# A GIFT FROM GRANDMOTHER

MARGARET DAVIS WINSLOW

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For My Grandchildren

Edward, Gil, Jimmy,
Frank, David, Winslow,
Bill, Britt, and Bob

Edward Cyrus Winslow, III
Gilbert Lawrie Newbold, Jr.
James Weeks Winslow
Franklin Davis Newbold
David McNeill Melvin
Winslow Britt Melvin
William Fountain Winslow
Britt McNeill Melvin
Robert White Winslow

# *Beginnings*

We were Quakers, devoted to the principles of the Society of Friends, and dedicated to the cause of education for the young Quakers of North Carolina. It had been so from Colonial times. Some of our forefathers had come from Penn's Colony, Pennsylvania, and settled on Deep River in the southwestern part of Guilford County. Some had come from Nantucket Island to Centre in southeastern Guilford while still others came in from the most eastern part of the state and made their homes along the Uwharrie River in Randolph County. They were farmers and millers, tanners and shoemakers, merchants and inn-keepers, printers and potters, with now and then a lawyer, and doctor and legislator thrown in. But it appears that they all had one common concern: better educational facilities.

In 1837 the Quakers, officially known as the North Carolina Yearly Meeting of Friends, established in a beautiful rural setting six miles west of Greensboro their co-educational New Garden Boarding School. This presented to all interested persons the opportunity both to help and to be helped—contributions and counsel were needed and a good enrollment was to be desired. From the beginning to the present day our family contributed its part in funds, in teachers and in pupils. On that opening day in August, 1837, twenty-five girls and twenty-five boys were enrolled and

according to her own statement my grandmother Anna Henley Davis was the first girl to register. From that time on we seem to have been somehow inseparably linked with the school.

For many years Grandfather Nereus Mendenhall was superintendent and teacher in the boarding school and in 1888 when the boarding school became Guilford College four of the five attractive daughters of Nereus and Oriana Mendenhall became closely connected with the college. Mary, the oldest daughter, was the wife of the first president, Lewis Lyndon Hobbs; Laura was the wife of the Professor of Greek and German, James Franklin Davis; Gertrude was teacher of natural science; and the youngest, Genevieve, was a pupil, a member of the second graduating class.

Most of the teachers in the newly organized college had been pupils and later teachers in the boarding school. Certainly they were all Quakers, and devoted to their work with a zeal and fervor not easily understood today. It was as a sacred trust to them to build and maintain a college of the highest intellectual and moral standards and to hold before the pupils those lofty ideals. They taught both by precept and example and held no brief for half-way measures, carelessness or deceit.

It was into this small college community that I arrived in 1890, the daughter of J. Franklin and Laura Mendenhall Davis. The President and Mrs. L. L. Hobbs were my Uncle Lyndon and Aunt Mary. The teacher of natural science was my Aunt Gertrude.

Papa, Mama and their small son Henry lived in one of the cottages built for teachers at the edge of the campus, and it was there that I was born. But we did not live long on the campus. Soon Papa bought the Hogue place on the Station Road and we moved into our own home. There Baby Sister Anna was born and there our parents spent the remaining years of their lives.

Mama was tall and slender and very beautiful. She was well-educated and artistic, having all the accomplishments of the gentle ladies of her day except musical training. Perhaps it was because they were Quakers, but for some reason most of our forebears lacked the musical training that they might have had.

Mama was a loving mother and an ideal wife for the college professor but she was delicate and frail. Soon after Anna was born the whole family had measles and Mama was never well after that. Our doctor, Dolph Roberson, said the measles settled on her lungs, and that she did not have tuberculosis, or consumption, as it was called at that time, but he prescribed for her the customary T.B. treatment. She took quantities and quantities of emulsion of cod liver oil and of malted milk.

A few memories of her have stayed in my mind: As she sat by the window in our sitting room and talked to Henry and me about the birds outside; the winter she spent in Florida near the end of her life; the beautiful doll clothes she made for us there; the boxes of oranges she sent us and the letters addressed to us individually which she wrote from Archer, Florida.

I remember, too, the morning when a kind neighbor, Mary White, helped us dress, then told us that our Mama had died. Later, before the funeral, we were taken into the room where she lay. Of course we did not realize the meaning of it all but I was awed at the beauty of everything; her face, her white satin dress and shoes; the flowers, especially the violets that I know now Papa had placed there with his own hands.

Papa and Mama's four sisters were crushed with grief, but we children were very young and were fortunate in that three of our aunts lived near and took us into their hearts and tender care. Mama's youngest sister, our Aunt Genevieve, lately graduated from the college, came to live with us. In addition we received special care and affection from Aunt Mary who lived at the college and had children of her own, and from Aunt Gertrude who was then teaching in the newly established North Carolina Normal and Industrial College in Greensboro.

Aunt Genie was strict, and intended for us to be brought up correctly. She was also good and kind and we dearly loved her in spite of frequent spankings and being made to "take thy seat" for small offenses. We were brought up by the clock, and just as the ringing of the big bell at the college regulated Papa's hours

of work so it regulated our activities. At ten o'clock in the morning we had an apple or some refreshment and from two to four in the afternoon we took our naps. When we heard the bell ring at 12:15 we knew that soon we could see Papa coming over the hill to dinner and then we would run with great glee to meet him. His pleasure at the meeting always seemed as great as ours.

Aunt Genie sewed for us with meticulous stitches and although style was entirely outside the realm of our thoughts or knowledge yet our clothes were pretty and generally not so plain as some Quakers wore. Usually Anna and I were dressed alike, sometimes having dresses of contrasting colors. Aunt Gertrude took especial interest in our clothes, sometimes ordering from Bests' Lilliputian Bazaar in New York and at other times sending nice materials from her own supply for our dresses. For our Sunday, or First Day, dresses in winter we had a fine tweedy wool with deep cuffs and shoulder capes of blue velvet decorated with small brass buttons. The skirts were long, just to the tops of our high buttoned shoes, barely exposing our black ribbed wool stockings. We wore our hair short, cut by the same barber in Greensboro who cut Papa's hair and in about the same style. When Henry was about ten years old and Anna and I still younger, we were dressed up and taken to Alderman for our photographs: a sweet serious-faced older brother and two tow-headed little girls.

Although she had graduated from the college some years earlier, Aunt Genie kept in touch with life at the college, and went twice a week to a class in china painting which was conducted at the college by Lillian J. Hill. We were left with our faithful colored Josie with the promise that some day we should have some pieces of her hand-painted china.

She had good reason to be painting china and to be interested in the college activities for she had fallen in love with one of her classmates who had later come back to the college as a teacher. One night, before we jumped into bed, we were allowed to look from the top of the stairs at a crowd of people gathering in the hall below for a party. Among them was Augustine Blair, and

soon after that we learned that he and Aunt Genie planned to be married. Papa, too, had decided to marry again, having chosen his bride likewise from the college faculty. Our future stepmother was a Mendenhall also, Mary Eliza, the daughter of Elihu and Anne Hill Mendenhall, a cousin of Mama's who had taught for many years at the Boarding School and then the College. She did not have a college degree when she began teaching at New Garden, but when the school became a college, conferring degrees on its graduates, she, in addition to her teaching, studied the necessary courses and gained her degree along with some of her pupils.

Therefore after Aunt Genie had been with us a little more than two years there was a general change for all of us and we were to experience another period of readjustment.

# *Weddings*

On June 3, 1897, Papa was married for the second time in Deep River meeting and with the same procedure as the first.

Marriage among Friends at that time was a serious matter, not only to the two contracting parties, but also to the whole membership. First, the monthly meeting must be informed of the intention of marriage. It, in turn appointed a committee to report at the next monthly meeting if the union was or was not, in their opinion, a suitable one. If the committee reported favorably, a special meeting was set for the ceremony at a time suitable to the two people most concerned and a committee was appointed to attend the meeting and report back to the monthly meeting. This was not any gay affair with music and flowers and display of formal clothes but rather a session of silence and prayer, with the couple and their attendants sitting on the facing bench. After a due season of worship the couple arose, took each other by the hand and spoke to one another their simple vows: "In the presence of the Lord and before these witnesses." After another season of silence with perhaps a prayer or two by any one who felt led to pray, the heads of the meeting quietly shook hands and the meeting was adjourned. The wedding certificate was read aloud and signed by many of those present. The committee appointed earlier to attend made its report at the following monthly meeting, and

the marriage was recorded in the minutes for permanent history.

June third was a beautiful day. We had to take a seven mile ride in the carriage to be at the Deep River Meeting House before eleven o'clock. I do not remember which of our horses we drove, for Papa had the best buggy and horse for his bride. Nor do I remember with whom I sat during the ceremony. It must have been beside one of my aunts, but I know I was near the facing bench where Papa sat and I distinctly remember receiving an affectionate pat on the top of my tow head from some gentleman near me.

We came back home to Guilford College after the ceremony while Papa went with his bride to her father's home some four miles on beyond the meeting house. There her parents, Elihu and Abigail Mendenhall, served a dinner to all of the wedding guests. Seated about the house and on the spacious lawn, each guest was given an individual tray made from a new white poplar board which Elihu had had sawed for the occasion. One of these boards still in my possession has these lines written by a guest:

"From this I eat my cake and bread
The day that Mary E. is wed."

Because Mary E. had been such a dear cousin and friend, we of the younger generation had always called her Auntie. Now that she was coming to be our mother it was a matter of some importance to us as to how we should address her and Papa had told us that he would find out from her what her wish was in this matter. When they drove into the yard at home a few days after the wedding we all ran to meet them and Papa told us she wanted us to call her Mother, and Mother it was from then on. Mama and Mother.

Several weeks later our Aunt Genevieve was married to Augustine Blair. He had been teaching at Guilford but at the time of their marriage he was working in Raleigh with the State Agricultural Experiment Station.

Theirs was an afternoon wedding and fittingly more elaborate

than Papa's had been, the ceremony being held in the college auditorium instead of the small New Garden Meeting House. After the wedding Aunt Mary Hobbs had a reception and supper for the guests at her house. It seemed to me to be a big crowd and at supper I found myself seated at a small table with my cousin Robbie Nicholson from Greensboro whom I barely knew. I think I was distressed at being separated from my brother Henry and from my Hobbs cousins who were my closest friends but a little proud, too, to be seated at a special table with a special guest from Greensboro. We must have been the smallest guests for we received much notice but with the arrival of the food my embarrassment faded. I lost some of my self-consciousness in satisfying my hunger and my table companion no longer seemed so important. Little did I know or care at that time that in a few years Robbie would come to live in our community and would be one of my playmates, and that many more years later he would express his hope that some day I would be his bride.

I am sure that I was nicely and correctly dressed for these occasions but I have not the vaguest memory of what I wore. Doubtless it was one of the last of the things Aunt Genie did for us to see that we had suitable clothes for our Papa's and for her wedding, but the fact that my dress left no impression on my mind is a testimony that attire and appearance were not made a matter of importance in our thought. We were taught that "Pretty is as pretty does" and to be well behaved was better than to be well dressed.

# *Mother*

Life under Mother's direction was much as it had been with Aunt Genie. Our house was remodeled and enlarged. We enjoyed climbing on the sills, playing in the building sand and hauling bricks in our little express wagon. It was then that I learned that a brick weighed five pounds. One of the men told me if I put twenty bricks on my wagon I would be pulling one hundred pounds—what a load for a little girl!

Mother was wise and good. Having lost her own mother when she was a little girl and having been brought up by a stepmother herself she had a sympathetic understanding of our needs.

Anna was the youngest of us, being only five when Mother came to us, and Papa always referred to her as "Our Baby." She was affectionate, playful and witty and was a general favorite. She was a source of much joy to Mother except for the fact that she was not very robust. She had to be coaxed to eat while Henry and I needed no encouragement to take our mush and milk. Sometimes we were even reprimanded for a too-vigorous scraping of our bowls. Our family was afraid that Anna had a tendency to T.B. and in order to keep her out-of-doors more Papa bought for her an Indian riding pony which she named Flink. For several years she enjoyed her horseback riding and became a good rider.

Henry and I were shy and more reserved than Anna, and I think

it was Mother's sympathy for us that kept her from putting us forward. She too was shy and was never in the limelight unless she felt it her duty to express herself for some cause. Then nothing could restrain her. In 1888 she was granted a year's leave of absence from the college in order that she might travel in Europe. In England she visited prominent Friends and solicited funds for the newly established Guilford College. This was indeed no easy thing for her to do, but was typical of the devotion of the faculty members to their work.

Both Mother and Papa believed in, and practiced industry. From our earliest years we had our duties, suited to our ages and abilities. Papa reminded us that "Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do." So we were given our parts in the operation of the home and for the most part we performed them cheerfully and well. I think that was because Papa and Mother performed their duties in a like manner. We had a colored cook and a white friend who came in once or twice a year to sew but Mother saw to it that I learned to cook and sew, too, for she said even if I never came to the place where I had to do the actual work, I should be able to direct it done correctly.

Like most of the elder Friends that I knew Mother was a perfectionist—nothing but the best would do. She taught me to sew, first basting, then sewing with fine stitches and I must learn to sew well by hand before I could use the sewing machine. When I made gathers I must take up two threads on my needle and skip four. I learned to enjoy drawing the threads in fine linen and making hemstitched handkerchiefs for gifts, but what a hard time I had making buttonholes that would pass! Many a "pig eye" I made before I made a decent buttonhole—and sometimes the material almost lost its shape from trial and "take out and do it over." When we cleaned our rooms we were not allowed to throw things back in the closet nor under the bed. Mother would say, "A place for everything and everything in its place" and if we were inclined to skip over some things she would have us be

thorough, for "God sees all the unseen things" and we must make our work suitable for God's sight. But she was patient and never made us wish that God did not see so well.

Besides being industrious Mother and Papa were thrifty. Waste and carelessness were not only bad economy but in view of the universal need they were also wrong. Nothing was thrown away. Scraps of cloth were saved to be cut into quilt pieces or into strips for "carpet rags." Mother would cut the strips about an inch or more in width and I would tack the ends together and wind the long strips into balls. When we had enough of these balls, Mother took them to a woman who wove them on a hand loom into rugs or into lengths that could be sewn together to make very pretty carpets. Mother, realizing that this would soon be a lost art, took me one day to see the woman at the loom, weaving the strips into yard-wide lengths of carpet.

She also collected pieces of silk and had some elegant silk portieres woven for the double doors between the sitting room and parlor. These were not of the hit and miss pattern like the rugs, but beautifully arranged as to color and were more exhibition pieces than useful, for only rarely did she have occasion to use them. In fact, she never used the carpets which she had woven, but kept them for us when we would have our own homes, because we had tacked the rags and wound the balls. It was more a means of keeping us busy and teaching us lessons than the need for carpet that caused her to do this.

The same principles of thrift applied in our living. No food must be left in the mixing bowls, and no peeling should be thicker than the mere skin which was to be removed. The Clean Plate Clubs of the present day school lunchrooms had not been thought of then but we practiced those principles in our home, and how we would have enjoyed having the rubber plate scraper which the modern automatic dish washers have brought into use.

Often we heard the maxim:

Waste not, want not.
For willful waste makes woeful want
And I may live to say
I wish I had the crust
That once I threw away.

When we were about to have a quarrel or speak harshly to one another, Mother would call a halt and say:

Boys flying kites haul in their white-winged birds
But you can't do that with flying words,
A word unspoken may sometimes fall back dead
But God himself can't kill them when they're said.

