the desirability of finding a place for this procedure “where a group of small boys will not be able to act as interested spectators” (Evening Star, 13 Dec 1916, p. 17).
\(^\text{20}\) (Housing) Evening Star, 6 Apr 1915, p. 5; (farm, purchases) 13 Dec 1916, p. 17; (fraud) 5 Mar 1916, p. 8.
\(^\text{21}\) “The ridicule of those who scoffed at this simple idea turned to approval when experience proved its effectiveness” (WARL, New shelter dedication brochure).
\(^\text{22}\) (Slippers) Evening Star, 6 Apr 1915, p. 5; (police) Wash. Post, 16 May 1915, p. 12 (officers were given contact cards for ready use). It is noticeable that WSH officials speaking at WARL meetings were generally critical of the police, while WARL members were much more complimentary.
\(^\text{23}\) (Visitor) Wash. Times, 10 Mar 1915, p. 8; (petition) Evening Star, 14 June 1917, p. 17.
\(^\text{24}\) At the corner of Maryland and 4½ Street. The house had once been the brothel of the city’s leading madam, Mary Hall. Wash. Times, 28 July 1917, p. 4; Wash. Post, 1 July 1917, p. R1; Wash. Herald, 1 Apr 1914, p. 2; WARL Ann Rpts, 1919, 1924. Good photos of the building will be found in the two annual reports, and also in Evening Star, 18 Nov 1917, p. 9; Wash. Post, 30 Mar 1919, p. S13. WARL Ann Rpt, 1924 lists a number of necessary repairs to the facility, coincidently giving a few more details of the place.
and electric killing cages (about $1,000, described later). Codman funded an addition the following
year.\textsuperscript{25}

As with its earlier move, the new and larger facility allowed the League to amplify its core work: over
6,700 animals passed through its hands in the 1918-19 year (April-March), and 12,200 in 1921-22 (\textit{!}).
The new home had stables for two horses and a run for dogs. More employees were taken on: a
bookkeeper and an extra summer agent. Staff generally consisted of a daytime clerk to run the office and
answer calls, a live-in matron, and the on-street agent. In 1924 their combined salaries of $2,625
comprised the largest item of WARL’s nearly $6,000 annual budget.\textsuperscript{26} In 1920 J. Joseph “Billy”
Smallwood replaced Parker as agent, making pick-ups.\textsuperscript{27}

Along with the numbers of animals processed, so did their range expand, though only of smaller
types. We never read of farm animals going there, but reports show minor numbers of squirrels, wild
birds, rabbits, monkeys, foxes, turtles, guinea pigs, opossums . . . in 1921 someone dropped off 104 white
rats. Almost all of these animals were injured and brought in to be euthanized.\textsuperscript{28}

Animal pick-ups (which by 1924 “not only cover the entire city but reach out into the suburbs [the
former county]”) were made during the day but deliveries accepted at any time. After several years of the
League’s agent taking cats from houses in a basket by streetcar (“a wonderful performance”) WARL
acquired an ambulance\textsuperscript{29} in the summer of 1918 through the efforts of Walter Stilson Hutchins. Even
with this, emergency runs in members’ cars or taxis were not uncommon.\textsuperscript{30} The ambulance averaged 19
collection runs daily in 1921, and in 1933 travelled 14,665 miles, supplemented by 688 taxi trips.\textsuperscript{31} In
1931 the shelter still had only one ambulance and the president wrote annoyedly of citizens who
demanded immediate pick-up of animals (“It would seem possible that . . . people . . . would bring in their
own dog or cat, thus releasing our one car to the calls of those who have no conveyance”). Persons
turning over animals received a receipt and signed a release.\textsuperscript{32}

A sample of emergency street runs made by WARL personnel reported in the two annual reports and
the press mostly concern cases of retrieving stranded or abandoned animals (cats in trees or sewers, an

\textsuperscript{25} Wash. Post, 30 Mar 1919, p. S13; Evening Star, 9 Oct 1921, p. 59. Later Mrs. Maxim Karolik. She was also a
generous benefactor of the Boston organization.

\textsuperscript{26} The salaries in 1914 were: Manager -- $45/month; night watchman -- $40/month; veterinarian -- $30/month
(WARL Directors minutes, 14 May 1914).

\textsuperscript{27} Wash. Herald, 26 Apr 1919, p. 3; Evening Star, 31 Jan 1918, p. 23; 9 Oct 1921, p. 59; WARL Ann Rpts, 1919,
1924; WARL Directors minutes, 19 Oct 1920. Smallwood’s photo is in the 1924 Annual Report with Micky, the
mascot.

\textsuperscript{28} Evening Star, 28 Apr 1921, p. 10.

\textsuperscript{29} A photo of this vehicle is in the 1919 Annual Report, and of later trucks in the 1924 report; Evening Star, 3 Aug
1930, p. 4; Times-Herald, 7 Jan 1941, p. 17. Replacements were purchased in 1920, ’24, ’33 and ’36, and perhaps
also years whose minutes are lost. “A new one will be needed every few years” (WARL Exec Comm minutes, 18
May 1933). The 1936 model had a built-in gas chamber (WARL memo, “Outstanding Achievements”, 29 Apr
1936). There was a standing Ambulance Fund.

\textsuperscript{30} “Before the League had an ambulance . . . it was no uncommon occurrence for a member to leave a dinner table
on receiving a telephone call . . . and drive to some remote section of the city to bring in some injured or suffering

\textsuperscript{31} The number of taxi runs actually increased over the years: 1936 – 1,454; 1938 – 2,004 (WARL Sec Ann Rpts,
1936, 1938). The League “has a special cat rescue gadget to fetch Toby out of a tree” (Times-Herald, 27 Apr 1941,
p. E2).

\textsuperscript{32} Evening Star, 28 Apr 1921, p. 10; 9 Oct 1921, p. 59; Wash. Post, 30 Mar 1919, p. S13; WARL Ann Rpt, 1924;
WARL Sec Ann Rpts, 1921, 1933; WARL, “A Few Facts”. See also Palmer’s extensive complaint about demands
for the ambulance “by thoughtless and selfish people” in the 1924 Annual Report, and also in WARL, “A Few
Facts”.

injured horse beside the road) and not the instances of direct cruelty handled by WHS agents. In fact, WARL reported abuse cases to WHS for action. The 1919 report gives an interesting example of the legal complications this work could entail: a starved horse taken while its (still legal) owner resided in the insane asylum.

Conditions at the shelter were exemplary, by all reports. WARL regularly advertised its approval by the District Health Department. In one of those stories that no writer could invent, two men searching for recruits for their “troupe of trained fleas . . . performing at a carnival at a nearby city” combed dogs for an hour, locating only two insect-performers for their company. “The Animal Rescue League is quite proud of this record” – understandably.

WARL remained frank in its policy of executing animals not readily adopted. Virtually all horses met this fate. “The horses are given a few days of comfort in the . . . stable before they are led into the stall . . . called The House of Blessed Release.” They were at the shelter because of their decrepit condition, after all. Recall also that, unlike WHS, WARL did not prosecute offenders; it only bought their nags with its Horse-Purchase Fund.

Of dogs and cats, clearly diseased or otherwise undesirable animals were killed on receipt. The large number stayed on for four or five days while the League attempted to locate their owners (both searching Lost and placing Found notices in the local papers) or find new families. “We would like to be able to place more animals in homes . . . but good homes appear difficult to find,” explained the League’s secretary. Only males were put up for adoption; all unredeemed females (dogs and cats) were put down. There was no fee for the animal and the League bemoaned how few persons made any donation for the service. A charge of $2 for animals eventually was instituted. Potential new owners were screened and signed a contract to care for the pet, obtain a tag (for dogs) and not allow them to be used for experimentation. Animals could be returned and any donation remitted.

The earliest reports mention only chloroform for killing animals, although probably horses were shot; the League spent $50 a month in 1918 for the chemical. The shelter continued to chloroform any animal put down at residences or on the street (for example, seriously injured ones) and, at the shelter (in a “chloroform box”), all animals with injuries and all puppies and kittens.

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33 In 1937 WARL asked the Commissioners for police powers for its employees, as WHS and the poundmaster had, but the Corporation Counsel advised that only Congress could grant this (Comm Minutes/Orders, 9 July 1937).
34 Evening Star, 29 May 1921, p. 6. See also Evening Star, 23 July 1923, p. 6; and Wash. Post, 22 Sept 1940, p. 74, for further details of operations.
35 WARL Pres. Palmer: “I wish to emphasize that we are neither a hospital nor a boarding house for animals” (WARL Ann Rpt, 1924), and many other such statements.
36 Evening Star, 9 Oct 1921, p. 59; WARL Ann Rpts, 1919, 1924. These purchases were still advertised in 1936 (Evening Star, 20 Dec 1936, p. 3).
37 “The League people are experts in detecting a stray from a homeless dog” (Wash. Post, 30 Mar 1919, p. S13).
With its move to Maryland Avenue in 1917 President Codman donated an electrocution system invented the previous year by Mr. Huntington Smith and used in 32 other shelters at the time. There were three sizes of these machines – a stall for horses, a cage for dogs equipped with a specially fitted metal collar, and a small box for cats. “Only a second is required to accomplish the result. The animal does not even close his eyes. His face is as peaceful and happy as before.” The agent was the “official executioner,” and an electrician checked the mechanism monthly. This system had been “endorsed and recommended by men of the highest standing in humane and scientific standing in the country,” and contrasted well with hanging, which was how human prisoners met their end in the District jail at the time.42

The 1931 WARL publication “A Few Facts” states that small animals were then chloroformed and larger ones dispatched “in the gas lethal chamber.” In fact, the League had discontinued use of its electrocution box in early 1930, the result of regular mechanical problems and doubts about its effectiveness. The Board considered purchase of a newer box in 1932 “similar to the one used in SPCA in New York, but of a smaller size.” This led to an unexpected evaluation of the different types of gasses used and their contrasting virtues.43

The League’s policy of destroying unwanted animals (“at the League headquarters ‘putting to sleep’ is the accepted description of the process”44) brought increasing criticism in the 1920s. This practice had both practical and philosophical underpinnings. The practical problem was obvious and the same dilemma that led its predecessor shelters and the pound to regularly destroy animals: space/resources/finances. “Collecting, as we often do, a thousand animals in a month, immense area, buildings, kennels and a great number of attendants would be necessary and the income required . . . would be far more than the public would be willing to provide.”45 Today, when far fewer animals are collected by a much larger number of organizations, the truth of this argument can be easily overlooked.

