FROM FARM TO SCHOOL

HIGH MOWING

Beulah H. Emmet

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1.

PROLOGUE

It lies off the beaten track, but not too far. It is on the top of a hill, but not too high. The mowing slopes to a dark pine woods with the blue hills glimpsed beyond at the edge of sight. To reach it you wind uphill through woods of pine and white birch, many maples, and an occasional oak or young chestnut, all soft-carpeted with fern and snowy with laurel in its season. A large sign turns you sharply uphill to the right. The turn is sharp because of a sentinel seven-branched white birch, which unfortunately is no longer there. However, the pause as you turn prepares you for the split-rail chestnut fence with its flower border, the long grape arbor and the greenhouse. At the top of the rise swings a wide welcoming circle of brown buildings crowning the top of the hill--the end of the journey. Not too far, not too high--but high enough for breadth of view and far enough for perspective on a busy world and a frantic struggle to get somewhere. Far enough and high enough to lead to a finding of values and goals, enhanced by the beauty of nature and the swing of the sun, moon and stars over the endless quiet of the hills. A structure founded on the inspiration given by Rudolf Steiner as he built a school for modern youth at Stuttgart, Germany, in 1919. This is High Mowing.

Now since the fire it is important that those things which are gone should be brought alive in pictures, as a recall for those who knew it and a background of the meaning of High Mowing for those who never saw its beginnings, but who come and come again to the school on the hill. Nothing that has been loved is lost. Everything we think or do or own is imprinted deeply in what we become. Memory clings, enfolds, plays tricks as the reality slowly recedes in time. When asked, "Do you have a copy of?" I answer, "Oh yes," as I see the book quietly at home on a shelf that is no longer there. Memory lives in an unconscious world waiting to be brought to life. It comes back changed, enhanced or beautified by a word, a fragrance, a color or a smile; it is made by the innate forming quality of the human imagination. As the actuality of the school building recedes into the past, as the beauty of centuries vanished in flame, its meaning in the lives of many people who have lived in its rooms or passed through its atmosphere takes on a stronger value, a deeper meaning from the very fact that it is no longer there. Nothing that has been loved is lost.

Places are important. The very earth on which human striving takes place carries, builds and holds an atmosphere of its own. A member of the faculty said to me after the fire, "But the land and its trees are still here. The beauty is still with us." A doctor once said of the hill, "Pine and birch on granite bring health."

As we look far back into the human history of this hill we find a united family, loving animals, dogs and horses, loving flowers and fern. David Cram invited all the children of the neighborhood to the raising of his barn. Years later there was an interlude of about 50 years of loneliness. Then the Emmet family found the deserted farm and made it into a home, brought it alive with their building and their friends, brought Miss Emma Cram back to the hill to tell them of her earlier life and to say, "I am so glad someone is going to love it again." And it was a home about which Robert Emmet looking at the still smoking ruins could say, "Mother, forty years."

For 28 of those forty-odd years the hill has been a school. And many of the young living in it and many of those who have gone on have called it: Home. Several adults staying in the summer have said, "There is a healing atmosphere, a creative atmosphere here--I can write my book." A fascinating doctor from Germany (witch doctor, the young called her), a doctor with magic hands, said, "The hill has many elementals."

This atmosphere of spiritual strength and healing has been built by the aspirations, thoughts and deeds of those who have lived here. The place came to the school, and the school came to the place; and it seems that we built well, that there has been enough strength to overcome early criticism and apparent disaster.

And so the building goes on with the hands and hearts that love what is on this hill, in this place.

This book hopes to be a history of years of growth, of inner and outer building by teachers and students growing through it and on into life. It is a stream of life. Its story must of necessity be a series of vignettes, of memory, with much put in but much left out, giving in the end a picture of essentials, of human hopes, of spiritual values. This the alumni have asked me to write.

2.

FROM FARM TO HOME

It is customary, I have been led to believe, that in telling a story one begins at the beginning, goes on to the end and then stops. But the fascinating part of this story is that it has no end and that as I set out to seek for a beginning the threads went back and still further back to find--what? The beginning of a human story. But I must start somewhere.

Into a summer sunset we came up the hill and fell in love with its silvery loneliness. A long line of soft gray weathered buildings clinging to the ground: a house, a small shed, a larger house, a long 80-foot shed leading to a large barn--built in 1763 and enlarged by David Cram in 1838, but now deserted and lonely. It stood untouched with its early farm simplicity under the beautiful proportions of true colonial. I knew I had found a summer home for four young Emmets and their friends. The next morning, sitting on the granite step of the small house with its owner, I bought it--as swift and sure as that. Fred Tuttle, a master carpenter of Wilton, and his sons were called in and we all set to work. The large house had four rooms downstairs. The center chimney was feeling its age, so we took it down and made one big room (later the faculty living room) the depth of the house. From the old bricks we built two outside chimneys to give punctuation to the long low line--a southern colonial touch perhaps, but legitimate as it turned out. A small old barn stood squarely in the view somewhat this side of the present pool. This we took down, using its boards to sheathe both sheds. With its beams we framed the new fireplace in the living room so as to carry on the old color of the wooden paneled walls. We saved every board and beam and even the old hand-wrought nails. The family set about washing the old glass panes of the windows (some were purples, carrying us back to Beacon Hill in Boston); scraping paint off the walls, off the doors--a fury of scraping, which process is messy, laborious and rewarding. The wide boards in the old kitchen (the half of the enlarged room near the lilac), ran into a wall, and beyond was a small plastered room. I felt that no New Englander would cut 23-inch-wide boards so short. So we broke through the plaster in the small room and struck wood. When we had peeled away the plaster we found that the boards were painted, painted with roses and urns in a cross-geometric pattern, like old wallpaper. The entire room was painted. Our first stroke, so to speak, yielded treasure trove and excitement was high. We asked Miss Emma Cram, who had been born on the farm and although 80 years old was still living in the village, to come up. She was delighted that someone who loved the place was bringing it alive again. Up the hill she came, cheerful and voluble. Round and rosy, she trotted about with anecdote after anecdote, but she always came back to the painted wall. "I didn't know it was there." Finally she said: "I think Miss Mehitable painted that. She used to putty up any glass that broke and paint on it--I think Miss Mehitable painted that." We, of course, were immediately sure Miss Mehitable had painted it. It seems that Miss Mehitable was her maiden aunt and the room had been her bedroom. In Miss Mehitable's father's will (her father was Jonathan Cram of 1736), she had been given rights to her room, to the kitchen and to the well as long as she lived. This sounded a bit defensive, and one pictured her as lonely and somewhat crotchety, painting her room. A story runs that one day at lunch when Philip, her brother, had asked a guest to have another helping of something, she said, "He does not need to take any more than he wants." Yet withal she had to paint and paint she did --her room, in secret. Today on this farm the young paint in a studio because they want to, but also somewhat because we urge it. So much have times changed.

Another story that relates to the farm and the young should be told. Since Philip and his sister Mehitable never married, David, a young nephew of Jonathan's, came back from Vermont to live at the farm. He was kept busy on jobs and was not allowed to go to a barn-raising. (In those days when the frame of a barn was set up everyone was asked to gather to raise the sides.) It was a many-man job and somewhat of a celebration. David in his disappointment swore that when he raised his own barn all the children in the village would be invited. The importance of this story is that all the children of the neighborhood came to the raising of the barn that now houses classrooms and bedrooms for youth. It seems as though the hill was meant to harbor young people.

As we go back in time we find only friendliness on the hill. As Miss Emma talked, we heard of Wally the "yaller" dog, of flowers and ferns in the house, of the Arabian pony who nuzzled them for sugar; and we saw a picture of a love of animals and nature, of open fires and popcorn. Shyly Miss Emma showed us a poem she had written about her beloved home. She asked me did I know Joyce Kilmer's poem, "The House with Nobody in It"? I knew his poem "Trees" but not that one. Then Miss Emma said she had taken a line from that poem and written about this farm: "It Wouldn't Be So Lonely If It Had a Ghost or Two."

The poem she held was badly typed and when I asked for it she said she would copy it for me. I said I did not want a copy, but she was adamant and took it home. That was the last time I saw her as she died early in the winter. I pleaded with her nephew to find the poem and at last in her diary of the day she died he found it. Unfortunately this long-sought original went with the fire, but I can repeat it for you. It belongs to the hill and emphasizes her remark that she was glad someone who loved it was going to live on her farm.

Though the shutters are warped and broken,
The vines are tangled and torn,
Though the paint is gone from the shingles
And the windows look forlorn;

Still to the dear old farmhouse
Old forms come trooping back,
Over each field and furrow,
Following each beaten track.

Still to the dear familiar hearth
Ghosts of the house return
To find rooms swept and shining,
Garnished with flower and fern.

Father, I can hear your voice,
Your counsel wise and sweet.
And I can see your patient smile;
O Father, may we not meet?

And Mother, often still
I hear your gentle voice;
How in my childhood's hours
You made my heart rejoice.

And brother, how often together
We made the woods resound
With laughter gay and carefree
For secrets we had found.

Is the group complete? Not wholly--
From each roomy stall
Comes a soft and gentle whinny,
A clear delightful call.

Dear old Arabian Jenny,
The colt of my childhood's pride,
Is gazing in at the window
Calling me to her side.

And now around the corner
Comes a merry Bow-wow-wow;
Wally is leaping upon me,
Licking my face and brow.

Thank God for the dear old homesteads
And the friends that are so dear
But most of all for the homes above,
The homes without a tear.

Though we may miss our loved ones
As they leave us here below
We will meet again in the other world,
For eternity is endless, you know.

It seemed as though Miss Emma had waited for us to come to tell us about her house, for she died only a month or two later. The high chest of drawers in my room (the drawers themselves saved at the fire in the frantic search for my coins) belonged to Miss Emma and was made by a member of the Frye family who was the town cabinetmaker. On the back was written: Isaac Frye 1792.

The soil of the farm had been tilled for generations but with the death of David's son it had been deserted and left to the will of the weather for at least 50 years. In 1929 the Emmet family found it. One summer day the two young Frye brothers from the foot of the hill, farmers whose family had lived on this land since before the Battle of Lexington, stopped my car and asked if I was going to farm. I said: "No, not yet." They said: "It's a good farm, or was, but we have a south mowing that is as good as any of yours." We decided that if they had a south mowing, we had a High Mowing. And so as a home it stood, the barn still empty except for an occasional trunk or such and a rope swing from the rafters. The long shed from west to east was maid's room, laundry and kitchen. We built the three arches, opening southward onto the terrace, which became a summer dining room.

The big room had a simple stretcher table for dining. Between the kitchen door and the door to the three arches was a cupboard carved by the penknife of a Tuttle brother after a design which I found in the Metropolitan Museum. The fireplace had a curved back, again copied from the Metropolitan Museum, and an old beam from the barn we took down for a mantle. Over this were three large pewter plates--one early American, the other two French with wide flanges called cardinal's hats. Next to the fireplace was a cobbler's bench with a leather seat. Later I was to sit there and teach for years and years. A round butterfly table stood in the window that looked down the length of the terrace and on it a porcelain plant which in the end grew to mammoth proportions with a sea of fragrant pink blooms. A corner cabinet filled the turn of the room and between the two southwest windows was an early painted chest with an old painted mirror above it. A sofa and comfortable chairs made the room gracious, warm and homey.

The terrace was very important to us. There we could live, not only with the earth but also with the heavens. Daily the sun rose in the east, swung the length of the terrace, and set over the dark pines behind the hills with all its wealth of colors--the cold bright reds of winter, the opalescent color of cloud-sheltered evenings, then the warm orange values of summer--never two days alike. And at night the moon took up the tale; crescent, full, waning. The buildings stood enclosed in the eternal sweep of the stars and the planets, a breadth of view that cannot be taken away. This terrace in the beginning was a country road struggling between the house and the view. We asked the selectmen if we could have the land if we built a road on the other side of the buildings. Two of them came up, shirt-sleeved and solemn. The problem was that not only was it town property, sixteen feet wide of wandering dirt, but it had a name, "The Isaac Frye Highway," and Isaac Frye had gone to the Battle of Lexington. They finally consented, however, if we would build a paved road on the north side. This, of course, we agreed to do and built it as you see it now. The result was that our view was our own, but we had no front door to go with the new road, just a hole in the wall. Outside of Chelmsford, en route to Boston, I saw a beautiful old doorway. The Tuttles took careful measurements of cut cardboard for each detail and copied it for us, even to the wooden fan. The room it led into, when constructed, was the painted room. These boards blocked any opening into the further shed soon to be called the chapel room, so we moved the painted boards into the large living room leaving the small room bare.

I went to Norfolk, Virginia, to join my husband, whose ship had come into port. With no regard for human relations the Navy put him on a day-long investigation board, leaving me to my own devices. I promptly went antique hunting, found two delightful women and told them of my farm. They said an old brick house in town was going to be torn down and we set out to see it. It was empty and locked so we crawled through a cellar window and "cased the joint." Delightfully illegal! It was exquisitely colonial in every detail. A few months later my fellow criminals wrote that they could send us the mantelpieces, the shutters, the chair rails, the hallway arch and the iron railing now in the big room. And so this all came up by a slow brown boat from Norfolk to Boston. Thus we had doorways, window frames, a mantelpiece and a carved frame for a bookcase for Aunt Mehitable's denuded room, changing it from early colonial to formal 18th century. The rest of the treasure trove was used in the other small room, which we made into a library--the pilasters of the arch framed a book alcove; the shutters became the ends of shelves by the window and the back of the window seat. The furnace chimney angled through this room, so we framed the brick back with the chair rail and paneled above it using a table top, thus making a frame for a Franklin stove. In the window by the fireplace was a night-blooming

cereus which started small but soon rose to the ceiling. (When it bloomed during the school year we called everyone to see it. The bloom lasted only one night beginning about 10 p.m., and filled the house with fragrance. It looked like a delicate dream of a water lily.) On the light green walls were four Chinese frescoes (18th-century, said the Toronto Museum) of four figures which I always felt were the four elements: Earth (with a flower), water (flowing from a vase), air (probably Quan Yin) , and fire (with a brazier). A medley of chairs and tables from mother's collecting, along with a delicate French sofa, all formed a circle for small and intimate meetings. Here, later, we held our weekly study-group meetings.

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But what is a home without a garden?

A garden is a lovesome spot
God wot
Fringed pool, ferned grot
The veriest school of peace
And yet the fool declares that God it not.
Not God in gardens when the eve is cool
Nay but I have a sign
Tis very sure God walks in mine.

The lilac bushes around the pool by the living room were the start of the High Mowing garden. Near them stood the new front door which the Tuttles had copied, and a path led out to the new road. The next arrival was Pan. When the moving van drew up the first thing they took off was Pan. Looking for a place to put him, they placed him on the flat stone covering the well. Since he had been a fountain in the garden at our Rye home (you can see where the water sprayed from the fishes' mouths), we felt it was an appropriate place for him and he has been there ever since. There were lilies-of-the-valley in Rye that had come from my girlhood home in Ridgefield, Connecticut. These in turn had come from grandmother's garden in northern New York, where they spread endlessly from the pump down into the orchard. Every year grandmother used to send me, at Wellesley, a bunch as big as a large cabbage. So for a fourth generation we planted lilies-of-the-valley around the lilac bush. Wisteria plants, young ones, came from mother's garden. We planted one on the big house chimney, one on the chapel chimney and one at the red house.

Our next garden adventure was roses. The rose is the flower of the virgin; it is the flower of love and home. We searched in old deserted gardens and begged our friends for roots. These were native roses that grew and spread and made themselves at home. So many kinds we found--large, single red, spicy and tall; double pink moss roses, soft green covered; Lancaster and York roses, a mottled red and white of course; bunchy, spicy pink roses; delicate white tea roses; yellow tea roses, so many roses. These we planted between Pan and the orchard, also along the ramp down by the pool--they were here and there, and we let them grow--which they did.

In the circle between Pan and the lilac, we planted myrtle as a background for early bulbs, scilla, tulip, hyacinth and narcissus and for later lily bulbs--everything that could feel at home and live with us with loving care, but not too much. Later during school time Mrs.

