EMANCIPATED SPIRITS

PORTRAITS OF KALAMAZOO COLLEGE WOMEN

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Emancipated Spirits:

Portraits of Kalamazoo College Women

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Gail Griffin, Josephine Csete, Ruth Ann Moerdyk, and Cheryl Limer
In May, 1983, one thousand copies of this book were printed in neutral black ink on 60# Hammermill Cream Text at Ihling Bros. Everard Co., Kalamazoo, Michigan. The type was set by Just Your Type and is 11 point Goudy Old Style and Cheltenham Bold Condensed in various sizes.

SECOND EDITION
JUNE 1990


Printed in the United States of America
To all the women of Kalamazoo College,
past, present, and future,
in classrooms and dorm rooms,
  hallways and offices,
kitchens and library stacks,
labs and locker rooms
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Much is said of our forefathers, but we are quite as much indebted to our foremothers for the civilization to which we have attained, as to our much-boasted forefathers.

Lucinda Hinsdale Stone
This is a book about pioneers. It begins with an account of the life of a woman who arrived in Michigan in 1843, when it was still mostly vast forest. It ends with the story of another woman, who arrived in Kalamazoo 111 years later to discover that the territory still needed considerable clearing. Between these are two other stories of pioneer women, both of whom likewise found at Kalamazoo College enormous challenges, great work to be done, obstacles of tradition and prejudice which never fall easily and might have thwarted lesser spirits. In other words, they found much the same landscape which greeted Lucinda Hinsdale Stone when she and her husband arrived to assume the leadership of a ten-year-old Baptist college in a three-room building shaded by burr oaks in the town square.

The point of commonality in these four lives is that college, which, as this book goes to press, celebrates its sesquicentennial. The theme of the year-long celebration is "A Tradition of Excellence." All year those of us who live and work in that tradition have considered that word "excellence"—what it is, what it is not, how many things it can be. The lives which form the subject of this book span that full 150 years and more, beginning with Lucinda Hinsdale’s birth in 1814, long before Joseph Merrill and Caleb Eldred ever dreamed of their Michigan and Huron Institute, and continuing beyond this year’s celebration. They comprise, in themselves, a tradition of excellence, a female tradition whose roots lie deep in the past, in Mrs. Stone’s time, when it was the new colleges of the American “West”—Oberlin, Antioch, Hillsdale, Olivet, Kalamazoo, Michigan, Iowa, Wisconsin—that shook the staid eastern institutions by daring to offer higher education to women and usually in the same classrooms with their brothers. The Western experience taught many women how little the prevailing notions of their capacities—or incapacities—described what they could actually do, and it lured Eastern women like Lucinda Stone who had already learned that lesson. It is this legacy of aspiration, commitment, and creativity in the face of resistant circumstances of all kinds which this volume is meant to honor.
The book germinated in my own interest in Lucinda Stone, which had grown to fascination over my first five years at Kalamazoo College. It began on the day I read a student's paper telling the story of the Stones' exile in 1863, which took some two-thirds of the student body with them. The woman who commanded that kind of loyalty while incurring that kind of wrath, thought I, is someone I wish to get to know. When the sesquicentennial planning opened the way for faculty projects, I saw my chance. The idea came for a volume celebrating various women affiliated with the College who sustained Mrs. Stone's legacy of iconoclasm, integrity, controversy, and courage—a book of troublemakers, like her; and, like her, women whose lives profoundly affected those who felt their influence. As subjects I wanted women who had taken first steps and opened doors—or broken them down. I wanted creators, history-makers—pioneers. And about three minutes' thought gave me my list: Frances Diebold, who, in her forty-four-year career at the College, was perhaps more responsible than anyone for its reputation in the sciences, that realm where women were supposed to tread so fearfully, and who became perhaps the most popular teacher since Lucinda Stone herself; Pauline Byrd Johnson, the College's first black student, who persevered on that lonely road to become the first black teacher in the Kalamazoo Public Schools; and Nelda Balch, who took theatre at Kalamazoo College from a multi-purpose auditorium in the rafters of Bowen Hall where the speech wing of the English Department sometimes put on shows, to the first thrust stage in Michigan, in the splendid Playhouse that now bears her name. All three are women whom I had admired—from nearby or from afar—for a long time, and whom I was curious to know. Along with Mrs. Stone, they represent, respectively, four areas in which the College's tradition of excellence has established itself: language and literature (Mrs. Stone's specialties), the sciences, teacher training, and the fine arts. And all were and are great teachers, so this is very much a book about teaching—the vocation which Mrs. Stone's contemporaries designated women's work, opening for the first time a profession for women.

My next idea was that the book should be a student-faculty collaboration. Since its subjects—if they consented to be guinea pigs—would include two emeritae and one alumna, the full scope of the College family would thus be represented. By now all the pieces were in place. To my delight, my three chosen subjects agreed to participate, and three superior students expressed interest in taking on three of the four portraits as their required Senior Individualized Projects during the fall quarter of 1982.

When we launched into our work, we followed quite different paths.
Mine led into musty volumes, yellowed newspaper columns, brittle letters, mostly in the Kalamazoo Public Library's voluminous collection known as the Stone Scrapbooks, the gift of the Lucinda Hinsdale Stone chapter of the D.A.R. My collaborators, on the other hand, rapidly became conversant with the vagaries of tape recorders. Their work relied primarily on oral history, a research technique of increasing importance in social historiography. But more than anything, they had to depend on their own instincts, intellectual and personal, in order not only to ask the right questions, but also to establish the rapport and develop the insights that allow those questions to be asked. In this respect their work was much harder than mine. The final products disguise the very difficult work of transcribing, editing, and organizing that creates a tight and meaningful story from hours and hours of tape. A "pure" oral history simply allows the subject to speak, so what is presented here is a modified form. Sometimes the subject speaks at length; sometimes the narrator takes over, shaping, developing, interpreting. Sometimes other voices are introduced to fill out the picture and expand the perspective. The authors have had to sustain a delicate balancing act requiring many sensitive editorial choices.

The result is a hybrid of biography and autobiography. Both are dangerous literary forms, more vulnerable than most to criticism. In the former, one person interprets another's life—a formidable undertaking in any case. In the latter, someone interprets his or her own life, and thereby becomes instantly suspect. Finally the hunt for "the truth" is probably futile, and both biographer and autobiographer need the courage to pay allegiance to the truth of their own perceptions. We hope our readers will bear this in mind. People who know the events and the cast of characters in the following pages will undoubtedly find that their recollections differ. In reading biography and autobiography, as in life, one must allow other people's stories their own validity.

As we discussed our work in progress, fascinating similarities began to emerge, and in the final copy they are even clearer to us. The importance of family background in all four cases is incalculable—or, as Frances Diebold puts it, "how things begin influences what they become." In all these stories the parents did not go past high school, so they put enormous value on education, and each chapter is the story of a girlchild whose parents were determined that she would have the education they missed. In both cases where the father was part of the daughter's upbringing, he was quite liberal regarding education and achievement as goals for his daughter. In two cases strong grandmothers played powerful parts. Perhaps most important, the mothers of our four subjects were women of courage and intelligence, but of little
opportunity. It has been said that every woman is her mother; it may be that every woman of achievement is, in part, paying a debt to the past, bringing to fulfillment her mother's dreams and potential. So, as the epigram suggests, this book is a tribute to all our foremothers. And we noticed in reading the final copy that a certain attitude or stance was common to all four women in their years of accomplishment: a personal dignity and integrity, a fidelity to the very best in the term "lady," which was their most effective resource in clearing ground, winning support, withstanding opposition. They all learned the secret of real freedom, to borrow a phrase used to describe Lucinda Hinsdale Stone: an "emancipated spirit."

For all of us, the experience has been extraordinary. An epilogue expresses some of what we have felt and learned. It has certainly been the most difficult research and writing project I have ever undertaken, as well as the most rewarding. Probably this is true for my co-authors as well. I hope that some of our excitement in immersing ourselves in these four extraordinary lives shines through our prose. For alumni, I hope the book revives memories and sparks ideas about what it is to belong to the Kalamazoo College tradition. For townspeople, I hope it will make the College even more a part of their lives. For my colleagues and our students, I hope it will offer a somewhat unique perspective on our institutional history and ideals.

The best thing about this project has been its collaborative aspect—between me and my students, between the four of us and our subjects, between us and all the other people who thought enough of the idea to help realize it—and they are many.

First of all, I thank Bob Dewey, Dean of the Kalamazoo College Chapel and Chair of the Sesquicentennial Committee, who was the first person to tell me it was a good idea, and who subsequently helped engineer it through all the channels. To Provost Warren Board and my colleagues in the English Department I am extremely grateful for their willingness to arrange my release from regular teaching for a quarter in order to direct the project. Dr. Board, the College's Faculty Development Committee, and the Sesquicentennial Committee also provided financial support for my replacement and for the project itself.

However, there were no funds to cover publication until Betsy Maxon, Director of the College's Non-Traditional Student Program, heard my saga and believed enough in it and in me to organize a fundraising effort. To her and to my other two "angels," Martha and Ann Parfet, I am greatly indebted, as well as to all the Kalamazooans who responded to their call. I hope they will feel it was worthwhile.
That their contributions widened the scope of our project to make it a community effort was an added joy to me, as I was learning at the time how deeply Lucinda Stone believed that her little College should be a force in and for the town.

Mrs. Stone's descendants have been extraordinarily generous with information, family documents, and moral support. My deep thanks go to her great-grandchildren Webster J. Jones and Margaret Jones McAllister, and to her great-great-granddaughter Ada McAllister. I hope they will enjoy my portrait of their remarkable forebear.

Catharine Larson, reference librarian at the Kalamazoo Public Library, was more than helpful not only in pointing me in the right directions but in hauling box after box of Stone Scrapbooks up from the basement so that I could study them in the comfort of the reference room.

The special efforts of my colleagues and friends at Kalamazoo College's Upjohn Library have made my work infinitely easier. The personal generosity and professional skill of Eleanor Pinkham, Joan Hinz, and Vicki Kupferschmidt gave me access to sometimes extremely rare sources and made research a pleasure.

Various people near and far have generously aided me and my students in our research, providing corroboration and offering unique insights. We are all grateful to Weimer Hicks, Lewis Batts, Laurence Barrett, Robert Dewey, Donald Flesche, Margo Bosker, Lowry Marshall, Clair Myers, Laurence Jaquith, Romeo Phillips, Robert Smith, Judge Charles Pratt, Joanne Allison, Suzanne Hammer, Roger Greeley, Dolly Brown Davis, Katherine Dukette Rogers, Shirley Payne Lowe, Clara May Graybill, Zack York, and Lucy Gallup.

Special appreciation goes to all the stalwarts, family and friends, who listened, criticized, encouraged, typed, loaned word processors, helped with research, and generally supported us all. Phil Pirages gave me sound advice about printers; Con Hilberry shared with us his wisdom about getting people to talk.

I have tried to find a way to thank Frances Diebold, Pauline Johnson, and Nelda Balch, but perhaps the book itself will have to do. These three accepted my proposition, in two cases without knowing me at all, and in all cases without knowing the students with whom they would be working. For many weeks they made room in their very busy lives for a student with a tape recorder, and they have opened their memories, their letters and albums, their minds and hearts to these strangers with the bravery and generosity of the fine teachers they are. It has been a monumental invasion of privacy which I acknowledge most gratefully. The products which redeem it are here, but the most important
results may lie within the students themselves—a phenomenon a teacher must always accept.

Most of all, I am grateful to Josephine Csete, Ruth Moerdyk, and Cheryl Limer, my collaborators. They invested in me a valuable commodity: the ten weeks which Kalamazoo College allows to a student for an independent project. Many other good projects would have been much easier, more pleasant, less expensive or more lucrative for them. None of them had ever done oral history or biographical writing before, and this project certainly required more work of a higher caliber than the usual “SIP.” In the final two months before publication they worked very hard to finish their chapters while taking other courses. Always I was demanding, obsessive, dictatorial; always they were brave, enthusiastic, intelligent, taking criticism and making revisions with the best grace. In this process I have learned more about teaching and writing than I ever absorbed in so short a time. I am very proud of them and heavily in their debt—and I will miss the Thursday afternoons around my table. The three of them sustain the tradition of a special excellence which Kalamazoo College can stimulate in a special student.

Gail B. Griffin
March 1, 1983
Chapter I

“A Desire to Know”: Women’s Education and the American Midwest

Gail B. Griffin
That the world was a paradise while man's wisdom sufficed for her who was to behold God only through him, has been the teaching of creeds not yet dead. There is a lesson in the little Samaritan maiden's repetition of the first transgression, as well as in its repetition a thousand times since. He that runneth may read in it this moral of the symbol, legend, or verity of Holy Writ, whichever way we may regard the story of the bite of the apple, viz.: that a desire to know was evidently an element in woman’s original psychical nature, be it original sin or otherwise; and correspondingly endowed, as is, just as evidently, her physical organization, to gratify this desire, we may conclude that she will compel some of the educational institutions of the age to service in its accomplishment.¹

—Lucinda Hinsdale Stone

As this version of the Fall shows, Lucinda Stone, like many of her feminist contemporaries, understood fully how radical, how dangerous, was woman’s desire to know. During the nineteenth century that forbidden desire became a forceful demand and, to many, a natural and unavoidable development in the course of what Victor Hugo called the Woman’s Century. For those on both sides of the issue, higher education for women was inextricably tied to the larger issue of the emancipation of women from their traditionally narrow confines, and thus was a critical and extremely emotional question. Thomas Wentworth Higginson—now perhaps best known as the “discoverer” of Emily Dickinson, but in his time one of the most eloquent and outspoken advocates of women’s rights—published in 1859 in The Atlantic Monthly an essay ironically entitled, “Ought Women to Learn the Alphabet?” In it he argues that once the right to the alphabet—that is, the rudiments of knowledge—was conceded, the rest would surely follow: “in view of the rapid changes now going on, he is a rash man who asserts the ‘Woman Question’ to be anything but a mere question of time. The fulcrum has been already given, in the alphabet, and we must simply watch and see whether the earth does not move.”² Like many of his contemporaries, including Mrs. Stone, he saw human progress in terms of the increasing supremacy of mind over matter. But while others used that premise to argue against education for women—
man being mind, woman being matter—Higginson came to the opposite conclusion. The human past, he said, was rightly male dominated because it was "an empire of the muscles, enlisting at best the lower portion of the understanding. There can be no question that the present epoch is initiating an empire of the higher reason, of arts, affections, aspirations; and for that epoch the genius of woman has been reserved."

For Higginson even to speak of "the genius of woman" was revolutionary, a blow against the ancient assumption that gender permeated mind as well as body, that, according to a Chinese proverb which he quotes, "For men, to cultivate virtue is knowledge; for women, to renounce knowledge is virtue." In both Greek and Judeo-Christian mythology, the woman who aspires to know—opens the forbidden box, bites the apple—releases sin and death upon the world. The deeply rooted prejudice against serious education for women not only persisted throughout the nineteenth century, but in some ways became more firmly entrenched. It rested upon two somewhat contradictory suppositions: first, that women were dangerous when educated—masculinized, immoral, pernicious; and second, that women were not capable of education beyond basic literacy and female "accomplishments"—or, as an American doctor put it, "Woman has a head almost too small for intellect but just big enough for love."

As recent scholarship has shown, this school of thought in many respects gained rather than lost strength from the eighteenth to the nineteenth centuries. The timeless belief in separate qualities and abilities for man and woman was codified by the development of a more coherent theory of woman's sphere, which Barbara Welter has called "The Cult of True Womanhood." As she explains it, industrialism in England and America took industry out of the home but did not take women along with it to perform tasks which had traditionally been part of their domestic role. In the ensuing split between private and public which bisected the culture, woman became "the hostage in the home," and around Woman and Home grew up an almost religious mythology, firmly establishing woman's symbolic function as representing those aspects of man which he could not afford to take with him into the world of business and competition. Woman and Home became repositories where man left the gentler aspects of himself each morning and recovered them each night. "What was new in this concept," Joan Burstyn explains, "was not the segregation of labor by gender, since men and women had traditionally performed different tasks, but the establishment of an ideal that removed women from all productive labor but childbearing, that separated men and women of a family
during their working hours, and that channeled women's energies, and only women's, into arranging for the consumption of goods and services by themselves and their families, and into undertaking services for their families and for those less fortunate than themselves.\(^8\) The professionalization of various occupations during and after the Industrial Revolution put them further beyond the reach of most women, since such professions now required education, apprenticeship, and money. "Once women were divorced from work by their physical confinement and by their lack of training, it was but a step to believe that they were both weaker and purer than men."\(^9\) Education for women was a profound threat to this neat world view because, of course, it attacked both weakness and "purity." Woman's new profession was, in fact, womanhood, and its laws and standards were strictly defined. Human qualities were painstakingly divided by gender, allotting to women, according to Welter, purity, piety, submission, and domesticity. The True Woman was universally held to be more spiritual and moral than man, just as the fallen woman was infinitely more evil than her male counterpart. And therein lay women's "power," as many proponents of True Womanhood argued: in their "covert superiority."\(^10\) Their intuitive gifts, moral power, and intensity of feeling were to console them for their utter lack of intellectual, economic, political, or legal status. As one Victorian preacher put it, "Woman's strength lies in her essential weakness."\(^11\) To become educated was to lose innocence—a word which means, literally, "not knowing."

True Womanhood was, of course, a middle-class ideal; in fact, one important criterion of middle-class status for a man was the leisure of his wife. Reality was quite different for the many women who, by necessity or birth, had to work for their bread, and by 1852, two-thirds to three-fourths of American factory workers were women.\(^12\) According to the 1870 census, one in eight women over ten years old worked at a paying job, and 93% of the female labor force was located in seven occupations: domestic work and agriculture (which accounted for 50%), along with sewing, millinery, teaching, textile industry, and laundry.\(^13\) Part of the agitation for increased educational opportunity for women arose from the growing realization that for women who must work, options were severely limited, and especially for middle-class women. Harriet Martineau, the brilliant English sociologist, wrote of her tour of the United States in the mid-thirties that America offered seven occupations to women at that time: teaching, sewing, keeping boarders, working in cotton mills, bookbinding, typesetting, and domestic work.\(^14\) Needless to say, their wages were often less than half those of men. At the very bottom of the scale was the country's black
female population, slaves in the south, domestics in the north. Through their eyes, True Womanhood was an alien species indeed, as Sojourner Truth announced to her audience in 1851 when, after an account of her life of enslavement, hard physical labor, extensive travel, and no whisper of chivalry, she asked, “And ain’t I a woman?”

True Womanhood was designed to preserve women in an extended childhood which was reflected in their legal status. On both sides of the Atlantic critics saw the ideal as particularly incongruous with nineteenth-century reality. The English writer Frances Cobbe, whose *Duties of Women* went into several editions in the 1870’s, said that women “have hitherto been treated as minors and have been taught the duties of minors,—unquestioning obedience and a childlike ductility.”¹⁵ And in America, Margaret Fuller exclaimed at mid-century, “[T]here are no American women, only overgrown children.”¹⁶ The feminist response to True Womanhood took on an added vehemence in America, where many observers saw it as dissonant with a democratic, progressive society. Higginson wrote, “In all European monarchies, it is the theory, that the mass of the people are children, to be governed, not mature beings, to govern themselves. . . . In the free states of this Union, we have formally abandoned this theory for one half of the human race, while for the other half it flourishes in full force. The moment the claims of woman are broached, the democrat becomes a monarchist. . . . [A]s matters now stand among us, there is no aristocracy but of sex: all men are born patrician, all women are legally plebeian; all men are equal in having political power, and all women in having none.”¹⁷ Martineau commented, “The Americans have, in the treatment of women, fallen below, not only their own democratic principles, but the practice of some parts of the Old World.”¹⁸ Other nations might stall, Higginson concluded, but “with us Americans, and in this age, . . . how is it possible for the blindest to help seeing that a new era has begun, and that the time has come for women to learn the alphabet?”¹⁹

And it would seem natural that a new country, with fewer entrenched traditions and established bastions of power, would indeed lead the way. But the real heart of the revolution lay in the heart of the continent—what was then sweepingly referred to as “the West.” There the development of higher education for women took a form quite different from what was happening in the East. Generally speaking, women’s education grew in the eastern seaboard states as a “separatist” enterprise, in one of two ways. The first is the Mt. Holyoke model: the female seminary (in this case, opening in 1837) which later became a
woman's college. The second is the establishment of women's colleges themselves, beginning with Georgia Women's College, the first in the country, which opened its doors on January 7, 1839. But the period of real growth came later, in the sixties and seventies, when the three "big sisters" were born: Vassar, in 1860, the first endowed women's college in the country; Wellesley, in 1875, the first to have a female president from the start as well as a female faculty; and Smith, in the same year, the first to establish entrance requirements as rigorous as those of men's colleges. This triad made waves quite justifiably and came to symbolize a new, serious approach to women's higher education. They offered a unique opportunity to women in the conservative east, or to those with resources and opportunities to come east. But in some ways these colleges were anomalies; a general, widespread advance in educational opportunities for women, from the secondary level on, did not underlie them. Eleanor Flexner writes, "By 1865 the higher education of women had made little progress except in the Middle West." There the extremely controversial phenomenon of coeducation became the dominant mode, for various reasons. From the 1830's on, formally and informally, midwestern women gained access to what was called "the male curriculum," as well as to the benefit of the more highly trained teachers who instructed their brothers. The term "co-education," which became current in the 1850's, was probably coined in Michigan. According to Dorothy McGuigan it may have appeared in Ann Arbor with the opening volleys of the battle to integrate the University of Michigan; Thomas Woody, in his two-volume history of American women's education, traces it to an 1857 circular to Michigan's union schools. In any case, until the latter quarter of the century "[c]oeducation was almost unknown in the east...." That Easterners saw it as part and parcel of the uncivilized West is clear from Lucinda Stone's account of a conversation with an American woman in Europe, which turned to the recent opening of the University of Michigan to women: "No, she said, she was sure that an author who had expressed the thought that 'emigration to the west tended to barbarism' was right, and that Michigan's opening the doors of its university to women was a proof of it." There is an obvious link between the unprecedented educational opportunities for women in the West, and the history of American feminism. The movement of women toward full citizenship was one which characteristically grew from west to east. The first state to consider female and black suffrage amendments was Kansas, in 1867, in a campaign that drew the formidable teams of Lucy Stone (no relation to Lucinda) and her husband Henry Blackwell, as well as Elizabeth Cady
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Stanton and Susan B. Anthony. The bill failed, but three years later Oklahoma became the first state to enfranchise women in municipal elections. The moving force behind that development, Esther Morris, became the first woman justice on record. The first woman mayor in the country was Susannah Medora Salter, of Argonia, Kansas, who took office in 1887; and Cottonwood, Kansas, had not only a female mayor but an all-woman city council. Likewise, the number of suffrage leaders who came from midwestern colleges and universities is striking: Lucy Stone and her sister-in-law Antoinette Brown Blackwell, the first ordained female Christian minister in the country, were among Oberlin College’s earliest graduates. Antoinette’s sister Elizabeth, the first female physician in America, acquired her hard-won medical training at Geneva College of Medicine in New York State—then considered “West”—from which she graduated at the head of her class in 1849. Dr. Anna Howard Shaw, who succeeded Susan B. Anthony as president of the National Woman Suffrage Association, attended Albion College before studying theology and medicine in Boston. Her sister-in-arms, Carrie Chapman Catt, graduated from Iowa State College in 1877.

Why coeducation was a Western phenomenon is a complicated question. James Angell, president of the University of Michigan shortly after it admitted women and later one of the great advocates of coeducation, probably explained it best: “As a matter of fact coeducation is one of the most characteristic expressions of the social evolution of modern and especially Western life. It is not now, and is not likely soon to become, an adequate or satisfactory expression of social and educational ideals in old communities or at all events in the conservative strata of such communities. . . . [T]he few instances in which the system has made its way into New England institutions of collegiate rank are essentially sporadic and serve rather than otherwise to emphasize the truth of this assertion. . . . If one follows the history of the development of the system, one is impressed with the fact that in its inception anyhow the movement possessed the true spirit of robust frontier democracy.”

It is certainly the case that True Woman was too fragile a creature for the West, where rigid roles and delicate concepts of femininity were hard to sustain against the demands of frontier life. Many women who migrated west discovered that they were called upon to do much that tradition denied them or denied that they could accomplish. Harriet Noble, who emigrated from New York to Dexter, Michigan, in the 1820’s at the age of twenty-one, wrote home: “I suppose most of my lady friends would think a woman quite out of ‘her legitimate sphere’ in turning mason, but I was not at all particular what kind of labor I
performed, so we were only comfortable and provided with the necessities of life. . . . The logs which I alone rolled in, would surprise any one who has never been put to the test of necessity, which compels people to do what under other circumstances they would not have thought possible.”

The test of necessity was indeed the element working in women’s favor in the west. Often it was simply impossible financially for a community or a church to construct separate schools for boys and girls and to hire two teachers. The financial factor worked again on another level in the cases of state universities, which often “went co-ed” in the wake either of demands that a coordinate female institution be constructed, or of the economic crises which plagued these institutions, whose endowments fell far below those of their eastern counterparts. In the latter cases, the tuition payments of women suddenly spoke louder than their supposed mental deficiencies. A good example is the unchartered precursor of the University of Chicago, which admitted women following the depression of 1873.

Yet another argument from necessity, not necessarily for coeducation but one of the most important in the history of women’s education in general, was the need for teachers, especially in the opening west. Mabel Newcomer writes:

One of the principal reasons urged for the spread of the public school system was that a democracy can function successfully only with an educated electorate. At that time there was even less support for giving women the vote than for admitting them to college; but it was becoming increasingly apparent that the only way to get even a minimum universal education for male voters was to employ women teachers; and since the teachers must know at least as much as their pupils, and preferably more, it was necessary to concede that a very substantial number of the female population must be educated too.

This argument, along with the growing popularity of the idea that educated women made better wives and mothers, played a significant part in eroding educational barriers during the first half of the century. One who seized upon both arguments was Catherine Beecher, sister of Harriet Beecher Stowe and Henry Ward Beecher. A conservative who never questioned the fundamental domestic role of women, she nevertheless saw the reality of working-class women and the vast educational needs of the West. Appalled by the “defeminizing” effects of the Eastern mills, she determined that poor single women should be funneled west and trained to teach. Drawing on the theory that was gradually to open this first real profession for women, she believed that every woman was by nature a teacher: “Our creator designed women
to be the chief educators of our race.” The Western Female Institute at Cincinnati, which she organized with her sister Harriet in 1833, was to be the distribution point. She herself toured Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, Iowa, and Wisconsin to learn the needs and difficulties in various communities, engaging other women as fund-raisers for prospective schools. Beecher had three priorities for her training schools: practicality, as opposed to the “refinements” and “accomplishments” of many of the Eastern female seminaries; financial security through permanent endowments; and curricular emphasis on physical culture and domestic science. Her greatest successes were in Burlington, Iowa; Quincy, Illinois; and Milwaukee, with a school which grew into the only college to come of her efforts, Milwaukee-Downer College.

In 1852, as the culmination of this work, Beecher founded the American Women’s Educational Association, whose stated purpose was to unite “American women of all sects and parties in an effort to secure to their sex a liberal education, honorable position, and remunerative employment in the appropriate profession of woman, this profession being considered as embracing the training of the human mind, the care of the human body in infancy and sickness, and the conservation and domestic economy of the family state. . . .” Godey’s Ladies’ Book assured its readers: “it will be seen that the purpose of the association is by no means to transplant women from the position which Divine Providence has assigned them.” Thus, as commonly occurred in the history of American women, was tradition invoked to undermine itself.

