Kalamazoo College is many things.

It is a place—terraced campus, stately trees, comfortably traditional architecture; located in the midwest but reaching out to the entire world.

It is people—professors who are loved, admired, questioned—often all at the same time; students who gather from a world of different backgrounds to share a new world of friendships, discoveries, personal searches for values and knowledge; others who offer encouragement, urge new dreams.

It is experiences—public ones such as sports, parties, classes, dormitories, extracurricular activities; or private ones such as the discovery of a special love or the emergence of a direction for life.

It is an education—stimulating, challenging, frustrating; reminding one how much more there is to learn, surprising one in the discovery that information and values return from the shadows of time to have an impact in today's world and extend into tomorrow's.

Kalamazoo College is an accumulation of all these, and more. Kalamazoo College: A Sesquicentennial Portrait is about memories and feelings. In pictures, it offers images that represent the individual and collective experiences of 150 years of people who came in contact with the College. It is not possible to show all facets of the College or all its people throughout its history. The pictures contained here, drawn from the College's archives, suggest all that
however, and in doing so should enrich the memory of each person looking at them. In words, it offers four warm, personal statements about the Kalamazoo College experience. The essays are not history, though they may be historical. They are evocative reminiscences, rich in insight and affection.

One may find in this volume a clue to a feeling long held but never quite understood, the stimulus to renew acquaintances or friendships, or the encouragement to honor the impact of Kalamazoo College in one’s life. It is a book to be enjoyed at one sitting, or to be savored at a more leisurely pace. Its richness will unfold anew at each reading. Like the College itself, this book invites one to return again and again.

*Kalamazoo College: A Sesquicentennial Portrait* is about quality and aspirations. It reminds us that 150 years of history are only a beginning.
Kalamazoo College
Kalamazoo College: A Sesquicentennial Portrait
## Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preface</td>
<td>vi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Robert Dewey</strong></td>
<td>“It Was The Same College, But It Was Different”</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Photographic Portfolio One</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conrad Hilberry</strong></td>
<td>“What A Picnic We Would Have”</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Photographic Portfolio Two</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Laurence Barrett</strong></td>
<td>“Teaching A Is Creative Business”</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Photographic Portfolio Three</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gail Griffin</strong></td>
<td>“Friday Mornings Are Always Golden”</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
For one hundred and fifty years, lives have been touched by Kalamazoo College. Thousands of students, professors, staff members and friends have come to the campus on the fair Arcadian hill and have left with memories to treasure for years, memories that vary greatly from generation to generation and from individual to individual.

Over the past five years, I have become fascinated by these memories. Working in the College archives, first as an undergraduate and then as a member of the Upjohn Library staff, I have learned about the people and events that are recalled by members of the College community. In these cluttered rooms, I have lost myself for hours, poring over ledgers, letters, photographs, Boiling Pots, and Indexes. I have browsed through the scrapbook that belonged to R. C. Fenner, class of 1887, and read with avid interest the papers of Luike A. Hemmes, who taught philosophy (and sometimes psychology and German) at the College from 1925 to 1959. Here I have come to envy those who witnessed the courage of Lucinda Hinsdale Stone and the foresight of Richard U. Light. In the archives, I have become aware that I belong to a community with a proud heritage.

Kalamazoo College: A Sesquicentennial Portrait offers many images of this community, both in its photographs and in its essays. It is intended not to chronicle the school's history, but to capture glimpses of the College and its people, to stir memories, and to evoke feelings. Perhaps, too, it will enable members of the College community to envision "K" in eras other than their own. An early photograph of Trowbridge Hall may help recent graduates to imagine College life when students dressed for served dinners and the victrola was played on the sun porch. Gail Griffin's descriptions of students returning from Foreign Study may lead older members of the College community to contemplate what it is like to participate in the K Plan.

Four dedicated members of the College community have contributed essays to this book. Each of them is a keen observer of the College. Laurence Barrett, Professor Emeritus of English and former provost, was on the faculty for 24 years and still is an active participant in the College's life. Robert Dewey, class of 1947, was formerly Vice President for Student Services and remains Dean of the Chapel and a member of the religion department. Conrad Hilberry, Professor of English and an acclaimed poet, has taught at the College since 1962. Gail Griffin, Assistant Professor of English and coordinator of the Women's Studies Program, joined the faculty in 1977.

The opportunity to select the photographs
for this book and to coordinate its development has been a pleasure and privilege for me. I am grateful to the authors, who have laughed and despaired with me. Guidance, support and encouragement have been provided by Al Blum, Vice President for Institutional Development, and Bob Dewey, chairman of the Sesquicentennial Celebration. Two dear, patient friends, Eleanor Pinkham and Sanford Greenberg, have cheered me on. I heartily thank all who participated in this undertaking.

Ann Graham, Class of 1981
"It was the same college, but it was different"

The first day I arrived on campus in the fall of 1940, I searched for the stone. In the pictures I'd seen as a child it had a date on it, 1894 or 1904, I can't remember for certain. I found it just to the south of Hoben Hall on the crest of the hill overlooking Lovell Street. Gazing at it, I thought about the young man, son of a distinguished Kalamazoo family, and the young woman, granddaughter of a Baptist minister in a tiny southern Michigan town, "spooning" by that stone; he a handsome football player, she an awkward, shy, beautiful girl. They were soon married. He was 20, she was 18 and already "with child." In 1915 in that staid town it must have been quite a scandal. I longed to know my mother and my father "spooning" by that stone at old Kazoo. Beanies were to be bought "at once" from the College Bookstore in the basement of Bowen Hall. Wearing mine walking under the oak trees on the walk from Bowen to Mandelle Library, I felt I owned the whole incredibly beautiful place. A boy from Kansas in this "eastern" academic grove! Clearly identified as a "frosh" by my green cap, I was conscious that I must share the place with upperclassmen, awesome in their good looks, suave behavior, athletic and intellectual prowess: Hugh Anderson, Jerry Gilman, George Otis, Fred Pinkham, Dan Ryan, chatting with professors, strolling with girls, walking tall across the quad. They were everything I wanted to be! They were "Kalamazoo College"! Surely sharing this place with them, I would by some collegiate osmosis, become like them. If only they would speak to me! When one did, I could not put together a sensible reply.

Mandelle's vast collection of books, vast for a youngster from the wheat fields, humbled me. I would never be able to read them all! Stacks! The very word was overwhelming. But behind Minnie Mandelle's pert portrait face I found eyes that understood: "I never read them all either, son, but it is a pleasant room, isn't it? You might as well sit down and give it a try."

Joining the Century Forum Society and surviving the initiation assured me that I belonged. The final cat walk, a series of benches from Treadway locker rooms arranged to rise from the floor of the basketball court to the top of the backboard, which I climbed on hands and knees, blindfolded, clad only in a jock strap, was terrifying. Pushed from that height into a blanket held by four century men was traumatic, but the conviviality that followed was golden!

The frequent night-time movement of 100 men up the hill to Trowbridge to sing "The Sweetheart of Sigma Chi," or "I Took My Girl Out Walking," or "She's My Cherie, She's My Cherie, She's My Little Trowbridge Girl," was my "Flirtation Walk," and I was Dick Powell with an Eleanor of my own.

Later the song would be "I've Got A Gal In Kalamazoo" sung by Johnny Sarno, Rex Broyles
and me at high school assemblies and sundry other public gatherings to promote U.S. war bonds. Sara Woolley was the “gal.” Her beauty was persuasive. Now and then there were classes, too.

How old were the faculty, the giants of our college years: Dieb, Dunsmore, Dunbar, Edward Hinckley, Milton Simpson, Dr. Stowe? Surely ancient. Probably in their thirties and forties. And not, thank God, our parents! But what was this feeling that they knew us through and through, often knew our parents, our sisters and our brothers, our aunts and uncles? They did not treat us as their children. They dealt with us with dignity, not as the “kids” we knew we were. And yet there was some transfer of wisdom beyond history, biology, English; some lessons taught subliminally about life, meaning, commitment, value. As bell-ringers in the Grove House of the Hinckley family, we were aware of Swedenborgian undercurrents, both mysterious and fascinating. Glasses of wine were served with spaghetti at the Dunbar home, in violation of every College rule. We consumed them with naughty delight. Cookies by Gibby Hemmes were a fixture in any Philosophy seminar in the upstairs room at the Hemmes' home. Libby Matson’s “extracurricular” class for young women, to teach them the meaning of the “four letter words” they were exposed to but had never understood, strictly general education, was not intended to stimulate their use of such language but to liberate them from their fascination cum ignorance of the same.

After an evening at Bucklin’s tavern, we sneaked very cautiously back to our Hoben warrens; we would have been ashamed to have been caught drinking by Gil Robinson, ex FBI agent. But drinking on Friday afternoons in Hoben lounge was strictly tea or coffee, served in china cups and saucers from gleaming silver services by faculty wives. We balanced tea or coffee cups on tiny plates with cookies (baked, no doubt, by faculty wives) as we practiced “gracious living.” The bi-weekly parade to our appointed seats in Stetson Chapel—faculty in the choir stalls, seniors in the first front pews, juniors behind them, sophomores still further back, frosh in the balcony—was a requirement we accepted without protest; that would come later. Over the years the things that happened every Monday and Friday—music, announcements, readings, lectures and homilies with a moral point—were not as important as the fact that we were all together in one place. We did not talk much about “community” then. We experienced it. Later, after I had a part in the elimination of required Chapel for what seemed like legitimate reasons in 1968, Weimer Hicks would say to me, “All right, do it. But let me tell you something; once it’s gone, you’ll never get it back.” That’s probably why I work hard to promote the residual tradition of those earlier days in Friday Chapel today. I know now what Weimer knew then, as he said, “I don’t care whether they like it or not. It’s good for them.” And I agree with Larry Barrett, who once told me that, if he were president of a college, “everybody—students, faculty, administrators—would be required to walk once a week to the center of the campus and kiss the flagpole.” Pressed to explain such a bizarre ritual, Larry’s answer gave a hint about its value: “I don’t care what the ritual is just so there is one and everybody does it together at the same time.” Dining in Welles Hall, our “commons,” was also a community event. I’ve never been able to warm up to the “separate tables” in Hicks.

However makeshift the skirts, jackets and ties of those days were, they were skirts, jackets and ties. However unruly the mob pounding on the as yet unopened door (Miss Lee gave the signal) held behind it by a head waiter and his crew, it grew quiet for the prayer, sat obediently to be served family style by white jacketed waiters, and
left only when officially dismissed. However much the current student generation might be appalled by these strictures on individual freedom, we were learning things which fought the rude, intemperate, self-indulgent instincts of the untutored, things in some way related to the preservation of civilized life. In that small college of the early 1940's, one often met Dr. Thompson, the President, on the walks between the buildings. His generous, open smile fell upon this or that uncertain boy or girl, expressed appreciation for a solo sung in chapel or a prize awarded at Honor's Day Convocation, or made reference to a parent's letter which had asked to be remembered to a son or daughter “if Dr. Thompson happened to see him or her.” It wasn't exactly a family. Or was it?

Now and then an event in Stetson Chapel was to become a lifelong memory. The towering figure and intense expression on Dr. Goodsell's face as he looked down upon us from the podium on a day following Pearl Harbor, to assess the situation as an historian, to express his concern for a world now at war, was impressive, respected and loved. When he toppled on the platform, suddenly, we gasped, frozen in our places. In minutes he had died; a great man going before our eyes. Henry Overley shooed the choir out of the stalls. School was dismissed for the day. I went to my aunt's home on Academy, an empty house at that hour, picked up an issue of “Colliers” for distraction, but as I turned the pages, I saw on each page in my mind's eye the giant figure of a hero of my youth topple again, fall, and die, leaving me with a lifelong memory of a man who was wise, passionately devoted to his students, concerned about his world, and of whom, too soon, we needy young were deprived.

We left campus around 1:30 or 2:00 a.m., five or six of us in an ancient Chevrolet circa 1936. We used Route 12 through Comstock, painting orange and black symbols on highway signs every fifth mile. Once in Albion, suggestions came in hushed, excited voices: “Let's paint all the fraternity house doors orange and black.” “Let's remove all the hymnals from the Chapel.” “Let's outline the football stands in Kalamazoo colors.” “Let's do all three!” So we did. We got back to campus in time for Saturday morning classes. Boarding the football train at noon to return for the Kalamazoo-Albion game, we stifled our anticipation under smirks and laughter. What kind of response would there be to our long night of hard work? Arriving at Albion, full of ginger and yells, we marched with our fellow students, 150 strong, to the football field. We were met at the gates by city and state policemen carefully examining Kalamazoo fingernails! I don't remember much about the game.

I hated him. He was a baritone. I was a tenor. He was from New York. I was from Kansas. He was handsome, sophisticated, confident, a scholarship student with high grades and a brilliant medical career ahead of him. He could write songs, sing like Lawrence Tibbitt and play the piano like Jose Iturbi. Girls crowded around him at the Welles Hall piano, swooning over him as if he were Frankie! We competed for solos, but since he sang better than I did, the best ones went to him. Henry and Mabel Overley tried hard to be totally fair, but I knew who was their favorite. As we sat across from each other in the arc of the choir stalls in Stetson Chapel, our eyes seldom met. If they did, the mutual cold stares were brief, and, quickly, we would turn away. When the choir went on its spring tour, Johnny and I, randomly assigned, had to share a room at the Allerton Hotel. We talked. He was human! We took two girls to “Aida” at the Chicago Civic Opera House. After that, we talked some more! In the bus returning to Kalamazoo, we sang; Johnny deferred to me on one solo, and I to him on another. Then
we sang in harmony. The next year we were roommates.

We had classes then, too.

In Spanish, Wetherbee and I fell instantly in love with Señorita Lennards. Why wasn’t she married? Would she wait for us? Which one of us? Wetherbee, by the way, was an imp. I was dozing in class one day with my loafers off. Wetherbee filched them, passed them down the row to a pal, who pitched them out through an open window. Since Bill Olvitt did the pitch, Wetherbee was certain he was safe. But Señorita Lennards knew her man. Glancing over the class, well aware of what had occurred, she settled for the one she knew was behind whatever happened on any day. “Señor Wetherbee!” she intoned, nor was she impressed when he feigned surprise, played the innocent. All semester, Wetherbee tried to talk some friend or other into asking Señorita Lennards, “Quantos anos tiene usted?” We never did find out. Wetherbee might have asked the question himself, but he wasn’t all that good in Spanish.

How people meet and team up in college has always been a mystery to me. I still have no idea how I teamed up with Ken Warren. Maybe we became friends after we almost got kicked out of Milton Simpson’s English class. A tale in itself. Dr. Simpson, who was known to lecture on with his foot caught in the wastebasket it had accidentally entered; who rushed in one day with bandages on his face to announce, breathlessly, that he “would have been to class on time but I ran into an old friend downtown,” (the friend languishing thereafter in Bronson Hospital); who split the military formations of ASTPers who formed, foolishly, at the end of the college drive, scattering in un-military style whenever Dr. Simpson’s Studebaker bore down on them at high speed; who sometimes lectured with the stub of a pencil in his hand, jamming it down on the desk to emphasize a point. Ken and I, fascinated with this unique pedagogical person, never missed class. It was, therefore, a surprise to be called in by the Registrar to be severely reprimanded for so many absences and warned about future tenure in Shakespeare. What could have happened? Given a second chance, we went to class the next day with a Holmes and Watson approach, planning to smell out this miscarriage of justice or, though we preferred not to, confront our unpredictable mentor.