Although she looked well to her household, Mother was in no way circumscribed by it. There was always committee work to be done for the Meeting. She was a member of the Advisory Board and The Girls Aid Committee for the college. And in the Sunday School she organized the Philathea Bible Class and was the teacher up until her last illness. For the girls of the class she began a kind of travelling library by subscribing to several of the best magazines and making them available in turn to the members. She also held offices in the State and National Woman's Christian Temperance Union which was a very active organization at that time. One of the projects of the W.C.T.U. was their work with the children in the cause of temperance. They held meetings for the children, encouraged them to sign the temperance pledge and to wear the small white ribbon bow which was the emblem of the organization. They also promoted the Demarest contests in which the young people memorized and declaimed temperance pieces for a silver medal. Then the silver medal winners contested for a gold medal. Anna and I took part in these contests, Anna winning the silver and gold medals.

I think one of the things that Mother enjoyed most was her participation in the Literary Club, composed of faculty members and others connected with the college. It was some time before

Papa could be persuaded to join the club, thinking it was more social than intellectual, but when they were studying the great Greek dramas he did become interested and decided it was a worth while pastime.

Like other Friends, Mother did not have any musical training, though she was very fond of music, especially singing. One of the greatest pleasures of her last years was a phonograph which reproduced the music she liked so much to hear.

While she was a student at Westtown School her love of music caused her to receive a demerit. It was a rule of the school that the teachers recognize the ability of the outstanding pupils by appointing them as "room keepers" for the classroom and Mother was a room keeper. During some particularly fine winter weather while sleighing with friends she spontaneously started singing,

Dashing through the snow
In a one-horse open sleigh,
O'er the snow we go
Singing all the way.

When she returned to the dormitory she was called in to account for such unseemly exuberance and as a punishment was deprived of her office of room keeper for her beloved teacher.

One of her prized wedding presents was a beautiful yellow plush photograph album whose curved front cover contained a small Swiss music box, which played two tunes. It was given to her by her devoted friend, Roxie Dixon White, handed to her all set to play at a session of Yearly Meeting. Luckily Mother waited to open the package until she was at home. What consternation she would have suffered had she opened the clasp and the sweet notes of "Way Down Upon the Swanee River" had come forth right in the middle of the serious deliberations of the Quakers.

# *Papa*

Papa was born July 4, 1850, and grew up in the Deep River community which was, and still is, a Quaker stronghold. As a young man of seventeen he attended New Garden Boarding School for one year then went to Westtown Boarding School in Pennsylvania. From there he went to Haverford College, graduating in 1875 as valedictorian of his class. Between the time of his graduation and his going to Guilford College as teacher, he studied at Johns Hopkins University and at the universities of Leipzig and Strasburg in Germany and he taught at Haverford, New Garden and in the public schools of North Carolina. Among his pupils at Mount Airy, North Carolina, were children of the Bunkers, the famous Siamese twins.

While a student at Westtown he decided that he wanted to enter the field of education and to make teaching his life's work. I suppose that to every man earning his living, the trade, profession or business by which he attains this end is foremost in his thoughts. But to Papa and indeed to the entire faculty, "The College" was much more than this. It was a cause to which they were wholly dedicated. The salary was necessarily small, but they were not working for the money that would be paid them. They were working for the education of the young people of the state through an agency of their church.

Papa came to the college in 1888 as Professor of Greek and German and in addition to the regular subjects each teacher conducted once a week a class in Scripture. Much of the Greek and German was elementary, not requiring nor giving opportunity for further study on the teacher's part. But the advanced course in Greek was a study of the New Testament and that, along with his class in Scripture, did open a welcome field for study and research. Not being satisfied with platitudes or the mere lesson in the text, Papa undertook an intensive and thorough study of the Bible, both from a historical and a critical standpoint. He was never content to stop learning and always felt there was more to reward anyone who would put forth the effort to find the truth. Through his own personal study and from all available works of the best authorities, he satisfied his desire to go beyond the surface and to learn the deeper truths. Later he was instrumental in beginning a department at the college in Biblical Literature.

We children were not unaware of his interest in, and intensive study of the Bible. We knew the names of the books he read, if nothing of their content. More than once on being asked: "Margaret, where is thy Father?", the reply was the same: "He is at home reading Israel." (The History of Israel.)

Mornings when we had all assembled for breakfast he first read from the Bible, choosing passages from the parts of the Bible which he happened to be studying at the time. He made the Old Testament come to life and there was a sympathetic twinkle in his eyes as he read to our amusement of the conquest of Canaan and the war with the Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites. He also read to us from the Psalms, but the two verses which he especially quoted are these:

> A soft answer turneth away wrath
> But grievous words stir up anger—Prov. 15:1

and

> Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye buy and eat; Yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price—Is. 55:1

Next to the College and Meeting Papa was interested in farming. By 1900 he owned the farm where he grew up, and as they were available he added more acres to the place at Guilford. There were then no county farm agents as at present, but late in the summer the farmers of the counties held their annual Farmers Institutes, discussing advanced or successful methods in all kinds of farm operations. Papa was an enthusiastic member of these groups. He worked to get a good attendance, to obtain good speakers, or to get the farmer who had been particularly successful in getting a good yield to come and tell the others how it was done. Then he went to other counties to help with their Institutes.

One summer when the Guilford County farmers met in our community they invited a farmer from Forsyth County to come and tell them what methods he had used in producing one hundred bushels of corn on an acre. He came and stayed at our house. At supper that evening the conversation was mostly about gardens and farm crops and one expression he used I have not forgotten. He said because none of his family cared for cabbage he did not "pester of raising it." There was no Jello, or ready mixed gelatin at that time but for dessert Mother had some pure fruit gelatin and when the guest was served he said, "I'll have to ask what this is," Papa replied it was nothing that could hurt him then Mother explained its contents.

Papa was an ardent advocate of rotation of crops and pure bred Jersey cows. He liked to see the soil turned over with the plow and made ready for the seed or the harvest, but by temperament he was no farmer. The only way he could manage a horse was in the saddle or with driving harness. If he tried to plow even the garden, the whole neighborhood was aroused. He excited the horse with his gees and haws and the horse excited him. The colored man Yance could come in and with a few words quietly accomplish in a short time what Papa had spent half the morning trying to do.

It was different with his cows. He liked to work with them. He had the best of the breed and appreciated their good points. He

tended to them himself, giving them the best of care and they responded to his treatment with a plentiful yield of good rich milk. He was very pleased when one made a record of two pounds of butter in one day.

For a short time he owned a fine Jersey bull, Pedro, but he did not have adequate housing for him and sometimes Pedro would go on a rampage, breaking out of his pen and tearing up the roads and lanes, causing a real reign of terror until he could be put back in the barn. I well remember the fear that gripped my heart with the words "Pedro's out" and I am sure the neighborhood was relieved that Papa did not keep him long.

Because the school at that time was necessarily self-sustaining, the college farm was kept in a good state of cultivation and productivity including the dairy. While Papa had only two or three Jersey cows, the college had a rather large and fine herd, so he loaned Pedro to the farm superintendent to be housed at the college barn. This was too great a temptation for the boys at the college. When things got too dull around the dormitory at night, they had only to think of Pedro in his pen which was not locked. While one or two boys went to the pen to liberate Pedro, others, protected behind trees and armed with stones, let go at him as he roared through the campus, creating havoc and horror. Getting him back in the pen was another question and it was accomplished only after the whole neighborhood had been aroused.

Due to Papa's knowledge and ready use of the German language he was sometimes called on to interpret or translate for persons in the community or even farther away. Once a letter came to the post office addressed in German script and the postmaster called Papa to know to whom the letter should go. One day just about noon when Papa would be coming home for the midday meal a "real German man" appeared at our house. The stranger had learned in Greensboro that Papa had studied in Germany and could speak his language so he was happy to find him. And what a conversation they did have! Papa often spoke German to us at home, familiarizing us with the idioms of the language and

the laws of grammar, but when he and the German guest began to converse, we could not recognize even a familiar word or phrase. The stranger stayed to have dinner with us and we children disgraced ourselves and embarrassed our parents by laughing as they talked in the German language. Papa tried to apologize for our giggling, saying it was amusing to us to hear a foreign language spoken, but we could not control ourselves and had to be sent from the table.

In those days the territory around the college was not built up with good roads and comfortable homes as it is now. It was mostly beautiful rolling country covered with native forests with here and there a small community of farmers. The country north and east of the college seemed a little more remote and inaccessible than some of the other places, though there were four or five families whose children came to school from the Battleground neighborhood: The Highfills, Whites, Coggins and Cases. One day Knox Highfill told us that he had discovered not very far from his home in an isolated house two German men who could hardly speak English but were fine musicians. He cultivated their acquaintance and finally got them to consent to give a music recital at our school. It was not any trouble to get a good attendance for such occasions and most of the patrons of the school were on hand. On account of their difficulty with our language they asked Knox to announce their numbers. Poor Knox! The names of the composers and their selections were quite as unfamiliar to him, and to most of the rest of us, too, for that matter, as the English language was to the guest musicians, but when Knox announced a selection from "Batch" we were all somewhat embarrassed. They played the best classical selections, duets and solos arranged for violin and even by an untrained audience their concert was well received. After the recital Papa went up to talk with them in their native language and learned that they were professional musicians who were fugitives from Germany because they were unwilling to take part in the compulsory military training in force at that time. When they had been in this country long enough

for them to safely come out of hiding, one of them, Herr Roy, became teacher of violin in Greensboro College.

Papa was courteous and kind but never courtly. He often said "Politeness is to do and say the kindest things in the kindest way" and

"Howe'er it be it seems to me
'Tis only noble to be good,
Kind hearts are more than coronets
And simple faith than Norman blood."

He often quoted bits of poetry to us to bring home a lesson in discipline or inspiration. The earliest one that I remember was from Isaac Watts' *Against Quarrelling and Fighting:*

Let dogs delight to bark and bite,
For God hath made them so;
Let bears and lions growl and fight
For 'tis their nature, too.

But children you should never let
Such angry passions rise;
Your little hands were never made
To tear each others' eyes.

Later he liked to quote from Ella Wheeler Wilcox's *Winds of Fate* and from the Sanskrit: *The Salutation of the Dawn.*

He liked to recall bits of practical philosophy which he learned from his father and grandfather: There was an older relative who had a family of boys and having a special piece of work which he wanted done he assigned one of the boys to the task. When he went around later to find out how the work was going he found that the boy had worked so well, and had made so much progress that he thought with some help the work might be finished in much less time than he had planned, so he called in another son to help with the task. But on checking up later on the progress of the boys he was disappointed to find that they had not accomplished

as much as he had expected of them and decided if they finished the job in the time he had allotted them they would need more help, so he put the third son to work with them. When the father came around again he found the work almost at a stand-still. The boys, having such a good time together had almost forgotten their work and had spent their time playing. The father's comment became a byword in the family: "One boy is a boy, two boys is half a boy, and three boys is no boy at all."

There was one quotation that he probably used more than any other: a remark made by a lazy fellow who complained of having to feed his one poor pig with these words: "It's a heap of trouble to have anything." So, if the house needed repairs, or he was called to the phone when he wanted to be reading, or if the cows got out of the pasture, Papa would dismiss all the vexations with that humorous statement: "It is a heap of trouble to have anything."

He loved flowers and derived much pleasure from his roses: The Duchess du Brabant, General Jacqueminot, The Bride and Marechal Neill. He always had a row of beautiful sweet peas in the garden which he cultivated along with the vegetables and there were loads of sweet violets around the edge of the garden. He liked to cut the flowers and bring them to Mother as a special gift or tribute. But he never bought them from the florist and so far as I know he never bought a piece of jewelry for anyone.

When we were older we bought for Mother a plain gold wedding band which she was pleased to wear. But Grandmother Davis never owned a piece of jewelry. It was too worldly!

After Papa and Mother were married Grandfather Elihu decided to give them a dairy cow and told Papa to choose from his herd the very best cow as a gift from him. When the cow was brought to our barn and Mother had looked at her for some time, she said, "Frank, does thee think that was the finest cow Father had?" Papa's reply was: "No, indeed, that wasn't his finest animal. I could not go in his barn and take for myself the best that he had." By such a choice he may have risked his reputation as a judge

of cattle, but he kept his self-respect and displayed another evidence of the character which Mother loved.

He would not participate in any display of learning or anything that savored of pomp or show. At one commencement late in his term of service when there was to be a special celebration, an academic march was planned but he would wear no gown nor collegiate hood. He did walk with the faculty and visiting dignitaries but he wore only his clean gray alpaca suit and carried his plain Panama hat. His companion in the march was Dr. Elwood C. Perisho, a member of the first faculty who had returned to the college after many years of teaching elsewhere. Dr. Perisho presented perhaps the most imposing appearance of any one in the line but it was certainly enhanced by Papa's plain and modest bearing.

When he graduated in 1875 at Haverford College there was no Phi Beta Kappa chapter there, but when one was established Papa was elected a charter member. When he received the notification I was impressed by his disregard for what I considered a great honor. He was near eighty years old before he consented to own the Phi Beta Kappa key and I doubt if he ever wore it. Certainly he had no place to wear it. When he carried a watch he kept it in his vest pocket without chain or fob along with the short pencils that he always used.

True to the doctrine of simplicity and moderation Papa did not like a profusion of any thing. Even when Mother died he came to me and asked that some of the flowers sent in by friends be left at the house so as not to have such a display at the grave.

He could keep up his part of the conversation in any kind of company, but was not a great talker and never verbose. He had a ready wit and plenty of little stories to illustrate his points. One story that he especially liked to tell was about a droll old friend of his who went out and bought himself a fine new shirt. Then he came in the house, unwrapped it, threw it in the fire and having watched it burn remarked, "I didn't burn that shirt because I didn't need it, but just for the damn grandeur of it." Papa often

saw things done that seemed to him to be much like the burning of the shirt.

Until the time of his last illness when he was eighty-two years old, Papa never stopped studying and learning. After the Spanish-American war some Cubans enrolled at the college although they knew very little of our language. Papa volunteered to teach them English if they in turn would teach him Spanish. Independently he picked up enough Sanskrit to help him in his Biblical studies, but he did not confine his interests just to the subjects he was teaching. After he was eighty-one years of age when he was visiting me, he asked if I had a copy of Sydney Lanier's poems and in the time of his visit of a few days he committed to memory the beautiful *Song of the Chattahoochie.*

These sentences taken from the valedictory which he spoke at his graduation at Haverford College truly characterize the attitude and purpose of his entire life:

"It is fitting that at the close of three or four years devoted to the noblest employment of youth, we should inquire what is their result in preparing us for the exercise of the highest duties of manhood.

"This one maxim, however, now at the end of our common labor, I will venture to recommend as the safest guide for us all, viz. that we spare no severity in judgment of our own attainments. . . .

". . . For above all other things it is necessary that we should ever be on the guard against ourselves. Let us therefore, ever keep high before us our ideal while we strive as constantly to make it a reality. No false pride or vain ambition will then betray us from the path of honor, and duty, and truth.

"Though our school days are done, we shall not cease to be students. The love of learning which our Alma Mater has begotten in us, and deepened, let us cherish and cultivate as the richest prize among her bountiful gifts; while we remember that here we have only made a preparation for beginning the process of acquiring knowledge and culture."

# *Papa and Uncle Lyndon*

From early manhood there had been between Papa and Uncle Lyndon a kind of David-and-Jonathan devotion which lasted all their lives. They were serious, earnest young men with similar interests and aspirations—each admiring and respecting the good traits and abilities of the other. They talked together of their hopes for the future and planned to work together if possible. Besides all that they were in love with sisters, the oldest and second-oldest daughters of Nereus and Oriana Mendenhall.

