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 founded 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 independ-
dence 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 devel-
oped 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.