

Carleton Family Memoirs

by
Mary Carleton Peterson

*These memoirs are based on a letter from Mary Carleton Peterson
to her grand-niece, Marcia Glick - October 1979*

My father, Herbert Carleton, was born on January 1, 1869 in New England, so you would call him a real Yankee. Congregational and Thrifty.



Herbert Carleton
1914
St. Louis Park, MN

I don't know what his father did for a living, but everyone in these times had a cow, chickens and a garden. So in St. Louis Park, when he built our house in 1902 or 1903 on the site of an old hotel (see photo below), he had a barn, cows, an orchard and a large garden. Then the Dan Patch (Northfield - Southern RR) condemned a right-of-way diagonally through the property between our house and the barn. My earliest recollection was of Father going each day to Minneapolis court to fight the case. I called the surveyors "bears." So after a few years of climbing the embankment to get to the barn and chicken yard, he gave up cows.

Mother made cottage cheese for sale, as well as milk which Rachel and Lois delivered. They gave me a ride in the wagon when they did that, and one day it tipped over and broken glass cut the skin near my eye. I've had a dimple in that spot ever since.



3742 Dakota Avenue, St. Louis Park, MN
June 1910

*Looking SSE from garden built by Herbert Carleton with Hazen helping.
Tore down an old hotel and built with part of its foundation.*

Father had an older brother, Arthur, who was a salesman for an extract company, first in Schenectady, and then in Ames, Iowa.

Aunt May would accompany him often on his calls, doing a lot of reading and crocheting. She taught me to crochet and somewhere in my hoard of savings, I have the towel insertion I made. She gave us fancy crocheted items until she learned we didn't appreciate them enough.

Father's youngest brother, Winfred, was a salesman for a poultry supply house, and New England was his territory. When we lived in New Jersey, we went to visit him at his booth at a convention in New York City. Neither brother went further than high school, if that.



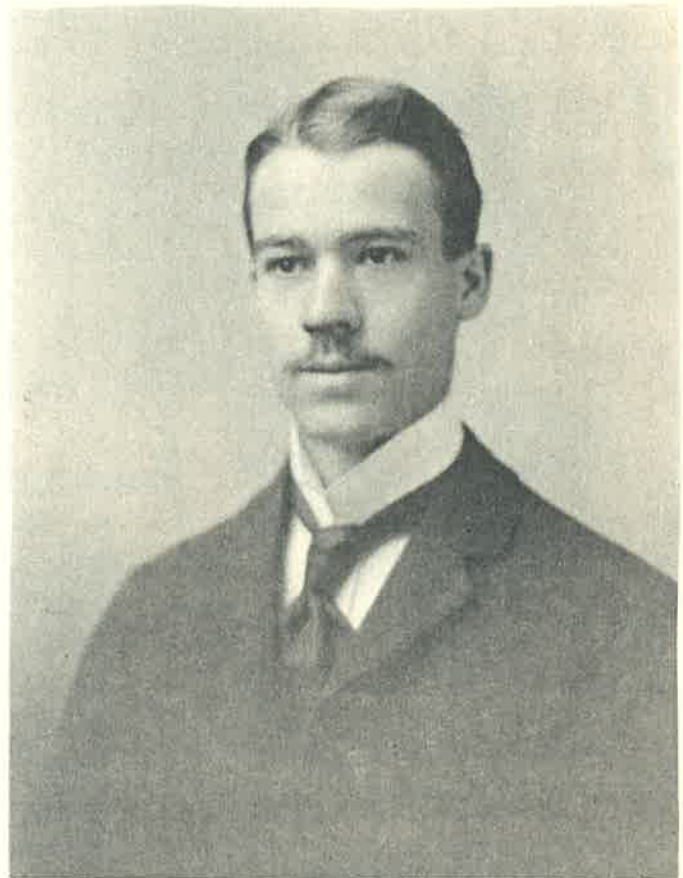
**Herbert, Alford, Winfred, Arthur, Susan Gridley Carleton
1877**