There was no need; our detective work was rewarded. Watching closely, we realized that the stub of pencil, slammed repeatedly on the desk was, coincidentally, dotting the attendance book with absences for selected students, Warren and Dewey! I think it was after that shared experience that we dropped in at Ken’s home; he was a “townie,” and his house and family bore a close resemblance to the gang in “You Can’t Take It With You.” I remember how shocked I was during my first visit when the phone rang and Ken, with his mother ironing nearby, picked it up to say, “Hello. Mazie’s whorehouse. Mazie’s busy right now. Can I help you?” It was like that with Ken. Cruel as it was, I recall that after surviving the first year, Ken and I joined together to serve, with no official sanction, as “greeters” of arriving frosh; Ken would bear down on some young thing from Three Rivers or Birmingham, and from 6’3” high, wearing a very authoritative and threatening face, ask, “What are you doing here? We don’t want you here! Go away!” Actually a warm and friendly fellow at heart, he would soon put the newcomer at his ease, and, often, the two would become fast friends. One semester, Ken and I took over the awesome responsibility of serving as “assembly coordinators,” a title we assigned to ourselves. Assemblies were pot pourri affairs held on Friday mornings in the auditorium on third floor Bowen. They had been, we decided, dull, a waste of time.
We would breathe new life into them. Assemblies were voluntary, unlike Chapel, and attendance had dipped to practically nothing. Slowly, with what gimmicks I cannot quite remember, we built attendance up, week by week. I'm certain we were featured in every assembly! Then, at the last assembly of the semester, we made extensive announcement of an event which would put all past assemblies to shame. Don't miss it! we appealed to our peers on posters and in the Index. It was to be the best Dewey-Warren special of the entire semester. Almost 300 students attended. They were treated to a blackboard and two impresarios who announced that they, the students, were to have the opportunity to evaluate the creative efforts of Dewey and Warren designed to rejuvenate Kalamazoo College assemblies. As we wrote titles for the various assemblies we had produced on the blackboard, they were to help us decide which were the “goodies” and the “baddies,” and even differentiate major goodies and major baddies from minor ones. For some strange reason, they took it seriously. By the end of this research program we were able to announce that they had decided that the Dewey-Warren team had truly wrought a change in Kalamazoo College life, which prompted us to give and receive from one another accolades and prizes so well deserved. It was, in short, a farce, a hoax, a swindle, but we pulled it off, largely because Warren was a person possessed of those magical qualities which made him irresistible. He went into the service in 1942.

Then I went, too, in March, 1943. I had tried several ways to avoid it. I could not. Besides, all my male friends had departed by then. Suitcase in hand, on one of those pre-spring March days, I walked out of Hoben bound for the train station and Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. I faced a new experience, “the service” and “the war.” I took a quick look back from the triangle which divides the College drive from Academy Street, a final look at the coming green of spring, the tall oaks, the familiar buildings, the students crossing the quad on their appointed rounds which I would no longer be making, and realized, at 20, and said to myself out loud as I gazed back up the hill at Kalamazoo College, “I will never come back here again.”

I never did. Not to that innocence, that unbridled fun, that second family. In Paris, encountering a fellow Kalamazoo student, I learned that it might not have been all that I thought it was; that it was not, for him, what it had been for me. We met accidentally and found our way to a bar to share some drink and talk. He was Jewish. I had visited his home in Winnetka, Illinois. Though not close at school, we had liked and admired each other. In that Paris bar, talking about days at Kalamazoo, I said, “There’s one thing you will agree with. At Kalamazoo you never encountered any anti-semitism.” He fixed me with a look, smiled strangely, and said, “Do you really believe that?” I did, of course. But for a half hour I listened to the experiences a Jewish student had at Kalamazoo College in the early 1940’s of which I had had no awareness; the calls to Trowbridge to learn that girls he knew were free were busy, though they would then appear with someone else at the Washington banquet or at a football game, the little hurts and slights that often lie just under the surface of the congenial “second family.”

But I did come back. Twice.

In 1946, having dropped my stuff in the familiar smell of Hoben Hall, I wandered up to Welles for lunch, a 23-year-old veteran. I found a place at a table with seven young girls (they seemed young to me) just down from Trowbridge.
I listened to their lunch time talk: “The food is so bad,” “We have to be in by 11:00!” “There’s no freedom here.” I could not believe they were serious. To a returning GI, the place seemed like paradise! Great food, no first sergeants, and a freedom they would never understand.

I came back again in 1967. I'd been told I couldn't. A friend who had returned to Kalamazoo after graduate school to teach for a year had written me to say, “Don't. You can't go home again. It doesn't work. I tried it.” But I did, and he was wrong. The thing is, it was and it wasn't home again. In twenty years, the enrollment had tripled, the campus had spread to the second hill, and there was this thing called “The Kalamazoo Plan.” It was the same college, but it was different. A better one, perhaps. What was different was the world. As I got to know the place in its new incarnation, I began to realize that human beings remain much the same from generation to generation, but the context changes. Now it was “bright students” (I think we were also bright, but with less knowledge of the world through television), a “quality faculty” (though ours was high quality at lower salaries); it was now “academics” and “pressure” and “study” in a way it had not been in the 1940's, at least for me, but this was a post-Sputnik world we had not known. Very soon it would be “an end to rules and regulations,” “down with required chapel,” “don’t trust anyone over 30.” Soon it would be “on and off” beyond the careful provisions of the K Plan; off to every civil rights and anti-Vietnam rally in any part of the state or the nation. Soon it would be a young woman from Bloomfield Hills crying out as she marched in front of Mandelle, “At last, I really feel like I'm in college.”

Then it changed. Enter the age of majority, 1972. Parietals are finished. For a new generation of students, academics became all-in-all. A cautious, career-oriented student body took over the social freedoms won by their older activist brothers and sisters, not really understanding from whence they came. Except for the increasing rigor of academic work (the coinage of the realm is “credit”), the student was a free agent. What to do when drinking, drugs and a social life cut loose from their moorings in adult authority descend on the young at the same time that the demands of the academic program increase and the job market grows tight?

Early in my six year stint as vice president for students, George Rainsford said, “Let’s lean toward the New Testament more than the Old.” In theological terms, the distinction is between grace and law; mature people live freely because they take responsibility for their lives and their conduct. In the college it meant a shift in relation to residential life and co-curricular activities, from adults determining “what’s good for them” to young people making their own decisions, learning how to make decisions responsibly, governing themselves and each other in most areas of college life apart from curricular requirements. It was a change from an altogether acceptable and appropriate paternalism in its time, an essentially rural view of the small college and its task so deep in the American psyche, and a midwestern provincialism which the second World War had seriously challenged; it was a shift to participatory democracy, shared decision-making, a new concern for the national image of the College, a recognition that technological literacy might well be an element in the preparation of the young for life in a different environment, and an increasing refinement of the College’s commitment to international education.

The distinctive feature of the one college seen from at least these two perspectives—the 1940's and since 1967, in my own case—is change within continuity. To regard either period as
"better" is to miss the point. The continuity derives from the commitment of the College to the "given" of its past history, to the liberal arts, a commitment recently re-affirmed by the Trustees. That commitment has shaped what we are today, and decisions we make today from the alternatives available to us, if made in the light of this fundamental commitment, will shape our future. But always the College will seek to respond to the new generations of young people, to their needs, both intellectual and human; it will seek to respond out of "a tradition of excellence" to the new demands of an ever-changing society and world, which means that it will always be the same and it will never be quite the same.

Now the year is 1982. It will change again. The harbingers of change are already being felt among us as the College seeks to respond to the problems and opportunities of a contemporary crisis and a society bewildered by changes of its own. So we will change again. That's as it should be. Together we can and will stimulate each other—though we belong to different constituencies of one college—to aim at excellence. More often than not, we will succeed. All I want is some stone for others to find, some songs for others to sing, some friends for others to make, and even a class or two now and then.

Robert Dewey
KALAMAZOO COLLEGE.

Lower and Upper Halls, 1880
Eurodelphian Room in Lower Hall
Kalamazoo College.

June 15th, 1870.

SOLDIERS' MEMORIAL SOCIETY,
DEDICATION OF THE TABLET
IN MEMORY OF THE SONS OF THE COLLEGE WHO FELL IN THE WAR.

GOD AND COUNTRY.
IN MEMORY OF THE
Students and Graduates
OF THIS COLLEGE, WHO FELL IN
THE WAR FOR LIBERTY AND UNION,
1861-1865.

JAMES M. ALLEN,        ALFRED S. HANDY,
C. A. BURGE,            JOSEPH W. HINSDALE,
GEORGE W. CARTER,       S. A. CORNELL,
JUDSON W. CARTER,       WILLIAM H. LAMB,
SAMUEL W. CROOKS,       CHARLES PORTER,
EDWIN R. KASTON,        G. W. PROUTY,
R. E. ELIRED,           ALEX. SHANAHAN,
LUCIUS F. HANDY,         GEORGE A. WILSON,
W. J. M. WOODWARD.

"They died, that the Nation might live,"

"Fought the good fight."
Williams and Bowen Halls

Path behind Ladies' Hall, looking westward
Stockbridge Hall, purchased by the College in 1921
Bowen Hall auditorium
Bowen Hall, built in 1902
Ladies' Hall (Wheaton Lodge), built in 1887

The Corner Stone of the

YOUNG LADIES' HOME,

KALAMAZOO COLLEGE,

Will be laid with brief, appropriate
exercise at the Upper College Grounds.

Wednesday Afternoon, June 13, 1887,
AT 2:30 O'Clock.
You are invited to be present.

Kalamazoo, Mich., June 13, 1887.

THE COMMITTEE OF ARRANGEMENTS.
Ladies' Hall parlor in 1890s
The reading room in Mandelle Library
Mandelle Hall, erected in 1930
Inside Trowbridge Hall
Hoben Hall, built in 1937
Old Science Hall, erected in 1927
Classroom in R. E. Olds Science Hall

Frances Diebold
Stetson Chapel, erected in 1932

A concert in Stetson Chapel
The President's Home, built in 1924-5

The Everton family on the porch of the President's Home
Building the faculty homes
Faculty homes, erected between 1926 and 1930
Tug of war at Mirror Lake
At Gull Lake

Campus in the 1950s
The interior of Tredway Gymnasium in 1932

Tredway Gymnasium, constructed in 1911
The tennis courts below Upper Hall
Stowe Tennis Stadium
"What a picnic we would have"

In 1960 or so, before I had anything to do with Kalamazoo College, I happened to be sitting next to Larry Barrett in a meeting of college teachers and administrators in Chicago. The meeting was less than fascinating, and at some point Larry began doodling on his yellow pad. The doodle took the form of a grid, four squares by four—fall, winter, spring, summer across the top; freshman, sophomore, junior, senior down the side. Larry looked off into space for a while, then began filling in the squares, pausing now and then to scratch something out or to look skeptically at the way the whole thing was shaping up. I would like to claim that I was present at the birth of the Kalamazoo Plan, but I am not sure Larry was making it up there in that meeting in the Palmer House. The doodling may have been partly for my benefit. If so, it worked. I asked him about his grid, and a year or two later, in the fall of 1962, I joined the faculty of Kalamazoo.

My first year here was also the first full year of the Kalamazoo Plan. Looking back from this distance, it is hard to remember what the college felt like—or what the country felt like—in the early Sixties. What John Kennedy was to the country, Larry Barrett and Weimer Hicks were to the college. They convinced us that we were in on a classy enterprise, that the college was going places. In fact, the college had already made some bold moves before the revision of the calendar and the introduction of the Plan in 1961 and 1962.

In the late 1940's and early 1950's, when other colleges were buoyed up by returning veterans and prosperous times, Kalamazoo almost ran aground. In 1953, when enrollment had shrunk to 356 and protesting students set off a stink bomb in the president’s office and removed all the pews from the chapel, the trustees saw that it was time to act. They appointed a new chairman of the Board of Trustees, Richard U. Light, and a new president, Weimer K. Hicks, and the college began to move. In the fall of 1954, 201 new freshmen were enrolled.

When Richard Light came on as chairman in 1953, he was dismayed by the faculty salaries: the highest paid professor was earning $5400. He proposed to raise some money from friends—five gifts of $10,000 each—to be spent over five years for salaries. There was nothing unusual about that. The bold part was that he proposed to spend this money on just five people, five new faculty members each of whom would be paid $2000 per year more than the college could normally pay. Admittedly, this would throw the whole salary schedule askew; these new recruits would be making more than some professors who had been teaching here for decades. Light’s argument to the faculty was that Kalamazoo needed the best young faculty members in the country and that the salary differentials couldn’t continue indefinitely. Shortly, all salaries would have to be raised. Light’s ambition for the school was contagious,
and the faculty accepted the recruitment scheme. It worked as Light predicted. Strong faculty were attracted, and within a few years all salaries were up dramatically.

The first person recruited was Larry Barrett, a Princeton graduate and one of Princeton's first Woodrow Wilson Fellows, who had commanded a submarine chaser in the North Atlantic in World War II. Barrett was hired as an English teacher, but Hicks soon appointed him dean. Barrett recruited some other young faculty members, offering them salaries augmented by the special money Richard Light had raised, but also offering them the promise of a college that was willing to try things. One of these recruits was Dick Stavig, also from Princeton, and also a Woodrow Wilson Fellow.

These new people turned out to be crucial in designing and carrying out the K Plan but, more than that, the recruiting scheme itself is a sign of the brashness and energy that characterized the college from 1953 on. Everybody knows it is bad policy to bring in new employees at salaries 50% higher than those being paid other people. But Richard Light, and later Weimer Hicks and Larry Barrett, were willing to risk some unconventional policy in order to build a distinguished college in a hurry.

Two other developments prepared the college for the Kalamazoo Plan. First, Richard Light, his wife, and their four sons spent the summer of 1957 in Grenoble, France, living in a pension and studying French, each at his own level. Exhilarated by the experience and impressed with the amount of French the family learned in a short time, Dr. Light proposed to make available to the college a trust fund to enable some thirty-eight students to study language in France, Germany, or Spain each summer. He himself helped make arrangements for the first groups to study in Bonn, Caen, and Madrid in the summer of 1958. Since Stavig and his family were to be in Germany that summer anyway, on a Fulbright appointment, Stavig agreed to make the rounds of the three centers, helping to solve whatever problems came up. This summer program was repeated each year, so that by 1962 the college had experience with foreign study, enthusiasm for it, well established friendships with key people in Germany, France, and Spain, and a handsome endowment.

Second, as Light remembers it, in 1957 word went out from the Carnegie Corporation or some such group that American higher education would have to double its capacity by 1970. It seemed clear to him that the country could not afford to expand its colleges and universities at that rate and still leave the campuses idle for three months a year. At his urging, the Kalamazoo trustees passed a resolution saying that the college would work toward a year-round operation as a way to increase enrollment without expanding the plant. How this was to be done the trustees left to the ingenuity of President Hicks, Dean Barrett, and the faculty.