The philosophic argument was, of course, less clear cut and probably more legitimate on both sides. From its founding the League made clear that a painless death served homeless strays better than a painful life. “The League believes that it is far more humane mercifully to dispose of sick and diseased [and simply unwanted] animals than to keep them alive and prolong their suffering.” Indeed, WARL never put any female animals up for adoption, and actively advised cat owners to keep “one or two of the strongest” kittens of their pet’s litters and drown the rest. “It takes but a moment.” This approach went beyond the limits of practicality and confirmed the organization’s stated goal not only of helping distressed animals

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44 Wash. Post, 17 Oct 1920, p. 46. The earliest use of this phrase I found was in 1902 (Wash. Post, 2 June 1902, p. 10), but from the 1920s on it was the standard terminology of humane organizations. “Euthanized” appeared in the 1960s.
45 WARL Ann Rpt, 1924.
but of ridding the District of strays with their deleterious “effect on sanitation” and potential danger to children.46

Needless to say, some opposed the very idea of putting down any creature, as they do today. “Many there are who believe that all humane workers are fanatical sentimentalists,” wrote President Palmer. “There are some, but there is a long difference between sentiment and sentimentality. . . . We are not in sympathy with those persons, of whom there are still some left, who hold that no animal should be deprived of life.” This controversy grew in the 1920s and explains a certain defensiveness in League pronouncements over the period. The Humane Education Society was founded in 1920 explicitly to avoid euthanasia (below). President Smith of WHS, a former League official, opposed the proposed merger with WARL precisely on the grounds that it killed unwanted wards.47

Following the League’s 1928 execution of the pitiable collie Pal, which the organization made into a poster child for its cause, a flood of critical and often caustic letters poured into the local press. “Why should an organization with the experience of thousands of dogs’ executions behind it suddenly become foolishly and tearfully affectionate . . . for just another dog, all in the days’ work?” wrote George Page pungently. “Did it not select this occasion . . . for the purpose of self-serving publicity? . . . Does slobbering over a dog and then killing him justify the League’s duplication of the poundmaster’s work, or make the lot of the unfortunate dog easier?” He concluded by rejoicing that there was “no ‘rescue’ organization for . . . children.” All of this the League bore with equanimity and, ultimately, success.48

A factor causing great seasonal strain on the League’s resources was the distressing habit of many citizens to simply turn pets outdoors when they left for vacations, creating an annual summer bump in waif dogs and cats. While the wealthy could take their pets with them or leave them in the care of animal hospitals or servants or private establishments,49 a large part of the population simply tossed them out, and whether or not expecting to find them again later is unclear. This habit was so common that it was unremarked upon in Washington until 1911.50 WARL advertised regularly each summer against such thoughtlessness, and reminded the public that they could leave (board) their animals at its shelter. These notices continued through the 1930s, indicating a continuing problem.51

Other unhappy sources of discarded pets came from families moving out of town or from houses to apartments; from unwanted litters and pets lost at suburban tourist camps or left at beach resorts; and those whose “usefulness is gone or [are] no longer beautiful or attractive.” During World War I League workers searched out pets abandoned by belligerent alien families expelled from the country. “Some of them have gone to new homes . . . to become . . . good naturalized American dogs and cats,” while others

46 Wash. Post, 12 Aug 1934, p. 7; WARL Ann Rpts, 1919, 1924. The policy on female dogs was adopted in 1932 (WARL Exec Comm minutes, 30 Nov 1932). Much later – 1963 – WARL had changed this policy, but, echoing the District’s policy of taxing females more than males to depress their number, the League charged $3 for a male and $10 for a female dog (Evening Star, 5 May 1963, p. 46).

47 WARL, Ann Rpt, 1924.

48 (Pal) Evening Star, 15 Aug 1928, p. 2; (criticism) 13 Aug 1928, p. 8 (a short, typical example); 20 Aug 1928, p. 8 (Page’s letter).

49 Classified ads of the late 19th century occasionally listed boarding available at “animal hospitals”. A superb description of one such place is in Evening Star, 16 May 1891, p. 7, which took in all kinds of animals including birds, squirrels and goldfish. The article goes into charges, facilities, and its related business: selling and stuffing animals.

50 By Health Officer Woodward (Evening Star, 5 June 1911, p. 1).

51 “With the departure of people for the summer vacation and consequent turning of pets adrift, the work of the League will undergo its annual seasonal increase” (WARL Ann Rpt, 1924). Some typical examples: Wash. Times, 11 June 1919, p. 22; Evening Star, 18 July 1927, p. 2; 30 July 1939, p. 52. WHS complained of this practice also (Evening Star, 4 Aug 1921, p. 21).
“have journeyed to the happy hunting grounds by the happy, painless way.” It also publicized reminders of good pet-care, such as the danger of summer heat and the need of canaries for exercise.\(^{52}\)

Horses and mules received well-publicized if largely symbolic support by WARL’s annual Christmas feast, modeled on Boston’s project and initiated in 1915 by member Mrs. Ira Bennett. Held at various locations over the years but eventually settling at the shelter, horses munched hay and corn before selecting an apple or carrot from a large Christmas tree, all this donated by members and sympathizers. Drivers found coffee and doughnuts, a gesture these hard-working men undoubtedly appreciated.\(^{53}\) In some years dog biscuits awaited accompanying canines. Take-out was available, and deliveries made by a roaming truck. The League’s winter horse-slippers and even leather bridles (to replace painful wire ones) were given out free of charge.\(^{54}\)

These events fed 102 in their first year and 150 in 1919, but numbers dwindled with the population of potential customers to 30 in 1928 and a disappointing three in 1933, its last year. Besides this lack of obvious need, WARL had opened itself to criticism that it was using money to feed horses “with so many human needs to fill.” As an alternative, drivers could pick up grain at the shelter.\(^{55}\)

In 1927 WARL advertised free summer boarding “to poor, disabled horses and mules” at a farm near Silver Spring, Maryland, but we have no further information on this venture, unfortunately.\(^{56}\) Perhaps this referred to the Humane Education Society’s farm.

Aside from its curious and aborted union with the Humane Society in 1927, WARL worked well with its humane colleagues all of this period. The Boy Scouts, Women’s Club, Washington Riding Academy, WHS – all contributed to the effort. The annual “Be Kind to Animals Week”, instituted in 1916, presented a good vehicle to publicize its work, and WARL participated in HES’s “animal parade” (below).\(^{57}\) In the late 1920s it joined other organizations on the issues of vivisection and safe horse stalls.

The League made sporadic efforts to educate children on humane practice but not as successfully as WHS. Its most successful juvenile program was made in conjunction with the District playground manager, Susan Root Rhodes, who encouraged the organization of Junior Animal Rescue Leagues in the very early 1920s. Sometimes children formed their own support groups, such as The Happy Four, which raised $35.23 for the League in 1922, and “another club of young girls” called The Animal Friends Society. Apparently this movement withered but was revived briefly in 1934, again under the initiative of the youngsters themselves.\(^{58}\)

\(^{52}\) (“Usefulness”) WARL Ann Rpt, 1924; (Alien dogs) Evening Star, 16 Feb 1918, p. 7; (advice) 1 May 1918, p. 3; 18 Apr 1932, p. 17. A stretch of Ontario Rd NW was a favorite place to toss unwanted cats (Evening Star, 23 July 1923, p. 6).

\(^{53}\) Needless to say, reporters could not resist the satirical possibilities: “Menu: Oats au naturel; Cornstalk fodder, Illinois style; Apples, carrots; Doughnuts a la life preserver; Coffee au lait” (Evening Star, 26 Dec 1916, p. 2).

\(^{54}\) Evening Star, 26 Dec 1916, p. 2; 24 Dec 1918, p. 2; 24 Dec 1919, p. 2; 28 Dec 1923, p. 6; but every year earned an account.

\(^{55}\) Ibid.; Evening Star, 5 Jan 1933, p. 17; 3 Jan 1934, p. 17; unidentified publication, 30 Dec 1928, file Wash. Div. These newspaper figures apply to the morning customers only and those coming to the premises, before the Star’s reporters had to write up their articles but are comparable with each other; WARL Sec Ann Rpt, 1933, states that 50 horses benefitted the previous December.

\(^{56}\) Evening Star, 3 July 1927, p. 3.

\(^{57}\) (Women’s Club) Evening Star, 14 Sept 1924, p. 26. The club offered a delivery service of unwanted pets to the shelter. (Be Kind) Evening Star, 26 Feb 1916, p. 12. The Executive Committee on 8 Mar 1933 did discuss a complaint that WHS was accepting unwanted animals, along with monetary donations, and then leaving the orphans with WARL while pocketing the money.

\(^{58}\) (Education) Evening Star, 19 June 1920, p. 3; Wash. Herald, 27 Oct 1938, p. 15; (Jr ARLs) Evening Star, 11 Sept 1920, p. 10; 28 Apr 1921, p. 10; Wash. Herald, 18 May 1921, p. 16; WARL Ann Rpt, 1924; (Happy, Friends)
WARL finances came largely from members’ dues (standard: $1-5, with higher levels to Life: $100, and a 25 cent Junior membership; somewhat revised in 1924), and the League solicited donations in honor of deceased pets to help with the summer “vacation season” and so forth. Special appeals, such as for a new ambulance, generally met with success. Bequests were regularly announced into the 1930s, including $3,500 in 1920 on condition that the lady’s pets be given permanent homes at the shelter when she was gone. The very devoted Mrs. Blumenberg sold most of her furniture and collections to benefit WARL.59

Most memorable was a series of high-profile fund-raisers in the organization’s first decade. These events were all aimed at and patronized by the most elite Washington society. “Smart society, accompanied by its aristocratic pets, was among the stream of visitors” to the first WARL Bazaar in 1919. Mrs. Warren Harding sent White House flowers to decorate the event. Bridge and maj-jong teas, held at the most fashionable hotels and clubs, saw attendance by the wives of Presidents Taft and Coolidge, and Secretaries of State Hughes and Kellogg, and (as a special ornament) the Baroness de Cartier de Marchianna. Three hundred ladies attended one such event in 1920, all carefully named in the press, including who partnered with whom at the tables. Theatre (a “musical fantasy” titled “Fairy Lane”) and film evenings flowed from the hard-working organizers. These had pretty much died out by the late 1920s.60

Appeals to the District government for a line in the city budget met with rejection, and the same response came from Congress.61 In 1929 WARL became a charter member of the Community Chest, bringing it a more reliable annual income. The League suffered a blow when the shelter lost its tax-exempt status in 1931, entailing a $115 bill to the organization; its status was restored the following year. A similar tax imbroglio occurred in 1941.62

Governance of WARL rested with an elected president, an array of vice-presidents,63 the usual officers, committees and a sizeable (15-20 members) Board of Directors. Throughout this period the League always elected the First Lady as its honorary president. Although the presidents changed frequently, a fair-sized group of dedicated supporters appeared year after year in one position or another; four charter members still served in 1939. Many of these also directly volunteered at the shelter and even kept strays at their own homes.64 There was a strong crossover between WARL and WHS officers.