The history of coeducation in Michigan offers an excellent case study of the test of necessity at work. The University did not open in Ann Arbor until 1841, but it was preceded by eight “branches,” established by the legislature in 1837, whose function was in effect to build the university from below, bringing male students to a uniform level of proficiency in order to qualify for university-level work. “With every such branch,” decreed the legislature, “. . . there shall be established an institution for the education of females in the higher branches of knowledge.” Such a separation was generally more in form than in fact, owing to exigencies of classroom space and faculty size. Lucinda Stone certainly regarded the Kalamazoo Branch as coeducational, and worked to make it moreso. This “de facto” coeducation later made it difficult to argue for the exclusion of female Branch graduates from the University. And in Ann Arbor in the 1860’s, when public support for the idea of integrating the University was growing, consideration was given to the concept of a coordinate Female College, but finances rendered that plan unfeasible, and the regents finally voted to admit women in 1870—the first through the doors being a Kalamazoo Branch
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Separate female seminaries did proliferate in the midwest, outgrowths of the seminary movement which began around 1750 in the East and South and which lasted for nearly a century, superseded finally by coeducational and women's colleges on the one hand, and public high schools on the other. The first in the colonies was probably at the Ursuline convent in New Orleans, opening in 1727. The Quaker and Moravian influence in the mid-Atlantic colonies created a relatively liberal atmosphere with regard to girls' schooling, and the Moravian Seminary at Bethlehem, Pennsylvania (1742), along with the Philadelphia Academy for Females (1792), were pioneers. Between 1749 and 1871 some 162 female seminaries and academies are documented. Accepting students from twelve to sixteen years of age, they taught a range of thirty-six subjects, but curriculum depended heavily upon location and institutional character. Generally the female curriculum in seminaries, as well as many colleges, differed from the male in the absence of classical languages, the inclusion of modern languages (English and French) and literature, more natural and less physical science, a lower level of mathematics, and the addition of fine arts and "decorations" such as needlework. According to Woody, the goals of the earliest seminaries were religious and domestic, later shifting toward teacher training and preparation for enlightened motherhood, and finally, from the 1820's on, acquiring more intellectual rigor. The two most famous were Emma Willard's Troy Female Seminary, the first endowed institution for the education of women in America (1821), and Mt. Holyoke, the brainchild of Mary Lyon, the earliest female institution in the country to go on to collegiate status. Some seminaries were coeducational—in fact, Lucinda Stone spoke of her alma mater, the Hinesburg (Vermont) Academy, as completely so, although she suffered for daring to enter the college preparatory classes. Those seminaries which did educate men and women together, she said, "were the initiators of a very important revolution in the status of the education of girls," and "were as perfect educational republics as can be imagined."

Just as coeducation sometimes slipped in by necessity, it often came by the back door, as the seminaries gradually merged over time with the male institutions with which they were affiliated or near which they were located. One such Midwestern example was the Granville (Ohio) Female Seminary, founded in 1832, which became Shepardson College and then was absorbed by Denison University.

But it was Oberlin College which accepted coeducation as an
educational philosophy from its inception. When it opened its doors in 1833, in what alumna Lucy Stone called “the grey dawn of our morning,” it made history on two counts, as the first coeducational collegiate institution in the country, and as the first to accept students regardless of race. In actuality, only the secondary and preparatory departments were coeducational during the first four years, attempting to compensate for the previous inferior education of female students so that they could go on to the higher levels. When the “college course” opened to women in 1837, four of them entered. The following year, twenty-five percent of the three hundred students in that course were female, demonstrating a general rule: that when the doors were at last opened, women did not hesitate. The college did offer a Ladies’ Course, which reflected the traditional curricular discrepancies. In its first thirty-four years Oberlin enrolled 395 students in the Ladies’ Course and eighty-four in the College Course leading to a B.A. Some five to seven percent of the student body over that period was black. Dormitories were segregated by gender, but dining halls were not. Female student life was supervised by a principal and a Ladies’ Board on the theory that “women know best what women need.” Girls were required to retire at 10:00 P.M., and while boys were prohibited from smoking and drinking, girls were not—doubtless on the premise that such enormities would not occur to them.

“It would be impossible for one now to conceive,” wrote Lucinda Stone in 1874, “the obstacles in the way of the girls who were first admitted to study at Oberlin. Every step was achieved through a moral battle with public opinion and popular prejudice, the depressing effects of which cannot now be estimated.” Her similarly named acquaintance Lucy Stone made clear that her alma mater was no utopia: “Oberlin’s attitude was that women’s high calling was to be the mothers of the race, and that they should stay within that special sphere in order that future generations should not suffer from the want of devoted and undistracted mother care. If women became lawyers, ministers, physicians, lecturers, politicians or any sort of ‘public character’ the home would suffer from neglect. . . . Washing the men’s clothes, caring for their rooms, serving them at table, listening to their orations, but themselves remaining respectfully silent in public assemblages, the Oberlin ‘co-eds’ were being prepared for intelligent motherhood and properly subservient wifehood.” She and her future sister-in-law Antoinette Brown set out to except themselves from that rule, but not before Lucy herself refused to write the commencement address for her graduating class because it would have to be read by a male student.
For several decades Oberling was generally regarded as a radical and dangerous extreme. But within a decade the idea was spreading in the Midwest. It is important to note that in addition to the other factors encouraging coeducation in the West, these private colleges were affiliated with various Western churches which tended to be less conservative than those in the East, more open to change and to concepts of social utility and reform. However, in the case of Kalamazoo College, which opened as the Michigan and Huron Institute in the same year as Oberlin, evidence suggests that before it was co-opted as a University Branch the American Baptist leadership did not admit women. In any case, women were not granted degrees until 1870. The closest follower upon the Oberlin experiment was Michigan Central College, first opening at Spring Arbor in 1844, then closed in 1853 and transferred to Hillsdale, where it became Hillsdale College. From its inception it was coeducational and open to all races, nationalities, and creeds. In 1851 it granted the first degrees given to women in the state of Michigan, when two women became Bachelors of Science.\textsuperscript{44} Two years later a woman earned the A.B. degree in the classical course. Olivet Institute, later Olivet College, opened in 1848 under the leadership of President Shiperd, formerly of Oberlin. Women there did not receive other than “Ladies’ Course” diplomas until 1874, when one woman took a B.S.\textsuperscript{45} Since the Michigan legislature did not grant charters to private colleges until 1855, when Kalamazoo took the first in the state, Hillsdale was truly progressive in granting degrees to women four years before a charter was possible.

In 1852 Ohio was the site of an experiment in coeducation famous—or infamous—largely because of its presiding genius, Horace Mann. Antioch College’s first Announcement included the following remarkable affirmation: “In some particulars of its aim and scope, this college differs from most of the higher literary institutions in the country. It recognizes the claims of the female sex to equal opportunities of education with the male, and these opportunities it designs to confer. Its founders believe that the labors and expenditures for the higher education of men will tend indirectly to elevate the character of women; but they are certain that all wise efforts for the improved education of women will speed the education of the whole human race.”\textsuperscript{46} The underlying premise of this statement was one of Catherine Beecher’s favorite tenets: “The proper education of a man decides the welfare of an individual, but educate a woman, and the interests of a whole family are secured.”\textsuperscript{47} One observer of Antioch’s opening hours commented on the student body: “It was a motley group. Ministers had given up their parishes; husbands and wives were there to enter side by side that
they might be fitted to rear and teach their children. Sons and daughters of eminent men, east and west, gathered there for the teaching of this man of reknown in education.\footnote{48} Antioch has been making educational traditionalists shake their heads ever since.

The Western colleges, because of their private, church-related character and because of the diversity of their "departments" and "courses" (separate curricula), found it relatively easy to coeducate, though sometimes the process was subtle and gradual—Kalamazoo College offering an especially good example. The public universities presented very different and more formidable obstacles, and it was when these bastions began to fall in the 1860's and 1870's that the "West" became the focus of a heated national debate on the question of coeducation. The University of Desaret (Utah) enrolled women in 1851, in its second term of operation, and the University of Iowa opened coeducationally in 1856. The Morrill Land Grant Act of 1862 stimulated the growth of state universities and the popular feeling that the extension of public education in the higher levels should include women, as well as that a public university should supply the burgeoning public school systems with teachers. But often the state universities gave in only after ten or twenty years of agitation. The Universities of Michigan and Wisconsin were considered the most significant pioneers, both of them large institutions—Michigan the largest in the country—with established reputations. At Wisconsin the idea began to brew in 1850, and some women entered the Normal School (teacher training department) in 1860. In 1866, after considerable Byzantine politicking, the legislature granted formal admission to women, and six completed the B.A. in 1869. The opposition was vociferous, as an alumnus recalled: "the entire body of students were without exception opposed to the admission of the young ladies, and the anathemas heaped upon the regents were loud and deep. Some of the students left for other colleges. . . . The feeling of intense and bitter indignation caused by the change continued almost unabated."\footnote{49} President Chadbourne, citing the idiocy of calling ladies bachelors,\footnote{50} managed to establish a separate Female College in 1867, but it vanished in 1871—when he did.

The Universities of Kansas, Indiana, Minnesota, and Missouri followed Wisconsin, in that order. But the Michigan case, culminating in 1870, was watched more closely by the national press, because of its size and prestige and because the aim was full and immediate coeducation, the admission of women to all departments and curricula. The story, discussed more fully in the following chapter, also begins in the 1850's with petitions to the legislature. The proponents, including
James and Lucinda Stone, usually argued on the basis of the University charter, which offered admission to all persons resident in the state. The legal "personhood" of women was very much an issue, here and elsewhere. In fact, one disgruntled professor, soon after the regents' vote in 1870, stopped his students from removing a dog which had wandered into the classroom with this clever remark: "That dog is a resident of Michigan. Don't you know we now recognize the right of every resident of the state to enjoy the privileges afforded by the University?"51

This kind of hard-bitten prejudice Madelon Stockwell faced with quiet grace when she arrived in the fall of 1870, but an advance party, consisting of another Kalamazoo College alumna, Alice Boise, had preceded her. As an unofficial auditor, privileged by her father's place on the faculty, Alice nonetheless took her obligation seriously and with that sense of historical responsibility which Mrs. Stone attributed to the first Oberlin women: "And I studied! Perhaps I had not realized until then that I was representing my sex. Yes, I was not studying for myself alone. Surely I must not fail!"52

President Angell, recounting the history of the 1870 decision, cited the Western educational climate as important in readying the ground: "usages in the West had fairly prepared the way for the admission of women to this institution."53 Boise had done some groundbreaking too, as had the earliest applicants, who were refused in 1858 and then waited with patience for years to receive their education: Harriet Ada Patton finally earned her law degree in 1872; Augusta Chapin settled for Olivet but finally received an M.A. from the University in 1884 and went on to become the first female Doctor of Divinity in the country. When news of the regents' vote in 1870 spread throughout the country, various voices predicted all manner of disaster. The New York Times commented cautiously, "Harvard and Yale, which have so long hesitated on the brink, will have an opportunity to observe the effect on those who have plunged boldly in."54 Those two academic patriarchies would continue hesitating and observing well into the twentieth century.

In Stockwell's wake a flood of women entered the University. The President's Report listed thirty-four women in 1871 (two in law, eighteen in medicine, and fourteen in the "Academic Department"); sixty-four the following year (three in law, thirty-three in medicine, twenty-eight in the Academic Department); and eighty-nine in 1873 (four in law, forty in medicine, and forty-five in the Academic Department).55 By 1874 the total was ninety-three (fifty in Literature, Science, and the Arts; five in law; thirty-eight in medicine) and twenty-eight
degrees had been awarded to women: three in Literature, Science, and the Arts; four in law; and twenty-one in medicine. The striking feature here is the preponderance of female medical students, reflecting a growing concern with the need for female physicians to treat female patients. Arguments for the appropriateness of medical study for women followed the general lines of the teaching argument: Women were the physicians in the family, and consequently medicine was a natural outgrowth of a traditional female role. The first female M.D. to graduate from Michigan, Amanda Sanford, produced a doctoral thesis contributing original research to the study of *eclampsia puerperalis*, the postpartum uterine infection which killed thousands of women, including Mary Wollstonecraft. Other alumnae moved rapidly into prominence in the history of women in academe. Alice Freeman Palmer, whom President Angell personally granted admission on grounds of her potential, despite her failure of the entrance exam, became president of Wellesley at twenty-seven. Alice Hamilton, M.D., was the first female professor at Harvard, though she was not allowed to march at commencement or to use the Harvard Club. “Yes,” she said tersely, “I am the first woman on the Harvard faculty. I’m not the first women who should have been appointed.”

Thanks to Hillsdale, Olivet, Kalamazoo, and the University of Michigan, the state achieved something of a reputation. As Lucinda Stone wrote in 1874, “Michigan has tried the experiment of co-education perhaps as thoroughly and extensively as any State in the Union—as any territory of equal extent in the world.” In rapid succession other state universities followed. In the same year coeducation came to the University of Illinois, Ohio State University, and the University of California. Cornell followed in 1872. This chain reaction, probably more than anything else, sparked new life in the controversy over higher education for women.

In many ways the arguments were the same that had always met attempts to educate women beyond the early secondary level or beyond a curriculum suitable for a domestic career. The specter of coeducation simply intensified the issue, since it posed a clearer, more direct threat to the notion of separate spheres and distinct abilities. President Angell of Michigan wrote that “coeducation is necessarily opposed to the view that woman’s only function is maternity, and that her only proper attainments are either of a domestic or sexual character.” For many, the idea of an educated woman was bad enough (she was often spoken of as a “monster”) but the idea of men and women educated together by the same standards in the same subjects
amounted to a kind of social chaos, a blurring of distinctions fundamental to social organization. The Detroit Free Press, in the thick of the University of Michigan battle, predicted that coeducation "would tend to unwoman the woman and unman the man—it would tend to produce confusion, and all confusion produces corruption." Similarly, female education even in seminaries had met a chorus of warnings from the pulpit about the corrosion of woman's role as repository of morality. If intellectual attainment threatened morality, then physical proximity of men and women during this process presented an even more dire danger.

Likewise, the argument of mental gender, the inherent difference and inferiority of women's brains, was even more relevant to coeducation than to single-sex education. Very late in the century—and still today—women's minds were thought to be quick and intuitive, but lacking in depth, reflective power, analytical skill, and the tenacity necessary to intensive study. Additionally, of course, women's reason was regularly clouded by emotion. In 1887 an article titled "Education of Women" appeared in the journal Education, enumerating "a few characteristics that are peculiarly feminine." First was "Woman's love of the helpless affecting her thoughts and sentiments and appealing more to pity than to equity. Second: The aptitude of the female mind to dwell in the concrete and proximate, rather than on the abstract and remote. Third: Woman's prevailing awe of power and authority swaying her ideas and sentiments about all institutions. Fourth: In reasoning, a woman is synthetic rather than analytic.... In woman the receptive faculties, in man the originative, are predominant...."

Since by that late date women were succeeding in colleges throughout the country, the author was obliged to add that "with such a forcing and unnatural process, it may be quite possible for a woman's intellect to produce work of a higher excellence than that yielded by the brain of an average man." In other words: Ladies, proceed at your peril.

Another argument rendered more pressing by coeducation was the professional or vocational: What was the point of investing public monies in a woman's education when the men in her classes were training for professions dictated by choice and aptitude, while hers was dictated by nature? President Erastus Haven, the die-hard who held the fort at Ann Arbor as long as he could, put it this way: "If we educate mind simply as mind, this would be right. But if our Colleges in their course of education, look to the preparation of young men for the professions of law, medicine, and theology, then woman would be necessarily excluded, since she would not choose to follow these
professions.” If by some unaccountable perversity women did choose to follow those professions, it was argued, the result would be disastrous on two counts: First, this influx of women would upset the economy, lowering wages and driving out male workers; and second, it would be a poor investment, since surely women would leave their professions as soon as they married and began having children. Additionally, some said, the opening of professions to women would encourage them to marry late or to stay single, thus betraying their duty to the race.

Some new arguments arose specific to the prospect of integrating existing institutions. The academic standards would fall. A certain amount of pedagogical freedom would disappear, since certain subjects could not be broached with ladies in the room. School spirit would decline. The social atmosphere would become either strained or dangerously loose. The element of mystery between the sexes would vanish—from which argument the interesting conclusion was drawn that marriages would be less likely. One observer noted, “This early contact with the other sex on a footing of equality, which the majority of girl students more than maintain intellectually, has tended to produce that contempt for the much vaunted superiority of man that is as a rule reserved for those post nuptial discoveries which make marriage such an interesting venture.” As women’s minds were geared for either the trivial or the merely utilitarian, the spirit of research would diminish. And the most widespread argument of all: The university’s reputation and position would surely be compromised.

But no argument against coeducation received as wide a hearing or as serious a treatment as the physiological. Joan Burstyn explains its sudden popularity in the latter half of the century as a response to the failure of the other arguments. That is, women were in fact being educated and succeeding, so a new and powerful offensive tactic was needed. No word generally carries as much weight in our society as a doctor’s. And in the 1870’s and after, the men of medicine came out in force, breaching barriers of propriety to discuss at great length the female reproductive cycle and its relation to mental activity. This school of thought was also bolstered by several of the many derivations of Darwinism that emphasized the central female role in the survival of the fittest and that made a great deal of skull size. The progress of the race depended upon the increased, not decreased, “protection” of women so that they might have healthy children. To fulfill this biological duty, women must avoid anything approaching masculinism. As an eminent British physician, Dr. Henry Maudsley, put it: “The forms and habits of mutilated men approach those of women; and women, whose ovaries and uterus remain for some cause in a state of complete inac-
tion, approach the forms and habits of men..."87 Science now provided a foundation that legitimized and widened the polarization of gender.

Rousseau had said in *Emile*, “The male is only male at certain moments; the female is female all her life.” The prevailing medical line was similar: that woman’s reproductive organs literally dominated her, not only physically, but mentally. “The ovaries... give to woman all her characteristics of body and mind...”, wrote one authority.88 Another, Dr. F. Hollick, cautioned his readers, “The uterus, it must be remembered, is the controlling organ of the female body...”69 As Burstyn explains, the later nineteenth century introduced the idea of “conservation of energy” into human physiology, so that it was believed that energy expended in one area of the body must come from another. In puberty and especially during menstruation, which was regarded almost universally as “a pathological and not a physiological process”70 and was still thought to include ovulation (that is, potential motherhood),71 so much energy was required that mental activity was either impossible or severely threatening to health.

The consequences for individual women were bad enough; the larger implications for the survival of the race were catastrophic. A chorus of male voices arose from the scientific and emerging social scientific fields to protest the trend toward higher education for women, in particular the lunacy of educating them in the same modes, by the same standards, and in the same classrooms as men:

In its full sense, the reproductive power means the power to bear a well-developed infant, and to supply that infant with the natural food for the natural period. Most of the flat-chested girls who survive their high-pressure education are incompetent to do this.72

If we wish woman to fulfill the task of motherhood fully she cannot possess a masculine brain. If the feminine abilities were developed to the same degree as those of the male, her material organs would suffer and we should have before us a repulsive and useless hybrid.73

[Educational competition with men will] hinder those who would have been the best mothers from becoming mothers at all, or, if it does not hinder them, more or less it will spoil them, and no training will enable themselves to do what their sons might have done. And the human race will have lost those who should have been her sons. Bacon, for want of a mother, will not be born.74

The first danger to women is over brainwork. It affects that part of her organism which is sacred to heredity. This danger is seen in the diminishing number of marriages. The postponement of marriage is very unfortunate in its influence upon civilization.75

It was a brave woman indeed who could face down that barrage
of guilt. These theorists also maintained that educated women suffered more often from sterility and early cessation of childbearing—so that even a healthy female college student or young mother whose reproductive organs appeared to be in good order had to fear the future biological backlash.

Far and away the most popular and influential of the tracts elaborating the physiological argument was Dr. Edward H. Clarke's *Sex in Education, or, a Fair Chance for the Girls*. Published in 1873, it rapidly went into seventeen editions. In Ann Arbor, which he had in mind when he wrote, two hundred copies sold in one day. As his title indicates, Clarke, a Harvard Medical School professor, exploited a popular tactic: He presents himself as an advocate of women, believing, he says, not in their inferiority but merely in their essential difference, and arguing that their distinct "organization" should be respected as "equal" by a distinct educational system. His approach is pseudo-Darwinian, citing the declining ratio of children under fifteen to women between fifteen and fifty. "Our modern ways of education," he asserts, "provide for the non-survival of the fittest." Describing the notorious unhealthiness of educated American girls in contrast to their hardy European sisters, he warns that they "will give birth to a feeble race, not of women only, but," more's the horror, "of men as well."

Fundamental to his argument is an almost hysterical fear of androgyny, of any blurring of sexual distinctions. The "masculinized" woman is, again, the chief monster: "Such persons are analogous to the sexless class of termites." Like those of his contemporaries, his analysis is more poetic than scientific, taking the physical as a metaphor for the intellectual: "Periodicity characterizes the female organization, and develops feminine force. Persistence characterizes the male organization, and develops masculine force." And equally basic is the conservation of energy idea: "The system never does two things well at the same time." The American girl, he continues, "yoked with a dictionary, and laboring with the catamenia [menstruation], is an exhibition of monstrous brain development and aborted ovarian development." Undergoing the physical and mental rigors of all-day, all-week, all-month classwork and recitation with her brothers, she is "deranging the tides of her organization." It is clear, he says, "that a girl upon whom Nature, for a limited period ... imposes so great a physiological task, will not have as much power left for the tasks of the school, as the boy of whom nature requires less for the tasks of the epoch." Consequently, "let her whole education and life be guided by the divine requirements of her system." Otherwise, Nature's revenge will be cruel: "There have been instances, and I have seen such, of
females in whom the special mechanism we are speaking of [the ovaries] remained germinal, — undeveloped. It seemed to have been aborted. They graduated from school or college excellent scholars, but with undeveloped ovaries. Later they married, and were sterile.”

To drive home his warning, Clarke has at his command a catalogue of “numberless pale, weak, neuralgic, dyspeptic, hysterical, menorrhagic, dysmenorrheic girls and women, that are living truth of this brief monograph.” And he trots them out for his readers, a series of case studies that begins to read like “Little Orphan Annie,” a litany of horror stories to frighten the foolhardy. There is Miss A, plagued during her college career by St. Vitus’ Dance, whom no number of European rest cures could help. “She . . . graduated at nineteen, the first scholar, and an invalid.” Married, she improved in health, but “so far, is without children.” Miss D entered Vassar at fourteen and showed evidence of reproductive retardation: “Confirmatory proof of such an arrest was found in examining her breast, where the milliner had supplied the organs Nature should have grown.” Particularly horrifying, though for reasons Clarke does not suspect, is the case of Miss E, daughter of prominent intellectual parents: “At the age of twenty-one she might have been presented to the public, on Commencement Day, by the president of Vassar College or of Antioch College or of Michigan University, as the wished-for result of American liberal female education. Just at this time, however, the catamenial function began to show signs of failure of power.” Along with dysmenorrhea and headache, “vagaries and forebodings and despondent feelings began to crop out. . . . I was finally obliged to consign her to an asylum.” And finally there is Miss F: “With the ending of her school life . . . there commenced, without obvious cause, a long period of invalidism.”

The truly sad aspect of reading Clarke’s case histories through modern eyes is how often he describes symptoms of depression which recent scholarship on women’s psychology clearly explains. Often his patients seem to have fallen into depression after graduation—a simple enough phenomenon to diagnose even from a lay person’s point of view when one considers the frustration and futility these women must have faced upon completing their educations only to find themselves without work to do, facing a future enclosed in the female sphere.

The shrillness of Clarke’s argument is explained by his consciousness of his opposition, which he often insults outright: Many of those who argue women’s capacity for male work, he says, “are of those who, having passed middle life without the symmetry and development that maternity gives, have drifted into the hermaphroditic condition that sometimes accompanies spinsterdom.” Others are merely ignorant, like
the president of Iowa State College, who reported of his coeducational institution, "The moral and religious influences attending the arrangement have been most happy." Yes," says Clarke, "the president reports happy moral and religious results of the experiment, but leaves us ignorant of its physiological results." His response reminds us that the physiological case against coeducation was designed to be unanswerable by the lay person.

However, it was answered—vociferously. While Clarke's book had enormous currency, it also elicited great anger, drawing into the fray men and women who might not otherwise have joined in. Lucinda Stone reported that women had often said to her, "I believe in educating women to be physicians since I have read that book, if I never did before"—a reaction Clarke had perhaps not banked on. Mrs. Stone contributed a chapter to a volume edited by Anna Brackett and entitled The Education of American Girls. Appearing in 1874, it was a direct response to Clarke. It is a most rational and wise book, in which it is clear from the start that the authors have got Clarke's number. "At first," editor Brackett explains, "it was asserted that woman was not equal, mentally, to the thorough mastering of the higher branches of study. Having been driven from that position by the indisputable evidence of percentages on written examinations, they have taken up their new position with the assertion that women are not able physically to pursue a thorough and complete course of study." Dr. Mary Putnam Jacobi strikes a similar note: "it is inevitable that the old doctrine of the mental inferiority of women should be defended, if at all, on a new basis; a basis organic, structural, physiological, hence incontrovertible...." Jacobi discerns an interesting contradiction in the historical opposition to women's education: "Formerly, they were denied the privileges of an intellectual education, on the ground that their natures were too exclusively animal to require it. To-day, the same education is still withheld, but on the new plea that their animal nature is too imperfectly developed to enable them to avail themselves of it." Jacobi, whose medical response to Clarke strikes a modern reader as wonderfully healthy and sensible by comparison, directly contradicts him in an analysis with which any modern practitioner would agree: "It is, in fact, a matter of common observation, that hysterical and anemic women, in whom disordered menstruation is most frequently observed, are conspicuously destitute of habits implying either cerebral or spinal activity—that is, they neither think much, nor take much physical exercise." In other words, Clarke's cure is the very source of the disease. Caroline Dall cleverly uses the conservation principle to
controvert Clarke: “the impending maidenhood sometimes makes such heavy draughts upon the circulation, that a girl’s real safety is found in steady study or persistent manual labor; the diversion of blood to the brain or muscle relieving the more sensitive growing organs.”99 Edna D. Cheney, in a chapter modestly entitled “A Mother’s Thought,” diagnoses the almost epidemic phenomenon of female invalidism most wisely: “I believe that more young women sink into invalidism, or die prematurely, from the want of adequate thorough mental training, than from any other physical or mental cause.”100 And Lucinda Stone concurs, speaking from her years of teaching: “that it was eating of the fruit of the tree of knowledge—‘persistent brainwork’ even—that furnished Dr. Clarke’s cases . . . an experience of teaching extending over forty years would forbid me to believe. . . . [S]ome sad cases of invalidism . . . I have known . . . where diseases may quite as probably have been induced by soul-loneliness—intellectual starvation—as by the brain-work which, in his cases, he assumes to be the cause.”101 Brackett simply finds the brain-uterus competition illogical: “To God, the brain of a woman is as precious as the ovary and uterus, and as he did not make it impossible for her to think clearly when the uterus is in a congested state, so, reasoning analogically from the knowledge we have of him, no more did he design that the uterus should not be capable of healthy and normal action while the brain is occupied with a regular amount of exercise.”102 Dall laments the general inability of women to respond professionally to one who describes the female reproductive system as an alien, mysterious organism: “when women and mothers come to utter words of the same scientific weight on this subject, their testimony will differ entirely from that of the leading physicians who now hold the public ear.”103 One wonders how many women Clarke did inadvertently send to medical school.

