

Nellie L. McElroy (1875-1937) became the first policewoman in New York State and the tenth in the United States when she was appointed to the Rochester Police Department on September 23rd 1913. Her casework dealt largely with the criminal offenses of women, and she ultimately ended up serving as both a beat officer and a social worker to the many at-risk women she came to mentor.



From the Albert R. Stone Negative Collection, Rochester Museum & Science Center, Rochester, N.Y.

McElroy (far left) at an army food sale in 1919.

Focused on preventing crime rather than policing it, McElroy deterred countless young people from vice and helped rehabilitate local families during her 23 year service with the Rochester Police Department.