Presidents of WARL were: 1914 – Mrs. Peter Goulet Gerry; 1914-17 – Mrs. S. M. (Edith) Ackley; 1917-19 – Martha C. Codman; 1919-20 – Chester A. Snow; 1920-23 – Adm. Sydney A. Staunton; 1923-30 – Mrs. Truman G. Palmer; 1930-35 – Mrs. William F. Ham; 1935-36 – Mrs. Harry C. Moses; 1936-40 – Mrs. C. Augustus Simpson; 1940-41 – Mrs. Merton E. (Annella) Twogood; 1941-42 – Mrs. LaVerne Beales.

Evening Star, 29 May 1921, p. 6; WARL Directors minutes, 21 May 1921; 26 Apr 1922; (later) 28 June 1934, p. 37; 5 Aug 1934, p. 24; WARL Exec Comm minutes, 27 June 1934.
59 (Dues) WARL Ann Rpt, 1924; (bequests) Evening Star, 7 Mar 1920, p. 29; (sale) 18 Apr 1930, p. 17.
60 A sampling only: Evening Star, 21 Mar 1919, p. 7; 8 Apr 1919, p. 8 (including the names not only of guests but also of their pets); 14 Jan 1920, p. 10; (theatrical) 9 Apr 1919, p. 8. Articles about WARL became much less frequent after 1924.
61 (Congress) WARL Directors minutes, 14 Dec 1921; 31 May 1922; (District) WARL Directors minutes, 26 Nov 1923; WARL Ann Rpt, 1924; WARL “A Few Facts”.
62 Comm Minutes/Orders, 28 Sept 1932; Director’s minutes, 5 Oct 1932; Wash. Post, 1 Aug 1941, p. 5; Memo, Sec of Board of Commissioners, 13 Mar 1945 (in WARL archives). It was one of the earliest members of the Community Chest.
63 Originally 15, raised to 25 in 1924 (WARL Directors minutes, 30 Apr 1924).
64 (Volunteering, animals in homes) WARL Ann Rpt 1924; WARL Sec Ann Rpt, 1932.
Paid staff grew to seven by 1940: kennelmen, drivers, matron and office employees. “Capt. Parker” (no source gives his personal name) followed Mary Coursey (after an interval) as manager of the facility from about 1931 to at least ’39, and was much loved in that position. “Under his guidance the Washington Animal Rescue League [shelter] has grown to be one of the best administered in the country. . . It is a model for all similar enterprises and could well serve as a model for private kennels and veterinarian hospitals in both cleanliness and arrangement.” Preston Thomas served as a very valuable agent from 1932 to at least 1942. Jessie (Mrs. Charles H.) Jones served as the on-site supervisor for most of this period.65

No doubt anyone working in an animal shelter has many stories. Here are a few

**Tales from the WARL Shelter**

- A man claiming to be a League fundraiser called citizens with candy for sale. “We have no one soliciting in any form for the League,” said V-P Twogood. Police investigated. *(Wash. Post, 14 Jan 1936, p. 5)*

- Pranksters took to calling various public institutions on April Fools’ Day and asking to speak with non-existent persons (the Zoo: “Mr. Fox” or “Mr. Lion”; the streetcar company: “Miss Car”; St. Elizabeths Mental Hospital: “Lizzie [Borden?]”; WARL: “Kitty”; the pound’s character is unrecorded). The phone company said calls that morning ran 10% higher than usual. Threat of police action ended the practice in the early ’30s. *(Wash. Herald, 26 Apr 1922, p. 4; Evening Star, 1 Apr 1930, p. 17; 1 Apr 1931, p. 17)*

- Eleanor Roosevelt once approached a National Park Service officer to ask for assistance with a lost dog. Officer Howell took the stray to the WARL shelter in his motorcycle sidecar. “The job was easy because the dog liked the unexpected ride.” *(Evening Star, 18 Dec 1933, p. 1)*

- A “shabbily-dressed” woman brought a very young baby (presumably her own) to the shelter asking that it be euthanized the same as a cat. “She told me she lived in Anacostia, that she was destitute and that the baby had no milk.” In spite of the attendant’s offer of help, the woman slipped away, leaving the infant. *(Evening Star, 23 Dec 1931, p. 17)*

- WARL entered investigations on the surreptitious poisoning of cats (1931) and dogs (1932). *(Evening Star, 21 Jan 1931, p. 8; Wash. Post, 12 Aug 1932, p. 16)*

- WARL received a “black-hand letter” (“a single sheet of stationery on which was drawn a human hand, painted a dull black with shoe polish”), probably from the same woman who had recently written abusing the League for unspecified policies. At the same time, several women began hanging around the shelter ostentatiously writing in notebooks, telling strangers (incorrectly) that the shelter had their dogs, and annoying people with “other ‘crazy conduct’.” *(Evening Star, 6 Apr 1930, p. 1)*

- WARL personnel (“including three of the best monkey chasers this side of Venezuela, one automobile and a snare into which Pluto [the monkey] didn’t stick his conceited little neck”) failed to retrieve a loose monkey in the Bloomingdale neighborhood. “That monkey can stay up that tree all night if he wants to. I’m going home,” declared a defeated Thomas Henry. A neighbor took him five

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65 (Staff) Wash. Post, 22 Sept 1940, p. 74; (Parker) Evening Star, 12 July 1937, p. 29; WARL Directors minutes, various dates; (Thomas) WARL Directors minutes; Evening Star, 20 Dec 1942, p. 18. See WARL Exec Comm minutes, 23 Oct 1936 for a curious imbroglio, in which Mr. Jones attempted to get Parker’s job through unsigned letters.
night if he wants to. I’m going home,” declared a defeated Thomas Henry. A neighbor took him five hours later. The League did once catch a baby alligator from an apartment building lobby and a fox from the Treasury Department building.  (Respectively: Wash. Post, 3 Aug 1936, p. X1; 3 Oct 1938, p. X13; WARL “The Twins . . .”)

- A pet owner brought in a litter of Pekinese pups whose mother had died, looking for a substitute dam. “After much deliberation a satisfactory mother – a tabby cat – was found, and the pups survived.” (Wash. Post, 22 Sept 1940, p. 74)

- After a botched attempt to shoot an injured horse on the street, WARL distributed a diagram of how to perform the operation to all MPDC officers. (WARL Sec Rpt, 27 Apr 1932; WARL Exec Comm minutes, 27 Sept 1933)

In 1932 WARL made the momentous move to its first purpose-built shelter, the building still standing at 71 O Street NW. The impetus for this project was twofold: (1) an increasing need for space and facility for an increasing number of animals; and (2) the National Capital Park and Planning Commission plan to develop the District’s immediate southwest area as a government enclave. Sale of the Maryland Avenue property to the District government (the street was being widened) paid for most of the new land and building; the public was encouraged to donate the expense of specific components in exchange for a name plaque, as was done also at the 1977 facility.

The neighborhood into which WARL moved – near the no-longer-existent Truxton Circle about a mile due north of the Capitol – was a long-established community by 1932, and in fact showing some deterioration as warehouses and workshops (especially garages and auto repair shops) increasingly crowded against the blue-collar residents. Its next-door neighbor to the east, picturesquely called Swampoodle, had already largely succumbed to this trend.

The League’s Real Estate and Building Committee had first considered a site at South Capitol and D Streets SW, “an unusually desirable location” near its current shelter and only five blocks north of the pound, and had made a deposit when “a few congressmen” (like all neighbors) objected to such an annoying house close to their offices. The O Street site was the next choice. In fact, even semi-gritty O Street protested; neighbors immediately to the east of the property hired a downtown law firm to protest the shelter as a non-conforming use in violation of zoning regulations. Unfortunately for them the Commissioners disagreed and permitted the “animal hospital” but limited it to 40 animals.

The present lot 110 of square 616 (the shelter and its parking lot) encompasses the consolidated lots 43-48 and originally carried the addresses 67-77 (odd numbers only). Lots 45-48 (71-77 O Street), previously holding houses, were joined as tax lot 811 in 1907 for the construction of a two-story brick warehouse (“waste paper packing plant”, F. C. Butt & Co.), enlarged to three stories in 1913, which was

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66 No non-profit organization has ever been known to admit that it has enough space, but in this case the complaint was correct.
69 Comm Minutes/Orders, 2 Sept 1931; WARL Sec Ann Rpt, 1932; letters regarding zoning protest attached to the building permit. The Corporation Counsel reaffirmed its stance (though it is not clear that this opinion arose from a complaint about WARL) in 1936; see above “Early Shelter Movements”. Neighbors, as the East Central Civic Association, tried to dislodge the shelter again in 1940 but were rebuffed (Comm Minutes/Orders, 6 Sept 1940).
demolished for the shelter.\textsuperscript{70} The 1870s houses on lots 43 and 44 (tax lot 867) were purchased by WARL in 1953 (but only consolidated as lot 110 in 1985) and taken down for today’s parking lot sometime afterward. The new shelter was about one block west of the League’s first, rented space on Decatur Street.\textsuperscript{71}

Architect Ralph W. Berry received the contract to plan (in separate jobs) the street-facing shelter/office and, on the rear alley, a garage. Berry designed nearly 100 houses in the District and others in Montgomery County, Maryland, between 1923 and 1937, almost all brick or stone structures in the wealthy upper-northwest area. This was a rare non-residential building for him.\textsuperscript{72} Berry and League officials visited shelters in New York, Baltimore, Philadelphia and New Orleans. The architect submitted his proposal to the federal Commission of Fine Arts (which oversees projects affecting the appearance of the capital city) for an advisory-only opinion. The Commission found the design “a good one” but felt that a stone structure was “more appropriate for a suburban type of building” and recommended instead its then-standard “Georgian type of brick building.” Berry ignored this advice.\textsuperscript{73}

