



## ***A second cousin. A notable first.*** ***An appreciation of Margaret Floy Washburn***

Stephen Mather's wife, Jane Thacker Floy Mather's second cousin was Margaret Floy Washburn. Their great-grandfather, Michael Floy Sr., was the subject of an earlier posting, *Roots and Seeds*.

Jane was the granddaughter of the Rev. James Floy and Margaret was the granddaughter of James' sister, Margaret Amelia Floy.

Margaret Amelia Floy married James Davis. Their daughter Elizabeth married Francis Washburn on 19 August 1869 at St. Martin's, Trafalgar Square London. Francis became an ordained Episcopalian priest and moved the family to Walden, New York.

In her autobiography Margaret Floy Washburn writes of her great-grandfather's success, "I have reason to thank the gods for his diligence, which enabled me to finish my professional training without having to earn my own living..."

Margaret, born 25 July 1871, entered Vassar in the fall of 1886 and graduated in 1891. She studied at Columbia but was only allowed to audit since she was a woman. **She then enrolled at Cornell and became the first American woman to receive a Ph.D in psychology.**

From the Encyclopedia Britannica: "After a year of teaching at the University of Cincinnati, Washburn returned to Vassar to teach psychology. She remained (from 1908 as full professor) until her retirement in 1937. A remarkably effective teacher, she made Vassar a leading centre of undergraduate training and research in psychology. Her own publications include scores of articles, reviews, and notes in professional journals and two books, *The Animal Mind* (1908) and *Movement and Mental Imagery* (1916)."

Margaret Floy Washburn died 29 October 1939.