They were at Haverford College together although they were not classmates. After graduation Uncle Lyndon went to New Garden to take charge of the boarding school and Papa studied further, here and abroad. But when New Garden Boarding School became Guilford College, Uncle Lyndon called for Papa to come and join the faculty, thus fulfilling their long-time ambition.

Both were good teachers, instructing and inspiring their pupils; thorough, sincere, hating sham and pretense or anything short of the best. In their work they complemented one another. Uncle Lyndon was a man of unusual grace and sweetness of character and manner, a polished executive able to take command of any situation. Papa was more retiring, with a rather stern exterior, but faithful and steadfast and in the right place at the right time to help.

It has been said by the Secretary that when situations became tense and sharp in faculty meetings, Papa could and would always bring relief by some witty saying or expression appropriate to the discussion.

For years and years Uncle Lyndon was presiding clerk of the Yearly Meeting and sometimes after some long and involved discussion, he would arise and say, "Is Frank Davis in the house? If so, will he please state the sense of the meeting on this subject." Papa would always be there and would arise, state in a few words the question and the conclusion drawn and the meeting would give its approval.

At Papa's first and second marriages Uncle Lyndon sat beside him on the facing bench and stood up with him when he said his vows. When late in life, some years after Mother's death, Papa decided to marry for a third time he again asked Uncle Lyndon to stand up with him. Uncle Lyndon replied, "Yes, Frank, I will do it this time again, but I want it understood that this is to be the last time."

Papa's third wife, Josephine L. Rhoadés of Philadelphia, had also been a member of the college faculty, having had charge of the music department. She was a woman of many gifts and took an active and sympathetic interest in the affairs of the college and the community giving freely of her artistic and literary ability. She not only encouraged Papa in his scholarly pursuits but in her loving care for him made his last years comfortable and happy.

# *Work and Play*

One of my earliest recollections is that of tagging along behind Aunt Genie saying "let me help, let me help." So she gave me a little dust cloth and let me dust what furniture I could reach. Later we had our regular duties, never too hard, but necessary, none the less. At first we were expected to have ready a basket full of nice clean oak splinters and chips (no trash allowed), for starting a fire in the kitchen range. Mother used only oak or other hard woods for cooking. Pine and lightwood made too much soot and clogged up the pipe too quickly. In winter we carried wood to the back porch for the sitting room fireplace. Through all the years that little fireplace was the only source of heat for the sitting room which was in constant use. The other rooms had stoves of various kinds for heating but never was a stove placed in the sitting room.

As we grew we were given other duties; the care of our rooms, filling and cleaning the lamps; taking the freshly laundered clothes from the line, each piece to be carefully and correctly folded to make ironing easier. Gradually we learned to iron and to wash dishes, to cook and to sew beginning with the simplest things and progressing according to our abilities and desires. As we became more proficient at our different duties Anna and I

alternated weekly in different duties, one helping with the cleaning and the other with the cooking.

But there was always plenty of time for play and recreation. As children we had good times playing together, enjoying the universal amusements of childhood. Anna and I spent our days and our imaginations at playing Pretend or Make-like keeping a constant "clack and clatter" as Papa called it. We had our dolls and doll equipment. We kept house in the corner of a room, or ran and played outside. On the wooded hillside north of our house we spent many a summer day. There we would sweep the ground clean of leaves and twigs, lay out our play houses, outlining the rooms with the small white stones which were so abundant, gather leaves and moss for doll beds and make hats, belts or doll covers by pinning together the oak and poplar leaves. In the spring we would bring to the house bowers of blossoms of the Judas tree, dogwood, sourwood and service berry, or gather bluets, violets and anemones and put them in the vases for our table. Anna especially liked to dress up in Mother's clothes and she was most proficient as the preacher when we were playing church.

One summer afternoon when all the doors and windows were open, Anna, dressed in Mother's long wrapper, was going up-stairs carrying a cup of buttermilk for a complexion treatment. The stairway was on the north side of the front hall, the bottom step being right at the front door. Anna was feeling fine, gayly singing as she went:

I can do without my food
I can do without my drink
But I can not do without
My merry chink, chink, ch.....

Her song was abruptly changed to a sharp short Whew! Just as she was finishing her verse there was a step on the front porch and a loud rap at the door. Knowing that she was in full view from the front door and also knowing that only strangers or formal callers used that door she was in haste to find refuge in her room

upstairs. But in her haste her feet tangled with the wrapper she was wearing and she almost fell downstairs.

At first we had no near neighbors. Across the road, now called Friendly Road, which forms the southern boundary of the college campus and the monthly meeting property and west of the little brick store, stood the home of John W. and Mary C. Woody. Their family consisted of two sons, Waldo and Herman, and a younger daughter, Alice, and Mrs. Woody's sister, Miss Alice Chawner. Professor Woody had taught at New Garden Boarding School and became a member of the first faculty of the college, teaching mathematics and physics. Mrs. Woody was a beloved and gifted minister in the Society of Friends and also taught at the college at a later time.

After teaching in the college for six years Professor Woody went into other educational work but they maintained their home at Guilford and kept alive their love for, and loyalty to New Garden Meeting and Guilford College. Their sons were older than we were but Alice was Henry's age and in the process of growing up together, attending the same school and Sunday school, there was cemented between us a lasting bond of friendship.

A few years difference in age in the very young makes a big gap but as the number of years increases the gap closes in. For Anna and me, as little girls, it was a special occasion when we could "go to see" Alice, but as we advanced in school and later became classmates in college, I enjoyed with Alice the comradeship of contemporaries. There were times when, instead of walking the half-mile for my midday meal at home I would, at Alice's invitation, stop with her for lunch so that we might have an extra half hour to use in preparing our chemistry assignment. I remember yet the atmosphere of tranquillity and sweet regard for others that pervaded their home.

There were not many houses along the hilly, rocky station road. Our house was on top of the second hill, half-way between the college and the Southern Railway depot. On top of the first hill

from the college lived the Doaks, Mr. and Mrs. James W. Doak, Nell, Bob, Henry and Charlie. Mrs. Doak's Mother, a little English lady with quite a British accent, Mrs. Buck, lived in a little pink cottage beside the Doak home.

Mrs. Doak had been the pioneer teacher of music at the College, moving out from Greensboro and bringing her piano to the college, so that students who so desired might have piano lessons. Her children were all older than we were, their youngest being a little older than Henry, our oldest, but here, too, was always a comradeship and a neighborliness which held us in the close friendship gained only by growing up together. There were other houses along our road but for many years there were no children there.

But we did not grow up isolated, without playmates. There was always Aunt Mary's. She and Uncle Lyndon with their family of four boys and one girl lived just north of the college campus. Theirs was a second home to us and with our Hobbs cousins we always had the happiest and closest relationship. Richard, their youngest son, was near Henry's age and Gertrude was somewhat younger than Anna.

Aunt Mary was a distinguished person, handsome, brilliant and influential. She held the respect of the Quaker leaders and her abilities were recognized beyond the limits of the State and of the Society of Friends. Her interests were broad and her sympathies deep. With all this she took a keen interest in her home, her flower and vegetable gardens and she loved all children. So it was not as a Quaker leader nor as wife of the college president that we knew her. She was our Aunt Mary. She took us into her heart and her home and along with all the other young folks of the community she made us welcome.

Their house was college property, and although it was built on a beautiful site it was behind the college and beyond the home of the college farmer, not far from the cattle barn. In the days of big houses it was small, especially for a family of growing boys, but Aunt Mary always made it adequate for any purpose. It had one advantage over the other houses in the community: a bathtub

and running water in the house. In the days when Aunt Genie was taking care of us she sometimes took us to Aunt Mary's for our Saturday baths. To me Aunt Mary's house was like an oasis of beauty in a desert of plainness. It was not that our house was devoid of any beauty. We had pretty wallpaper, family portraits that seemed to be watching us wherever we might go, and other good pictures. On the sitting room mantle there was a Seth Thomas clock which kept time for us as long as we were there. In the parlor there were two large bookcases filled with books. The walnut one was Papa's, holding a set of Chambers Encyclopedia, books of history and poetry and studies in Biblical Literature. The oak desk-bookcase was Mother's. It contained mostly books of English and American Literature and on top of it sat two stuffed owls—a screech owl and a great horned owl which T. Gilbert Pearson had stuffed and mounted for mother when he was one of her pupils in college. Besides the bookcases there was a brass studded mahogany table which held handsome albums, cut glass epergnes, the blue bubble glass vase, the big tiger cowrie shell, the stereoscope with a pile of pictures to be seen through it. Also there was on the mantelpiece the potpourri which gave off the most heavenly odor when the lid was quickly lifted in the process of dusting, along with the alabaster miniatures of the Leaning Tower of Pisa and the Companile of Florence which Mother had brought from Europe and treasured very much. There was an old walnut corner cupboard in the dining room where antique glass and the good dinner ware was kept and a china closet full of pretty hand-painted china.

But Aunt Mary's house seemed to me to have the elegancies which other houses lacked. Especially the pictures of The Triumphant Angels by Fra Angelico which hung in her sitting room attracted me and the sight of them, even today, brings back to me the feeling of awe which I experienced as a little girl.

There was no distinction of birth or class in the neighborhood and all the boys of the community congregated at the Hobbs home. Aunt Mary not only made them welcome, but made them

feel important as well and I am sure that many homes near and far are not only prettier but happier today because of this association of early years.

The boys were interested in sports, especially baseball and in an open field back of the Hobbs house many a game was played, the Hobbses, the Doaks, the Ballengers, Lindsays, Knights and Nelsons making up the teams. Henry played some baseball, but his chief interest and ability was in track work, especially in the longer distance running. Twice his sprinting brought honor to the schools he represented, Guilford and Haverford and at Haverford he was called "the silent wonder of the cinder path."

When I was six or seven we gained some near neighbors and playmates. A widow, Mrs. McNairy, with her three children came to live in the house adjoining our south lot. There were two girls and a boy in the family: Lake, the oldest, a beautiful girl with long brown curls, Holly the only boy and Eddie, just the age of our Anna. We became good friends; Holly and Henry roamed the woods and fields together setting traps for rabbits and "possums," finding birds' nests, making sourwood whistles and setting flutter wheels in the little stream of water at the foot of the hill. Anna and Eddie, too, were devoted friends, but neither we nor they were allowed to run into the other's house and spend days and nights together. Our parents believed "Familiarity breeds contempt," and limited our visits to one a week. But we went to school together and Anna and Eddie sat together in one of the double desks that were used at that time.

Once Anna and I very wrongfully tried to arrange it so that we might all play together more often. South of the barn Papa had a field of lush green rye for his cows. It grew thick and higher than our heads and we loved to run through it, feeling the blades against our faces and arms. Finally near the middle of the field we tramped down a small room where we could hide and play. We asked our neighbors to meet us and we had a few hours of fun playing there, committing the double sin of disobedience and of ruining Papa's fine rye. Of course Papa soon found

us out and then Mother took charge. We were given a "talking to" and deprived of a visit to Grandfather Elihu's. This was severe punishment for we dearly loved to ride in the carriage to Mother's home.

Mother did spank us if the occasion called for it but it was not often necessary. Not that we were so good, but because her talks to us, when we had done wrong, were more effective than punishments. Even the spankings were preceded and concluded by a "talking to" that left us so sorry and ashamed of our misdeeds that we felt that we never wanted to do wrong again and usually ended with a tearful vow that we would be good from then on.

After a few years our association with the McNairys came to a sad and tragic end. Eddie went to visit some relatives near Greensboro and became sick. Her mother went to her and learned too late that her sickness was smallpox. Eddie was quarantined at her Uncle's home, but lived only a short time. Soon Mrs. McNairy and Holly came down with the disease and a strict quarantine was placed on their house so near to our own. Holly's case was light and did not cause him much trouble but Mrs. McNairy's was critical from the first. There were no nurses to be had and special doctors visited the patients at night. Mother could do nothing to help Lake except to leave food and supplies for her at a distant spot from our house, then get safely back before Lake went to pick them up. She was there alone with her desperately sick mother and her not-so-sick brother. One afternoon she called to Mother that she did not see how her mother could last much longer and later she came out again to say, "Mrs. Davis, Mother is gone." It was a trying and sad time for all of us. Now we can be thankful that due to compulsory vaccination and advanced medical skill such experiences are no longer necessary. The doctor and undertaker came at night and fumigated the house and a private funeral was held, though I never knew when nor where, just as I never knew when Eddie was buried. After Holly recovered he and Lake went to live with their Uncle and Aunt, Mr.

and Mrs. Cecil Boren, near Greensboro and we saw them only rarely after that.

As soon as Mother learned there was smallpox in the neighborhood she gathered us all together, including Cora the cook, and walked with us down the road to Dr. Roberson's house to be vaccinated. As a rule the colored people did not willingly submit to vaccination, fearing they might lose an arm because of it but Cora was vaccinated and got over it safely and we children had only small scars from it.

That is the only outbreak of smallpox I ever experienced and I do not know how serious or how wide-spread the epidemic was, but I do know the county maintained a pest house to which persons with the disease were taken and cared for at the time. For many months following this sad experience we were kept in our own neighborhood and when Christmas time came we could not "go to town" to see Santa Claus or buy gifts. We had to be content with what we could make or buy at the little neighborhood store.

We did not go to town often—only when we needed new shoes, or a professional haircut or for some special occasion like Christmas. We rode in the carriage and in the early days drove right to the heart of town to hitch the horse. The courthouse then stood on the square where the Jefferson Standard Building is now and we had no trouble finding hitching places near the courthouse or on one of the side streets. Most of our shopping was done in one block on South Elm Street at the stores of J. M. Hendrix, Odell and Vanstory. Sometimes Mother would go to J. W. Scott, a wholesale house, for a hundred pounds of sugar, a case of some canned goods or a bolt of cloth. Later Ellis Stone and Meyers had stores on the west side of South Elm where we could get ready-made clothes, but up until we were about grown, all our clothes were made for us—coats and all. Colclough's Store was most interesting to me. There, in ordinary times, one would find tables completely covered with chinaware, all kinds and for all purposes.

At Christmas time he added toys and I naturally liked to linger there at that time. It was, and still is, to me a mystery how I could find in that crowded store a single doll carriage that I liked and later find it in our sitting room on Christmas morning marked for me.

As in other things our observance of Christmas was simple. We wrote letters to Santa Claus and after letting Mother and Papa read them burned them and sent them up the chimney on their way to the north pole. We decorated the house with holly or evergreens and hung up our stockings, but did not have Christmas trees nor baubles or wreaths. There would be an orange and an apple and candy in our stockings, usually a piece of jewelry or small bottle of perfume from our Aunt Gertrude, practical gifts such as gloves, coats or book sacks, dolls and doll clothes and furniture, tea sets and always books.

The trip to town usually took the best part of a day. Our horses were gentle and we never drove them hard. After Greensboro put in the electric trolley we could hitch the horse in Lindley Park at the end of the car line and ride the trolley into town but we usually drove all the way so we would not have to trouble with the bundles.

When the trolley was first installed it was a new and strange thing to the horses and naturally they were frightened by it. Remembering how Dr. Roberson's horse had died of fright at the sight of a traction engine we always hoped we could get into town without seeing the electric car, but sometimes we couldn't escape it. Coming toward us as we rode in the carriage, it was so big and fast and noisy we did not know what old Julie would do. One fine day as we were leaving town we saw the car coming in the distance. Mother thought, to be on the safe side, Papa ought to get out and hold the horse's reins. Rather reluctantly Papa did get out, and walked at Julie's head until the street car was past, but the big old horse hardly noticed it at all. As Papa was getting back in the carriage some little boys across the street

called out, "Hey, Mister, who was scared, you or the horse?" Papa enjoyed the joke but I think he wanted to answer, "It was my wife who was scared."