Of the seven bids for construction, the choice went to Bahen & Wright, a general contractor active in the city 1926-40 and working mostly in the eastern half.\textsuperscript{74}

No building project is simple. To quote League Secretary Flora Beales’ 1932 report (abridged): “We were beset with difficulties from the very beginning – such as delay in removal of the old warehouse, readjustment of plans, securing permits, and finally when the excavating was started a bad soil condition and water was found, necessitating a different foundation.” The last added $6,260 to costs, bringing the project to about $26,000.\textsuperscript{75}

The shelter opened with an invitation-only ceremony\textsuperscript{76} on 23 June 1932. It had (and still has) “an English façade” of Potomac River gneiss (from “the Bucolstone [sic] Quarry”) over a brick structure. Public rooms showed the same fieldstone and glazed tile. A slate roof topped both shelter and the separate double garage, and handsome multi-panel windows (sadly now gone) gave an aristocratic feel to the entry and gables. All of this reflects Berry’s work on posh new houses for an upper-class clientele.\textsuperscript{77}

\textsuperscript{70} For an account of a fire that destroyed a later occupant, the Cook and District Waste Paper Company, see Wash. Post, 23 Apr 1927, p. 1. It was “an old brick structure.” The place burned again three years later (Wash. Post, 30 Aug 1930, p. 1); its removal must have gratified the neighbors.

\textsuperscript{71} Building permits 76/6 July 1907; 77/6 July 1907; 2370/29 Nov 1913. Perhaps a house on lot 48 was demolished in 1907 – the building records are not clear on the exact location of many properties, but see Evening Star, 26 Feb 1900, p. 10, which mentions a house there. The history of the lots is derived from the records of the District Surveyor’s Office with the kind assistance of Mr. Neal Isenstein.

\textsuperscript{72} DC building permit database, Washingtoniana Div, ML King Library. Perhaps his disappearance as an active architect from 1931 (immediately after designing the shelter) to 1934 tells us that he was the R. W. Berry who held some civil posts in his home of Chevy Chase, Maryland, at that time (Wash. Post, 14 Oct 1931, p. 8; Evening Star, 8 July 1933, p. 26). It is difficult to disentangle him in newspaper accounts from a near exact contemporary and well-known topographer with the U.S. Geological Survey, Ralph Whitely Berry, of nearby Kensington (Evening Star, 24 Feb 1949, p. 21). The “A. Moore Berry, Architect” addressed in the CFA documents was Judge Berry, the architect’s father, who lived with him and perhaps handled some of his business matters (see Evening Star, 7 Mar 1939, p. 9). Mrs. Berry frequently attended local society events.


\textsuperscript{74} WARL Sec Ann Rpt, 1932; DC building permit database, Washingtoniana Div, ML King Library.

\textsuperscript{75} Evening Star, 5 Sept 1931, p. 13; WARL Sec Ann Rpt, 1932.

\textsuperscript{76} “With much newspaper and radio fanfare” (WARL, New shelter brochure).

Visitors, and reporters, were adequately impressed: “The most modern and well-equipped facilities for the care and shelter of stray and sick beasts,” “thoroughly insulated and fireproofed,” and “safe, sanitary and comfortable accommodations.” With its 50 cages for dogs and a dozen cat cages, separate runs for each, veterinary clinic, two “comfortable” stalls for horses (in the garage), and an upstairs caretaker’s apartment, “the new building compares favorably with the best anywhere” – “a credit to the City and to the Directors.” Cages carried the names of their donors (including the Washington Cat Club), and a plaque in the main hall commemorated the 1917 donation of the earlier building by Martha Codman and Chester Snow, which later paid for the new one. League members made other special donations: shrubbery, the paved walk, office furniture. The contractor also made unspecified contributions.

With the new building came new staff. The move was a convenient occasion to discard unsatisfactory workers, but another consideration also came into play: should the new matron be white or colored? We don’t know this information for earlier staff except for Coursey (white) and the two agents Parker and Smallwood (black) – in fact we know little about the very small staff at all. In this case, after considerable discussion and review of nearly a hundred applications, “it was thought best to hire a white person as matron or house manager.”

At its inauguration the building already held 40 dogs and 12 cats. In its new quarters the League increased its clinic service to three veterinarians (later reduced back to one paid doctor but expanding this effort through the Tail-Waggers Club, below). Through an agreement with the District government, city-owned horses retired in favor of trucks went to WARL, which placed the healthy ones in nearby farms. At the same time, routine ambulance runs to take pets from homes dropped back from daily to four days a week, though the truck was available 24 hours a day for injured animals. Educational outreach grew in scope. Generally the League’s work at O Street continued smoothly as before, but with a larger staff, more professional operations and continued harmonious governance.

Throughout the study period WARL took in a surprisingly large number of animals: rising from about 6,000/year to 11,000 during its first decade and to 18,000-21,000 in its second. It consistently held about three times the number of waifs as did the pound in the 1920s and ‘30s.

Before leaving this section we must stop to consider why WARL had such a smoother time of it in the 1920s and ‘30s than its sister organization WHS. Both experienced some financial distress, especially during the Depression, but WHS fell into an organizational disarray that did not afflict WARL. Two possible causes of this difference come to mind:

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78 “The runs are covered with a shelter . . . protecting the animals from heat and rain. There are hose connections in the tiled kennels so that they may be kept clean and have plenty of fresh water. There is over-head ventilation and . . . a thermometer in the room so that the temperature may be properly regulated” (Secretary’s Ann Rpt, 31 Mar 1933).
79 Wash. Post, 24 June 1932, p. 18; Evening Star, 23 June 1932, p. 17; WARL Sec Ann Rpt 1932. The plaque is now at the current shelter.
80 WARL Exec Comm minutes, 9 May 1932; WARL Sec Ann Rpt, 1933.
81 Perhaps these doctors were donating their time. “A number of veterinarians were antagonized due to not being recognized in any of their work through the League” (WARL Exec Comm minutes, 25 May 1938).
82 (Animals held) Evening Star, 23 June 1932, p. 17; (clinic, horses) WARL Exec Comm minutes, 25 Aug 1937; WARL, “The Twins . . .”; (ambulance) WARL, “Please! Cooperate . . .”. Purchase of a small “pick-up ambulance” in 1938 was intended to eliminate the need for taxi trips (WARL Ann Rpt, 1938).
83 The Executive Committee minutes of 25 Mar 1936 record with no sense of irony: “It seems that, because of the large amount of publicity we are receiving, Mr. Smith, of the Pound, is worried about his job. Mrs. Moses will see him, to explain that we really do different work from the Pound.”
WARL was from its beginning focused on a specific, concrete task – sheltering lost animals, while WHS remained largely issue-oriented. The constant demand of the shelter operation kept WARL from wandering into diffuse, ancillary issues, while WHS’s loss of direction deepened as it held onto its prime concern for horses long after those animals had largely disappeared from the city. Notice the relatively small number of stances taken by WARL (vivisection, pet care) compared to the very long list of concerns adopted by WHS. A secondary benefit of this was that shelter work could much more directly involve WARL officers and members as volunteers than the recurring lobbying- and education-oriented efforts of WHS;

WARL seems to have fallen much less than WHS under the influence of strong-willed presidents. Over the period of this study WHS had six presidents who served at least seven years; WARL had one. Without the steadying demand of shelter operations, WHS’s interest and tone changed with each president (Snow – horses; Smith – vivisection). WARL adopted a more collegial governance.

At the same time, the two organizations showed a common development in the 1920s and ‘30s which led them both to their current and much healthier condition: they broke out of their upper-class bubbles and incorporated the District’s middle class. This is a difficult trend to pin down. We have no way (as far as I know) to analyze the financial or social status of their membership over these years, but a very noticeable change from the 1910s and early ‘20s is the absence of society events (card parties at the Willard, etc.) as fund-raisers and the gushing over the gilded names of their supporters. By the 1930s both groups were placing pleas for membership and funds in the public papers. Following the lead of their middle-class younger cousins HES and APA (below) they took to parades, adoption days and advice to pet-owners. (WARL, with the never-stopping needs of its shelter, seems to have made this move before the more insular WHS.) Of course, another factor could well have been a shift in the concerns of the wealthy to other, more fashionable causes.84

WARL’s history before 1940 is completed by descriptions of three adjunct organizations, all originating in the 1930s to support its work.

The Washington Herald (later Times-Herald) Animal Rescue Service85 was a pick-up service operated only in suburban Maryland and Virginia. Eleanor “Cissy” Patterson, socially prominent owner of the Washington Herald, established and personally financed the operation in November 1935 upon finding a family of starving dogs abandoned in a Virginia farm. “She appealed to the League for assistance and there followed some years of a remarkable association. Until her death [1948] Mrs. Patterson supported the mercy errands of two suburban ambulances while the League in turn faithfully adhered to its agreement to admit and care for the many Maryland and Virginia cases.”86

The service started operations with one van – “the most modern vehicle of its kind in the country,” with a built-in killing chamber for distressed animals. It must have been large, since the organization promised to take unwanted horses. The service immediately demonstrated its

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84 Any reader, thinking back over the past five or so years, can easily make a long list of issues once fervently espoused and now forgotten by the glitterati.
85 Sometimes, and mistakenly, the Maryland-Virginia Ambulance Rescue Service. The Times and Herald merged in 1939.
usefulness; on its first day “more than a score of calls were received at the Herald and the Animal Rescue League before the new animal ambulance . . . started its rounds.” Nearly 1,100 animals were brought in over ten days in November 1935. It purchased a reported 150 horses yearly. 87

- Simultaneously with the start-up of the ambulance service came the organization of the Maryland-Virginia Animal Rescue League. This effort was so closely tied to the Herald’s ambulance service that contemporary accounts confused them (“the M-V ARL, or the Times-Herald Animal Rescue Service, as it is frequently called”). It used the O Street building for its office, and paid WARL 45 cents for each animal it left at the shelter, WARL being barred from assuming the cost of out-of-town hobos by Community Chest rules. 88

- WARL began discussion of forming a local chapter of the Tail-Waggers’ Club 89 in 1936. The organization originated in England and by 1936 had chapters in thirteen American cities and a host of Hollywood patrons. 90 In this regard the Club was different from the other animal-related organization described here in that it was distinctively part of a national system rather than an autonomous group: “Straight from England, its charter was granted after much effort on the part of Mrs. Lawrence Wood Robert.” 91

Tail-Waggers’ advertised a laundry list of goals and benefits (“to sponsor legislation beneficial to dogs and their owners, to provide funds for existing dog shelters, to educate children in animal kindness, to advise . . . owners on care and feeding of dogs, to property handle our stray animal population”) but largely sold its $1 memberships on the benefits of: (1) the special identity tag each member-pooch would wear, aiding in recovery of run-aways; and (2) its promise to open a charity dog clinic. The Club became active in 1937, headquartered in the O Street shelter. 92 The tags appeared immediately but it is not clear when the clinic project, as distinct from WARL’s established service, started.

