

Margaret Plumer Lamberton Minnesota Ancestor

Margaret Plumer (1832-1902) was born in Franklin, Pennsylvania, daughter of Arnold Plumer (1801-1869) and Margaret McClellan Plumer (1807-1879). Her father was an attorney and later served two terms as a member of the U.S. House of Representatives from Pennsylvania.

Margaret came to Minnesota in 1855 with her husband Henry Wilson Lamberton (1831-1905), her two young sons, Arnold Plumer Lamberton and Charles Harkness Lamberton, and her brother, the Honorable Samuel Plumer. Her husband Henry had studied law under his brother Robert A. Lamberton, an eminent Pennsylvania lawyer, and was admitted to the bar of Dauphin County, Pennsylvania in 1852, the same year he and Margaret married.

During their first year in Minnesota, Margaret and her family resided in Winona. Henry joined the Winona County Bar Association in 1856 and was elected Winona's first city attorney. The next year, Henry's business interests took them to Faribault, Minnesota. By 1857 they moved again, this time to Oshawa near St. Peter, Minnesota. There, Henry practiced law and Margaret and Henry's third son, Henry McClelland Lamberton, was born. Margaret's husband Henry was appointed a Citizen's Mounted Marshall during the U.S. Dakota War of 1862.

After the war, Margaret and her family moved back to Winona and remained there for the rest of their lives. Winona was a bustling metropolis with 815 residents and 670 buildings. There were dry goods and grocery stores, lumber dealers, hotels, livery stables, meat markets, newspapers, bookstores, physicians, druggists and at least one saloon. Henry established the law firm of Plumer and Lamberton with Margaret's brother Samuel Plumer. In 1864, Henry ran for U.S. Congress as a Democrat, losing to the Honorable William Windom who later became a U. S. Senator and Secretary of the Treasury.



*Figure 1 Margaret Plumer Lamberton,
Courtesy Winona County Historical Society*

By the mid-1860s, Henry became more interested in business than in law. He was appointed as land commissioner of the Winona and St. Peter Railroad in 1866. The Winona and St. Peter Land company was established, and it bought a half million acres of land from the

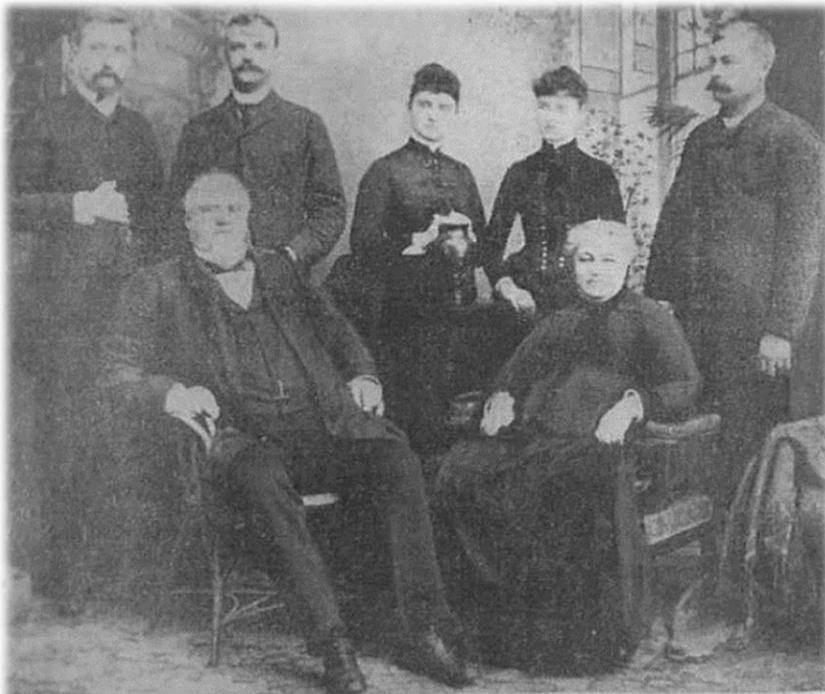
railroad. Henry organized the Winona Deposit Bank with Margaret listed as a co-partner and Vice President, an unusual occurrence at the time.

The family moved into the Lamberton House in 1871. Built by Henry Huff, one of the city's founders, in 1857, the Italianate mansion remains a city landmark to this day. Members of the Lamberton family occupied it until 1956. In 1962 it was deeded to the Catholic diocese to become an orphanage, and was listed the National Register of Historic Places in 1977.



Figure 2 Lamberton House, NRHP file 1976

In 1881, Henry was elected mayor of the city of Winona and was reelected in 1882. During his administration the city's waterworks were constructed. Henry was appointed by Governor Nelson to the board of the State Capitol Commission in 1893, charged with planning and overseeing the construction of the Minnesota State Capitol in St. Paul.



This is the first Lamberton family, that of H. W., to live in the house. At right is H. W.'s son, Henry M., who was to head the second family to occupy it.

Figure 3 Lamberton family, St. Paul Pioneer Press clipping 1958.

The older boys, Arnie and Charles, went away to school at the Shattuck School for Boys in Faribault. Both returned to Winona and worked at the family bank. Henry graduated from Princeton University and became a distinguished attorney in Winona. He married Jeanette McKain Shepard, an opera singer from Illinois, and they had two children, Margaret and Henry "Jack" Jr.

Margaret and Henry's two daughters attended school in Philadelphia. The eldest, Mary Ella Lamberton,

married John Raymond Mitchell, a graduate of Yale University who became a banker. Youngest child Margaret Plumer Lamberton married Charles Arthur Boalt who also became a prominent St. Paul banker.

Margaret died 21 April 1902 at the age of 69. Her granddaughter Margaret, daughter of Henry McClellan Lamberton, had just been born on April 2 of that year. This granddaughter went on to become a member of NSCDA-MN, and one of her descendants is a leader in the organization today.

Margaret was much loved by the Winona community as well as her family. An obituary reads:

The funeral of the late Mrs. H. W. Lamberton was held at 3 o'clock this afternoon from the family residence of Fourth and Huff Streets. A profusion of floral tributes and an unusually large attendance testified to the universal esteem in which the deceased was held. All the banks of the city closed at 1 o'clock to give employees an opportunity to attend. Among the great number of flowers banked around the casket was a beautiful floral pillow, with the word "Mother," given by the children, the design being white roses and carnations. A broken circle with a sickle was a tribute from the immediate employees of H. W. Lamberton. The Arlington Club (a leading social organization) sent flowers and there were numerous other floral gifts..."

Colonial Ancestor

John Pearson (1610-1693) came from Essex County, England to America in 1643. He married Dorcas and they had 13 children. He was a representative in 1678, Deputy of the General Court 1678-80, and was the first deacon of the Rowley, Massachusetts church. John built and operated the first woolen, or fulling, mill in New England. Together with a grist mill and sawmill, the mills remained in the family until 1809 and operated until it was destroyed by fire in 1916.

Margaret is descended from John's eldest son John, who took over the family milling business. John Jr's daughter Sarah married Jonathan Plumer and the family remained in Massachusetts until Margaret's great grandfather Nathaniel and his wife Hannah moved to Pennsylvania (between 1775 and 1821). Nathaniel served as a second lieutenant in the Massachusetts militia during the revolutionary war.



Figure 4 Pearson House, built by Captain John Pearson Jr., 1714.
From *Early Settlers of Rowley, Massachusetts*

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Winona Historical Society archives, photo of Margaret Plumer Lamberton, November 2017, and H.W. Lamberton, March 2023. Use permission granted 12 Mar 2023.

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