So when Larry Barrett began doodling in 1960, he had two elements of the Kalamazoo plan already at hand: an endowed and successful foreign study program and a demand from the trustees for year-around operation. As he and the faculty moved around blocks on the four-by-four grid, adding a quarter for career development or service and another for an independent project, they had another ingredient to work with, too—a kind of exuberance born partly of the times and the confidence that the college-age population would increase each year, seemingly forever, but also born of Kalamazoo's own success. The student body had doubled in less than ten years, and most of the faculty were young and a little reckless.
Everyone was urged on by the energy and example of Weimer Hicks. Larry Barrett writes this about Hicks in those days:

When we came in about 7:30 to get psyched up for our 8:00 classes, Weimer was already in his office. He was there if we came down at night to get a batch of themes we'd left behind, and the lights from his office window were visible from almost any point on the campus. He wasn't compulsive about it, just committed. He never pushed us. He didn't fool around with flow charts and deadlines, and we never felt we were working for Weimer. We were working with him for the College, and we would have felt sleazy if we hadn't. The College was something you worked your ass off for, because Weimer did.

This account of the mood of those times is not quite adequate. I have made it sound too familiar, as though those people might almost be ourselves. But in this time between 1957 and 1962, the college's choices were colored by an element of naivete, of provincialism, of slightly giddy innocence that now seems as far away as the moon. This paragraph, written by Dick Stavig in 1974, catches the feeling of the campus when the summer foreign study program was first introduced in 1958:

When the program was publicly announced and current students realized that some of them would be going abroad the following summer, the mood was one of excitement and anticipation. Neither faculty nor students were clear about just what the program might do and mean, but almost all agreed that it would somehow be a good thing. An adventure of some sort was ahead of us, an adventure that just might significantly change Kalamazoo College. When the first participants were announced in Chapel—an extremely dramatic event though perhaps unnecessarily traumatic for those who had applied—the chosen few responded as if their numbers had been selected in a million-dollar lottery. One freshman told me with tears in his eyes that he thought Kalamazoo College must be "the greatest school in the whole world!"

The romantic intensity of that scene now seems a trifle embarrassing, as though we were looking back on our adolescence. Since then we have become slightly middle aged, faculty and students alike. We have become sophisticated.

When it came time to consider a year-around program with students coming and going, the faculty was skeptical. And in truth the plan was risky. In retrospect, its merits seem obvious, but it might have failed. What if students, not wanting to give up their summer vacations, had declined to come? Or what if they had gone off campus, liked it, and not come back? Resistance came from unexpected quarters. The language departments weren't so sure foreign study was a good idea. Students came back talking fluently, to be sure, but you should hear their grammar! Stavig himself was alarmed at the idea of sending all students abroad; the summer program had worked, he thought, because the participants had been carefully selected. And foreign language didn't seem essential to him. Why shouldn't English majors study in England?

Barrett saw the plan as a way of disabusing students of the notion that the world fell away just the other side of Detroit and Chicago, and Kalamazoo was in the middle of it. If we sent students off without any faculty members around to intervene and arrange things for them, students, he believed, would develop competence and poise, maturity and awareness of the world that no college could hope to induce on its own campus. We might offer an undergraduate program unequalled anywhere in the variety and depth of experience it
offered its students and in the maturity it could expect in its graduates. He hoped the dramatic increase in maturity would be recognized on campus so that upperclassmen would be treated very differently from freshmen. Besides this, he thought the college might develop strength in the teaching of foreign languages comparable to its strength in the teaching of sciences. It might become the Middlebury of the midwest. As he looks back, these ambitions have been fulfilled partly but not completely. He wonders whether he should have stressed those goals more insistently at the time. As it was, he tended to use the arguments that would appeal to each constituency. With trustees, he spoke of the efficient use of the plant; with faculty members, the arrangement whereby they would teach just two courses at a time for three quarters each year; with students, the opportunity to get off campus – and especially abroad. His larger hopes were part of the conversation, of course, but when he insisted on them, people became defensive.

Anyway, though almost everyone had some misgivings, the college went ahead and did it. Stu Simpson, the Business Manager, ran out cost projections ten years into the future. A faculty committee worked on the details all summer – Frances Diebold, Ed Moritz, Elton Ham, and four or five others under Ray Hightower’s chairmanship. Rolla Anderson knew the Plan meant trouble for all the athletic programs, but if it was the best thing for the college, he would back it. The science departments said pretty much the same thing. In 1961, the college shifted from a semester calendar to a quarter calendar, and the following year the whole Plan went into action. Seniors wrote Senior Independent Projects in the fall or winter; with the help of Walter Sikes and a newly organized Career Service office, sophomores went off on jobs in the spring; and 104 juniors went abroad, 80 in the fall and 24 in the spring. Stavig thought foreign study would work best when it was seen as a privilege for selected students, but when the Plan was adopted, Barrett said, “See what you can do with the rest.” As the first Director of Foreign Study, Stavig designed programs for all of them – proving himself wrong.

As one sign of the college’s confidence, the African program was introduced right then, that first year. Up to that time, no American college or university had set up a regular program of study in an African university. Any sensible administrator would know enough to wait a while, to give the other parts of the Plan a few years to settle down before taking on the exotic problems of malaria and race and student riots in Africa. But Barrett, Stavig, and John Peterson, an Africanist in the history department, saw an opportunity in Sierra Leone and took it. Five students studied there in 1962, seven in each of the next two years, and nine in 1965, when an additional center was opened in Kenya.

Gradually, national attention was directed to the college. As early as 1960, the New York Herald Tribune ran an article about foreign study programs in general but particularly about Kalamazoo:

Yesterday, Kalamazoo College, in Kalamazoo Mich., added new emphasis to this trend [toward study abroad]. This summer, the college announced, fifty students will go to Europe under a scholarship program. Eventually, free study abroad will be provided for half of the college’s students before they are graduate.

The college, it was pointed out, is located in what once was known as the nation’s Mid-Western “isolationist belt.” The “Summer Study Abroad” program, one college official said, is only part of a larger effort to make “internationalists” of the students, to familiarize them with foreign cultures.
And, said Dr. Weimer K. Hicks, college president, the program is regarded as a "logical extension of the language and social studies offered by most liberal arts colleges."

When the Plan was about to go into effect, in 1961, Time ran a picture of Hicks and Barrett on the quad and a story entitled "Boiling-Water College," which spoke of "a year-round operation that gives students, at no extra cost, a remarkable range of educational experience in the standard four years before graduation: social work in Africa, fulltime jobs in executive suites or emergency wards, mandatory study at any of three European universities, and regular work at Kalamazoo." After the first group of juniors returned from abroad, eight of them were interviewed by Walter Cronkite on CBS television. In 1964 the Wall Street Journal carried a story on Kalamazoo College, and two years later Stavig wrote an article about foreign study for the Saturday Review. Among many other foreign study stories, Stavig quoted one returning woman student as saying, "I feel that my experience in Europe was a dividing line between two lives—that of a child and that of an adult. . . . I feel different inside. . . . more stable, basically happier, freer as a result of my experience. I no longer feel like a child wandering, asking to be led. I have begun to feel that someday I may be able to lead."

Though the times and the college have changed, what happened to that girl in Europe continues to happen: students come back from Career Development or Foreign Study or Senior Independent Projects with a new sense of themselves, new confidence and independence that set them apart, a little, from their fellows at other colleges. And from the beginning students have seemed to have a shrewd instinct for combining academic work and off-campus experience in just the way to allow themselves the most dramatic growth. In the first year of the program, Bertha Doleman, a sophomore sociology major from Darby, Pennsylvania, went for her Career quarter to Miles College, a predominantly black college in Birmingham, Alabama, where she assisted in the Sociology Department and did other jobs. A black woman herself, she learned from her own experience how it felt to be black in the deep South. Then, after a summer back on campus, she left for Fourah Bay College in Freetown, Sierra Leone. After her return she wrote these "Reflections" for the Kalamazoo College Alumnus:

"Aren't you glad to be home?" the smiling African asked me. And I, having grown a bit tired of this question, rather impatiently replied that I was not an African, that three centuries away is a long time.

"But you're not wanted there, Bertha. Look at how they treat you. Here you could be free, spiritually free; and this is the most important thing in life."

Instinctively, I prepared to reject my friend's statements. . . . you can't say I'm not wanted. I have plenty of white friends. Look at all my friends at "K". . . . My community hasn't treated me so badly either; the people at home are fairly liberal. . . . Then I admitted that I was kidding myself. I knew all along what my friend meant. He was talking about a difference in atmosphere, a difference which affects one's feelings of self-worth, which colors one's reactions to others. He was talking about the difference between my interpersonal relations in Birmingham, Alabama, where I spent my Career Quarter—and in the United States' many watered-down versions of Birmingham—and in Freetown, Sierra Leone. I had to decide what it meant to be a Negro in each of those places. . . .

No, being a Negro in Birmingham, Alabama, was for me not an easy thing. I was constantly angry, rebelling, never losing the feeling of
being caged. How can a person retain his sense of worth and dignity when he lives like that?

And then Freetown. What about Freetown? I had expected to really feel my foreignness in Sierra Leone. "None of this 'going home' business for me," I had told my friends. "The only thing the Africans and I have in common is our black skin, and that certainly isn't much." How wrong I was!

It did not take many days in Freetown before I realized that I felt a definite kinship with the Africans there, before I realized that some part of me does belong to Africa.

I felt very much at home there, so free to be myself, so accepted. Suddenly, for the first time in my life, my blackness was an asset and not a liability; my skin served to include me in the mainstream of life rather than set me apart.

A person who has never experienced racial discrimination cannot possibly understand what this means, what it means to know that you are in your own house and if another man cannot tolerate your blackness then it is he who must leave, what it means to be able to associate with whites and feel that you are on absolutely the same level—without the nagging discomforts and suspicions that often hinder such relationships in the States.

It meant that I could meet people and not always be on the defensive, that I could walk along the streets greeting everyone I met and not feel if someone didn't answer that it was because of my skin, that I could be really proud of being black and not be called a racist.

Still, I am an American, and although I delighted in my ability to blend in with the surroundings, I sometimes felt the need to assert my American-ness, to be identified as a foreigner. One such time was the weekend of President Kennedy's death; another was the many occasions when my African friends expressed the hope that their American brothers would someday return.

Yes, the ties of culture were there. So, in the end, what could I do but turn to my smiling African friend and say sadly, "You know, it is strange that I had to leave my own country to first feel at home."

Now, after twenty years the K Plan is no longer novel. We are not much in the news, though Joe Fugate was awarded the Chevalier dans L'Ordre des Palmes Académiques by the French government in November, 1981. I myself continue to be moved and astonished whenever I hear students tell where they have been and what they have done, how their academic work has been nudged by their off-campus adventures and how it has nudged back. But we now are on intimate terms with the disadvantages of the Plan, too: the pressure everyone feels, learning in ten-week sprints, but especially the pressure on science students who must crowd their first five quarters with science and mathematics before they get to enjoy a little elbow room sophomore and junior years; and the coming and going which disrupts sports, theater, music, friendships. "I get sick of saying goodbye," one student said. Still, you can't be around campus spring and summer terms without feeling the pitch of excitement as students come back and prepare to go off again. And even meeting them on the street, you are impressed with how they have changed.
“I learned a lot of German. As my grandmother said, my German boyfriend was a two-legged dictionary.”
Joanne Stewart

“This has been more of an unlearning time than anything else. When I came I was sure at the end there was going to be some greater clarity. On foreign study, I began to realize there wasn’t going to be any miraculous clearing in my mind, no sure sense of direction. Since then I’ve been seeing that experience is a process of finding the source of direction.”
James Lindbeck

“I was so much the fundamentalist when I came. At first I thought Schmeichel was crazy, but then I began to look. You know, the birth stories are different in Matthew and Luke.”
Leah Shafer

“I was off winter, working as a guide-lecturer at the Museum of Science and Industry in Chicago. I had to learn the spiel about certain exhibits, like the Coal Mine and Main Street and the captured German sub—had to learn it in French, German, and English.”
Lisa Weier

“For Career Development I worked in a factory at home—Amex, Inc. I needed money for foreign study. I worked right there on the floor, pushing metal through the furnaces. There was a lot of animosity toward college boys, but I got along well. I could talk sports and I like hard work. I saw places where I could have improved things—like the flow of material through the plant—from things I’ve learned here.”
Tom Welke

“People come here interested in three or four things. Then they narrow down. But I’m still interested in the same three or four things. You have to work to do that.”
Matthew Goulish

“Career Development came at the right time. I was getting frustrated with K. In science classes you never get much positive feedback, but on the job they say, ‘You know that?’ They’re impressed.”
Leah Shafer

“In Africa, I saw that things could be unstructured and still work. I could behave differently without everything coming apart.”
James Lindbeck
"My family in Aix was a lot like my own home. Comfortable. They had parties. But then I traveled to Athens and Egypt. I walked around in some of the poor parts of Cairo. People were willing to talk— I talked with a man who had lost two sons in the Israeli war. Later I did my SIP on food problems in Egypt. Eventually I'd like to go back there—to see if I could make a difference."

Tom Welke

"You can get the K Plan to do almost anything you want it to do."

Matthew Goulish

"At Indiana University, the project went wonderfully. My boss was one of the names in the field and I got honors. But that sixth floor lab was the last bastion of male strength. I was the only woman in the group, and they actually had pictures of naked women on the walls. We talked about foreign policy and basketball for three months: anything else was too threatening. When I mentioned that I would be going back to Flint soon, somebody said, 'Stay around. Every lab needs its groupie.' I got furious. I went right through the roof. I get goose bumps right now, thinking about it."

Joanne Stewart

"I was going to go on foreign study last fall but the University of Madrid closed. So I went to New York instead—worked with Fritz Bultmann, making collages, cutting, gluing, painting, talking. That's pretty foreign—New York."

Matthew Goulish

"As far as being a good employee, you have to earn that. My having been at college doesn't mean anybody owes me anything. It was a chance to mature in different surroundings. My brother, my mother never went to college—that doesn't make them worse employees or citizens."

Tom Welke

"I think of Spencer's Liberation Theology and Whitehead courses. Every day they affect the way you think. There's no going back. Walking out of his class you literally see the world with new perception. And history classes are always good because of all the stories you pick up: Chen's Complete History of Japan, China, and Korea in ten weeks. And Barclay."

Matthew Goulish
The Kalamazoo Plan has become so deeply a part of our experience that one could almost say, as Clair Myers did the other day, that we are the K Plan. If that is so, the college may reflect the K Plan in ways we are not aware of—in our social patterns, for example, or even in our architecture.

It seems to me that Kalamazoo, in comparison with other colleges, is noticeably centrifugal. That is, a visitor to campus is likely to ask, “Where is everybody?” We tend to disappear into the corners of the campus, where we work or socialize with a relatively small group of friends. Sometimes these groups are people who happened to room near each other freshman year; sometimes they were on Land-Sea together; sometimes they are brought together by an interest in sports or theater, music, the chapel, or one of the sciences; sometimes they are people who went to the same foreign study center; sometimes they are an intramural softball team or a group of bell ringers. Whoever they are, they are not gathering gregariously in the lobby of the union or on the quad. One of the reasons that Commencement seems such a dramatic and moving event, I believe, is that for once we are all there together.