In a return to the League’s society roots, Club members – four- and two-legged – initially seemed largely upper-crust. One of the earliest canines enlisted was Cretz, “dean of diplomatic dogs” and once owned by Queen Marie of Romania; another was the “refined and disdainful black French poodle” of Lt. Hubert Chandler. Fund-raisers from the late ‘30s included theatricals, embassy receptions and other events reminiscent of earlier times. The Evening Star’s “safety dog”, Knee-Hi, was given honorary membership in 1939, and during the war Washington Tail-Waggers sent contributions to their British cousins. 93

89 This is the correct form of the several variations of the name, taken from the organization’s newsletter.
90 I cannot pass up the names: Bette Davis, Dolores Del Rio, Leslie Howard, Dick Powell, Rupert Hughes, and boxer Jack Dempsey (Wash. Post, 12 Apr 1936, p. R16).
91 Evening Star, 27 Apr 1938, p. 23.
92 (Goals) WARL Tail-Waggers’ Club Comm minutes, 16 Sept 1936 (the committee considered writing Walt Disney to ask if Mickey Mouse would serve as honorary president; Mickey and Minnie become the first members); (tag) Evening Star, 13 Nov 1937, p. 30.
In 1950 The Club incorporated independent of WARL but stayed at O Street. Dr. Crosby Kelly, who had “been in charge of the clinic since its beginning”, treated 8,283 animals (“dogs, cats, horses, pigs and one rabbit”) that year, charging only for inoculation.94

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94 Tail-Waggers’ Club Ann Rpt, 1951; The Suburban Spectator (pub by the Woodward & Lothrop Department Store), Sept 1952 (with a photo of Kelly; both at the Washingtoniana Div, file “Animals”).
CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

Later Humane Organizations

There are in Washington three major associations which are the champions and protectors of poor, hungry and abused animals [WHS, WARL, HES]. Each has the support of the public, works in its special sphere and does much to lessen suffering of animals and to relieve those persons who feel distress that so many animals suffer. (Evening Star, 21 Nov 1923, p. 6)

A few later humane organizations in Washington round out our account. All of them did good work with good intentions, but with few or none of their official publications available now, their histories must be pieced together from news accounts of the time. These organizations tended, for some reason, to take names very similar to existing groups and to each other, so that even contemporary readers became confused, requiring occasional published explanations by knowledgeable persons differentiating one from the other. None of them used acronyms but we will here for convenience.¹

The Humane Education Society

The Humane Education Society is composed of sincere and earnest people who love animals, and under their auspices [such] a home . . . may become a valuable feature of the District’s practical charities. (Evening Star, 10 Aug 1922, p. 6)

Sun and rain stain the battered old sign that hangs at the front gate [of the HES farm]. And, as time gradually blots out the letters, the memory of this haven for homeless beasts fades just as surely. (Wash. Post, 29 Oct 1933, p. SM6)

The Humane Education Society² came into being in March 1920 with the aim “to inspire children with the sentiment of kindness for animals” and to crusade for the usual list of causes: vivisection, trapping, performing animals, slaughter house reform and so forth. What led to its formation and what need was felt for an organization largely paralleling WHS we do not know. Among the founders are many of the usual names: Blumenberg, Venable, Sargent, former WHS President Snow and most importantly James P. Briggs,³ also heavily involved in WHS.⁴

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¹ WHS and WARL also did not use acronyms in our study period but later took up this more modern practice.
² Sometimes The Humane Education Society for Homeless Animals
³ Briggs figured prominently in the earlier discussion of WHS, which see. Briggs was a native of Maine and moved to Washington as a young man (Evening Star, 11 Sept 1945, p. 2). His photo, sporting with homeless dogs at the farm, is in Wash. Post, 9 Nov 1924, p. SM10. A touching if somewhat hagiographic portrait of him is that by his widow, Anna, for which I thank Mr. Jim Taylor, current president of NHES and Briggs’ grandson. This book – not widely available – is deposited in the Washingtoniana Division of the ML King Library.
⁴ Evening Star, 30 Mar 1920, p. 15.
Briggs served briefly as president until formal adoption of the organization’s constitution in May, when Paul Bartsch took the position. The group reiterated its educational interest (“by . . . means such as public lectures, meetings, exhibitions, work with school children”) but after “a spirited debate” chose to take no stand on vivisection.5

The infant organization started life with a bang, holding the first “Be Kind to Animals Week” parade, an event specifically not intended to raise funds (“There will be absolutely not a cent collected”) but to publicize the cause. Banners, speeches, illustrated lectures, hoards of Boy and Girl Scouts and a detachment of cavalry from Ft. Myer enlivened the day. HES covered all expenses, and how such a new society could pull this off is not recorded, but then, it was a group “composed of prominent Washington men and women.”6

HES’s first parade was such a success that the organization constructed a larger event the following year. Local newspapers caught the fever and hyped the coming extravaganza for weeks. “Plans . . . are proceeding swimmingly.” The District government formally declared the dedicated week, ministers used the humane theme for their sermons on “Humane Sunday”, and preliminary fund-raising film/variety evenings and society card parties filled the What’s Happening pages.7

The parade itself was a great, splashy affair following the inaugural parade route up Pennsylvania Avenue to the presidential reviewing stand at the White House. But floats, teams of draught horses, the Ft. Myer “Arkansas canaries” (mules), Miss Alice B. Taylor’s prize collie Pershing, the Soldiers’ Home’s celebrated Shropshire sheep “and dozens of other aristocrats of the animal world” all gave way to the President’s own Laddie Boy, probably the most ballyhooed dog (“much press-agented”) in White House history. More humble pets received prizes from a select committee.8

The following year (1923) the Society shifted gears and exchanged elite canines for common dogs – a “Mutt Show”, modeled after established events in Baltimore, New York and other cities. The proposal stemmed from the obvious if theretofore overlooked fact “that there are hundreds of plain ‘dogs’ here which have no pedigrees but which are beloved by their owners.” These plebian pooches paraded their stuff at the Coliseum for two days and then down Pennsylvania Avenue; professional judges had the challenge of devising criteria for awards. John Phillip Sousa and Irene Castle donated prizes. In spite of its middle-class nature,9 “that the show will be a social event seems certain.” A second “annual” show was held (belatedly) in 1925 but without the high-society hoopla; it was the last.10

By the time of the Mutt Show James Briggs had resumed the HES presidency, a position he held until his death over twenty years later. The Society claimed about 200 members in 1922. Membership dues ranged from $2 to $5.11

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5 Evening Star, 12 May 1920, p. 7.
6 Evening Star, 7 Apr 1920, p. 4.
7 Evening Star, 14 Apr 1921, p. 3; Wash. Times, 1 May 1921, p. 14. One film, “Our Four-Footed Friends”, featured “prominent Washingtonians and their animal friends.” How interesting it would be to have this footage today!
8 Many more details will be found in Evening Star, 8 May 1921, p. 6; 14 May 1921, p. 2; Wash. Herald, 14 May 1921, p. 2 (with a photo). The highlight of the parade was Laddie Boy’s attempt to jump from his “gorgeously decorated” float into his master’s arms; he was thwarted by Wilson Jackson, “the colored master of the hounds at the White House.” Other attractions were a three-horned sheep and an 800-pound hog. Several hunt clubs participated, an interesting date for the anti-hunting HES.
9 “Just as no dog was discriminated against so the owners – male and female, white and black – meet on common ground” (Worden, “A Poorhouse Paradise”).
10 Evening Star, 30 Oct 1923, p. 16; 31 Oct 1923, p. 4; 10 Nov 1925, p. 27.
As, in effect, HES’s only president and its guiding hand, Briggs deserves notice. A man of some position (he was a lawyer first in the Department of the Interior, and then from 1919 to his death in the legal office of the Bureau of Internal Revenue), he could have lived the standard upper-middle-class man’s life of the time – fraternities, hobbies, social functions, dabbling in business and real estate – but gave himself and his estate over entirely to the cause of animals. “Though he worked hard as an attorney during the week, Mr. Briggs . . . devoted every spare moment to [animals’] rescue and care.” Following his 1925 marriage to a much-younger neighbor and regular WARL volunteer, Anna C. Reynolds, Briggs moved the family to the caretaker’s house in the newly-established farm, where his wife cooked the inmates’ food while her husband worked (six days a week) in town. “After his workday was done, Briggsie spent long hours taking care of the animals and repairing the kennels.” The couple returned to Washington on the birth of their first child in 1929.12

For a period in the early 1920s HES held exactly the sort of society fund-raisers executed in that period by its sister humane organizations. Its “dance and carnival,” “silver tea and musicale,” “spring kermis” (dance show), and card parties saw attendance from such ladies as the wives of Presidents Theodore Roosevelt, Taft, Harding, Coolidge, of Nicholas Longworth, Henry C. Wallace, Harlan Stone, Peter G. Gerry (of WARL), Henry L. West (of the Cat Club), as well as Alisa Mellon and “Mrs. Edgar Allen Poe” (of Baltimore). Actor George Arliss and his noted colleagues Elsie Janis, Irene Castle and Minnie Maddern Fiske supported the effort. Humane benefactor Mary Peet left a large part of her estate to HES in 1929 (along, it will be remembered, with a smaller bequest to her maid Sarah Beckley).13