Waterman designed the herb garden around the courtyard. We went on a wonderful herb nursery jaunt and came back laden with old friends and adventures. One old friend was bee balm, an absolute necessity because we had a hummingbird--ruby throat and invisible whirling wings. He came every year from somewhere down the road near the octagon house. We never found the nest, it was so tiny. Thyme, sage for fragrance, and many kinds of allium (just another name for onions) in flaunting color variety completed the flower bed.

The terrace side of the house was not gardenish, but we put petunias in the window boxes as a tribute to the stateliness of the buildings--different colors every year to see which looked best against the old brown of the house. All this early effort has lived to make gardening part of the work program of the school.

When we had to dig up some of the roses after the fire because of the new chapel, we found some roots twice as thick as your thumb. An amazing and difficult tangle, but so strongly alive we heeled them in the vegetable garden and have now transplanted them along the covered walk between the faculty house and mine. They have bloomed and all of them seem to have lived. They say that roses like to be pruned, and I can believe it.

The gardens around the road are still peacefully blooming, but after the fire those around the houses were pitifully trampled by trucks and several very dragon-like monsters. Every time we were given an inch of safety we planted lawn and flowers.

Pan is back again on his well stone. He was the first thing salvaged by the young at the fire and lived two and one-half years in Mrs. Karl's window watching and waiting.

A few of the lilies-of-the-valley were saved. They have been disentangled after forty years of peaceful spreading and are again near the lilac. The lilac, older than old and tree-like, was completely burned, but it has sprung from the roots, a thick young tangle and full of larger blooms than the old trees gave us.

3.

FROM HOME TO SCHOOL

In the spring of 1942 I said: "I will put you in my barn." This was to a group of faculty who had resigned from the Edgewood School in Greenwich, Connecticut, out of loyalty to a principle of freedom. Since I had resigned first, there seemed to be a responsibility involved, and after all there was the farm to go to. This was in April 1942 and we quietly went on planning and building as if there were no war in Europe and no dearth of materials here. To make a farm into a school from May to October was the problem.

Before starting any building operations I called the New Hampshire State Board of Education and over the telephone asked a New England voice for permission to start a school at my home in Wilton. I was told categorically that no woman could start a school in New Hampshire. I said, "I think that a bit arbitrary." He answered, "You had better come up and talk about it." I replied that that had been the object of the telephone call. I took my son John and another member of the faculty, dressed up to the nines and frightfully respectable, and off we went. When we arrived the powers that be had evidently "looked me up" because everything was peaches and cream. It may have been my distinguished father, my Navy husband, or just my money, or something. I do not know. I never asked, of course, "and they made it up for many a mile with mutual bow and pleasant smile."

We started building in the barn. Then came our second setback: a moratorium on building descended upon us, prohibiting the use of metal and wood. We had already started work. That is, we had ordered plumbing, and we had rebuilt the floor of the barn, after my son's truck had broken through. (Bobby was farming at the foot of the hill.)

With this news I fled from Greenwich (where I was still teaching) to New Hampshire, to find the carpenter, the plumber, the mason, and the contractor waiting for me around the dining room table in the living room. "Well, gentlemen," I said, "we are going on even if we have to go to Washington." "We thought you'd say that," they smiled. I asked: "What do they tell us to do?" "Go to the nearest P.W.A. Office in Manchester," one answered. Another said: "Boston is larger and almost as near." "No," I said, "I have lived with the government all my married life and I have learned to do as I am told." So three of us set out for Manchester. They were all friends of mine, as they had helped build the home. In New Hampshire you have friends, then they put on a cap or an apron and become a carpenter or some such. They have a delightful sense of dignity and self-respect that meets you frankly.

Sitting at the desk in the P.W.A. Office was the son of the Wilton postmaster. He knew us, he knew the house and he groaned. "I can only show you this," he said, handing me a depressing sheaf of government mimeographed sheets about four inches thick. I waved it aside and began to talk about the school. His interest was intense but his faith was hampered by red tape. I told him of the date of the truck episode and the mending of the floor, which was a day or two before the moratorium. He said: "Don't you think that is fishy?" I answered: "It is delightfully fishy, but it is a dated fact and what are you going to do about it?" "I will call Boston," he said. His report was clear and excellent and the voice from the phone said, "Tell her to go ahead as fast as she can." The school was started!

During our return to High Mowing, the car wheels hardly touched the ground. The next immediate move was to gather all the plumbing equipment in the store, it seemed, and put it in the yard beyond the barn, so that it would be "on the job." We then gathered all available carpenters in the countryside. I don't think anyone so much as got his roof fixed that summer.

When we first decided to build, which was before the moratorium, I had asked Rhoda Barney, a classmate of my daughter Beulah's at Edgewood, whose mother was a well-known architect, to come and build for us. She expected, I think, to do a henhouse or some such. Instead she found herself standing in the vast reaches of the barn. Not daunted, she pointed here and there as she planned this and that and ordered plumbing. Some had already arrived before I got to New Hampshire for the summer, but now the space outside the present dining room looked like no man's land. Rhoda imported a group of Italian workmen from Greenwich; we put them in the red house, now part of the boys' dormitory, and "grandpa" came to cook for them. At first all went well. We invited Italy to beer and hamburgers over an open fire by the pool, and Italy invited us to macaroni and wine. But Italy could not understand the slow tempo of New England that went steadily on its way with a quiet "yes'm" and a smile. The Italians were expert, urban and quick. As time went on, it became an international situation and we could not have them all working in the same place. Finally there were not enough places to keep them apart and somebody's grandmother got ill and someone else had to go to a funeral. It was fascinating but not too easy. Italy finished its job in swift and expert style, however, and left, but New England stayed on. It became obvious that we would be able to open in September, although there would still be the rap of mallet and clink of hammers.

Three problems then met us. The first was the sad necessity of dislodging a vast colony of swallows who had made their home in the barn for many generations, I am sure. They were vociferous and persistent, coming back again and again, swooping their wings almost in our faces. Finally, however, they left. I hope they found a more hospitable barn.

The second problem was that we could not build a new science laboratory nor outfit one except with glass, and we had a brilliant boy headed for M.I.T. Dr. Von Baravalle and I went down to the Central Scientific Company in Boston. Here we met a group of elderly and very respectable gentlemen who could give us only glass and who were sure the world was "going to the dogs." I have often wondered where that expression came from and think of Jezebel. Our next try was the P.W.A. Office in Boston. We went cheerfully, as Dr. Von Baravalle and I are perhaps the world's most complete optimists. Also, after our experience in Manchester, I had decided the school was meant to be. We entered a room the size of a hangar with row upon row of desks and a man at each. We took our turn in this organized world. Finally we were sent to a desk and there sat a man from New Hampshire. He was, of course, immediately interested, but said that although we could double the size of any existing laboratory; we could not build a new one. "However, try it," he said, and handed me the good, familiar sheets of government printing. I asked him to help me answer the questions as I was not always sure exactly what was wanted and was convinced that brevity was not only the soul of wit but of success. We answered the questions together and had to state that we were a new school. We left the paper in his gentle hands and went home. About three weeks later I got a letter from Washington with more questions. It seemed to be from another part of the department, and as I courageously answered them I did not have to state we were a new school. This was cheering and I hoped we might be the slip between the cup and the lip. For no obvious

reason we got permission with a high priority. This was the second event that made me feel that the school was meant to be.

Our last difficulty was the fire escape. We had to build an inner stair and an outer stair from the third floor of the girls' dormitory. Specifications were exact to the last inch and we could buy no iron. Some of the faculty scoured the junkyards of Boston, specifications in hand. It took several junkyards to find exactly what we needed and, of course, it included all sorts of extraneous bits and pieces that belonged to the junk. The courtyard had become a junkyard. A nice, little old man worked after hours with a forge in the center of the junk, shaping and molding the iron. So as you look at the fire escape, remember it is hand-forged junk. Rather pleasant, really, and still with us.

As to the building: The attic in the big house and the attic in the small house (which became my house) were plastered, plumbed and made habitable. This entailed plaster dust everywhere. Plaster is put on nowadays in tidy sheets, but then it was just dust--fine, white and omnipresent. Trying to keep the rooms beneath clean was not possible--so we waited. Then furniture began to come. The passage from the main house to my house was a good storehouse. It was piled with beds, then with bureaus, then with tables, until there was just a narrow path from my house out. When those had disappeared into their homes in the school, faculty trunks and books began to come. The books delighted me as no one else in my family collected books and here were book lovers arriving.

Alongside this building activity, all summer long, people came up the hill. Students from the Rudolf Steiner School who had been waiting for a high school. Students from I don't know where, who found out I don't know how, until by August we had to order more school chairs. We opened with 53 students. We had an entire high school, as we opened with five in the graduating class, who came up from Edgewood. Visitors came from the school agencies expecting to find a small, white building and, it seemed, were surprised; there were *Vogue, The New York Times, Redbook*, etc. This was a side of being a school I had not envisioned.

It had been a busy and complicated summer, but the only one to have a nervous breakdown was an aristocratic French poodle, royally named Pepin Le Bref, who belonged to my son Barton, then in the army in Alaska. Erica Lohman, who came to teach art, finally gave him the one-person love and security he needed. Erica was the youngest of Isadora Duncan's troupe, and a dark-haired, low-voiced, exquisite creature. She and Pepin made quite a pair.

The night before the opening of school we gave a party in the dining room and in the big room for the workmen. We served beer and things, but somehow the men did not think beer was enough. The faculty had an entertainment planned, but somehow it never came off. In other words, the men took over--said they had never been given a party before--they were usually shoveled out. Said they had had a good summer--paid tribute to Rhoda Barney, called her the "Boss." I wondered what tribute they would give me and found it was the "Lady." They sang barbershop songs and danced amazing somethings. Before things got out of hand, I asked them to sign the paper going into the threshold stone the next day. It certainly was a rousing ending, although the masons and carpenters still had work to do.

The next day the students and their parents came. We had an opening ceremony at the threshold stone. We could not have a cornerstone because we could not build on new foundations, so said the government. So we took the well stone that was under an elm in the high mowing and smoothed it. In the round hole in the center we put a copper box. In the box were a penny, a nickel and a quarter of the year 1942; a tassel of corn that grew ten feet high in the garden; and a paper on which was written:

> "We sink this granite stone in the earth before the doors of a new structure planned to house youth. May they find here health of the body trained to skills and techniques, wisdom of the heart open to the understanding of their fellow men, strength of mind, and freedom through richer opening vistas and high goals. To these things we who have built it, we who will teach in it, we who have come here to learn--dedicate this building."

This was signed by the workmen, the faculty and the parents who were there. This granite stone is still there--you walk over it whenever you pass over the front steps.

4.

WHEN HIGH MOWING OPENED ITS DOORS

When High Mowing opened its doors in September 1942, it consisted of my small house, the adjoining shed which had been made into a chapel, the large house which housed living room, music room and my library downstairs, and rooms for faculty upstairs--four on the second floor and three on the third. The long shed between faculty house and the old barn was kitchen, laundry, bedroom and bath for the cooks, and infirmary. Then the main school building. Across the road was the red house, and the boys' dormitory. Two miles along the hill was an old white farmhouse, the lower school. This farm we bought so that the school itself could own land and thus become incorporated. The "High Mowing" land still belonged to me. Also, we hoped to have the lower grades as any Waldorf School should--with classrooms and dormitory. Here Mrs. Von Barava1le, Margaret Cunningham (now Mrs. Wesson), and Ann Friedl, had charge of about ten young people of varying ages. That is a story in itself .

But now it is time to cross the threshold stone and enter the main door of the "barn." Down the hall on your right are two classrooms, language and history. To your left is the "library" or study hall and all across the end, the big room. We had taken the beams which made the second floor of the old barn and put them in the ceiling of the library, hoping to give it a quiet atmosphere--and we hoped that the long colored sampler over the windows would give it warmth. But horses and cows were once stabled where this room stood and there seemed to be still a good deal of stomping and swishing.

Taking out the beams left the big room two stories high. Dr. Von Baravalle and I geometrized the room for light and space. We planned the three gradual steps and the long windows at the end. The iron stair railing from the old house in Virginia had been lying patiently in the barn so we placed it at the end of the room. To balance this we put up the 17th-century tapestry given by my mother.

The fireplace being part of the fire wall (bless it), we decided to show all the brick making the pattern flame-like (not too successful) but still charming. The two rows of tiles at the sides were made here on the hill by my daughter Beulah, now Mrs. Frederick Hiebe1. They represent Pisces, which we decided was the zodiac sign for the birth of the school. The roses stood for all that roses mean and perhaps brought into the room some of the riot of the roses in the gardens. At that time we had a sofa and upholstered chairs and a massive, old, oak table that we thought indestructible. The big window took on the proportions of the old barn door where the hay came in and out. In front of it was a table with plants. The Jacobean oak bookcase was a gift from Mrs. Senator Tobey. The piano was opposite it near the door to the library. The room had a homelike feeling at that time--an evidence of optimism, or was it naiveté.

Upstairs, the pine-tree room on the courtyard was the science laboratory; the three rooms opposite were then two classrooms--English and math. The third floor was the girls' dormitory except for a long, double room overlooking the oval, which was the art studio, hence the big windows. The wing, or henhouse as it once had been, was made two-story since we could not build on new foundations. The downstairs housed the office; the upstairs the girls. The old wooden door to the henhouse with its wooden latches you will find high on the wall of the girls' dormitory third-floor sitting room hiding an attic. The

doing over of the third floor for the girls' dormitory was a challenge. There had been wooden stairs going up to the cupola and a trap door making it a small square room, and rumor had it that you could see the ships of Boston harbor with a telescope. We never did; the trees may have grown. We dispensed with the trap door and the stairs, giving indirect lighting to the floor below to make a living room of it. Around this cupola lighted center we built rooms of different shapes--like a home with a gathering center.

Below the main floor of the barn stretched a large open space. At the time of the farm it had been the manure pit, the ceiling upheld by sturdy posts and at the end of the space a strong stone wall. At the time of our home-building we made this space into a garage--cement floor and three double doors. It held space for six cars to take care of all our friends. Now for the school it was the only space large enough for the dining room and kitchen. How things do change. The doors therefore became windows--we put in every inch of glass we could as we thought it might be dark. Under these windows a low shelf stretched the full length of the dining room for plants to give cheer. Surprisingly, the room was not gloomy. It is now full of greenery of different sizes and shapes and in places the fragrance of herbs. Plants can grow without some sun or mostly only at sunset.

To add color, from year to year we would ask a senior to paint the spaces of the back wall. Jane Fuller gave us an early New England farm in the first span at the foot of the stairs. A few years later James Sage chose a few favorite or famous literary figures--Robert Frost, Emily Dickinson, Horace Greeley centered with the Bronson family; to the right Daniel Webster and Mary Baker Eddy. Between them stands a blue mystery figure which was an attempt to catch the elusive principal. Next comes Celia Thaxter and her Sandpiper, the cook's dog, uncurling ferns, laurel in bloom, and high on the hill the clustered buildings of High Mowing.

Near the stone wall Penny Thompson painted a group of young people all quietly watching Shakespeare's seven ages of man against a New Hampshire winter background of field and forest. A landscape painted by Judith Bishop fills the end of the room next to the kitchen.

Eleven tables, mostly round hutch but two rectangular, fill the space. The rectangular tables are black, hand painted by a Russian artist friend of mine, Alexis Tiranoff. Many of the chairs are antiques, some colored and some plain, some almost antique, some modern. All this makes the room very colorful. And filling the end of this lower floor toward the road is the kitchen.

So were the buildings of the new school!

And into these buildings the pioneer faculty moved--a group who dared to face the uncertainties of a New Hampshire barn rebuilt, a northern winter and a new school.

The first group of faculty that came had resigned from the Edgewood School with me, on a point of freedom. This presented a problem as there were more than we needed. But again there is a stirring of fate. In the group was a fine mathematician and physicist who had been absorbing all Dr. Von Baravalle could give him. A delightful character, but he was a Communist. I could not see bringing a Communist to a New Hampshire hill and wondered what to do. His party took care of that. He was categorically ordered to stay where he was. Another teacher got married--another's mother was too old to move. So we

finally started with a full complement, winnowed by the hand of fate. It was interesting and gratifying.