This centrifugal pattern, I believe, is characteristic of faculty as well as students. I have never seen a small college faculty as free as ours is of feuds and cliques and rivalries, long standing alliances and divisions. The Kalamazoo faculty are remarkably respectful of each other, remarkably open in their discussion of issues, and disinclined to think in political or factional terms. In truth, we trust each other. But the counterpart of this openness is that social interaction among faculty is less intense than it might be on another campus—certainly less intense than it would be on a small campus in a small town. We know and like each other, but we live in various parts of the city and have friends outside the college; like the students, we tend to scatter. We don't generally spend our evenings talking college politics.

One might agree that the college has this centrifugal character and still doubt that this has anything much to do with the K Plan. Students tend to disappear into corners of the campus, the K Plan sends them to the corners of the earth—does that prove the two are connected? It doesn't. But let me look for a minute at the architecture of the campus to see if I can make the connection plausible, assuming that architecture reflects social patterns as well as shaping them. Even though the campus has maintained a certain uniformity of architectural style, I think there is noticeable difference between the buildings built before the K Plan and those built after. For example, when I first came to Kalamazoo, the central building was Bowen Hall, standing where Hicks Center now stands. If I remember correctly, when you entered Bowen, you entered a central space with a high ceiling, smaller than the lobby of
a hotel or a bank but nonetheless a gathering place. The president’s office, the business office, and the dean’s office all opened off this lobby, and there were enough classrooms and faculty offices in the building so that a great many faculty members and students passed through the lobby every hour. Winnie, the telephone operator, sat in a glass cage at one side of the lobby, and if you wanted to get a message to someone, you just asked Winnie to keep her eye out. When Bowen was torn down, administrative offices were moved to Mandell, and for a while Winnie sat in a glass cage outside the admissions office. But nobody much came by. There no longer was a central place on campus.

I realize I haven’t proved anything so far, except that the college was growing and that an important building got too old to repair. But consider the building that houses the academic programs that used to be in Bowen: Dewing Hall, built in 1968. In many ways it serves us well, providing good offices and imaginative classrooms. But I have never seen a more centerless building. It not only lacks a central lobby, it doesn’t even have a central door. You walk in the front door, stare for a minute at a blank wall, take a turn to the right, and you are lost. It is a perfect place to hide. The stairways are arranged so that the easiest way to get to the second floor may be to go outdoors and come in again. If Bowen Hall drew people to the center, Dewing draws them to the periphery. It provides excellent places to work or to meet in small groups but no place where people would naturally gather. It must have been the product of a centrifugal state of mind.

To be fair, let me concede that the Fine Arts Building, built only a few years before Dewing, does have a central lobby, and the Library is only a little more peripheral than other libraries. Libraries are supposed to be places to hide. But compare Trowbridge, Hobe, or Harmon with Crissey and Severn, built after the K Plan. I don’t mean to argue that one is preferable to the other, but the long corridors and central lounges give the older dorms a feeling of coherence or centrality that gives way in the newer ones to the intimacy of smaller groups separated in suites. And the single dining room in Old Welles, where everyone ate together, loud and crowded, under the socialistic mural, has been closed in favor of the English pub, the Spanish room, the African room, the Oriental room—in this case, an explicit reflection of the K Plan. The first decade of the K Plan, 1962-72, happened to be the decade in which Dewing, the Fine Arts Building, the Library, Crissey, Severn, and the Hicks Center were built. It could be that our enthusiasm, in those years, for individualism and diversity of experience affected the design of the buildings, without our being aware of it. And now the design of the buildings affects our social patterns.

The genius of the K Plan is that it makes the experience of college unusually vivid and remarkably different for each student. In conventional colleges, to be sure, some students study biology and some political science, some go out for basketball while others edit the newspaper. But they are all in the same landscape, speaking the same language; they all meet the same sorts of people on the same paths across campus. But if one sophomore is working at the Dental Research Institute of the University of Michigan, another on the Sioux Indian Reservation in Dupree, South Dakota, a third in the office of a U.S. Senator in Washington, a fourth at Anti Pasta’s Restaurant in Tucson, Arizona, a fifth in an elementary school in Anchorage, Alaska, and so on through the class, their experiences may have almost nothing in common. The weather will be different, the co-workers different, the demands and frustrations and satisfactions of the job entirely different. The
sophomores come back, somewhat changed by their jobs, and then go off again to Bogota or Bonn, Aix or Nairobi or Madrid, Caen or Tokyo. To hear Matthew Goulis, Tom Welke, and Lisa Weier talk about what they have done and learned from freshman to senior year, what the experience has been as they see it from the inside, you would hardly guess they had gone to the same college.

If this is true, what keeps the college from flying apart? What makes it a single institution after all? The answer, of course, is the academic program on campus. In a sense, as teachers, we don't care where students have been or are going; we want them to know chemistry or history or Spanish or mathematics, whatever their individual experience may be. We hope, when they leave Kalamazoo, they will be competent as well as adaptable, both well travelled and well informed. From time to time, we look for new and better ways to integrate students' off-campus and on-campus experiences, but some tension between the two is inevitable and desirable. The traditional, strongly departmental academic program provides an equal and opposite pull, a centripetal force drawing students together in classes, laboratories, musical groups, theater companies. A member of the English department at Michigan State University told me he was envious of the amount of control we have over our students; we can actually require them to take certain courses in a certain sequence, and at the end we can examine them on the assumption that they have had more or less a common experience. Though he may exaggerate a little, basically he is right. We do control the programs of our students—and we are rather jealous of the right to that control. Occasionally, the control may seem (and may be) petty or arbitrary, but by and large it is appropriate. It is the only force we have that is strong enough to pull against the astonishing diversity of experience offered by the K Plan.

Fortunately, these two forces—one urging us apart, the other pulling us together—are both very firmly established. Neither is likely to overwhelm the other. We seem to be maintaining a fruitful tension between these two opposing goods. Insofar as we can deliberately influence the balance of these impulses, I think we probably should emphasize, now, the forces that draw us together. (The K Plan will provide diversity without any deliberate reinforcement from us.) Especially, we should do what we can to draw ourselves together in ways that are not strictly academic. For example, Red Square, added as a brilliant afterthought toward the end of the decade of centrifugal building, shows what can be done with bricks, running water, stairs, and fruit trees set out where people will be passing. It invites us to cool our feet and talk. Symbolically, it does its best to offer an alternative to Dewing—and to connect the old quad-centered campus with the new street-centered one.

It was good instinct that governed the choice of the two buildings we have built most recently: the Nelda Balch Playhouse and the Rolla Anderson Athletic Center. (Well named, too.) They are places to come together, a lot of us at once, for non-academic pleasures—for the illusion of life and the hope of victory. And in the Anderson building, the space seems to me to be put to the right uses. It would be good to have squash and handball courts, but it is more important, right now, to have a huge open space where we can hold Commencement if we have to or where the whole college can watch Hope go down.

Bob Dewey has been right to tend the tradition of Friday Chapels as a weekly occasion that draws a considerable fraction of the college together. We will never go back to the required chapels that jammed us all in, often sullenly, but some of us are lifted by this weekly token of our wholeness. Founders Day, Honors Day, Scholars
Day, the Forum. For a few years there in the late Sixties, the Christmas Carol Service may have seemed a bit hokey. Now we realize that we need it. There are plenty of things we have no desire to revive or invent – May Fetes and Homecoming Parades with floating queens. But how about a mock political convention? Is that beyond reviving? And how about tables on the quad outside the snack bar?

The K plan fills the periphery of the campus with astonishing individuals, those who have been disillusioned in Syracuse and those who have fallen in love in Senegal. If we could think of a way to get them all together on the quad once or twice before commencement, what a picnic we would have. In the meantime, let’s sign Nelda Balch on for more Readers Theater—and bring back the McLain Family Band.

Conrad Hilberry
Lucinda Hindsale, principal of the Female Department, 1843-1863

James A. B. Stone, president, 1843-1863
The faculty, 1888-1889
St. Andrews June 10th, 1893

To our sister the faculty of St. Andrews,

To twenty-four hours instruction in

Singing the commission of the robes,

June 11th at twelve and a half cents, above. R. 2970

H. S. Slocum

June 11th, 1893

Dr. Slocum and graduates, 1893
Dr. Kendall Brooks, 1868-1887

Monson A. Wilcox, 1887-1891.
Gaylord Slocum, 1892-1911

Herbert L. Stetson, 1912-1922
The faculty, 1929
Samuel Brooks, professor of Latin

Mary Clark, instructor in history and grammar
Stillman G. Jenks, professor of chemistry

Lucy H. Johnson, instructor in Latin and history

Elizabeth Axtell, instructor in English and history

Herbert L. Stetson, professor of psychology and education
George A. Williams, professor of Greek

Clarke B. Williams, professor of mathematics
James P. Worden, professor of German and French
Allen B. Stowe, professor of chemistry, and students
Frances Diebold, professor of biology, and students
Marion H. Dunsmore, professor of religion and Raymond Hightower

Justin H. Bacon, professor of French

Luike J. Hemmes, professor of philosophy

Lemuel F. Smith, professor of chemistry, and Allen B. Stowe
Classroom in the 1930s
Classroom in the 1970s
Harold Harris in the classroom

In class
Becky Gray, Rhodes Scholar, and President George Rainsford, 1981
Studying in Mandelle Library
Mary Barnes, Helen Mather, and Florence Meredith, librarians

In Upjohn Library
Classroom scene
Class of 1904 in 1902
A class reunion in 1953
At the senior breakfast at the home of Dr. Stetson in 1905
Dr. Hicks conferring a degree in 1956
Three or four weeks after my arrival in Kalamazoo in the fall of 1953, I was sitting in my office with a freshman, going over his latest paper. It was a pleasant place to work, on the south side of Bowen, second floor, over Frances Diebold’s lecture room, and the sun poured through the high windows and made the generations of varnish on maple and oak woodwork glow like gold. A relaxing, genial place to talk over themes—but this time it wasn’t working.

I was asking all those questions English professors have been asking freshmen time out of mind—"What was the main point of this paragraph, Tom? (or Sue, or Diane, or whatever) . . . Why did you choose to use passive voice here, or did you go into it blind without stopping to choose? . . . Oh, that was sort of careless, wasn’t it? Now, when do you really need passive voice? . . ." And so on. But, as I say, it wasn’t working. My freshman wasn’t paying attention. I grew a bit sharper—perhaps the atmosphere was too relaxing, too genial—and then I noticed his hand trembling and realized he was uptight.

I put the paper down. “Say, what’s the matter with you? You’re worried about something. What’s happened? What’s wrong?”

Then it all came out. “Somebody knocked a microscope off the lab table. It was one of the good microscopes, and they broke it, and they didn’t tell Dieb.”

“Come on, now,” I said. “Relax. Dieb’s reasonable. She knows no one breaks microscopes intentionally. Forget it.”

“But you don’t understand,” my freshman insisted. “It’s not the microscope. That isn’t it. It’s whoever did it, didn’t tell Dieb.”

And at that moment I knew with absolute confidence that at least one student at Kalamazoo was getting a liberal education, and not just because he was taking freshman writing, biology, calculus, and speech (required in those days). He was also learning that there are certain verities in this world, one of which is that when you make a mistake, you tell Dieb.

It was a moment of genuine relief. I still remember the flood of assurance I felt. I had just come out from Bowdoin, which had long since sunk into self-satisfied complacency under the thirty-three year presidency of Casey Sills and was comfortably unpromising. But it did give a liberal education. It put its touch on the students, changed them, matured them; there was no doubt whatever in my mind about that. I wasn’t so sure of Kalamazoo, which forbade smoking on the campus and drinking on or off. It was a liberal arts college, of course, not so different from Bowdoin in distributional requirements (Bowdoin required speech, too), but liberal arts don’t guarantee a liberal education. They are only a vehicle for the teaching, and it’s the teaching that turns the trick.

I was soon to find Dieb wasn’t the only one. Walt Waring came in one morning to tell me exci-
edly that he had at last realized what *Othello* is about, his eyes shining like Cortez’ on that peak in Darien. I did not know then that he was to make essentially the same discovery every year for as long as we were to teach together, and always with the same contagious excitement. It infected his classes, made literature a heady joy, and if, thirty years later, his students have forgotten the date of *Othello* or whether or not it was performed by the Lord Chamberlain’s Men, most of them are still reading with the same deep pleasure. Generally speaking, Dieb’s students have forgotten a lot of biology, too, but there are other things they will never forget.

Or I remember standing in the hall in Bowen, eavesdropping while Marion Dunsmore taught his five or six students in Greek. He was deriving etymologies from the *ag* stem, the hypothetical Indo-European root for “thrust” or “drive.” Chalk clicking against the blackboard, he told them how it came down into Latin as the *agri* root, meaning “to plow,” and so into our own language as *agriculture, agrarian, agronomy*, and a whole family of related words. He told them how the *g* changed to *c* in the Germanic languages and gave us *acre* and even *acorn*, and how the stem came down into Greek as *agon* and became *agonia*, the Greek word for the wrestling match at the Olympics, and so, by metaphor, into our own language as *agony*. Word after word blossomed on the blackboard, Greek, Sanskrit, German, Lithuanian, French, Danish and Cymric—a whole Pentecost of words—and though Marion never mentioned it, over everything he said hung an overpowering sense of the community of our race, the kinship of the serf driving his plow in Wessex with the Greeks in their wrestling match at the annual games. Over it, too, hung an equally inescapable sense of time, for he told them of that stem coming down out of a misty pre-history, showing up in a dozen places when the first writing appears, becoming more and more surely traceable. And, though he again said nothing about it, a certain reverence in his tone revealed without question his strong sense of our debt to the past. And just because it wasn’t said, I felt it, standing out there in the hall, and I know those half dozen students felt it, too.

If you had asked, Marion would have said he was simply teaching etymology. That’s what’s wrong with questionnaires and inventories that ask faculty whether or not they believe it is their business to “inculcate values.” No self-respecting liberal arts teacher preaches or proselytizes or persuades. Each teaches a discipline which, though it may be about values as in a course in ethics or literary criticism, is essentially value free. Every one of them will vote no on that questionnaire item, and the results can be dangerously misleading to people who don’t really know what happens in colleges like ours to kids studying the disciplines under people like Diebold and Waring and Dunsmore. Such questionnaires can lead to the assumption that a course in biology is essentially the same as an equivalent course at State, only more expensive, and that we ought to be more efficient about it.

Generally speaking, something different happens to the students in colleges like Oberlin and Amherst and Earlham and Kalamazoo. It is intangible and terribly hard to define, but I have watched it for close to thirty years in the classrooms of my colleagues, and I know it is there. It lies not in what we teach in our disciplines, for that is essentially the same in every undergraduate program, but in how we teach, how we relate to students, how we feel about them and they about us.

No teacher really committed to giving a liberal education will, for example, be content merely to train students, even while teaching them some-
thing as basic as calculus or punctuation. A class of mathematical whizzes knocking off A's on the toughest calculus exams given in years is still disappointing to such a teacher unless he or she has nurtured the instinct to ask questions, stimulated a nascent intellectual curiosity. That's part of the fun of teaching basic courses to freshmen and sophomores. They are full of questions. And at about five years of age most of them discovered that asking questions of adults who couldn't answer them was irritating, and learned to keep their wonderings to themselves. Now they are in an environment of people who want to know too, and the questions start coming again.