With wonderful celerity HES grew beyond its originally stated goal of education into the shelter business. In August 1922 the Society announced its plan to raise $25,000 and buy a 150-acre farm about fifteen miles from the District in Brookville, Maryland, and there establish a “rest farm” for all homeless beasts. Two well-placed ladies (one a senator’s wife)14 led this effort but President Briggs was the public face of the project. While waiting for a full subscription HES established “a home for dogs in a small country place.”15

The Be Kind to Animals Rest Farm (later the Animal Rescue Farm)16 was visited by a Mr. King in late 1923. He found a well-ordered establishment where, “amid contentment and free from care, were animals, some too old to work, some that had never known a home before and others thrown out on the world for various reasons.” Horses, dogs and cats, “under the watchful eyes of a Mr. Warden and his wife,” all had comfortable quarters and appropriate food and water. Planned improvements would make the farm “one of the best institutions caring for stray and homeless animals in the entire country.” Briggs borrowed $4,800 for this venture by mortgaging his own house.17

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12 Briggs, For the Love of Animals, pp. 55, 73.
13 Some examples: Wash. Times, 12 Apr 1922, p. 9; Evening Star, 3 Feb 1924, Society p. 6; 18 May 1924, p. 55; (Arliss) 16 Mar 1928, p. 39; (Janis) 3 Nov 1922, p. 35; (Peet) Evening Star, 13 Mar 1929, p. 3.
14 Mrs. Duncan U. Fletcher, “wife of the Florida senator,” and Miss Edna M. Patton. “The idea had been in the minds of these two women for several years, but obstacles always appeared in the way” (Evening Star, 4 Aug 1922, p. 22).
16 This was not the Brookville site originally planned but an 80-acre farm on River Road in “the village” (now a very pricey suburb) of Potomac, Maryland (Evening Star, 8 Nov 1925, p. 6). Detailed driving directions will be found in Evening Star, 4 Dec 1924, p. 6.
17 (King) Evening Star, 12 Dec 1923, p. 6; see also N. C. Williams’ enthusiastic report in Evening Star, 17 Apr 1925, p. 6. (Mortgage) Evening Star, 29 Nov 1925, p. 3. The farm itself cost $3,800 and it was mortgaged in 1924 (Evening Star, 29 June 1924, p. 7).
The HES in its general operations mostly resembled other such efforts in Washington: it took charity strays and cast-offs, gave out animals for adoption to stringently qualified persons, and employed a full-time caretaker. The chief differences with other shelters were that it accommodated any type of animal (though we mostly read of horses, cows, dogs and cats), and most importantly that it did not kill them. Some of the wards “will find good homes through the kind offices of the directors, and others will lead a comfortable life until death calls them.” Diseased animals, however, were put down.

The farm was generally described as well thought-out and –run. The first resident caretaker was “William” (Warden?), an African-American who lived there with his family, “selected for his integrity and genuine love of animals”; Mrs. P. W. Falconer was manager in 1925. Salaries for a farm manager and the caretaker came to $100 a month. Dogs lived in a purpose-built one-story building with fireproof cages and a central run. Cats shared a roomy common space with wire-enclosed yard, also in a new building. The caretaker’s house was probably an existing farmhouse – it had no heat, stove, electricity or plumbing. The farm included a dog cemetery.

The farm held about 120-140 tenants (in one account: 6-8 “rather decrepit” horses, 20-30 cats, 100 dogs; later accounts routinely say 50-60 cats and 150 dogs), and some cows, hogs and ducks. The shelter once housed a turkey but a German shepherd ate it. Original plans called for a receiving station in the city but it was not mentioned afterward. HES members occasionally picked up street animals but the large number were deliveries by uninterested owners or others. Like WARL, the Society sometimes purchased broken-down horses. “Those who can afford it are expected to give something for placing or obtaining a dog there. The requirement, however, is waived for persons without means.” Adopted animals could be returned, as at WARL. The Society, wishing to reduce dog/cat populations, eschewed breeding at the farm and of course guarded against “adoption” for experimentation purposes.

A few details round out this portrait of HES’s shelter. Dogs ate a “slum-gullion” of meat, corn bread and dog biscuits; cats had milk, salmon and commercial cat food. With grain and forage for horses.

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18 Plans to accommodate paid boarders probably never materialized. HES had a “rescue vehicle” (Briggs, For the Love of Animals, p. 55).
19 Evening Star, 17 Apr 1925, p. 6; Worden, “The Poorhouse Paradise”. Briggs denied that any animals were executed (Evening Star, 29 June 1924, p. 7).
20 “Even the most ferocious-looking bulldog . . . yelps in friendly delight when he sees William” (Evening Star, 29 June 1924, p. 7).
21 “The buildings . . . are not palatial but they are well-kept and in good repair. There is an eleven-room house and several barns. Around the entire [area] extends a strong fence” (Worden, “The Poorhouse Paradise”). This article gives a fairly detailed description of the place and some useful photos. Briggs built the pens himself, “learning carpentry as he went along” (Briggs, For the Love of Animals, p. 55).
23 In 1924 HES futilely offered to take in the German shepherd Fritz, ordered destroyed by the Police Court for viciousness. “Fritz attempted to prove his good character in court and permitted strange folk to caress him. Before the trial ended, however, Fritz leaped at an attorney” and as a result was gassed at the pound. (Evening Star, 31 Mar 1924, p. 16)
24 “The Society has had wonderful success in placing animals in good homes . . . over 300 dogs and 100 cats having been thus placed in the last few years” (Worden, “The Poorhouse Paradise”).
26 “Not salvaged from somebody’s trash can or lunchroom, but . . . from one of Washington’s leading hotel supply firms and guaranteed fresh” (Evening Star, 29 June 1924, p. 7). The writer could not resist adding (nor can we): “That stew smelled dog-gone good to the reporter, too.”
added, the monthly bill for provisions averaged $400 each month. Early plans to provide “free clinics for pets of the poor” (provided by two of “the leading veterinarians of Washington” – volunteers) did not materialize, but another early idea – making strong horses available to teamsters so that tired animals could take a rest-vacation – was actually advertised in 1927. True to its educational mission, orphans and school children visited the farm. HES placed regular classified notices of its services in local newspapers but only in its heyday period of 1925-26.27 Aside from routinely joining other groups in protests against vivisection and the other usual causes HES in the 1920s focused on its shelter operation.28

In late 1925 HES suffered a public relations disaster: Rose Saffranek (“Miss Rose” to the children at New York Avenue and North Capitol Street), a kind, eccentric lady who had taken in “an even dozen of the lowliest mongrels and alley cats that she could find,” tried to mollify annoyed neighbors by turning over the two noisiest dogs to the Animal Rescue Farm, but was refused for lack of available kennel space. Saffranek complained bitterly to the Evening Star (“They seem to be able to take pedigreed dogs from rich people, but my poor mutts don’t stand a chance”). In spite of a vigorous defense by member Louise C. Worden (“I have paid several visits . . . The ‘pedigreed dogs’ . . . mentioned . . . are conspicuous by their absence. Most of them are just plain dogs”), the paper sent a reporter to investigate.29

“Animal Rest Farm Inmates Pitiable”, with accompanying pitiable photos, completely trashed the HES shelter, bemoaning the conditions of the facility, medical care, and food, describing the suffering of specific animals and – most damning – revealing a nasty war between recently-fired caretaker Sarah Faulkner (who refused to move) and her non-resident replacement Aldrich Butt, each accusing the other of causing the problems. “Whether the condition that exists there today is due to poor management, overlapping authority or lack of funds, . . . the animals themselves have become victims rather than beneficiaries of the kindness.”30

This fiasco fed the papers for a few weeks (“Following The Star’s article . . . complaints have poured [in] alleging that its description [of] the farm was unjust, unfair and erroneous”), including a generous and informed defense of HES by WHS Secretary John Heap. The Society pleaded poverty, hastily arranged care for the sickest animals, and booted out Faulkner, giving resident oversight to its secretary, who quickly had the place cleaned and repaired. Visiting veterinarians declared the Star’s depiction unfair.31

The 1925 expose did not kill the HES shelter but the group showed a clear decline after that. Publicity and fund-raisers disappeared soon thereafter. Indeed, it is surprising to read in the farm’s 1933 obituary that it had continued to operate more-or-less successfully almost to the end. Briggs stated in 1925 that the Society put $10,000 into the place the previous year and in its last years expenses ran $600 a month. “Now [1933] it considers itself fortunate to obtain that amount over a six-month period.”32 Briggs’ 1929 arrest for keeping an illegal animal hospital (veterinary clinic) in his home near Gallaudet College (he was, in fact, holding dogs there for transfer to the farm, something he seems to have done regularly), and his 1930 legal problems with WHS for diverting that organization’s funds to HES and

28 The organization issued a plea for greater safety at racing stables following a well-publicized fire in 1923 (Evening Star, 22 Oct 1923, p. 6).
29 Evening Star, 8 Nov 1925, p. 6 (a complete account of Saffranek); 16 Nov 1925, p. 6.
30 Evening Star, 29 Nov 1925, p. 3.
31 Evening Star, 30 Nov 1925, p. 6; 2 Dec 1925, p. 2; 6 Dec 1925, p. 5.
32 “Times were hard. Often we found ourselves having to beg or borrow money in order to feed animals at the Farm. How I hated pleading for money!” Mrs. Briggs opened a candy shop to supplement income, without great success (Briggs, For the Love of Animals, pp. 73-74).
other groups both damaged the Society and demonstrated its declining fortunes. Painfully, an anticipated bequest of $100,000 was lost to unanticipated relatives. Neighbors brought suit against the farm as a nuisance. Everything went wrong.33

The Animal Rescue Farm (still fronted by “a battered old sign ‘Be Kind to Animals Rest Home’”) closed in 1933, killed both by lack of funds and of a robust organization to oversee and support it. “Two years ago the turnover of the dog population at the farm was rapid. Stray dogs and injured animals . . . were . . . sent to the farm daily . . . Every pen was full and the lying-in hospital was operated to capacity . . . Now there are almost no visitors. The veterinarian has gone and the . . . animal hospital [has] been locked . . . Weeds fill the long wired-in pens that extend from a central house . . . Two or three decrepit old horses still wander in the woods of the farm.” A sad end for such a hopeful and useful venture.34