Various of his other premises come under attack, such as his assumption that coeducation is an imitation of a male model: “Do sisters ‘imitate brothers in persistent work everywhere?’ Nay, it is not the brothers whom they imitate, but their own steadfast, God-implanted instincts, which they thus attempt to work out.”104 And as for his romantic description of the protection of women in oriental cultures, Lucinda Stone could comment from her experience in the Middle East: “Most Eastern women that I saw, exemplified the ‘Oriental care of woman’s organization’ by abandoning their own to a mere animal vegetation.”105 Apart from disparagement of Clarke, another theme of Education of American Girls, shared widely by nineteenth-century feminists, is that
the traditional debilities of women, the sources of cultural stereotypes, were in fact products of nurture, not nature, and that education was the corrective for those very weaknesses which opponents of women's education cited. Says Mary Beedy of female emotionalism: "The exercise of the intellectual powers is the best means of preventing and countering an undue development of the emotional nature. The extravagances of imagination and feeling, engendered in an idle brain, have much to do with the ill-health of girls." Regarding the American girl's tendency to solipsism and triviality, Brackett asks, "Ought she not to have been educated into so wide a horizon of thought that she herself, and her affairs, her loves, and hates, should not loom up before her in such disproportionate size? A woman is to live in her affections? But what if her affections have been outraged, betrayed, or crushed? ... Our American girls will not be less strong in their affections if we educate them into thought and knowledge, as well as into emotion and blind belief." Women's ineptness at business, she argues, is a clear product of lack of training: "whenever women have received a thorough business training, these charming and bewildering feminine characteristics, which render them only a source of confusion, are not found."

The authors give close attention to the impact of education upon what were considered the positive traits of True Womanhood. In answer to the charge that education destroyed modesty, Brackett says, "When our women are better educated, there will be less prudery and more real modesty." Along with Beecher, she argues that education strengthens women's domestic roles: "The power of independent thinking, without which there can be no judgment, and which alone frees the soul, the real mother must have, and our girls should be most carefully educated into it." But female helplessness, at once cherished and ridiculed by the dominant culture, she regards as a dangerous debility, undermining a mother's ability to do her job. She offers the picture of the uneducated, unworldly widow, "looking around stunned and helpless ... unable to do anything for herself or for her children." Childlikeness was one attribute of the True Woman whose time was past: "Babies and half-educated children are very pretty to play with, interesting to watch, and delightful to care for, but when they are married and have children ... they appear in a somewhat different aspect." Cheney similarly insists on a closer examination of the ideal: "It hardly strengthens a woman, to be told that women are more angelic by nature, more amiable, more religious, and more holy than men, when she is suffering from excessive nervous irritibility, from neglected solitude, from want of employment suited to her feeble powers, or from the unused energies of mind and body which are devouring her day by day— to
be called an angel, when she is only a drudge, is not consoling.” Clarke had painted a picture of woman as being at constant war within herself. “If, in place of this conclusion,” says Adelia Johnston, “against which all a woman’s instincts rebel, we may truthfully teach her that there is no antagonism between her body and her brain, and that, for the good of the race, she ought to develop both, we remove all stumbling blocks from her way, we lighten her burdens, we make her brave to endure, because our teachings correspond with her preconceived ideas of justice and benevolence.” But perhaps the best response to Clarke was that of an early Michigan alumna, Olive San Louie Andersen, in her novel An American Girl and Her Four Years in a Boys’ College: “Women have washed and baked, scrubbed, cried and prayed themselves into their graves for thousands of years, and no person has advised them not to work too hard; but just as soon as women are beginning to have a show in education, up starts your erudite doctor with his learned nonsense, embellished with scarecrow stories, trying to prove that woman’s complicated physical mechanism can’t stand any mental strain.”

Before and after Clarke, various other arguments emerged to combat the tide of reaction to educational developments in the West. The practical economic and logistical argument was persuasive: Coordinate female seminaries and colleges were too expensive and cumbersome to administer and govern. The renewed uproar about education and motherhood prompted a renewal of the old response that educated men required educated wives to raise educated children as true helpmates. Emily Davies, the great English pioneer in women’s education, founder of Girton College, commented, “It is, in fact, taken for granted, that though for women who have only themselves to think of, it may be a good thing to have some intellectual resources, for mothers there is nothing like good sound ignorance.” Many felt that seminary and even women’s college education was an inadequate remedy, as curricula and requirements remained different from or inferior to those of the male institutions which set standards. “A diploma from Michigan University is of much more value to a lady than one from any of the colleges for women,” wrote one advocate. A coeducational institution would offer women better trained professors and fairly universal standards and requirements, as well as practical training should she need or choose to work.

Some adherents regarded coeducation as more natural—nature was invoked frequently on both sides of the debate. It would create, they said, not only more understanding and realism between the sexes, but
a greater stimulus to study. And it represented, to many patriots, democracy in academic terms. Some even argued that coeducation would ameliorate undesirable extremes in gender-role development." Others, such as our friend Higginson, appealed to sheer logic: "What rational woman, we ask, can be convinced by the nonsense which is talked in ordinary society around her,—as, that it is right to admit girls to common schools, and equally right to exclude them from colleges ...." Emily Davies took a similar approach to the issue of the advanced work level required by male institutions: "Why should simple equations brighten [women's] intellects, but quadratic equations drive them into a lunatic asylum? Why should they be better for three books of Euclid, ... and 'stupified' by conic sections or trigonometry?"

The vocational argument was trickier. Edna Cheney, in Education of American Girls, conceded that the full coeducation she sought for women posed a problem "in our present social system, where it is still considered out of place for a lady to work for a living." And Brackett wrote, "If these girls had had real work for which they were responsible, and felt themselves able rationally to utilize the power of which they were blindly conscious, they would not be found today in the wards of asylums, or condemned to the luxurious couches on which they spend their 'inglorious days.' " But few were prepared to advocate outright the opening of all professions to women, though Emily Davies told the British Schools' Inquiry Commission that some professional outlets were necessary. Higginson used the example of Florence Nightingale, at that time fighting to professionalize nursing, in arguing for professional standards and training for women, as opposed to a sentimental reliance upon female qualities. Nightingale, he says, "did not merely carry to the Crimea a woman's heart, as her stock in trade, but she knew the alphabet of her profession better than the men around her." Early in the twentieth century, ex-president Angell wrote, "By common consent medicine and teaching are the two professions really open to women." Both were defended, as we have seen, on traditional grounds. By 1870 the feminization of teaching was simply a fact: Three out of five teachers were women. So a woman at the University of Michigan could always plan to teach, though the upper echelons—administration and college teaching—were firmly closed to her. A Massachusetts County School Superintendency was offered to a woman on these grounds: "As there is neither honor nor profit connected with this position, we see no reason why it should not be filled by a woman." Lucinda Stone would be instrumental in the
steady pressure that opened the Michigan faculty to women. As for medicine, the prejudices were thick. The medical faculty at Ann Arbor explained in a memo to the regents opposing the admission of women, that “woman is during a large fraction of each month a quasi-invalid, that her mental and moral manifestations are seriously perturbed at such times . . . that childbearing must incapacitate her during a large part of the period of utero gestation . . . and finally, that as child-bearing would be an insuperable obstacle in the way of a female physician, the danger would be that foeticide and infanticide, already alarmingly frequent, would become still more so.” In other words, we cannot have the sick treating the sick. However, in addition to the argument that woman was by nature self-sacrificial and attuned to suffering, there was a growing demand for female doctors; especially the gynecologist and accoucheur were thought to be more properly female than male. By 1870 there were 525 female M.D.s in the country—along with sixty-seven clergywomen but only five female lawyers. Medicine and law presented obstacles for women beyond access to training. The first female doctors in the U.S. and England both were driven to found women's infirmaries when no hospital would accept their services. And a law degree did not mean admission to the bar; in many places women could not plead in court.

Various progressive thinkers, understanding that the ageless debate on the relative merits of the sexes was impossibly skewed by circumstances, saw coeducation as the most important step toward disproving notions of female deficiency—or, at the very least, establishing grounds for a viable comparison. Higginson argued metaphorically, “If an extraordinary male gymnast can clear a height of ten feet with the aid of a springboard, it would be considered slightly absurd to ask a woman to leap eleven feet without one; yet this is precisely what society and the critics have always done. Training and wages and social approbation are very elastic springboards, and the whole course of history has seen these offered bounteously to one sex and as sedulously withheld from the other.” Caroline Dall put it most concisely: “What we claim is, that no one knows, as yet, what women are, or what they can do . . .”

But soon enough the reviews were in, providing the pro-coeducation camp with its most powerful ammunition. The Western colleges and universities were monitored assiduously, and throughout the last quarter of the century reports on the academic, social, and physical results of coeducation received widespread attention. With regard to academic competition, there was almost complete consensus. Dr. Mahan, first president of Oberlin and later president of Adrian College in Michigan, said that the proportion of men to women who failed to complete the
course of study at Oberlin was 2:1. President Angell reported from the University of Michigan, the other great focus of interest: "In elective courses, in which the men and women are represented in anything like equal numbers, a common verdict of instructors concerning their relative merits is that the women are on the average the better students. They seldom attain the eminence of the ablest men, but the ablest men are excessively rare."135

The question of lowered standards was answered succinctly by Dean Cooley of the University of Michigan Law School: "You are misinformed if you are told that the standard of admission is lowered by admitting women to the university. The tendency has been in the other direction."136 When consulted about the moral and social effects of the female presence, Presidents Finney of Oberlin and Mann of Antioch were guarded - both advised close supervision and moral leadership. Mann told the Michigan regents, "If, for instance, women students must be permitted in a city like yours to board promiscuously among the inhabitants, I should prefer that the young women of the age should lose the advantage of an education rather than incur the moral danger of obtaining it in that way."137

After thirty-four years of coeducation at Oberlin, President James H. Fairchild, who led the college from 1866 to 1889, addressed all the burning issues: "the strong and the weak scholars are equally distributed between the sexes.... A breaking down in health does not appear to be more frequent than with young men.... The education furnished is general, not professional, designed to fit men and women for any position of work to which they may properly be called." Additionally, he noted, most graduates did marry, and the daily association of the sexes tended to diminish foolish love affairs rather than nurture them. Oberlin had, he admitted, graduated some "distinguished lady lecturers" (he undoubtedly had Lucy Stone in mind), but thankfully they did not attribute their radicalism to Oberlin.138

The news on the biological front was equally heartening. Angell wrote, "Although it was a matter of prehistoric knowledge that women could work all day in the field, many learned persons predicted a speedy decline for the audacious young female who attempted to follow the same collegiate course as her brother. The young person referred to has, however, both in coeducational colleges and in colleges for women, generally insisted on the retention of oppressively good health."139 In fact, she "obstinately persisted in growing stronger with each year of study."140 In a reaction to Clarke which shows how seriously he was taken, the Association of Collegiate Alumnae undertook a nationwide survey in 1885 to ascertain the relative health of
college women and non-college women. The results, to Clarke's un- doubted chagrin, were that seventy-eight percent of the college-edu- cated respondents claimed good health, as opposed to only fifty percent of those who had not received post-secondary education. 141

Finally, Angell maintained, coeducation could not be compared on an equal basis to sex-segregated education, for it was a different organism altogether, grown in different soil for different uses: "If the life and spirit of Oxford or of Yale or of Harvard constitute one's sole standard of educational excellence, then the average coeducational institutions will indeed seem a desolate waste. If one's idea of social salvation for young women involves matrimony as its only god, and the chaperone as his prophet, then the coeducational regime must generally be condemned as a pagan system marking a barbarian stage of culture." 142 A frontier is an interesting concept, viewed at once as forward and backward, the boundary of the march of "civilization," and also its backwater. Thus was coeducation regarded in the east as both a barbarism and a radical novelty, heralding the demise of the deeply institutionalized conception of the female as an auxiliary of the male, inherently distinct in character and purpose. By 1875 the phe- nomenon was clearly not to be stopped; a domino effect was in motion. "One result is marked," wrote Anna Brackett; "from all sections of the country, women heretofore knowing each other only by reputation, or not at all, are being bound together by a common interest in a sense never before known, and unknown girls in Western colleges are beg- ging of women to plead for them that they not be deprived of their places. The result need not be feared. The irresistible force of the world movement cannot be permanently checked." 143

Statistics from the U.S. Commission of Education bear her out. In 1870, 11,000 women were enrolled in post-secondary institutions, receiving one in seven A.B. degrees. 5000 were in Normal Schools, 3000 in seminaries and academies offering college-level work, and 3000 more in degree-granting colleges and universities. Of that last 3000, 600 attended the forty private coeducational colleges, 200 were spread among the eight coeducational state universities, and 2200 were in wom- en's colleges. 144 Three years later, 8141 women attended coeducational colleges or universities (5622 in preparatory courses; only 2519 in the "college course"). Of the ninety-seven schools which accounted for 7357 of that total number, five were in New England, eight in the Mid- Atlantic states, seventeen in the South—and sixty-seven in "the west." 145

Biennial statistics from the Office of Education show the great shift to coeducation in the decade from 1870 to 1880: In 1869-70, forty-one percent of the women students were in coeducational institutions, 58.9%
in women's colleges. Ten years later, the balance had shifted: 60.4% to 39.6%. In 1889-90 the figures were 70.1% to 29.9%; and in 1899-1900, 71.4% to 28.6%.

During the last three decades of the century, the total number of female college students grew from 11,000 to 85,000, from 21% of all students to 38.8%; but still in 1900 they represented only 2.8% of the total female population aged eighteen to twenty-one. From 1870 to 1890 coeducational institutions grew from 29% to 43% of the total; men's colleges shrank from 59% to 37%. Over the same period women's colleges grew from 12% to 20%. It came as a surprise to many to learn that men were entering coeducational schools at a more rapid rate than all-male institutions. But in 1890, only at Oberlin, 53% of whose students were female, did women comprise over one-third of the student body.

Toward the end of the century a reaction against coeducation set in across the country. But certain ineradicable precedents had been set. On the strength of the example of earlier institutions, important new ones, such as Leland Stanford University and the University of Chicago, opened coeducationally in the latter part of the century. One of the greatest accomplishments of the Western coeducational schools was the education of black women, who were accepted at state universities much more easily than at women's colleges, which were also much more costly. By 1890 there were only thirty black women with college degrees, though more had attended college for some period. Before 1899, Mt. Holyoke and Vassar had admitted one black student apiece, Wellesley and Radcliffe two apiece—and Oberlin fifty-five.

Despite statistics, the battle was never easy. Attitude, as always, lagged behind fact, and all those nameless women behind those faceless numbers may justly be regarded as heroic. Every one of them had something to prove every day of her life. As one of their champions wrote in 1874, "The old Chinese wall of prejudice, surrounding the subject of women's education, from which there are so many outcomes, is not broken down yet. We only learn how strong it is when we come to some new point in the siege or defense. Sermons that have been preached at learned women, and jokes perpetrated at their expense, are still issued in modernized editions, and scare and sting as of yore. It is quite curious to note how the style changes, but the thought remains the same."

Her name was Lucinda Hinsdale Stone. Schooled from infancy in the frustration and bitterness of opportunity denied, scarred in adolescence by the "scare and sting" of privilege and prejudice, she seized her chance to come west, to a small village in Western Michigan which for her was no backwater—but truly the New World.
Chapter II

“Heretic”:
Lucinda Hinsdale Stone

Gail B. Griffin
Lucinda Hinsdale Stone
during the Kalamazoo College years
"Alma Mater" was the name they reserved not for the school but for her. Twenty-two years after her departure from the college, amid protests, striking students, innuendo, and threat, her former pupils met again in Kalamazoo to honor her and her husband, and the encomia poured forth: "what love of the true and beautiful there is in me, I know I owe to you, in great measure..." I decided to begin reading about Lucinda Hinsdale Stone with the volume memorializing that occasion—a good and bad decision. To see her through the eyes of her students is, in one sense, to see the truest picture of her, for she defined herself first and always as a teacher, and it was these old Kalamazoo pupils whose loyalty and enduring love solaced her to the end of her long life, in some way atoning for the bitter memory of her exile from the college, vivid to the day she died. But in another sense, the tributes of former students obscure the picture with clouds of glory. A biographer searches through the paeans to find any trace of the living woman whose influence spread from her small college outward, further west, back east, into the conclaves where history was being made, even across the oceans.

So, as I read the "reunion book," it helped to look up occasionally and rest my eyes on the portrait in the Kalamazoo College collection. It presents her as she was at the height of her service to the college: a handsome woman of early middle age, shining dark hair in the loose ringlets of the day, full mouth turning in the hint of a smile which is gentle but might also be the slightest bit ironic. The dark eyes are utterly direct, expecting the truth and giving it. The face is solid and strong, the face of one who should lead and will inspire, one who is not easily fooled or defeated. It is a good portrait of a fine face, whose power takes one slightly aback. One imagines her effect upon people on first meeting.

She is often spoken of as an exceptional woman—exceptional to the usual rules of womanhood as the nineteenth century defined it; exceptional in her determination, her energy, her education, her courage, the loyalty she could command, the diversity and significance of her
projects through the eighty-six years of her life. The portrait testifies
to the truth of all this. Yet it is important to qualify the idea of Lucinda
Stone as a splended anomaly. For she was also very much—to borrow
the title of an encyclopedia in which her friend Mary Livermore in­
cluded her—a Woman of the Century. Her ambitious life and her
influential personality are lenses in which converge many of the major
social, cultural, and intellectual impulses that shaped the Woman's
Century. When she died, in the opening months of the new century,
the eulogies proliferated around the state of Michigan, but perhaps
most apt was a remark by Lucy Andrews of Three Rivers' Twentieth
Century Club: “She was one of the best of the Nineteenth Century....”

I

“The blood of both martyrs and heretics runs in my veins,” she
wrote. The first American Hinsdale, Robert, was descended from the
French Hinsdals, who probably formed part of the Huguenot flight
to England. Robert settled at Dedham, Massachusetts, where he mar­
rried Ann Woodward and helped to found the first church on Novem­
ber 8, 1638. Lucinda Stone spoke of him as the first man to propose
free schools in the New World. He was killed by Native American
forces at the battle of Bloody Brook on September 18, 1675, along with
two of his sons, including Barnabas, Lucinda's great-great grandfather.
Barnabas and his wife, Sarah White Taylor, were the parents of Isaac,
who settled with his wife, Lydia Loomis, at West Hartford in 1715 and
raised one of the characteristically large Hinsdale families. The third
child was Joseph, Lucinda's grandfather, born August 9, 1720. At
twenty-six Joseph married Elizabeth Kellogg and settled at Canaan,
Connecticut, where Elizabeth spent the next twenty-two years of her life
bearing children. The ninth of the eleven was Aaron, Lucinda's father,
born March 25, 1764. In his late seventies Joseph moved the family
to Hinesburg, Vermont (spelled “Hinesborough” or “Hinesburgh”
until the 1870's), where he died on December 30, 1800. At about that
time his son Aaron married Lucinda Mitchell.

Through both paternal and maternal lines Lucinda Stone was con­
nected to the New England reform movements of her day. The Deer­
field, Massachusetts, branch of the Hinsdales produced two radicals
whose spirits merged in Lucinda. One was Elihu Burritt, the abolitionist
and pacifist, and the other was the daughter of Aaron's cousin Lydia
Hinsdale Hart: Emma Hard Willard, whose Female Seminary at Troy,
New York, opened its doors in 1821 as the first endowed institution for
the education of women.

Lucinda Mitchell, born September 4, 1770, was a direct descendant
of Anne Hutchinson, of whose rebel blood Lucinda Stone was extremely proud: "I used to say when a child that Roger Williams, who gave shelter and protection to my kinswoman, Anne Hutchinson, in her banishment, was the first man I should ask to see when I got to heaven." Late in her life Lucinda was to write, for the entertainment of one of her clubs, a lengthy "letter" from Hutchinson, in which she assumes the identity of her famous forebear and describes American colonial history from the point of view of one who paid heavily for subverting its patriarchal structures. More immediately she was related on her mother's side to Maria Mitchell, professor of astronomy at Vassar, a mild-mannered Quaker who discovered her comet at the age of twenty-eight, was the first woman admitted to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences the next year, and in 1850, sponsored by Louis Agassiz, became the first woman elected to the Association for the Advancement of Science. Later in her life, in 1873, she founded the Association for the Advancement of Women, writing, "I wish we could give to every woman who has a novel theory dear to her soul for the improvement of the world, a chance to work out her theory in real life"—a sentiment her cousin Lucinda would have applauded.

Hinesburg, Vermont: "a good town, as Daniel Webster said, 'to emigrate from,' and a town richer in good influences to bear with one to any part of the world; for it was situated nearly midway between the state's two Colleges, Burlington and Middlebury, from which it distinctly felt the intellectual breezes. . . ." Lucinda Stone, one of the emigrants, thus looked back over the years to Hinesburg, seeing in it something of the spirit which sent countless New Englanders west to frontier towns like Kalamazoo, carrying with them their northeastern toughness and resiliency, as well as their belief in the power of education: "I do not understand just what the influence is, what it is that Vermont hills and mountains whisper to her children, but there has ever been among them some subtle, gentle, inspiring encouragement to study, a promise of help to those who would help themselves,—who would if they must make their own way through difficulties of study or business." When Lucinda Hinsdale was born, the town numbered about thirteen hundred people and was considered the most progressive in the state. The minister of the Baptist Church somewhat later (1833) was William A. Arthur, father of President Chester A. Arthur, who spend nine years of his boyhood there.

Aaron Hinsdale owned a water-powered woolen mill on some 260 acres near the town, including seventy acres of cedar swamp. In their home on the old north-south coach road between Burlington and
Middlebury, he and Lucinda Mitchell began, in 1792, a family which, consonant with tradition, grew over twenty-two years to twelve children, three boys and nine girls: Mitchell, Cynthia, Jerusha, Betsey, Myron, Sophia, Charles, Louisa, Sarah, Nancy, Mary—and Lucinda, the last, born September 30, 1814. "As a child I grew up very much by myself," she wrote. "My mother had a world to do; my sisters were all paired off with each other, and I think I was not a very welcome child. I do not wonder at it because my mother already had eleven children, and my older sisters did not want the care of another child. I felt when I was very young that I was in the way, and that it was a trouble to take care of me. I used sometimes to wish that I might die, because I thought nobody loved me; but this drove me to my books, and I lived with my books as far back as I can remember."12 Like many another bright, lonely child, she found in reading an alternate reality: "The characters in books early became real friends to me, as living as living friends."13 One wonders if this sense of aloneness and unwantedness worked itself out in adult life in her intensely maternal feeling for her students, especially the girls.

As a child Lucinda rose in the dark to sit on the doorstep and watch the sun rise over Camel's Hump, wondering if it dropped into Lake Champlain to the west every evening.14 From this ritual grew the habit of extremely early rising that stayed with her for life. Among the burr oaks of Kalamazoo, she never quite lost her love for the scenery of her childhood, especially the maples "that used to entitle each one of us to 'our own' sugar tree in the spring and that were, in the autumn, such a glory that I used to wonder if the trees of Paradise could be more wondrously beautiful than these."15 Overlooked in the bustle of the household, the little Lucinda relied upon her books and her two best friends, Spot, a black-and-white cat whom she was permitted to feed fresh milk foam in a small saucer-like depression on the stone hearth, and Ponto, the dog. Ponto had saved from drowning the son of one of her father's mill hands, who proceeded to try to sell him. Outraged by such a breach of loyalty, Aaron Hinsdale bought Ponto and fired the workman.16 One legacy from her father was a love of animals for which she became famous.

Before his youngest child's second birthday, Aaron Hinsdale was dead, on April 29, 1816. Lucinda's adult memories of him were few and perhaps shaded in by her older siblings. She recalled that he was kind to the poor and 'adopted' several orphan children. And she traced in part to him her own religious iconoclasm, for his own distaste for the orthodoxy of the local Congregational Church, especially the doctrine of hell, alienated him from it.17 In light of her own involvement with
Lucinda Hinsdale Stone 37

Unitarianism during the last half of her life, she surmised that he was probably a Unitarian in spirit. Most clearly she remembered his death, with that sensitivity of children to its presence in the house: "I remember his sickness, and of being carried on the shoulder of some person, through a dark entry between the parlor of our house... and the room where he was sick.—I think dying. I remember the fear that possessed me as I went through that dark entry. I can remember the high posts and the curtains around the top of the bed. I remember, too, the black coffin in the parlor, at the funeral."18 Late in her life, because of her involvement with the Kalamazoo DAR chapter that came to bear her name, she attempted to discover whether he had fought in the War of Independence: "My father must have been in the American Revolution, for one of the things I remember, as far back as I can remember anything, is a sword that always hung in a closet where I saw it every day, and was told that it was the one my father bore, when a very young man, in the battles for American Independence."18A

Aaron Hinsdale's death left his wife with a huge family and control of the mill. We can only conjecture the weary despair of the widow faced with keeping a business afloat and raising a family whose youngest was still almost an infant. The little girl's loneliness deepened. "I remember once of being sick, and I drew up in a low chair near the great kitchen fire-place. I can recall bending over the ashes of the decayed fire, the chills running over me, and wishing I had someone to pet me and ask how I felt, as I had seen the mothers of some of my playmates do; and I thought I would just as soon die as not." At least in retrospect, however, she was able to see past the bitterness to the circumstances which prevented her mother from filling her emotional needs: "My mother had so much work to do that she had very little time to pet me or talk to me."19 As she matured, the full picture of her mother's life grew clearer, and she was permanently, deeply marked by the image of the woman alone, struggling. Perhaps more than anything else, it was this image which determined the direction of the daughter who bore her mother's name. As a girl, Lucinda Mitchell had nursed her invalid brother, step-brothers, and step-sisters, moving prematurely into the maternal role that devoured her life. Her youngest daughter's most potent memory concerns her mother's awareness of what her own life might have been: "I have seen her cry oftener of regret for lack of early advantages than for anything else in the world, and she was willing to make any sacrifice for the sake of the education of her own children."20 She spoke of her mother as "the most omnivorous reader she ever knew,"21 and the house was always full of books, if low on other staples.22 Her mother spoke openly of
the "wrong done to the girls of her time. . . . Indeed she could never speak of it without tears and with expressing her faith that if God was good and just, as she believed he was, a better time would come for women, though she might not live to see it."23

That Lucinda moved rapidly and readily toward a fulfillment of her mother's lost dreams was perhaps in part due to her position in the family: With so many "mothers" taking care of domestic duties, the pressure on her was lessened. She recalled a sister pushing her away from the ironing board, telling her, "You are good for nothing; you never will be."24 Well—not for ironing, anyway. Instead she thrived on the family's encouragement of reading: "Ours was a large family and we were rather ahead of any of our neighbors in books and newspapers. As early a picture as I can recollect of myself is of a little girl less than five years old, being sent out to get the weekly newspaper from the paper carrier who handed it down from his saddle-bags, which he carried on horseback, and my mother, in summer, always sent me back again with a mug of ginger or root beer, a voluntary offering of gratitude or gladness for the newspaper, of which I believe she read every word, advertisements and all, and when the paper was read by our family, I was always sent to carry it first to the neighbor that thought most of reading the religious weekly newspaper, and when it came home I was sent again on the same errand."25

At three she was sent to the district school. "There were no kindergartens then, and children were sent to school to keep them out of the way."26 At some point her sister Sophia apparently taught there. The first book Lucinda remembered reading was Pilgrim's Progress. Her family as well as her friends laughed at her precociousness. "I felt hurt a great many times about being laughed at when I attempted to tell them what I had gathered from my books."27 Sadly, her father's religious unorthodoxy left her open to a brand of terrorism from the Hinesburg elect, notably one Deacon Steel, which exacerbated her alienation and was perhaps the germ of her own lifelong abhorrence of puritanism and dogma: "I was told many times before I was ten years old that my father had gone to hell, and it was one of the agonies of my childhood that I believed this to be true. I have lain awake many a night, because I saw those pictures of a flaming hell and my father tossing in its flames. I remember, as though it were yesterday, of crying all the way home from school because other fathers came to bring their children home of a cold, snowy night, and I had no father to come for me—he was in hell. . . . An early question with me was, why my father had been sent to hell. I feared to ask my mother, thinking it would pain her greatly to tell me."28
Interestingly, she connected her father's fate with the works of Thomas Paine in his desk, which, though forbidden, she perused thoroughly. He became her earliest philosopher and hero. "He was the first man ... to propose incorporation in our constitution from the beginning, the rights of women to full citizenship. He said sex could not separate taxation and representation; that it was absurd to try to found a free government on any other principle." Paine's anti-slavery sentiments also planted important seeds in her brain. Her siblings were avid readers, and her eldest brother, Mitchell, gave her a love of Robert Burns which lasted through her life. Mitchell, a lawyer, was master of the local Masonic lodge in 1823 and was elected the next year to the state legislature. He seems to have become something of a father to his littlest sister.