Arthur Seldon Carleton

1893

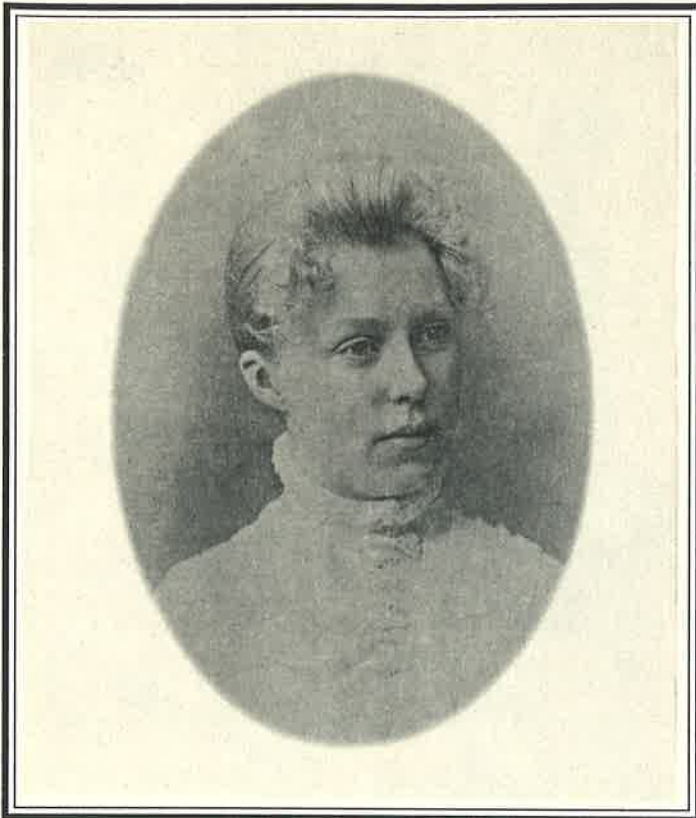
Brother of Herbert & Winfred



Winfred Gridley Carleton

1896

Brother of Arthur & Herbert



Blanche Emma Barney Carleton

1887

High School Graduation

But Father was a "book worm." He could have gone to Yale, but an Uncle Gridley had given money to little Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota and tuition costs there were low. So by train he went out there and attended 4 years. I doubt if he went back East for any vacations. I think he found summer work.

He was a Junior when Mother started as a Freshman, and they were seated at the same table in the dining hall.

They became engaged - maybe the next year. I never heard of either of them having had any other dates. Each of them joined debating societies which were the forerunner of fraternities, and sometime Father won a \$50 prize for a debate and spent that on the diamond solitaire he gave Mother. Mother gave it to me at the time Allan was born. I wore it for years, but it is now in the safety deposit vault.

Father graduated, went to live with his parents in Hartford, Connecticut where he attended Hartford Theological Seminary. After Mother graduated, she went back to her parents in Mankato, Minnesota and did nothing for one whole year while getting ready for an August 31 wedding. She wore long underwear and a woolen bridal gown. We did have a snap shot of Ada dressed up in it in 1926 or so. Her wedding shoes were worn that once. Small, pointed shoes with a tiny 2 inch heel. We had them for years also in a trunk in the attic.

Their first year married, life was spent in the Carleton home, along with Arthur and his bride. Mother attended classes at the Seminary. They played tennis and used a heavy racket which I also used when growing up. Imagine my Mother with her long skirts on the court.

Father and Mother were interviewed for missionary work in a foreign field. Mother stated that she did not think Father would be suited to that life. Father was hurt and always felt resentment. So Father was sent as a teacher in a Home Mission school at Evarts, Kentucky. Had to go horseback and ford streams to get there. Some of the many cases of books he sent there fell into the water. He dried them out, but I doubt if he ever read them. In our attic for years was a bookcase of them. We gave them to our St. Louis Park Congregation minister, who was on the faculty of a seminary in Minneapolis. I wonder if any students read them.

Father studied Greek and Latin and German. So did Mother. After one year in Kentucky they went to the German speaking town of New Ulm, Minnesota. That is where Hazen and Rachel were born.



Hazen & Rachel Carleton

May 6, 1899



Alford Carleton

June 1891

*Father of Herbert E. Carleton
Husband of Susan Gridley Carleton*



Susan Gridley Carleton

June 1891

*Mother of Herbert E. Carleton
Wife of Alford Carleton*

Kentucky was a sad experience. Alford Carleton had died of pneumonia, and "Big Mrs. Carleton" came to Kentucky where "Little Mrs. Carleton" was busy with baby, Dwight, and doing art work. (I have an oil painting of a mountain scene. A better painting was on our parlor wall all the years I was growing up. It had a gilt-frame. Wonder who has it now.) Baby and Grandmother died of typhoid. Mother could not stand it in Kentucky, and left by train for Minnesota, with Father finishing out the school year alone. He boarded out. He had to ask for "sweet milk" or he would be given buttermilk.