While Anna and I were always devoted to one another, as years went by I gradually spent more and more time with Henry. Anna always had a little girl of her own age who was her special friend, but for years there was no girl of my age in the neighborhood. By the time we reached the sixth grade Henry and I were classmates and from then on we were together. We studied some subjects together, we went together to school and college functions and we two comprised the Latin class in our Senior year at college. He took me with him to visit his traps. He showed me the cave he had dug in the side of the hill north of the house where he had a cache of rabbit tobacco, various kinds of seeds, odd stones and arrowheads, and gun powder.

Richard Hobbs was, throughout the years of his life, Henry's best friend. Being the youngest of the Hobbs Hollow crowd and not so interested in baseball as the others, they found other interests which kept them together. Henry was at Richard's house or Richard at Henry's whenever possible. Aunt Mary had a rule in her family that the boys should spend the early hours after Sunday dinner in some study of the Bible or other serious subject. Richard would like to get out of that task and would ask to go to see Henry. On one particularly pretty Sunday afternoon he made his request and was told that he could go when the clock indicated three o'clock. After being left alone for a little while he stepped up to the beautiful grandfather clock and turned the hands so that they indicated three o'clock and came on to play with Henry. They were happily engaged in some project out near the barn when we looked down the road and saw Uncle Lyndon briskly stepping up the path to our house. He called for Richard, "Richard, thee must go home at once. Thee tampered with the clock. I wouldn't have come after thee but thee tampered with the clock." So we all learned a lesson in patience and honesty.

Sometimes on summer evenings when there was still time to

play out doors after supper we would take our stands at the two oak trees in the yard and play Miley Bright. The first one would call to the other: "How far from here to Miley Bright?" The answer: "Three score miles and ten." Question: "Can I get there by candlelight?" Answer: "Yes, if your legs are long and light." Then as each one started running for the other's position the latter would add, "Watch out, there's a witch along the way." Papa would be the witch, jumping out from his seat to catch us before we reached the safety of the other tree.

I did not then think of it as remarkable that Papa could and did answer all our questions. He knew the planets and constellations, and taught me to locate the North Star by following the direction of the first two stars in the Big Dipper. He could identify all the different trees growing on the hill-sides and around the fields so near us. He could take the problem in partial payments over which I had vainly struggled so long and get the correct answer without any trouble. But he always protested that "tricky" or involved problems were out of place in a textbook. He knew the wild flowers by name: the anemones, bluets, bloodroot, Jack-in-the-Pulpit; also the names of the weeds against which he labored, and he taught me to recognize the birds by sight and by their songs.

Before we had the responsibility of home work from school Papa would often read to us at night, always poetry. I do not remember that he ever read a child's story to us but he used the poems he liked: Whittier's *Snow Bound, Barefoot Boy,* Longfellow's *Hiawatha, The Childrens' Hour, The Village Blacksmith* and *The Psalm of Life,* Tennyson's *The Brook* and *Enoch Arden.* While reading the account of Enoch's return to the scene of his former home and his thoughts on seeing someone else in his place we got to weeping so that Papa had to stop. Then we thought we knew why Tennyson had named his poem and chief character as he did—*Enoch Arden, In a garden.*

In the summer time too we helped with the canning of fruits and vegetables; fed and cared for the little chickens and often

went to the pasture for Papa to bring the cows to the barn for milking. This was pleasant work until a thunderstorm was threatening. Then the mother hens trying to gather their biddies under their wings seemed to try to settle in every direction rather than go into the coop. And the cows sensing the oncoming rain and perhaps driven on by our haste, would break into a run and go through the bushes and fields rather than use the well-beaten path which they usually followed so contentedly.

It was an experience with the cows in a rain storm that afforded us one of our funniest hours. It happened one summer afternoon during vacation. Henry was staying at the farm which he loved. Right after the noon day meal Mother and Papa left for an overnight visit at Mother's home past the Deep River Meeting-house. They said they would go by The Oaks and tell Henry to come home that evening to do the milking and stay with us overnight. About the middle of the afternoon a quick shower came up but instead of stopping in a half hour or so as we expected, it got worse and continued to rain hard all afternoon. At milking time Henry had not come and the rain had not stopped, though it had slackened somewhat. Papa never failed to milk the cows night and morning, and we felt that it would be an unheard-of bit of negligence if we let them go unmilked that time. We decided not to try to bring the two or three cows to the barn but to take buckets and bran to the pasture and milk them there. So Anna, dressed in Papa's boots and overalls, and I, wearing overshoes and an old coat, armed with milk buckets, bran and umbrella, set out for the pasture. It was, in clear weather, a pretty and interesting walk, up the lane, through a rocky grove into a shady meadow where there was a cool spring and a gentle stream of water. But this afternoon it was wet and slushy. Instead of finding the cows under the trees near the gate where they usually stood at milking time, they were farther down, near the branch where the thicker trees afforded more protection. So we went to bring them to the gate, not thinking what an odd and weird spectacle we made. The cows raised their heads, looked at us for an instant and began to run

farther away. We put down the umbrella and tolled them to the gate with bran then began the milking. Bossy licked up the bran so much faster than I could milk we decided that we might make time by both of us working on one cow, Anna on one side, I on the other. But the cow would not stand for that and began kicking, so each of us took a cow and milked away, rain water running off the sides of the cows into the milk buckets. With much talk and laughter we finished the job, took the milk to the house and poured it out for the chickens, changed our clothes and had supper.

On account of the heavy rain Henry had not been able to come the five miles from the farm, but came early the next morning; and when Papa came he told us that it would have been all right to have left the cows unmilked for that one time.

In these days girls would simply put on their pedal pushers or shorts, slip off their loafers, tie a plastic kerchief over their heads and have the chore done in short order, but we had no such modern modes.

I believe that in the process of growing from babyhood to adulthood there are many miracles of preservation. Surely without some providential care few of us would grow up sound and whole. Two special occasions come to my mind, evidences of providential care. One year Papa had a surplus supply of dry corn, food for the horses. This he stored in the upper part of the carriage shed. Anna and I liked to play in the buggy under the shelter and one morning we spent some time there talking and playing until fancy took us on to another place. In a short time after we had left the buggy we heard a crash and hurrying back we found the buggy crushed under the weight of the corn which had been too great for the floor of the shed. What had made us leave the buggy before the corn crashed down?

The second event was not so simple. On the back porch, near the well we had a small table, with soap, basin and towels for washing up on coming in from the outdoors. Near the table stood a small wooden keg for the waste water. One morning before we were all to leave home for an all-day visit to some kinfolk, Papa

took up the ashes from the fireplace where there had been a fire the night before and in order to attend to something else at the time he put the bucket on the edge of the porch and then forgot it. But it happened that the bucket he had used was a fiber one, and there were in the ashes some live coals which he had not seen.

We went to grandfather's and had a nice visit and on returning home we saw a sight which gave us cause for much thanksgiving. The live coals had burned through the bucket, kindling the porch floor for the space of about a foot. The fire ate slowly along the boards toward the walls of the house. But that keg of waste water happened to be sitting on the very boards that were burning their way to the wall. The fire dried the staves of the keg and burned the wooden bales so that the water came out around the bottom of the keg and put out all the fire. Thus we were spared the horror of coming to a homeless hill.

# *Schools and Books*

The very happiest day in the year to me was the first day of school in the fall. Autumn, my favorite season, was at hand. In the orchard behind the barn the magnum bonums, then the winesaps hung red and ripe for our eating. The woods were fringed with purple asters and the road sides and fence rows were aglow with golden rod. The ripened corn had been cut and stood in fragrant shocks along the path. The grasshoppers rose in a late show of energy from the drying grass and flew crazily about for a few minutes then settled down again for their last long rest. Even late in the morning the grass and leaves were still studded with millions of dew-diamonds set there by the breath of the cooler and longer night. Our school schedule had begun.

There was the walk of a short half mile to the school house in the crisp cool air and the excitement of seeing again the friends we had not often seen during vacation; of meeting with the teacher and getting our new places in the schoolroom. Then came the greater pleasure of finding out what we would study and of getting our new textbooks. But the climax of delight did not come until I had reached home in the afternoon and gone off to some quiet place alone and examined my new books from cover to cover. I was happy in possessing them and completely intrigued by the

thought of what knowledge might be mine when I had "gone through" those books.

In winter when the weather was very bad, Papa would hitch up the horse and take us to school in the buggy, then drive back home, put the horse in the stable and walk to the college to his classes, for there was no shelter near the school where the horse might be sheltered.

The school that I first attended was the little two-room subscription school near the meeting house. There was a little one-room "Free School" about two miles north of the college but we went to the subscription school maintained and supervised by the members of the monthly meeting, especially by those having children of school age.

My attendance the first year or two was very irregular and I cannot believe that the teacher, Miss Sybil White, was glad to see me. I was very young and the only beginner she had. I think there were ten or fifteen pupils, of ages from six to twelve with only two or three in the same class. Each had his own books. There were McGuffy's readers, Holmes' readers and other texts in arithmetic and geography and elements of English grammar. Papa, always alert to the latest educational trends, bought for me a new Stickney reader which he wanted me to use at school.

At first I spent only half the day at school, going in the morning with Henry and coming home at noon with Papa, for the meeting house and our school house were near the college buildings. I shall always remember with gratitude Henry's eagerness to have me go with him and his apparent pleasure at having me at school. There came the day when I was allowed to stay the whole day, taking my "dinner" in a pint sized tin pail. As we neared the school yard Henry told me to hold my pail behind me and announced to the other pupils, "Margaret has to go home at noon" then I proudly showed my pail and let them all know that I, too, could make the whole day.

The pupils sat in double desks, the boys on one side of the room and the girls on the other, separated by a wide central aisle.

Facing the teacher's desk at the front of the room was the recitation bench where the different classes "said" their lessons to the teacher, while the others in the room prepared for their recitations. Each one was expected to sit quietly and study without any whispering or moving about unless granted permission by the teacher. An iron stove in the middle of the room furnished heat and the larger boys were assigned the duty of bringing in the wood and keeping up the fire. Two boys were appointed also to bring to the room or playground a bucket of fresh water for drinking. On warm days after much activity at recess we would crowd around the bucket, each one clamoring for his or her turn at the dipper: "Me next! Me next!" Recalling now the boys and girls who drank from the common dipper I am impressed with the fact that with the exception of two or three they have all grown to maturity and have taken their places in the great business of living a full and useful life.

Our Friday afternoons were always given over to special exercises. We had recitations, compositions, spelling matches or contests. Sometimes the teacher would read to us. It was on such an occasion that I first listened to Eugene Field's poem *Little Boy Blue* and fought back the tears at "the angels' song that awakened our little Boy Blue." It was here, too, that I was introduced to Br'er Rabbit and Br'er Fox and other characters from *The Tales of Uncle Remus*. In one of the spelling matches I, the smallest person in the group, "cut down" one of the largest and most advanced boys in the room, spelling correctly the word "buffalo." But I could not hold my place long. I soon went down on the simplest four-letter word "wash." How could one misspell that word? W-a-r-s-h. My humiliation was greater than was Pal's whom I had so lately embarrassed. A verse in the book of Proverbs says "Pride goeth before destruction and an haughty spirit before a fall." I probably was a little proud to have gone ahead of one of the most advanced pupils but I had not a trace of "an haughty spirit." I was sorry to see his humiliation and I was well aware that if the word had come to me first I might have misspelled it

too, for as he began to spell it I kept wondering if it had one f or two. His mistake in spelling it with one f enabled me to spell it correctly. I knew that I had gained by his loss and truly I did not deserve any credit for good spelling. I soon proved it to the whole room.

At the close of the school year we had public exercises in the college auditorium, with songs, dialogues, recitations and plays, all the pupils taking some part, since there was no graduation. My teacher usually asked me to recite some poem which Mother or Papa should select and teach me. Papa chose my first long recitation and Mother drilled me in speaking it. It was a poem Papa had seen in a publication of the Spelling Reform Association and he gave it to me as it was printed in the approved (and improved?) form of spelling. I had to transcribe it to the standard spelling before I could commit it to memory.

### The Calf Path

One day through the primeval wood,
A calf walked home as good calves should;
But made a trail all bent askew,
A crooked trail, as all calves do.
Since then two hundred years have fled,
And, I infer, the calf is dead
But still he left behind his trail,
And thereby hangs a moral tale.
The trail was taken up next day
By a lone dog that passed that way.
And then the wise bellwether sheep
Pursued the trail o'er vale and steep
And drew the flock behind him, too,
As good bellwethers always do.
And from that day, o'er hill and glade
Through those old woods a path was made,
And many men wound in and out,
And turned and dodged and bent about,

And uttered words of righteous wrath,
Because 'twas such a crooked path;
But still they followed—do not laugh—
The first migration of that calf,
And through this winding wood way stalked,
Because he wabbled when he walked.
This forest path became a lane
That bent and turned and turned again;
This crooked lane became a road
Where many a poor horse with his load
Toiled on beneath the burning sun
And travelled some three miles in one.
And thus a century and a half
They trod the footsteps of that calf.
The years passed on in swiftness fleet,
The road became a village street,
And this, before men were aware,
A city's crowded thoroughfare.
And soon the central street was this,
Of a renowned metropolis.
And men, two centuries and a half
Trod in the footsteps of that calf;
Each day a hundred thousand rout
Followed the zigzag calf about;
And o'er his crooked journey went
The traffic of a continent.
A hundred thousand men were led
By a calf near three centuries dead.
They followed still his crooked way
And lost one hundred years a day.
For this such reverence is lent
To well-established precedent.
A moral lesson this should teach
Were I ordained and called to preach,
For men are prone to go it blind

Along the calf-paths of the mind,
And work away from sun to sun
And do what other men have done.
They follow in the beaten track
And in and out and forth and back
And still their devious course pursue
To keep the paths that others do.

* * * * * *

And many things this tale might teach
But I am not ordained to preach.

By Sam Walter Foss

When the exercises were over my cousin Laura Worth, who had, a short time before, graduated from the Boston School of Gymnastics, came to me and told me she had enjoyed the recitation for she had walked the very street in Boston which had been the calf's path and was later named Milk Street because of its origin.

In a few years after I started to school the enrollment had grown until there was need for another teacher, and the little room at the back was made into a comfortable classroom for the primary pupils. By that time I had advanced far enough in my classes to stay in the "big room."

When we were very young, Mama subscribed to an illustrated magazine for children called *The Little Ones* and had the issues for each year bound in strong permanent bindings which would withstand the wear and tear of our hands and afford us many happy hours. There were stories and poems suited to our interest and understanding, but the one that I remember best was a little lesson in rhyme which Papa often quoted to us. On one page a little girl was pictured, standing near the street looking longingly at an elegant lady who was riding by, seated in her carriage behind her coachman and spirited horse. Under the picture were these lines:

If I had a carriage all my own
Like Miss Rebecca Hood,

I'd never think to ride alone,
I'd be so kind and good
I'd ask the children one and all
Throughout the neighborhood.

On the opposite page the same little girl was standing by her doll carriage holding out at arms length a much battered rag doll and speaking thus to her little brother:

O take your dirty dolly, Ben!
And don't you ever dare
To put her in my cart again
With Lovely Lady Clair!
You have soiled her pretty dress
And mussed her golden hair.

Papa saw a fine point in those two little stanzas and enjoyed referring to them in cases of selfishness or inconsistency.