At thirteen Lucinda entered the brand-new Hinesburg Academy, two miles from her home. Part of the great seminary movement which defined American secondary education between 1750 and 1850, Hinesburg was noted for its superior instruction. A separate preparatory curriculum was available to university-bound young men, but sometimes the young ladies were permitted to enter these classes. By 1836 the academy had fifty-two female students and forty-three male. Lucinda studied at Hinesburg for two years and suddenly found herself launched precipitously into her life's work when she was asked, at fifteen, to teach a summer school some seven or eight miles from her home, boarding with local residents. Lonely and homesick, she nevertheless learned another lesson in her evolving religious relativism: She discovered that Congregationalist Hinesburg's prejudice against Methodists was by no means universal, and that irregular church attendance did not necessarily betoken spiritual bankruptcy or poverty of character.

At some point around this time in her adolescence, Lucinda transferred to Mrs. Cook's Female Seminary in Middlebury. Immediately her knowledge of French, mastered under a Hinesburg teacher who had studied in France, made her valuable as a part-time teacher as well as student. In addition, she taught geometry. But she was soon disenchanted with what seemed, to her, instruction inferior to Hinesburg's. She also found the strictly "female curriculum" limiting, and the contrast served to solidify the beginnings of a real understanding of the poverty of women's education and a commitment to the idea of coeducation. "When I went from [Hinesburg] for a time to a ladies' seminary, esteemed as good as any in the state, I felt I knew things in a different way from that in which the seminary girls knew them. I had been better, more thoroughly and broadly taught in our academy with young men and young women in the same classes." So she went
home and resumed her studies there.

She later recalled considering, at this point, either Mary Lyon's Mt. Holyoke Female Seminary or her kinswoman Emma Willard's Troy Female Seminary. But since Mt. Holyoke did not open until 1837, when Lucinda was twenty-three and had left Hinesburg, this aspiration would have been impossible, unless somehow word of the early plans had reached her. Probably the discrepancy is attributable to a confusion of memory in Mrs. Stone's later years. In any case, she was sure that her minister appealed to her sense of loyalty, pressing her to stay at Hinesburg, which was trying to establish itself as an institution. She agreed, fueled by his encouragement to enter the preparatory classes and study the Greek and Latin that she loved along with the young men who could anticipate a college education. "My own course," she remembered, "was precisely that of the young men in every study, though Greek, to which I was persuaded by my minister, led me through a cruel martyrdom of jokes from my companions. Repeating at school what their mothers said at home, they even then satirized me with proposals to get up petitions to open the doors of our State University to girls 'who wanted to be men.' I felt these jokes so keenly that at first I pursued my study of Greek covertly, reciting out of school. But, cheered by my minister's encouragement, I lived down jokes, and went into the class with the young men, kept up with them, and continued the study until they went to college, and beyond . . . ." Covert her study truly was: "I used to shade my windows at night, I well recollect a great portfolio that I had, that I stood up for a shade, to prevent people from seeing my light." Lucinda Hinsdale's unaccountable academic bent, combined with the oppressive intimacy of a small town, reinforced her sense, carried from infancy, that she was somehow always to be an outsider.

But the Hinesburg days awakened the two powerful forces which would shape the rest of her life. The first, engendered by the Hinesburg and Middlebury experiences and shared by countless women throughout the nation who would lead the educational reforms later in the century, was "an irrepressible desire for the higher, more thorough, college education for women, which should cure the affectation and pettiness of school girls,—in short, give them something worthy to live for and to do for others." The second developed during her last years at Hinesburg, when the academy's principal was a young man named James Stone, four years her senior. "It was very evident to the other students," said another pupil of those days who afterwards moved to Michigan, "that Mr. Stone was much attracted to Miss Hinsdale."
Uriah and Hepzibeth Stone came to Piermont, New Hampshire, around 1763. Their son Simon Jeness Stone and his wife, Mary, became parents of James Andrus Blinn Stone on October 28, 1810. He lived in Piermont to the age of fifteen, when he left for the academy at Royalton, Vermont, to be "fitted for college." At twenty he entered Middlebury, and upon graduating with higher honors in 1834 came to Hinesburg Academy. An open-faced, genial young man of twenty-four, he had been nurtured in the tradition of New England independence of conscience and had come to religious maturity during the so-called Second Great Awakening, the evangelical impulse which swept the Eastern churches in the first quarter of the century, engendering the social reform movements of the thirties, forties, and fifties. A fine scholar and linguist, he counted Sanskrit among his accomplishments. He was intensely proud of the teachers in his lineage, telling his assembled ex-students sixty years later, "To teach others is a great and responsible work, it is a permanent one, especially when we remember how much unconscious tuition there is, not laid down in the curriculum but sure to be imparted and received." He had himself been powerfully influenced by his teacher Ralph Thatcher, "[a] born teacher, enthusiastic, and apt to excite enthusiasm in others," who "gave a new bias and direction to the souls of not a few of us." These notions of the charismatic teacher and the personal element in education were to become the distinguishing features of the Stones' leadership at Kalamazoo College.

It is not difficult to understand the mutual attraction which developed between teacher and pupil at Hinesburg Academy in 1834. The fresh young principal, thoughtful, progressive in spirit, full of zeal and idealism, committed to teaching as the most honorable of professions, sets his honest, gentle eyes upon the graceful, intelligent face of the infamous Miss Hinsdale, who quietly tolerates ridicule and loneliness for the sake of an education, keeping pace easily with the boys in his classes. Perhaps the price she is willing to pay to learn Greek, his favorite subject, is among her initial attractions. In her experience as a teacher, she comprehends his dedication. She perhaps surprises him with her broad-mindedness, her determination, her reserve of anger. Her tastes are wider, more eclectic than his; she is, probably somewhat to his shock, a great novel reader, while he, though he tries to keep current, is happier with Homer on the windy plains of Troy. "I believe," said a student, "he never enjoyed a modern novel." She challenges and excites him in her intelligence and independence. He has not so much found the perfect mate as truly met his match.
She, for her part, has a more complicated decision to make. For a nineteenth-century girl, the choice of a husband has all the intricacy of a career choice, for her options are, essentially, bounded by his. For a young woman like Lucinda Hinsdale, with ambitions, social commitments, a hungry spirit demanding more than the world allows to a girl, a husband must be truly an exceptional man. In James Stone she finds answered her passion for teaching and learning, her love of classics, her emerging social conscience, especially where the increasingly urgent question of slavery is concerned. Her intellectual ambition and resulting convictions about the suppression of women, she finds, are neither laughed at nor patronized, but understood and shared. Her intellectual adventurousness and antipathy for orthodoxy and narrowness meet his own. “I used to teach you,” he said in 1885 to his former students, “that there are many and conflicting theories in mental science, in ethics, in political economy, in geology and in art.”

To her life he brings sympathy, gentleness, and the generous, sometimes sly humor for which his students love him. He is “a noble, whole-souled, clear-headed, broad man, without a particle of meanness or malice in his composition.” He represents the best of her times, a world larger, more challenging, less small-minded than Hinesburg. In him she sees not only a magnetic personality but a likely and livable life for herself, and a compelling way out.

In 1836, probably with some understanding between them, they went separate ways, he to the Andover Theological Seminary, she to Burlington Academy, which had written to Hinesburg for a teacher “educated by a man.” Saying goodbye to some of her male classmates who were bound for college, she blurted out, “Oh, I wish I could go to college!” and the howls of derision started up again. “I doubt if I ever cried so much over any other faux pas that I ever made, or felt so hurt by the innocent expression of any wish. But this remembrance was strong incentive in working to make Kalamazoo College co-educational, and in seeking to pry open the doors of the University of Michigan to women students.”

At Andover, James Stone pursued his tendency to nonconformity which was yet another strong bond between the two. At a Congregationalist institution, he joined the Baptist Church. Rapidly his inherent opposition to slavery crystallized as he moved closer to the current of abolitionism. In Boston he heard the famed abolitionist orators Wendell Phillips and William Lloyd Garrison, at a time when mobs were driving them through the streets. Stone’s conviction became complete: “no man can believe in the fatherhood of God, the brother-
hood of man, accept Christ's teaching in the Sermon on the Mount, and believe in the righteousness of slavery at the same time."44

Meanwhile, Lucinda Hinsdale did not last long at Burlington, accepting the offer of a governess' post on a plantation in Natchez, Mississippi, perhaps out of a desire to witness slavery first-hand. In any case, what met her upon her arrival in Natchez confirmed her worst visions and burned into her memory an image that was to last for life. Driving to the plantation, she passed a slave auction: "A girl stood upon the block. The auctioneer was showing off her good points, making her open her mouth to show her teeth, use her limbs in various antics (as he would show off a young colt) to test her agility, while he chuckled, wheedled, scolded, and threatened, by turns, to make her do her very best. It seems strange to me now," she wrote as an old woman, "that I could have lived through such a scene, but I am not the same person or being now as then, else I could not have borne it . . . . To me there can be no greater proof of the doctrine of evolution and the 'Ascent of Man' than to contrast the impressions produced upon me then, by such scenes as I was compelled to witness, with the effect they would have upon me at the present time."45 For three years she lived plantation life, wondering at the debasement of the slaves and the dehumanizing effects of this environment upon the children she was trying to teach. Among her Natchez acquaintances was Varina Howell, later Mrs. Jefferson Davis.

The spring of 1840 found her suddenly close to the place where she would do most of her life's work: in Grand Rapids, Michigan, with her next-oldest sister Mary, now Mrs. Walker. Brother Mitchell and his wife, a Hinesburg girl named Dorothy Weed, had moved in 1834 to Gull Prairie, near Kalamazoo, later purchasing a farm on Portage Street. James Stone had meanwhile left Andover the preceding year and had taken a ministry at Gloucester, Massachusetts. Communication must have been rapid, for he arrived in Grand Rapids and on June 10, 1840, they were married by the Reverend James Ballard. Before heading back east, they travelled south to the nine-year-old village of Kalamazoo to visit Mitchell and family. The local Baptists invited James to give the Sunday sermon in their church on South Street. His reminiscence of this evening is practically the only available glimpse of the newlyweds: "I was pleased with the Assembly of Kalamazoo Pioneers, clad as they were in the well-saved costumes of the different sections of the country from which they had emigrated, but I noticed that they were continually turning their eyes away from the preacher, so redolent with the aroma of old Andover, and fixing them upon a young bride who had received no formal introduction, but who sat among her friends in one
of the Hinsdale pews, and was very attentive to the sermon, for she had
never before heard that man preach. I could not find it in my heart to
blame the audience on this occasion for exalting the pew at the expense
of the pulpit. And now, when forty-five years have passed, I still think
their preference was not only a natural one but justifiable.”46

The Stones travelled back to Gloucester, where their first child,
Clement Walker Stone, was born on May 30, 1841. Soon thereafter
they moved to Newton, where James was called to fill a sabbatical
vacancy as Professor of Biblical Literature and Interpretation at the
Theological Seminary. During this time he also edited a Baptist mis-
sionary publication in Boston, the first phase of a secondary career
in journalism which he would take up again in Michigan. The Baptists
there had not forgotten him, and in May of 1843, James and Lucinda
Stone, she pregnant with their second child, went west again, this time
for good.

II

“Then it was not boasting,” Lucinda Stone recalled in 1894, “to
openly call this the most beautiful town for situation in the State of
Michigan. It was certainly one of the most promising for future distinc-
tion of any of the uprising villages . . . ”47

Kalamazoo, founded in 1831 as Bronson, took its new name five years
later. In 1833 fifteen families resided there; by the time the Stones ar-
rived the population had grown to fifteen hundred. The beginnings of
social stratification were in evidence, Mrs. Stone later recalled, the lead-
ing families bearing names now imprinted on the local geography: Bur-
dick, Stuart, Comstock, Upjohn. Mrs. Comstock was a niece of James
Fenimore Cooper, whose “Oak Openings” was set in Kalamazoo.48 The
village’s business district lay almost completely east of what is now
Burdick Street; there were four taverns, a few brick houses, and no
sidewalks. The Stones would hear the first whistle at the Michigan
Central Station three years after their arrival. They found a house in
what is now the 200 block of West Michigan, on the north side. “It was
indeed almost impossible for years,” Lucinda Stone wrote, “to convince
our eastern friends that so far west any of the amenities of civilization
exist.”49 But for her and her husband, the Michigan frontier represen-
ted freedom—from the barbarities of the South, from the constrictions
of the East, from the limitations upon talent and imagination. For Mrs.
Stone in particular, as for many other illustrious women of her day, the
West was the only place big enough to allow her to breathe and grow—
and work.
"This young state," wrote a visitor from New York in 1839, "has burst into existence with all the suddenness and beauty of an opening flower in the tropical climate; and although she is not yet the 'Empire State,' she is destined to be the 'educating state.'" The town of Bronson had made Michigan history in 1833 with the founding of the first institution of higher education in the state, its singularity reflected in its sprawling name: the Michigan and Huron Institute. It was founded by Caleb Eldred, a Vermonter like Lucinda Stone, and Thomas Merrill, personifying the Eastern Baptist missionary tradition of which James Stone was a slightly later example. Two years later the Methodist Seminary at Albion was born. In 1836, the year the name of the town changed, the Institute's first building was completed, and the following spring, on March 21st, the name was changed to the Kalamazoo Literary Institute. A year later, on May 1, 1838, a rival appeared: the Kalamazoo Branch of the University of Michigan, which as yet was mostly an idea. "Between the common schools and the University were to stand the 'Branches' . . . ." Their purposes were fourfold: to train common school teachers for the state, to provide agricultural and technical training at at least one branch, to attach to themselves female seminaries for the education of Michigan women, and to prepare students for the University, which finally opened formally in 1841. By the time the Stones arrived in Kalamazoo, there were eight such branches in the state.

But two years earlier, realizing the impracticality of two competing institutions in so small a town, the Baptist Institute and the Branch had merged. The Baptists agreed to relinquish the old name, on condition that they retained the power to choose the Principal of the new Branch. The post was filled by William Dutton, a Ph.D. from Brown University, surprisingly highly qualified for this outpost of academe. In 1843 Dutton resigned, and the Baptists decided to replace him with a minister to serve both their church and the Branch.

As she settled into her new home and prepared for the birth of her second child, Lucinda Stone apparently did not plan on taking part at the Branch. "I did not intend to teach, but circumstances forced me to take the place of the principal of the ladies' department . . . ." If indeed she began her new job with the new academic year, she was six months pregnant at the time. Horatio Hackett Stone was born on December 7, 1843. She plunged herself into the work of the young college. "I never had time to think whether that which devolved upon me to do, were wearisome, or not. It crowded so to be done that I learned to live upon work. The more I had to do, the more I could do." Here at last was a calling, a need so overwhelming that the pressures
and bitterness of Hinesburg could be forgotten and all her energy, her training, her instincts, her ambition put to full use every day. The question was not what a lady, a minister's wife, ought to be doing, but rather what demanded to be done for a small frontier community intent upon educating the sons and daughters of Michigan. As so often proved the case in Western towns, necessity itself rewrote the rules for women, creating a larger, more demanding role and fuller possibilities.

Kalamazoo soon realized it had imported from Massachusetts a dual force to be reckoned with. In its new Baptist minister and Branch Principal it had a man of fine intellect and superior training, but also a man of vision and aspiration, a mover and shaker of the first order, determined from the start that the Branch would not merely thrive, but grow and assume educational leadership. His wife later wrote, "Much of the trouble which caused his resignation from the presidency of Kalamazoo college arose out of his insisting upon an open, rather than a purely Baptist corporation, for the college. He wanted Kalamazoo College to be an educational institution, not merely a Baptist College. As such he wanted it to take hold of the people of the city and state, and be a moral and intellectual force."54

And, to its undoubted surprise, the community discovered that his wife was no silent partner. "She was," wrote a student, "a born leader."55 A modern historian sees her as the real driving force in the dynamic Stone partnership: "Of the two, she seems to have had the keener mind, the greater facility of expression, and the deeper dedication."56 In fairness, this impression may derive from the activity of her later life, when long experience and the survival of outrage and humiliation had brought her strong character to its full pitch. Nonetheless, one does sense that Lucinda was perhaps the more intense half of the team, driven in a way that James was not, determined by her past to make something important of her life in a part of the country where a difference could still be made. With her she brought incomparable energy, awesome self-discipline, a ravenous intellect fortified by the fabled "Hinsdale memory," and something more, something more dangerous: "I am by inheritance for the people, a democrat—not a party Democrat, but a real one—and a heretic."57 As it had been for her ancestor, Anne Hitchinson, this potent combination was to be at once her triumph and her undoing.

But none of this darkness was visible on the horizon the morning the Stones first met their eighty-six waiting students58 in the Branch, a two-story plain wooden structure sitting in the northeast corner of what is now Bronson Park. The ground floor was one large room (with that
rarity, blackboards) in which the boys were taught. Upstairs were two rooms, a large one devoted to Mrs. Stone and the girls of the Female Department, and a smaller one, "Number Three," originally designated for individual tutorials but gradually subsumed by other aspects of the life of the Branch—meetings, speeches, festivities. Around the building were the huge burr oaks the Branch students would remember years later. The male students often boarded in the old Baptist Institute building in town, the girls in private homes, many more of them being local residents.

Like many other semi-collegiate institutions, the Kalamazoo Branch was "coeducational in fact but not in theory," for simple practical reasons: It was too expensive to construct another building for the girls. The Stones, already committed to coeducation, nevertheless sustained the "fiction of separate departments" in deference to public opinion, subverting it whenever feasible, and gradually eroding it over the years. James Stone received a salary of $200 from the Regents of the University, plus his income from the Baptist Church. Lucinda Stone received no salary, and indeed the Female Department itself was allotted no funding until 1859. Until then it was maintained straight out of the Stones' pockets, from which their assistant teachers also had to be paid.

The curricular differences between the departments corresponded to the general rule: The "ladies" usually did not go as far in Latin as the men and rarely studied Greek—though some, as their teacher herself had done, did enter the Greek courses, “and were the leaders of their classes,” recalled their proud Alma Mater. The Female Curriculum offered a more thorough study than the Male of French, German, History, and Literature. The mid-term exercises of March 19th and 20th, 1846, give an idea of the Branch curriculum and the requirements. The men were examined in grammar, arithmetic, algebra, geometry, natural philosophy, chemistry, Greek, and Latin; the women in geography, grammar, arithmetic, algebra, astronomy, history, and French. For the men there were also prize speaking competitions and orations, as well as a humorous “colloquial discussion”; for the women only prize reading (including a surprising number of contemporary women authors) and compositions, including one on "The Evils of Romance" and another on "The Pleasures of Romance." The more aggressive and competitive forms of public speaking were still prohibited for women.

In 1885, when some three hundred of the Branch and Collège students returned to Kalamazoo to honor their old teachers, they spoke movingly of the old Branch days. The day began at 9:00 with chapel,
followed by a short talk by Principal Stone on some moral point. According to a firm Stone principle, mathematics consumed the morning, when the head was clear. Wednesdays were composition and declamation days for the men, composition for the women. When Mrs. Stone's classes finished early, they would come clambering downstairs to watch the men's performances, sometimes conspiring to subvert them. On Wednesday afternoons the school newspaper, *The Mirror*, edited by two students, was read aloud, as there were no facilities for printing. The paper seems to have been, at least in part, a gossip sheet, detailing the romantic intrigues of the students and publicizing their poetic rejoinders to each other on questions of, for instance, which sex was the most faithless.

Women sometimes entered Dr. Stone's classes, and men were frequent participants upstairs, if their interests lay in the less traditional subject areas of the female curriculum. The Stones immediately established an atmosphere of easy, convivial relations between the men and women, which Mrs. Stone later attributed to the legacy of her seminary experience, where the unnatural rules offended her as much as the duplicity of the students in evading them: "my experience has taught me that it is folly to try to contravene the laws of nature. The stricter the laws against all association of young men and young women, the stronger the inclination to break them. Young men and young women will seek one another out in some way; hence, as a teacher, it became a study for me how best to direct their association during those years when both are pursuing an education." The two stories of the Branch were always conscious of each other. One student remembered, "The Doctor had begun our recitation before Mrs. Stone arrived in her school—at this time we heard overhead, what seemed to be jumping from seats to the floor, the next instant there came tumbling from the ceiling about ten feet square of plaster on the Doctor's and our heads. In a moment with a twinkle of jest in the Doctor's eye, he observed, 'Young men, nothing bad comes from above.'"

For the ladies, the week ended on Fridays with an afternoon talk by Mrs. Stone, more of a conversation than a lecture, designed to engage her students in a discussion of art, literature, language, points of conduct, of morality, of friendship. Neither of the Stones was a strict disciplinarian, and a modern reader is struck by the ease and humanity which obviously pervaded the Branch. Mrs. Stone loaned books generously to her students, but admonished them that they had better scratch the faces of her children than deface her books. Always a passionate animal lover, she unfailingly brought their large yellow dog, Prince, to class with her, where he sat at her side as she heard recita-
tions. In 1847 he was succeeded by her third son, Jim—James Helm Stone, born July 19th—who sat on his mother's lap as she heard her girls' recitations. Thus her nineteenth-century answer to the problem of child care for a working mother.

Doctor Stone was remembered by many for his energetic walk as he entered the classroom, and for his playful humor. According to Branch alumnus Elisha Eames, "he always had an answer ready and when he used to come into the room with his quick, rapid step, he would sometimes get pretty well up toward the stage before any of us would see him or any attention be paid to his presence. He came in one day when there was a great deal of noise going on and it was kept up for some little time after he entered the door. Turning quickly toward us, he said, 'Young gentlemen, when you are going through a field and there is a pool full of frogs all croaking at once, and you throw a Stone in the water, the frogs will stop their noise. Now I want you to be like the frogs.'"

"He was a born teacher," one of his students wrote, using precisely the phrase Stone used to describe his own mentor, Ralph Thatcher. A man "greatly attached to children," he seems to have thrived on the company of young people, and to have sustained something of the child in himself. He appears to have had a gentling effect on his boys, and while his pedagogy was exacting, he was also a nurturant, supportive teacher: "He never allowed the student to become discouraged from any lack of attention to him, or appreciation of his efforts .... The gentlemanly respect with which he ever treated [his students] cultivated the same qualities in them ...." They would later liken him to the renowned Thomas Arnold, father of Matthew and reformer of the British public school system in the first half of the century: "He made the Kalamazoo Branch the Rugby of its day. For like the incomparable Arnold whom he so much resembled, his ideal of an education was the all-round development of the scholar, a thorough training that would carry him to a knowledge of himself and of the world."

In 1844 the old Institute building burned, and the male residents had to find private lodging. Some boarded with the Stones, including James Bates, who recalled the duo at home: "During the fall term of 1847 I read with [Dr. Stone] in a few weeks most of the Greek then required for admission to the State University, and for reasons I do not recall was during that period an inmate of his family. I studied hard, and often far into the night, and remember being awakened from my solid morning slumber by the brisk call of 'Jacobus' from the Doctor at the foot of the stairs. It was during these weeks I had the opportunity of witnessing something of the prodigious amount of work done by Dr.
and Mrs. Stone, each one of whom seemed to crowd the work of a week into every day. Such persistent, tireless, serene exertion on her part; such diverse, unsparing, unending labor on his."  

Another student remembers Lucinda Stone's "bubbling merry laugh," but also her capacity to "blaze into an indignation that was at white heat against wrong and hypocrisy." Contrary to the logical assumption that she would make a forceful first impression, we are told that she "ever had that singular modesty, almost humility of demeanor which with a slight hesitancy in speaking would almost have given the impression of timidity had it not been for her deep earnestness and the tenacity that came from her profound faith in, and the courage of her convictions." Her subsequent friend, Caroline Bartlett Crane, saw her cry only twice, once over the sexual betrayal of a young woman, and again upon hearing the initial verdict in the Dreyfuss case, when she "rocked to and fro, and cried out, 'My God! My God!'" We are perhaps relieved to learn that she fulfilled her sister's expectations, becoming a notoriously bad housekeeper who once asked her neighbor, "Do tell me how you manage to get a dinner without using every knife, fork, and spoon in the house, in the cooking." Her husband constantly teased her about her absentmindedness and the clothes lying in disarray all over the house. Thankfully, his mother, Mary Stone, lived with them until her death in 1882 and absorbed the domestic duties. Neither was her forte financial: Her biographer says she was "by no means a businesswoman" and thus was "easy prey of the unscrupulous."

The small college grew in accordance with the Stones' visions. Its academic reputation flourished, and tangible results convinced the Baptists and the town that the Stones were doing something right. Dr. Stone remembered proudly one such bit of evidence: "Among those who went from us to Ann Arbor was Edwin S. Dunham ... to whom I gave a letter of commendation to the faculty of the young university, saying that I thought him well qualified to enter the sophomore class. After examining him pretty thoroughly in his studies they gravely informed him, that if he expected to enter as a sophomore they should be obliged to disappoint him, but if he chose to enter the junior class, he might consider himself a junior in good and regular standing ...." In 1845 the university regents withdrew financial support from the various Branches, cutting them loose to fend for themselves now that the university at Ann Arbor was thriving. By 1850 the state constitution made no provision for the Branches at all, and most were replaced by academies which became, essentially, secondary schools. The Kala-
mazoo Branch resumed its old name, the Kalamazoo Literary Institute, with the Baptists in full control. But students and townspeople alike still fondly called it the Branch. Meanwhile, the Stones had sold the trustees on an expansion plan including a Theological Seminary and a new building for the College on a hill at the west end of South Street, where Hoben Hall now stands. That structure, the Upper College Building, later Williams Hall, was constructed from 1846 to 1848. When the Theological Seminary was established, housed in the new building along with the Literary Department, James Stone resigned his pastorate to become Professor of Biblical Literature, presiding over the six-year seminary course and assisted by Dr. Edward Anderson, who would later play a leading role in Dr. Stone's dismissal. The Literary Department was headed by Professor Eaton, with one assistant.