With the end of the farm whatever vitality the Humane Education Society still had evaporated and the organization (such as it was) lived on only as a soapbox for President Briggs, who remained its head to his death. He regularly spoke on humane causes at animal-related events, at commemorative celebrations (National Dog Week, Be Kind to Animals Week) and on radio, many projects still listing HES as a sponsor. He was a vegetarian, a rabies-skeptic (and therefore opposed to compulsory inoculation for that disease), belonged to the Anti-Capital Punishment League, and served as the president of the National Society for Humane Regulation of Vivisection. Briggs died of a heart attack in 1945.35

After Briggs’ death HES underwent a re-organization (1948) under his widow, Anna, as the National Humane Education Society, which very much “need[ed] more membership and monthly dues funds.” It was this group that bought a 146-acre farm in Leesburg, Virginia, in 1950, as will be related in the Afterword.36

Animal Protective Association

Unlike most organizations, [APA] asks for nothing but co-operation in taking care of homeless dogs and cats.
(Wash. Post, 23 Aug 1936, p. R14)

Virginia W. Sargent as a student at Carberry Elementary School won $5 in a WHS essay contest on the theme of “Humanity to Animals” in 1911. Nearly seventy years later the elderly Sargent reminisced: “I am reminded of my eighth-grade class years ago, where our teacher, a Miss Young, welcomed the formation of a ‘Band of Mercy’ . . . We had a ‘Kindness to Animals’ essay contest and I won one of the prizes; also one in high school [Eastern High School]. . . It proves what good influence a kind-hearted teacher can exert upon the sensitive minds of young people toward God’s animal creations.” In this way was born the most persistent and appealing “promoter of religious-humane education” in twentieth-century Washington, DC.37

34 Wash. Post, 29 Oct 1933, p. SM6. The animals were taken by a New York shelter (Briggs, For the Love of Animals, p.74).
35 See his obituary, Evening Star, 11 Sept 1945, p. 2. His death is touchingly described in Briggs, For the Love of Animals, p.76.
Sargent’s strong Christian faith shows through clearly in her years of humane work and her many, many short writings. “As a lover of all God’s creatures, a God-fearing practical humanitarian, I should like to [say that] animals and birds in our midst . . . should and can be respected as God’s creatures. He is their Creator as well as ours, and a Christian respects the works of His hand,” reads a typical letter. She described herself as of a Scotch family and daughter of a Presbyterian elder. All her life she strongly supported the First Presbyterian Church and assisted in its Sunday school program. She graduated in the first class of the YMCA’s School of Religious Education in 1922.38

Sargent and Sarah Beckley were the only prominent humane volunteer workers in Washington before World War II of modest income.39 She worked for the U.S. Department of Agriculture, though only for fifteen years. She joined WHS at the lowest membership level ($1). She never married and lived with family most of her life.40 She was “a strict vegetarian” and “a passionate nature lover” (all her own words) who spent her summers (in “what office leave I can spare”) at “my little summer suburban home” in nearby Garrett Park, Maryland.41

Sargent’s intense attachment to the cause of her “animal friends and helpers” is easiest seen today in her near continuous stream of letters published in local newspapers, beginning in 1921 and running to her last years – often four or five a year and we don’t know how many others not published. (She also spoke on radio.) None of these lectured readers or wagged a finger at them; all expressed a warm love for her fellow-creatures of God and offered easy, sensible steps how to aid them, from joining one of the several humane organizations (she always included contact information) to feeding birds in winter. Mostly she promoted local efforts, but she also wandered into issues of vivisection, Easter chicks, rodeo animals, circus lions, bull fighting, hunting, animals in markets, validity of rabies scares, nourishing animal food, child labor, and the morality of current movies. She protested wartime scrap drives held on Sundays and in 1957 scolded the Soviet government for “shooting a defenseless little dog into outer space.”42

She was always practical. She joined the three local humane organizations active in the 1920s and remained faithful to all even after she had started her own. She helped with the 1919 WARL bazaar and the pound’s 1930 Thanksgiving doggie dinner. When the government demolished some dormitory buildings near Union Station in 1930 and the old Center Market in 1934 marked an important advance for Sargent and her friends: ARHEL became the Animal Protective Association,43 and the APA opened a (probably more substantial) shelter at 5200 Wisconsin Avenue NW.44 This facility operated like its established counterparts, with its own telephone number, visiting hours (closed on Sundays, of course)

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38 (Quote) Evening Star, 8 Jan 1949, p. 6; (background) 2 Apr 1927, p. 11; 26 Oct 1942, p. 9; (graduation) 15 Apr 1922, p. 11.
39 I say this on the evidence of her regular clerical job and that, unlike the other women described here, she had no husband for support. Her record of financial contributions to her organization clearly indicates that she had some resources, possibly just savings. Her Capitol Hill neighborhood was not fashionable and none of the usual society ladies worked with her. Let us note that James Briggs nearly drove himself and his family to penury with his support of HES.
41 (Vegetarian) Evening Star, 24 Dec 1921, p. 17; (nature) 19 Sept 1924, p. 6.
42 The last demands to be documented: Evening Star, 21 Nov 1957, p. 18.
43 There were similarly named organizations in many US cities at the time but, like the Animal Rescue Leagues and Societies for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, they were entirely independent of each other, linked only by common goals and methods.
and 24-hour drop-off. It “picks up lost or deserted animals, and tries to restore them to their owners or find good homes for them.” Like WARL, it did not place female animals, leaving open the question of what it did with them and with unclaimed animals.\textsuperscript{45}

In the first half of 1933 ARHEL took in 600 animals; the total for three years (1933-35) stood at 5,760. Sargent’s accounts of these ladies’ tireless and lonely work seeking out and feeding or capturing desperate animals (mostly cats) are undoubtedly accurate: “The Association keeps a watchful eye on areas of government improvement [demolition/building] and its agents [have] been at work feeding and rescuing the waifs . . . Some evenings, with the press of other orders, there is only time to feed; but someone will visit the spot every day until every possible rescue is made.” APA also went on the street to distribute Thanksgiving and Christmas dinners to homeless cats, dogs and to horses “stabled in poor areas of the city.” During this period APA “specialized on feeding homeless cats . . . Eventually it hopes to capture and destroy humanely the surplus cat population of Washington.”\textsuperscript{46}

Advertisements from 1936 placed the facility on Bradley Road in Bethesda, Maryland; apparently the facility had been forced to move from Wisconsin Avenue. APA began looking for permanent quarters, settling in the then-outskirts of eastern Washington, at 3900 Wheeler Road SE. The 1½- story house and 2-story “animal rescue home” were occupied in October 1937 (World Animal Day). Sargent covered the estimated $13,500 cost as a memorial to her parents. Her own cat, Fluffy, was the first resident. Along with the dedication, Sargent announced plans to resign the presidency of APA in favor of Anna Briggs so that she could concentrate on children’s humane education but this did not happen, and she continued to head the organization to its end.\textsuperscript{47}

The new shelter lived a financially precarious life. Staff was reduced to one, meaning that APA could not pick up pets from houses, and telephone service cut off just the following year. The phone was off once more in 1943, and APA again reduced its efforts (and phone service) in 1948, when it “need[ed] more membership and monthly donor funds from the public.” The organization was not a member of the Community Chest funding system.\textsuperscript{48} Sometimes bright spots lighted the routine, as when 40 members of the Junior Animal Protection Association gathered at the shelter for Bobby Briggs’ seventh birthday; and we read of a branch of APA in neighboring Prince George’s County, Maryland, in 1946. The Wheeler Road shelter closed in 1953 “because of the increasing number of apartment units in the area.” Hopes of establishing a new facility in upper Montgomery County, Maryland, were thwarted by zoning restrictions. APA then continued simply as an education and advocacy organization, operating from Sargent’s home back in Garrett Park, where it had started.\textsuperscript{49}

\textsuperscript{47} Rossel E. Mitchell was the architect and Lacy H. Smith the builder. (Bethesda) Evening Star, 5 Oct 1937, p. 2; (buildings) 12 June 1937, p. 25; 10 July 1937, p. 25; Wash. Post, 11 July 1937, p. R1; (financing, presidency) 5 Oct 1937, p. 2. There is a photo of the dedication (perhaps an additional building) in Wash. Post, 25 Sept 1938, p. 6. Animals were buried on the grounds (Evening Star, 16 Oct 1937, p. 22).
\textsuperscript{49} (Children) Evening Star, 1 May 1938, p. 2; (branch) Wash. Post, 6 Aug 1946, p. 6; (close) Evening Star, 6 May 1953, p. 56; (later) Wash. Post, 6 Mar 1955, p. B4; letter, Sargent to District Commissioners, 8 July 1964 (National Archives, RG 351, Entry 17 “Register of Letters Received”).
Virginia Sargent moved permanently from her E Street home to Garrett Park in 1953. About fifteen years later she joined Anna Briggs’ family in a specially built addition to their house and lived there until retiring to a nursing home, where she died in 1984, still president of the Animal Protective Association.\(^50\)

News articles of 1936 reported on the recently opened *Times Free Animal Clinic*, organized by the Washington Times. Dr. Milton A. Bosley, president of the D.C. Veterinary Medical Association, treated pets gratis at his own animal hospital (311 6th Street NW) two afternoons each week, underwritten by the newspaper. In its first three weeks’ operation the clinic handled 235 dogs and cats. “Its fame has spread . . . as far north as New York City.” Without searchable access to back issues of the Times, however, we cannot know how long this good service continued.\(^51\)

The *Animal Defense Society* appeared very occasionally in newspapers of the late 1930s and early ‘40s, always in association with Elizabeth B. Howry, a well-connected lady of the city (she had been presented to the Court of St. James) whose other, and very active, interests included opera and Democratic politics. The Society aimed “to abolish all cruelty to dumb creatures,” worked often with the Anti-Vivisection Society (a 1938 article confuses them as “The Animal Defense and Anti-Vivisectional Society”), and held a few society-packed events (a play is mentioned) of the sort familiar from the earlier organizations. In fact, the Society seems to have been a personal effort of Howry, rather as the HES became a personal platform for Briggs, who cooperated with her.\(^52\)

**Other Organizations**

A letter writer of 1922 outlined the variety of humane organizations in the District for the guidance of Evening Star readers – WHS, HES, WARL – “There may be others.”\(^53\) In fact, in the first half of the century a fair number of other groups in the Washington area concerned themselves with animal welfare. These fell into three types:

- **Suburban organizations:** A comprehensive directory of humane agencies published by the American Humane Association in 1949 listed seven in nearby Maryland and two in Virginia.\(^54\) Virginia Sargent knew of two shelters in Maryland and three in Virginia in 1953 (Evening Star, 19 July 1953, p. 23). The *Washingtonian* magazine in 1971 found seven and five respectively.
- **Coordinating bodies:** A 1947 memo in WHS archives discussed the then-active “Federated Animal Welfare League of Maryland-D.C.-Va. and West Va.”; the 1971 *Washingtonian* article named statewide coordinating humane organizations in both Maryland and Virginia.
- **Ancillary organizations:** A good number of groups concerned themselves with specific aspects of animal welfare, sometimes working with one of the larger organizations on projects. Some of these

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\(^{51}\) Wash. Times, 6 Jan 1936, p. 11; Jan 1936 (date unclear), file clipping Wash. Div.