Herbert, Rachel, Blanche & Mary in front

Father's next teaching job was in Delano, Minnesota, about 30 miles West of Minneapolis. When he wanted to go to Minneapolis, he bicycled. He was always a great walker. When I was a baby, he would carry me on his shoulders when he walked wherever he had errands. When I was 6 years old (1916) and had pneumonia, he carried me in his arms to the end of the street car line (several city blocks) and then to Eitel Hospital near Lowry Park, Minneapolis.

I recovered eventually, after having had an open cut under my right shoulder blade for drainage. The scar grew with me always the length of the bone. After I was home awhile, I came down with a high fever. This time an ambulance was called. It turned out I had developed a case of red measles, having been exposed by a teacher friend who had visited me in the hospital. I had a private room again, and the same private nurse as before.

Back to 1900 - Father became principal of the St. Lewis Park Schools - all 12 grades. A neighbor girl, a Senior, was recommended by my father for an office job in the local lumber yard, so she missed graduating with her class. When these high school reunions take place, she bitterly regrets not being on the list. Her friends and relatives tell her to go anyway, but she won't.

In 1901 or 1903 Father gave up teaching. Since he did not want to move again, and since he saw land development on the outskirts of Minneapolis, he went into Real Estate and

Insurance. Mother Blanche had rheumatic heart disease after Lois was born in 1901. Grandmother Barney took her to Hot Springs, South Dakota for open air rest.

When Hazen was a teenager, he also had rheumatic heart disease and went to Hot Springs, South Dakota. He worked while there K.P.duty. Lived in tents. We have his blueprint type pictures. Also have pictures of the guests. I can remember Mother telling about the "painted ladies of the night" leaning out the windows of the second story soliciting.

A neighbor was hired to care for the family. I think she was a midwife. I think it was she who served with the doctor when Charlotte was born in 1907. How adored she was, fat baby, by Hazen, Rachel and Lois. Then she came down with measles at 9 months old and died of pneumonia. Her last gasps of air were so wracking that the doctor tenderly administered ether. Rachel, who became a doctor, remembers that moment and felt it was most merciful. Modern medicine would have used antibiotics - and if they didn't work would keep life going at all costs.

Mother was not pleased to be pregnant a year later. No such alternatives as birth control or abortion. On July 9, 1909, she bore twin girls in our upstairs bedroom. Neither baby was healthy looking. While the doctor and midwife were tending to the weaker one (me), the other one died. Buried her in a shoe box under the lilac bush near the house.



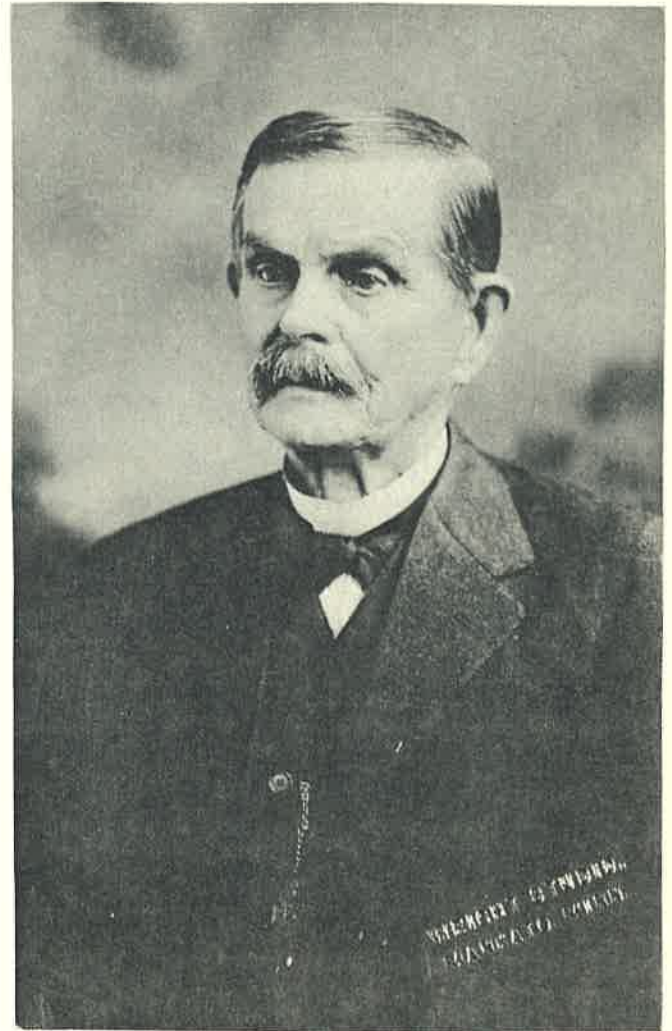
**Rachel Carleton
December 1923**



Asa Barney
September 26, 1856
*Born in Summerville,
New York in 1835
Father of Blanche*

Grandfather, Asa Barney, probably came West from New York state by covered wagon. He taught, as did Grandmother, Mary Ellen Wood, at Garden City, Minnesota.