The doyen of the group that came was Dr. Maud Thompson. She reigned in the second room on the right as you entered the school. She taught history and Latin, took roll call and had her eye on the study hall activities across the corridor from her room. A veteran teacher with an amazing memory and a Ph.D. from Yale, she was a little white-haired woman, her hair soft and fluffy, her eyes clear, direct, and wise, even when they twinkled. She dressed mostly in gray with white at her throat held by a cameo. Her petticoat almost always showed in the back but no one ever told her. She was straight as a die, loyal to anything she believed in but scornful of subterfuge and alibi. She was good at seeing through people and the young respected, sometimes feared, but always obeyed her. She lived in the village and used to invite students to meals. They came back wide-eyed because she had shed the teacher for the hostess, cooked a delicious meal and had turned on all her charm. She was liberal in spite of her cameo, a socialist with all the strength of her convictions. When she saw things to be done she did them, quietly and definitely --a tower of strength. She was with us many years. When she retired there was a large hole to be filled. No one who studied under her or worked with her ever forgot her.

Dr. Von Baravalle taught in the original Waldorf School at Stuttgart and had the great privilege of working with Rudolf Steiner. In fact, Rudolf Steiner launched him on his geometric drawing career. He brought a knowledgeable background and set up our curriculum for us in the concentrated units of three weeks. With us he taught all science, and organized the afternoon work program. I never understood how one man could do so much. Lithe and active, sanguine and ever willing, he helped launch us nobly. When he left at the end of the year it was a family necessity and we both regretted it deeply. He has, however, come back and back, and as long as he lived he always had a beaming faith in High Mowing.

On the third floor Mlle. Philippe ("Mammy") ruled the girls' dormitory. An eagle of a woman, tall and straight with a crown of white hair, she was a Belgian who had worked in the underground, sometimes carrying messages through dark alleyways and sometimes singing to the men with her clear strong voice. She spoke with a touch of iron, but her heart was warm and a quick word was all that was needed. You could hear her say: "Enough." or "To bed." or "Where you go?" and that was it. She ruled a tidy and cheerful dormitory with fun. The emotional crises were listened to and then muted with a reasonable sanity. Every Christmas Carol Vesper Service she sang *Minuit Crêtien* to us with the dedication of her life's experience. Wisdom with wings! Finally there were too many girls and too many stairs and she retired to the family who brought her over from Europe--her second home.

Winifred Hill was always quiet with a smile. She was the daughter of the Congregational minister in Wilton. She had been living with the Emmet family several years when the school was founded and then quietly fitted into her place. She taught English--somehow her classes seemed to like grammar and I think anyone who worked with her became a lover of reading.

Ann Friedl came to us to help in the "lower school." We tried to have the lower grades as all Waldorf Schools should, but found that it was not going to work as a boarding school on our distant hill. As that group gradually came to an end, Miss Friedl moved up to the

high school, taught French and German (having come from Alsace where history kept changing its mind), and became one of the best teachers on this continent. Her popularity is evidenced by the pictures on the walls of the French room. One weekend the room was mysteriously closed and Monday morning it blossomed forth on wall and ceiling with many decorative grammatical suggestions. She played lovely games with all phases of grammar and the students throve--even learning English grammar from her, as she tartly reminded us. Her sense of fun and humor smoothed over many an emotional flurry. When Dr. Thompson left us, she took over roll call and the overseeing of study hall. Tall, dark, and vivid, her presence was felt wherever she was.

It is interesting how the family interweaves with the school. Mrs. Robina Thomas had lived with the Emmets in the past, before she was married. Years later, when school opened in 1942, she found herself with two daughters and no husband. She came to us and lived in the infirmary, also taking charge of a thousand practical details. Later she moved to the faculty building and took on some of the office work, as well as housekeeping details. She had two deep-seated loyalties: the school and her growing daughters. Joan graduated from the school in 1947, and in 1949 was married to John Emmet--in the church in Wilton Center. Sylvia graduated in 1951. Robina stayed on until retiring age and then went to New York City to join her daughters, now both married, and to spend much time babysitting and going to the theatre. She has since had one granddaughter graduate (Anne Emmet '73).

Our Finnish Toimi Parssinen, solemn and silent, and his cheerful chattering Elsa were with us in the beginning helping us build. In those early days I suppose he would have been called a janitor, as he took care of furnaces (which were coal, then) and did all sorts of odd jobs. But he was a meticulous cabinetmaker as well, and what he gave us were our classroom tables and our round dining room tables. (I wanted round tables because then everyone could talk to everyone else--anyway I believe in circles.) With his skillful hands and his cheerful smile and his Finnish English, he went about filling the insides of the rooms we had shaped. Our parting after several years was sad, but his health was not too good and his one daughter had graduated. However, we never forgot him or Elsa and obviously they never forgot us. We did not see them for years, but we kept track. Then the spring of the fire, at a time when we were in great need of carpenters, on May Day they appeared out of the blue as though we had called them. Bob Pittman and I might be said to have grabbed them. Now among other things Toimi has made our chapel benches, new classroom tables and lovely round tables for the library, corners with fine cabinets, and shelves. He has strewn the new buildings with his touch. Fearful that we would not like it, he shyly unwrapped for us the lantern now hanging from the peak of the Eurythmy Studio. Until 1972 he was still quietly with us, if anyone with a hammer can be called quiet.

Joe Miller lived in a small white farmhouse on the hill. He worked with Bob Emmet on his farm until it broke up in 1947 and Bob came to the hill. Joe followed him and became our janitor. He was part Oklahoma Indian--he certainly had the quiet silence of that race. He was reputed to be the strongest man in Wilton. He was also a weather prophet, not from the weather bureau point of view, but with an instinctive wisdom; he was often more accurate than the radio. He breathed a quiet loyalty as steadfast as the granite he trod upon, but gradually his eyesight failed. Finally, only with persuasion from Mr. Steward, Bob Emmet and me, he agreed to take the chance on a cataract operation. Both eyes were done and Joe turned up spick and span and smiling with his new eyes and new glasses and a new confidence.

One day I called him in to see my new post-fire house. I can see him standing on my terrace threshold interested and pleased and somewhat vocal. From my doorstep he walked down the hill to his fatal tractor. The next we heard was the tragedy of his getting caught under the overturned tractor. The affection shown for this quiet man as people gathered at his house was impressive and heartwarming. Even now some years later, I often wish I could pick up the phone and call on him to help.

5.

FACULTY THROUGH THE YEARS

There has always been a difficulty in finding faculty. There are not enough teachers trained in our point of view in all the wor1d--not just in this country. Teachers are being trained in several schools here and in Europe, but new schools are being started and there are even groups waiting for teachers so that they can start. Going to the agencies for teachers is not really successful. Because of our dedication to a definite spiritual approach to man, people think we are odd, or they listen intellectually and decide that if they accept what Dr. Steiner asks they will be giving up their freedom--you cannot explain that working with spiritual values is perfect freedom, even though the Christ said so. However and nevertheless, people come and they are good and you take a long breath, and then they retire and you begin again. However, those who have gone keep in touch or come back. They do not forget threads woven on this hill. I do not know whether faith or patience is the most important.

I have told you of the group of teachers who came to the hill in the beginning. Now follows a group who by being here have added specially to our growth. Many more could be mentioned--this is just a sampling:

Dr. Poppelbaum

Dr. Poppelbaum was versed in all sciences--gray haired and small and tidily built with a deep quietude, until you saw his eyes or touched the spring of his attention with a question. Then he was all alive and his deeply trained mind answered to the full what you had sought, answered to the meticulous word and with a poet's eye. Thus he changed from a still spring to a flowing fountain. He had come from long years of training at the hands of Dr. Steiner, ever seeking to carry further or deeper the thought that he had met--experimenting with metal colors in the chem 1ab--or with sound at the piano--seeking, ever seeking. Of all this he gave what he could to the young and to the faculty on the Hill. His knowledge of English was amazing and his scientific perfectionism made his translations of Dr. Steiner's words and his explanations of his thought crystal clear. The faculty met with him weekly to read Dr. Steiner.

He was teaching at Alfred University and had spare time to come to us. Later he came to stay and brought Isobel Dobson with him for our ceramic room.

After several years he left us, called by Dornach to go onto their Anthroposophical Society's Executive Committee and we were bereft but glad that we had taken as much as we had while he was with us, glad that we had touched the depth of what he had learned.

The Karls

Mr. Karl and Hertha, his first wife, and two children came to us from Switzerland via Costa Rica, via Spring Valley, N.Y. High Mowing needed a gardener and so the family came to us in 1945. (Never have our gardens been more beautiful or have we had such an array of compost piles.) He had the greenhouse enlarged and moved from down near where the saw mill is to its present site. Mrs. Hertha Karl taught biology and had very green thumbs, so she took slips from the grapevine growing against the "pit," planted them

along the greenhouse and the next year transplanted them to form the arbor along the road from the end of the fence up to the greenhouse. It was two years watchful work and a permanent and delicious contribution to the Hill.

The Karl family broke up after John graduated in 1950, and a few years later Mr. Karl married Isobel Dobson. After a short time away (when two students took charge of the "Pottery"), the Karls returned--Isobel went back into her "Pottery" and he taught history and art.

Mr. Karl gave us vivid chapel services. Even so long ago, two I remember well: one on Zurathustra and one on the Popol Vu--the bible of the Aztecs. He also gave talks after lunch on Fridays on the lives of the musicians with Mr. Tallarico at the piano. One interesting thing to note is that people brought up in Anthroposophy can do so many things so well. Mr. Karl is pre-eminently a painter or a gardener or a scholar or which? Withal he is a quiet man with the strong, purposeful stride of one who belongs to the soil. Primarily now he teaches, and I mean teaches, history.

Isobel Dobson Karl moved quietly in the "Pottery." The "Pottery" has long been and still is a source of character building alongside its busy, truly creative output. Mrs. Karl never raises her voice. She seems, in fact, to be a quiet smile weaving her way through a complex group of people, young and not so young--and everywhere she brings a warm serenity and an effective purposefulness.

Bob Pittman

One of my most pleasant pursuits is watching the alumni grow up. In Bob's case I was able to watch it happen here on the Hill.

Bob Pittman came to the school its second year as a Junior. He helped Mr. Hirons in the dormitory and went from us to the Marines. Released, he arrived on the Hill at no time of year that one could go to college, and so found himself again in the boys' dormitory. It has been said that Bob can do so many kinds of things. The fascinating aspect of this to one who tries to be an educator is that he has learned through observations--I might say osmosis. He will watch and thereby learn how this is done and that--learning through watching and doing. His reading fills in the gaps in whatever he is learning, for him books have been a following, not a leading. A bit of carpentry, or bricklaying or mending machines or designing houses. He worked with Dr. Poppelbaum and became a good teacher, particularly in algebra, and, of course, mechanics. Singing in the Milford Chorus, he learned to direct a chorus. He was not afraid of responsibility, often representing the school in meetings and thereby learning the barometer of the critical and academic world. His most spectacular feat, of course, was driving a bulldozer through the infirmary walls to cut off the fire from the main school building. The firemen would not do it but gave him permission. Covered with a mackintosh sprayed with water, he plunged through the fire thereby saving much damage to the school building. That might be called keeping your head, seeing a need and having the equipment and the courage. Emergencies certainly test people.

Bob is responsible for the design and construction of the Gymnasium, of the wing, of the boys' dormitory, and the pentagon. It is interesting that what Bob built for the school the

fire did not touch. Afterwards he designed the new school building, the new chapel and infirmary, and my new house. He was invaluable to me for many, many years!

Dick Ellis

Dick Ellis came with his family. We put him in the little yellow house at the foot of the hill toward the Fryes--a tidy and cheerful person and good to have around. He taught math and I have a feeling that even those in his class who did not like math enjoyed the work. He was with us several years, always cheerful, and useful. Then he left us. I don't know why exactly, except that he went back to his good old fashioned teaching and rose in the ranks. I wish we could have kept him. However he still comes back every so often on May Day.

Robert Emmet

Although my son, Bob, was not exactly on the faculty when school started, he had been here before the beginning. He was running the Four Corner Farm at the foot of the hill and we used him extensively for our work program. I can still see a truck load of students cheerfully going down the back road en-route to cows and pasture.

Five years later he came to the school to teach biology and chemistry. Serious-minded and big-hearted, he was really interested in our pedagogy. He set out to learn all he could from Dr. Poppelbaum in chemistry and Mr. Ege in biology. It was a golden opportunity to learn by watching, listening and doing and he took advantage of all he could absorb. Now, these days teaching in a public school, he never has any discipline problems and is asked to train teachers. It is interesting to have the Waldorf point of view, even if unlabeled, make a dent in a large public.

Here on the Hill, his next move was a new wife and the boys' dormitory. This was a heavy schedule for him and a very new experience for her. She came all naive to our philosophy, although her background was deeply Christian. With her excellent mind she set about coping. I can remember two real contributions: work on the Weathervane and a "faculty follies." I cannot give you the plot of the follies as it was mostly nonsense interspersed with song. I remember that I did not appear except as a voice that intermittently throughout the evening answered a rap on a door with "Come." A new parent was being shown about the school and all the nonsense was an attempt to explain the school to this rather bewildered mother. One song and dance I remember entitled: "Never a Dull Moment on the Hill." This had become a recurrent phrase, and it was used to meet all sorts of happenings.

> "Never a dull moment, never a dull moment, never a dull moment on the Hill
> Always something to be glad about
> Or something to be sad about
> Whether using head or heart or hand or will."

The final contribution of the R. T. Emmets was a son. Having a baby arrive in the boys' dormitory was an enriching experience for everyone!

Mr. Kertesz

Mr. Kertesz dropped in one day saying, if I could give him a "job" as Orchestra Director, he could stay in this country. He was on a visitor's permit with his wife--two people astray from Hungary. We agreed to take them in and became immediately involved in red tape. Down to Boston we went, enduring long hours of questioning from the Immigration people and the FBI. It all concerned Hungary in wartime and it seemed endless, more than one day as I remember. The FBI man was steady, quiet, clear and very persistent. I thought how tired he must be too. It was really an interesting experience in government problems. They were admitted. Our long suffering authority turned to me and said with a smile: "You had no right to give Mr. Kertesz a "job". I smiled in return and said that I could not be sorry for it--then back to the Hill in triumph. Mr. Kertesz was a European trained cellist. That meant, it seemed, that he could teach any orchestral instrument, and our orchestra grew steadily. If the instruments we had did not make for a balance, Mr. Kertesz would recruit or beguile the students into learning the ones we needed, and then write parts simple enough to meet their needs. He spent almost all of faculty meetings busily writing parts. What we could give Mr. Kertesz was only a part-time job, and after several years, dark, agile and alive he finally developed a full time job in the Milford Public Schools and moved off the Hill. But we launched him. He retired from public school teaching in 1975 and returned to bring our orchestra back to life.

Mrs. Kertesz, a most quiet and immaculate creature, had in the meantime solemnly, expertly and meticulously been working on costumes for play after play. Again and again these costumes pop up at us still from the depths of our costume room.

Mrs. Flood

Mrs. Flood, musician and scholar, came to us in her early widowhood and took over the girls' dormitory, took it to her heart. Her hands were so crippled with arthritis that she could no longer play the piano. Later the third floor steps became too much so we put her in the apartment over my room and gave her English to teach. This she did superbly and thus still kept her heartwarming contact with the students. She was indefatigable in her interest. Long and fruitful talks we had sitting in my room. Then one vacation she was in a motor car accident and hurt her neck. Nothing daunted she went around cheerfully in an appalling collar, stiff necked, as she was not. Finally she had to go to California for the climate. It was a bitter parting for all of us. She is not well, but her contact with the school continues by cheerful letter or newspaper clipping, and she keeps in touch with students who go to see her, ask her advice and generally love her.

