

UC San Diego

Biographies, Autobiographies, & Memoirs

Title

Carrie Prudence Winter Kofoid (1866-1942) Biography

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/3hf301pg>

Author

Day, Deborah

Publication Date

2025-02-16

Carrie Prudence Winter Kofoid (1866-1942) Biography



Carrie Prudence Winter was born August 24, 1866 in South Coventry, Connecticut, a daughter of Rev. Alpheus Winter and Flora Damaris Thompson Winter. Her father was a congregational minister and headed the Connecticut State Temperance Association. She graduated from Hartford Public High School and received a Bachelor's Degree from Oberlin College in 1890. Her sister, Julia Flora Winter Hatch, was a teacher at Hampton Institute and later a missionary at the Mt. Salinda, Melssetter District in southern Rhodesia, where she died in 1908. The family had a wide acquaintance in missionary and temperance circles.

While at Oberlin College Winter and her classmate Charles Atwood Kofoid became engaged. They delayed their marriage while Kofoid completed his doctorate at Harvard University. During this period, Winter taught school in Middletown, Connecticut and in Honolulu, Hawaii.

Winter traveled to Hawaii under the auspices of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions and taught at Kawaiahao Seminary in Honolulu from 1890-1893; she formed many friendships in missionary circles there. She left her home on August 15, 1890 and traveled by train to Chicago where she met her missionary associate, Ida May Pope. Miss Pope was then principal of the Kawaiahao Seminary, but was later principal of Kamehameha School for Girls. They proceeded by train to San Francisco, where Winter saw the Pacific Ocean for the first time. They stayed at the Occidental Hotel for several days. Winter sailed on the steamer Zealandia which reached Honolulu in seven days.

During her years in Hawaii, Winter developed friends in missionary and church circles including the Atherton, Castle, Cooke and Waterhouse Families. Her closest associates included Rev. Oliver P. Emerson, Rev. William Brewster Oleson, Miss Irene Stiles, Miss Retta Hight, all affiliated with Kawaiahao Seminary or Kamehameha School.

During her years at Honolulu, Winter exchanged letters with her fiancé at Harvard. He wrote about his collecting trips, Harvard and his teachers, including Alexander Agassiz and E.L. Mark. She wrote about her students, the Kawaiahao Seminary, her travels in the islands, politics in Hawaii, and her associates and friends. He found her letters so interesting that he suggested she publish in the Hartford Courant. The Hartford Courant wrote Winter directly in 1893 to request articles describing events leading up to the overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy, and general essays on the Hawaiian Islands. These were published as letters from Hartford Courant correspondent CPW and given titles, including "A Sketch of Cosmopolitan Honolulu," "Passion of the Natives for Flowers and Bright Colors," "Picturesque Scenes in the Capital City."

Winter stayed mainly in Honolulu during her years in Hawaii, but she took a trip to Maui and visited Haleakala Volcano on horseback in July 1891. She visited the leper colony on Molokai. She took a camping trip on horseback to Hilo and the island of Hawaii in July 1892. While in Hawaii, she collected photographs, botanical specimens and some objects as souvenirs. She left Hawaii in June 1893 aboard a sailing vessel S.C. Allen, arriving in San Francisco July 1, 1893.

Carrie Prudence Winter married Charles Atwood Kofoid on June 30, 1894 in Middlefield, Connecticut.

She accompanied him to Illinois where she completed an M.A. degree in history at the University of Illinois under Evarts B. Greene in 1906. Her thesis is entitled, "Puritan influences in the formative years of Illinois History." She also studied Russian at Illinois, and in 1903 began work translating *The structure and classification of the infusoria Aspirotricha (Holotricha auctorum)* by W. Schewiakoff. Mrs. Kofoid continued her historical research and published articles, both fiction and non-fiction, in magazines after settling in Berkeley.

In 1905, Julia Morgan designed and built a home for the Kofoids on Etna Street in Berkeley. The Kofoids lived in Berkeley, California for forty two years.

The Kofoids were active in civic and university life. They traveled extensively in Europe, India and Asia. During these trips, Mrs. Kofoid visited missionary groups and YWCA groups and often contributed funds for their support and corresponded with them after returning to her home.

Mrs. Kofoid was active in church affairs and taught Sunday school for many years at the First Congregational Church in Berkeley. During World War I she was a very active member of the Young Women's Christian Association, serving on the California Field Committee. At the time of her death she had served for twenty three

years as President of the Woman's Board of the Pacific of the Congregational Church. She was particularly active within that organization on its Board of Missions.

She died of a heart attack in Berkeley on November 4, 1942 and was survived by her husband, a zoologist at the University of California in Berkeley. They had no children.