Lucinda Stone and her Female Department now had the Old Branch building to themselves by about 1850. One senses that she rather liked having her own domain. Her morning chapel exercises became her own and her girls' dearest memory of the old days; they were "the rising sun in whose light the pupils studied through the day." These "services" were less a religious ritual than a communion in the fullest sense, prefiguring the chapel hours of Allan Hoben's time. "In these morning exercises," Mrs. Stone related, "the wall separating sacred and secular things seemed, without any design on my part, to have been broken down, or to have sunken of itself out of sight. . . . Here, in the chapel exercises, as opportunity offered itself, I expressed what I so deeply felt,—that life was the finest of the fine arts; that it was full of days and duties which it was in our power to make sacred and joyous; that every hour might be a sacrament, and every day a true Sabbath." The impact of such inspired teaching as the Stones were offering is clear from the 1854-55 catalogue, when, after little more than a decade, the enrollment had more than tripled, from 86 to 274— at a time when the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts at the University of Michigan enrolled 156. The regular college course enrolled 29 men, 26 of them local; there were 114 in the Male Preparatory Course, only 18% of them local owing to the presence of a high school in Kalamazoo; and 14 in the Theological Seminary, none of them local. And 120 women were enrolled in the Female Department, a full 58% of them from Kalamazoo. In another three years that figure would almost double to its all-time high of 214. These statistics speak particularly eloquently of Mrs. Stone's growing influence and reputation, especially in the community.

Clearly the next step was a charter. Dr. Stone, elected President by the Board of Trustees in 1852, was actively exerting pressure on the
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reluctant state legislature, which was fearful of opening the door not only to competition for the University, but to another clear and present danger represented by private colleges in general and by the Stones in particular: coeducation. Nonetheless, after a lengthy battle, a general law was passed and approved by the governor on February 9, 1855. The first institution chartered under the new law was the rechristened Kalamazoo College. In the following year, 1856-57, total enrollment in all departments swelled to 407; 402 in 1857-58. In fourteen years the Stones had managed nearly to quadruple their student body.83

Realizing that the charter was imminent, the Trustees had announced in January of 1855 a plan for formal support of a “Female Collegiate Institute,” with $1000 pledged. The argument of Mrs. Stone's success was irresistible. The new Institute was to be “disconnected with the College for males, except for the use of apparatus, lecturers, etc.” and it was to be “liberal toward all classes and denominations,” like the Theological Seminary, which, though Baptist in character, was “to maintain... such a religious catholicity as shall commend [the trustees] to the sympathy of all.”84 The Stone philosophy at this point prevailed over their new College.

The enrollments also made it obvious that Mrs. Stone's young ladies needed a new building. The issue was settled one night when a group of townspeople, inspired by the village officers' fear that the Trustees might obtain right to the Branch building by continuous possession, and intent themselves that the square should be a village park, physically removed the building to the middle of a roadway, where it stood for some time, despite Dr. Stone's remonstrances. The Female Department quickly sought shelter in the basement of the Baptist Church, where it remained for four years.

This was no small undertaking. In 1857, with an enrollment around 210, the Department employed ten teachers (whose total salary pool was $2730), two of whom were also on the regular College faculty, and several more of whom were probably not full time. Lucinda Stone was Principal and teacher of Moral and Intellectual Philosophy and English Literature; her staff included music and art teachers, a Mlle. Lellane teaching French, and Dr. J. Adams Allen, who lectured in physiology.85

With $10,000 raised for the new building, the cornerstone was laid at the corner of South Street and Michigan Avenue on August 28, 1857. The three-story structure was to measure 86' by 54'. The day was marked by a parade of the College men down Main Street to the corner of Michigan, where they were joined by the women. Two years later, in the autumn of 1859, Kalamazoo Hall was dedicated and occupied, later to be renamed the Lower College Building and used continuously...
until Bowen Hall was built on the present campus. We can only imagine Mrs. Stone's feelings on the day she moved her girls out of the church basement and into their impressive new home, symbolizing the commitment of the college to her Female Department. She herself had borrowed $500 to become the second largest subscriber to its construction. The separation of departments was still only superficial; "in all cases where the studies are the same as in the Male Department," explained the 1858-59 catalogue, "the classes are united, and the recitations made to the College Professors. Arrangements are also made by which those young Ladies who prefer to pursue the regular College course in the Male Department, can do so." The new building was often called the Female College Building, suggesting that while coeducation was making headway, Mrs. Stone's department also managed to maintain a distinct character. In all probability Mrs. Stone regarded this as the best of two worlds. With the opening of the new building came the days that would shine for her still, fifty years later. She felt herself reaching the height of her own power: "I have never taught, I think, as I did then, and never have I seen gathered in any school, pupils of a higher grade of character or of greater promise than were gathered there."

This was the Stones' heyday, the zenith of their influence and the crown of their aspirations. They had built two beautiful new buildings and increased enrollments exponentially, and they and their college were pivotal forces in the community and in the state. James Stone served as president of the Michigan Teachers' Association and was active in the emergence of the Michigan Republican Party in the early fifties. In 1857 he proposed to the trustees an even more ambitious plan, to include seven buildings and a total of six departments: the College, the Preparatory Department, the Theological Seminary, the Normal Department (for teacher training), an Academy of Fine Arts, and a Polytechnical School. The Normal Department actually appeared in 1859 and lasted four years. In 1864 the Institute had switched from three annual terms to two. The College was attracting a creditable faculty, which met weekly to discuss all areas of College life, including student discipline.

The Female Department faculty met separately, and on Saturday evenings the women teachers met at the Stones' splendid new home, which stood on the crest of the hill overlooking Main Street, where Stowe Tennis Stadium now lies. These sessions originated as simple discussions, but evolved into literature and language classes. With her teachers Mrs. Stone studied the bright lights of her age: Ruskin, and her
great hero, Emerson, but also Margaret Fuller and Elizabeth Barrett Browning. Always Lucinda Stone was one who knew the accepted canon thoroughly and went beyond it, never failing to introduce her students and teachers and friends to contemporary minds, including the prominent female writers of her day and the past. Her great love of the French language engaged the group. “I urged them to read, read, read, until they forgot they were reading a foreign language.”89 At a time when the status of modern language study is apparent in its relegation to the female curriculum, she took it more than seriously, believing then and especially later after her trips abroad that a living language was the truest means of entering a foreign culture. Her struggles to convey the benefits of foreign languages to frustrated students will be familiar to modern teachers. A recalcitrant student protested “the nonsense . . . of having but two genders for every kind of noun in the French language”, and puzzled me to tell how it came about that everything living or dead, animate or inanimate, must be either a man or a woman in French. And when I tried to tell him what a remarkable people the French were, how fertile in resources, how wonderful in invention, in discoveries and art; what a treasure of enjoyment he would be laying up for himself, by mastering the language,—a task easily accomplished with perseverance, so that when he took up a French book he would not think whether the thoughts came to him through the French or his own language, he pettishly replied that he did not think he ‘cared to know more than to call a table feminine and a bed masculine, when there was no reason in common sense for the difference.’”90

As teacher training engrossed more of her energy, Lucinda Stone began to think increasingly seriously about the enormity of the project called education. “The science of education is, today, where the science of geology was fifty years ago. We are just beginning to think of it as a science. Men and women are waking up to its demands.”91 Her excitement in teaching, as in other areas, arose from the sense of being in on the beginning of something. Using a favorite metaphor, she described her pedagogical philosophy: “Teaching had become to me, not only one of the fine arts, but one as sacred as temple or cathedral building.”92 It was precisely during this time, the middle decades of the century, that the great reversal was coming to pass whereby teaching became, predominantly, a female profession and, in consequence, was losing its former prestige.93 Generally female teachers were paid a third to a half of their male counterparts’ wages,94 and the stereotype of the schoolmarm—dry, disappointed, sadistic, small-minded—was gaining currency. And yet the opening of the teaching profession to
women was an enormous opportunity for the vast numbers of them who had to earn their way in a world where their "respectable" options were otherwise extremely limited. It was also during the forties and fifties that Catherine Beecher's brainchild, the National Board of Popular Education, was sending thousands of Eastern teachers west as missionaries to the illiterate frontier. Mrs. Stone was probably in basic agreement with Beecher's belief that teaching was indeed women's work, that women by nature were gifted for teaching the young and exerting the moral sway that was woman's inheritance. How much she knew of her part in a great revolution in the teaching profession we cannot know, but it is most characteristic of her that she approached "women's work" with a professionalism that simply ignored the possibility that teaching, and in particular teaching women, might be anything other than an exalted and sophisticated profession, demanding a high level of skill and training, and a major commitment from its practitioners. One of the distinguishing features of her life was the supreme seriousness with which she took issues and tasks dismissed or taken for granted by others, and her ability to compel others to the same seriousness.

Her teachers discovered that they had signed on not for a job, but to a calling. She was no easy taskmistress: "A teacher's life should be, of all lives, a growing one. I required of my teachers a preparation for their class recitations. I expected them always to come to their classes fresh from a review of what they were to teach. I held that it was never safe to trust to a past understanding of a lesson, however simple it might be. This they the better understood, by knowing that I practiced what I preached . . . . I also encouraged my teachers to be always pursuing some study outside of and beyond what they were teaching,—a language, some branch of science, art, or literature, or to read some work in a foreign language . . . ." As her staff was primarily female, it was even more imperative that they be continually educating themselves, as their own educations were undoubtedly spotty.

She understood, as the years went on, the particular perils of a pedagogical life: "Teachers, generally persons of more than ordinary mental endowments and culture, usually live much secluded from society, with little inflow from superior minds. The waters of the fountain within them stagnate, or they die of a kind of inanity—emptiness. In this way pupils are often defrauded of the services of inspiring teachers." As teaching grew into a huge and highly regulated industry in the latter half of the century, her observations and experience led her to an understanding of what we now call teacher burn-out. The culprit, she said, was "routine work and mental exhaustion,—chronic diseases with
which so many teachers 'break down,' as it is phrased, and are sent to a sanitarium or asylum for recovery . . . ."98 Teachers' lives became more and more regimented by the burgeoning educational bureaucracy, which elevated men immediately to administrative authority and left women in the classroom, subject to massive restrictions on their lives and work, as well as to appalling wages. But it was the institutionalized absence of creativity in the teaching profession which repelled Mrs. Stone most and made her most determined at Kalamazoo that her teachers should have "freedom to grow in their professions, and to be their individual selves, in their work."99 Late in her life, at a Philadelphia mental hospital, she was horrified by the number of patients who were female ex-teachers: "If all mental life has been smothered, desire for excellence in her profession killed out in this way, how long will it be before the physical energies will succumb? If a profession, that might be great, is turned into routine, mere machinery grinding, is it remarkable that nature, outraged and abused, should lose its balance, and mind and body together break down? Any occupation requiring brain work, to be either pleasant or healthful, must permit some freedom and individuality to the worker. Working at one's best is working, in one sense, in one's own way. The life of a good teacher must be one of growth."100

This ideal of constant growth, metaphorically so attuned to the spirit of the century, was the Stones' chief legacy to their students. In her later years Lucinda Stone was sustained by letters from many a veteran of her Female Department: "Often, I have rejoiced to find in the narrative proofs that . . . she had not forgotten the old school motto, made familiar by constant quotation: 'The Object of Life is to grow.'"101 The truth of the motto, for her, was attested by her two favorite studies, the world of nature and the world of art, from which she took images of the teacher: "The bee, the beaver, and the chambered nautilus are great teachers, but without planning to teach. The true artist is like these children of nature, building, like them, and often better than he knows, from materials within himself and from those with which he is environed."102 In her work at Kalamazoo College she found the satisfaction that great teachers find, a creative fulfillment that for her was founded in the natural law of growth. "I think few teachers have ever loved their work as I have. To watch the development of a bright intellect under the pursuit of different branches of knowledge has been with me a feeling and an enjoyment akin, I think, to that which the artist feels in seeing his work grow under his hand. Nor has the study of the processes of what is generally called a slow, dull mind, attaining to higher grades of thought, been destitute of interest. Invaluable sug-
gestions have often come to me from such a mind." As her students presented her with varying raw material, she grew as an artist.

Those around her confirmed her view of her work. The *Kalamazoo Gazette* observed at her death that "the work was to her not a trade, but an art. Her educational ideals were very high. The acquisition of knowledge was not an end, but a means to this end; namely, the development of character, independence of thought, and, as Ruskin says, 'fineness of nature.' Nor was this all; the final end to be sought in all educational processes was to fit the individual to do service for others." And the students understood as well: "'The figure is in the stone and the sculptor only finds it.' The figure here was character, and it was the educational work of our teachers to develope that in its fullest perfection."

Today it is perhaps not quite so acceptable to speak of teachers as "character artists." The Stones simply took for granted the enormous influence of teachers and the great moral responsibility consequently incumbent upon them. They believed they were the educational vanguard of a new age in which "[t]he new man must develop by the law of love and righteousness, as well as by training, to the highest development of the intellectual faculties. Educators must aim to make a good man as well as a great one, or they will fail utterly." The various generations who received this unabashedly value-laden education realized that they had been part of an extraordinary academic experience. At the reunion one of them said that the Stones "were in fact as well as in law, our teachers in loco parentis, for they not only taught but trained the students...; ever impressing on their minds, till it became ingrained in their natures, that it was morals that gave the highest value to scholarship."

The teacher in loco parentis was a role which the Stones readily accepted, especially Mrs. Stone, believing as she did that "the mother-heart must be at the center of all true teaching." She and her husband designed the College to be a home as well as a school. "Surely," she wrote, "there is no responsibility like that of a teacher except that of a parent... ."

The Stones' domestic life was part of the life of the College, and the students truly felt themselves familiarly bonded. In fact, some of Mrs. Stone's Hinsdale relations, like her nephew Edwin, son of brother Mitchell, were her students. But the girls of the Female Department were especially drawn to the charismatic maternal power of their teacher. "[Y]our great Mother love," one of them later told her, "large enough to take in all of us girls, with all our faults and failings[,] in our eyes surrounds your face with a circle of light." Perhaps her lack of daughters had something to do with Lucinda Stone's remarkable relationship with her "girls"; perhaps more pertinent was her own
childhood, the absence of a strong bond with her own mother and sisters. To be both a powerful intellectual model and an unfailing emotional resource for hundreds of young women recompensed her for her early loneliness, as well as allowing her to give to them the incalculable early advantage she was denied.

The personal element in teaching the Stones saw not as a danger but as a resource in the individualized, wholistic education in which they both believed so strongly. Mrs. Stone’s classroom reflected this philosophy: “In her methods of teaching she was independent and followed her own judgment and many practices now being introduced into our educational system were by her followed many years ago,” said the Gazette in 1900. “Her school room did not present the appearance of system and method of the modern class room, but rather a place where the pupils had gathered to pursue their work from the love of it, for Mrs. Stone possessed that rarest qualification of a teacher to awaken in the pupil genuine love for his work; or, as one of her old pupils says, ‘It appeared like a lot of girls having a friendly talk with their mother, yet never was teaching more effective.’” When the day was done, recalled Mrs. Stone proudly, “They had not learned their lesson, but knew it.”

Her classroom encouraged the spontaneous and extemporaneous, giving the students the sense that they were in the presence of a growing mind: “I can recall now,” Julia Gilbert Elder told her old teacher, “so vividly, your every tone and gesture, when after the morning reading, you would often try to impress upon us some truth that had just seemed to strike you.” Another student recalled that “even the dullest of us did not hesitate to bring our thoughts to you, sure of as careful consideration as though we had been your equal. We remember how tenderly you led us, making us know our ignorance not so much by anything you said, as by our own quickened sense of comparison. Somehow you had the power of divining the best there was in us, and the tact to bring it out.” Perhaps this is the secret of the Stones’ gift as teachers: “They both possessed the happy, not to say ‘divine,’ faculty of seeing others at their best, and had unbounded charity for our faults, as if evil were only perverted good, and by their belief in us they led us to believe in ourselves, thus ennobling our lives.” That this is a working definition at once of a good teacher and of a good parent is no coincidence.

Though no student would have doubted the Stones’ intellectual credentials, it was unquestionably their personal impact which galvanized the students, drawing from them a unique loyalty. This, in fact, might be said to have made the reputation of the young college. “Moral
and religious instruction was made valuable to us," one old Brancher recalled, "not so much by direct teaching, or what we were brought to know, as from what we were brought to feel by the unconscious influence of the life and character of our teachers..." Wrote another, "It was one of the secrets of [Mrs. Stone's] influence that with all her strong characteristics, strongly developed, she never was didactic—she suggested things rather than asserted them, she inspired rather than taught her ideas."[117]

The Stones clearly came to hold a power over their students which might have been easily abused, a power which the Baptist trustees were to suspect and undermine a decade later. But the fact is that it worked: Kalamazoo College students flourished at other institutions, impressing their teachers. Alice Boise Wood went from under Mrs. Stone's wing to her home in Ann Arbor, where, with her professor father's encouragement, she began to audit classes. Her judgement thirty years later is telling, especially as it reflects Mrs. Stone's favorite lesson: "No instructor—and I came under many both in Michigan and Chicago Universities—ever so deeply impressed upon me the necessity, and also the possibility of progressive accomplishment, of constant enlargement, as you taught it to me. And you taught that lesson by the best of all methods—an ever present example."[118]

In the fifties the academic family at the west end of Kalamazoo was large and tightly knit, full of the excitement of an experiment, the commitment of a cause. The students drank in the cosmopolitanism which the Stones offered: "Their great knowledge of life, their large circle of friends, their wide acquaintance with literary people and books, their own vast mental resources and fund of wit and wisdom, made association with them a liberal education."[119] And always, within this larger project of education, another one, crucial to the progress of the century, was going on, whether in the top story of the Branch, the basement of the Baptist Church, or the new building opened in 1859: "we must thank our Alma Mater—our dear Mrs. Stone—for the impulse toward the good, the true and the beautiful she gave us; with the firm principle she aimed and fixed in our youthful minds; that life was earnest, and women had a place to fill, a work to do, as well as men; under God's guidance she must act well her part...[W]e are all Mrs. Stone's 'girls'...; and to the end, we and our children shall 'rise up and call her blessed'..."[120]

During this era the students concocted a song in which each verse immortalized a faculty member's special obsession by having him or her ride up to heaven on that particular hobbyhorse. Mrs. Stone's verse went as follows:
Word has it that she was highly amused. But having felt in her own life the effects of blind prejudice, she was committed to the belief that change comes when Truth Unvarnished is allowed to shine, as it did in her classroom and her husband's. Though, as we have seen, their teaching was informed by moral premises, it was no worshipper of tradition, creed, or established belief. They knew that growth involves destruction as well as creation. "The most tedious lessons," she wrote, "are those of unlearning what we once learned. Knowledge is a ruthless iconoclast. She shatters the idols of our youth." But while this idol-shattering was sending independent young thinkers out to change the world, it was also storing up trouble a few years down the road.

III

Lucinda Stone's own "ruthless iconoclasm" was described by her friend and biographer Belle Perry as an "attitude of intellectual hospitality" that knew no sacred cows, no arbitrary perimeters, and no false modesty. A student elaborates: "A woman of uncommon mentality, like Bacon 'she took all learning for her province.' Nothing was too abstruse for her comprehension,—nothing too insignificant . . . to convey some meaning. With a prodigious memory that was a family characteristic, she combined a wide reading that made it the storehouse of all the various thought of her own and of past times; thought which she did not lay away as in a napkin, but which she fed on and assimilated, making it a part of her own being." She saw all the works of humanity and nature as material for study, sacred texts to be interpreted. "Every letter of the alphabet," she wrote, "is the representative of some deep human want, or a passionate desire to make known some recognized truth, that through that letter, struggled to expression like a human groan, or a jubilant 'Eureka!' and before it found its present form and place in our words, it has passed through the seething brains of generations of men—philosophers, artists, inventors. Every letter is instinct with meaning, sentient with a soul." This understanding of the evolutionary nature of civilization made her a cultural and historical relativist before her time. A student remarked that her motto seemed always to be "I count nothing human
foreign to me,"¹²⁶ and it led her to a strong awareness of ethnocentricity and historical parochialism, later confirmed by her study and travel abroad. In an article late in life, for instance, she traces the triangle as a symbol of tripartite power through many cultures and religions, describing its appearance in art and architecture, which were for her, as for her contemporary John Ruskin, the clearest indicators of the spirit of a people or an age.

Quite naturally this broad understanding of cultural diversity fed her religious views. Like her contemporaries such as Elizabeth Cady Stanton, nurtured in a strong religious tradition but drawn to a rigorous critique of society, her continued religious belief demanded a revision of the androcentric and patriarchal theology of her upbringing. "To her all truth was religion," wrote a student, and "she came to look upon widely diverse systems of belief as only different phases of the same religious thought—as different manifestations of the same essential truth."¹²⁷ Her own definition of her faith was "... any mere Sunday religiousness, but a daily, joyous, continued intercourse with the Father of Light, who is truth, and whose field of work is the world."¹²⁸ Her humanism was her belief that people were obliged to imitate God, creating and enlightening—especially the teacher, whose office was as sacred as that of the priest. Her faith embodied the dynamism she saw as the central law of life. Her minister recalled that "intellectually her faith changed in form. She continually sought more light, larger horizons. She did not remain stationary; she grew in spirit. In all changes she was conscious of an ever-deepening, ever-enlarging faith."¹²⁹

Needless to say, just as her father's rejection of elements of doctrine had incurred the displeasure of the Vermont Congregationalists, his daughter's latitudinarianism was fated to collide with the more conservative elements in Kalamazoo, particularly in the Baptist hierarchy. Once hearing that students trapped by a downpour in a college hall were engaged in that forbidden pleasure, dancing, she responded, "Poor things. I hope they are dancing. It will help them to while away the time."¹³⁰ Lucia Eames Blount, her student and lifelong friend, remembered, "She was absolutely free from bigotry. When I look back to that time, and remember what the old Baptist doctrines used to be, as propounded by their minister, I wonder how Doctor and Mrs. Stone could have remained so long within that fold as they did. Their influence was always for the widest interpretation and the broadest charity for all mankind."¹³¹ Mrs. Stone's favorite childhood verse, taught her by her minister—perhaps the same who encouraged her to enter the college preparatory classes with the boys—was:
Let there be many windows in your souls,
That all the glories of the universe may beautify it.
Not the narrow pane of one poor creed can catch the rays
That shine from countless sources.132

The conviction of change and growth as the inexorable spirit of all life, underlying Lucinda Stone's approaches to education and to religion, puts her squarely within the nineteenth-century zeitgeist. Darwin's Origin of Species appeared in 1859, in the midst of the Stones' ascendancy at Kalamazoo, and she, along with most of the other writers of her time, adopted its metaphor enthusiastically. The idea of evolution was at once terrifying and exciting to many observers of the age—notably Tennyson, whose In Memoriam, one of Mrs. Stone's favorite works, captures both the horror of a world in which nothing is stable, and the distinctive Victorian optimism which interpreted evolution as a biological certification of constant progress. Mrs. Stone chose the latter reading. If, she said, "growth is the law of every true life,"133 then even though "evolution is a slow process, . . . it is God's process, and his eternal law of Progress."134 Even as she began her work in Kalamazoo, the excitement in the venture came largely from her belief that this, her age, was to be the great age of improvement and enlightenment, moving slowly but surely toward a millennium of justice and human liberation. "Progress was her one watchword," her students recalled; "the one passionate cry of her soul was for the breaking down of all restrictions against absolute freedom to be and do whatever one would."135 This emancipation of the human spirit and intellect would not be without a struggle but was certain of victory: "The world will go forward in spite of old foggy notions and all attempts of those whose faces are always turned toward the past, to keep things precisely as they were in their fathers' fathers' time."136

This faith, for faith it was, may sound naive to our jaded twentieth-century ears, but it was by no means unique in the Stones' time. It gave Lucinda Stone the spiritual resources to face great disappointment, as well as a way to understand and forgive those bulwarks of conservatism who blocked her favorite projects. For example, of one American minister who could not be brought to see the justice of coeducation she said, with transcendant resignation, that "he had not progressed to the opening of colleges to women. It is of no use; you cannot hasten the shedding of the old burr till the nut is ripe."137 She understood the bravery required by her ideal of growth: "It takes more courage to face a new thought than it does to face the cannon's mouth."138

Her view of her century as a wondrous age of change gave her an
acute interest in contemporary culture, in the ideas, the books, the people who were, as she was, working toward the fulfillment of God's great project of freedom. Democracy, in its widest sense, was the political dimension of this project, so the United States was destined to lead the way, its historic moment having arrived. But she saw democracy as another evolutionary form, gaining momentum in the Renaissance and moving forward to the present. Its surest evidence was in art, beginning with Rembrandt, who taught art to see the common people again, and culminating in the contemporary socialist art movement in Britain: "I agree with William Morris that 'we do not want art for a few or freedom for a few!'"\textsuperscript{140}

Unlike many critics who saw a dearth of true artistic inspiration in what Matthew Arnold called the Iron Age of the nineteenth century, Lucinda Stone saw it all about her in great minds creating a new spirit of humanism. Emerson, specifically in his idea of the over-soul, was her prime deity. "I do not believe the influence of any one mind has produced so great a change in what I may call our moral civilization," she wrote.\textsuperscript{141} She admired the Brownings and Tennyson—though with some reservations concerning the latter for his flippant treatment of women's education in\textit{The Princess}. And her thought coincides often with that of Ruskin, in his somewhat anthropological approach to art, and in his sense of the hallowedness of true labor, truly inspired. Her use of the image of cathedral building to describe such labor, particularly education, suggests a familiarity with Ruskin's "The Nature of Gothic."\textsuperscript{142} That women artists should be playing a large part in the cultural revolution was, for her, only natural. She was a great Brontë fan who recalled the appearance of\textit{Jane Eyre} in 1848 as "the dawning of a new literary period."\textsuperscript{143}

It was in this context of an age of progress that she came to see abolitionism and feminism as inevitable movements of the human soul. From Natchez and even earlier she carried with her to Kalamazoo the conviction that "Garrison was right in calling slavery 'the sum of all villainies.'"\textsuperscript{144} On this subject she made no deference to community feeling. Her students said that "she gloried in being called an Abolitionist in any sense of the word."\textsuperscript{145} Later in the century, when abolition had been bloodily achieved and the complex issue of social integration had superseded, she appears to have moved toward a somewhat paternalistic view of what "the Negro" ought to be concerned with, quoting with approval a black Chicagoan named Monroe Clark, who had told a journalist that "the Negro must fight his own battles. He must learn to make a living, and to care less about gaudy clothes and things to eat. It's not a question of right to vote or right to sit up in white
folks’ parlors. It’s a question of whether the Negro will learn to be a valuable and industrious citizen.”148 Surely she never so cavalierly dismissed women’s aspirations to the ballot, though the emphasis on economic self-help and the importance of oppressed people achieving their own freedom is consonant with her philosophy.

The movement of women toward full participation in society came to be, for Mrs. Stone, the most dramatic revolution of her times. By sheer numbers, but also by the strength of women’s particular gifts and training in nurturance and concern for others, women would not merely help but lead the struggle toward a more humane society. In many ways Lucinda Stone’s steps coincided with those of the women and men who were taking the first steps on the very rocky, uphill road toward the Nineteenth Amendment of 1920. New Englanders like many of the suffrage leaders, James and Lucinda Stone likewise drew the crucial connection between the abolitionism that gained momentum in the thirties and the feminism that began to coalesce in the forties. The Seneca Falls Convention of 1848 was organized by Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton (educated at the Troy, New York, seminary of Lucinda Stone’s cousin Emma Willard) after they had been barred from a London Anti-Slavery Convention eight years earlier.