\(^{52}\) Evening Star, 9 Jan 1936, p. 12; 25 Apr 1938, p. 20; 28 Apr 1938, p. 24; 13 June 1943, p. 22 (ADS joins Civil Defense effort to protect animals; see Appendix D13); 9 Aug 1964, p. 39 (Howry’s obituary, with photo). *Hearings . . . 1939* (Senate), 8 Feb 1938, pp. 79-82, includes an extract of the Society’s letter in support of raising Poundmaster Marks’ salary. It was last heard from in 1945, testifying against a vivisection proposal (Evening Star, 15 May 1945, p. 10).

\(^{53}\) Evening Star, 21 Nov 1923, p. 6, and other similar references.

\(^{54}\) Excluding those concerned only with children. This document is in the WHS archives.
were branches of national bodies. Among those mentioned in press articles were: Audubon Society (issues related to birds), Izaak Walton League (fish), Jack London Club (circus and performing animals), Dog Lovers Protective Society (dogs, probably very short-lived), Washington Aquarium Society (pet fish – they disapproved of square tanks), Anti-Steel-Trap League (fur-bearing animals), League to Conserve Food Animals (western cattle and sheep herds), and American Red Star (army animals). There were also local conservation groups, such as the Fish and Game Protective Association.

55 Sources for the smaller or defunct organizations are: (London) Evening Star, 23 Mar 1922, p. 14; (Dog Lovers) Wash. Post, 10 Apr 1945, p. 9; (Aquarium) Wash. Post, 17 Jan 1916, p. 4; (Steel-Trap) Evening Star, 5 June 1925, p.32 (organizers included Briggs, Smith, Hutchins, Palmer, all familiar from discussions above); (Food Animals) Wash. Times, 12 Apr 1922, p. 9; (Red Star) Evening Star, 25 Mar 1917, p. 13; see Appendix D13.
CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE

Summary

This last period of our study – 1912-1940 – saw the culmination of trends noted in the earlier Summary: the near-complete disappearance of farms and of individually kept farm animals from the District accompanied at a slightly slower pace by disappearance of draft horses, guard dogs and other work animals, and packs of stray dogs, leaving the city’s human populations knowing animals only as treasured pets. Add to this the abatement of rabies scares, which by 1940 continued more in memory than experience, and we see a very different social environment regarding animals than at the beginning of the century.

In this period the general attitude toward homeless animals changed from control/elimination to rescue – the Shelter model over the Pound model. No longer would anyone declare that “a stout club will do” to solve the stray dog problem as happened at the 1854 meeting. Three indicators can be cited to demonstrate this trend:

- After 1912 the Congress and Commissioners enacted a number of laws and regulations addressing animal welfare (e.g., requiring vaccinations) while the only acts regarding farm animals addressed the minor nuisance of chickens;
- The pound itself moved both in practice and image closer and closer to the Shelter model, with a program of dog-adoption days, pet safety programs and avuncular poundmasters;
- The major local humane organizations (WHS and WARL) gradually broadened their membership and with it their center of gravity from the upper to the middle class, indicating an increasing acceptance of their humane goals.

These trends have only increased into the present time – a victory for our good impulses when favored by broad social and economic trends and supported by an enlightened and energetic citizenry.
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CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX

Dead Animals

Mann’s business passed to Patsy’s son Charlie, who closed his rendering plant and now only collected carcasses for a flat yearly payment of $3,000, delivering the bodies to soap manufacturer Norton and Comp., which kept the innards and returned the hides to him (“It was nothing . . . to receive 10 to 15 dead horses per day.”). He continued this work through successive contracts until 1923, when the District took it over. Over time the District had undertaken the collection and disposal of garbage, ashes and other refuse as a direct function of the city government. By 1920 only the collection of dead animals and night soil was still contracted out, and the 1923 annual District appropriation required that city crews collect dead animals in the coming fiscal year, under the City Refuse Division of the Engineer Department. Three men were assigned to this duty. Two trucks and one horse-drawn wagon supported the work in 1931. Their duties must have been well-performed: “Maryland residents . . . haul carcasses over the District line and leave them by the roadside, knowing the District authorities will remove such material promptly.”

A useful 1926 article on District street-cleaning procedures states that of the 43,609 carcasses collected in 1925 about 30,000 were cats and 12,000 dogs, the rest being “rodents, horses, mules, cows, sheep, goats, poultry and miscellaneous pets. Generally about 500 miscellaneous animals are removed from pet stores and express [transport] company headquarters. These include animals [in transit] which die from accidents or diseases . . . Canaries, parrots, guinea pigs, trained mice and rats, and a great variety of other pets are delivered to the rendering establishment.”

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1 Norton, “History”, pp. 5-6.
2 Comm Minutes/Orders, 1 Dec 1891; 4 June 1900; 18 June 1902; 6 June 1905; 1 Apr 1910. This is the last such contract mentioned in the minutes but the story can be followed through the annual reports of the Street Cleaning/City Refuse Divisions. By 1920 Mann’s plant had moved to Four Mile Run, Virginia (Wash. Times, 2 July 1920, p. 13). See also: Wash. Post, 30 Mar 1900, p. 10; 8 Nov 1902, p. 2, in which the body of Admiral Dewey’s dog, shot as rabid, was removed by the Washington Sanitary company after the Street Cleaning Department had been notified.
3 As recommended by the Commissioners in their 1898 annual report.
Not all animals were left on the street; here is a charming story from 1926: “In dear remembrance of my dead child, Fannie. She leaves to mourn her mother, Bessie Brown, her father, Shack, a host of good friends and Cousin Lon.’ Finding this note on a freshly packed grave on Buzzards Point [in Southwest Washington] yesterday Policeman Davis settled down to unravel what appeared to be an unauthorized burial of a baby or young child. After confiding to his superiors the details of his serious mission Policeman Davis went back and ordered the body exhumed. It was found to be the body of a dog” (Evening Star, 17 Sept 1926, p. 1).
5 Among the express company pick-ups were eight deceased Alaskan reindeer intended for Christmas displays and then the Zoo (Evening Star, 26 Dec 1926, p. 69). Possums, rabbits and rats also figure in official Department reports. One must wonder about larger game animals such as deer, which today figure regularly in the crew’s work – there is no mention of them in earlier reports.
The city continued the practice of selling the hides, rendered at a private plant in Rosslyn, Virginia, into soap. Hides of larger animals were sold separately, the resulting revenue totaling $3,000 in 1926. In 1918 the city purchased the old Washington Fertilizer plant in Cherry Hill, Virginia, for the incineration of garbage, and by 1935 all carcasses were destroyed there. The nearby city of Alexandria also brought its animal bodies there after 1933 (Appendix C9). Later information on this service is lost to the increasingly slim reports of the Commissioners, but we can express some surprise at the steady – indeed, increasing – number of animal corpses taken from city streets. This undoubtedly is due to large numbers of minor pests and wildlife such as rats and squirrels, which were not picked up earlier but now figured in the count.

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6 Evening Star, 26 Dec 1926, p. 69; Schmeckebier, The District of Columbia, p. 387; City Refuse Div Ann Rpts, 1935, 1937. The arrangement with Alexandria was formalized by the Commissioners (Minutes/Orders) on 20 Oct 1933 and makes no mention of a charge levied.
Cat Shelters

The Barber Refuge for Animals
*Wash Times Magazine, 13 April 1902, Magazine p. 8*

Mrs. Beckley’s Cat Shelter
*Wash Post, 18 October 1908, p. SM3*

“The Difference Between Catching Dogs and Cats”
*Wash Post, 16 June 1912, p. 17*
WARL in the News

Evening Star, 7 Apr 1919, p. 24

Evening Star, 9 Oct 1921, p. 59

Evening Star, 24 May 1925, p. 5

Evening Star, 2 Feb 1926, p. 9

Evening Star, 3 July 1927, p. 3

"a small group of meddlesome rich persons"

– the press joined in on a common view

*Wash Times*, 1 Apr 1914, p. 3
The WARL Shelter

Where Dumb Friends of Humans, In Adversity, Are Given a Haven

The Maryland Ave shelter
Wash. Post, 30 Mar 1919, p. S13

WARL’s first ambulance
WARL Archives

The Christmas Horse Banquet
Drawing by Laura Friend Smythe;
Evening Star, 5 January 1933, p. 17

Thanks to Mr. Kent Boese;
WARL Archives

The O St shelter
WARL Archives
Personages

T. Edward Clark
Association of Oldest Inhabitants Archives (HSW)

Cecil French
Evening Star, 7 Oct 1904, p. 20

Sarah Beckley
Drawing by Laura Friend Smythe;
Wash. Post, 18 Oct 1908, p. 2

Mary Coursey
Evening Star, 20 June 1914, p. 9
Personages (2)

James P. Briggs
Kindly provided by Mr. Jim Taylor (Nat. Humane Education Society)

Virginia Sargent
Kindly provided by Mr. Jim Taylor (Nat. Humane Education Society)
Secondary Shelters

Mr. and Mrs. Frank J. Buckley
Drawing by Laura Friend Smythe; Wash. Times Magazine, 3 Aug 1902, p. 4

Society for Friendless Dogs shelter
Wash. Times, 13 Nov 1905, p. 11

Tail-Waggers Club
Evening Star, 19 July 1942, p. 3

Animal Protective Assn
Evening Star, 21 Nov 1943, p. 3

Humane Sunday
Evening Star, 13 Apr 1940, p. 14

Humane Education Soc shelter
Both illustrations: Evening Star, 29 June 1924, p. 7