Hedwig Bossart

Hedy was our trained nurse--alive, dependable and useful. My clearest memory of her is dandelions! She and I sat on the terrace with small knives digging dandelions. Inch by inch we went. She finally cleared the lawn of dandelions. If you shift that persistence and skill to the infirmary, you will realize what a good nurse she was.

The Kaufmanns

Another dramatic faculty event was the arrival of the Tilo Kaufmann family. Tilo, effervescent, talkative and full of constructive ideas; Dolores, dark, quiet with hardly a loud word; their daughter, Deborah, only a few years old but completely choleric--her screams were part of the day. I watched Dolores quietly, steadily and calmly meet Deborah's outbursts of temper--divert them into channels, until over the years the temperament was led into constructive and active channels. It was fascinating to watch Dr. Steiner's advice on the treatment of the choleric temperament come into visible justification.

Tilo was shop teacher and builder. He took the shell of the garage near the gym and transformed it into an unusual house--a two-level living room with a rounded fireplace--touches everywhere of creative thinking in wood. The staircase in Mrs. Karl's house, the Red House, is of his building, part of the transformation of the second dormitory. There were always interesting creations coming out of his shop. I remember two large rocking horses, which I grabbed for Christmas presents, and I still meet them when I visit my family.

Mr. Ege

There was another figure--tall, quiet, dignified--that came to us from the original Waldorf School, one who had worked with Dr. Steiner at Stuttgart and who had given his whole life to helping the schools--Karl Ege. He knew the entire educational picture in and out. Since the needs cannot be the same on this side of the water as in Europe, it was valuable that he brought the ability to adapt to realities here. His human breadth stretched beyond geographical limits. When he first came to this country, he divided his time between the Steiner School in New York City and High Mowing. He came to teach biology, that most living of the sciences, and physics. He would also train the faculty. Deeply imbued with Anthroposophy, he did not force his ideas upon people but was there to answer questions. Anthroposophists may not proselyte, may not force their philosophy upon others, because not until a person comes to it with questions of his own is he truly ready for it. It has been discouraging at times because the tendency in America is to say: "Yes, I understand that but what do I do?" not realizing that the "do" must come from within. Because the impulse must come from a feeling--understanding the "do" will be different for each individual, although for each the impulse springs from the same attitude toward the human being. Mr. Ege had patience and faith and an abiding loyalty to what lives on the Hill. I can see him sitting quietly in a deep chair in the corner of the faculty room listening. Then suddenly he would lean forward, hands out and say: "If I may." Thus he would illustrate a point and mostly with examples from his beloved biology. He was with us for a few more years, no longer teaching but giving of his gentle and deep wisdom to whomever asked, giving until he was quietly and serenely called to other worlds.

"Ask and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you."

Mr. Tallarico

Music, of course, was very important in our picture but we could not give it full time, we were not large enough or wealthy enough. This made for an imbalance. But again our Guardian Angel remembered us. One day a dignified, grey haired, Italian gentleman asked if we had any need for music. It seems that he had been in charge of piano at the Peabody Institute in Baltimore, but had reached retiring age and as his wife was a native of Wilton he had come up here. We welcomed him with open arms only to find that he had been a concert pianist from coast to coast. For years he played for the chorus, helped put on Gilbert & Sullivan, played for chapel, gave us a concert after lunch on Fridays. These were the times Mr. Karl would talk about a musician's life and Mr. Tallarico would flowingly illustrate. Music all around--and the children singing in the dormitories. He set our morning verse to music with Mr. Steward's words. I don't think I know anyone who met life with a smile such as his. His other occupation was gardening and he always had the earliest peonies to bring us for the commencement bouquets. As happens in this world, he found he could not play so much and must leave us. I asked him if he would like to play a last time for commencement and he said yes. Early in the day I heard him at the piano and going to the big room found him playing surrounded by the young. After listening for a while I said: "That is music you have written for our march down the steps." With a shouting smile he said yes, and handed me the manuscript which we still use, of course. That was the last time I saw him but we still have him with us through his two manuscripts, through his music.

Mr. Steward

Up from the South came a tall, distinguished southern gentleman. He took over our business office, and worked and planned, and created a friendly and useful atmosphere. Although he did not teach, he made himself a part of the school, both to faculty and students, with no fanfare and trumpets. I am sure it was his initiative that inspired Mr. Tallarico's music for our Vesper Hymn. If accused of this, his answer was a smile. He left us as quietly as he lived, as he didn't wake up one morning. It was amazing how large a hole such cultured quietness could leave.

The Swansons

The Herbert Swanson family descended upon us--much to our pleasure. Mr. Swanson, a definitely erudite creature, turned his talents to math. His wife, charming and gracious became my private secretary, and the girls, four of them, entered the school--that left only John who was too young for us. Mrs. Swanson came just in time to help me with my 50th anniversary book, both with typing and advice. Mr. Swanson stayed until the girls graduated and then left us to have a school of his own, which had been his dream before he came to us.

The Eberle Family

Mr. Eberle had been gardener at The Waldorf School in Stuttgart. He and his family went a-journeying to America, and he wrote me. He was also a trained gymnast, and it seems he missed working with the young. He seemed too good to be true and I said: "Come." The family moved into the octagon. Within two weeks the stone wall along the gym and the entrance steps were built. This German rate of speed went on and on. Since walks of our

local granite are bumpy, I began talking about slate and we thought of going over to Vermont. But one day two young men from Vermont with a load of slate to sell arrived in the village, and they were sent up the Hill. We put their slate in the field behind the garage and Mr. Eberle used it all, bit by piece --the walk to the gym--the walk to the boys' dormitory--the mantle piece in the dormitory living room. Mr. Eberle also built the granite steps to the dormitory--steps up and steps down, under the oak tree. Then summer was over and it came time for gym.

His gym classes were meticulous in technique and very popular. The figure of Mr. Eberle in motion was beautiful to see. It was a sad day when they moved on to the Honolulu Waldorf School. The Eberle family will not be forgotten, not only for the contributions left behind, but for themselves as people.

Douglas Morse

Doug Morse '60, graduated from college, tried his father's business for a while, then in spite of family persuasion to stay home, decided to come to the Hill. He proceeded to make the dormitory a home for himself and the boys, helping Bob Pittman at first and then taking over. I offered to tuck him in a small room with a bath in the dormitory, small, but it had the old, original fireplace to which, years before the school, I had helped to add bricks. Perhaps I was sentimental, but I could see its homelike potential and it had its outside door giving freedom. He looked at it dubiously at first, decided to try it and made himself very much at home. He has since bought land on the hill and built a rather spacious and charming house which he calls the "cabin," probably because it is built of logs. If he planned it for an escape spot, which every dormitory counselor needs at times, he was fooled because the students, boys and girls, follow him down. Lately he has made it a social center, collecting people, students and alumni, for such party evenings as after May Day when a beneficent eye on the situation is helpful.

He has taken two more steps in the process of identification with the Hill. He has been head of the Alumni Association, where his executive ability has had free reign and he is teaching English classes with success using the good old fundamentals so many of the young resent.

Ruth Prince

Ruth Prince, is difficult to write about because from the moment she opened the door to the art studio she belonged. She came with two girls, one old enough for us and one not, and we tucked the family into the small apartment at the lower school, but she did not stay there long. She married Bob Pittman and moved up onto the hill, moved into Bob's unique and pleasantly modern house. She was very busy with her studio and house and other skills beside just painting. May Day time found the group around her full of all sorts of charming projects. Her loyalty to her husband took her away from the school but she has never lost interest.

The Cooks

As guardian spirits of the kitchen world, we have had interesting people whom we do not forget.

There were Hans and Ruth Preuss from Germany who, after bitter experiences during the war, came to our hill to find peace. They made real friends, not only with the faculty but with the children, and had force of character enough to keep order and respect as well as love. They were with us many years until ill health overtook them and they left for California. We still hear from them and alumni drop by to see them.

We also had a sterling New England couple from the state of Maine--the Coyles. We had good New England food with the right touch--solemn New England humor from Mr. Coyle, and jolly enthusiasm from Mrs. Coyle. Unfortunately, Mr. Coyle became ill and they left us.

Nowadays, in the '70s, we have had six cooks. It seems that Steven and Eunice Chalmers, who had been running a restaurant near Washington Square in New York City, became tired of the atmosphere, human and physical. They had a friend whose daughter was coming to High Mowing. New Hampshire seemed good to them and so they came to see us, bringing a tall, solemn friend called Chris. Although we could not possibly pay them what they could earn in New York City, they seemed to like us. They have a quaint old house in Hancock with a terraced garden, where they stay when off-duty. Soon they returned bringing two friends with them, Numael and Shirley Pulido. The upshot was that these five, along with Numael's mother, accepted what we could give, divided their time and took on the kitchen. Numael's mother was Spanish, and spoke no English. She used to run a hotel in Colombia. I shall always remember her sitting on a stool during meals, facing the dining room, watching the swirling activity around her. Unfortunately she is no longer with us, having gone on to other worlds.

The food has variety, mystery and flavor. The kitchen is busily full of students and quiet conversation, although about meal time it does seem overpopulated. There is a relaxed give and take.

I must mention the other talents of these two couples. Numael is musical and Shirley is an artist. In their first year here they got the children interested in Mozart's "Magic Flute"--so interested that the school had to put it on! They have continued to be the chief source of our musical programs and choir activities. The Chalmers, for their part, have put on a Medieval Pageant for May Day, and now Mr. Chalmers is helping to teach History through Art. It is good for the students to get to know the faculty from different points of view, not just as "dear teacher" or as "cook."

6.

FOUR PHASES OF GROWTH

Leaving Edgewood and coming to the hill gave us freedom to try to build a Waldorf School. Much has been written about these schools and many people all over the world are building them, for it is an international movement throughout the free world.

Rudolf Steiner said that he was starting a form of education for modern youth. So our acceptance by the New Hampshire hill was not just a move, it was the beginning of a crusade, an effort to meet the deep needs, to answer the questions asked by and implicit in the young. In those days of 1942 the need was not so obvious, but High Mowing's purpose has grown clearer and clearer as the years roll by. Being human we err, but as we build with what Rudolf Steiner has given us, we know not only "what" to strive for but "why." The why that Rudolf Steiner has given us is a great comfort as we thread our tangled path. There are four phases so far in our growth, four chapters in the story of these thirty-odd years.

First Phase

When High Mowing opened in its first phase, we were the only high school in the U.S.A. working with the Waldorf point of view. Many students came to us from the Waldorf Schools in New York, Kimberton, Adelphi and Highland Hall, and later Green Meadow, as it built up to high school. They had had the Waldorf approach to learning in the lower school and came to us eager to learn more. That was perhaps the outstanding difference between them and the students from other schools. They had had their questions answered--the questions they had asked and those that they did not know how to ask. They had had their imagination stimulated in the academic field as well as the creative. They were indeed a true leaven and helped give the whole school an impetus to learn. Teaching in those days was fun.

Another difference between High Mowing and the other Waldorf Schools was that we were the only boarding school. This posed its problems, but also had its advantages as we could create the atmosphere that we wanted without impinging of different backgrounds, environmental and family. There was a unity of approach that gave security to those we were trying to educate. We based the curriculum on the Carnegie unit of 120 hours to a credit and we set it up to prepare for college, which was vitally necessary here in New England. Surprisingly, we found that there was time within the curriculum for creative work. This, of course, was a necessity for us if we wished to lead our young into rounded human beings. With this curriculum we sent students to M.I.T., Harvard, Wellesley and so forth.

There was excitement in pioneering, new firsts all the way. There was not enough room, not enough equipment. This threw teachers onto their ingenuity and the use of their imagination. It gave flavor that too much of the material, too much comfort can kill. We proved my grandmother's saying that "if you do not have what you want, use what you have and you will have what you want."

Second Phase

As time went on, the other Waldorf Schools developed their own high schools, which, of course, was right and necessary. Fewer and fewer students came to us with Waldorf training. For us this posed a problem and brought us to the second phase. Little by little we realized that our task at High Mowing was to face and meet the needs of students coming into high school who had not had our early training, and knew nothing of our point of view. As a pathetically general rule, these young people had learned to dislike math or they felt that they could not understand it. They had learned to repudiate grammar and sometimes to resist school in general. So in a span of four years (or many times only two) we had to try to awaken an interest in learning, to try to balance the personality so that they could stand on their own two feet and go forward into the world, directed and alive. We faced the challenge, of course, because as we had learned at the beginning that this school was meant to be, so now we knew that the present situation was meant to be. In this balancing of thinking and willing, our creative work was of inestimable value, because what one created belonged to one, reached the inner feelings and gave them form and substance. This second phase we have been living with for many years.

The atmosphere that we decided to build up here on this hill was one of "home." The fact that it had always housed a home may have helped. The need in so many cases was for the students to find a group of people that really cared for each one of them, that would spend of their time and experience to talk with them in surroundings of simplicity and beauty. This was the healing need of those times.

High Mowing was a home before it was a schoo1--and becoming a school it still stayed a home. It was a home for young people from any type of background, of any race. It was a home to so many young people who should have had their own homes but did not, and others whose parents were separated. At High Mowing the young learned that people cared--cared enough to listen. That was almost all that was needed. Aren't the words heart and hearth the same? One evening around 10 p.m. I found a perfectly respectable young lady taking food from the faculty ice-box. I was surprised. She said: "But Mrs. Emmet I thought that this was a home and I always raid the ice-box at home before going to bed." What was the answer?

I must speak of the importance of our dormitory life and pay tribute to those men and women who live with the students. Since we strive to build a home on the Hill, the daily relationships take on great importance. I annoy the academic faculty when I say that the dormitory is more important than the classroom. It is the source of attitudes toward life, of a possible serenity, and can also very definitely feed the classroom. It is not an easy way because the form is not clearly stated, the subject matter consists of emotional, personal problems and the counselor has to make it up as he or she goes along. But the result can be a sense of security--of a feeling that people really care--of a place to grow from. It takes time, patience and wisdom. It is not easy.

Fundamentally we do not believe in punishment. If you are Christian you believe in the two commandments of the New Testament: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and all thy soul and all thy mind, and the second is like unto it: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thy self." The ten commandments of the Old Testament give us: Thou shalt not, thou shalt not. With this approach our laws are set up and our prisons filled. I always think of Van Gogh's painting of the endless tramping round and round of the men in the

prison yard--no way out, no way up. One cannot, of course, do away with the law, but a Christian approach shows the younger generation that stressing the good in them will lead onward. It is fascinating how quirks and angles, anger and violence disappear when you stress the good that they have--and there is always good to find and a way to build. "Since you have this and this, why do you do thus and so?" I always try to have students sent to me for "punishment" leave the room with a smile.

This is not to say that punishment is not necessary these days. It is the only recipe that some people understand, and it will take time to wean them. Some students think we are weak because we do not immediately punish, but they realize in the end it is not weakness but a different kind of strength. Often seniors on the Student Council will discuss how to approach a student without punishment. This I consider a victory; perhaps it is Christian education.

Third Phase

The third phase covered the late sixties and early seventies. A demand for reality, a resentment of activity per se, casual dressing, long hair and behind it all the pitiful temptation of drugs.

During these years the young people coming to High Mowing tended to be very different from earlier students. The rector of a large boys school said to me at a meeting: "Education is not as much fun as it was, is it?" My answer was: "No, but it presents a fine challenge." In fact, education is in a turmoil in high schools and colleges. Some schools have become more rigid, some have given many freedoms. Rudolf Steiner stated that he was building a school for modern youth and I feel that our experience on the hill has vindicated him. We have not had to change any essentials. On the basis: "Compromise with circumstances but not with your ideals," we decided to allow long hair and mini skirts and trousers, as we felt that if we spent our time "picking on" the externals, we could never reach an inner striving of the young. We did ask for cleanliness and tidiness. We felt that in their aimless seeking if we could find something that they felt was really their own they would take a direction and move on into a form. Our creative work has been invaluable because all that builds from inside out. Never are you so free as when you are creating something.

