L. S. Allstrum

Miss Esther Allstrum

Allstrum Printing Company

Successors to

Waller Printing Company

Phones: Main 6768
A 1033

729 Commerce Street

Tacoma, Wash., Nov. 24, 1911.

Miss Ida M. Tarbell,

New York City.

Dear Miss Tarbell:-

Replying to your letter of the 11th inst regarding the recall of A. V. Fawcett.

I am trying to give you herewith some general observations on ex-mayor Fawcett as follows:

He is, first of all, of the old school politicians. His creed is "To the victor belongs the spoils", and he is bitter in his antagonism to Civil Service. He thinks and acts almost without exception with an eye to political end or effect. His political career is as follows:

1892

He was candidate on the Democratic ticket for County Commissioner and elected.

1894

Was candidate for Mayor on the Democratic ticket against Ed. S. Orr, Republican, and Dr. Goddard, Populist, Mr. Orr was elected, Mr. Fawcett being third in the race.

1896

Was a candidate on the Fusion ticket, Democrats and Populists, against Mr. Orr, Republican. Was elected by two votes.

Later in the year was a candidate for Governor before the fusion convention made up of Democrats, Populists and Silver Republicans,

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held at Ellensburg. The Governorship went to a Populist. Hence Mr. Fawcett did not receive the nomination.

1898

Was the Democratic candidate for Mayor before the Fusion Convention of Democrats, Populists and Silver Republicans. Was beaten for the nomination by Cyrus Mentzer.

1900

Was a candidate on the Citizens' ticket for Mayor against Louis D. Campbell and was beaten.

Later in the year was the Democratic candidate for Governor before the Fusion Convention of Democrats, Populists and Silver Republicans held at Seattle. Beaten by Governor John R. Rogers.

1902

Was the Republican candidate at the primaries for State Senator. Beaten by Lincoln Davis.

1904

Was the Republican candidate at the primaries for Mayor. Was beaten by Lous D. Campbell.

1906

Was the Republican Candidate before the primaries for Mayor, but withdrew before election, leaving the field to R. L. McCormick, who was at that time the Tacoma representative of the Weyerhaeuser Timber Company.

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1908

Was the Republican candidate at the primaries for Lieutenant Governor. Defeated by Lieut. Gov. Hay.

1910

Was candidate for Mayor under the Commission form of Government and elected.

About the time of his first campaign he gave a turkey dinner to a big gathering of poor children. This gave him the title of "Turkey Fawcett" by his enemies who claimed it was a"grand-stand play" for political effect. After his first election one of his first controversies was with an electric company here about wires. He did not debate the matterlong with them but one night took his policemen and cut the wires down. The electric manager came along and protested and he was promptly sent to jail where he had to put up a cash bail. This started the name of "Fighting Fawcett". This also gave him a following of people bitter against Corporatinns, and in this policy he found more encouragement, and he has followed it to date. After his term of Mayor expired his different candidacies, as mentioned above, proved failures, he lost strength, and seemed abandoned politically. When the campaign was started,however, in April 1910 he seemed to immediately recoup all his political strength and was easily elected. But upon entrance to office he seemed changed. He was a great deal older, and partly due to this fact, partly due to an antagonistic commissioner his colleague even older then himself

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there was strife and friction from the beginning. It grew in bitterness each week. About this time Women's Suffrage was voted in the state, and Fawcett's enemies claimed that on account of the coming women's vote he forsook old affiliations with liquor interests and started the anti-treating sentiment. He had always been recognized and accepted, I think even admitted himself, allied with what is called the "open town element". In fact he even rents today one of his buildings to a saloon, which it is claimed is as low a dive as the present conditions will allow. He drinks himself, and I do not think that he has ever denied but what these are his most congenial surroundings. Naturally therefore when he introduced and had carried his Anti-Treating Ordinance everybody was surprised, and the liquor interests were bitter against him. This condition of course added fire to the flame of friction which was constantly growing in the Commission, and petitions were started, and it was claimed justly I guess, by the whiskey element. There was a response and a re-call election ordered. Whether for "political effect" as his enemies claim, or not, Fawcett has always stood for what he calls the "Common People". This was in fact in my judgement the main issue in the re-call campaign, and I think won him more votes from the working men than anything else. As one voter said, "I do not care what he is for, or what he is, he is AGAINST corporations". This policy which Fawcett has followed so persistently gave him many votes. And against him there was first the Women's votes

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His domestic record lost him many votes among the women. His first wife died, then while he was living with his second wife he was charged with paying attention to a young woman. Wife #2 finally secured a divorce, when he married the young woman, and the Court records together with the neighbors' evidence made very fatal campaign data for him. Due to this, his natural and previous affiliations with the liquor element, on the one hand, on the other the high moral character of his opponent, the women helped, and, in fact I think they did, elect his opponent. Working on the same side with the women were the saloon men, who as a rule fought Fawcett, not that they wanted his opponent so much, but that they did not want Fawcett. Another large part of the voting population concluded that on account of his political ambitions, his political methods, his inability to work harmoniously with his collegues on the Commission, all meant confusion and a detriment to securing results for the city, and voted against him.

His opponent, Mr. W. W. Seymour, had never been in office until he was elected a member of the Park Board. A clean man of high moral standards but handicapped in his campaign because of his reputed wealth. He had donated to the city a $ 10,000.00 Conservatory for Wright Park, offered prizes to school children, had introduced and worked indefatiguably for playgrounds, had always been charitable with his purse, had for years taken very active part in all civic affairs, had been accepted as a successful business man.

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All these things helped in the campaign, and in fact about the only charge even politically that could be brought against him was that he was rich. This latter fact, against Fawcett's plebian ways, made a close contest, but it was settled by voting Fawxett out, and in the light of subsequent I believe I voice a general sentiment that it was a wise vote.

Being a woman, naturally Fawcett's political character or his executive ability to handle the city affairs would be rather insignificant in comparison with the moral issue involved. As stated above the records bearing on Fawcett's moral life were almost conclusive that his moral standards always have been low. Evidence was presented in his divorce trial to show that he was almost inhuman in his treatment of his wife. While I appreciate that these things are generally barred in a political fight it goes straight home to a woman, and it is a big issue with them. The woman with a few exceptions came forward splendidly and the fight that they made to defeat Fawcett is entitled to being recorded in the highest works enobling women. Though possibly prejudiced in favor of women, though trying to be honest in all statements, I sincerely believe that the women defeated Fawcett, and it was strictly a moral fight with them. Personally I do not wish to express any opinion of Mr. Fawcett. He appointed me Pure Food Inspector without my solicitation a position which I still hold, being re-instated by Mr. Seymour.

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If you use this data in your publication please do not in any way mention my name in connection therewith. Hoping this will meet your requirements, I am,

Very truly yours,

Esther Allstrum

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