After *Little Ones* we received *St. Nicholas* Magazine from our Aunt Gertrude for many years and we read the standard children's books: *Little Men* and *Little Women; Hans Brinker, Birds Christmas Carol, Sara Crew* and *Alice in Wonderland.* This last one was the most fanciful story we knew, for except for the story of the *Musicians of Bremen* we had none of the Fairy Stories of the Grimm brothers or of Hans Christian Andersen nor did we read the *Arabian Nights.*

Later we read all of Ernest Thompson Seton's animal stories, and the bird stories by T. Gilbert Pearson who was a great friend of our family. There was a book called *Sparrow The Tramp* by Lily Wesselhoeft which we all liked very much and which, along with most of our other books, we kept for other children, and another generation to enjoy. We were taught that books were our friends and should be treated with care and respect.

In Papa's bookcase there were illustrated copies of *Pilgrim's Progress* and Milton's *Paradise Lost* but the very pictures repelled me and it was many years before I had the courage to read the

texts and find beauty in them. However there was one large green volume of a thousand and one pages which was used and enjoyed more than any of the others. It was *The Fireside Encyclopaedia of Poetry*, compiled and edited by Henry T. Coates and "affectionately dedicated" to his Alma Mater, Haverford College. It was "comprised of The Best Poems of the Most Famous Writers English and American" and we never failed to find some poem suited to our need or mood, varying in topics from *The Night Before Christmas* to Shakespeare's sonnets. On account of its size the most convenient place for us to open it was the floor and many hours we spent lying prone, poring over some poem we specially liked, or copying "a piece to say" at school on Friday afternoon. It was a cherished wedding present and on the flyleaf was this inscription written by Uncle Lyndon:

To J. Frank and Laura M. Davis
With the love of
L. Lyndon and Mary M. Hobbs—
May 4, 1881

School terms were short and in the months when we were not in school Mother would have us read aloud to her from standard studies in literature and some new books but she saw to it that we had only those books which she considered worth while. My cousin Robbie Nicholson had a copy of *St. Elmo* which he brought to me to read but Mother thought it was not suitable and I had the difficult duty of returning it to him, unread except for the first few chapters.

# *The Religious Society of Friends*

Early in the history of the denomination the name Quaker was given in derision to the members of the Society of Friends, ridiculing them for the manner in which they spoke or prayed when moved by the Spirit. But instead of bringing discredit to those to whom the name was applied it worked the other way. By their honesty, sincerity, and upright living the Quakers so ennobled the name that in time it came to connote the very qualities of the members themselves.

It is generally known that The Friends are a small religious sect which differs from other larger denominations in the simplicity of its faith and in the absence of form and ritual in their worship. Rather than an elaborate creed and exacting rules of church order Quakerism is a way of life, expressing the belief that there is a spark of the divine in every person and holding the life and teaching of Jesus as the great example and goal of its profession.

A few concerned Friends may hold a meeting for worship anywhere and at any time, but the unit of the organization is known as the Monthly Meeting, the members of the unit assembling once a month for worship and for transaction of business connected with its growth and development. Several monthly meetings collectively form the Quarterly Meeting which meets four times a

year and many Quarterly Meetings make up the Yearly Meeting.

Generally it required only about a couple of hours to transact the business of the monthly meetings but the Quarterly Meetings required two sessions, with a picnic lunch between, affording the opportunity of meeting with friends and relatives not recently seen. The sessions of the Yearly Meeting lasted nearly a week and were of much importance. Representatives came from the Quarterly Meetings along with visiting friends from other Yearly Meetings in the United States and abroad. At this time there were epistles to be read from other Yearly Meetings, the London general epistle and the Dublin epistle. There were reports on the spiritual condition of the meetings. The chairmen of Committees on Peace, Education, Missions, Alcohol and Narcotics, and Indian Affairs gave their reports along with the chairmen of Finance and Statistics.

I enjoyed attending the Monthly and Quarterly Meetings, mostly at first, because of the greater freedom of behavior allowed me. There was a short period of worship then the Clerks would take their places at the table, read the minutes of the previous meeting and take up the business of the day. I liked the earnestness and the freedom with which the members spoke to business, and when after due consideration the members were convinced that the course was the right one to take, they expressed their approval: "I approve of that," "I do," "So do I," "That meets with my approval," "I am led to believe that that is a move in the right direction," or they might dissent with equal freedom. But the part that I liked the very best of all was the reading of the Queries, which are a kind of guide for Quaker conduct. More often than not Papa was the one who read the Queries and I think it was the knowledge that in his life he so faithfully and affirmatively enacted the answers to the questions that made the reading of them such a satisfaction to me.

Are you careful of the reputation of others? When differences arise do you make earnest effort to end them speedily?

Do you seek to maintain a religious life, and to be watchful that you may not be unduly absorbed by temporal affairs?

Do you who have children or others under your care, endeavor to train them for upright and useful lives?

Do you abstain from the manufacture, sale or use of intoxicating liquors as a beverage? Are you careful to avoid all places and amusements inconsistent with a Christian character and do you observe true moderation in all things?

Do you frequently inspect your affairs and settle your accounts? Are you just in your dealings; careful to live within your income, and to avoid involving yourselves in business beyond your ability to manage?

There were other queries of like nature.

Soon after Mother came to us she made one change in our Sunday schedule. We were in the habit of going to Sunday School, then going home, missing the meeting for worship which followed. Mother decided we were old enough to stay for "meeting" so one Sunday without saying anything to us before hand Papa met us as we were leaving Sunday School and said we were to go with him and Mother to meeting. I was not pleased at the prospect but knew that there was nothing else to do but go. Papa and Mother sat on the second row from the front and I dreaded to go so far up where I would have to sit so quietly but there I sat until I got a seat, years later, in the choir.

Often I would try to relieve the tedium by having some of my friends sit with me. Once when a visiting minister of the emotional type asked for all the Christians to stand he caught me off guard. Not knowing exactly what was expected of me, I kept my seat. The preacher came down from the rostrum straight to talk to me. But Papa came to my rescue. He reached around behind Mother and drew me away from the preacher to stand with him for he had no patience with emotional indulgences in meeting. One of my cousins knew better how to cope with such a situation. Once when he did not stand in response to such a request the preacher went

to him asking if he did not wish to testify to God's grace by standing.

"No."

"Wouldn't thee like to kneel here and have a little prayer?"

"No."

"Well, doesn't thee want to go to heaven?"

"Not yet."

That closed the conference.

Papa was always looking out for the unfortunate and the stranger. If, after meeting, he saw someone standing around looking lonely or hungry, more often than not, Papa would ask him home to dinner. Often when someone declined his invitation he would say to us, "Well, we saved our dinner and our manners, too."

Our house stood near the station road and if on a Sunday morning we saw some odd-looking person go by we would say: "Look out, that man will be here for dinner" and we were often correct.

One special Sunday I remember. As we were about to leave home for Sunday School we saw an unusually large man walking past our house toward the meeting house, supposedly having come in on the train that had not long before passed on the way from Greensboro to Winston-Salem.

"Who can that be, Anna?" I said.

"I don't know, I never saw him before."

"Well, mark my words, he will be sitting at our table when we eat dinner."

We did not see him again until as meeting was convening he walked into the meeting house alone and took his seat about half way down in the middle tier. The meeting was honored that day with the presence of Charles Tebbetts, a Quaker leader, who had come with a special message at that time. As soon as the meeting had settled into quietness, with everyone more or less awaiting the sermon by Charles Tebbetts, this big man, the stranger we had seen on the road, arose and began talking and talking without much point or purpose. He finally got the idea across that he

thought it was wrong to have a planned program for a meeting for worship. Every one began to fidget. Then Albert Peele, the patriarch of the meeting arose, the stranger still talking, and said: "I hope our friend will be as brief as possible for we have another friend, also, to be heard today." Friend stranger took his seat immediately but when Mother and Papa drove into the yard after meeting he was sitting in the carriage with them and was our guest for the rest of the day.

But these were just rare occurrences which stand out in my mind. There were the usual Sunday mornings spent in quiet unhurried worship with sermons by numbers of different preachers, with hymns and prayers, aided in the summer time by the breezes, the birdsongs and the perfume of the out-of-doors, all of which opened the very doors of heaven and gave access to the Heavenly Father whom we sought to know and to obey.

# *Grandparents*

When we gained a stepmother we also acquired an extra set of grandparents. Of my grandfather Henry Davis and my grandmother Oriana Mendenhall I have no recollection. I barely remember grandfather Nereus Mendenhall. Although he was the most widely known of my grandparents it was not as a physician, nor scholar, nor religious leader that I knew him, but simply as a good grandfather to a very small girl. Papa has told me how grandfather Nereus held us in his arms and sang to us a song of his own composition. When my children were small Papa did the same for them, using grandfather's song. Thinking it ought to be preserved and handed down to other generations he wrote it out for me on the occasion of one of his visits to me and here it is:

Ho, Ho, Ho
What does the po
Little Eskimo
Do when it snow
And the wind blow?
He gets on his slide
And away he glide
Down to the sea
As quick as a bee.

He catch him a seal
And think it weal.
He take off the skin
And he jump in.
He catch him a fish,
A very fine dish.
He eat it up both head and tail
For the Eskimo stomach
It never fail.

It was grandfather Elihu Mendenhall who provided us with the traditional grandfather's house. He lived on a large farm and operated a tan yard, a shoe factory and a store. It was interesting and a little revolting to see the cow and horse hides soaking with oak bark in vats dug deep in the earth, being made ready for shoe or harness leather. Then there was the room where the shoes were made by hand, each part being carefully cut by pattern from the proper piece of leather. There was only one style, rough brogan, for all sizes. Some of them—especially the children's shoes—had a copper tip to protect the toe of the shoe and perhaps of the wearer. Anna always wanted a pair of copper-toed shoes that came from Grandfather's shop and he gave us each a pair. But I never enjoyed mine. I thought they were ugly and wore them with much humiliation. Anna wore hers with pride.

The two-story house painted white was a good example of Southern Colonial architecture, with a small front portico, a wide central hall with two rooms on each side and the stairway leading to the second floor. The dining room, kitchen and back porch formed a long ell at the rear. There was also an intriguing third floor attic full of old furniture and trunks containing dresses and bonnets of a former generation. In this attic we spent many happy hours with Mother's little nieces, Annie, Cassie and Mary Mendenhall, who lived nearby. In fact we might enjoy a whole afternoon there, investigating the contents of the trunks, dressing up in the basques and bustles, learning how to manage the hoop skirts when

we sat down and acting as grand ladies at a party. If Grandmother Abigail cared if we played there we never knew it.

At the foot of the slight hill on which the house stood there was a spring of cold clear water and beside the spring was the brick springhouse with troughs filled with the cold water flowing constantly from the spring. Here were crocks of milk, cream, buttermilk and butter. Cakes, pies, preserves and fresh fruits and vegetables were kept in cupboards in the springhouse too.

Beside the path from the house to the springhouse there stood the ash hopper. The bottom of this covered V-shaped structure was lined with wheat straw then all the wood ashes from the house were emptied into it and when enough ashes had been collected or when the need arose, water was poured in. The liquid that drained out at the bottom of the V was a good grade of lye and was used in making soap.

It was their observance of Thanksgiving that impressed me most. The immediate family was not large but there were numerous relatives and all of these were invited to Grandfather Elihu's for Thanksgiving Day. Sometimes some of the kinfolks were "in from Kansas" or Indiana and they were always included. Often some of the teachers and students from the college were there. Extra tables were placed in the dining room and even then sometimes some of the guests had to wait until the "second table." We children used to like to wait because there was less supervision then.

Throughout the fall we looked forward to Thanksgiving day at Grandfather's. It was always cold and sometimes snowy. Preparations were made days ahead. Sometimes Papa would have the double tongue put on the carriage instead of the shafts so he could drive two horses thus making the trip in a shorter time and with more ease for us and for the horses. Mother usually had something to take to her family so on the evening before she got everything ready and put the pieces of soapstone at the side of the fire place so that during the evening and night they would absorb plenty of heat. In the morning they would be wrapped

with paper then thick cloth pad and put in the carriage for foot warmers. Sometimes a lighted lantern was placed under the lap robe. If the weather was bad the curtains were put up around the carriage and we sat all dimly sheltered from the elements.

Of course to us the dinner was the crowning event of the day. And indeed it was a feast beginning with oyster stew with big yellow blobs of butter floating around on top, and ending with cake, candy, nuts and raisins. There was turkey and beef and ham, potatoes and parsnips and carrots—cranberry sauce in sauce dishes beside our plates and good crisp celery standing up in the celery glasses. Then came mince and pumpkin pie followed by the sweets and nuts. There was an incident at one of the dinners that Henry never forgot. The dishes had been removed after the main course and the pie was being served, a wedge of pumpkin and a wedge of mince on each plate. In his boyish awkwardness Henry's hands tangled with his plate and sent it tumbling to the floor. "But," Henry always added, "I caught both pieces of pie on their way down and the plate didn't break. So everything was all right."

I remember especially the year when, instead of bowing our heads in silent prayer around the dining table, we sang hymns of thanksgiving as grace before the meal. There were some good voices among the guests and it seemed to me a beautiful expression of the thanks we so sincerely felt.

I knew Grandmother Davis best of all my grandparents. She spent the last years of her life at our home and it was my especial duty to take care of her. She was crippled with rheumatism and each day I helped her dress and undress. In winter I kindled the fire in her heater and saw that she had a supply of wood for the day. She taught me to knit and turned the heel when I had learned to knit stockings. She also helped me knit a pair of mitts such as were in use in her day. She talked to me of the old days when she was young and of the members of her family whom she still held in loving memory. Sometimes she would ask me to bring out her box of letters which, I think, contained most of the letters

she had ever received, and she would pick out special ones for me to read aloud.

When she came to our house she, naturally, brought many of her own things with her, some fine old pieces of furniture, the leather-bound family Bible with large print, a very old Elias Hitchcock clock whose weights had to be wound up each day. It was Henry's duty to wind the clock. The key was crank-shaped and, until she could feel perfectly satisfied for him to care for the clock, she always told him to "put the key at the figure three and turn toward the figure six." Henry must have got his love for old things while winding Grandmother's clock for her.

Her place at the table was always set with her own china or table ware "to make her feel more at home." Mother and Papa did not drink coffee, but Grandmother always had her breakfast coffee which she drank from the saucer. She poured the coffee first into the cup, put in sugar and cream, then from the cup she poured it into the saucer, placing the cup in a small cup-dish which was near the saucer.

She was well past eighty years old when she came to live with us. For fifteen years since Grandfather's death she had stayed at her farm home alone except for colored Abby who helped with the work, and now and then an unattached relative or neighbor who made her home there as a companion. Of the five children only Uncle Stephen, the oldest, and Papa were left. Two younger sons had died in early manhood and Cordelia the only daughter had married and gone to live in Kansas and had died there. Uncle Stephen lived on a farm about a mile from Grandmother's. Grandfather Nereus Mendenhall's farm joined the Davis farm, the dwellings being nearer one another than most farm dwellings are, but now the Mendenhalls had left the farm and only occasionally was the house occupied. So as Grandmother became more feeble and as it was increasingly difficult to find someone to stay with her Mother asked her to come to live with us and she accepted.

We, her grandchildren, enjoyed visiting her when she was keeping house; and Anna and I spent a week with her each summer,

usually going in August so that Papa and Mother would have the time free to attend all the sessions of Yearly Meeting. Of course we were not allowed to go until we could be trusted to take care of ourselves and perhaps be of some help to Grandmother. But poor Grandmother! I am sure she mistrusted our ability to take care of ourselves and I am afraid we were anything but a help to her. We were too active and venturesome for one of her age. We would run down the lane toward the "big road" and pull up sassafras roots so we could chew the aromatic bark. Once she made us some tea of the dried sassafras bark. With milk and sugar added it was a lovely pink color and most delicious we thought. We would sit on the big barnyard gate and call as loudly as we could toward the barn in order to hear the echo of our voices. It was there that I learned the meaning of the word echo. We would rock in the big porch settee with such vigor that the whole house quivered.