Why the drug problem was tossed upon the young in these years is hard to understand. It might be the effort of Lucifer to combat the electrical, mechanical world that Ahriman has helped us build. The mechanically organized world is clever and convenient, practical and economically efficient, but where is human freedom? Time, yes, all but eight hours a day to do what? Play is the modern answer; watch television. The young say this is not enough--we as people want something more. Then the Luciferic dream world is offered them with drugs. I do not think we can blame the young--if you are out for blame. What we can do is feed the realities within themselves, build strengths through the realities of their own efforts. The creative world in all its aspects does this, pulling out from inside the imagination and the heart, and gives them the opportunity to build something that they know belongs to them. This not only takes away the need for drugs, but gives them a path for their feet to tread.

Fourth Phase

And now in the mid-seventies we are building into a fourth phase. It is a privilege watching the youth of today and following the changes that come with time. For us here there is a lack of resentment--the generation gap seems to have gone, that pitiful slogan that reduces things to a dead level. The students coming today seem to want to know the faculty, not just as teachers but as people. They have a sensitivity and a wanting to know, a need for deeper values than the externals of life in this materialistic world.

This, of course, is just what we hope for, what we as a Waldorf School can understand and lead to an inner serenity. We can and we have. Teaching may come back into the fun it used to be.

7.

MY FATHER AND MOTHER

And how through the years has the school been financed? One may very well ask--and so I must tell you of my father and my mother.

My father, A. Barton Hepburn, has not been on earth since 1922, and yet he is omnipresent, for the existence of this school is due to the man he was, the man I knew and loved, the quiet figure who spoke of values, who loved people and trusted them. His trust in me made this school financially possible, for my share of his estate came to me at the very time I needed to build the school. And it was because of his humanity and standards that I had confidence in the road I was following.

He was born on a mortgaged farm in Colton, St. Lawrence County, New York State. He taught school, became school examiner. To be a school examiner in those days you needed two horses, a buggy and a sleigh. As he went from town to town in the county, he got to know the people, dropping into one house or another. These people finally sent him to the assembly in Albany, instructed to vote a certain way on a certain measure. There he met the world of politics and quietly withstood the attack and voted as instructed. This earned him a reputation for strength and uprightness, which in turn brought him the post of Bank Examiner for the state of New York. He said he knew nothing of banking but the senate said what they needed was someone with courage and honesty. He studied at night, perhaps in self-defense. After New York, he went to Washington as Controller of the Currency. Being a staunch Republican, he left Washington when Cleveland came back to the presidency.

We next find him president of the Third National Bank of New York City and from there his rise was spectacular. For years he was president of the Chase National Bank and there met the first world war. His bank was in charge of the affairs of England and Japan. He originated the idea of the Federal Reserve Bank, and when asked why his name was not connected with it said: "It does not matter who gets the credit as long as the job gets done." That is a good thing to think of in these days of competition, egotism and grab. Another thing he told me I have often used in times of decision: "Compromise with circumstances, but never with your ideals." He did not talk much and never asked for anything for himself. What was given to him had to be freely thought of or freely given. In the chair at Chase Bank board meetings, he would listen and as the men turned to him for his opinion he would say: "That reminds me"--at the end of the anecdote the question was solved. He had a Lincolnesque sense of humor. He made a great deal of money, but it was never for the money, but for sake of the situation; personal, national, international. He said to my husband: "I do not know why this money came to me. I cannot explain it." Perhaps John D. Rockefeller, Sr.'s statement explains it. He said: "Mr. Hepburn was in Wall Street but not of it." His room was always quiet and I would sit on the end of his sofa and we would talk. His very blue, blue eyes had a twinkle. I promised him to keep my eyes blue but somehow they changed. Those talks were always fun as well as fruitful.

He stayed in harness to the very end and when the stroke came he did not last long. It was no tragedy. After his full life he would have hated to have people needing to take care of him. My father, who had never asked anything of anybody, was showered with tributes from around the world. And I sang as I opened letters and carried arms full of flowers,

because the tributes came and came and he could not stop them. That was what the world thought of him. So you see, he is very important to High Mowing in many ways and the story is incomplete without him.

From the very beginning there has been love of people on this hill, and perhaps this love of people came first from him who made it financially possible. That makes High Mowing a fitting place for just this kind of Waldorf School where Christian love is the very basis for its living.

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The story of my mother and her later financial backing (in the early fifties) is quite a different tale. My mother's name was Emily, which I understand means energetic. Coming from a farm by an old covered bridge over the Winooski River, near Montpelier, Vermont, she coped amazingly with the complexities of New York City into which she was tossed by my father's steadily expanding world. I made life difficult for her at times, or maybe most of the time. I took up barefoot dancing somewhat akin to Isadora Duncan's. This was "not done" as my kind friends wrote me and as mother told me until she discovered she could raise money for her charities through my dancing. Then came osteopathy, another outcast world. I did, however, go to college (Wellesley). This mother approved of as she said I was still too naive to "come out." My marriage into the navy she approved of also, even though it gave me a come-and-go husband. When he was away I had complete charge of the children, had to be both father and mother to three boys and a girl. I became, of course, interested in schools. This took me to the Edgewood School in Greenwich, Connecticut, a John Dewey School. This again worried mother: Would her grandchildren get to college--whom would they marry? As they were still pre-adolescent I thought it somewhat premature.

When I left Greenwich and established a school at High Mowing, strangely from then on, Mother relaxed. It was fascinating to watch her. She liked the students. She liked my title of principal, perhaps not realizing that I had virtually given it to myself. She visited. I can see her sitting in a big chair watching the *Mikado*, thoroughly enjoying the picture which consisted very much of costumes she herself had brought back from Japan. This enthusiasm resulted in giving the school the money to build the wing! At last Mother had fully accepted her unconventional daughter.

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For many years, until 1957, the school was my personal property. Only the lower school belonged to the school. (Property was necessary for their corporation. So I bought the lower school and gave it to the Board of Trustees.)

The other buildings had been a home for my children for years. Although they had left college and married and lived elsewhere, they still kept coming back and I did not want to break threads. Finally they all agreed that the school should have the buildings--as they could come back anyway in summer. And so in 1957 at a faculty and trustee meeting, I handed over the buildings and the land to the school, with the stipulation that should the school close, the land should be given to some group working with Rudolf Steiner ideals. The faculty in gracious gratitude stated that I must have the right to live in it, in my house, as long as I wished.

8.

APPLICATIONS AND ACCREDITATION

High Mowing's approach to parents from the outside world is varied, interesting and perhaps unusual. Believing in reincarnation as we do, this life on earth is only a span of time in an endless spiral of striving. Anything we can do to help, helps forever. Therefore why has this family come, what do they want, will they see what is on the Hill and so be fed? What the students noticed, what they comment on as they go through the school is most revealing. Where they stood academically is not so important as what they are seeking. Many unbalanced children have been sent by doctors and friends because of what we had done in balancing some other child. The medical angle we are not equipped to cope with and will not touch. It is not possible for us to work with a psychiatrist--and a psychiatric child is apt to be hopelessly intellectually introverted. We are not a school for "problem" children unless everyone today is a problem child, especially in the field of balancing the thinking, feeling and willing, which is the secret of our endeavor. The thinking world is universal and can be taught directly--a fact is a fact, a tree is a tree. However, we find that even in this world the memory has been stressed more than the thinking. The memory, useful and needful as it is, is only a corner of the world of thought and does not make a thinker any more than the knack for portraiture makes a great painter. Therefore, we hope to help the students to think. The feeling world cannot be taught directly; it is a deeply individual world made of all the reactions of each one in all their years. We try to touch it in two ways--in the classroom by appealing to the imagination--the picture part of the mind which is always warmed with feeling. If the imagination can be caught the memory is brought alive. This is done by offering realities not abstractions, by painting characters in words not merely dates and battles. Or in science, giving the experiment first and then the definition. The second way is through the arts--the creative side, be it painting, eurythmy, music, ceramics, drama. There the student is involved from the inside out and has a feeling of being, of belonging. If the two aspects of thinking and feeling can be balanced, it is interesting to watch how the will, the activities take on a purposefulness and a sanity.

With this point of view we watch and question the new comer. The academic record we ask for as much to decide what they could do as what they have done. There is also the questionnaire, which is a character sketch, a picture of their interests, and totally non-academic.

Since asking direct questions of the young, especially by an adult who is faculty, is obviously not fruitful (well darling what did you do in school today?) I wrest a student from study hall and send the two on a journey of the school with the injunction to ask and answer all questions. A ball of misery will often come back with a broad smile or sometimes a dubious frown. It is important to us that the student himself wants to come. Meantime, I question the parents as to background. All this takes time, but accepting a student at High Mowing is a very important event in his or her life and an important decision on the part of the school, a responsibility to spiritual values. Whatever the wisdom one has it is not always adequate and mistakes are made of course, but not too often.

In the early years we had to hope to fill the school and there was not much choice. Later we were flooded with applications. This is due partly to our reputation, but also to the fact of our creative work. For a time the young brought the parents, sometimes bewildered parents or hopeful parents. The young are apt to come because of the creative work. They are seeking for something that is their own. This they find in the studios. Given that outlet for their ego drive they will accept the academic forms. This they must do because the school prepares for college. They ask for the truth and no one could quarrel with that, difficult as it may be to untangle these days. Once at the end of an interview a boy said to me: "This is the first school I have visited that has told me the truth." I did not pursue the subject.

Formal academic accreditation is not important in the overall picture of young people coming to High Mowing. But particularly in the beginning it was necessary for the school to be accepted by the outside world. And through a chain of coincidences we became accredited the second year of the school in 1944!

At this point the story of Middlebury College should be told: As a graduate, my father left money in his will to endow a college for women. This was in 1921. Middlebury refused it. The money therefore came back into his estate and made possible the founding of High Mowing.

The second year of the school two graduates wanting to go to Middlebury asked me if they would have to take college board examinations. I should have said: "Of course, we are not accredited." Instead I said: "Why don't you write and ask?" We had already gone to the college and had met the Dean of Admissions. Middlebury had been my father's college and he had given a large and hideous (I'm afraid) dormitory. I mentioned it to the Dean with apologies. Somehow word got around that Mr. Hepburn's daughter was there and the president appeared and asked me to luncheon. A dignified and solemn affair. But we had made a real contact.

As a result of my suggestion the girls wrote. It seems that the Dean was on the College Board Admissions Committee, which none of us knew. She wrote back that she would accept the girls and put the school on one year's trial if I would be willing to have them as "guinea pigs" (not her phrase). I was more than willing as High Mowing School could be proud of them. It seems she did watch them carefully. The only comment she made was to ask one of them not to climb on the roofs. The result was that we became accredited in our second year, which was unprecedented, because legally it took five years. The Dean was only at Middlebury two years and also resigned from the College Accrediting Board. Was she only there to welcome us?

The New England Accrediting Committee was soon dissolved and the task of accrediting fell upon the New England Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. By the time they became organized we had been accredited ten years and were up for a re-evaluation. I sent in our name. At the annual meeting only two names were announced as re-accredited--St. Paul's and High Mowing. It made a pleasant echo in the room. The committee was still working on the others. That gave us ten more years to grow.

The result of the next examination for accreditation was disappointing: We were not accepted. We had to answer page after page of questions--each faculty member, each department. In those ten years the Association had become thoroughly organized. As I

tried to answer the questions, I realized that we did not fit the established categories. Luckily there was space at the end for comments and I spent much time writing essays trying to explain our school.

There may have been other difficulties but two main ones stood out. Since my money paid the yearly school deficit, there was no ten year security as to the continuance of the school. The other was a fear and an absolute lack of understanding of the spiritual basis on which we were built. We were told we were not living up to our professed objective. (They seemed to think they understood what it was.) Since we were merely a group of human beings this was probably true, but could any human group reach the ideal we strive for?

We wondered what would happen to our standing. First in the summer we encountered parents of incoming students. Only one withdrew his daughter because we were not accredited. The next spring only one small western college refused us. A branch of the University of California wrote that because we were not accredited, the student must have above a B average--then two weeks later another letter came to the family saying that they had looked us up and considered us accredited. In those long years we had built up a reputation! So much for the past.

In the hurly-burly of these days, accreditation is becoming less and less important. One does not know where things will lead, but at the moment we see no need even to try for accreditation. High Mowing School will always be grateful to the Dean of Students at Middlebury and the twenty year span given us to build.

9.

CHAPEL

Back in the beginning of changing the deserted farm to a home, between the main house and the smaller house stood a shed; its uneven gable was of wide and narrow beams, its walls, old weathered beams. It had its music even then; the good west wind whistling between its gray boards. The floor was dirt and there was an old well in the middle. The entire space was littered with the most amazing assortment of things "that must not be thrown away as they might come in useful": Old magazines, the lost part of the weathervane (the rooster's tail which we actually recognized with glee and put back to complete his dignity as he welcomed the world). There were piles of twiggy wood, broken furniture, even an old corset and hooped skirt frame and so forth. We cleared the room, filled the well, and put down a good oak floor. Halfway down the room we built a comfortable fat chimney to house a Jacobean stone mantle that mother had sent up--a mantle that might have been of Shakespeare's time. We decided to have leaded windows to house the stained glass I had brought back from Rheims in 1919. Two were from a chateau, but the third was from some lost church and with reverence we gave it a suitable home. The orange color framing its circle was most unusual and the horse by the man's figure had four heads--the eagle, the lion, the bull and the man. Six quartered oak, carved, gothic posts I had found in the attic of an antique shop in the Hague rose above the mantelpiece; a death's head on one and on another an admonitory monk with an upraised warning finger, very severe. Between these we made a niche to house the lamb. Being addicted to lambs, I had found this one somewhere in New York. He came from China about 300 B.C. If Alexander the Great had gotten that far East, as he so longed to do, he might have known the lamb, or not. Two lamps hung from the peak of the roof, one from a church in Italy, the other in bronze from 18th century Holland. They had hung in our house in the Hague which had many high ceilings. We put a grand piano in the room and comfortable chairs and a sofa. We used it as a cool summer living room but even then we called it: "the chapel."

When the house became a school there was very little to do. One day out motoring, I saw the long, early New England benches by the side of the road in a town that ,was "doing over" its church. I said: "Save them, I'm coming back," and they did. Somewhere I found the early iron candelabra for each side of the fireplace. Mother gave us the copy of the stone, carved, colored Madonna. It was pure Renaissance but I never could discover who had done the original. This we put over the mantelpiece and moved the lamb to the table on the left with the candelabra near an early, Italian, velvet chair. In his new home he sat happily. He was made of soft, creamy stone and his nose had been worn quite shiny by hands that had caressed it. Whose hands we shall never know although it is pleasant to wonder, for he must have been loved. Now, again many hands quietly caressed him as they left the chapel.

Chapel time is vesper time, the end of one week or the beginning of another. As you enter the door, you can drop the bits and pieces of daily irritations, step into the candlelight and face the Madonna. Beneath her in winter is the warmth of a fire, in summer, flowers. It is a soft-lit different world, far from every day. We sing a vesper hymn, an adaptation by Mr. Steward of the morning verse, set to music by Mr. Tallarico. For years Mr. Tallarico sat beaming at the piano, an instrument he seemed to toy with, touching its many keys up and down to his will, leading the singing with the sensitivity of his touch, filling the room with

music. The service ends with: "Rise and close with 55" and you file slowly back to the everyday world.

In the service are the hymns, Lord's Prayer and a talk--you notice I do not say "sermon." The framework of the talks are seasonal: St. Michael and his strength, and the meaning of fall. Always Keat's "Ode to Autumn" and Shelley's "Ode to the West Wind"--the west wind who is our most familiar friend, cooling the hill in summer, gleefully howling in winter, playing sculptor with the snow, especially in the courtyard where the snow is swirled into most excellent modern forms. Often we have the lives of the great initiate leaders of the earlier religions building up to Advent and the Christ: Rama, Krishna, Buddha, Orpheus, Moses. For the beginning of Christmas we have an advent service. The second week we have a carol singing service interspersed with poems as a relief from the singing. The last Sunday before vacation comes our Nativity in the big room, but more of that in the next chapter.

