

CAROLINE J. WELTON

Erected 1888

A gift to her native town by

Caroline Josephine Welton

A friend of Animals

— From the Plaque

Caroline Josephine Welton, usually known as Carrie, is best remembered for her intense love of animals. Born on June 7, 1842, she was the only daughter of Joseph Welton, a prominent businessman. Upon his death in 1874, Carrie became a wealthy woman and found, in the newly established American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, a cause to which she would devote much of her considerable fortune.

Carrie was a familiar sight in late nineteenth century Waterbury, riding her spirited horse, Knight, throughout the city. She had a spirit of adventure, which, combined with her independence and wealth, eventually resulted in tragedy. A great beauty, she was also considered to be a fine businesswoman. Taking charge of her own affairs following her father's death, she drew up a will in 1878 naming the ASPCA as her chief beneficiary. In 1880, she departed from Rose Hill, the home shared with her mother, to begin a lengthy sojourn in the Western states.

During her stay in Colorado, Carrie developed a great love for mountain climbing. After making successful climbs of various peaks, she set out on September 23, 1884 with a guide to make the ascent of Long's Peak. A furious snow storm suddenly began while they were in the midst of the climb. Forced to leave her under the shelter of an overhanging ledge, the guide went for help. On his return he found her frozen to death.

When, in due time, the contents of Carrie Welton's will were revealed, they included \$7,000 for erecting a statue to her horse "Knight" (which, by a kick in the head, had caused her father's death). Several relatives chose to contest it on the basis of insanity. After a lengthy court procedure, covered by the New York Times, a jury let the will stand as written. The monument of Knight, striding above a drinking fountain for horses, was completed according to her wishes as a commemoration of their mutual affection.