Large sugar maples shaded the house on the east and south and afforded us a pleasant place to play on the gravelly ground which was much nicer than the rocky red clay at home but sometimes we would play bareheaded in the hot sunshine in the nice clean sand when we should have been sitting quietly in the house. Grandmother said little girls with fair skin and blond hair should not expose their complexions to the sunshine. It was a shame we had no sunbonnets. We must wear hers. Then she had some pretty bonnets made for us. They were not calico slat bonnets like hers, but of a blue-gray chambray made with quilted brims and full crowns and with ruffles all around the edges. They had nice long ties to be tied snugly under our chins to hold the bonnets secure. She never knew how those bonnets choked and suffocated us when we wore them as she intended and that mostly we wore them with the ties tied at the ends and the bonnets hanging down our backs, swinging from our necks.

Grandmother's whole place was very interesting to me because it was so different from ours. Coming in the long lane from the road before reaching the site of the house we passed near the

"shop." In those days every farm of any consequence had its blacksmith shop with bellows and forge and anvil where the farm implements might be made or repaired and where the horse shoes were shaped to fit the horses's hooves, then nailed on with the sharply tapering horseshoe nails. I could understand and appreciate Longfellow's *The Village Blacksmith* because I, too, liked to see fire on the forge blown to white heat by the blasts of air from the big bellows. But what I liked better was the permission to blow the fire in the kitchen fireplace with the small hand bellows that was kept near by.

The dwelling was a square salt box type with two large main rooms, the kitchen and the sitting room. Built around these on three sides were the porch with shed rooms at each end, four bedrooms and a well room. There was a large fruit-and-root cellar under the kitchen, and instead of a springhouse such as Grandfather Elihu had she had a dairy cellar below the level of the well room. The crocks of milk sat in a large round trough of solid stone and were kept cool by water from the deep well just outside the kitchen door and adjacent to the cellar. When there was just a small amount of butter or cream that Grandmother wanted to keep cool she put it in a tin pail and let it down in the well, suspended by a stout cord. The large stone trough had formerly been used for grinding gold ore in the Davis mine in the years when North Carolina was one of the leading states in the production of gold.

The interior of the house intrigued me. The sitting room and some of the bedrooms were dimly lighted, due to the maple trees, the deep porch and the small windows. The rooms were adequately furnished, all of the pieces being made of the best woods but there was a simplicity and solidity about them that made them almost austere. Most of them had belonged to older relatives and acquired at "the sale." It seems that the custom of settling up an estate was to have a sale of all the property of the deceased and relatives had the opportunity of "buying in" what they wanted.

So Grandmother had the solid walnut corner cupboard, the mahogany stand of drawers, the cherry wood table, the cypress "chist with a till," and walnut candle stands and spool beds. But one of the things that interested us most was a large paper picture of Noah's Ark with a long line of animals entering two by two. Sitting on the cypress chest near the picture we would amuse ourselves for long periods of time pointing out and naming all the animals we knew and there were many that we learned by having someone point them out and name them for us. The picture was fastened on a long wooden roller and it must have been one of a set of maps and illustrated Bible stories but that one picture of Noah's Ark and animals is all that I recall.

Like many people in those days Grandmother had a buffalo robe, the thick hairy hide of the buffalo which in earlier days had been so abundant throughout our country. I thought that robe was a mark of distinction and one afternoon instead of taking my rest on the quilt pallet which she used for me, I asked to be allowed to sleep on the buffalo robe. She put it down on the bedroom floor and very happily I lay down on it. But my happiness did not last long. It was hot. The hair was coarse and sticky and I soon wished I had never asked for the buffalo robe.

Once when I had mashed my finger with a stone in the yard Grandmother got her fragrant "bamigilead" salve and fixed it up right away. I knew that she herself had made the salve from the resin in the leaf buds of a tree that grew near the house but it was only after Henry had rooted a twig of the tree and transplanted it in the yard at home that I learned that it was the Balm of Gilead tree and not "bamigilead" as I had heard from Grandmother.

Although she had kerosene lamps Grandmother still used candles just for general lighting. She made her own candles from a mixture of beeswax and tallow. There was a day when her supply of candles was getting low so she got the candle molds, let me help her knot and stretch the twine through the molds for the wicks; then she poured in the liquid wax and set it aside to harden.

The candles were about eight inches long and the molds were small, making only six or eight candles at a time. So it was a long process to make enough candles for a season's supply.

Across the path from the house was the granary with large bins holding bushels and bushels of wheat and oats which had been grown and threshed on the farm. The door to the granary was kept locked because there was stored the food supplies for man and beast until the next harvest.

Behind the house were the rows of beehives furnishing honey for the table. There, too, was the garden where the best vegetables ever grown could be gathered as needed. In the slight ravine between the Davis and Mendenhall houses was a thicket of blackberry vines where luscious berries abounded, but after my first experience of gathering them I never wanted to go berrying again. All unaware I collected on my body so many chiggers that I almost became ill.

In that part of the state there were many small grist mills whose large stones were turned by the force of water from the creeks and rivers that were making their way to the larger water courses and to the sea. To these mills the farmers carried their wheat and corn to have it ground into flour or meal, and the farmer who had to buy his flour was not considered a very good farmer.

For many years, even after the modern roller mills came into general use, Papa had an interest in The Little Mill on a fork of Deep River and not far from Grandmother's house. Here he took his corn for corn meal and his wheat for white and graham flour. Mother always maintained that this burr flour, as it was called, was more healthful than the more modern bleached flour.

Above the mill the river was dammed to form the mill pond and beside the pond stood the miller's house. On certain days of the week or when the miller had a large order for grinding he would open the water gate, directing the water into the huge waterwheel which began to turn and set in motion the mill stones which crushed and ground the grain into flour. This was sifted through the bolting cloth and run into large heavy sacks.

Papa always tried to get the flour from his own wheat after the miller took out his toll to pay for the grinding, but sometimes he did not have time to wait if other grain was being ground, or if, on account of dry weather, there was not enough water to turn the wheel, then he would bring home flour from some other farmer's wheat.

Often he would take us in the buckboard with him when he went to mill, or to Grandmother's. We did not play around the mill very much. We were allowed to see the working parts if they were not in operation and we always stepped up on the scales to learn how much weight we had gained since our last visit. The door was in two sections and if the mill was running the lower half of the door was always fastened. The smell of the freshly ground flour and the sight of the room and the miller, covered with the powdery flour dust, is still with me.

Beside the road going to Grandmother's there stood the "Burnt Poplar," the shell of a large old poplar tree whose heart had been burned out many years before. Naturally many legends had grown up about it: Some said that Revolutionary soldiers had camped beside it and their camp fire had burned the south side of the tree causing that part of it to die. Another legend was that it had been the hiding place for deserters in the Civil War. Certainly the blackened cavern held a fascination for us and we were always interested when we neared it for it was the half-way mark from our house to Grandmother's. It was also a favorite perch for a great horned owl which could often be seen in daylight, sitting on one of the highest limbs of the tree. Papa often told us of a conversation he had had with the owl late one afternoon: As he was driving home the owl had called out from his lofty perch: Whoo-whoo-whoo-ah-hoo to which Papa replied: "Just Frank Davis going to mill!"

Grandmother had mattresses of feathers on all of her beds and when we were visiting her we slept on one of the beds in her room and she on the other. It was pleasant lying on the soft feathers, keeping awake for a few minutes listening to the whippoorwills

calling near the house. But there were two nights that I remember that were terrifying. I was a sound sleeper but on one occasion I was awakened by the horrendous noises of a cat fight on the porch near our room. After my first fright I realized what it was and only wished the cats would stop. But for what seemed a long time they kept up their unearthly yowling. The next fright was much worse—Grandmother became sick and when I awakened she was sitting by the wash stand heaving and groaning. I was stiff with fright. I tried to be quiet so that Anna would not wake up and be frightened, too. For a while Grandmother would be relieved, then she would get up and go through with the whole thing again. I covered up my head and held my eyes tightly closed and prayed over and over, "Dear God, please don't let her die." We were the only ones in the house then and I was relieved to know in the morning that my prayer had been answered and Grandmother was almost well. That was our last visit with her in her home for she soon came to live with us. She was past eighty-six when she died after two days of illness which Mother thought was acute appendicitis although the physician never made a definite diagnosis.

She had talked to me often of what she wanted done when she died. She had her clothes all ready and everything in order. She gave me her walnut corner cupboard, and the leather and plush side-saddle which she used in her younger days along with the riding skirt for use with the side-saddle. She had already given me a wool blanket which she herself had made through all the processes from the sheep's wool to the hand-woven blanket. She wanted this to be used as a sheet for she thought it was necessary for children to have woolen covering in the cold weather.

The funeral was conducted in the Deep River meeting house and the burial in the burying ground adjacent to the meeting house where so many of her family rested. I rode the seven miles from home to the meeting house with the Quaker minister, James R. Jones. There was not much conversation between us. He asked

me how old Grandmother was and I told him she was eighty-six on the ninth of July, 1902. He said that was a ripe old age.

On our way back from the burial my habitual thought of her returned, storing up in my mind the interesting things I would tell her when I got home. Then came the shock that she would not be there to hear them.

Although my grandparents differed widely in their personalities they had in common certain sterling qualities of character for which we, their descendants, must be eternally thankful: their personal integrity; their sense of responsibility toward their fellowmen and their unfailing allegiance to justice, truth and sincerity under every circumstance of life.

# *Other Relatives*

Grandfather Nereus Mendenhall had a brother Cyrus who was a banker and lawyer in Greensboro. He married the wealthy and fashionable Nancy Staples, who was not a Friend and who brought with her to her new home a retinue of slaves. Both marriage "out of meeting," and the possession of slaves were contrary to Quaker custom so Uncle Cyrus was disowned. In other words he was turned out of meeting.

Mary and Pearl, two of their daughters who grew to maturity, were noted for their beauty and their accomplishments. Mary was trained in music, both vocal and instrumental, and must have been something of a charmer, too, for after many years and much experience she told me that at one time in her younger days there were sixteen young men waiting for her answer to their proposals of marriage. When I was about ten years old Cousin Mary, with her two young sons, Waller and Robert and an invalid brother, Percy, came from Greensboro to make her home at Guilford College. She brought some of the glamour of "society" with her in the elegant house furnishings, her musical instruments and the big iron balls she had set up in her front yard. Her younger son, called Robbie then, had been my dinner companion at Aunt Genie's wedding. Having no sister of his own, and being near our ages, he liked to play at our house. We introduced him to

the games and entertainments of rural life and he in turn shared his town games with us. Just before completing his medical studies at Vanderbilt University he contracted typhoid fever and his promising career was cut short.

Soon after coming to Guilford Cousin Mary announced that she would give music lessons and the question of my beginning the study of music was raised in the family. By that time Quakers conceded that there was much in music that was beautiful and elevating and that a knowledge and appreciation of good music was a necessary part of an all round education. So I began music lessons. But only in vacations. My school work must not be interrupted by the extra study of music. We had no instrument, but so eager was Cousin Mary to have some pupils she offered to give me a lesson then let me practice for half an hour on her piano. She put a pile of thick books on the floor for my feet and adjusted the revolving piano stool to the correct height and I started on my musical career.

At the same time Mother thought I should begin to learn something about keeping accounts and she set up a page for me to keep books on the cost of my music lessons and sheet music. But I am sorry to say I do not now have any evidence of pages of neatly kept accounts.

Cousin Mary, through her musical ability, contributed a great deal to the enrichment of the life of the community. She freely helped with the singing in Sunday School, and with school programs, playing marches and accompaniments for songs. Early in my experience she wanted me to sing a lullaby to my doll on stage at some school program but she was afraid Papa would not approve. He was still not enthusiastic about just any kind of music. She said she did not understand how anyone could object to singing, for she felt that heaven was full of music and that angels were always singing around the throne of God; but I must first get Papa's permission. He had no objection and I sang the solo to my doll, but it was a far cry from an angel's song.

In the meantime the community was growing. Families with

children were moving in to take advantage of the good educational opportunities offered by the new graded school and the college. Some were Quakers and some were not. The Methodists of the Muirs Chapel Circuit built their parsonage just one door from our house. All the new-comers were good citizens, taking part in community life, and if not members of the meeting most of them took an active part in the Sunday School.

How it happened I do not know, but after many years of singing hit-or-miss in Sunday School there suddenly appeared in the meeting room a small reed organ. I do not know if the Sunday School or meeting or individuals bought the little thing but it evidently was there to fill a need for better singing and to help those who knew instrumental music to direct those who did not. I do know that it did not meet with the whole hearted approval of some of the older members of the meeting. It was never mentioned at our home though I knew that Papa did not believe in such diversion from the true purpose of Sunday School. Then as suddenly and as quietly the organ disappeared. No one knew where it was nor how it was transported. The mystery of the organ remained unsolved for many months until it was found secluded in a closet under the stairway in one of the college buildings. More than fifty years later the principals in the act confessed. Richard Hobbs had heard his parents say they did not approve of squeaky, crude music in Sunday School and Meeting, and certainly that little organ was not capable of anything else, so Richard decided to do something about it. Under cover of darkness he and Henry had carried the offending member from the meeting house and put it safely away in its hiding place, and for half a century no one knew who had removed the organ.

During the noon recess toward the end of the second year of our graded school my friend, Kezzie Woosley, and I were in the school room studying our spelling. Having left our playmates in the school yard playing hopscotch, and jump-the-rope, prison-base and drop-the-handkerchief, we had come into the room to make sure that we were prepared for the afternon lesson. We studied

the "blue back speller," but did not spell by syllables as Papa had recommended. Kezzie, the daughter of the Methodist minister, Mr. Woosley, lived in the parsonage near our house and was older and much more advanced than I, but we studied the same spelling lesson, since the class was composed of every one in the room. She called out a column of words for me to spell, then I called another column for her. We finished quickly and took up general conversation. I was intrigued by a beautiful "breast pin" that she wore at her throat; a circular wreath of opals framing a small picture of a handsome young man. I knew he was someone special to her but neither of us referred to the pin nor to the young man. Suddenly she asked, "Do you have an ideal?"

"Ideal, what do you mean?" I answered.

"Someone that you think is just right and that you want to be like."

"Yes, my Aunt Gertrude."

"Why do you want to be like her?"

"Because she is a teacher and everything she has is pretty and everything she does is nice."

My Aunt Gertrude Mendenhall was my ideal. Indeed she was someone special to each of her five nieces and ten nephews.

When she graduated from Wellesley College she came back to North Carolina to teach at Peace Institute in Raleigh. There she was associated with Charles D. McIver who had already started on a campaign for better public education for the children of the state. This concern of his developed into a crusade for education for the young women of the state and it was while working for this cause that he made the famous statement that became the battle cry for the cause: "When you educate a man you educate an individual but when you educate a woman you educate a family." From Peace College Aunt Gertrude went to be a member of the first faculty of Guilford College but when the State Normal and Industrial College for Young Women was established at Greensboro in 1891, Dr. McIver the newly appointed president called her to be in charge of the mathematics department and to act as

its first professor. So she left Guilford and spent the rest of her life in Greensboro teaching young women who came to what is now the Woman's College of the University of North Carolina.