The winter and spring services are varied. If preaching were the solution to the world's problems; if the voices from all the pulpits of all the ages gave the answer, the world would be a very different place. So we do not preach. However, sometimes one can lift a problem or a point of view that is a reality in the school to a higher level, raise it out of the everyday and, speaking in pictures, point out values. If it is recognized as actual and true and living in our midst, it can be telling even if it seems like a parable. Or one can read from Emily Dickinson or Robert Frost or Walden in the winter. Mr. Ege took chapel when he was on the Hill. Mr. Karl has done it many times.

At Easter time when we are at school, each morning at assembly from Palm Sunday to Easter, I tell of the deeds and words of Christ Jesus as he led the world to the events of Good Friday, that he might give the world the event of Easter Sunday. In the chapel at the Easter service, each one is given a candle at the door. There is much of the Messiah and a reading from the Bible. As we sing the Hallelujah, candle by candle is lit from the candelabra by the lamb. Slowly the light grows and grows until the room is aglow. Each carrying a candle, the students file slowly out. It is interesting that some blowout the candle, but many do not.

Our last chapel service of the year is Baccalaureate and comes on the Thursday before graduation. We have a visiting clergyman for emphasis and importance.

There are two poems by Dr. Steiner that we repeat quite often: "To Wonder at Beauty" and "May the Events Which Seek Me." This last was startlingly appropriate for our service after the fire. For we had a service that Sunday evening with the lamb and the two candlesticks. What made everything so poignant was that the lamb had been saved. . He had evidently dived nose first into the fire and he now bears evidence of being a black sheep. But he was saved and we ignore the blackness and caress his nose as before.

One of the fine and heartening realizations that came out of the flames (and there are many) was how much the lamb and the chapel had meant to the school. The boy that brought the lab across the campus to safety was literally mobbed. Several alumni wrote: "If the lamb was saved, the heart of the school is saved."

10.

CHRISTMAS

High Mowing is rich in Christmas reverence and Christmas frolic. The chapel services through Advent lead up to the high event of the season--the Nativity.

"The Nativity" at High Mowing grew out of one held at the Edgewood School--the Christmas story told in music, pantomime and song. It was worked out by the five seniors of the first graduating class, who had come up with us from Edgewood. Its form changed and adapted itself to our big room with its heaven-sent balcony. Between the two windows we built a shed of old beams and boards so that it looked even like part of the room. This was curtained with skrim to hide the crèche until the angels came to open them. A Christmas tree with thirty-three red roses and the signs of the zodiac and candles balance the balcony. Above the crèche shines a star, a many pointed star from Italy. The curtain is closed and everyone--shepherds, angels, Mary and Joseph gather behind to sing "Prelude Thought to Christmas." Slowly the curtain opens to find Mary sitting on the steps listening to heavenly strains (from Palestrina) while the angels gather on the balcony, until her hearing becomes sight as Gabriel comes down to her. Then the vision (angels and Gabriel) vanishes heavenward to the "Gloria in Excelsis Deo" written for us by a student, who then took himself to Harvard to major in music.

Then comes the voyage to the inn in pantomime to an early English carol. Joseph and Mary cross to the inn and Joseph raps with his staff. The inn keeper stepping from behind the curtain is distressed for there is no room at the inn, then realizes as he meets Mary's quiet look that something must be done. Worried, bewildered, he finally thinks of the shed and leads Mary and Joseph to it. He closes them within the curtain and goes back with a worried shake of the head.

The music now changes to an old Greek folk song, "Shepherds On This Hill." The shepherds are apt to be many as they are our masculine singing group, led by a boy with a recorder. They straggle in, cold and weary and settle down to sleep. The angels, singing the same melody, descend and form a moving curtain in front of the crèche. They wake the shepherds to wonder, and joining the angels in song the shepherds move to the manger. Joseph receives their gifts and Mary shows the child--friendly, human. Then the shepherds move away to wait under the angel balcony.

The music changes to an early carol in a formal Byzantine mood as the kings come with their gift bearers, stately and magnificent in garb that came literally from the East. They cross the room, over and back and over again, a long stately voyage. They point to the star, find their way, and one by one present their gifts and then stand by the Christmas tree.

The Nativity closes with a full chorus of the "Gloria" and finally the "Sanctus." The picture now seems like a Renaissance painting. The crèche in the center, angels above and around, shepherds to the right, kings to the left. The entire picture grew from the space of the room, the balcony, the steps, from music we found and music written for us, from materials given by friends and relations that had been to the East or had searched in their attics: a Nativity that grew at High Mowing. Every year it has been the same, almost step-

by-step and note-by-note, and every year it is different because of the individuality of those who move through it.

We also have a "Little Nativity," as we call it. When we had a lower school they gave it to us. When the lower school closed, the high school found themselves without it and they demanded that the freshmen give it to us. So we still have it, now performed by the seventh and eighth grades. It is entirely different in mood, being the medieval shepherd play from Oberhausen. You are in a church with the men on one side and the women on the other (presumably). One of the guilds of the town is presenting the story. As in medieval fashion, it is a delightful mixture of comedy and reverence. There are three shepherds, Mary and Joseph, an invisible ass, lots of straw in the manger and a host of angels led by Gabriel. They all come on singing "Adeste Fidelis" and Gabriel makes a formal presentation. Then they move to their seats, leaving Mary and Gabriel.

After the annunciation comes the shepherd scene. They are lost and hungry and human as they tell us, sitting and eating before going to sleep. One is an old man who moves with difficulty but sees angels clearly. Between each scene the children walk singing a carol: "How Far Is It to Bethlehem," "Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming," "Gloria," "Silent Night." There is an appealing naivete to it all.

There is yet another Christmas festivity at High Mowing. We have the "Little Nativity" the Wednesday before we go home, in the late afternoon at sunset time. Then comes a carol supper. For a week the dining room has been candlelit and festive with greenery from our woods. At this supper we sing between bites, one table or another starting a carol. Fools appear, one, two, sometimes three and their antics are various. Finally the party begins in the big room. The yule log is brought in by the fools as we all sing: "Deck the Halls." Then I take a fool's hand and move into a circle. Each one takes hands until the long line winds in and in. Then I turn and unwind until I can mount the stairs to the balcony, up to the third floor, around a chair and down again. "Here We Come a Wassailing" echoes loud and soft, punctured with squeals and giggles. Back into the big room we wind again into a circle and out. This is apt to be mixed and muddled with incipient tragedy, but very popular.

After this the Shepherd Story from St. Luke is read in all the languages the Hill can offer. We have had as many as twelve. A faculty child reads the English so everyone will remember what the story is about. An alumnus has been coming back lately to read the story in the original Greek. Someone offers the Latin of the Vulgate--in the early days Dr. Thompson did it. The French and German are read by the students, and sometimes there is Spanish, Norwegian, Hungarian, Swedish, Czech. These other languages are apt to be faculty. Some who have gone on come back to read it. The origin of this is poignant. In 1942 as Christmas approached we watched the war misery across the ocean. There was an Englishman with us and we mentioned Dunkirk, that bitter time when England standing alone had its back to the channel, the time Churchill called "England's darkest hour"--the time when every boat, ship, anything that could float rushed to bring the English army home--the time when a blessed fog came down from above, cloaking and helping the exodus. Every year since, we have read the Shepherd Story from St. Luke at the Christmas party.

The next event in the party, the senior class does the "Partridge in a Pear Tree" in eurythmy, then come French and German carols. The fools have intermittent fun and throw candy down from the balcony for everyone to scramble for.

Each year I have given books to the school. They are waiting under the Christmas tree and as I call a fool to get them there is a scramble and a large flower of rose-petal faces surrounds my chair as I give them out. The climax, however, is the Christmas book given to me by the school. The students have been working for weeks. Each page is hand done and the book is bound each year with a different material. The year we could have a copper cover signified the end of the war. This custom started in 1942 and the pile had grown in height and variety as it lay on the chest at the end of the living room in the old house. Their burning is perhaps the greatest loss of the fire. There was real beauty, real poetry and tireless effort in those books, unique, alive and irreplaceable. A committee of students led the endeavors and it was entirely student work. I had always felt that those books were visible evidence of the heart of High Mowing, through work both academic and creative.

I would like to quote three poems that somehow have been saved from the lost books, to insure the recognition of the quality of what has been here.

(1) Silence

Looking into the world
I ask the question that everyone asks
The question that troubles the soul;
"Why, O Lord, am I here?"
Silence and the throbbing of life are all I hear.
"What, O Lord, am I to do here?"
Silence and the breathing of living things.
"Where, O Lord, in anger I ask am I to find you?"
Silence, soft silence, sensitive silence,
Sanctimonious silence.
My answer was in the silence
And it was life that answered me also.

(2) The Tarn

I saw you first when I had climbed a hill
Holding the secrets of the moor. You seemed
Part of all the sadness of the world,
Part of all that wistful hearts had dreamed.
Star points have nestled in your silver soul,
Sunlight has touched you passing by;
There is no whisper that you have not heard
Cold and inviolate, underneath the sky.

(3)

Now leave me alone with God
For I have seen and heard
What I would discuss
With Him.
Give me leave to go
Where only the wild cry
of deer
and partridge
break upon the
songs of bird and plant.
For I would hear only
these voices
that speak with the
tongue of God.

After the fire, on St. Valentine's Day, the students gave me a book. The cover was a box made from wood saved from my house. The inside pages, stressing the sun again and again, were many more than at Christmas, until as I turned them page by page, I realized that it was a New Year Book and almost a roll call book. And withal it had the quality of the Phoenix.

11.

THE SAGA OF EURYTHMY

The problem of launching Eurythmy at High Mowing was interesting. We had wanted to have it for years before we found someone with enough official credit to be allowed to teach it according to the rules from Dornach. Then Miriam Wallace came. She was alive to her busy fingertips with wisdom and experience, especially in Curative Eurythmy. What she did for several children was spectacular, especially in restoring speech and movement to one boy who had been accidentally shot in the face. Unfortunately, the word Eurythmy grew to have a curative connotation and the students decided that they were very normal and healthy. Forcing in the creative fields does not work, and so in spite of Mrs. Wallace's real contribution, both as an eurythmist and as an alive and perceptive person, we had not yet achieved our goal.

I then asked Dr. Winkler about Sabina Nordoff. He said because of her wide experience she could answer the girls' questions about ballet and Martha Graham, and he said that the boys would fall in love with her, which she could cope with. I asked her one sunny day here on the terrace. She trembled, then her eye lighted. She stood quietly for a while looking at the hills and then she accepted. Sabina had been brought up in Eurythmy--almost with mother's milk--but being of a seeking nature she had also studied ballet and modern dance. She had even been on Broadway in *Oklahoma*. When I found her she was married with two children. She had gone back to Eurythmy, not only with content but with conviction. She had decided to use her creative reach to build as Dr. Steiner had asked. Today she strides through our fields and hills, through our halls and rooms, touching and culling the young as she passes. She comes for several three or four week periods a year, and over three-quarters of the school choose Eurythmy. Of that group, if they have a free period of study, we are apt to find them in the Eurythmy Studio. Her classes are a fertile field for our deeper points of view. She also has a talent for being on the Hill in times of crisis. At the dramatic passing of Mr. Piening, she gave her classes a picture of the meaning of death, death as an opening door and a going on, a picture of reincarnation. Mr. Piening, dedicated to our out-of-doors, had been overworking and we were worried as he was no longer young. But he wanted to get this and that done, eagerly, insistently. Then one morning at roll call, in front of the whole school, his heart gave out--suddenly and quietly. It was, of course, a great shock to all, but especially to the young. Sabina shifted her entire program to meet their need.

Again, she was the one who first smelt smoke on the night of the fire. She fled through smoke-filled rooms to find me and the telephone. Having lost everything she had brought to the Hill, she yet rallied to the children in and out of class. Crises are a fine drawn test.

All these years have culminated for Sabina in two structures: a studio and a home. Before the fire the alumni had been financing two rooms: the library and the Eurythmy studio were both being slowly built by the school, man and boy. The shape of the building is an octagon with three sides of large windows--the library is below, the studio above. The roof to the studio, a pointed, eight-sided figure, was built on its own floor. The day we "raised the roof" was silent and enthralling. Block by block placed at the corners, it slowly went up, hitch here, hitch there, to find at the end that it fitted --fitted exactly. This was greeted

with a shout and cheers and a great sense of homegrown accomplishment. At the peak of the ceiling hangs a delicate glass colored lantern--a gift from Toimi.

The walls of the studio are painted by an alumnus, John Eaton. John came to us from the wilds of Canada, at least from Ottawa, but with a love of the wilds beyond. At ninth grade he could not read or write. After years of frustration, of silent sitting in classrooms, he took hold of the Language Training we offered and when he left could read somewhat and write short, poetic pictures. He never learned to spell but he could draw and paint--great, strong, realistic animals of his Northland. On the Hill he met abstract painting and tried it, but always the strength of his realism shone through. Since he left us, he has been painting and painting, exhibiting in Ottawa and New York, London and Paris, and what is more practical: selling. An expert eurythmist while with us, he had kept in close touch with Sabina. His murals in the Eurythmy room are a complete synthesis of the rhythm of Eurythmy and realism and power.

Sabina had been talking for years of building a home up here, and she even waited patiently for years, then after the fire Bob Pittman "sliced off" the second floor of the "henhouse" with its gabled roof, a part of the old farm building, put it on rollers, trundled it through the orchard, and it is now peeking through apple trees on its own foundation. Sabina calls it the "ark," has brought all her lares and penates up and keeps telling us how much she loves it. I feel as though we had finally caught a butterfly.

In this story of Eurythmy we cannot tell of all the performances we have done, but some should be mentioned. Eurythmy and drama are so easily intermingled. It was a May Day evening and we had many parents. *The Boy With a Cart* by Christopher Frye necessitated a journey across South England. We had built a juniper chicken wire hedge in front of the length of the pool. The weather threatened and glowered and finally at curtain time rained a fine Scotch mist. We could not move the pageant indoors, so we rifled the attics for quilt and blanket and invited the parents to sit in the rain. They did, almost all of them. One parent said: "Where but at High Mowing?" I was prompting with a flashlight, sitting huddled under a blanket with boots and cloak authoratively provided by Dr. Williams. For a few minutes people were restless, but then sat quiet, absorbed and concentrated, and not very wet for about an hour. One parent wanted to finance the taking of it to New York City but we really could not move the hedge.

Another adventure was *Noah's Ark* by Rumer Godden. This we took to Boston, and Rumer Godden came. It was exciting sitting beside her and watching her reaction to her own child. She had touched the finger of Eurythmy in England and so understood and thoroughly liked what she saw. Pegasus was a white spirit against a background of strength and many animals. Rumer Godden went up afterwards and spoke with the children. We did the *Trojan Women*, the choruses in Eurythmy, in the Gilbert Murray translation; we had a slim, dark, tragic Hebuka and a blind girl as Cassandra who seemed to move as though with truly inner sight. I don't think the audience realized she was blind. Much more could be said about Eurythmy. This much must be said. It feeds an underlying point of view, strengthens the will and pulls a group of egos into a feeling of togetherness, a feeling of daring to move with inner security.

12.

DRAMA THROUGH THE YEARS

Drama is an important as well as an exciting educational pursuit. It is almost indispensable to balanced growth. To be somebody beside yourself, completely, imaginatively and on your feet can be an experience of stretched wings. Leaps of growth can grow out of a play. We have watched it again and again. The object in a school is not primarily to make a "successful" play, not to pull the young actors beyond the level at which they can understand the character portrayed--what they speak and do they must understand on their own level. Hamlet will not mean to them what it does perhaps to the coach, and yet it can have a piercing reality if the actor is living what he sees and knows. It is all a deep imaginative building so that each speech, each gesture and also each pause has a meaning. There is a fresh vitality that comes when the picture is clear--a vitality that must not be over-rehearsed. It is not a question of technique that is essential, but of imaginative seeing and that can be dulled with too much repetition. Facing Koko with the Tit Willow song, I told him that the song was known by everybody in the audience and therefore it would be difficult for it to come alive. "But," I said, "there is the tree, there is the bird and there is the river. Sing it!" He stood with his back almost to the audience and brought tears to my eyes. I never asked him to rehearse it again except during big rehearsals, lest he spoil it. One year we had a Hamlet and an Ophelia in our big room that I have not seen bettered on Broadway. You did not ask whether Hamlet was mad or not, whether Ophelia was mad or not. They just were there carrying you beyond any critical evaluation.

