

= Jeannie Mole =

Harriet Fisher Mole (née Jones ; 2 May 1841 ? 15 April 1912) , known as Jeannie , was a British socialist , feminist , and trade union organiser in Liverpool . Arriving there in 1879 , Mole was instrumental in bringing socialism to Liverpool , as well as setting up a number of societies to encourage trade unions amongst Liverpool 's female workforce . She supported strikes to improve the workforce 's conditions , especially to remove fines .

Mole was also a supporter of dress reform , set up a socialist food van and advocated at a coroner 's investigation for the family of a woman killed in an industrial accident , ensuring the family received compensation and encouraging the jury to recommend safety improvements as part of the verdict .

= = Biography = =

Harriet Fisher Jones was born on 2 May 1841 in Warrington to her father , Evan Jones , a tinsmith , and his wife , Harriet Jones . As she and her mother shared the same name , she became better known as Jeannie . In 1860 , she married a fruit merchant , Robert Willis , and the couple travelled to New York , where she took an interest in the black rights movement . On her return to England , she and her husband settled in London and had a son , Robert Frederick Evan Willis , better known as Fred . Willis spent some time helping the poor in the slums of London . She was heavily influenced by the works of Thomas Carlyle and John Ruskin , setting her on the path of socialism .

In the late 1870s , Willis divorced her husband and remarried . Her new husband was another fruit merchant , William Keartland Mole , who was also the son of a wealthy Liverpool jeweller . William was 22 at the time , and the marriage was witnessed by Mole 's son , as well as her brother . The family moved to Liverpool , living on Bold Street . It was there that she began her lifelong ambition to improve the lives of those in poverty within Liverpool .

Mole suffered a heart attack in 1896 , likely due to excessive work and the ensuing illness lead to her taking a step back from organisational work the following year . Her son , Fred , died in 1905 . On 15 April 1912 , whilst on holiday in Paris , Mole died .

= = Feminist and socialist work = =

Finding just six socialists in Liverpool , Mole started propaganda meetings in her home with the support of her husband and son . These meetings lead to the formation in 1886 of the Worker 's Brotherhood , the first socialist society in Liverpool . The Brotherhood , despite never achieving great numbers , went on to help form the Liverpool branch of the Fabian Society in 1892 . Mole became vice president of the Liverpool Fabian Society in 1895 . She also focused on more practical solutions for social issues , for example , funding a " socialist food van " at a cost of £ 55 6s 5d and campaigning for a " people 's hall " in Liverpool for the working class .

Mole was an early follower of dress reform , a feminist movement against the cumbersome garments of the Victorian era , and would regularly wear an outfit reminiscent of Greek robes . She gave the pattern to Caroline Martyn and Julia Dawson , who wore similar outfits .

In 1888 , Mole and the Workers ' Brotherhood started to campaign to unionise the female workers in Liverpool into female @-@ only unions . They started working with the Women 's Protective and Provident League (WPPL) , calling for the founding of a local branch , and in January 1889 , the group set up the Liverpool Workwomen 's Society , representing bookfolders , tailors , and cigar makers , with Mole acting as secretary . Women were over @-@ represented in these poorly paid trades , with four women for every man working in them . The society relaunched the following year as " Liverpool Society for the Promotion of Women 's Trade Unions " , expanding its membership to other trades in reaction to Liverpool City Council 's inaction over sweating systems in the area . Mole helped set up specific unions , such as one for (primarily Chinese) laundresses and washerwomen . Around the same time , the House of Lords launched a select committee on sweating systems , with the ensuing publicity encouraging the group to take further action .

In 1894 , Clementina Black set up the Women 's Industrial Council ; soon after , Mole helped found a Liverpool branch in which she was the secretary . The council helped form unions for upholsteressess and marine @-@ sorters , as well as worked with the other groups set up by the Workwomen 's society . In her role , Mole also stepped up inquiries into working conditions for women ; for example , when an industrial accident killed a woman at the Old Swan Rope Works in Liverpool , Mole attended the case as secretary of the ' society for inquiring into the conditions of working women ' . She ensured that a factory inspector attended , that the jury made recommendations to prevent future accidents , and that compensation was paid to the woman 's next of kin .

In 1895 , Mole leveraged her position in the Liverpool Women 's Industrial Council (LWIC) to encourage a strike amongst Liverpool 's women ropemakers to stop fines on top of loss of wages for petty misdemeanors such as turning up late . Despite the successful outcome of the strike , the section of the LWIC led by Eleanor Rathbone wanted to focus on " social investigation " and disapproved of the action , leading Mole to disassociate herself from the group . Mole also created and edited the " Women 's Page " of the Liverpool Labour Chronicle newspaper .