In her busy life she never forgot us nor failed to pay us special attention. She seemed to feel a responsibility toward us and at the same time to take a special pride in having us with her. Often she would come out on the train to see us for short visits. Sometimes she would hire a hack and bring some of her fellow teachers out to Guilford and sometimes take us back to visit with her in Greensboro. We grew to know the teachers at "The Normal" almost as well as we did those at Guilford.

At first "Aunt Gertie," along with other members of the faculty lived in Dr. McIver's home and we became friends with Mrs. McIver and the children in the family. Later she bought a home at 1023 Spring Garden Street opposite what was then the main building of the Normal and until her death in 1926 she maintained a gracious and hospitable home there, open not only to her relatives but for her fellow teachers, her pupils, and her friends in Greensboro. She often had two or three other teachers living with her, changing according to circumstances but one remained constant and permanent: Miss Melville Fort, the head of the Art Department, and like Aunt Gertrude a member of the first faculty.

I remember the day when I was about three years old that Aunt Gertrude took me to dinner with her in the College dining room at Guilford. We were guests at a teacher's table and I was quite innocently entertaining the group by giving some animated account of a recent experience. Suddenly I looked up and realized that not only those at our table but all around us had stopped eating and were looking at me. My story ended abruptly. Immediately I hung my head and so great was my embarrassment I could not be persuaded to answer any more questions nor to take any dessert. My shyness was painful.

Aunt Gertrude seemed to be able to recognize in each of us our best potential abilities and did everything she could to develop them. It was at her suggestion that I began music lessons. When

Anna showed an aptitude for drawing and painting Aunt Gertrude contacted the art teacher at Greensboro College and made the appointments for Anna to go there for lessons. She offered rewards for mental attainments and as much as possible gave us such advantages as we could not have in our small community life. There was the summer day when Gertrude Hobbs, Anna and I were visiting her in town. She had met us at the train and had taken us to a drug store for a limeade. It was the first time we had ever had a carbonated drink. We felt very sophisticated and a little uneasy but "Little Gertrude" gave expression to our feelings when she said, "It's good but it hurts." She seemed determined that we should not grow up to be what one of the Guilford students had called us: such sweet simple little girls.

When Ernest Thompson Seton was to lecture at "The Normal," Aunt Gertrude arranged for Anna and me to go into town on the afternoon train, hear the lecture and spend the night with her, and return home next day on the morning train. We had good seats in the auditorium and sat waiting for the lecture but he did not appear. After much time and some impatience on the part of the audience it was announced that Mr. Seton's train was late but he would give his lecture as soon as he arrived at the college. After an hour or more of waiting he arrived in not too good humor. Before he began his talk he rather gruffly apologized for the delay. When the train had finally arrived the driver of the college hack had tried to save time by taking a short cut from the railway station to the college and the hack with the driver and lecturer had got stuck in the mud and caused further delay. But he delighted us with his lecture, giving an account of some of his well known animal characters.

To get us home the next morning Aunt Gertrude went with us in a hired hack to the railway station and left us in the care of the colored bagagge man until time to board the train. She could not stay with us because she must meet her early classes. When we arrived at the station at Guilford, Papa and Henry were already at school so we walked home, changed our dresses and went to

school for the rest of the day. Although we had missed some of our lessons we were much the richer for having seen and heard one of our favorite authors.

I keep in my mind a picture of Aunt Gertrude which seems to me to exemplify her whole character. The walk from her home led straight across Spring Garden Street to the door of McIver Building where she taught. Each morning neatly and meticulously dressed, having gone over with her maid the plans for her household, she set out punctually for her classroom. I see her now walking to her daily work, tall, erect, resolute, yet emanating grace, beauty and dedication.

In our immediate family there was another aunt, Julia Mendenhall Moore, the third daughter of Nereus and Oriana Mendenhall.

As a young woman Aunt Julia had gone to Wayne County to teach in a Friends School. There she met, fell in love and married a young farmer, George Moore. At that time the distance from Goldsboro to Greensboro was great and visits between the families were rare. Aunt Julia with her five sons and one daughter did come to Guilford often enough for us to know them all and we had for them a cousinly affection but we lacked the close association of growing up together.

During summer vacations Anna and I always looked forward to our visits at Uncle Stephen's. His daughter Mary and foster daughter Annie were older than we were but the whole family made us most welcome and seemed to enjoy us more because we were still little girls. We took with us a spirit of play and fun that perhaps had already escaped them.

Of all the places I knew Uncle Stephen's was the most idyllic. The dwelling, typically early American, and always glistening white, stood on a slight hill, sheltered by large oaks, maples and locusts. The grass in the yard was thick and dark green and there were lilacs, sweet betseys and box bushes along the garden walk. The front porch looked down the gradually sloping hill to the barns and the river beyond. The well and well-house were about 40 feet back of the kitchen and beyond that was the apple

orchard. All the buildings were kept in good repair and there was a cleanness and orderliness even in the fields that gave a pastoral charm that attracted me to the place.

At sunset the cows, with tinkling bells, came up the long cedar lane and stood at the lower gate waiting to be turned into the barn for milking. If we awoke early enough in the morning we could hear from our small second story rooms the commotion and the lowing of the cows as they were driven from the barn to graze in the meadow or lie in the shade of the willow trees along the banks of the river. Unlike Papa, Uncle Stephen worked his horses quietly, but raised his voice in directing the cows to their right places. At evening we might hear him yelling at "Brindle" or "Old Blue," or "Jenny" to make them go to the right place and stand quietly. Unlike Papa, too, he was a trader. When Papa bought a horse it was a lifetime deal, but when Uncle Stephen bought one he kept it until he could get another one that he liked better. The convening of county court in Greensboro was also a time of buying, selling and swapping of livestock by the farmers of the county and Uncle Stephen was likely to be among them to see if there might be some horse or cow that he could use to advantage.

Uncle Stephen's first wife, Roxie Welborn, died when Mary was a small girl. After due time he began to "pay attention" to Vetura Reynolds who lived in High Point. One Sunday afternoon he drove over to see her and before he left, asked her to marry him. She refused. However when he had said farewell and was unhitching his horse to go home, he presented such a picture of despair and loneliness that she could not stand it. She called to him to come back and told him she had changed her mind; she would accept his proposal and they might begin to plan for their wedding. In later years she said that she never had regretted that change of mind.

In keeping with the tradition of early Quakers they had no piano or organ in their house but Mary did have a large Swiss music box and a number of metal disks, somewhat like phono-

graph records which determined the tunes. In the evenings when supper was over and the day's work done we would all gather in the large sitting room kept cool in summer and warm in winter by the thick inner-wall of logs. Then we would listen to the music from the music box or look at the *Greensboro Patriot* or the *Ladies Home Journal* left in their mail box by the newly-established R.F.D. Before time to go to bed Uncle Stephen was likely to say, "Anna, what was it James Jones (the preacher) said?" Anna knew what he meant and was happy to oblige with some of her inimitable mimicry. As she stood giving out the most fantastic exhortations, Uncle Stephen shook with laughter and Aunt Vetura smiled broadly, not being quite sure that it was proper to have fun from a mock sermon. Certainly there was nothing profane or sacrilegious about what Anna said. She simply used that medium because she knew no other.

Great-Aunt Minerva Mendenhall was the most legendary member of the family, partly because of her age and partly because of her surroundings. She was Grandfather Nereus' oldest sister, a large woman as were most of the Mendenhalls; had been a school teacher in her early years and had never married. She lived in the family home on the main street of Old Jamestown on the tract of land granted by the Earl of Granville to James Mendenhall when he migrated in 1754 from Pennsylvania to North Carolina. Even at her advanced age she managed her affairs and kept up with things outside her home. One of my earliest recollections of her is the occasion of a visit with her when I was five or six years old. The colored man who helped around the place had come in to talk to her about the work for the day, and she asked me if I would like to go with him and others to pick peas. I did want to go and enjoyed the activity of the morning. When I came to the house about noon she held out her clenched hand to me, saying, "Hold fast to what I give thee" and slipped a nickel into my hand. She had two dogs, a small Pekingese and a large one whose breed I do not know, both of which she let stay in the house with her. She was the only person I knew who permitted dogs in

the house. We were warned against stepping on the big dog's tail lest he bite us and we gave him a wide berth.

The house, built about 1800 as a combination dwelling and inn, stood adjacent to the street with the front porch paved with flagstones even with the sidewalk. The first floor was on four levels and would, at the present time, be called a split-level house. On special occasions we sat in the parlor at the west end of the house, where I had a hard time keeping still on the hair-cloth sofa or mashed my fingers in the platform rocker. I wanted to get up and examine all the fascinating things I saw: the bouquet of wax flowers under their glass dome; the golden clock also under its glass cover, and many other interesting things. A door from the parlor opened onto a large formal garden. There were some tall cone-bearing trees near the house, then boxwoods and flowers and beyond these the vegetable garden. I was glad to leave the parlor for the freedom of the garden but I had to be careful not to go too near the row of beehives along the garden fence. We were more at home in Aunt Minerva's sitting-room and were thrilled to go through the door that opened on a secret spiral stairway leading to the bedrooms on the second floor.

The place is described in the book *Old Homes and Gardens of North Carolina* by Henderson and Wooten.

I enjoyed all my associations with my relatives and friends, but I could not then know of the rich heritage of happy memories and the inspiration of their nobility of character that would be mine in later years.

# *Twentieth Century Changes*

Charles B. Aycock was inaugurated governor of North Carolina in 1901. He had made his gubernatorial "campaign a crusade for public education" and upon taking office he set to work on a state-wide campaign for "free public schools, open to all, supported by the taxes of all its citizens." He went through the whole state making speeches to arouse the people to the need of better public schools, and longer terms of instruction. Our little community was already aware of the needs and readily responded to his plan. Even with two teachers in the subscription school, and one teacher in the "free school" educational facilities were inadequate. Before the year was over our district had been formed and the citizens had voted for a public graded school to be supported by special taxation. It was, thus, the first rural graded school in the state.

In the fall of 1901 the Guilford College Graded School began operation. An additional room was built near the original two-room building, the "free school" was abandoned and all the children in the district came to our school buildings. There were three teachers. The grades were necessarily irregular, each teacher taking the equivalent of two grades. Clement O. Meredith, a recent graduate of Guilford and Haverford was the first principal, and teacher of the fifth and sixth grades. I was in the fourth grade and studied Common School Arithmetic, Mental Arithmetic, Gram-

mar, Geography, Reading, Spelling, and Writing. We had a "Library" in the room, a small bookcase of two shelves and it was there that I chose my first library book, a biography of Robert E. Lee.

The next year Professor Meredith went to teach at the college and we had for our principal and teacher, R. William McCulloch, a senior at the college. At the close of the six months term it was fitting that Governor Aycock come to give the commencement address. Of the exercises I only remember his eloquent and fervent appeal for better education for all the citizens of the state. When the program was over, I, along with others, was hurrying off the stage when Professor McCulloch called to me. He wanted to give me the honor of shaking hands with the Governor. I was excited and flustered, and although I was proud to have had the great man speak to me, I was relieved when I could go on out with my classmates.

After our school closed Professor McCulloch joined his class at the College, graduated and went on to further study in education. When the graded school opened in the fall we went into a new four-room brick building with four teachers and an enlarged enrollment.

A few years after our new school was established another change began in our neighborhood. At the same time I learned a new word and got a vague idea of some of the affairs. When Papa came home one afternoon he told Mother there would be a mass meeting at the schoolhouse that night to discuss voting bonds for good roads. I could guess at the meaning of mass meeting but I had no idea what voting bonds could be. I learned that all the people of the community were asked to come together to express their opinions and wishes about borrowing money enough to build a macadam road from the station to the college. If the plan met with the approval of most of the citizens a special election would be called for a general vote on "floating bonds" for the transaction. It was long before women had the right to vote, but Quaker women, having always had equal rights with the men in all the affairs of

the meeting, were naturally interested in this community concern and had perfect freedom to attend. For some reason I was one of those present at the mass meeting, hearing the discussions and learning that there was more to the movement than I had known. It had already been generally discussed in the neighborhood and the leaders of the movement knew fairly well the attitudes of their neighbors. When the meeting had been opened and the purpose stated, most of the men freely expressed their opinions on the subject. They stated the need for better roads and their approval of the plan to borrow the money, through bonds, since that seemed the only way possible to get the improved road. It seemed that it was about to be unanimous until the chairman arose and thanked those who had spoken their minds and asked if there were others who would like to say something. "We have not heard anything from our friend J. B. Smith over here. Will you tell us, Mr. Smith, how you feel about this plan?" John Baptist Smith stood up immediately and said, "I am unalterably opposed to such a plan. The Bible clearly tells us to owe no man anything except to love one another and you are planning to go into debt for thousands of dollars. We have no right to put upon the shoulders of our children and our grandchildren the load of debt which they did not assume. I shall emphatically vote against it."

But the election was called, the bonds were "floated" and in due time the road was built, the first rural hard-surfaced road in the county.

There was undoubtedly need for improved roads. The county system of maintenance was hardly adequate with the automobile coming into more general use in the towns. They were just "dirt roads," some more easily kept up than others depending on the soil and the natural drainage. The road to Greensboro from the College was fairly good since there were few steep hills and the soil contained more sand or gravel than was found in some other sections. The road by our house from the college to the railroad station was not so good. The soil was pure red clay but full of stones large and small; the hills were steep, and the bridges which

spanned the little spring-fed streams which ran through the valleys, were both low and light. In case of continued bad weather the red mud was slippery and, at the same time, sticky, and except for the abundance of stones in the soil the road might have become impassable.

Because our house stood at the top of the steepest hill there was always the problem of going down the hill in the mud as we left home and climbing the hill on our return. Coming up never seemed so dreadful as going down. Many times I put my hands over my eyes in dread and fear as Julie's big feet sank into the mud and slipped in her effort to hold back the carriage and keep it in the roadway. Pulling up the hill always seemed safer though it must have required more of the horse's power. At any rate our home was at the top of the hill and there was great relief when we turned from the road into the driveway and toward the barn. In case of very dry weather there was the problem of the fine red dust which settled on our clothes and tinted them, especially our long white skirts and underskirts.

At last about 1910 we were to have a macadam road by our house. We were happy and excited when the men came up the hill with their instruments and stakes to mark off the new roadway, and to indicate the depth of the cut necessary for a gradual slope from the foot to the top of the hill. But they struck an unexpected snag when they got to the crest where our house stood. Our neighbor who lived just opposite us and who was well known as a person who held on tenaciously to what was his, met the surveyors with the statement that he would not allow them to take a foot of his property. They said they were authorized to widen the road, taking an equal number of feet from each side. He continued to fume while the men talked.

In front of our house and near the road on our lot stood two fine old white oak trees which made the perfect setting for our house and yard. To grade the road as planned meant cutting deeply into the root system of the trees but if all the width was taken from our side it would be necessary to cut to the very trunks

of the trees and remove them. Naturally we did not want to lose our valuable trees, and the road men did not want the trouble of taking them down. We did not get into the argument, we only heard it from our house, but Mother quietly took her seat on the front porch and stayed there until the men had won their point, and staked off an equal amount of space from each side. When the road was finished Papa had a high retaining wall of cement built all along our front and those two fine trees are still there, almost fifty years after a part of their root system was disturbed for the sake of a good road.

There were no bulldozers or tractors in general use at that time and the work was done by convict labor. The convicts, mostly colored people, wore the conventional striped suits of prisoners and had men with guns standing guard over them. One morning as the neighborhood children were on their way to school one of the convicts made a break for freedom by running into the woods when some children got between him and the guard. There was much excitement for a short time until he was brought back.