That is how they met. My memories of him are his stories of the past, which bored me.



Asa Barney
1925



Mary Ellen Wood Barney
*Daughter of Abiel & Charlotte Spear Wood
Mother of Blanche*

When Mary Ellen died in 1912, he had his son, Dr. Paul Barney, D. D.S, Paul's wife, Harriette and 4-year old Bernita, move into his home, which was remodeled. He had his own sitting room, bedroom and bath, and would come into the dining room for meals. He had a special moustache cup to drink from. Every day he would walk to the business center of town. Every birthday he went to the photographer and except for the changing dates, you couldn't tell which year it was. No gray hair, or only a few. He was so proud of himself. Wanted to live longer, but he died of old age a few months before his 90th birthday in 1926. He had a Masonic funeral. Father and I went down to Mankato by bus. Mother had gone earlier. I felt no emotion until at the grave site and when I saw the coffin lowered into the hole, I started weeping. A second cousin whom I hardly knew put her arms around me and said comforting words.

At my mother's graveside, Hazen, Bob and Dick were bearers. Hazen commented on how light the coffin was. Such wonderful personages, with their tiny frail earthly bodies.

I just paid Bernita a share of costs of resetting the gravestones of the Barney plot.



Rachel Carleton & Grandfather Asa Barney



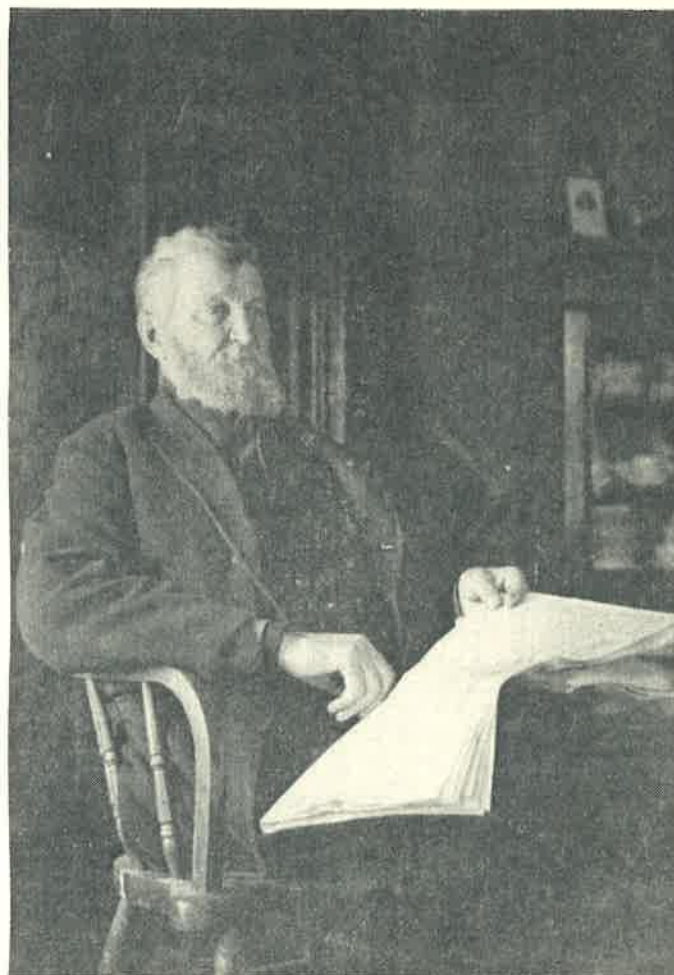
**Asa Barney with Granddaughters
Bernita Barney (Comminsky)
Dorothy Barney (Forsyth)
Mary Carleton (Peterson)**

I never knew my Grandmother (Mary Ellen Wood). In 1911, she took my mother and all us four children to Orlando, Florida for a two-month stay. She did nothing about the lump under her armpit until she returned to Minnesota, and went to the Mayo Clinic. She was much loved by everyone, and she said "Little Mary" will never remember me. I was 3 when she died. She was also a business woman.

Her mother, Charlotte Spear Wood, was French Canadian. After Charlotte's death, Grandfather Abail Wood took his family from New York to Minnesota.



