

## DR. JOHN MILHOLLAND & FAMILY



Dr. John Milholland, left

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*“Should I ever come so near you again rest assured  
I am coming to see you, and I plan to come to Iowa  
during some of my vacation.”*

— George Washington Carver

John Milholland was born in 1843 in Ohio. He served in the Civil War for 3 1/2 years. He married Helen Frisbie in 1871 in Iowa. He graduated from medical school and began his medical practice, setting up his doctor’s office in Winterset, Iowa in 1882. He was one of the family doctors in town.

George Washington Carver moved to Winterset around 1888 and began working at odd jobs and taking in laundry. Dr. Milholland was a leader in a local church and George began attending there. His singing caught the attention of Mrs. Helen Milholland. Dr. Milholland **befriended** Carver and invited him over for Sunday dinner.

The Milhollands took an interest in the young man and encouraged his artistic talents. When they found out his life story and saw his determination, they thought he should try going to college again. They recommended Simpson College which was just 20 miles away. Although he was a little worried about being rejected because of his race, Carver took their advice and enrolled in Simpson College. He wrote a letter to the Milhollands and said, “The people are very kind to me here and the students are wonderfully good.”

George Washington Carver stayed in college, transferring later to Iowa State College to complete a bachelor’s degree and then a master’s degree in agriculture. He appreciated the help and encouragement he received from Dr. and Mrs. Milholland and never

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*Simpson College, Indianola, IA*

forgot their kindness. They continued to write letters to each other long after Carver graduated from college and moved to Tuskegee Institute in Alabama. He said, “You can’t imagine how much good the reading of your letter did me...”

Dr. John Milholland practiced medicine in Winterset for 37 years and retired to California.

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### GLOSSARY

**Befriended** - Made a friend of.

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### TIME LINE • GAINING AN EDUCATION: 1876 – 1896