Like those other women who suddenly saw a great work waiting for them, Lucinda Stone believed that the infinite theories of women’s incapacities were null and void for sheer lack of data. Woman was the untapped resource of the world: “she can never really know herself, or be known by others, as the power in the world, greater or less, which she was ordained by God to be, until these thousand restrictions that limit and dwarf her intellectual life are removed.”147 As she studied and observed, she realized how firmly established was the doctrine of women’s wholly secondary, vicarious existence, and she was not hesitant to lay blame at great doors:

Milton is to be thanked for so lucidly setting forth his great moral heresy that everybody can recognize it and renounce it, that man only is made for God’s service.

“He for God only—she for God in him;” . . .

If women are to advance one step, their first leap . . . must be over this abominable and ridiculous doctrine.148

As she believed that America was chosen to lead in the liberation of humankind, she likewise saw it as only logical that the liberation of womankind should begin at home: “And will not woman awake as never before to see, and make themselves bold to declare that Herbert Spencer’s doctrine, that ‘Equity knows no sex,’ is, and shall be, the saving doctrine of our national honor?”149
Like many of the other American feminists, Lucinda Stone appears not to have questioned seriously the fundamental concepts of masculine and feminine, except as they were especially negative. That is, she heartily objected to the idea of women as inherently shallow, emotionally and physically unfit for serious intellectual enterprise, absorbed by the personal and domestic; these attributes, she knew, were products of culture and training, the natural fruits of a deprivation of serious pursuits. She was wholly in tune with the feminism of her time in believing education to be the long-awaited corrective for such limitations. But she was willing to accept that women were gifted in maternal qualities and moral capacity, and that they had a special domestic role to play. She saw these characteristics as great strengths, which she called not “feminine” but “womanly” and which she foresaw as enhancing human life when they could be extended into the public sphere. Her argument—in some sense more radical than conservative—was that women could do it all, that “of not one [distinguished woman of the past] is it recorded that their high attainments spoiled or in any way marred their domestic virtues. They were as womanly as they were learned and accomplished.”

In this and other respects, Lucinda Stone belongs among what Alice Rossi has called “Moral Crusader Feminists,” as distinguished from “Enlightenment Feminists.” The latter group, in which Rossi includes Margaret Fuller, Harriet Martineau, and John Stuart Mill, tended to be slightly older, “highly urban, sophisticated, solitary thinkers and writers.” The Moral Crusaders, in contrast, usually came from rural and small-town America and were not so much radical political thinkers as inherently conservative, middle-class people motivated by “a moral impulse acted out in the political arena.” While the Fullers and Mills were the isolated intellectuals, working largely through their pens, the Crusaders were activists, working together in the successive reform movements which grew from the evangelicalism of the early part of the century. This group includes nearly every leader of the early suffrage movement—Anthony, Stanton, Mott, Lucy Stone, Antoinette Brown Blackwell, the Grimké sisters. Their feminism was part of a wide concern with the moral health of industrial, commercial American society, and it rested upon a belief in the particular duty and ability of women to be the regenerating force. As Frances Power Cobbes, one of their English counterparts, put it: “Profoundly satisfied am I of this, that the cause of the emancipation of women is identical with that of the purification of society.” It is in this context that the relationship between the suffrage and temperance movements can be understood. In this soil Lucinda Stone’s feminism took root, and in her diversity of com-
mitments and affiliations she is an excellent example of the Moral Feminist in action.

With the Stones' involvement in these great movements of their day, and with the growing reputation of the college, Kalamazoo in the 1850s became the cultural center between Detroit and Chicago, a common stopping point for eastern notables. "Our house on the hill," wrote Mrs. Stone, "(the site of the present Stockbridge mansion)," was par excellence the hotel whose latch-string was always out to men and women in the lecture field of those days. We are openly anti-slavery in thought and acknowledged women suffragists, as were most of those who filled the lecture platform of those days, and toward the private hotel on the hill people of this kind drifted." William Lloyd Garrison and Wendell Phillips visited, Phillips lecturing three times in Kalamazoo and staying twice with the Stones. Mrs. Stone thought him "the handsomest man that I ever [had] seen," and used his lecture, which espoused "the rights of all men and women," in her class the next day. Phillips' track record was secure in her admiration: He refused berths on a train and a steamship when Frederick Douglass was denied accommodation, and he loaned Susan B. Anthony money to finance her 1855 tour of New York to gain signatures on a petition asking the state legislature to pass laws guaranteeing women control of their earnings, guardianship of their children after a divorce, and the vote. He and Garrison, along with another Kalamazoo visitor, Bronson Alcott (father of Louisa Mae), had all signed the call for the first national women's rights convention in 1850.

Frederick Douglass himself stayed with the Stones, along with his wife Helen, who continued to correspond with Mrs. Stone to the end of her life. Lucinda Stone was a deep admirer of Douglass, who, in addition to his remarkable life as an abolitionist after having been born in slavery, had been the lone voice in support of Stanton's resolution at Seneca Falls calling for the female franchise. In old age Mrs. Stone remembered "the scars of his wonderful experience deeply graven in his noble face; yet, less scars they are, than glory marks reflecting the radiance of the victor's crown in view . . . . No man has ever lived who could more truly say in 'crossing the bar': 'I have fought the good fight; I have kept the faith' than Frederick Douglass." Elizabeth Cady Stanton passed through, along with Mary Livermore, editor, temperance and suffrage leader, who would also become a lifelong correspondent. Nearly exactly Mrs. Stone's contemporary, Livermore had also been a governess in the South and had gone on to a diverse career in hospital work, municipal sanitation, and women's rights—another archetypal Moral Crusader Feminist. She became...
president of the Illinois Woman Suffrage Association and editor of its paper, The Agitator, and then in 1869 she was Vice President of the American Woman Suffrage Association and editor of The Woman's Journal, which published Mrs. Stone's articles. The new dream of suffrage, controversial even among feminists, some of whom believed it might be asking too much too soon, presented no problems to the Stones. Mrs. Stone quoted her husband as saying, with eminent reasonability and a faith in evolution like her own, "This is right; it is the natural, and must be the inevitable, evolution of the Declaration of Independence. Taxation and representation are inseparable—must be in a true Republic." He maintained, she remembered, "that Mary Wollstonecraft struck the keynote in this subject nearly one hundred years ago, when she based man's right on human rights—women's suffrage on the rights of all suffrage and the rights of human beings."

But the brightest star in her constellation of house guests, for Lucinda Stone, was the great Emerson. He visited twice, in 1860 and 1867, and at least the first time at the "hotel" on the hill. He fulfilled his greatest fan's expectations: She called him "the most sincere man I ever saw," and mused, "I think Emerson did not even suspect or think anything about being with barbarians in Kalamazoo . . . ." Barbarians, no; wilderness, yes, as we learn from the great man's journal: "At Kalamazoo a good visit with a college wherein I found many personal friends, though unknown to me, and where one Emerson was an established authority . . . . I saw Michigan and its forests and the wolverines pretty thoroughly." Mrs. Stone's cousin Sanford C. Hinsdale remembered the 1860 visit, during which time he had been a student at the College, with particular clarity: "I was living at your house at the time, and I remember that Emerson took supper at your house, and that he seated himself next to me at table, preferring to place himself beside a bashful student, with whom he indeed conversed during almost the whole progress of the meal, paying very little attention to the grave professors who sat at the same table. This was characteristic of the man. I remember he visited our Greek recitation that afternoon and his conversation at the table related to the study of Greek. His talk gave me a great desire to read in the original the divine Plato, and to understand him." During the visit a student read an essay on Emerson and Plato, all unaware that one of his subjects was seated happily in the back of the room. All were impressed with this luminary's lack of pomposity, and Mrs. Stone believed that his essay on "Conduct of Life" grew from a Kalamazoo lecture. He, in turn, deemed his hostess "a most amiable and excellent person . . . ."

These visitors were one of the ways in which the Stones extended
the life of the College to the Kalamazoo community. One wonders how the visits of such controversial figures as Stanton and Douglass were greeted, especially as the Douglasses stayed with the Stones, surely an unprecedented challenge to social mores. Another "community outreach" project began in 1852, one which was ultimately to bring the name of Lucinda Hinsdale Stone national recognition.

It began with the Saturday evening teachers' classes. They incorporated women from the community and grew into separate history classes and discussion groups on art and literature which, their leader immodestly observed, "came to be the real center of literary and educational culture and higher social enjoyment in Kalamazoo." In 1852, eight of the women decided to establish themselves as a club, and began to canvass the town, soliciting fifty-cent subscriptions (later one dollar) for annual privileges, twenty-five dollars for life membership in what they called the Ladies' Library Association. A small collection of fifty volumes was accumulated, the first lending library in Kalamazoo. One of the early battles concerned the inclusion of fiction, with Lucinda Stone not surprisingly on the "pro" side and one of the more conservative matrons as her opposition. Swedenborg and Channing were also controversial additions. "I had contrived to get two or three volumes of Emerson accepted," Mrs. Stone said, "but our good librarian—a most excellent woman, was distrustful of the influence of these works." Likewise, she herself donated Lydia Maria Child's Progress of Religious Ideas, a work espousing her own view of world religions, and these volumes met with suspicion: "They were for a long time kept on a high shelf well out of sight, lest someone might be tempted to read them . . . ."

For its first thirty-seven years the L.L.A. was itinerant before building itself a permanent home. Housed first in the home of a member at South and Rose Streets, it moved to a room over a store at Main and Burdick, and then into the courthouse, where it stayed from 1853 to 1859. Reorganized and incorporated in that year, it moved into the basement of the Baptist Church for eight years, then into the Corporation Hall until 1878, and then, for one last year, back into the church, where Mrs. Stone and her girls had sought refuge after the "relocation" of the Branch building. The Association's first president was Mrs. A. S. Kedzie. Its monthly meetings consisted of formal papers and discussion as well as socializing, and the secretary's records show one paper on the virtues of coeducation delivered by Lucinda Stone. Guest lecturers, including Wendell Phillips and Horace Greeley, were featured, and the programs sometimes sprouted new outgrowths: For instance, during the 1860's, biweekly evening reading groups began at the Stones'
home, with Mrs. Stone as one of the two readers.

She may be forgiven for her pride in the Association. In itself it has played an important role in the city's cultural heritage, as the only public library for many years. In the larger context of American women's history, it is perhaps even more important. Mrs. Stone always argued that it was the first women's club in the nation. Modern accounts cite two predecessors, the Ladies' Educational Association of Jacksonville, Illinois (1833) and the Ladies' Physiological Association of Massachusetts (1848). But the L.L.A. was unquestionably a leader in the great project which was to make an important mark on women's social and intellectual progress in the later nineteenth century and to dominate the last half of Mrs. Stone's life.

The manifold objections to Lucinda Stone's taste in authors suggests the constant opposition, friendly and otherwise, overt or not, that her efforts and those of her husband encountered in the years from 1843 to 1863. Such resistance they generally met with equanimity, humor, and understanding as simply a part of their job. But the full-scale sabotage of the mid-sixties was nowhere in the realm of their imaginations.

IV

In Thomas Mallory's version of the Arthurian myth, just as Camelot has come to resemble Arthur's dream, the king begins to understand that it is doomed. Whether or not, and how early, the Stones began to realize that they would not live out their lives at the College is hard to determine. Between the time of the charter and 1863, something in the air seems almost to have changed. Yet more substantial causes are discernible. Student enrollment suddenly dropped fairly drastically: In 1857-59 the student body numbered 403; the next year it was 269. Enrollment in the Female and Preparatory Departments during the same period dropped from 214 to 134, and the next year down to 75. Charles Starring cites as reasons a depressed economy in 1857 and tougher entrance requirements, but also the increasingly unpopular liberalism of, in particular, Mrs. Stone.

The Baptist leadership had undergone a shift in the conservative direction with the appointment of Samuel Haskell as minister in 1852. Whether or not he is the monster of hypocrisy and mendacity of Mrs. Stone's account of the debacle, he was most certainly a man of infinitely narrower spirit and creed than James Stone, and probably represented a move on the part of the church toward a more distinctly denominational institution. Mrs. Stone says that in 1854 he began to refer to Dr. Stone as "Acting President," and that there was no doubt in the Stones' minds that he coveted the presidency for himself for a
decade. For her Haskell seems to have harbored a special animosity, which she attributed to two sources: First, "I did hate and eschew religious cant and long-faced Pharisaical religion or its pretence. I saw its effects upon my pupils and was convinced that many among them had, under its influence, entirely deceived themselves, and been rushed into the church in times of revival, without any idea of a 'conversion' that should control them in such little things as school duties, their faithfulness in study, and, in short, integrity and truth of life." This suggests that a new, more fundamentalist religious spirit had gained power on campus. Second, "I knew that he had cherished toward me, for years, a particular dislike, as one of the class termed 'smart or literary women.'" He questioned her foreign language teaching, saying that she was "tinctured with German rationalism" and wondered aloud if French morality went alongside French literature.

Her teaching of Ivanhoe and other novels was criticized, by Haskell and probably by others in the church and town, as well as her tolerance of dancing. A "complaint was made that a copy of The Atlantic Monthly had been seen on her table," and "she had required of her pupils to commit to memory some of Byron's descriptive poetry in connection with certain history study which it was designed thus to illuminate and vitalize. Was not Byron an infidel?"

Surely the Stones' belief in coeducation, as well as their innovative classroom methods, met with church and local disapproval as well. But in addition to what seems today outrageous narrowness and bigotry, there were very real and severe financial problems. "Whatever his other virtues," in the opinion of the authors of the College's 1933 Centennial History, "Dr. Stone appears to have been a very poor financial manager." There is no reason to doubt that assessment, for Stone was a gambler, like most dreamers, and gamblers sometimes lose, especially in hard economic times. We should remember that the financial crisis which came to a head in 1863 built during economic depression and civil war, which of course also drew young men and their tuition payments away from the college.

In 1853 an effort to raise $30,000 in endowment had been launched, but in Samuel Haskell's report on the College in 1864, the total stands at only $20,000, probably most of it in unpaid pledges. The total worth of the institution, in "lands, buildings, apparatus, and accredited paper," was estimated at $46,810 in that year, but the College was operating on a deficit budget, with a debt of $20,545 looming over the heads of the trustees and the Stones. That debt Haskell at least attributed to "the erection of buildings and maintaining the extended course of instruction"—that is, to the Stones' ambitious plans.
The trustees met in June of 1863 to face a crisis. They rejected a fund-raising proposal from the Executive Committee—chaired by Dr. Stone—to raise $100,000 county by county throughout Michigan and to offer, in return, complete tuition waivers. Instead a plan to garner money from the Baptist churches of the state was adopted. While the “Stone plan” does seem impractical, it is significant that the Board opted for church rather than public support of the institution. At this point, Dr. Stone must have sensed the shift in the wind and begun to prepare for the worst. And Mrs. Stone, too, facing increasing pressure from Haskell and his adherents, must have known her days at the College were numbered when her husband brought from the meeting the news that the Executive Committee had been asked to consider whether the Principal of the Female Department ought not to be a man.

When the Board met again on November 4, J. C. Clark, the College’s financial agent, spoke of the need for new leadership to fire the fund-raising effort. In June he had called for “revived faith in God among Trustees and Teachers.” It must have been that night, after the meeting, that James and Lucinda Stone reached their decision, or at least confirmed it between them. The next day, they submitted their resignations together. Mrs. Stone’s account of the breaking point makes clear that to her, an irrevocable change had occurred: “Harassed and hindered and trammeled in my work, the time finally came when I felt that I could never there, realize my ideal of what teaching should be—more—I could not retain my own self-respect and my position in the college . . . and I resigned.”

On the morning of the 6th, she walked into Kalamazoo Hall, pausing on the way in; “it seemed to me every brick in that building had been cemented with my blood—more, my tears.” In the morning chapel session 133 young women faced her, and she broke her news to a seemingly ignorant audience; apparently the students were oblivious to the growing storm. “I tried to tell them a little of what life would probably prove to most of them—plain sailing in a calm sea and then there would come a crisis. Life was full of crises like this and we must meet them with brave hearts. I could hardly utter the words, for I felt that my own heart was breaking. Such a weight lay at it that it stopped my breath. My mouth was dry, and sometimes when I moved my lips to speak, I could utter no sound. I felt as if paralyzed, and when on leaving the chapel my pupils crowded weeping around me, and threw their arms about my neck with such expression of affection and grief as I never thought to call forth in any one, I could not return their embraces by a word or a movement. I felt as thought it were death creeping over me, and more than half believed it was.”
Walking home "mechanically," she went to bed, lying "for hours almost powerless to speak or move. I learned then for the first time in my life the meaning of 'stony grief.'" Late in the day, she returned for some papers. "Coming back, I stopped in the path across the College Park, and turned to look an adieu to the College Building which had been erected at a cost to my own soul, which none but my own soul could ever estimate. A dark cloud curtained all the western sky when as I stood gazing, my tears falling like rain, suddenly it lifted, and the setting sun burst forth flooding the college towers with such a glow of light, that they seem ablaze, and in this sudden glow, I read a promise . . ."186

The cataclysmic news spread quickly, of course, and Mrs. Stone recalled "a scene of excitement such as I never had seen before, and entirely beyond my power to quell. The students draped the college tower in mourning, and tolled the bell till midnight."189 The next morning, when she left her house to go over to the College, a silent row of her pupils waited in the yard to escort her. That morning, in chapel, she spoke of "religious influence" as the source of the great change, and assured them that her teachings were strictly in accord with the Bible.190

The air must have been thick with rumor. One such, which would persist throughout the next dreadful year, was that Dr. Stone had not merely mismanaged funds; he had embezzled them. The source of this one seems to have been T.A. Jones, treasurer of the Board. On November 9, a deputation of senior students arrived at the house on the hill to ask about this story and Dr. Stone responded by saying that he had never even handled College money unless it was given him by the trustees.191

Meanwhile, the students formed a plan. To the horror of the administration, especially the new Acting President, Edward Anderson, something approaching an astonishing three quarters of the student body made known their intent to leave the College; the estimates range from 120 to 150 of the 194 total students.192 Immediately Dr. Stone was charged with having arranged a deal with them beforehand, and he responded by quickly summoning the Board, of which he was still president, to deny the story. Anderson arranged a special faculty vote to expel the students who failed to return, and they responded with a petition for the Stones' reinstatement or else honorable dismissal for those students wishing to leave, which latter request was granted. Most of them did leave, along with a few faculty and trustees as well. A number returned the following fall, but total enrollment was down from 194 to 152.
Meanwhile, in the midst of personal grief and anxiety for the College, the Stones had to face the exigency of their own financial situation. "Mr. Stone," his wife explained, "never received any salary from the college while filling the Presidency and two professorships . . . He did receive a small salary, from the Theological Seminary . . . inadequate for our support." She, of course, had earned nothing and had gone into debt for her new building. The answer to their destitution was immediate: Mrs. Stone opened the Kalamazoo Young Ladies' Seminary in her own home late in 1863, using as well a house next door which they also owned for classroom space.

It is impossible that she did not know that this new enterprise would run afoul of the College authorities. When she repeats that she had no choice, however, we must believe her. She maintained later that President Anderson fully sympathized with her decision, and that subsequent President J. M. Gregory advised her to do it. Needless to say, a large number of the female students who had left the College immediately applied for admission to the new academy, which was instantly full to capacity, leaving, by Mrs. Stone's account, a mere "score" of women at the College.

From students and townspeople and perhaps from faculty, pressure continued to come upon the Trustees to reinstate the Stones. Dr. Stone was offered his theological professorship without the presidency at one point; Mrs. Stone was asked to continue the Female Department on condition that her husband did not return. Their sense of themselves and of the times, however, made them refuse. Gradually the pressure shifted to Mrs. Stone and her new school. A petition came to her from members of the Board, the faculty, and the community asking her either to return to the College or to seek a home beyond Kalamazoo. It was perhaps at this point that she realized that the worst was yet to come, that she was not to be allowed to disappear from the College and continue her vocation in the city she had made her home for twenty years. "It was the Inquisition over again, as far as the laws of today would permit," she said. Sympathetic townspeople presented her with $300 to continue her school. And then one day President Anderson himself arrived at her door. "Mrs. Stone," he said quietly, "do you know what you are doing? You do not know, but I tell you if you do not give up your school and leave Kalamazoo you will see trouble such as you never dreamed of. There will be batteries opened upon you that will make you wish you had taken my advice."

The succeeding events are today a tangle of threat, conspiracy, anger, confused identities, and forged letters that baffles and astonishes a
modern sleuth. The problem for a biographer is that the only extant full account of the next troubled year is Lucinda Stone’s: a long letter to President J. M. Gregory, written in 1868, a morass of detail, full of fury and righteousness. It would be easy for a suspicious eye to read it as the self-justifying, self-aggrandizing outpouring of a proud, ambitious woman bent on painting herself and her husband as martyrs—except that enough objective evidence exists at least to qualify that assessment severely. A sympathetic observer might yet see it all as the sometimes exaggerated, always emotional “last word” of a woman whose pride, whose career, whose marital life and domestic peace were suddenly mortally threatened—not to mention a College to which she had devoted herself. It may not be a perfectly reliable document in all points, but it is surely understandable and on the basis of the evidence mentioned earlier, it is not in any way to be dismissed. It is basically chronological but extremely desultory and sometimes redundant, and it has the additional drawback, for our purposes, of having been written for someone totally familiar with the tortuous plot and the diverse and intriguing cast of characters. Finally, we must accept Mrs. Stone’s account because we have no other, and also perhaps because all evidence depicts her as a woman of strict truthfulness—“Truth unvarnished.” We should also keep in mind the legendary accuracy of the Hinsdale memory. That her truth is acid and angry makes it none the less true. As well as giving us the single complete narrative of what must still rank as the College’s darkest hour, the letter to Gregory has one other merit: It reveals, with painful clarity, its author and the effect of the ordeal upon one who lived through it to carry its legacy of bitterness into a new life.

As Lucinda Stone tells it, then, she began to notice, after Anderson’s chilling threat, whispered conversations among the girls in the hallways of her home. Suddenly some of the pupils, who boarded with a Mrs. Jones, were absent from classes. She called one of them, Abbie Harter, to her and asked the reason, whereupon Abbie, sobbing, told her to see Mrs. Jones, who could tell her what Abbie herself could not. Doing so on January 19, 1864, Mrs. Stone heard for the first time the tale which suddenly, awfully, made Anderson’s implication clear: Mrs. Jones told her that she had it from an unimpeachable source that Dr. Stone, two years before, had been caught in flagrante dilecto with a student one evening in his study. The “unimpeachable source” subsequently turned out to be Allen Curtis, the Jones’ son-in-law, who had been Associate Professor of Latin and Mathematics at the College from 1861-63 and had left on November 4 to assume a new post at the University in Ann Arbor. “Mrs. Stone must know of these things,”
Mrs. Jones had told Abbie Harter, "she certainly knew of an abortion being procured to cover up Dr. Stone's guilt." It was on this same day, according to Mrs. Stone, that another College source broke to them what came to be known as the "Canada story": that Dr. Stone had had a sexual liaison with a servant girl years before and for fourteen years since had been maintaining her and her child in Canada. If Mrs. Stone is right about her dates, the convergence of information and people on January 19 suggests a concerted attack of some sort.

On the evening of the 19th, Samuel Haskell himself appeared at the Stones' house and heard Dr. Stone's denial, which his wife recalled as follows: "I do not claim to be a perfect man, by any means; I am, perhaps, more weak and fallible than most men, but of all these charges, I am as innocent as a child unborn. I am utterly astonished by them; I know not what to make of them. I have no child in Canada, and never had, —any more than you have; —and as to what Curtis says he saw in my study, he might as well say he had seen me commit a murder, and I should know just as well what he meant."

"Overwhelmed, bewildered, petrified," Mrs. Stone left for Detroit that night to attend the deathbed of her sister, Mary Hinsdale Walker, from whose home she had been married twenty-three years before. Upon returning, she and Dr. Stone began investigating the sources of the stories, which, within a week, "had been scattered and broadcast into the community." Anderson and Haskell arrived on January 25 to ask Mrs. Stone again to close her school and return to the College — without her husband, of course. Haskell said he had been aware of these stories for years, but subsequently told her that at a point when the trustees were considering reinstating Dr. Stone, one Joseph W. Hicks, who had assumed James Olney's professorship of Mathematics in 1863 when Olney left for Ann Arbor, had approached him with "proof" of the story concerning the student. Anderson averred that Curtis had told him years ago, during Curtis' own student days at the College, that he himself had witnessed the liaison in the study.

The "case" against Dr. Stone was placed before a church committee of five men, several of them known enemies of the Stones. Dr. Stone protested, pleading for counsel, and was denied. One of the committee commented, "We are not going to have the Phillistines come in to judge Israel." The committee convened on March 1, 1864. Therein began what Lucinda Stone was to call "the strangest moral epidemic of which I ever heard or read." Hicks charged that his own wife, Nellie Davis Hicks, had been subject to an "indecency" from Dr. Stone while she was a student, before her marriage, living in their home. In corroboration he was induced to present a letter dated August, 1858, allegedly
from one Miss D. who had boarded with the Stones a year earlier. The letter, “immodest and vulgar, written in pencil, without postmark or envelope,” recounted that Mrs. Hicks had disclosed the story to her, and also apparently described yet another “impropriety” perpetrated by Dr. Stone while she was “packing her trunk in grandma’s bedroom”—grandma being Dr. Stone’s mother. The presence of Miss D. was clearly critical, and she was brought by the Stones’ son Clement and his wife, Caroline Moore Stone, whom he had married on October 12. Miss D. denied ever having written the letter or suffered the insult. Mrs. Stone argued the improbability of the story on grounds that it would have been unlikely for one of the students to be packing in Dr. Stone’s mother’s room, far away from the student quarters. Finally, when the watermark on the letter dated the paper three years posterior to the alleged date of the letter, the forgery was clearly established. As for Nellie Hicks, Mrs. Stone says that she was loath to testify and extremely ambivalent about the story, making reference to having merely supported her husband in his account. For the Stones, these charges were doubly painful in that Nellie Davis had been one of Mrs. Stone’s girls, an intimate inmate of their household whom they called “our oldest married daughter” and whom Dr. Stone had married to Joseph Hicks a year after the “insult” supposedly occurred. Indeed, Mrs. Stone argued, would it have been likely for the victim of this insult to have continued under the Stones’ roof for six months?

The plot thickens. Allen Curtis’ story had now changed somewhat. In February, according to Mrs. Stone, Haskell told her that Curtis had said merely that he knew of Dr. Stone’s adultery with his student “as if he had seen it.” In place of the first story he now proposed a second, occupying fourteen pages, alleging that his own wife, Mary Jones Curtis, had sustained a sexual relationship with Dr. Stone which she had confessed to her husband on her deathbed in December of 1861. It is difficult to resist the impression that Curtis and Hicks had somehow concurred on a tactic of implicating their wives. If Nellie Hicks’ wifely fidelity made her a relatively safe witness, surely the silence of the tomb made Mary Curtis even safer. This story seems to have been, for the Stones, the crowning horror of the entire proceedings, for Mary Jones, too, had been one of the students for whom they felt an especially parental love, and James Stone had performed her marriage as well. Mrs. Stone expounds at great length evidence of a strong filial relationship between Mary and Dr. Stone which, for her at least, renders most unlikely the possibility of adultery.