Sometimes they are foolish questions, sometimes they lead to nothing, but always they are worth taking time to explore. Kurt Kaufman, one morning, was visited by a freshman lugging a full gunny sack.

“What's that?” asked Kurt.

“Peach fuzz.”

“Peach fuzz! Come, now.”

“No, really. It is peach fuzz. My Dad raises peaches up by Manistee, and each year we brush tons of this stuff off them before we send them to market. And I've always wondered what there is in peach fuzz that makes it protect the peaches. I guess that's why it's there. I thought I'd extract some of it, if you could show me how.”

So Kurt dropped whatever it was he was doing and spent the afternoon with his freshman extracting essence of peach fuzz. Late in the day they boiled off the acetone and found in the bottom of their beaker a yellow crystalline substance. It looked suspiciously like sulfur. It was sulfur. And then the embarrassed freshman explained.

“Gosh! I forgot to tell you, Dr. Kaufman. We spray our peaches with sulfur every year to inhibit fungus.”

That's where Kurt stopped when he told me about it, because that's where the joke is, but I suspect he responded, “Never mind. Now that we know that, I'll show you how to clear the sulfur out, and we'll try again.”

It is this nurturing of intellectual curiosity, not superior teaching in the disciplines, that has sent so high a proportion of Kalamazoo graduates on to the graduate schools. There has, it is true, been superior teaching in the disciplines. Otherwise our graduates would not be so readily welcomed in the post-graduate programs or do so well once they are there. But it is their having been encouraged in their hunger to know that sends them on in the first place—or their having been infected by teachers full of that hunger themselves.

To be perfectly fair, this kind of encouragement happens in the universities too, at least for those students bright enough to stand out above their peers and attract their teachers' attention. But there is another kind of question—a very important kind—which is not likely to get attention in the universities, partly because it is so often asked by apparently unpromising students. Such questions drive down under the commonly held assumptions and, once asked, often don't require much brilliance to be answered. They are questions like Galileo's “Is it really true that a heavy body falls faster than a light one?” Once he had asked that, the matter was easy enough to settle—and physics had espoused mathematics and was never to be the same again. Or Pasteur's “Is there really such a thing as spontaneous generation?” Somebody once made a study of Pasteur's vocabulary and concluded he had only a limited intelligence. Perhaps, but it required no great brilliance for him to seal some sterilized broth in flasks and watch what happened—and when he set those seals the whole history of civilization changed.

These are the questions that Kurt Kaufman says “have been trained out of most of us,” and which he exemplified with a story about a sopho-
more I will call Blaylock, because I have forgotten the real name. Kurt had been synthesizing a psoralene—or, rather, had been trying to. It had run the first time he tried, but now that he was trying to make more of the stuff, something kept going wrong. It was a frustrating and nerve-wracking business, for a run took three days and, it was always well into the second before it became evident it wasn’t working.

“It was about two o’clock in the morning on our third try,” Kurt told me, “when I knew it wasn’t running again. I told the kids who were helping to shut the thing down and went into my office, feeling suicidal. Then Blaylock came in. He was only a sophomore, but he was one of the kids who was helping.

'Dr. Kaufman, sir, about the synthesis not running . . .’

‘Well?’ I said, not very friendly . . .

‘Well, sir, I was thinking about washing the equipment.’

“When he said that,” Kurt goes on, “I blew up. All my suicidal inclinations became homicidal. I told him he damned well knew we’d been washing the equipment, more and more carefully each time. And Blaylock said, ‘But, sir, that’s what I mean. What had you been doing with the equipment before it ran that first time?’

“And the minute he said it, I knew what it was. At some stage in the process during that first run we had inadvertently introduced a trace of something catalytic that made it go. As a matter of fact, there was only one place it could likely have happened and one thing it could likely be. We went back, introduced a bit of it deliberately this time, and the synthesis ran.’

I like that story because I like to think of Kalamazoo turning out creative people—perhaps someday, if we are lucky, even a Galileo or Pasteur. And creativity always seems to lie in the gift to ask questions that have been “trained out of most of us” and are stifled in most undergraduate institutions. It’s good to be in a college where they are not, good to teach with people like Kurt who can listen to them.

But there are other things that happen in a liberal education in addition to the nurture of the enquiring mind. Something happens to motive, to why students do things. They come to us out of a world of being expected to please Mother and Dad, and some are so tied to pleasing Mother and Dad that they can’t clearly choose what they want to do themselves. A few are so bent on displeasing Mother and Dad that they can’t choose, either. But when the fire of intellectual curiosity really begins to burn or one discovers the satisfaction of opening night after long weeks of practice for one of Nelda Balch’s plays, Mother and Dad become less determining. And they should. That’s why Kalamazoo is a residential college.

Other new motives come into play, too, like a concern for others. Some of it is caught by contagion from a faculty who students find are generally concerned about them. Sometimes it is deliberately taught. Every new batch of freshmen in my composition course came fresh from having been told to “do your own work, children” in a spelling-bee environment where the trick was to outdo everyone else in the class. I would tell them that they were there not so much to learn to write as to help nineteen or twenty others learn to write, and I would set the course up so they had to. It is surprising how much students learn when they are teaching or tutoring others, how much pleasure there can be in doing assignments together, and how much the backing of the group helps dissolve insecurities. There’s nothing novel in this. Everyone at Kalamazoo knows it and uses it in teaching, though each goes about it in a different way.

More, students at a college like this put
away the childish carrot-and-sticks motivation as they learn that the most important reason for doing anything is simply self-respect. It's not easy to lead them to that. It requires knowing the students individually, and permitting them to know us. They come to us motivated by marks and the compulsion to succeed, and nothing is more effective, if you just want to teach subject matter, than to go right ahead motivating with marks. Many institutions do.

But stand outside Marcelle Dale's class some afternoon and watch what's happening. (Most faculty at Kalamazoo teach with the doors open, which is a sign of health in itself.) The air is full of electricity. Everyone is on the edge of the chair, or everyone except "Madame Dale." She is on her feet and moving every minute, moving toward whatever student she is addressing and then turning to someone at the other side of the room. Her dialogue with the class comes like machine gun fire, but every question, every comment, is directed to an individual. When a response is right, there is always the brief word or gesture, not so much of approval as of recognition and respect. And when it is inadequate, there is an equally brief response, not so much of disapproval as of disappointment, a sort of "How could you?" seasoned with a frown for the too cocky or tempered with a jest for the sensitive. Her students do not compete with each other, and they don't work just to please her, though they bring her roses. They work because she believes in them, and they must perforce believe in themselves.

I am unabashedly envious of Marcelle's skill, for I work for the same thing, but overtly, clumsily. My students come into a composition class thinking they need writing in order to get good marks in other courses in college. I never try to disabuse them of that, though I think it a despicable reason to take a course and, besides, it isn't true any more. I just tell them I will put criticisms but no grades on their papers, and when I go over papers with them, I tell them, "This is careless, sloppy work, and you should be ashamed of it." Or I say, "That paragraph is a gem. The prose rhythms are fine. You spend just long enough on the first point before you shift into contrast, and you finish it with that brief but inescapably conclusive sentence. I wish I had written it myself." And sometimes my student will respond, with a bit of embarrassment, "Did you really like it? I sort of liked it myself." And that is my moment of victory, because it means at least one student is no longer taking composition in order to get good marks in other courses, but because it is fun to write, and because there is pride in doing it well.

But something else happens at Kalamazoo and colleges like it, something that occurs when the student finds the right teacher for himself or herself. Every once in a while I would find among my advisees someone in whom I could see a hint of deliberate solidity, a slight tendency to put things carefully and thoughtfully, the still callow promise of unusual intellectual integrity. And I would tell them to take a course from John Spencer—"Only, there's one condition. If you agree to take the course, don't come to me expecting me to approve a drop-add. I won't sign it." After the first week of slow, deliberate work, outlining reading, analyzing it with an almost maddening care, some would tell me, not without a touch of resentment, that they regretted ever having bought my deal. But if I had been right in my initial judgment of them, and I usually was, they wouldn't ask out. A couple of weeks later they would be in to admit a grudging respect, and as the term went on that would blossom into downright admiration. Along with the coffee and cookies he took into his eight o'clock classes, John gave his students something of himself. He made something of the callow
promise I had seen in them, matured them, helped them to become themselves, and they loved him for it. He's still doing it.

That's one of the reasons why a faculty in a college like this should be such a menagerie of different types and different kinds. The students come to us from a world dominated, usually, by two adults whom they didn't choose and to whom they have obligations they didn't elect for themselves. Their image of themselves has largely been created by others, and though they believe they are coming to get a good pre-med program or a solid background for graduate work in psychology, they really come here to find out who they are, to get at the "real me." They find themselves, for the first time, among adults whom they really can choose or disregard—or whom they can even detest without the guilt of detesting a parent. And those people represent all the options. There are liberals and conservatives; disciplined orderly people and imaginative, creative ones; idealists and realists and skeptics. There's everything.

There is Marigene Arnold, who could be Margaret Mead all over again if she had Mead's built-in PR agent. She came from a small college herself and goes on doing for our students what her teachers did for her. She is cosmopolitan in the true sense of the word, at home in Mexico and Africa, always aware of another point of view and ready to listen to another position. She would rather teach her students on an Indian reservation than amid the clutter of committees, routine, and reports that tangle life on campus. She is always patient, always ready to listen, and I have never heard students speak of her with anything but appreciation and respect. She doesn't have superficial devotees, as some faculty do, but she has the real thing: a sizeable number of students who would no longer be here without her.

And there is Con Hilberry, who gets great poems out of students who have been absolutely sure that the last thing in the world they could do would be to write poetry. And in so doing, he leads them into an understanding of what it means to be creative, which, in the long run, is more important than the poem. He is a most effective critic. I know, because he has had a major hand in turning much of my own writing, which I knew to be mediocre, into something I was proud of. He has a most perceptive eye and can smell a fault far more accurately than the rest of us, but he also has a gift for pointing it out in such a way that his student, though he understands exactly what is wrong, never feels the knife. More than anyone on campus, he makes learning a social act. Poetry he makes a communal feast.

There is John Wickstrom, dry, sardonic and equally impatient with careless thought whether he sees it in peasants or princes, students, fellow faculty, or trustees. He teaches history, at least according to his letter of appointment, but the country in which he lives has no boundaries between the disciplines. Art, philosophy, literature, and history are all kin, to be rigorously studied together. Hence, he is a healthy influence in a system that sometimes forgets that you cannot produce liberally educated people by subjecting students to a succession of specialists. More important, he is a kindred spirit for the best and brightest of our students. He's a demanding one, but we always have a few students who, without his presence, would feel like aliens among us lesser mortals, and they are devoted to him.

There's Billie Fischer, whose two slides of art works separated by centuries but projected side by side before her classes make exactly the same statement about timelessness and the kinship of our race that I heard Marion Dunsmore making as he traced the ag stem almost thirty years ago. Her students learn even more, perhaps, in her living room, watching her family life, shar-
And Wally Schmeichel, with his challenging eye, who lectures with more lucidity and eloquence in a second language than do most of us born to it. Without the least touch of piousseness or the least tendency to proselytize, he reflects a spiritual commitment, an authority that makes students phone him when they are desperate for help with their lives.

And Howard Roerecke, whose mellifluous voice and delight in literature make his classes an experience in their own right, and who writes the most careful and thorough criticisms on students’ papers I have ever seen. Each is personally addressed — “This is an impressive job, Sue . . .” and then goes on and on with detailed analysis and helpful comment. The students, reading those comments, know he is working for them, and they work for him in return.

And there is Joe Fugate, who was Dick Stavig’s protegé as Dick was mine, and who lives according to the Law. I know no one with whom I can more strongly disagree, and no one I more genuinely respect. And David Small teaching students who never dreamed they could draw, just as Con teaches poetry. And Kathy Reish, and Richard Cook, who was Kurt Kaufman’s protegé and who, now that Kurt has been half snatched from us, keeps him present in the labs and classrooms of the science buildings. There are Bernard Palchick, and Don Flesche, and Dick Stavig, and T.J. Smith, who writes like an English professor, fiddles like a member of the Music Department, leads a group in ringing changes and, almost incidentally, loves the elegance of a finely tuned mathematical algorithm.

There are Fred Strobel, and Chen, and Herb Bogart, and Henry Cohen, and Gail Griffin . . . The list goes on and on. Seen as a whole, the faculty looks like so many brilliant pigments on a painter’s palette, each with its own place and purpose, eventually, if properly used.

But all that variety, all that opportunity for the students to choose, works only because the faculty themselves work at making it work. Liberal arts teachers study their students with the same care with which they study their disciplines. They study each new group gathered in their classrooms, usually as a group first, because the first few meetings are crucial. Who is aggressive and inclined to dominate, and how much should he or she be tempered? Who is insecure and needs support? Are there animosities in the group, or old friends who sit together, back each other, and may make a cabal? Who are the nay-sayers—a blessed gift when the discussion gets going in the wrong direction? A good class is a functioning organism of very different personalities, just as a good faculty is or just as a good orchestra is. One of the tricks of great teaching is to orchestrate them, and it usually has to be done in the first few class hours. After that, the dies are cast, and it’s too late.

More important than that, though, good liberal arts teachers get to know their students until each is a unique bundle of potentialities, personal traits, and patterns of behavior. There is no real way to do that, fully, except outside of class, and there is no way to do it except by permitting oneself to be known. No one has a right to ask another human being to let himself be known without offering the openness that makes it possible to be known in return. Every faculty member has his own way of doing it. Marigene Arnold and Gail Griffin live with their front doors always open to students, and usually with a few in the living room. Billie Fischer’s house is likewise open, and so is Con Hilberry’s. Jean Calloway invites a group to his home to listen to opera, and, when they are ready, takes them on an opera trip to New York. Franklin Presler does much of it in his office, talk-
ing to students (no, not to them but with them) until long after both should have gone home for supper.

It takes time. It take energy. It keeps faculty from a great many pleasures other professions have time to enjoy. But it is worth it, as those of us who were undergraduates in such colleges know. We are what we are because someone took time for us.

Looking back, I see that a lot of this is about the old guard—Diebold, Dunsmore, Kaufman. That is as it should be, I suppose. Let's have honor where honor is due.

All the same, it is the younger generation I salute, the new faculty, the untenured. They work under far more difficult conditions than we did. We had a fixed budget for instruction—enrollment multiplied by tuition. It couldn’t be cut, and it came to a bit more than 50% of the total education and general expenses. Our present faculty enjoy no such guarantees, and instructional budget, as a percentage of total expenses, has markedly dropped. We enjoyed a simple form of governance, built largely on mutual confidence and on being too busy teaching to bother. They are tangled in a system of governance that, to my elder and jaundiced eye, seems ridiculously time-consuming and relatively impotent. We worked with an unusually lean administration, too much involved in its own problems to bother us except for truly urgent matters. Now, faculty are surrounded by administrators and support staff, making new demands on faculty time. We flourished in an expanding market. Now the college-age pool is shrinking, and for some reason I cannot understand, it is assumed we must drift with the tide and cut back too. There are reductions in teaching staff and maintenance personnel. Every year, for us, there was an offer or two, trying to bid us away to another campus. Now there is nowhere to go.