From the time he was a small boy Henry was interested in gathering and saving seeds of all kinds, then planting them and watching them grow. He had a green thumb. He could stick a little twig into the ground and soon it would be growing, producing roots in the ground and new stems and leaves above. The year the road was being built in front of our house he had a watermelon patch at the farm with an abundance of fine melons and he asked the guards if he might give the road gang some melons. It was arranged that they could have the melons after they had eaten their lunch on a certain day. Henry got much pleasure from taking the melons to the guards and watching the convicts enjoy their portions.

We enjoyed the macadam road as only they can who have known mud, dust, stones and ruts. One thing we deplored: The earth from the tops of the hills was moved to fill in the valleys. The little streams at the foot of each hill which we had enjoyed with every

changing season were now far below the road bed. We were no longer near them as we went to school and could not keep up with their moods and their changing conditions. It was almost like losing a cherished friend.

# *To College*

After three years in the graded school I had completed most of the subjects offered and was ready to move on to college.

Because the State at that time had no uniform High School system and young people generally were prepared for college in private or church-owned academies, Guilford had continued to operate a two year preparatory department along with the college curriculum. The same high standards of character and scholarship were maintained in the preparatory department as in the college and probably due to the fact that the majority of the students were Preps there was no great distinction between the college students and those in the preparatory department. The college students had their class meetings, their inter-class debates and athletic contests and junior and senior privileges, but the Preps were members along with the upper classmen of the literary societies, Christian and ahtletic associations and glee clubs.

Henry and I enrolled in the second year preparatory department, determined to do our best to prepare ourselves for the four years of college ahead of us. I cherished my matriculation card, signed by L. L. Hobbs, President, and George W. White, Treasurer.

Our work as Second Year Preps was much the same as it had been in the graded school. Instead of one teacher for all our studies we had one for each subject. We had a regular class in Scripture

each Wednesday and on Sunday we went to the college Sunday School instead of the monthly meeting Sunday School.

It was the next year when I was classified a Regular Freshman that I achieved the real sense of belonging to the college, a member of what would be the twentieth graduating class.

The Boarding School and College had been established and maintained by the faith and zealous devotion of the founding fathers and of the succeeding generations. Throughout the Yearly Meeting there were those who gave sacrificially of whatever gifts were theirs: Some gave of their money, others of their time and counsel. Some supplied actual provisions; others gave labor. Those who had the special qualifications travelled to other Yearly Meetings soliciting funds for the school while those who had the gift of teaching or of management stood by the school through dark days and bright working faithfully and well, with small consideration of pay, often turning back to the institution most of the salary they had earned.

When L. Lyndon Hobbs became president, in his inaugural address he set the pattern for the College and for the Faculty. He put it thus: "I accept it (the Presidency) as a divine commission and pray to be found faithful in the discharge of my duties in order best to promote the success of the Institution in its grand mission of disseminating sound learning and moulding Christian character. I rejoice in the confidence which I have that every member of the Faculty enters upon his services with a like feeling of responsibility ready to sacrifice self if need be, for the promotion of the cause for which Guilford College is to exist."

Four of the original nine faculty members were still in active service while we were members of the student body—and the other teachers who had been added to the staff had come with an equal devotion to the cause of education and a sense of their responsibility as teachers.

We who were children of the Faculty had grown up in this atmosphere of love for, and devotion to the cause. It was as much a part of our lives as the air we breathed, or the plain wholesome

food we ate, or the prayers we said at night. We sensed the trials and triumphs of the authorities, knowing when there was an effort to pay off an indebtedness, or when some rare gift was made, or some important personage was expected to visit the campus.

Our class, by far the largest one up to that time, had several members directly connected with the college—Bob Doak, Richard Hobbs, Alice Woody, Margaret Peele, Henry and Margaret Davis and Hugh White who had become a member of our community in time to enter college with our class. In the fall of 1905 we began our college careers with a sense of responsibility if not enthusiasm. I was happy. I was an actual member of a college class; I had my brother, Henry, to study with me and to accompany me whenever I needed him, and I was eager to study and learn.

At that time there were five main buildings on the campus: Founders, Archdale, Y.M.C.A. now the Music Building, Memorial, and King number 2. Before we left the campus The Power House and Mary Hobbs Hall had been built and King Hall had burned to the ground. In King Hall were classrooms, the library, the Henry Clay and Websterian Literary Society Halls, and the "collection room"—where everyone met each morning for collection or chapel exercises, and where all except the juniors and seniors sat and studied when not in class. Guilford was probably unique in that there were two groups of cottages on the campus where co-operative housekeeping was practiced to help defray the expenses of living on the campus. The cottages for young men were in the southeastern part of the campus, and the girls' cottages west of Founders, where Mary Hobbs Hall now stands.

And there was the picturesque boardwalk spanning the slight ravine between Founders and King. For many years this was a beloved land mark built for, and used chiefly by the girls and teachers who lived at Founders. Its removal in more recent times brought nostalgic regret to the old girls who had used the walk so many times a day.

The college property surrounding the campus was cultivated,

the farm supplying much of the food for the school. Throughout the campus and farm there were definite boundary lines beyond which the boys and girls could not lawfully go. A fine apple orchard northwest of the campus about where the Frazier apartments now stand was within the girls' bounds and they were encouraged to get what fruit they needed. Although out of bounds for the boys, they too, in some unknown way seemed always to have plenty of fruit from the orchard. The College Pond was within the boys' bounds but when the snow was well packed and the ice sufficiently thick the entire school, well chaperoned, of course, might get off for a whole afternoon for a skating and sledding party.

Of all the extracurricular activities the literary societies were generally the most popular and the most cultural. Each organization maintained an elegantly furnished and well equipped room or "hall." The Zatasian and Philomathean, the girls' halls, were in old West Hall in Founders. Meetings were held every Friday evening after supper and were carried out with much formality. Not only were the members trained in public speaking, but in presiding, parliamentary procedure and in social graces. The highest events of the year were the receptions given by the men's society for the members of the young ladies' society or vice versa. These were carried out with all the elegance and formality possible. The visitors would be entertained by the best program the hosts could present, consisting of debate, music, oratory—followed by a social hour in which the members were engaged in some literary contest and were presented with attractive souvenirs. Then refreshments were served, the most elaborate that the treasury would stand. Each society planned for this event for months ahead with the special purpose that it should excel that given by the rival society. There were also the four annual oratorical contests, put on by each of the societies with a prize for the person who was considered best in each, with a prize also awarded to the new member who had made most improvement during the year. The Websterian Society gave for the oratorical

prize a large unabridged Webster's Dictionary on a stand. These contests and the interclass debates brought out keen interest and rivalry, and the members of our class, 1909, won a fair share of prizes. We were especially pleased when Rush Hodgin, Richard Hobbs and Will Boyce won for our class the debating cup for two years.

Of almost equal importance with the literary societies was the Men's Athletic Association. During the period when we were in college, Guilford was enjoying very successful seasons in baseball, basketball, tennis and track and many bonfires celebrating important victories were kindled in the period from 1905 to 1909.

To make money for operating expenses of the Athletic Association the young men put on one or two minstrel shows a year. These were smash hits with songs and jokes and impersonations of the faculty. Albert Peele, the oldest minister and head of the meeting was a man who enjoyed good clean fun and had a most hearty and contagious laugh. The managers of the minstrel shows always made sure that he was given a ticket and a good seat for the show. They knew success was assured if they could just make "Uncle Albert" laugh. Only Charlie Doak could "take off" Professor Davis. With his quick bouncing step he would take his place in the scene saying, "I am almost out of heart and quite out of cow feed."

We considered our class at least equal to the best that had gone through the four years. There were twenty-one of us, almost twice the number of any previous class. There were more day students than ever before, which meant more class parties and more visiting off campus, for the girls were not required to have special permission to go to the homes of the Faculty. And we had a fine spirit of loyalty to our classmates, to our teachers and to the College.

Rarely was there a week end without some special activity on Saturday or Saturday evening. Some form of athletics took about half the week ends; basketball in the old wooden gym, baseball, and tennis tournaments, and once a year a Field Day.

There were music recitals throughout the year, and entertainment brought in by professional players, and the Saturday night lectures by members of the Faculty. If nothing else was scheduled the boys and girls might persuade the authorities to allow a "Social." At most of the sports events and special entertainments the boys might have dates with the girls of their choice, but only at the sports events were they allowed to sit with their dates. In Memorial Hall the young man escorted his date to her seat on the north side of the building then went to his own seat on the south side. But by some secret arrangement he usually found a seat from which he could get a good view of his date and no one could prevent the exchange of eloquent glances.

At home our day began as usual on January 13, 1908. Papa, always the first to arise, had dressed and, following his daily custom, had called Henry as he went downstairs. He rekindled the fire in the sitting room fireplace and went outdoors to attend to his morning chores. Suddenly he heard a great clanging of the college bell and looking in that direction he saw over the tree tops great billows of smoke and flame. He rushed back into the house and called again, "Henry, come down quick. There is a big fire at the college." Henry, having taken his time since his first call, increased his speed and was downstairs in a few seconds. He and Papa jumped on the horses, bare back, galloped off to the college and found our beloved King Hall enveloped in flames. Papa soon returned home to console Mother but Henry stayed to help save what could be reached. When Anna and I got downstairs we found Mother sitting in the kitchen rocker with her head in her hands. The library which had had her devoted, even loving care for fifteen years before her marriage was gone! It was a heart-breaking experience for all and especially for those who had labored so long and lovingly for the building and the equipment which it housed. Of the ten thousand volumes in the library nine hundred and seventy-two were saved and some of them were damaged. The men's literary society halls were on the first floor and most of their furniture and portraits were saved.

Each member of the junior class was required to prepare and deliver a "junior oration," so early in the year Miss Julia White, our librarian, began passing out slips with possible subjects for orations. The large number in our class made it necessary to have two evenings for our exercises which were given on December 13 and 14, 1907. We were fortunate in having completed that part of our junior work before the loss of the library.

The junior-senior banquets were, as always, high social events, both that given by us for the class ahead and the one given for us the next year.

At last, in the fall of 1908 we were seniors. During the first semester we applied ourselves to our work and play, with vague and remote thoughts of the future. But after mid-year examinations were over we began to bestir ourselves. We realized that the time had come when decisions must be made, work must be completed and the time was short. We must choose subjects for our senior theses, write them, have them typed and in the hands of the faculty at the appointed time. By Valentine Day parties for the class had begun and continued at an accelerated rate until the close of the year. Some of the teachers gave exemptions from final exams if the student made an average of 90 or above, and others substituted certain written reports for examinations but withal we had no time to be idle. In place of a final in French Dr. Meredith took his classes on an all day picnic. We went in wagons to a farm about five miles from the college and enjoyed a sumptuous lunch. A special guest at the picnic was Dr. Meredith's fiancee, Miss Angelina Wood, the music teacher. Their happiness seemed to spread to all the others. They were married soon after school closed. One of Dr. Meredith's contributions to the picnic was a whole bunch of the largest, most beautiful bananas I have ever seen.

The day before graduation we met in West Hall for our last class meeting. The history, the prophecy and the last will and testament were read. Upon the motion of Rush Hodgin we voted to present a silver cup to the first baby born to a member of the

class. This cup was given to the daughter of Charlie Benbow. As an expression of our love for her, we wanted to leave with our Alma Mater a token of our appreciation of all she had meant to us, so as our parting gesture we decided to erect a suitable gateway at the entrance of the college campus. We disbanded, resolved to return for our first reunion at the next commencement.

When graduation came on May 26, 1909, Robert C. Root, a member of the class of 1889, the first graduating class, came from California to make the alumni address. He stirred our hearts with these words:

> Twenty-four years ago I came to Guilford without wealth or influential friends, an unlettered country boy seeking for the training that would give to life a deeper meaning, and for the future a more useful service. Here at Guilford I found something better than wealth—the spirit of helpful, sympathetic interest and the truest, best of friends. And if there should ever be any event in my life worth the remembrance of my fellows, it will, in large measure, be due to the helpful influence of the manly men and the womanly women whom I have met here. For who could come into living relationship with the beautiful life of that scholar and Christian gentleman, Joseph Moore, or the precise, accurate scholarship of President Hobbs, or the persistent "stick-to-it-iveness" of Professor Woody; or the grave, yet genial and scholarly Quaker, Professor Davis, and not feel an intense longing to be a truer, better man? And add to these the gracious lives of Priscilla B. Hackney, "Miss Julia" and "Mary E.," all so gentle and yet so genuine and so womanly; and the keenly intellectual and spiritually helpful Mary C. Woody and Mary M. Hobbs, and you give to youth the best things in life, those helpful, formative influences that appeal to man's highest aspirations and help him most effectually in that greatest of all his labors—the building of a life.
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> Do you ask me what and where is the "Guilford spirit"?

My answer is that its mainspring is found in the lives of these manly men and womanly women who are both scholarly and Christian and, in my opinion, all the more scholarly because Christian. And "twenty years after," the "Guilford spirit" is not only a blessed memory, it is more, it is a present forceful reality.

It is this helpfulness, sympathy, brotherly kindness and spiritual life that so distinctively marks the life at Guilford and gives it a value in "the building of a life" that the large college or university in the very nature of things cannot equal. Larger buildings and better equipment the larger institution may possess but the essence of life does not abide in bigness. My experience as a student of two of the great universities of the west—though most profitable in every respect—convinces me that Guilford College has a large field of usefulness in the Southland which few other institutions can so well develop.

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How, then, may aspiring youth catch the right inspiration and be imbued with the spirit of service? At the Christian college, I believe is the best place, for there he finds the spirit of sacrifice, the spirit of service, the high ideals, the mount of vision. There he can go up into the mountain until his face shines as did that of Moses. There he can dwell apart from the world for a season and catch as did Isaiah (Ch. 2:1-5), the divine view of the world's better day of peace and good-will. There he may, with Paul, see the heavenly vision and have his personal relation to the eternal verities rightly adjusted. Then he will learn with Dr. Van Dyke, "how the sight of the things that are great enlarges the eyes"; and with Dr. Hamilton Wright Mabie the value of large ideas and large ideals gathered from the "Books of Life"—the chiefest of these, as Dr. Mabie rightly insists, being The Book, the Bible. And having caught these inspirations having made these high ideals his own having rightly adjusted himself

to God and truth the college man can safely enter upon his life of service with the certainty that the investment of his life is in the best paying securities and the joy of living will be found in the joy of service.

Naturally after twenty years some of those first teachers were no longer at the college but there were others who carried on the same high and noble standards as did they. With a similar feeling of affection, respect and thankfulness we would add the names of those who had enriched and given direction to our lives. We could not fail to mention Raymond Binford, Robert N. Wilson, Clement O. Meredith, Samuel Hodgin, Louisa Osborne, George W. White, Maud Gainey and Sarah Benbow.

In the *Alumni Journal* for April 1954, there is this poem which means Guilford to many of us.

## THE GUILFORD SPIRIT

What mystic Spirit dwells
—beyond the simple, open gate?
—beneath these ancient spreading trees?
—beside these walks?
—between these lofty red-brick walls?
What quiet spirit dwells?

I have seen it move
slowly with the passing sun,
quickly in the silver rain,
flashing in a sudden smile,
lingering in the warmth of friendship.

I have heard it sung
softly with wind-stirred leaves,
majestically through organ notes,
lilting in the gay young laughter,
swelling to a Symphony of Silence
beyond the holy hush of Meeting.

I have seen it, I have heard it,
perceived its presence here.

What mystic Spirit dwells
so quietly among us here?
—It is the soul of this place—
strengthened through the years—
sustained with unfailing faith—
Here the Guilford Spirit dwells:
this soul, immortal part of God.

JOSHUA CRANE, '54