As for the Canada story, it was never capable of proof, and investi-
gation revealed a contradiction of dates similar to that involved in the Hicks charges. Mrs. Stone asked how it would be possible for her husband to have communicated with and sent money to a mistress for fourteen years, unknown to his wife, who opened all his mail. President Anderson was obliged to withdraw the story, but in language intimating Dr. Stone's guilt. The committee met through March 25, and on April 1 reported to a full church meeting, which commenced with a prayer from Reverend Williams, paraphrased in Lucinda Stone's most acidic prose: The "prayer was long and loud. His petitions that God would remove the stumbling blocks from the church and purify it from all the stains of the iniquity of that sinful, erring man, Dr. Stone, were interspersed with quotations from various pious hymns, by which he wrought himself into a perspiration of devotion, most moving and pathetic."209

Again, Mrs. Stone's account of the meeting is such that we must believe either that she manipulated the facts with terrible license, or that she and her husband were indeed up against a real conspiracy of the most blatant sort. The committee, she says, reported that the Hicks and Curtis charges had been corroborated, though a minority report was submitted alleging insufficient evidence. Dr. Stone protested vehemently the investigative proceedings and reiterated his willingness to submit to a fair examination of his behavior with counsel provided for himself. Mrs. Stone was prohibited from speaking without a full church vote on the right of women to a voice in the church—a right which the enraged Lucinda Stone argued they had always had and exercised. Haskell put the report to a vote, which perhaps was quite close, since Mrs. Stone says that twice it was voted down and twice he announced to the contrary. She charges that "upon discussion it came out that Mr. Haskell had not regarded the votes of the female members of the church."210 Some of the deacons remonstrated with him, and the meeting adjourned until the following Friday night. At that second meeting, says Mrs. Stone, the minority report was adopted, exonerating Dr. Stone, but "Mr. Haskell and his friends"211—probably the investigating committee—met separately and voted to exclude Dr. Stone from the church.

The controversy surrounding these proceedings and the degree of alarm they raised is clear in a document of protest signed by eleven committee witnesses, including Clement and Carrie Stone:

We, the undersigned, were called as witnesses before the investigating committee, appointed by the First Baptist Church, to inquire into certain reports about Dr. Stone and others, and we affirm and declare to the Church, that we were astonished beyond measure, to witness in
these times and in this place, before a body of professedly Christian men, such a perversion of justice, such illegal reception of evidence as rejected by any civil court, such a determination on the part of some of the committee to reject utterly any and every testimony in Dr. Stone's favor, and to receive everything that would condemn him. The spirit manifested by several of the committee was, in our opinion, more suited to the times and rules of the Inquisition, than to the middle of the nineteenth century, or to a religious denomination always claiming to have taken the lead in the cause of religious liberty; it was, in our esteem, not only unjust to Dr. Stone, but insulting to the witnesses . . . .

We feel constrained to make this statement from simple love of justice, believing that she has been outraged, that a great wrong has been done or attempted, and that it is our duty to protest against such a flagrant violation of Human Rights. 212

Perhaps at the inception of this plan—for plan it surely was—to discredit Dr. and Mrs. Stone with the College, the students, and the community, the planners underestimated the Stones' ability and readiness to fight back. Mrs. Stone commenced church proceedings against Mrs. Jones, who was now denying that she had ever charged Dr. Stone with immoral conduct. Dr. Stone launched a civil suit against Anderson for the Canada story. There may have been a suit against Curtis as well. 213 The Anderson suit won James Stone damages of $8000 and secured Anderson's departure from Kalamazoo.

Mrs. Stone's charges against Mrs. Jones grew into yet another byzantine maze of letters, affirmations, retractions, denials. Haskell's own conduct was at last implicated, in his having conspired with Mr. Jones to cover his wife's duplicity. There was a confrontation between Mrs. Stone and Haskell on September 10, followed by a meeting of Haskell with his deacons on the 24th, essentially to ask him why he had refused to bring Mrs. Stone's allegations of falsehood against Mrs. Jones before the church. Mrs. Stone was present at the meetings. The deacons were disturbed enough by Haskell's behavior to arraign him before another church meeting to answer charges of falsehood. Haskell managed to convince the body assembled that a week of prayer was needed before these charges could be addressed. At this next meeting, which Mrs. Stone says was crowded with people who had not attended for months, 214 a motion was introduced to deny the hand of fellowship to four deacons who had been sympathetic to Mrs. Stone's accusations, to Reverend Slater, and to Lucinda Stone. The grounds for the charges against her were her attacks on the moral character of Haskell and some of his cohorts—"injurious words against a brother." 215

The trial of James Stone and this subsequent exclusion of six of the church's most respected and active members split the Baptist Church
wide open, and the gash went deep into the community. Between fifty and a hundred church members withdrew to form the new Tabernacle Church.\textsuperscript{216} The tight harmony of church, College, and town which the Stones had managed to create a mere ten years earlier had vanished utterly, replaced by partisanship, slander, secrecy, and doubt. The church was riven, the college was still floundering, and the community would feel the aftershock for years.

The motives behind the concerted attack on the Stones after their resignations are difficult to discern over the distance of a century and more. Almost certainly the threat posed by Mrs. Stone’s school—as a draw upon college enrollments and as a public reminder of the rift—was primary: “the trouble Dr. Stone was making was my school, and that alone,” his wife insisted.\textsuperscript{217} Mrs. Stone’s conviction that Haskell feared that James Stone would replace him as minister after leaving the College seems logical, as does her belief that Haskell was after the presidency. “These reasons seem and are unspeakably base,” say Willis Dunbar and Charles Goodsell in the Centennial History, yet they admit, “it is difficult to see what other motives there could have been.”\textsuperscript{218} Allowing for the tendency of a modern observer to see James Stone as a maligned hero, it still seems rational to view the charges of sexual misconduct as fabrications of the conspirators. We can never know what germ of truth may have lain beneath the whirlwind of rumor and innuendo. In the judgement of Goodsell and Dunbar, “that Dr. Stone was indiscreet but not immoral in his relations with women students is probably the truth of the matter.”\textsuperscript{219} Yet, if not immoral, then what does “indiscreet” mean? Too overtly affectionate? Too personal? Flirtatious? He had, we remind ourselves, married one of his students. Perhaps the loving parental relationship with his students which seemed natural, “maternal” in Mrs. Stone was more easily misconstrued in her husband. She dealt largely with young women, but even a female teacher’s affection for her male students is not usually misconstrued as readily as a male teacher’s for young women. Finally, the secret lies with him, and perhaps with her as well. If she ever entertained doubt of her husband, she never revealed it; to the end she staunchly maintained—as others did—that the charges were simply ludicrous. What private questions may have intensified her trials in 1864 belong to her alone.

V

The Stones were nothing if not survivors. They had strong intellects, devoted friends, vast personal resources (though not financial), humor, and New England resiliency. Life in no way ended after the disaster
of 1864, but it is interesting that while Lucinda Stone’s days of reknown and greatest influence were yet to come, James Stone’s finest hour was past. At the 1885 reunion a former student, one of the few who mention the bad days, surmised that “the sagacity and indomitable energy with which he urged his darling enterprise of Kalamazoo College indicate what he would have been capable of unhindered by the malice, jealousy, and bigotry of those who owed him aid and loyal service, and who, before they dealt him that cruel stroke, might well have exclaimed with conscience-stricken Macbeth ere he stabbed the gracious Duncan, ‘Who should against his murderer bar the door, not bear the knife himself.’”

For Lucinda Stone, a sense of history helped her to digest the harrowing experience: “It is an example of what has been in all ages, the fruits of sectarianism or partisanship when these assume the name of religion, and avail themselves of the power and influence of a church to work their mischief.” Although her career as a teacher continued unabated, the severance from the little college, where she saw so much good that she was uniquely fitted to do, was lacerating: “Very painful was my abandonment of a work that seemed so full of promise, and in which I felt a kind of tender sacred enjoyment, akin to that which a mother feels in pouring out her life, to find it again in her children.”

As her powers of assimilation were put to their sorest test in early 1865, with the resignation and trials behind her, the old faith in evolution came to her aid. It was a time of great and painful growth which culminated at last in her ability to bless the darkness: “To the dark spirits more than to bright and prosperous days I think we should all acknowledge we are indebted for the best of all we know.” Her own idea of education as a profoundly changing force came home to her with new impact as she realized the effect of the storms through which she had come: “They are what has made me what I am. They are what I have learned and experienced, transmuted into myself. The woman, the teacher, worker, thinker—whatever I may be, and am they have wrought into all my intellectual, religious, and spiritual life.” That a higher order of being was evolving from the mire of 1864 she insured simply by believing it.

On the day she resigned, she had seen a “promise” in the sun-streaked clouds. Again now she felt a force at work beneath the poverty and regret of her new life: “the illuminated side” of the cloud “will sometimes appear and you will recognize that an angel still walked beside you in the midst of that great darkness.” The sense of a new purpose grew with time and brought her to realize that her work had just begun. In that passage—fundamentally a solitary one, since it
demanded a new definition of her own life—lies her real heroism. She underwent a spiritual transformation the like of which Samuel Haskell would doubtless never know. The fires he fed, consuming her own life, "have yet burned to an intellectual and spiritual liberation that was to me a conversion—a new birth." The precise nature of this rebirth probably remained her secret. But it manifested itself outwardly in a relentless pursuit of project after project until the closing days of her life. She seems to have gained from the trial by fire of her fiftieth year some new energy, surpassing even that which had inspired her young college, and a new determination that the end of one phase must be the start of another, that the growth process is our only salvation.

She hurled herself into her new work, her academy, and her women's club activity. In 1864 she began learning German to supplement her excellent French, and when she travelled, a French or German grammar always went with her. The First Unitarian Church became her new spiritual home, where she found a less hierarchical and dogmatic brand of faith and a religious community traditionally very progressive toward women. Her children were virtually grown now, youngest son Jim turning seventeen in July of 1864. She seems to have had a most affectionate relationship with her first daughter-in-law, Carrie Moore Stone, and she and her husband visited Clement and Carrie in Detroit frequently. It was in returning from one such visit in 1865 when, stopping for breakfast in the Ann Arbor train station, she saw crowds of people sobbing and learned that Abraham Lincoln was dead. The same sight met her at each station between Ann Arbor and Kalamazoo.

The two younger sons, Jim and Horatio, now aged twenty-two, were helping their father in his new enterprise, the Kalamazoo Daily Telegraph, where he drew upon his journalistic experience from Massachusetts. He was later president of the Michigan Publishers' Association. At Christmas time in 1866 came yet another disaster, which more than anything else would direct Lucinda Stone's energies outward into a wide sphere. The house the family had occupied through many of their College years, serving now as the new school, burned to the ground. There were those in the town who "saw, and openly [said that] they saw in the flames the hand of an avenging God." Probably at this time the Stones moved to their home at 144 E. Lovell Street, the present site, appropriately, of the Kalamazoo Gazette building. Neighbors quickly took in the teachers and pupils boarding with the Stones, and the school finished out the year. "But it was teaching under such difficulties and disadvantages that the next summer I discontinued my school, to take a class of young ladies to Europe to continue, by travel, studies which they had pursued under my instruction in school."
Possibly she knew and resigned herself to the fact that her days as a teacher, as she had known them, were over.

From the skeleton of Lucinda Stone's life, which is really all a biographer has, a pattern emerges: triumph and success followed by tragedy, setback, defeat, loss, and then a new crusade. To some extent this is perhaps the rhythm of all human life, but in hers it is very pronounced. She may have made it so, by forging into a new project as the surest means of defeating the darkness and moving the life-spirit along. This time the new endeavor began as an escape from the ashes. The fire forced her to broaden her definition of herself: "I became what might be called a teacher at large." And that fairly describes her career for the remaining three decades of her life.

The 1867 trip to Europe was her second; she had made one earlier with her husband. It was, according to her, the first such trip conducted by a teacher with a serious educational purpose. Exactly as she had been determined to separate female education from genteel and trivial "accomplishments," with which it was closely associated in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, she now sought to keep her brand of foreign study distinct from the usual Grand Tour finishing school provided for the offspring of wealthy Americans. She insisted that her young ladies approach the trip "not as a finishing of the education, but as part of a course." Between 1867 and 1888 she made eight such trips, the last at seventy-four years of age. Dr. Stone accompanied her on only one of them. The group always included a business manager to work out the details, logistical and financial. "She knew exactly where she wanted to go, but was helpless in handling finances." Sometimes this manager was son Jim; once daughter-in-law Carrie. University professors and archeologists were enlisted to act as guides wherever possible, and the students were required to write essays before a visit to a museum or historical site, to insure that they were prepared to understand it. "It was a liberal education to go sight-seeing anywhere with her," one student recalled.

Mrs. Stone insisted on a certain seriousness of demeanor from her groups, well aware as she was of the Ugly American phenomenon: "We say [Europe] sends us mostly of her peasantry the lowest class. It is the possession of money alone that saves thousands who go to Europe every year from being our low class. They were of that class until a successful venture made them rich enough to go abroad and make a display of their folly in Europe." One travelling student observed: "At that time many American ladies going abroad made great pretense of showing their wealth, but this Mrs. Stone would never allow us to do, and we were always compelled to dress plainly, and be modest,
unassuming, and respectful in our behavior, and economical as to the expenditure of money." And the students were not permitted to settle for the tourist's view of the beautiful and historic: "At times we engaged a guide and went into the lower parts of the large cities in order to study the condition of the people. These excursions were made a text for interesting discussions of sociological problems." These travelling schools were Mrs. Stone's chance to explore fully her concept of education as experiential, transcending books and classrooms as well as "legitimate" subject matter. And she and her charges impressed and confused local residents with the spectacle of educated, modest, studious women on their own together in a foreign country.

The travelling school idea had given her one means of fighting back against loss, despair, forces of fate which seemed to want her and her ideas out of the classroom. In the late sixties, another suddenly appeared before her, in the shape of Madelon Stockwell. The daughter of an Albion College professor, she had attended both Albion and Kalamazoo Colleges, where she had excelled in Greek—the subject that had cost her mentor such pain and brought her to seminal realizations about women's education. The Stones decided that the moment was ripe to send a female Kalamazoo College student to the University of Michigan, where she could pursue the subject at an advanced level under the best teachers.

"I had always been greatly interested in the higher education of women," Mrs. Stone wrote, explaining her involvement in Stockwell's case; "it had really been my life work . . . ." She was beginning to realize that her life work could be, must be, much larger than Kalamazoo. Her years there, slowly and carefully integrating the Female and Male Departments and raising the standards of both, had confirmed her belief that only true, full coeducation would answer the needs of women, of the nation, of the age.

Vassar was already open; the next decade would see Wellesley and Smith, where, she later observed, "many, very many are admitted to enter . . . the classes as freshmen, or freshwomen, should it be (?) . . . ." But she continued to prefer the idea of a fully integrated institution to that of a women's college, which had "not the advantage of age and history." This decade of the seventies would likewise see a flood of verbiage on the question of educating men and women together. Mrs. Stone apparently was familiar with all the "theories" of physicians, psychologists, educators, and when in 1874 a volume was planned to respond to Dr. Edward Clarke's Sex in Education, she was asked to contribute. Amidst the uproar she maintained her characteristically serene faith in the idea whose time has come: "Our modes of educa-
It was a particularly American enterprise. Europe, she believed, represented the womanhood of the past—trivialized, artificial, avaricious—while the New World must bring forth a New Woman—serious, self-reliant, modest, practical, socially useful. Neither the male institutions nor the female invaders would defile the other: "The shrines of Minerva will not be desecrated by their presence. Their intellect will be developed, and their affections will be cultivated, and all true womanly virtues fostered in the innermost penetralia even, of that temple where all wisdom, and all art, and all science, are taught; whose patron deity was prophetically made by a mythology, wise beyond its own ken, not a man, not a god—but a goddess, a typical woman."

Such a typical woman was Madelon Stockwell. The timing was perfect; she gave Lucinda Stone the great saving gift of another battle to be fought; or rather, she gave her timely ammunition, as the battle was already underway and the Stones were actively involved in it. It had begun at the State Teachers' Association meeting in Ann Arbor in 1855, where Kalamazoo College professor Daniel Putman had exploded, one by one, the arguments against coeducation and had insisted that the University owed Michigan women a chance. In the spring of 1858, Sarah Burger of Ann Arbor, who had attended the 1853 women's rights conference in Cleveland and heard Lucy Stone and Lucretia Mott, announced her intention of applying for admission, along with several other women. Her application soon followed, with those of Harriet Patton of Ann Arbor and Augusta Chapin of Lansing.

The regents even then were divided, but President Tappan was firmly opposed—and somewhat hysterical, though not atypical:

I sometimes fear we shall have no more women in America. If the Women's Rights sect triumphs, women will try to do the work of men—they will cease to be women while they will fail to become men—they will be something mongrel, hermaphroditic. The men will lose as the women advance, we shall have a community of defeminated women and demasculated men. When we attempt to disturb God's order we produce monstrosities.

At their September meeting that year, the discussion turned on a legal point of considerable significance to women's history in the nineteenth century: whether or not the University statute making eligible for admission "all persons resident of this State" included women, who, according to Blackstone's old precedent, did not have legal "personhood." Ultimately the regents found their loophole: Certain classes of
persons—immoral people, for instance—could be excluded, so even if women were persons, the University was not bound to admit them. And, they concluded, "it would be a misapplication of the funds of the University to appropriate them to the education of women."244 The expert opinion of college presidents across the country was solicited and tended to confirm the regents' tendency—except for the testimony from coeducational institutions.

In June of 1859 the regents received a petition signed by 1476 Michigan residents in favor of opening the University to women, and Sarah Burger renewed her application, with three others, only to be denied once more. James Stone addressed the state legislature on the issue and he and Lucinda lobbied their wide acquaintance, arguing directly with President Tappan. By 1867, public opinion had swung far enough toward the women that the state legislature passed a joint resolution calling for the admission of women. But most of the faculty and President Haven, Tappan's successor, resisted, while the regents continued split. Haven called for a separate State College for Young Ladies, a proposal roundly attacked by James Stone in the pages of the Kalamazoo Telegraph. After a public Greek examination at the University, Professor Boise, the father of Mrs. Stone's former pupil Alice, at the time an unofficial fellow student of Haven's son, "laid one hand upon the shoulder of young Haven, and one upon [Alice] ; and gazing earnestly at Dr. Haven, said in impassioned tones, 'And your son can go on; but my daughter cannot!'"245

Meanwhile, behind the scenes, the Stones continued to push, convincing Madelon Stockwell to apply for admission. In their lobbying and writing, they continually stressed the purely rational and legal argument that the University charter clearly included women. They argued for female and black suffrage on the same constitutional grounds. Among the regents at this point was George Willard, rector of Kalamazoo's Episcopal Church and Latin professor at the College. Once the Stones persuaded him of the morality and legality of coeducation, he began to work on his brethren, repeatedly introducing resolutions into their meetings. His efforts finally prevailed, aided by Haven's about-face, probably in the wake of his realization that a separate female institution was too costly and that the tide had turned anyway. He resigned shortly thereafter, done in by the whole battle. And in early January, 1870, Willard's resolution passed, with one dissenting vote.

An elated Lucinda Stone carried the news herself from Ann Arbor to Kalamazoo, where Madelon Stockwell learned she was to make history. On January 10 she received a letter from the University's
Dear Miss Stockwell,

Since the receipt of your letter of inquiry the regents have adopted a resolution which in effect removes every obstacle to the admission of ladies into the university . . . .

Very respectfully yours,

H. S. Frieze

Stockwell's entrance examination is a story in itself, best told in her own words in a letter to Mrs. Stone:

My examinations in the various authors with whom an acquaintance was required were longer and more severe than those given the young men. Whether this was because the professor wished to escape the charge of partiality, and so leaned too far the other way, or whether it was from curiosity to see what I knew, I cannot tell. Among other passages in Livy I had the celebrated crossing of the Alps and the destruction of the Titans, and the soliloquy beginning with "O divine ether," in "Prometheus Bound," which is in itself a senior study, but I had read it the year before. The professors were kind enough, but they were severe.

As an instance of the irony of fate, the very first recitation I ever made in the university was to give this translation from the "Antigone" of Sophocles: "But it behooves us in the first place to consider this, that we are by nature women, so not able to contend with men . . . ." The professor later denied having chosen Ismene's speech deliberately. Stockwell was admitted as a sophomore—the "she-sophomore," as she was known. Her trial by fire was the double line of male students along the "Diag," through which she had to pass. But as she said in her regular reports to Kalamazoo, after a time it was the women of Ann Arbor who were most hostile to her, while the young men were "very kind." The local newspapers vied with each other in prophecies of doom, whereas two black men had enrolled two years before without a murmur in the press or the University records.

As her teacher had predicted, Madelon Stockwell's career at Ann Arbor was illustrious. Mrs. Stone wrote, with barely disguised glee, "She was especially distinguished in mathematics, in which it was prophesied that women would certainly fail." But she concentrated on her chosen subject and "graduated the first Greek scholar in her class." Looking back, Mrs. Stone wrote, "The event did not turn the world upside down. It did not even lower the standard of scholarship in that excellent institution . . . . Neither did it outrage womanhood nor disturb the general course of nature." But still it was momentous, and Lucinda Stone was never one to veil her pride in significant accomplishments in which she had a hand: "She was the first one to break the ice of an old, old prejudice, and I thank God that I helped her to
do it." The passage of Madelon Stockwell through the doors of the most respected state university in America sent virtual shock waves through academe and was an important milestone in the subsequent history of women’s education. Ironically, 1870 was also the year in which Kalamazoo College awarded a degree to a woman—Catherine V. Eldred—for the first time.

Meanwhile, the Stones had become grandparents with the birth of Charles Perce Stone to Clement and Carrie on Christmas Eve, 1869. With the inauguration of Ulysses S. Grant in 1870, James Stone became postmaster of Kalamazoo, a post he held for four years. But on March 4 darkness came again, with the death of the Stones’ middle son Horatio, at the age of twenty-seven, of causes lost in time.

One striking feature of what remains of Mrs. Stone’s papers and published writing is that she never speaks of her family. Even Dr. Stone is mentioned only in terms of his beliefs or his activities at the College. Her love for him is expressed primarily in her defense of him against his accusers, and there it is such a defense as a loving friend would give. One hungers for some more intimate sense of their mighty partnership, and of their relationship with their sons and daughters-in-law. A remarkable marriage even by modern standards it must have been, at once deeply binding enough to establish and sustain their ability to work together so productively, and roomy enough to allow her powerful character and interests their head. Even Belle Perry longs for the correspondence between them in their years of separation before marriage, "[b]ut the letters were not preserved, and Mrs. Stone lived too much in the present, even up to the close of her life, that no one ever gathered from her any incidents of her courtship, nor what passed between them in correspondence." But that she lived in the present (a questionable conclusion anyway) is not the whole story. It seems that as her life grew more and more public after her departure from Kalamazoo College, she kept her private life in greater reserve. That she was a woman of strong affections and maternal impulses is beyond doubt, from the testimony of friends and students. The image of her teaching her girls with little Jim Stone on her lap is indelible. But what sorrow she endured after the death of her second son, like the other perhaps deepest feelings of her life, apart from her devotion to her students, was kept very close to her heart.

1871 saw another trip abroad, to Britain, Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany, France, Italy, and Austria. Mrs. Stone took letters of introduction from Ralph Waldo Emerson to enable her to meet some of the objects of her admiration, such as Elizabeth Gaskell. She made a pil-
grimage to the home of the daughter of Robert Burns, her childhood hero. The old woman thought her American visitor was Mrs. Stowe and congratulated her on *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. She also stopped at Haworth to pay tribute to the Brontës. In London she heard with satisfaction F. D. Maurice preaching against the doctrine of hell, and she met George Frederick Watts in his studio. In Parliament she heard the great antagonists of the day, Gladstone and Disraeli. The dour Queen Victoria did not impress her much in passing. In Paris she heard Victor Hugo give a funeral oration in which he touched very sympathetic chords: "His reverence for woman, his comprehension of what she might be as a power and a holy influence in the world, of her equality with man as a soul from God, grow upon me every time I recall that occasion."254

The German army on parade repelled her, as did military shows in general, in its exhibitionistic machismo: "it was to me a most impressive lesson as to the foolishness and frippery with which greatness must clothe itself when it is on the wrong track. It seemed to me beneath real manhood to deck itself out in this manner. This is the silly side of war."255 With her Ruskinian sense of the human cost of beauty, she contemplated the probable wages of a picturesque boatman on the Rhine, and considered giving him money: "Would he take it as I really meant it—as a penitent's offering?"256 And the famous laceworks of Brussels elicited a similar reaction: It was a lesson in economics, she said, to "see the poor women at work, and from actual sight learn to estimate the real cost of Brussels lace."257

In the next year came a somewhat more unusual journey. This time she took a group to Italy, from whence they went south through the Adriatic, avoiding Greece reluctantly because of a cholera outbreak, and into Egypt, then back through the Suez into Palestine and Syria. Egypt was a revelation, providing her with a sense of ancient human civilization upon which she drew regularly for the rest of her life in explaining the roots of the modern. The challenge of Eastern cultures seemed to expand her sense of diversity and relativity. She admired the Eastern ability to tolerate what seems chaos to the eyes of Westerners, who cannot "withdraw our thoughts" from what we see long enough to understand it on its own terms.258 In Cairo she visited a girls' school where the traditional veils were laid aside, and she was moved by a dragoman's remark, when she asked him why his wife was veiled, that she was ashamed to be a woman.259 Her observation was that "we call it heathenish for Egyptian women to veil their faces, but has not the network veil to hide women in the Parliament Houses in London the same genealogy as the veil of Egyptian women?"260
Everywhere she tested her ideas; one of her favorite memories was discussing coeducation with Dom Pedro, Emperor of Brazil, atop the Great Pyramid.

In 1873 she made a trip east, where, in Boston, she visited the Sorosis and New England Women's Clubs. Both had been founded in 1868, the former as a protest on the part of a group of women who had been excluded from a dinner for Charles Dickens sponsored by the New York Press Club. The New England Women's Club had a less defensive origin and included men as members. Mrs. Stone observed both in action, studied their constitutions, and came home to Kalamazoo bearing copies—and an idea. Since the 1852 organization of the Ladies' Library Association, the concept of women's clubs with at least a partially educational aim had spread throughout the state, and her expertise was usually solicited in the form of advice or lectures. Elsewhere in the West clubs were springing up, bearing names like Brontë (Madison, Wisconsin) and Minerva (New Harmony, Indiana). She played a leading role in the Kalamazoo club throughout the sixties and seems to have attempted to lead it in a more clearly educational direction. She offered four courses in history, twelve or twenty weeks in length, between 1867 and 1869 and a Shakespeare course in 1870. The charge was at first five dollars, then three, with profits split between the L.L.A. and herself. On the strength of the popularity of these courses she suggested to the Association that they constitute under their auspices a subsidiary for specifically educational purposes, on the model of the clubs she had visited in the East.