The trouble with all this is that teaching is a creative business, and the creativity doesn’t happen in the classroom, as a general rule, or when you are preparing courses. It happens when you are showering or scrambling your eggs for breakfast, walking across campus, talking shop with a colleague over a coke, pushing a shopping cart down the aisle of a supermarket, driving home at night. It is during those moments of mechanical, almost reflex activity when the mind is free and only half concerned with something else that the god speaks, as Socrates put it, and you suddenly know how to teach Othello, or what to do with an apathetic class, or what a perplexing student needs.

But if the mind is crowded with concern about the College, or about how one will live if the tenure doesn’t come through, the creativity doesn’t happen. The best teaching can only come out of faculty who are secure and know they belong. Without that, you can only carry on with will power and commitment.

As I watch I am impressed by how our younger faculty are carrying on, and that’s why I salute them. In spite of the non-teaching demands on their time, they are in their offices talking to students until long after supper time. When the College decides to treat Grove Houses like real estate and charge the going rent, a few, like Billie Fischer, stay and use the Grove as it was built to be used. Others, at their own expense, find houses within an easy walk from the campus, and if you drop by any night in the week, you will find students there, talking.

If, thirty years from now, these younger teachers have become the old guard in a stronger, more confident college, it will be because of what they are doing now.

Looking on and watching, I feel pretty sure that is what will happen. They will be the ones to whom honor is due, and there will be a new generation of younger faculty, their proteges, insecure but tremendously promising, carrying on.

Laurence Barrett
Debate team, 1925-1926
Mock Convention, 1932
Mock Convention, 1968
Kalamazoo Alma Mater

Words by
W. F. Fielding, '94

Music by
W. F. Fielding, '94

1. O, Kalamazoo, we love thee well, Our home sweet home, And the friends we've made, We'll cherish in our hearts, And we'll return again, To sing the glee of yesternight, The light and joy of yesternight.

2. Oh, Kalamazoo, our Alma Mater, Our shield and banner, The memories we've held, We'll cherish in our hearts, And we'll return again, To sing the glee of yesternight, The light and joy of yesternight.

Kalamazoo, our Alma Mater, Our shield and banner, The memories we've held, We'll cherish in our hearts, And we'll return again, To sing the glee of yesternight, The light and joy of yesternight.
The Kalamazoo College Index, October 1912
Kappa Pi, 1914

The Sherwoods
The band

The College Singers
May Fete, 1958

A party in 1906
A masquerade in the 1890s
Football team, 1941-1942

Butch Niefert in 1931
Cheerleaders, 1960
Basketball team, 1920s

Basketball in the 1940s
Basketball in the 1960s
Track at the turn of the century
The track team, year unknown
Baseball team, 1908

Baseball team, 1912
Baseball team, 1920
Women's Basketball Champions, 1915

Coach Mather
Gym class in Treadway

Wrestling, 1971-72
Tennis, 1931

Tennis team
Archery

Bowling, 1942
Paris, 1968
Aix-en-Provence, 1967
Travelling in Europe
As I write this, another Commencement is past. The week between graduation and summer quarter is a strange one, hopelessly short for those of us who must whip two new courses into shape for Monday. Psychologically it seems even shorter because of the special character of Commencement week—its emotional overload, its pomp and circumstance, its finality. It always seems to me that there ought to be a more decent interval before we forge ahead callously into a new quarter, a space of time suitable to honor the lately departed and our own four years of psychic and intellectual and even physical effort on behalf of a project that seems, at the beginning, quixotic: helping them turn into grown-ups, educated people who have somehow, we convince ourselves, absorbed something of what we call the college's values. There is much talk of said values lately, some of it disturbing, all of it vague. This spring I have thought a great deal on the subject. I would like to think some more.

But time waits for no woman at K. The quarterly cycle spins on inexorably. In many ways this pattern inculcates a false reality, as the students rapidly become aware. Everything is ten weeks long. "I can stand anything for ten weeks," they say. Nothing is permanent or durable. But then, on the other hand, there is a profound truth to our eccentric pattern—the truth of the seasons and the moon, the constancy of constant change. "Naught may endure but Mutability," saith the poet.

I am spending this interim week in abeyance, trying to let the events of last week settle. It is as if a lengthy opera came suddenly to a crashing finale in two bars. And they are gone, and we are left, feeling a lot of the bereftness of parents, much of the futility. The long green expanse of summer quarter stretches in the sun.

A year ago the graduating seniors gave me the honor of my life, electing me to speak to them on Awards Night. This year they wisely chose Franklin Presler, and he suggested what they ought to take with them from this extraordinary place. Chief among these treasures, he said, was Memory.

I first saw this place in winter. December 22, 1976. I was early for my interview. I drove through the quad and stopped the car in front of the historical marker. I read it briefly ("... special honor in teaching of the sciences." Hm.) and then spent some minutes looking up toward the chapel through the falling snow. Can you see yourself here? asked a voice. Can you see yourself walking across that quad, from one solid red Georgian building to another, whatever they are? Try. Picture it. Imagine.

And I did.

I remember virtually blowing in through the
front door of Humphrey House in a gust of snow, thinking in passing what a beautiful building it was, thinking I must present quite a spectacle, feeling like Dorothy in Oz, a sensation that was to become familiar. Hal Harris was there to meet me, and then the others came single file down the stairs: Waring, Stavig, Bogart, Roerecke, Barrett. Hilberry, I found out later, was missing. My lord, thought I, what am I getting myself into? "I'm the guy you'd be replacing," said Larry, and I remembered how much I like Midwestern bluntness, how lost I had been in southeastern sophistication for the last five years.

Driving back to Ann Arbor through the snow that afternoon, I thought about moving into all that maleness. Gee, Toto, this sure doesn't look like Kansas....

Humphrey House. On my deathbed I will be able to recall the sound of the heavy front door closing, the gusts of breezes through the hallways, the slightly nervous voices of health science majors creeping tentatively around the corner to my office: "I've never even been in this building before...." They are taken aback to find themselves in a structure whose whimsical, irregular character absolutely reflects the disciplines housed there: English, Philosophy, Religion, Education. And now, most appropriately, the Non-Traditional Student Program.

One day the Angel of the House, Mrs. Windisch, who grew up in it, took me on a tour, room by room, telling me what each had been when the house was a home. Time hangs over that big house, the first steel-frame house in Kalamazoo, built in 1915, so thick and solid of wall that in the winter it is the warmest building on campus, in summer the coolest, and all with a highly eccentric heating system and no air conditioning. Always it is dark, protected from the sun by the long eaves, where pigeons converse in ripples and coos. The wonderful dark wood of the Lounge, the bright sunniness of the Simpson Seminar Room, otherwise known as the Porch. The deep calm of that house, surrounding the frenzy of my days upstairs.

In my first year I occupied Larry's office, over the entrance. That way I could keep up on tennis scores, as I had to compete for students' attention with the unmistakable Missouri inflections of the Voice of the Hornets, Don Flesche. In my second year I moved down the hall to Walt's old office, with its walk-in closet, its fireplace and mantel, its sconce lamps curling out from the wall. I wouldn't move to Dewing for anything, even to get closer to the campus grapevine.

When I leave at night I look back over my shoulder at the wrought-iron tracery around that big old door: curling vines and two placid deer with raised heads—a survival of a nineteenth-century imagination. The door closes behind me with its customary "chunk!"

... the University of Michigan, which may be taken for as high an example of coeducation as any that exists, never will nor can be the best place to educate boys and girls until there are earnest, noble, and highly, broadly educated women on the faculty... women from the foundation up—women on the board of regents. . .

Lucinda Hinsdale Stone

I walked into my first class at Kalamazoo College—Expository Prose, of course—and launched into The Spiel. I was in my usual Overdrive, that combination of terror and excitement that besets me on the first day of classes. Twenty faces watched while I did my number. "This will almost certainly not be your favorite among your courses at Kalamazoo College. But it will almost certainly be the most important." I went on and on about philosophy of writing, deadlines, assignments, grading, attitude, office hours, typing paper.... Finally I
ran out of words and breath. “Any questions?”

A young man in the front row, to my left, had been leaning into my speech with something approaching real interest, his chin on his hand, his elbow on his knee. Dark hair and eyes, studying me intently. He raises his hand.

“You don’t have your doctorate, do you?”

In fact, as I knew at the time from his face and sensed later from our relationship, it was curiosity talking, not the kind of resentful suspicion of female authority I was to come to know all too well. In fact, my doctorate was so hot off the presses that it was missing from the new college catalogue. But at the same time I knew that neither David X nor Bob Z would ever have faced such a question in the classroom, protected as they were by beards, ties, elbow patches, low, ringing voices, and thousands of years of academic tradition. Nobody ever asked them if they were secretaries.

When Rick asked that question, a light began to dawn. That quarter I wrote a column for the *Index* about my only female teacher in nine years of post-secondary education, about how she had influenced me and what had become of her in academe. And in writing it I began to understand what it meant for me to be here, behind this desk, in front of this classroom, and what I had to do about it.

Fortunately, I had some help.

We used to gather on preordained Fridays at somebody’s house for wine and cheese. I looked forward to it for days. As I walked through the door into a shower of hellos, I felt the week’s aggravations wash away—somewhat. It was something like finding a roomful of English speakers after travelling in Lithuania for six months. I felt part of another enterprise within the larger mission of the college, a vital and rich enterprise: that of teaching each other and our women students that we could all do it. For me, having passed through those nine years of solidly male authority, these women were my teachers, the single most important element in my first professional year.

In memory I can look around the living room and see them all: Babette Trader, whose sad, understanding eyes and utterly sympathetic manner have soothed many a newcomer, notably me. . . . Marigene Arnold, my first friend at Kalamazoo, the faculty joke-teller and tear-shedder, anthropologist to the core, who brings to teaching a humanity and integrity students talk about years afterward. . . . Eleanor Pinkham, K’48, whose unruffled grace and total professionalism pervade Upjohn Library, making it run like a well-oiled Rolls-Royce. . . . Tish Loveless, wiry and strong, doing her quiet and sometimes not-so-quiet burn on behalf of women’s athletics. . . . Kathy Reish, who blazed so many trails for us from her multilingual Tower of Babel in Romance Languages to Mandelle. . . . Marcia Wood, K’55, whom I looked to always as a model of creative independence at work in an academic setting. . . . Lisa Godfrey, K’66, who almost single-handedly created an audiovisual program that astonished me during New Faculty Orientation. Only later did I learn that Instructional Services was also a character-building workshop for her uniquely devoted student workers. . . . Marcelle Dale, whom for years I could call only Madame Dale, her rich alto booming through the halls of Dewing at 7:55 A.M. . . . Margo Bosker, for whom life was raw material for funny stories with which to combat the demons. . . . Nelda Balch, like a mythical queen turned into a willow tree, her face full of experience and always capable of astonishment. . . . Sally Olexia, her wild laugh soaring up over the lunacy of the pre-med world. . . . Billie Fischer, whom the insanity never seemed to touch as she went about her busy, cheery way, throwing elaborate Italian
dinners for art history classes, and having her baby daughter in the two weeks between quarters. . . . and Ruth Collins, who, I quickly learned, really runs the college, and whose brusque, understated support buoyed me immeasurably.

I remember that during that first year Ruth gave a talk on professionalism for women—a tricky issue, one of great moment for me at the time. She described inheriting the registrar’s office from her husband Paul when he died so suddenly in 1974. Professionalism, she said, is the process of taking somebody else’s job and making it your own.

I have never forgotten.

The rhythm of the quarter: the scrambling start, everybody plunging back in much too soon after whichever experience of last quarter; hitting one’s stride around third week; the seventh-week slump where teaching is like pulling teeth and learning must be even worse; the rush to the finish; and then the strange, sudden silence and the great shift while another class of students comes back “on” to replace whoever has just left.

The rhythm of the week: the scrambling Monday that comes too soon; hitting one’s stride around Tuesday or Wednesday; then the rush to the finish. . . . Tuesday/Thursday double blocks, the horror of two in a row. . . . On Thursday a pile of brand new hot-off-the-presses Indexes waits in the Snack Bar at lunch time. I know that various souls have spent a sleepless week to get it out, have been destroying friendships over deadlines and column-inches. I have seen the pride that a good Index gives its staff, a pride which becomes in the editor almost parental. I have seen the anguish over hot issues of ethics or campus politics. I always wonder what it will be this quarter, what will ignite the outrage of what group, what will enflame the “Letters” column. I have seen, time and again, editors come to see themselves as part of this place as a result of the paper, of having to care about what goes on.

. . . and Friday. Friday mornings are always, in memory at least, golden, the sun pouring through the Chapel windows. Since this ritual is no longer compulsory, it has lost some of the grandeur it had when people watched to see who was here and points were won or lost. But its psychic necessity emerges more clearly. It is one hour during the week when nothing can be asked of me, when I needn’t move, when I may simply sit and listen—to the speaker, to my own head, to the birds outside. I watch the trees and the windows of Trow, letting the week settle in my mind, remembering and healing, celebrating a little community before the weekend drives us all apart.

All teachers are frustrated actors, or preachers. I’m the former. For us Nelda Balch offers Readers Theater, the highlight of fall quarter.

When I went into it, I thought of it as pseudo-theater, a bunch of academics reading out of books. Little did I know. For Nelda, and soon enough for her actors, it is a discrete art form, with its own laws and secrets. For me it was something more: a chance to make a fool of myself in front of any student who cared to watch, and my one shot at being swept up into the tornado of Nelda’s energy and monomaniacal vision.

Watching her at our first rehearsal, I can see the finished show gleaming in her eyes. You’ve got to trust that, no matter how amorphous things appear as a gaggle of Ph.D.s stumble around living out their own fantasies in the overwhelming shadow of hers.

Your ego gets very resilient. Nelda renders you childlike. You’re in the middle of what you’re sure is your big moment, and you’re really on a roll when suddenly you notice that she has her chin in her hand and her brow furrowed and is studying the placement of the piano. You’re declaiming to
the rear of the Playhouse, positively resonating, and she breaks in to announce that she can't hear you. You repeat a line twenty times as she eyes you distastefully, and then suddenly, on the twenty-first try, for no reason discernible to you, she says, “That’s it!”

And it happens, the Balch magic. Your voice does things you didn’t know it could do; the illusions appear before your very eyes, the fragments mesh; the show is on. I become Mae West; Dewey becomes FDR; Kurt Kaufman is truly himself in a tux, reading from Fitzgerald; Flesche becomes the rear end of a camel so convincingly that people later swear he wore a costume.

And then, like Prospero, she breaks her staff and drowns her book. When we celebrated her completion of twenty-five years with the college, someone read something splendid about her, and then she told her story. She spoke of happening upon Kalamazoo while driving through Michigan and hearing about a vacancy in Speech; about Bowen Hall and the old theater on the top floor; about the English Department; about Dorothy Dalton and the dream of a Fine Arts complex. It was the first time I heard this story which others knew well. As she spoke, her face was full of loneliness, of toughness, of many opening nights and difficult actors and unsung battles. At the end I felt grateful.

