

VIRGINIA WOMENⁱⁿ HISTORY 2006



Mary Terhune

Katherine Barrett

John-Geline Bowman

Grace Hopper

Sister Marie Berg

Mary Tyler McClenahan

Anne Richardson

Benita Mosley



Dominion



Katherine Harwood Waller Barrett
(January 24, 1858–February 23, 1925)
Stafford County, Reformer

Soon after her marriage to Robert S. Barrett, an Episcopal minister, Katherine Harwood Waller Barrett began caring for unmarried mothers and their children who were often treated as outcasts and had few opportunities to obtain medical care, occupational assistance, or a good education. Born in Falmouth, Stafford County, Kate Waller Barrett earned a medical degree in 1892 while living in Georgia, and after she moved to northern Virginia in 1896, she took part in founding the National Florence Crittenton Mission, the first philanthropic institution chartered by Congress, to care for unmarried mothers and their children.

First as vice president and then as president until her death in 1925, Barrett directed the national network of affiliated Crittenton mission homes and wrote and traveled throughout the world to raise money and promote good child care and other issues relating to women's health and employment. Barrett was an honorary vice president of the Equal Suffrage League of Virginia, a charter member of the Virginia League of Women Voters, and a member of the board of visitors of the College of William and Mary. She took an active role in Democratic Party politics in order to advance her work on behalf of women's issues. She was president of the National Council of Women in 1911 and in 1919 was appointed by President Woodrow Wilson as an observer to the Versailles Peace Congress. After her death, the governor of Virginia ordered the flag on the State Capitol to be lowered to half-staff, the first time a woman had ever been so honored.

