



## Smithsonian Institution

*Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum Archives*

### Benjamin O. Davis Jr. Collection - Social

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[[image - photo of Dorothy Carnegie]]  
[[photo credit]] Hal Phye [[/photo credit]]  
[[caption]] DOROTHY CARNEGIE [[/caption]]

Milquetoast (from the tortures of fear" noted Collier's (January 15, 1949). Carnegie discovered "the magic combination of great names and simple truths," observed Margaret Case Harriman (Saturday Evening Post, August 14, 1937).

Dale Carnegie was born in Maryville, Missouri on November 24, 1888, the second son of James William and Amanda Elizabeth (Harbison) Carnegie. The family lived on a farm close to a river that overflowed every spring, ruined the crops and kept them in poverty. Mrs. Carnegie, a devout Methodist, wanted her two sons Cliff and Dale to become missionaries. The family moved to Warrensburg, Missouri where Dale liked to recite at local festivities and, encouraged by Nicholas M. Sonder, a schoolteacher who boarded with the family, he joined the high school debating team. He lost every debate until he attended a Chautauqua lecture and, impressed with the personal testimony of a speaker, copied the style.

After he entered the State Teachers' College at Warrensburg, Missouri in 1904, his ambition to become a Chautauqua lecturer led him to practice recitations on the horse that he rode to and from college. He was graduated in 1908, and his first job was with the International Correspondence School as a salesman in Alliance, Nebraska. He sold only one course, gave up the job, and went to Omaha to sell for Armour & Company. By 1911 he had saved \$500 and he started East to take a course in public speaking. A train acquaintance convinced him that he should try acting.

In New York he enrolled in the American Academy of Dramatic Arts. Among his classmates were Guthrie McClintic and Howard Lindsay. He realized that the theatre was not his forte after he had played the part of Dr. Hartley in a road show of Polly and the Circus. Returning to New York, he applied to the Young Men's Christian Association on 125th Street, for a job teaching public speaking and was hired. He took a course at Columbia University School of Journalism in 1913, and a short-story writing course at New York University in 1914. Adolph E. Meyer (American Mercury, July 1943) wrote that the professor of the NYU course predicted that Carnegie would do "big things." He was soon selling essays to World Outlook, American Magazine, Illustrated World, Pictorial Review, Rotarian, and Scholastic, while continuing his teaching at the Y.M.C.A.

When his income had increased to \$500 a month, he rented an office in Times Square, scheduled new courses, hired substitute instructors for his widely scattered classes, and wrote pamphlets to standardize his methods. His name had been spelled Carnegie - although his father had claimed distant kinship with Andrew Carnegie, the millionaire - until 1916, when about to give a lecture at Carnegie Hall, Dale changed it to Carnegie.

During World War I he spent a year and a half at Camp Upton, New York. After his discharge, Lowell Thomas offered him a job as business manager for his "With Allenby in Palestine and Lawrence in Arabia"



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Carnegie was married in 1921 to a French Countess. They traveled abroad for several years, then established a home in Forest Hills. The marriage ended in 1936.

After his travels, Carnegie had reorganized his classes and reduced his pamphlets in a book called Public Speaking at Practical Points for Business Men (Association Press, 1921). It became a standard text for public speaking courses and was revised as Public Speaking and Influencing Men in Business in 1931. Lincoln The Colonizer (Century, 1932) was his second book.

Model of the success of his first book, he offered data for new pamphlets, hired research workers to find information about well-known men, selected the most prominent, and toured the country for personal interviews. Little known facts about Paul Revere (People (Greenberg, 1934) resulted, and was the basis for a radio show on WJOL. The program was so popular that Five Minute Biographies (Greenberg, 1937) - the actual radio sketches - became his fourth book.

Dale Carnegie's How To Win Friends and Influence People became an overnight best seller. Margaret Case Harriman (Saturday Evening Post, August 14, 1937) wrote that within six months he had made \$125,000 and was in demand for lectures, radio shows and magazine articles. A column of "magazine previews" was published in seventy-one daily newspapers. Carnegie reorganized his courses at the Carnegie Institute for Effective Speaking and Human Relations, appointed class directors from his alumni, and selected and trained area managers who conduct over 300

lecture tour. The lectures were such a "sensation" that Carnegie was engaged to present a second string tour simultaneously, throughout the United States and Canada in 1921 and 1922.

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