To her alarm, Nelda has become a building—that beautiful Balch Playhouse she waved into being, from whose broad windows, during many an intermission, I have looked out over the sparkling city.

Christmas sneaks up on us each year. Fall quarter grinds into the tenth week and everyone is haggard. New students are by now completely shell-shocked, all traces of neophyte illusions worn away. Seniors face the dawning awareness that soon, very soon, someone is going to want to see some physical evidence of an SIP. Expository Prose teachers are tunnelling their way toward daylight. No one has any time to think about the Season of Lights. The Friday 10th week Christmas Carol Service seems almost perfunctory. But we stagger into Stetson anyway. It’s not even snowing, we grumble.

Someone has had to remember for us—Dewey, our guardian of memory in many ways. He and his elves have once again lit the chapel windows with candles nestled in greenery and red bows. We smile to each other and sing and listen to words we’d forgotten about small miracles occurring on cold, clear nights, and we remember. And when we walk out, all the front windows of Hoben are lit, and it has begun to snow.

“T he children are leaving for far places.”... the first line of a poem by Collette Inez, our writer-in-residence for several summers, referring to summer quarter at Kalamazoo, that expectant time when the college holds its “rising juniors” in its hand for a moment before flinging them across the globe. In that time the prospective foreign study center sinks in as part of one’s identity; one begins to identify personally with Caen, Njala, London, Erlangen.

In January of my third year, I too went on foreign study.

I have never really written about the African trip, except for a few tentative poems, a few paragraphs in the alumni magazine. It is no Heart of Darkness, to be sure; but it is, in many ways, beyond me, beyond my language. “You will love it, you will hate it,” I was told, and I did. Mostly I left with my eyes wide open and came home with two acquisitions: a set of images from another reality which have changed me permanently, and an entirely new relationship with the college, based on a new understanding of what it is.
That is, I brought home with me precisely what every returning sophomore or junior brings. Except that Africa is . . . different.

It is in many ways the quintessential foreign study experience, for Africa does not come easily to westerners, though it is entirely friendly. Our students in Africa must struggle even harder than their peers in Europe to get their minds around an alien, often disturbing reality without squeezing it into a false shape: the fine art of foreign study, arguably the most valuable gift the college offers to students smart enough to take it.

When I try to think about the whole of it, the images race. By the time we first met up with K students at the University of Nairobi, we had been already from the vast, parched, sweeping beauty of the Sahel in Niger to the oppressive humidity and even more oppressive militaristic architecture of that urban planner’s nightmare, Lagos, where we talked to wonderfully eager people about the future of education. The dry coolness and European veneer of Nairobi constituted another radical shift. After what was to become a familiar and crucial ritual—the students showing us around their adopted city, making it their own by describing it to us—we decided on a trip up-country, to get beyond the beautiful facade of Nairobi. At Lake Nakuru two remarkable things happened: I came as close as I will probably ever get to a baby hippo, and George Rainsford roused us out at five to watch the sun rise through the rolling mist over the Rift Valley. My friend Michael Kocher, the first (and perhaps last) student I ever converted to an English major, watched with me, and it’s still there when we see each other. These things were remarkable to me not simply for themselves, but because, I realized, they too were Kalamazoo College, part of that collaboration between the institution and its students and the world that is the college in its finest sense.

Dakar, too, is Kalamazoo College—gleaming white, surrounded on three sides by a brilliant sea, a marvellous ragout of Wolof and Muslim and French culture. There Marti Skidmore, always before so reticent, so diffident, was showing me Dakar as if she had invented it. And perhaps she had. We haggled for silver in the Court of the Moors; we raced for a mosque that would admit women, only to find it closed; on the magical island Goreé, we stood silent in the House of Slaves, where thousands of future Americans were crowded like animals before touching African soil for the last time.

But it is always Sierra Leone that comes back most readily, perhaps because it was our first African foreign study center in 1962, perhaps because 20 of our students were there that year, many of them special to me. I have been rereading something I wrote then:

January 15, 1980–The verandah of the guest house at Fourah Bay College is one of those places where I could cheerfully spend several months. After the long land and water journey from the airport and the hair-raising trip up Mt. Aureole, with Freetown falling away beneath us, I can look down through the thick trees and bright flowers at the city and, far below, the harbor and the misty sea. We wait for the Fourah Bay 13 to gather there before we all go out to dinner.

Finally they trickle in—exuberant reunions, embraces, laughter. The patio grows crowded. The women wear loose summer dresses; everyone looks tanned and thin and tough. Kerry, the campus philosopher, engages me in an intense discussion of the frustration and fascination of Sierra Leonean politics. Vera, from Oberlin, who felt out of place all her life, can barely squeeze us into her Byzantine social life. I watch her and recall her letter back in October, describing that first lonely night at Fourah Bay and the growing awareness in those first weeks that as a black woman her life...
would never be the same. Darkness covers the mountain as we pile on a college bus and wind down to the city, now a wild cluster of lights.

On the bus Elisabeth appears, down from Njala, the bucolic half of the University of Sierra Leone, the mystical Njala. She is here to persuade us to let her stay to do her SIP. She whose agile mind was so restless last summer has found something she can’t let go right now. The bus sounds like New Year’s Eve as it rolls through Freetown’s narrow, almost Elizabethan streets. Heidi, sitting next to me, is fairly breathless with her Christmas travels – alone – all over West Africa, fighting to translate what she’s learned. I am thinking of last summer, when Joe Fugate was shaking his head over her, when she was putting her bare feet up on the President’s desk and generally outraging everyone. Now her eyes are full of the knowledge that people are much better than she ever suspected, and that she is stronger, smarter, more tolerant, more capable of love than she ever knew. She is describing a Freetown family she has adopted in order to escape the class boundaries of yet another little college on a hill.

“Gail,” she exclaims, “the mother knows nine languages and everyone says she’s uneducated because she doesn’t know English!”

The bus tumbles through the dark. Stories of Christmas travel, of diseases and disasters, of romances, of African roommates, of courses and teachers are blurring. They are amazed at what they know, as am I. Last summer’s cynics are talking about the Peace Corps, about coming back somehow, someday. They are talking about Kalamazoo College in a new language. Trying to listen to everybody, I’m aware that, along with the old liking and affection, I’m feeling respect and envy. I feel also the privilege of touching their lives at this point, and I realize again why I do what I do.

That moment on the guest house verandah, amidst the hugs and Star Beers – that was Kalamazoo College too, especially as George was there with us. Part of travel is redefining home; we reinvented K together that night. It happens all the time.

When I first came to Kalamazoo, I lived in an apartment on the corner of Monroe and Lovell. From my bedroom window, through the trees, I could see the light in the Stetson Chapel tower. In the winter it was a glimmer through the thick leaves. In the rain, the snow, it was a soft blur. But it was always there. On a couple of occasions when it felt to me like the bottom was falling out of my life, I used to lie in bed and watch that light, late into the night. It seems rather silly to me now, sentimental or superstitious. I don’t know exactly what I saw in that light; maybe it was something like the light at the end of the tunnel, or the light that guides lost sailors through a storm. Maybe it was like the green light at the end of Daisy Buchanan’s dock, which Gatsby watches in silence across the dark water. Or maybe it was simply something to focus on. I think, though, that somewhere in my mind I recognized the light as evidence that over there, across the street and down the hill, was a place where there was good work to do and there were good people who cared about me. There was a living organism which would rouse itself tomorrow morning, as I would, and move into another day, beginning when Joe Fugate hit his office at God knows what hour.

During the winter of 1981, when the light was out for a long time, it was fairly unsettling to me. It meant something considerably more than a dearth of virgins in Dewaters. Last summer I moved to a little house in which I am remarkably happy. But I miss the light.

One bitter grey day we see, from Stavig’s office, that a crowd has gathered in the middle of
Academy and the wrecker readies its lethal ball. We throw on our coats and run out, down the hill. It is not every day that an old warhorse bites the dust. George pronounces a benediction; there is laughter and mounting excitement. And then the ball swings into that wall of brick which caves in like cardboard.

Within hours, there is no Tredway Gymnasium, only rubble. Months later, its successor has risen up, phoenix-like, and there is great talk of names. After many serious and not-so-serious suggestions, they wisely decide on Rolla Anderson, who says he is also alarmed to wake up and find himself transformed into a building. Almost immediately the students christen it the Rolladome. Actually, the best idea for a name survives only in oral tradition: Retredway.

Walter Waring is currently teaching his last Shakespeare course at Kalamazoo College. Some ninety clever students have got wind of his imminent departure and signed up for it in order to be part of a local legend.

I remember when I first saw a picture of him back in the fifties when he was K’s answer to Errol Flynn and certain women couldn’t take notes and watch him at the same time. I will always think of his as the kindest face I will ever know, and the wildest laugh. I am wondering what Humphrey House will do without that slightly demented laugh.

The night I came to interview, formally, several months after that first encounter, I went to see Dr. Faustus with some senior English majors. I remember feeling heartened by their hairiness, thinking that the sixties must still be alive at Kalamazoo. I also remember that the smoke intended to surround Mephistopheles backfired and nearly asphyxiated the audience in the new Playhouse, of which everyone seemed so proud.

After the play we walked up the icy hill to Walter’s house for a reception with the Department. One by one they arrived, minus Hilberry again, and before too long Hal Harris and Herb Bogart were deep into one of their legendary sparring matches, this time on the question of the Greatest American Film. Hal was pushing for “Singin’ in the Rain,” and Herb was questioning his judgment. It was my introduction to their particular mode of discourse, and I was drinking quietly and watching in amazement. From the corner of my eye I noticed that Walter was tossing peanuts into the tiny waiting mouth of his equally legendary poodle.

Just then there was a hiatus in the argument, just long enough for Walter to look up, grin at me, and assure me, “Dog likes peanuts,” as the students convulsed.

His benign detachment has counterbalanced our sometimes pointless engagement; his unpretentiousness is the antidote to our self-importance. In the middle of a department meeting I will look over at him and realize he is lost on the windy plains of Troy, or somewhere equally interesting.

Every year there are one or two students who become disciples. They meet with him regularly and at length, sitting across that blessed table in his office for hours, listening and watching in awe while he holds forth, pouring out his vast, learned, intricate world view. It is he in the department who reminds me of the World of Ideas regularly, for when I venture into Dorothy Ashley’s office to drop off mail or make a request, he will hook me with that “Hey, Gail!” I never know what I’ll hear when I answer: “D’ya remember what old Ulysses said to Achilles?” “Have ya ever considered the difference between character and role?” “I’ve been reading the craziest damn book. This guy argues that all art is based in violence. Hee-HEE!!”

During my first year, when I had the office
closest to his, I would hear his slow, heavy steps up the stairs, smell the cigarette smoke, and then see him appear in my doorway, dreaming wildly, a long ash defying gravity on the end of his cigaret-ette. “That Shakespeare,” he’d say, shaking his head, laughing, “he’s got everything.” I have yet to hear anything more cogent about Shakespeare.

It is perhaps this innocence about literature—as if he too were twenty-seven and just starting out—that drew me to him, as well as his anarchist tendencies. Often I felt that we were somehow in cahoots; around Walter I could be less careful than usual of what I said—the more irreverent, the better he liked it. I will always see Walter, at the end of a meeting of the faculty called to debate some highly political question, rising and thundering, before stalking out, “Rage, rage against the dying of the light!”

One day this spring he told me that he had always regarded me as his replacement. It is enough to give one pause.

“A teacher’s life, of all lives, ought to be a growing one.”

Lucinda Hinsdale Stone

When growth occurs, boundaries usually crumble, generally not without pain or some kind of loud noise. I think of Kalamazoo College as a place where some traditional boundaries are not much respected—thick lines between on-campus and off-campus, between academic and experiential, between disciplines, between teacher and student, faculty and staff, between personal life and professional life. What I have learned here as a teacher is how spocious are some other lines we like to draw in the teaching and learning professions—between objective and subjective, between the classroom, the office, the living room, between our private selves and those we tote into the classroom each day.

Looking back over the past five critical years in my life, I see all kinds of walls, fences, bunkers toppling over, sometimes most awkwardly. Many of the ideas of teaching which I held dear quickly disintegrated, sometimes as a result of sheer practical experience, but sometimes because of the nature of this institution, which, like the Baptists who founded it, believes in total immersion.

“You’re sharing in learning,” said one alumna about student-faculty relations at K. Certainly I think of my years here mostly in terms of what I’ve learned, not what I’ve taught.

I have learned that what I teach is not so much subject matter but skills of interpreting, habits of thinking, arts of communicating. It is not the reading list that matters so much as the experience—not the products but the process.

I have learned that as teachers and students we bring our whole selves to what we do, or we do each other a disservice. We pay for it—royally—in lack of privacy, lack of time, lack of control. But the price is not exorbitant. Teaching and learning without illusions of the “merely” personal versus the human, intellectual versus emotional, private versus professional is mighty risky business, but highly profitable. It is also demanded by a place in which we do not merely work, but live together.

Maybe most importantly—and closely related to this last—I have learned that the classroom ought to be full of commitment, values, passions, as well as ideas, analysis, facts. It is a pretty idea, thus put, but not really a popular one, because, like all good ideas, it is a dangerous one, prone to abuse. In 1980 our Baccalaureate speaker was Robert MacAfee Brown, who spoke on “Passion in the Classroom,” a provocative enough subject that we were anticipating an X-rated Baccalaureate. It was decidedly PG, but nonetheless, for me, highly radical. It has stayed with me because it helped me center on what I believed at a time

when my particular passions in the classroom were causing me some confusion and difficulty. He said that we needed not less but more personal passion in teaching, more sense of the particular contours of that human being in front of the class, more obvious commitment.

I have thought about that talk much since. Dr. Brown certainly did not intend it to be peculiarly applicable to Kalamazoo College, but I believe it was. I believe that ours is an institution depending extraordinarily upon individual personalities, commitments, talents, and energies to make it go. And I believe that here, more than at most colleges, students learn through contact with particular people who serve temporarily as media for the grand ideas, the superb insights, the wonderful books and writers, the concepts of professional life.

And vice versa: I first made the acquaintance of J.B. and Lucinda Hinsdale Stone through the medium of a student, who turned in a paper on the Stone Scandal in response to my favorite Expository Prose assignment: a paper on some aspect of the college. Deep in the archives in the Library basement, this student had happened upon the remarkable Stones.

J.B. Stone: preacher, liberal educator, the finest product of the Evangelical spirit in America. Teaching at the Hinesburg Academy in New Hampshire in the 1830's, he finds himself powerfully drawn to one of his students—a dark-haired, serious, graceful young woman of fine intellect and strong beliefs named Lucinda Hinsdale, likewise a prime example of the dawning, liberally educated feminism of her day.

He follows her to Grand Rapids, neutral territory where teacher and student can pursue a dangerous romance. They marry and wind up in Kalamazoo, where J.B. is pastor of the Baptist Church and Principal of the “Branch” – the Kalamazoo Branch of the University of Michigan. Mrs. Stone, a graduate of Middlebury Female Seminary, a laughing stock in her home town for wishing to go to college, becomes Head of the Female Department. He is perhaps a bit more strait-laced than she; she reads novels.

