

Only The Beginning

These profiles of some of the most prominent pioneers do not begin to complete the roll call of blacks who were in Spokane Falls around the turn of the century, striving to achieve against the odds. In fact, records indicate that at the turn of the century Spokane had a larger black population than Tacoma and was closing in on Seattle. Among the many other black arrivals here were Jessie A. Williams, the first black lawyer back in 1891, son of William Williams, a physician who specialized in foot ailments, and his wife Hattie, a hairdresser.



*Henry W. Sample,
Spokane Police Department 1892*

Henry W. Sample became the first black man to wear a police uniform in 1892. Another black man, Walter Lawson, saw service as a special policeman with the department around 1900, and still another, Fred E. Goddard, was a plainclothes officer and later became driver of the police greyhound. Goddard's death, resulting from an accidental, self-inflicted gunshot wound, made newspaper headlines in 1913.



*Fred E. Goddard,
died in 1913*