I am, of course, offering you high points--for again and again it takes patient seeing to bring some of our actors alive. After all it is not an intellectual world for the young, the world of drama, it is a world heightened with imagination.

We used to have a play in the fall, a talent search affair amongst freshmen and sophomores. Lately it has become a Parents' Day which enlarges the picture. Then there is the Nativity Play. The Shakespeare Play given by the juniors after their academic block on the Bard comes in the winter term. For May Day something expansive is chosen to foster parental interest. The senior play comes at Commencement. That makes at least five plays a year for 30 odd years, and if you add it up you are faced with 150 plays and I am faced with what could become merely a list which my mind shies away from. A list, and yet if I named them each name would come alive for some of you. In the early years of the school Gilbert and Sullivan was a sure favorite and given almost every year at May Day, with its rollicking fun and its extensive cast and everybody singing.

I coached the plays for many years but had to give it up, with great regret. It is more strenuous than teaching because you are creating as you go--picking up those bits that the actor offers you, incorporating sometimes a new phrase that he gives you, sometimes shouting in exasperation. Toward the end of each play as things hopefully were pulling together, it seems that I gave them a thorough dressing down, waving arms and shouting voice. These episodes were greeted with smiles and I was told it was no worse than last year. They knew I was not really angry, and it did pull things together.

We gave *Patience* twice because we did not have a tenor, that rara avis. *The Pirates of Penzanze* came one year because of an exquisite bird like voice. These operettas were

interspersed with such plays as *The Ladv's Not for Burning.* Dick Sewell had the lead, only to have him come back later on the faculty and produce it himself. One year, four boys wanted to give *Sleep of Prisoners*; another year, *Wind in the Willows* was given out-of-doors beyond the kitchen. We kept the canary-colored cart for years, in fact, used it a second time .

One May Day we gave *Prunella*. We built a house out of cardboard, to the left of the pool, and took the windows out of the chapel (having decided it would not rain--it didn't). The roof was "thatch." The collecting of the grass was a busy occupation and it ended very thatchlike.

We gave the *Servant of Two Masters* as a senior play. Patrick Sullivan coached it to everyone's pleasure. There is a story connected with it. Douglas Schmidt showed signs of being interested in scenery design while with us. He did the sets for *The Gondoliers*. Now he has gone on (far on) and is doing design for Lincoln Center, Denmark, Washington and Tanglewood. He arrived with painted curtains as backdrops. He hung them on wires and all that was needed to change sets was a boy slowly pulling one curtain away as he pulled the other on with dignity and simplicity. I recommend it highly, that is, if you can paint that size curtain.

One year (1972) for May Day we gave *The Magic Flute*. It came about this way: The Pulidos had been quietly rehearsing some of our good voices in *The Magic Flute.* Finally the demand from the students brought on a full production. It seemed ambitious and we wondered, but drama and Eurythmy joined the song and it turned out to be one of the finest musical experiences we have ever had at High Mowing--surprising and delighting audience and ourselves.

And so drama has gone steadily on. We have had several coaches in the years, and the gym is used more and more as the audiences have grown. But not always, say I with nostalgia, for in the gym there is an intimate quality lost, but then we do have enough space.

13.

WORK PROGRAM, BOYS' DORM, AND THE GYM

The afternoon work program has always presented problems, especially in the long winter months. There are several reasons for this. The most obvious is the many hands and feet and temperaments to keep busy. But underneath this is the negative meaning which the word "work" has acquired. It has almost become synonymous with hard labor. People no longer seem to realize that having been given a physical body it must be worked to keep it healthy. If it does not work, we take tonics or go to a doctor or run a depression. If we could see ourselves as spiritual human beings and could realize that the greatest, most important and probably most difficult artistic creation of our lives is the sculpturing of our own body, then we would gladly "work." In our social set-up the laborer is below the white collar man, and needs to be organized and defended. In the Middle Ages there were organizations called guilds, and the work of the guilds was glorified into churches and cathedrals, on frescoes and altar paintings.

Today endless time is spent on labor saving devices--machines in the kitchen, in the cellar, on the farm, in factories--everywhere you turn. These machines (when they work) are amazing, but man's problem is not to lose his humanity in them. He must use them but must not let them use him.

Here at High Mowing we have tried in several ways to offer things to do-- things that build to the future: the saw mill, the garden and greenhouse, the ski tow and the swimming pool--even just tidying the grounds for the sake of the picture your school presents to the world.

Sports also have their objective to train in coordination and team work. If you play your best, it does not matter if you win or lose.

All of these are to help build the sculptured figure that is you. The process is perhaps easier watched in other people than in oneself--the change in walk, in carriage, in gesture, in the shape of the face, the sound of the laugh. There are many things that change. It is fascinating to watch growth!

Lately our afternoon program has included working on a very much enlarged vegetable garden to help feed the school. Our gardening is bio-dynamic. There has been no chemical on the land since 1929. There is a field beyond the boys' dormitory with rows and rows of vegetables--corn, carrots, cabbage, etc. In the field between the school and the greenhouse is a large pentagon with vegetables, herbs and flowers.

Many hands are busy in the fall harvesting for freezing and storing--many hands in the spring for planting in the greenhouse and transplanting out-of-doors. Beyond the practical use for food come the flowers and trees for beauty, a deep need of man.

We were thinking "farm" when the fire gave us other things to do, but even so we have 100 chickens, a few sheep and goats. We were, as a matter of fact, getting 100 eggs a day when school closed. Somehow we could not tell the hens that the children had gone and so we spent hours freezing eggs, eating eggs, selling eggs and giving them away. We see the

need for an outside market to sell the eggs, herbs and plants started in the greenhouse. Now that the fire necessities are behind us we hope to make this a growing concern.

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One great purpose of the work program is to meet the physical needs of the young men of the school, and for this reason the building programs have been a vital part of our education. The building and rebuilding of the Boys' Dorm, and the building of the Gym have been special highlights of the program.

The history of the Boys' Dormitory is long and checkered. At first it was just the Red House that in the days before the school had been the gardener's cottage. Now it is where Mrs. Karl lives plus the wing back to the present main door on the road. It was very small but all we had. The double-decker bunks in the bedrooms upstairs left enough room to turn around in, perhaps. There was, however, a large living room with a fireplace--the one, in fact, that is now in the faculty room by the roadway. Charm it had, shall we say, but it was too crowded. Mr. Hirons was in charge. (He also gave us our music for the first three years. He had a large mixed chorus which lent itself delightfully to Gilbert and Sullivan, and a small group of girls who sang beautifully a capella. He also chose our hymn books for chapel.) .

Although the first dormitory was homelike, it was obviously too small, so that as soon as we were allowed to build (in 1946) we started. We built along the lines of the present dormitory. It was still wartime, however, and the material we could get was only thus and so. The beams were too short, making the corridors so narrow that elbows interfered with the walls. The windows did not match, giving the building a rather surprised look. However, there was more room. In the basement we built the chemistry lab and the pottery. In this second building my son Robert and his wife reigned for several years and then Bob Pittman took charge.

The present dormitory (built between 1959 and 1963) is the third. The second inevitably turned rickety. By this time Bob Pittman knew from experience what we needed: wider corridors where two boys could pass, more living room space, more single rooms, more bathroom facilities, more desk space to study, and no space under the beds to collect dust and things. In this rebuilding, the chemistry laboratory took another journey to the basement of the wing, and Mr. Swanson spent long hours setting it up for lecture space and lab space and cupboard space. The kiln became a focal point for the main chimney of the new dormitory and for an enlarged "pottery" as Mrs. Karl called it. She was even then the presiding genius and staunchly the kiln held its own.

There was no hope of having a "gym" unless we built it ourselves, but how could we build a space high enough and wide enough? Then Bob Pittman came back from his years with the Marines and brought the idea of hangar construction. He drew the plans and we set to work--except for the cement foundation and the final floor, it is student and faculty work, taking about five years (1951-56). Most gyms stand out blatantly on the landscape--ours is quietly hidden by trees.

Laying the under-floor with diagonal boards seemed an endless job. Crawl and pound, crawl and pound, slowly the students moved over the floor, but with eyes at ground 1eve1--the further corner seemed miles away. The area is more than that of the main building,

but finally the floor was finished. The next job was to raise the walls. The crew built the side walls flat on the floor, then at lunch came a call for help and a group of volunteers raised the first side as the carpenter crew set it in place. About a week later the second side was raised! Quick time for only after school work. The taller sides, with their slight bend starting the arch, were set up in the same way, only each was in two sections. Then the building process slowed down. The arches for the roof were built flat on the f1oor--an impressive pile of them. A movable scaffolding was built reaching the height of the building. Each arch was lifted to a crew above and set in place, then another, and another, and another as the scaffolding was moved down the room. Thus we had our skeleton structure. This was in place when in 1954 the hurricane hit us, but proudly the structure held. Nothing was displaced.

The frame was as stately as a cathedral, an amazing feeling of space. The moving sun cast geometric figures on the floor. It had a startling beauty. All summer visiting parents and friends said that it must not be covered over. No practical suggestions for a New Hampshire winter were forthcoming, however, so sadly, little by little, we covered the roof. We did, however, leave a large window behind the balcony framing pine trees in memory of the picture quality we had had to hide. Even that window had to be wired, so far do the tossing activities of the young reach. The finished floor was professionally laid. The small rooms on the sides were made into private rooms for music practice--piano--drum--guitar--etc. Even with the distance and the trees we can often hear the steady boom boom of the drums.

As the school has grown the gym has been used not only for sports and gymnastics, but for Halloween parties, and for commencement when the weather has not cooperated, and more and more it is used for drama--May Day especially, when our visiting friends would overflow the big room. At this writing there is a "problem"--the athletes calling for a free gym, the Drama Department and its cohorts pleading for a theatre. So far however there is peace and cooperation. At least our vast building is very much alive!

14.

REMEMBER THE TIME WHEN?

The Time When: The four archangels came to live on my bed?

It was an old bed with four slender columns and a plain board for a tester, and the surprise happened one Easter Sunday at the end of Chapel Service. As I rose to close, a student's voice said: "Mrs. Emmet, please go into your room," as they moved to make a passage for me. As I entered my room, I found four angels--one on each of the bed posts--Michael, Gabriel, Raphael and Uriel. At Michaelmas I had given a chapel service on the four archangels of the seasons. Mrs. Scott, teaching English and with two of her family in the school, had asked a New England woodcarver to make the four angels. It was a delightfully well kept school secret and a pleasant surveying of the seasons. They were just right--dignified and quiet--those four guardian angels, and they made my bed safe, beautiful and unique.

The Time When: John Emmet, navigator of a B-17, was leaving for England?

On the phone from somewhere in the West, John was very definite about the fact that he was off and the date, but most cheerfully indefinite about where he was going to stop before the final take-off. For several nights we left the light on in the cupola of the barn and in the chapel, feeling it might be a recognizable configuration. One evening he phoned from Grenier field in Manchester, and his brother Bob went to get him, entirely sub rosa! In conspiratory secrecy we fed him, sitting on the kitchen stools, and cheered him, and finally before early daylight he had to go. Next morning a B-17 buzzed the school--low and round about and back again. All the school was gathered in the oval waving and cheering. The belly turret was actually spinning but we could see no one. And then it was off, and he was off, and they were off. As he was the only one of the crew fortunate enough to say good-bye to his family, his adventure became a bomber affaire.

The Time When: The split-rail fence appeared?

There was a grove of dead chestnut trees on our land. Two students decided that the trees were too stately to go up the chimney in smoke. They cut them down and split them into long rails to make a fence for our entrance. The grove was deep in the woods and we only knew of their industry as we watched rail by rail put in place. It was long, hard and determined work, and they cut and split until there were no more trees. The fence reached as far as the greenhouse on the right, and on the left it went as far as it could. To complete the line Mrs. Hertha Karl planted her grapes. Little by little through the years the garden bed has been planted along the fence, so successfully in fact that one of the fence makers coming back said: "But the planting hides the fence." It does not really, but it might be well to keep it trimmed in gratitude.

The Time When: John Karl tried to become an American citizen?

It was a most interesting case of entry. On all his vacations John had traveled north and south and west with an avid curiosity to see his new country. He got jobs on the way, here and there. For entry he needed a check on every hour he spent in this country. He did not know many of the people he had worked for--it was a long list. This impasse caused much hair pulling and despair for us and also for the immigration authorities. John could not even make his last appointment with them as he had a final examination at Harvard. Suddenly it all cleared up--he had become of age and enlisted in the Army. We all looked back over the unbelievable hours we had struggled. We thought there ought to be a song, "Red Tape, Red Tape," but of course they had had to check--it was wartime.

The Time When: The Halloween party was in the barn at the lower school?

The place was full of lights and shadows, of hay and strange costumes, of music and laughter. A costume was the passport to the party and so deciding to break the generation gap, I did my hair in two braids under a short brimmed cotton cap, wore dungarees, a loose shirt and came in with a slouch, avidly chewing gum. There was interest and mystification amongst the gathered group and it was some time before I was recognized. I decided, as the drama coach, it was time to put on my own show. Such fun! and I think perhaps I made a dent in the gap. The next week I was presented with a handmade doll dressed as I had been, carrying under its arm a small book labeled "History of Art." I lived with her many years--until the fire.

The Time When: One of our alumni came back from war?

When people think of war and armies they are apt to see it all khaki colored and regimented, but each experience is utterly unique. As in all things, it depends on the point of view. When Roy (he had sung "Koko" in the Mikado) came home and was stationed at Fort Devens nearby, he periodically used to arrive at High Mowing in a car we could hear as it turned in at the gate. He told us jauntily that he was at the front desk at the army base, and had had the unutterable joy of telling officer after officer as they came in just where to go.

The Time When: Out of the blue came a stroke of fate--polio!

It touched Rustan Bunting--a quiet, perceptive, and, we had come to feel, wise boy--one who watched and perhaps dreamed, but always spoke or moved to action when there was need. In the hospital he was quietly obedient and serenely accepting for one of his age. He was not with us long. His mother asked for cremation and we had a ceremony in the chapel. His mother came, and a clergyman, sitting beside me as I led the service. A wreath of red roses and music--prayers that belonged to the school, and one that a student asked for. Even with the family there, he seemed to belong to the school. The small square box of all that was material of him was left with us-- strangely and silently left with us. It stayed quietly in a corner of the chapel for some time as I tried to think of some worthy place where it could be put. Then one of our alumni said that he knew of a place here on the Hill that Rusty was very fond of, and could he take the box and bury it there alone. It seemed such a right thing to happen, to keep the depths that were in the boy secret still and to have him here on the Hill, a silent guardian of the needs and strivings of a place he loved. Somehow it seemed as though we had earned a guardian angel.

Meantime, the Health Department stepped in and we were quarantined, and no one went home. It was a question of waiting, so difficult and sad, for Rustan was much liked. Dr. Linder gave us a powder and every morning the school would solemnly take some of the powder as they filed out the door after assembly. There was no surety, of course, but that something was being done was excellent psychology. No one else caught it except Dr. Linder's daughter, Maria. Her mother came up and they lived in the infirmary, and Maria set herself to come through whole and did daily exercises and everything else she was told. The result is that she shows no sign of ever having had it and is now a Ph.D. working at M.I.T., and on our Board.

I find that when it comes to a real crisis the young are amazingly realistic and practical.

The Time When: The girls dorm got a new look?

A winter week-end in 1955, one group of students decided to go to the "Snow Ball," a yearly event in the village. Another group, far larger, decided not to, and instead they secretly planned to paint the walls of the girls' dormitory living room. There were secret preparations all day to secure paint, paint brushes and ladders. Mrs. Preuss promised refreshments in the infirmary.