It appears that Mrs. Stone, too, believes in teaching not literature or French, but people: “Young men and women will seek one another out some way; hence, as a teacher, it became a study for me how best to direct their association during these years when both are pursuing an education.”

A radical idea – but then she has many: “... my experience has taught me that it is folly to try to contravene the laws of nature.” The laws of nature, however, do not whisper to her that women are, as her contemporary, Tennyson, puts it, “blinder motions bounded in a shallower brain.” She struggles ceaselessly to make the Female Department curriculum something more than finishing school fare, to make coeducation a reality at what turns out to be, in 1855, Kalamazoo College.

And what about values, passion in the classroom? “Dr. and Mrs. Stone... had advocated abolition for years, and had preached it to their students.” Years after they leave the college, Lucinda Stone writes, “We were openly anti-slavery in thought and acknowledged women suffragists...”

But as always, passion exacts its price. Suddenly, in 1863, both Stones separately tender their resignations to the Board of Trustees. Dr. Stone is accused of financial mismanagement, and, to clinch the deal, a morals charge is concocted involving him and a student. Mrs. Stone is charged with equally serious misconduct: “It was complained that she read such undesirable current literature as the Atlantic Monthly, that she had her students commit to memory certain stanzas of the poetry of Byron, ... and that she encouraged them to read novels such as Ivanhoe. It was said that she was a realist because she read the works

2. Ibid., p. 55.

3. Ibid., p. 65.
of certain German philosophers, and that her moral influence was bad because she read certain French authors. The Board discusses whether it wouldn’t be advisable to have a man heading the Female Department.

But at this point comes the development that stuns the modern reader: Of a total of 152 students, 125 withdraw in protest and support of the Stones, and most of the faculty resigns, as well as many trustees. It doesn’t work; in the fall nearly everyone is back and the college rolls on under more conservative leadership—a president opposed to degrees for women, for instance. The Stones live out their astonishing and productive lives, Mrs. Stone becoming instrumental in pushing the doors of the University of Michigan open to women (the first of whom is one of her ex-students) and into her seventies directing what amounts to a foreign study program for women.

How often I have looked back across a century at Lucinda Stone’s confident, intelligent face and felt a pang of recognition as well as admiration. This year, entirely with small donations from alumni, faculty, and students, we managed to fund a Prize in Women’s Studies in her name. I wonder if she would approve. Certainly she would be pleased that Brenda Marston won it for a 200-page SIP on Algerian women, an outgrowth of her foreign study experience in Senegal.

“He wanted Kalamazoo College to be an educational institution, not merely a Baptist College,” Mrs. Stone wrote of her husband. “As such he wanted it to take hold of the people of the city and state, and be a moral and intellectual force.” They knew their college, knew its future. But what moves me most is that their college knew them. 125 students, most of the faculty, and many trustees were simply unwilling to accept the college without them. For them, Kalamazoo College was Dr. and Mrs. Stone—their vision, their strong personalities, their politics, their... passion. Those students, faculty, trustees, knew even then the secret of this place: Kalamazoo College is its people—its eccentric, controversial, committed, imaginative, angry, passionate people. And the values of the college, over which I’ve been puzzling—those students, faculty, trustees knew instinctively what they were: they were incarnate in the Stones.

Spring again, for a Michigander more an act of faith than a climatic phase. The first day of spring quarter is always a kind of spontaneous festival, another First Day of the Year, when suddenly, periodically, all day I am interrupted in my office by faces appearing around the door, voices I haven’t heard in six months, people who have crossed the Great Divide of the K Plan and are back from Bonn and Bogota, Fourah Bay and Dakar, Hong Kong and Strasbourg and Madrid. On that far side of the divide they were fuzzy, confused sophomores. Now, safe on the other side, they are marked; one can spot them a mile off. They are hairier, more sophisticated, better looking, more relaxed, a little dazed—especially the African crew, which will spend the next three weeks or so grappling with a sense of time they had almost forgotten. They all seem to have grown into themselves somehow.

Today I spend the day leaping up from my chair, hugging them, saying, “Welcome home.” Their eyes say how much they want to hear that but also that they are doubtful that this is home, this old place. The centripetal and centrifugal pulls that Con Hilberry speaks of are meeting head-on today.

This week there will be a welcome-home dinner in Old Welles. Joe will tell inside jokes and announce language tests (groans) and revel in what he has brought to pass yet another year and in the knowledge that tonight he is not so much the patriarch who lectured to a captive audience.
every hot Wednesday afternoon last summer, so long ago. This year Dr. Light attends the dinner and the applause is thunderous across the room of people who are suddenly aware that someone they have never met has given them this enormous gift.

Spring. The bricks on Academy Street are finally dry, and the tires sing as they spin up the hill and down. Spring seems to come later and later each year; we grit our teeth through April blizzards that make us irrationally angry, and then one day it is spring and, as if to make up for lost time, everything explodes into bloom, color, smell, thickness and greenness. From my office on a Friday afternoon I notice that it is getting harder to see who is coming and going from Mandelle. The windows in Fine Arts are open, and music drifts out through the warm air—pianos, soprano voices. Semi-nude bodies sprawl on the hill outside, reading or talking or sleeping or waiting to graduate. Dulcimers and banjos appear. Stereo speakers in Hoben are turned outward, and music blares across the quad. Voices call to each other all the welcome homes; hands wave.

One day I dash over to the Snack Bar through heavy spring rain. On the dark, sodden quad a man and woman are playing frisbee, thoroughly soaked, laughing, waving to me.

As an old Michigander, I should have recognized the greenish, sullen sky, that sudden stillness. Howard Roerecke emerged from his office and announced, in his unflappable way, that a tornado had been spotted west of town, on its way toward us. Then the sirens. Everyone disappeared into the basement—everyone except me, running out into the parking lot to do precisely what you’re not supposed to do in a tornado—roll up the car windows. Over the top of the Fine Arts Building I see swirling shingles and wood. I can barely fight my way back to the house, and when I get there, the door won’t open, so great is the suction from inside. I stand there pulling it, sure that I’ve seen this scene in some movie or other. At last I get in and stand in the silent house while the storm does its terrible dance overhead. In the intense silence that follows, everyone reappears from the basement, wondering if I’m alive.

We wander outside and see that the fence is down along the tennis courts, that great limbs block West Main, that Mountain Home Cemetery is bald and gaping. And we begin to hear the sirens, which will persist into the night. We think what might have been, had the funnel veered just one block south and chosen Academy Street.

As I near the finish of this, it is summer quarter again. Here where our ends are truly our beginnings, where goodbye and hello pass on the street, we have just welcomed back another batch of Career Developers. (Is it significant that we have switched from Service to Development?) Last week I attended a “debriefing” meeting where several faculty ask pertinent questions of several students about their work during the spring. In answer to a question about whether the college adequately prepares them for this work, the students were, to my surprise, almost unanimously supportive of the liberal arts as traditionally defined. They seem to have got the message somehow. One young woman said that she saw no real need to amass technical knowledge or expertise on campus, since it could be acquired on the job by a reasonably intelligent being. Lonnie Supnick asked her, “Then what does this place give you?” and she responded, “The ability to ask the right questions.”

I thought about her answer throughout the meeting, on into the evening, and ever since. There is at least one sophomore woman on this campus, I thought, who knows what a good education ought to yield: the ability to ask the right questions.

This ability has perhaps two components:
the habit of questioning itself, and the knowledge and wisdom to know what to ask. One component is assertive, refusing to accept what is given without examination and justification. ("Question Authority," reads a current campus button, amusingly mild-mannered to this child of the sixties.) The other component is, paradoxically, humble, questioning instead of presuming to know. It is the humility John Spencer speaks of when he tells a student that even to begin to learn anything from a writer you must sit at the writer's feet for a while.

Lonnie's question has also stayed with me: "What does this place give you?" I decided to ask a number of people what they thought the college gave its students that was, perhaps, special. One cited the personal growth that comes from the diversity of the program. And I remember that even when I interviewed here I thought that the seniors I was meeting were years older than I had been at 21—more experienced, more assured, more graceful, less deferential—sometimes wonderfully world-weary.

Another respondent emphasized the opportunity for students to receive personal attention from at least one faculty member, probably more, who knows the student well. And again I wonder, as I have so many times, how different those difficult four years might have been for me had I had anything approaching the relationships between students and faculty that I have witnessed and been part of here. It was both hard and easy for me, as a new young faculty member, to adjust to: the discomfort of having so much of you seen and known, of not being able to protect yourself with the professorial mask; the ease of regarding the people in front of you as friends, of enjoying them wholly, of knowing that mutual admiration of people learning together and allowing themselves to be known.

It was Marigene Arnold, of course, who put it best, for me, when I asked her what the college gives its students: "a growing sense of independence and interrelatedness." Once she explored that theme in a chapel talk in which she asked her student audience to drop, for a moment, the illusions our western, post-Enlightenment culture teaches us about individual accomplishment and to think seriously about who it was here to whom they were in debt, who made the way easier. To be sure, the independence is fostered carefully and creatively, through Career Development, Foreign Study, the SIP, the Plan itself, which remains a kind of intricate board game until the student begins to respond creatively and courageously to it. And the independence does flower, as I realize again every Commencement Day, as they walk across the stage to pick up their diplomas, somehow transformed into definite, confident adults, or reasonable facsimiles thereof. But it is perhaps the interrelatedness that is hardest for an American to learn, taught from the cradle that dependence upon others is weakness. To learn that higher interdependence which comes from strength and knowledge is outrageously difficult, particularly at twenty, but it is our only real source of achievement, comfort, meaning.

Norma Bailey, K'69, gave a surprisingly similar response to my question: "I felt like I belonged to something that drew me in and I gave to it. I belonged somewhere." As she spoke I realized that this is precisely what the college has given me: the sense of an identity that comes from a rare relationship with a place of work, a relationship I missed entirely in my undergraduate and graduate studies. As soon as I stepped onto this campus and ever since, I have been given the sense of belonging to a community endeavor that matters. But I received the other half of the gift, too—a new sense of my own powers and abilities, my own outlines and limits. I pulled into focus here.

Is this dichotomy not, I wonder, the source of the curious, intense ambivalence with which
students usually regard the college while they are here? It encourages, demands their evolution into self-reliant beings, while it surrounds them with familial care, concern, safety. It pushes them out of the nest and yanks them back in. The communal and individual ideals tug against one another, creating a tension that produces our very best students, but does not make life especially easy.

Many of the students, and probably a lot of faculty too, love and resent the college as they do their families, or themselves. It is inescapable, always there when you don't want it — and also when you do. In five years I have seen, in moments of tragedy and loss, this community quietly, quickly close together like fingers, supporting someone, healing itself. When Catherine Smith was fatally injured two weeks before she was to graduate this spring, two faculty members sat with her at the hospital through the first night of her coma, before her parents could arrive, simply so that she would not be alone. The next day a student who had heard this said to me, “I really didn't know it was that kind of place.” It's that kind of place.

In my second year here, Food Service Director Gordon Beaumont was killed in Hicks Center while attempting to save Gina Hinkelman, the Food Service secretary, who also lost her life. After memorial service some students protested that the college relapsed too soon into business as usual. The college does roll on, like the seasons, like life itself, thank goodness, swallowing up even such enormities. Gordon and Gina and Catherine and the other lost ones live in the collective memory. But for there to be a collective memory, there must be a collectivity. And communities are seriously endangered species in this world of tiny incoherent fragments and impersonal corporate monsters. Sometimes I have felt that what we are doing here is preserving a doomed ideal, fighting the wave of the future, propagating irrelevance. But more often I have felt that what we are doing here is cultivating, insisting upon the values that might just save us all.

Memory.
The class of '82 is memory now, and the class of '83 are, in the parlance of the place, rising seniors, out of the waves like Botticelli’s Venus, coming into their own.

It really does move too fast. I didn’t have time to say goodbye to so many. During that last frantic week, though, I did do a lot of remembering.

I graded a batch of Expository Prose research papers, remembering with pleasure how these folks wrote ten weeks earlier. I also read ten autobiographies, the final projects in my freshman seminar which is an organized exercise in memory and brings about surprising, powerful results in eighteen-year-olds who often have not thought much about memory before. Additionally, I graded a splendid set of final projects from our first interdisciplinary women’s studies seminar, which had stretched over the entire year, and thought a lot about that extraordinary group and about the controversy surrounding the course when it was first proposed and what that had meant to me.

During the week I initiated some twenty students into Phi Beta Kappa, remembering my own initiation exactly ten years earlier; and I sang with the Baccalaureate choir so I could remember I had a voice and also so I could get a good seat to hear Father Theodore Hesburgh, whose talk on the heroism of service brought back some names from my childhood — Tom Dooley, Albert Schweitzer. Tim Schroder, the elected voice of the Class of '82, gave a witty, wise, urbane, learned, acute talk, and as he spoke — composed in his tie and jacket, his hair still tinted from his lead role in the spring play — I recalled the Tim of three years before — recalcitrant, awkward loner with a gift for
words—and felt wholly irrational pride. Earlier in the week I had stood where he was standing to speak about Cas Smith, who had died four days before, and whose grin is one of my particular memories from the Class of ’82.

On Commencement Saturday the English majors and their parents gathered at my house for the departmental breakfast, and I thought how tall John Sullivan had become, and I told Martha Sullivan’s mother that I knew all about her from Martha’s autobiography three years before. And Larry Barrett showed up and I recalled, “I’m the guy you’d be replacing.”

It was overcast and drizzly all morning, but at 3:00 the sun broke through and we lined up and marched down that hill again, through the double aisle of senior faces suddenly tender and kind, maybe remembering. I must admit having always liked the idea that we get to march first, in our multicolored hoods and silly hats, getting a last face-by-face look at them, and they at us, collaborators in this fabulous adventure that always ends so suddenly.

 Somehow everything seems to have worked. Pudgy, awkward boys are suddenly tall, smooth young men with futures who look down at me with gentleness and comradery. Frantic, giggling girls are tall, purposeful women who speak in lower voices and have some idea what they’re up against and how to combat it. It cannot have been four years. But it is, and will be, June after June, world without end. Do I really want to do this for a living? They always say that the hard part about K is continually saying goodbye, but ultimately that’s the faculty’s lot.

I hear Warren Board ring out their full names, I see them walk toward George’s outstretched hand, Ruth having checked the diploma to make sure all’s right with the world, and I am always absolutely sure I will never feel this way about a departing class again. Always.

Memory. Without it, as individuals, we are John and Jane Doe, police problems, blanks. We improvise ourselves. Without it, collectively, as peoples and institutions, we are dangerously at sea. Thus it has been so crucial for women, for black Americans that a legitimate history be written for them, lest they remain strangers in a strange land. Admittedly, history is creative—we lend meaning as well as find it. But there is, too, the genuine flash of recognition in that dark mirror. And then the choices become clearer for us, individually and collectively.

As I wander through the chaos on the quad after the ceremony, I am introduced to parents and hugged. I am hoping that Franklin Presler was right, that they take with them Memory, like a treasure, like a tool that will make the choices easier for them, too.

The quad empties and I walk out, trying to remember where I parked the car.

Gail Griffin
The Class of 1910 captured by the class of 1909