Charlotte Spear Wood
Mother of Mary Ellen Wood
Grandmother of Blanche Barney Carleton



Abial C. Wood
Born in Randolph, Vermont
Died 1899 in Monkato, Minnesota
Father of Mary Ellen Wood
Husband of Charlotte Spear

Grandfather Abail Wood not only homesteaded, but each child did so also, which meant living on the 160 or however number of acres. At Mary Ellen's death, her portion of the land went to Paul and Blanche, and a business building went to Uncle Harry. The home went to Asa. On his death, the home went to Paul and his ownership of two business buildings went to Blanche and Harry. Grandfather Wood and Grandfather Barney were both insurance salesmen and went around the country in horse and buggy.

Uncle Paul Barney started at Carleton College then transferred to the College of Dentistry at U.M. His lifetime practice was in Mankato. He belonged to a Golf Club and a Bridge Club. He took only one vacation that I know of, and that was to the Black Hills of South Dakota. Aunt Harriette was quite social and civic minded. After his death (1936 or 37) she managed the farm except that her hay fever was too severe to make frequent trips. Now Bernita owns and manages it with "help" from her husband, Jerry Cummsky.

Uncle Harry Barney entered U of M Medical School (right after high school). He came back home for a weekend with his medical books - showed them to his mother, and exclaimed "Just look at them - I can't possibly learn all that." So he studied Law, became a successful small-town lawyer, even taking some of his cases up to the U.S. Supreme Court. His daughter, Dorothy, born 1912 or 13, grew up with no money worries. She later said she wished he had been more strict with her. Their son, Dick, much younger, grew up to be a spendthrift, many times married, and we have lost track of him.



Back Row:
Mildred Barney, Blanche Barney Carleton, Harriet Barney
Front Row:
Harry Barney, Herbert Carleton, Dr. Paul Barney



Lightning Hill Farm House
Built by Abiel Wood

Inherited by Dr. Paul Barney and then by Bernita Barney Commisky

Cousins on the Carleton side are Arthur Seldon Carleton's two sons, Wilson, graduate engineer who worked for a lifetime at Pittsburgh Plate Glass. About retirement time, he and his wife, Esther, went to Jefferson, Maine where their parents had inherited a small piece of property and gone to live with an aunt. Then they went to live with her. They had two daughters. The younger one died at the birth of her first baby. The older one, Flora May Arnold, and her family have now moved to Jefferson, Maine to care for Esther. Her husband, Walter Arnold, was a free-lance photographer. He also has a dredge - harvests sea kelp.



Flora Mae Carleton Arnold
At College



Alford Carleton & Daughter, Muriel

Arthur's younger son, Alford, graduated from Oberlin, a theological seminary. He had a church in New England, then went to Aleppo, Syria to teach in an American High School and College. He retired as president of it, and served for a while on the American Board of Missionaries. While in Syria, his wife, Mary, had 3 daughters, all by Cæsarian section. She now has Parkinson's Disease. They live in a colony of retired pastors. I know nothing of his daughters whereabouts, now all in the U.S.

Winfred Gridley Carleton married Lucy Clark and had two daughters, Elizabeth and Dorothy, about 1900. A son, Arthur, died at age 12. Elizabeth taught Physical Education and owned a camp for girls on Cape Cod. Dorothy taught Art. She married a widower with no children. His name was Bill Adams, descendent of John Adams. She really knows family history. They adopted a boy, Bruce, and girl, Beatrice, who were not interested in family history.

Some years after Lucy died, Winfred married her cousin Marietta Platt, who was a retired first grade teacher in New Haven. She recently died at the age of 103. We knew her well.

Herbert and Blanche Barney Carleton's children, Hazen, Rachel, Lois and Mary contributed nine cousins.

Hazen Carleton had four children, Bob, Dick, Mary Beth Glick and Billy, who died in an automobile accident when he was a teenager.

Rachel Carleton Sparks had two children, Jean Sparks Gates and James Edward Sparks.

Lois Carleton never married.

Mary Carleton Peterson had three children, Allen Peterson, Vernelle Peterson Evans and Janet Peterson Shisler.



(Left to right) Hazen Carleton, Lois Carleton, Rachel Carleton (Sparks), Mary Carleton (Peterson), Bernita Barney (Cumminsky) and Dorothy Barney (Forsyth)



Philura Cummings Barney
1806-1865

Wife of Judiah Barney

Mother of Asa Barney

Grandmother of Blanch Barney Carleton

Memoirs and photographs compiled by Janet Peake Sparks,
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daughter of James Edward Sparks
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