As soon as the "Snow Ball" contingent had left (dressed in best bib and tucker), a great hustle and bustle started. Furniture was piled high, news papers were spread over the floor, ladders were dragged in over the pile of furniture, paint cans forced open and paint spilled--luckily it was a water base paint.

Excitement was high as they started to mix colors. A soft light rose color was wanted, but the first sample turned out to be a harsh defiant pink. With cries of disgust more white was added and a whole can-full of sandalwood. It still did not look right. Some said orange, but there was no orange. Despair! Give up? No! Carefully they scraped the last bit of white out of the can and one of the boys stirred the mixture again with a screwdriver, even dipping in his hand in order to reach the bottom, as by now the bucket was full.

Brushes and paint were distributed, and everybody started just anywhere and worked as high as he could reach. Meantime, quietly, an alumnus had taken it upon himself to fill the cracks with putty, and now protested eloquently as they began to paint over the still wet putty. Enthusiasm covered everything and everybody, especially as the paint began to dry lighter on the wall. "It doesn't look so bad after all."

For the upper reaches, the tallest ladder was put up against one of the high gable walls, safely supported by two sentinels because the floor was slippery. Others painted from stepladders or from a chair put on top of a table. From a precarious position high up with one foot on the ladder and the other on a rafter somebody said: "You know, I would never had had so much fun going to the Snow Ball. In fact, I think I've never had so much fun in my life." Someone else from the middle of the room looking about with a critical eye said: "Yes, they will like it. I wonder who will notice the change first?"

All of a sudden everyone was hungry. Turning out the light, they rushed over to the infirmary where a party was awaiting them--punch and tidbits, nuts and fruitcake, cookies and candies, and more punch. Never was anything so good.

Time flew, the clock struck midnight, and the first group returned from the dance with the news that one of the girls had been chosen first maid of honor to the Snow Queen. Music and applause greeted her as the crowd entered the big room. In blue jeans and paint spattered shirts, the others joined them and danced a bit. But all things come to an end.

The high tide of exultation gave way to great weariness. The girls climbed to the third floor. "What happened to the light?" someone asked half consciously. Then a cry through the whole dorm, followed by rushing footsteps and outbursts of astonishment. The surprise was complete, and the room really charming.

The Time When: The daughter of Booker T. Washington brought us two fine black students?

Nettie Douglas Washington was a beautiful girl. Indian blood gave her high cheek bones. I shall not forget the way she danced to the modern rhythms, making them beautiful and her own, and I realized how in borrowing a rhythm from another race we had debased it.

Larry Washington came as a freshman. I can remember him in cap and gown, ready to graduate, and I said to him: "Larry, what do you think of the color problem?" He looked at me solemnly, then with bright intelligence said: "I have lived at High Mowing so long that I don't think in those terms any more."

The Time When: I attended a School Principals meeting?

Once upon a time I went to a meeting of the School Principals of New Hampshire at Dartmouth, because Tyrone Guthrie was speaking at the college after lunch. The room I entered was apparently filled with tall, dark figures and not a face I knew. Smiling bravely I found a seat. The figures at my table were suddenly quietly polite. Someone at the head table rose to make a speech. He introduced it as is often done with a few light remarks. He had embarked on a story when he suddenly caught sight of me. All things stopped. I was the only woman in the room and his story was evidently one only told from man to man. Embarrassment, apologies, although I told him no to mind that I could take it. Also, I thought it would be interesting to hear one of these famous man-to-man stories. I didn't. What interested me mostly was that he had happily assumed that there was no woman principal in New Hampshire. Since they were public school people in toto, I think he was probably justified. And anyway I had only come to hear Tyrone Guthrie who was a good friend of my son Barton.

The Time When: Students impersonated members of the faculty?

One year the students developed enough courage to present an evening's entertainment devoted to the "taking-off" of different members of the faculty. We all loved it, of course, and it might be a very good thing to do again. I have forgotten most details of the fun, but one impersonation of the principal had me leaning on the piano, gazing at the world outside, each morning just before the verse. I guess I have always done that.

The Time When: Peter, the parakeet, brightened our life?

My room (before the fire) was at the end of all things--through the kitchen, the living room, through the music room, the chapel, through a short hall and then into the light of my room. This journey was taken every morning by a senior bringing my breakfast tray. After giving it to me, the next ceremony was to take the cover off Peter, my parakeet, who lived on a table over in the corner. This was a signal for a whirr of activity--a dive at the wooden tester on my bed--little feet going back and forth, back and forth with a quiet patter--then maybe a dash to the bathroom and back to the bed. The same long journey to my room was often taken by a student or a teacher with something on his or her mind. As the visitor sat comfortably in the pink chair beside my bed, Peter's activity might end with a dive onto the visitor's head. This was apt to mellow but not really disturb the situation. Peter was busy, inquisitive, and somewhat chattery vocal. For him this activity represented a need to be sure all things were friendly and as they should be. If you talked to Peter, he used to dip his head and stretch his wings, one and then the other. He has always reminded me of the birds in Giotto's picture of St. Francis preaching to the birds. I am sure Giotto was right. Peter was seemingly just an ordinary green bird with black markings, just a parakeet, no pedigree. He lived with me many years, and then one morning he did not wake up--we never knew the reason. We buried him under the roses near the chapel door. People thought I should get another bird, but to me that seemed out of the question.

The Time When: Politics came to us?

In 1964, during the New Hampshire Primary, Mr. Nelson Rockefeller came campaigning to Wilton. That was too near home to miss, so a group of seniors walked down the hill to greet him. At the end of his talk he said he would answer questions. The High Mowing group stepped forward. A boy's voice said: "Excuse me sir, are you pressed for time." The chairman said loudly: "He certainly is." The boy's voice said: "Excuse me, but I was addressing the governor." Silence--then the boy's voice continued: "There are many people up on the Hill who would be interested in what you have to say. Won't you come up." And Mr. Rockefeller said: "We will see what we can do. Wait for me by the door."

Suddenly reality struck the group and they realized that the school must be notified. One of them called Mrs. Thomas: "He's coming, he's coming, get everybody together." "Who's coming?" "Mr. Rockefeller." "Are you serious?" "Yes, yes, yes." When Mr. Rockefeller met the students at the door, they said they had walked down to Wilton. So he told them to get into the press bus, and up they came. Meantime, it was afternoon on the Hill and everyone was scattered. Frantically calling and shouting and rushing around we gathered those we could, a respectable group, waiting in the big room. Suddenly he was there!

I met him at the front door and ushered him into the big room. There was by now no introduction needed, but I spoke a few "well chosen words." There was a pause as he surveyed the group--hardly a vote to influence. Then he met the situation with facility and charm, even picking out one of the children on the front row to ask a question of her--an amazing exhibition of *savoir faire*! Meantime, in the background, his entourage was growling and furious, he was missing a definite meeting with some voters, factory men. They looked around the big room (they had not really had time to see anything else) and asked me what this place was anyway. Thinking of what his grandfather had said of my father, my sense of humor came to the fore and I answered simply: "A school in a barn." I do not think it helped. A senior had rushed to her room and brought down one of her High Mowing pots--somehow she knew of his interest in ceramics. As he went out the door, she gave it to him. As suddenly as they had come, they were all gone.

We took a long breath and sat down. We hoped that the timetable was not too upset and that it would not seriously affect Mr. Rockefeller's political career. .

The Time When: The "whirligig" disappeared?

One morning we missed the whirligig under the maple trees--it had vanished! I decided it was a lark and said nothing, and the faculty also said nothing. So successfully frustrating! After a few days two strong and energetic young men told us that they had taken it down into the woods as a lark. The whirligig had been there longer than the school. My mother had bought it from New York World's Fair and sent it up for her grandchildren. Now time and tide had taken its toll--apparently it resented being carted off to the wood and had somewhat melted under the treatment. The two strong and energetic young men dutifully set to work and rebuilt it for us. "And the moral of that is… said the Duchess. .

15.

JANUARY 18, 1970

Out of the darkness of deep sleep came the word "Fire"--the school is on fire! I turned on my light to find Sabina standing by my bed, a breathless eurythmic figure with smoke streaming eyes. I telephoned the fire department and Bob Pittman. Going to the chapel door, I opened it to find a solid blinding bank of white smoke. Frantically putting on coats and boots we went out to the freezing ice and snowbound terrace. We could see flames at the end of the three arches, flickering feelers of flame, but smoke everywhere--white, brown and even black smoke pouring out of the chimney of my small library. Smoke was in command before we woke, and made all efforts to enter the buildings impossible. There was a cigarette dropped in an overstuffed chair in the student smoking room. The students poured water and water until they were sure it was out and then went to bed. This was at ten p.m. So the smoke had had three quiet hours to find its way before Sabina woke. Later the fire chief said, if a cigarette gets into upholstered furniture throw the chair out the window. But we did not know then.

Sabina woke at 1 a.m. to the smell of smoke and a glint of fire out her window which looked down the length of the terrace. Rushing downstairs she was met everywhere with blinding smoke and so turned through the chapel to my room. The girls were alerted and went to the boys' dormitory where roll call was taken. Everyone was safe so we were free to watch the fire. The Wilton fire department came very soon, and with the first burst of water it seemed that the fire could be contained in the three arches. I went back to my house as I was clad only in nightgown (held off the snow by a brown leather belt I have been fond of ever since), wrapper, a coat, a quilt, and by now soggy bedroom slippers. Then I heard boys' voices crying water! water! for many of the boys were out helping with the hose. The water had given out! The road up the hill was icy and a fire truck was stuck, blocking the road at the foot of the hill, blocking it for four more fire engines. We never had any more water.

Flames burst from the windows of the faculty house and I watched the Christmas books go, and then on to my library. The whole house was a glorious bonfire. We realized it probably all must go. One of the boys was standing under the big maple tree taking pictures and pictures so that we have a complete record of the fire. Several of the other boys carried Pan over to Mrs. Karl's house where he stood in the window until the spring when he went back to his old well stone. Old wood and a tarred roof, and a strong west wind to toss the flames--nothing was left but three lonely chimneys in an hour and a half to two hours. How could one measure time. Some boys came into my house and saved the school records in my office. The Chief of Police came to ask me to go across campus. Trailing a comforter and with soaking feet I went to Frank Waterman's house and sat amongst a quiet group of girls warming my feet at the fireplace. Soon the electricity gave out and we had neither light, heat nor water. One of the boys melted snow to make coffee.

The room was quiet soft movement and soft voices in firelight and candlelight--waiting, waiting. Suddenly one of the boys burst in carrying the lamb from the chapel, still hot from the fire, and very much a black sheep as he must have taken a nose dive into the fire. The boy was instantly mobbed with cries of the lamb, the lamb. He was put on the table, still too hot to touch, but still with us. The reaction was amazing, surprising and heartening. Then Bennett Frye stood beside me and asked me where my Greek coins were.

I told him in two wooden boxes on top of the high bureau next to my bathroom. After a while, I have no idea how long, a young fireman stood beside me saying: "I have two boxes here for you." I thanked him and told him they were very valuable and tucked them under my arm--cuddled them, in fact. It seems that Bennett had had a hard time persuading the firemen to let him go into the house. In fact, the firemen went in and threw out the drawers, all four of them filled with scraps and bits and lovely old world things that go with an old "bureau." Finally they reached the top and found the two old Dutch inlaid boxes that held the coins.

By this time the other fire engines had arrived, but too late. However, one could see outside the window the flash out and on of their lights, blinking--blinking--blinking. Outside there was activity. Although there was a great brick fire wall between the three arches and the big house--sparks were hitting the roof. Bob Pittman asked if he could go through the three arches with a bulldozer and knock down the dangerous structure. The firemen finally gave him permission, and covered with an asbestos something or other, he plowed his way back and forth, thereby averting any danger to the big building. About four a.m. the Peaslees sent over some coffee from the kitchen made from snow water. I sent for the Chief of the Fire Department, who was also Chairman of the Board of Selectmen, to ask him what he wanted us to do--could the girls go back, etc. He said, yes, but the fire department would be around most of the day. So we asked them to breakfast and lunch. I asked him if my house had gone and he said, yes. Then I knew that I owned nothing in the world but my nightgown, belt, wrapper, coat, a quilt; but the realization, of course, came much later and little by little as events checked and rechecked.

With daylight came a return to reality. There was nothing left but the gaunt helpless chimneys amid a welter of icebound, snow-covered beams, many of them still steaming. And this we had to look at until the spring broke the frost and we could clear to build. I found a wooden plaque at Hayward's saying, "God bless this mess." This I stuck in the forefront. With daylight came the need to go on--my family to let know. The only telephone was a pay phone in the boys' dorm and I had no pennies. It was the first practical check but the central was full of cooperation. Bobby came in four hours-Barton in the afternoon, bringing a rocking chair and a rug, saying, "You must have something from home." (They are still in my living room.) Johnny and Joan came the next day, with practical gifts. It had been their home since the 1930s.

Five faculty members had lost everything as this was their home. They had to be tucked into a rather full school. I was put into the room at the end of the "Pit" extension as it was called--a light and comfortable room with a large window overlooking the ruins. People began to bring me things: clothes from top to toe, toothbrush and toothpaste from an alumna, a brown sweater dress from Mrs. Frye that I am still wearing, plus the brown leather belt that guided me through the fire. But of the school, no one was hurt, nothing was harmed--we lost only one schoolroom. So obviously we carried on! How does one evaluate--what does one do? What was gone was history and beauty, but only its material evidences.

We held chapel that night, Sunday, in the big room with the lamb and the two old iron candlesticks saved from the fire, and flowers. I can remember writing words at the office desk and asking Sabina, sheet by sheet, if it was all right. Since she had tears in her eyes, I decided that perhaps it might do. The room was very full. We opened with the Vesper Hymn. Then the following prayer:

May the events which seek me come unto me
May I receive them with a quiet mind
Through the Father's ground of peace on which we walk.

May the people who seek me come unto me
May I receive them with an understanding heart
Through Christ's stream of love in which we live.

May the spirits who seek me come unto me
May I receive them with a clear soul
Through the spirit's light by which we see.

We sang the Lord's Prayer and Thomson's Alleluia. Then I spoke:

Fire--what does it mean?--one of the four elements--strong--active. Heraclitus said it was the basic element--motion--everything flows--*Panta Rei* in Greek. It is also said that fire cleanses.

Somehow this school always rises to an emergency as you have today--this big night and day--in so many ways. Chapel tonight, to bear witness to the fact that we carry on as usual or better than usual.

I have been wondering why a fire on the Hill after 28 years. I have been wondering why all parts of this school that go back into history have gone up in smoke, but that the places that house the young of today were not threatened (or almost not). I do not believe that any event (even one so apparently disastrous) cannot be made to bear good fruit. What must we build from this event of today? What must we learn, all of us? My entire life or any material evidence of it has gone up in smoke. Could the eighty years be the cause of so much smoke?

I have often said that even at my age I look forward to the future and that it is your doing, you people who have made it possible. Now I will have to prove it somewhat bitterly, I must confess, for we are going on, building on, thinking on. It is a great challenge. Forty years these buildings have stood in my care, housing so much that came from rich experience. What can we do now? What can we build to balance that richness? It is too soon to tell, but not too soon to think of it. What can you give the school as rich as what you have lost today, and I am not speaking of material things--extraordinary as that picture is. It is the significance of those things. What can we substitute <u>now</u> for what is not here materially--can we keep its significance--the culling of a long life's experience? Let us try.

We rose and closed with 55.
Then it seemed time to sleep.

16.

EPILOGUE

After the fire the building process was slow and arduous. The rubble was removed, the ground was leveled, the new buildings one by one were built: first my new house, then the faculty house, the infirmary wing, the connecting walkways, the chapel, and finally the new lawns and gardens were brought to life. While I continued teaching History through Art, leading Chapel services, directing the Nativity, etc., the administration of the school was gradually turned over to the faculty. Today they carry on in the true tradition of High Mowing, and I wish them well.

And so High Mowing goes on building into the future, and I watch it with the feeling that all these thirty odd years of struggle, of careful, steady, hopeful planning have been well worth it.

My love to the alumni(ae) for whom I have written this book, and my love to the faculty and students of the present and the future.