Again, some members balked. " Didn't it look too much like women's rights?" But previous success prevailed. The name of the new organization was at first to be the Kalamazoo Women's Club, but it was "softened down to Ladies' Library Club." Immediately Mrs. Stone was elected the club's first president. Meeting for the first time on January 20th, 1873, the club had its own officers and programs were planned by four committees, each in charge of one Monday afternoon per month: Art and Literature, Science and Education, History, and Miscellaneous. Any woman could join for one dollar, and fees went to the L.L.A. treasury. Often College faculty taught the weekly seminars, as did Dr. and Mrs. Stone. With fourteen members at its inception, the club grew within a few years to over two hundred. Looking back Mrs. Stone said, "I think it is not extravagant to say that it has done more to [promote intellectual culture] than all the schools, the college, and the Female Seminary together, in the town." In a day when "women's clubs" commonly are taken less than ser-
iously, it is important to understand this phenomenon in the light in which Lucinda Stone saw it and taught others to see it. The club movement belongs to a phase of the larger women's movement in the nineteenth century which one historian has called “Domestic Feminism.” While the Cult of True Womanhood set up an incapacitating paradox by at once glorifying the feminine and incarcerating women within the very qualities it hallowed, women's clubs allowed them to “leave the confines of the home without abandoning domestic values.” Thus they offered a brand of activism more congenial to a large spectrum of women than suffragism. Clubs are probably best understood as one vehicle through which feminism “filtered down” to the typically moderate woman and changed her life most immediately.

The clubs were sometimes the most advanced educational organs in a town. In Kalamazoo the women's club provided the city's sole library for years. Clubs brought women together and taught them to see their common interest, giving them an intellectual and social purpose and a sense of personal responsibility beyond domestic duties. Mrs. Stone saw the breakdown of artificial boundaries between women as one of the chief benefits of the club movement: “It has developed in a spirit of friendliness in them, a desire to know one another, and a feeling of common interest in the highest good of sister women. Our churches used to foster this feeling in days past; but . . . churches don't do so any longer.” She “saw in the women's club movement an important influence in breaking down the barriers of denominational prejudice, as well as that narrow spirit which could confine a woman's interest and association in life to those of 'her own set.'” They were a way of sharing the wealth of those women who had been educated, had travelled, had read. And they were a forum in which women could apprise themselves of social issues and political events in an atmosphere where, for the most part, men were not present and they could learn to express views and ask questions. Lucinda Stone, understanding the problem of female reticence, always approved most heartily of those clubs where the weekly or monthly program came from the membership rather than from an outside source: “Voluntarily very few of the ladies will sufficiently overcome their diffidence as ever to utter an opinion or offer a criticism.” The Kalamazoo Library Club had a resident critic, highly unpopular, so that speakers could learn a certain professionalism.

But most importantly, clubs were a means for women to educate themselves at a time when higher education was still largely closed or unavailable to them. Mrs. Stone saw the club movement as “but another phase of educational progress,” that irresistible force which
was sweeping women onward. Part of its attraction for her was that women were doing something for themselves: “in the meantime, while the world has been discussing the question of where women may properly be educated ... women themselves ... have, by the thousands, and tens of thousands in our country, laid out for themselves elective, or what we have termed ‘post-graduate’ courses of study which they are pursuing in associations which they call ‘clubs,’ and which, more than Vassar, and Smith, and Wellesley Colleges, are the real institutions at present educating American women.”

It is characteristic of her that she co-opted the derogatory public appellation of women’s clubs as “the Middle-Aged Woman’s University,” using it completely seriously. Because the clubs encompassed a wider spectrum of women and because they were directly involved in the life of their communities, “[t]hey have effected a revolution in the ideas of women’s education, quite as important, and far more wide spreading than the admission of women to our colleges, formerly open only to men.”

Mrs. Stone’s career thus recapitulated what she saw as the progress of women’s education in the nineteenth century: from female seminaries and “departments” to coeducation to the continuing education of older women who had missed the opening of formal institutions to women. The next phase of her life was “this ‘post-graduate education’ that is going on all over the country, especially in our own state,” the consuming project of her middle and old age, and it had an especially powerful draw upon her in addressing primarily older women: “The women who lacked early opportunities and who hungered for knowledge appealed to Mrs. Stone in a way which would be difficult for one to understand who did not know her closely.”

The source of this appeal, of course, lay sixty years back in Hinesburg.

As the clubs sprang up across the state, her itinerary became ever more crowded. On the first Monday of the month she was in Detroit, lecturing on art to the women’s club there and visiting her son. She served consistently on the L.L.A. Board of Directors and brought back for the club’s growing collections pictures, sculpture, and books from abroad, as well as slides for the clubs megalithoscope. In 1873 she offered another course, “Series of Conversations on Foreign Countries and Travel.” And in May of 1878 she saw the L.L.A. take possession of its elaborate new home on Park Street, the first structure in the country built by and for a women’s organization. In her eighties she was a member of at least fifty women’s groups throughout the state, all of whom she visited, lectured to, advised, corresponded with regularly. In the 1870’s she launched her “Club Talks,” weekly newspaper columns primarily in Kalamazoo, Port Huron, and Detroit papers, in
which she explored, in detail and depth, books, works of art, historical figures, mythology, religion, current issues, questions submitted by readers. With striking frequency these small essays deal with women and ideas about women: Madame Necker, Madame de Stael, a poet of Michelangelo's time named Vittoria Colonna, "Notable Women of the Times of Francis I, Henry VIII, and Charles V," "Learned Women of Bologna." Obviously it was her intent that this post-graduate course offer women a revised curriculum in which they were included.

Her new journalistic career was facilitated by that of her youngest son. Jim Stone had left Kalamazoo by 1874, when he was publishing the *Port Huron Times*. In 1878 he moved to Detroit and took over the *Post and Tribune* (later *Tribune*), which he came to own and where most of the Club Talks appeared. In addition to running his printing company, he also served as Internal Revenue Collector for the city and was involved with other periodicals. On December 3, 1879, he married Margaret Clare Webster of Plymouth, New Hampshire, and the couple returned to Detroit to settle, where his parents visited regularly.

Mrs. Stone's life during these years was remarkably mobile. In 1875 she had taken a group to Europe again, meeting Garibaldi and Mazzini in Italy. The grandeur of Rome left her somewhat cold, so she concentrated on the Italian children. She commented caustically on the political dimension of the Roman Church hierarchy—the riches, the pomp and circumstance, juxtaposed with the poor, adoring populace. In May of 1879 a trip to Philadelphia included a children's hospital, where her considerations of the role of women in social reform were preserved in a Club Talk appearing in her son's paper:

... it is generously provided for, and well supported and conducted almost entirely by men, though some of the attendant physicians are women. It would seem most suitable that they should be, for while women are especially fitted by nature for the care of children, I can but think that they, feeling with their mother hearts, as well as scientifically recognizing the enormity of the sins of ignorance which entail such suffering upon children, will, more than men, turn preachers against them. They will seek out ignorant mothers and enlighten them, and explain to them that their children have had to suffer the penalty of their errors.

When "female qualities" are revalued, in other words, head and heart can finally cooperate and progress is sure. This excerpt reveals once more her special pleasure in seeing women helping other women, as well as her sense of the need for women physicians.

Fall of the year saw another trip abroad, this time to England, Ger-
many, Switzerland, France, and Spain. At all her stops now she was sending home columns for her club women, vicarious foreign study courses. At sixty-five she was climbing the Alps, glorying in Mt. Blanc; but the bullfights of Madrid did not impress her as other than organized barbarism, animal lover that she was. There she met with James Russell Lowell, American Ambassador to the Spanish court, with whose kinswoman she was travelling, and she saw King Alfonso XII. A trip the following year took her entourage, among other places, to Madame de Stael’s villa. Voluminous column inches treated her readers to her observations on the life of another woman who had paid a large price for the privilege of exercising her remarkable mind.

The new decade brought her first granddaughter, Carrie Lucile Stone, born to Clement and Carrie on May 13. The next year Jim and Margaret began their family with Samuel Webster Stone, called Webster, born in Detroit on October 24. He was followed two years later by a sister who bore an honored name, Lucile Hinsdale Stone ("Lucile" was her grandmother’s choice), born February 19, 1883; and the next year by a brother who commemorated his grandfather: James Blinn Stone, born March 11, 1885, and always called Blinn.

In the spring of 1891 Lucinda Stone went home again, back to Hinesburg for the first time in thirty-five years. Writing back to her club women, she commented that she found at the University of Vermont only a very few women students in comparison to the University of Michigan.

Several projects at this time took her to the Eastern part of Michigan. She was giving history lessons to Detroit women at a rate of five dollars for fifteen lessons, and she and James were deeply involved, from 1880 to 1882, in plans for an experimental women’s school, combining practical training with a more traditional academic course. To be built on the banks of the St. Clair River, the school, founded by Caroline Farrand-Ballentine, was named for Mary Somerville, the Scottish scientist who had died in 1872. The short-lived Somerville School belongs to a movement toward vocational education for women which spread during the closing decades of the nineteenth century and the opening decades of the twentieth. The school flourished briefly and died, but points to the Stones’ continuing interest in the broadest range of possibilities for women’s education.

On the many trips across the state to Detroit, Lucinda Stone often stopped at Battle Creek to visit the family of Samuel J. Titus, the son of her closest girlhood friend in Hinesburg. Battle Creek was also the final home of one of the century’s true legends, Sojourner Truth, who had settled there in the fifties and worked the Underground Railroad. Born in slavery sometime in the late eighteenth century, Sojourn-
er Truth, then Isabella, was freed by the New York Emancipation Act of 1827 and had managed the near-miracle of regaining custody of her son, after he had been sold, through the courts. Travelling widely, she preached abolition and women's rights, supporting herself through domestic work. Mrs. Stone continued to visit her until her death in 1883 at probably over a hundred years of age. She encouraged Sojourner to learn to read and sometimes asked rather silly questions, such as “Well, Sojourner, this is better than slavery, isn't it?” to which the old women responded, “Why, bless you, honey, heaven's better'n hell.” The two seem to have found a commonality; Mrs. Stone relished Sojourner's response to a pompous Battle Creek minister who followed abolitionist Parker Pillsbury (a classmate of James Stone at Andover) at the podium. The minister seems to have launched into an extended apology to the deity for allowing Pillsbury's unrighteousness to utter itself, when Sojourner stood and said quietly, “Let the little brother be comforted; he needn't be afear'd of the wrath of the Lord, for I don't 'spect the Lord ever hear'n tell of him.” Mrs. Stone heard Sojourner's tales of slavery and was interested in her sense of her own mission: “It was Sojourner’s belief that God had called her out of slavery just as much as He did Moses. She believed she heard an audible voice. She has told me this story many times. I never went to Battle Creek without seeing Sojourner if possible, and she came to see me many times.”

On her deathbed, Sojourner shared a last vision with her friend: “I’ve been thinkin’ all day of the Infinite. The Infinite, chile! Think on it—what a word it is! The Infinite, and you and I are in it, we’re a part on’t!” The flash of her dark eyes literally drove Mrs. Stone back from the bed. No human being, she said later, had ever given her such a clear idea of the Infinite.

She was about to turn seventy the following year; perhaps in Sojourner’s eyes she saw for the first time her own impending confrontation with the Infinite. But if aging frightened her, no one knew it. Her friend the Reverend Caroline Bartlett Crane used her as an example of Wendell Phillips’ formula for eternal youth: “Ally yourself early with an unpopular but righteous cause.” Mrs. Stone continued to battle the demons of the past and the clouds of the future by seizing the day, taking on new causes and projects as they presented themselves—which they did with increasing regularity as her name became known throughout the state and the nation. “Any woman with a mission, real or otherwise, found a patient, listening ear, and the flickering flame of an embryo genius was fanned back into life by the breath of her kindness.” On January 7, 1882, she resigned from the
Emancipated Spirits

Library Club Board and was made its first honorary lifetime member. But her involvement with her other clubs continued and this, plus her travel—there were two final trips abroad in the 1880's—and her contact with her old students, were her elixir of youth: "keeping abreast of and in sympathy with the latest thought and youngest feeling, she ever retained the love of the young, the middle-aged, and the old, alike . . . ."261

The avid conference-going of her seventies was one means of sustaining this vital contact with the dynamic present. In August of 1883 she went to Minneapolis to attend a meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, of which her kinswoman Maria Mitchell had been the first female member. Several old pupils arranged a reunion at the Lake Minnetonka home of Mrs. W. W. Huntington. At their request she delivered one of her old "Friday talks." So powerful was the nostalgia that afterwards a group of alums hatched a plan for a full-scale reunion to take place in Kalamazoo two years later. Twenty of them living in Kalamazoo met during Commencement Week, on June 18, 1885, to make definite plans. They divided into committees—we note the name of Madelon Stockwell Turner on the reception committee—and the invitation committee, chaired by Mollie Gibbs, issued the following call, after much exhaustive research with the post office:

The former pupils of Dr. and Mrs. J. A. B. Stone, living in Kalamazoo, send to you, our associates and comrades in study, a cordial greeting, and respectfully invite you to meet them in their city, September 23rd and 24th, for a grand Re-union of the Branch, College, and Seminary students during the years from 1843-1848.

The return of the former teachers to their old home in Kalamazoo, is suggested as an appropriate occasion for the expression of a grateful recognition of their self-denying labors during so many years—labors that have contributed so much towards making our beautiful city eminent for its schools, colleges and ladies' seminaries, its literary clubs, and the general intellectual tendencies of its people.

This gathering will afford a happy opportunity for the renewal of former friendships, and the perpetuation of the sentiment of "Auld Lang Syne."262

Invitations were sent to as many addresses as could be procured, and announcements were issued to the press of Michigan and elsewhere to try to apprise those whose residences were unknown.

And they came, from Michigan, Ohio, Iowa, Indiana, Minnesota, Illinois, New York, Kansas, Missouri, Colorado, Texas. Three hundred
of them converted upon the city in late September. On Wednesday evening, the 23rd, the group met in the Presbyterian Church on Bronson Park, near the site of the Old Branch. Henry Hoyt spoke a general welcome to the Stones, and Dr. Stone responded, in his jovial, gentle way, saying that the gathering was “enough to make a very Stone vocal—spontaneously vocal.” After his reminiscences of coming to Kalamazoo with his bride and of the old Branch days, W. C. Ransom responded from an old student’s vantage point. And then Mrs. Stone rose to speak, at much greater length, characteristically, than her husband. About her students and her philosophy of education she spoke, challenging the grey-haired men and women before her with a litany of questions drawn directly from her own rocky road over the past twenty years: “in what has your soul grown since then? In what is it more to live to-day than when you were young and life was so full of hope and bloom and promise? What, since then, through love, and the sacrifice of self, that helps a brother man, have you learned of love to God? . . . What have you learned of gain through loss?” Then she cast her memory over the various structures in which she had taught the people assembled there. Only briefly did she touch upon the dark days of the sixties: “Another school farther up the hill is connected with most dear faces, here before me—with pleasant and rewarding work as well as with trials, with which no former ones compared, but which yet have taught me the best and holiest that I know.” After her talk, the many letters of regret from all over the country were read, followed by poems and an historical overview of the Stone years by A. D. P. Van Buren. On Thursday a “collation” took place, including a number of speeches, toasts, readings from the old Mirror. Over and over one metaphor colors the students’ sentiments. Envisioning meeting again in heaven, they imagine a recreation of the old Branch days: “the unending reunion which awaits the faithful teachers and pupils, in the Mansion planned by the Heavenly Father for us.” In their minds, the Stones’ idea of education as an imitation of the divine became quite literal. A “Grand Social Re­Union” closed the gathering.

For the Stones, the event must have been something approaching a vindication of their lives at the College. For the students, it was a final chance to be children again, under the tutelage of kind, demanding, inspiring parents. They departed with the image of the Stones together on the platform, white-haired but not really much changed, quick of eye and wit and tongue—or, as one who could not attend beautifully described them in a letter read on Wednesday night, “he still brave and blythe, she self-poised and thoughtful, refusing to grow old.”
The organizers of the reunion had been none too early in their planning. Two years later, on October 3, 1887, Clement Stone died at forty-six, leaving a young widow and children seventeen and seven. Seven months later, on May 19, 1888, James Stone was "seized with one of those paroxysms of pain," probably a heart attack, while visiting his son Jim in Detroit, and died almost immediately. He had a long life, seventy-eight years, forty-eight of them spent as half of a truly rare partnership in learning and building. Ironically enough, it is described in glowing terms by none other than Samuel Haskell: "they twain have been one flesh and one spirit in these labors . . . . Their work has been multiform and multiplex. There is nothing which they have not touched, from the gravel beneath all material foundation stones, to the finial of each pupil's edification in learning and character." In James Stone's later years, after his retirement from public service and journalism, he still contributed whole-heartedly to his wife's work, lecturing for her clubs, writing articles, participating in the Somerville School enterprise, travelling abroad with her groups. The last personal glimpse of him is a memory of his granddaughter Lucile, aged five when he died: "One of my earliest recollections is of walking to church beside my dear Grandfather Stone . . . that dear old gentleman with his silk hat and gold headed cane. How we children loved him, the few years we had him!"

Lucinda Stone's grief is reflected only once in her preserved correspondence, in a letter to a Mrs. D. A. Blodgett, who had lost a husband after extended illness. The letter suggests that James Stone perhaps had been suffering for longer than his sudden death would suggest. Mrs. Blodgett has referred to "the memory of the suffering endured before the rest came," to which Mrs. Stone responds, "I know well what this is. My experience is like that of George Eliot, there is no cure for it but time and over much work." The comparison to George Eliot is illuminating, suggesting that Mrs. Stone saw her marriage as similar in its elements of partnership and mutual respect to the union of George Eliot—Marian Evans—to George Henry Lewes, who had died in 1878, well before the famed novelist with whom he lived. It does not surprise us that "over much work" was the antidote Lucinda Stone prescribed herself. Her work was uninterrupted; in fact, 1888 saw her final trip abroad at the age of seventy-four. Included in her group this time was Governor Bagley's wife, and the memorable event was an interview with Admiral Dewey. While the loneliness after the deprivation of husband and son within one year can only have been
enormous, she, more than many widows, had stored up resources to combat it. It is worth wondering whether she would have agreed with Haskell's "one flesh" description of her marriage. That they moved as a united force is certain, but our impression is that the force of that unity came from the strength of two distinct personalities.

Now she embarked upon life alone. Her mother-in-law had died in 1882 at ninety-three. With her remaining son, Jim, her relationship deepened. What was needed was a new project, and within a short time a fine one presented itself. In a sense it represented a continuation of the Madelon Stockwell enterprise which twenty years before had lifted her from the ruins of her life as a Kalamazoo teacher. Now, observing the growth of coeducation, and also perhaps looking back over her own near half-century of involvement in the development of women, she saw the missing piece. She describes it in a Club Talk of the 90's, which begins on the subject of the continued resistance to coeducation:

Whatever these objections are, they are just as great in regard to sending young men [to coed institutions] as to sending young women, for these objections lie in the line of manners and morality. We can never have a true civilization until morality is measured by the thing done and the motive in doing it, rather than by the person who does it, man or woman. If I could make the environment for the young women in the University of Michigan, for example, I would greatly prefer sending a daughter there—or a son either—than to any exclusively female or male college. But the University of Michigan, which may be taken for as high an example of co-education as any that exists, never will nor can be the best place to educate boys or girls until there are earnest, noble, broadly educated women on the faculty—until there are such women in all departments to which women are admitted—women from the foundation up—women on the board of regents—women who will see what women need, as men can never see it—noble, high-minded women who have had all the advantages that the world can give them, working side by side with just as noble, high-minded broadly educated men.291

In April of 1890 she proposed, in one of her articles, the establishment of "a memorial professorship to our mothers who longed to see the intellectual sunlight of our day and died without the sight . . . ." This, then, was to be her final effort in honor of her mother's blighted life: to see women on the University of Michigan faculty. She kept another familial spirit in mind as well: "Such a professorship should at once be founded and filled by a noble, truly educated woman who would be, in the department she should fill, as worthy of the place and honor in it, as Maria Mitchell was, of honor in her department of astronomy at Vassar College." Again she argued that this reform was an historical inevitability, only awaiting human assistance to be born: "In this, as in every other noble undertaking, I would like to see men and women
working together . . . [I]n this they will only be working with the
trend of the times, the spirit of the age. And what is this but what we
call God in history?" 292

At the commencement exercises in Ann Arbor that June, the Uni-
versity bestowed upon Lucinda Stone an honorary Ph.D., only the
second to go to a woman from that institution. “Dr. Stone,” as some of
her friends took to calling her, responded in characteristic fashion with
a letter to President James B. Angell on July 26, 1890, proposing to
raise $150,000 from Michigan women to endow a chair of Social
Science and Ethics to be filled by a woman. The women’s club network
could be easily activated; they wanted only Angell’s approval, or at
least his permission to act. He responded on August 2 with a letter
whose delicate specifications are only nearly as remarkable as its nega-
tive grammar:

While I probably do not share your views as to the necessity of such
an appointment, I am quite ready to admit that a woman of tact and
sense might help the young women in some ways as I cannot. And
personally I should have no objection to seeing such a woman in our
faculty, when a vacancy in a chair especially suited to make her most
helpful occurs, and when the woman for the place is found. It would
hardly be asked that a good man be displaced to make a place for a
woman, but too great care could not be taken as to the first ap­
pointment, both in respect to the chair and to the person. 293

Apart from his having missed the point—that a chair was to be en-
dowed anew—the interesting aspect of their correspondence is the
distinction between his sense of fairly neutral equity—cloaked in
reservations—and Mrs. Stone’s sense of the positive value of women on
a faculty.

If Angell thought he had stalled her, he was wrong. On September
26, an open letter to the regents from Mrs. Stone appeared, calling
for the opening of the faculty to women. She reminded the gentlemen
of the Madelon Stockwell case twenty years before, and then stated
her case, beginning, of course, with an appeal to the inalterable law of
progress—and an oblique allusion to Thomas Wentworth Higginson:

Now one step of advance always leads on to another step forward.
Women should not have been permitted to learn the alphabet if fur­
ther demands were to be denied them. The regents of the University
in that earlier day should have been reminded by the great German
poet that “Ever the woman soul leads upward and on.” But for
women and, it is fast being conceded, for the world, “they builded
better than they knew” in letting them into the University, and out­
witted themselves if they meant to curb their privileges in the future,
for in nothing is it truer than in learning, “that increase of appetite
grows by what it feeds upon” . . .
But I now see and feel that an institution is not really co-educational until it is co-educating—until men and women both and together form the teaching force and influence of that institution—until the girls in the University can be brought into association with superior, cultivated, scholarly, accomplished women in the faculty of teachers, as well as men of the same grade of scholarly attainments.

Her argument rested on two points. One was justice for the students: "it seems well and proper and needful that among 115 professors and instructors, nearly 400 women should claim that some proportion of these teachers should be women, to whom they can more naturally and familiarly resort for counsel and advice in a thousand matters than they can to the very best and wisest of men." Doubtless her own sense of the critical role she had played in and out of the classroom for her girls contributed to this surprisingly modern sense of the importance of female faculty. Her second point was equity for the prospective teachers: "For while many young men not so noted for either natural gifts or scholarly attainments during their course of study as some of their young women classmates, have been invited back as instructors and professors in the same institution, the highest and most gratifying compliment that could possibly be paid them, the young women graduates have been obliged to take inferior positions in High Schools and Seminaries of lower grade and their best attainments which are what the world needs and for which they labored as assiduously as the young men, are in a measure lost to the world, or at least they are misplaced and are but half felt."294

Step two was the constitution of a Women's Auxiliary Association of the University of Michigan for the express purpose of raising money and finding likely candidates. Lucinda Stone was chosen Executive Secretary. "It is asked of you," said the Association's initial document to the regents, "that you shall give the Association your endorsement and recommendation, and that you shall approve of the aims it is pursuing and accept the services of those whom it offers to you; and give them such titles in the teaching body of your University as they shall be fairly entitled to." Three specifications were made: first, that the Association intended to solicit contributions beyond the scope of the University's regular fund-raising; second, that no religious tests were to restrict employment; and third, that "[c]areful inquiry and investigation has shown that one reason why a great many young women go elsewhere for higher education, is because their sex has no representation upon the teaching force of this University."295 Privately, Mrs. Stone expressed her sense of the requirements for the prospective candidate to President Angell: "Superior ability, distinguished attain-
ments, . . . irreprouachable character, and a high sense of its value in students . . . [and] the manners of a true lady. As for religious tests . . . undipped people may be as good as dipped if their hearts are clean. In short, let the creed of the teacher be the teacher's life."295 The Association membership agreed on another interesting point: "the marriage of any person employed under these funds shall never be held a disqualification in any respect, whatever, from the continuing of such employment."297 It was still very much the rule that women who married were summarily dismissed from teaching and other posts.

In the ranks of the Association was an alumnus named J. B. Walmsley, who had sought out Lucinda Stone about the idea and pledged $20,000 of his own money. On the strength of his enthusiasm and that of other alumni, Mrs. Stone continued her letters to Angell. The Michigan graduates "say they are older now and wiser, they see things in a different light and wish that, when they were in the University, they could have come more closely in contact with women . . . ."298 In the same letter she nominated Miss Eugenie Galloo to the French Department. Though her greater interest was in the original idea of the Social Science and Ethics professorship—a chair in a much less traditionally female field—she seized a wedge where she found one. Walmsley had thoroughly investigated Miss Galloo and negotiated with her and her family, the letters flying ceaselessly between Kalamazoo and wherever he was.

Meanwhile, in the early months of 1891, the wealthy and influential citizens of Michigan and beyond received letters from Lucinda Stone, often very long, imploring their help. She presents herself most often as a great admirer of the University whose plan is intended to benefit it. "I am very proud of our University," she writes to Senator John Benson, 13th District. "I think the advantages it offers to students are magnificent. But I should not be willing to send a daughter there under its present conditions—without some woman in capacity of teacher—indeed without a number of women teachers of the same ranks as the male professors and of scholarly acquirements quite equal . . . ."299 She gauged her audience with obvious care. As she wrote to the senator as a constituent who might boycott the institution, she writes Mrs. Frank Leslie from a much more directly female point of view: "I want this done for women. Think of the millions that have gone to endow colleges, universities, theological seminaries for men, while almost nothing has been done for women." And her requirements for equity are quite clear: "Michigan University is [coeducational] in all but that which I wish to see established, to make it co-educating: professorial chairs filled by women, somewhat proportionate to the number of
young women to the young men in the university"—a goal to make
even the modern affirmative action officer quake.

For Thomas W. Palmer, Senator and president of the upcoming
Columbian Exposition, she changes tactics. First she lays out her plans
quite explicitly, ending with an appeal to motherhood: “My first object
is to see a professorship endowed for the medical department”—a
small change of aim. “Secondly, the department of physical culture, the
gymnasium for which so many of the alumnae are working. For this
there must surely be a professor[,] and then my pet-professorship if
I may so call it, for which I am working with the most zeal of any, is
a professorship which I would call Social Ethics, to be filled by the
grandest woman we can obtain to fill it. This, I want to be, a memorial
professorship to good women who lived before this new time with its
increased advantages for women, came to cheer their hearts.” Surely,
she goes on to say, Senator Palmer’s own mother was one such good
woman. Then comes the rational and patriotic argument: “It is really
the declaration of a nobler independence than was that first declara­
tion of which this is really but the legitimate outcome and evolution.”
And finally, she appeals from a male point of view: “the young men
need quite as much the influence and association of highly educated,
superior and mature women, as the young women do.” In fact, Mrs.
Stone believed this deeply. Young men away from home for the first
time are likely, she said, to come under influences which undermine
respect for women. Noble women in front of their classrooms could
counteract that pressure and in general lend the gentling, humanizing
influence she saw them exercising throughout society: “What an in­
fluence upon students whom they met daily in their classes might such
women exert in regard to the purpose and life of the students! Would
the rude and brutal tricks of hazing be considered a glory to real man­
hood by students accustomed to meet women of learning, true ac­
complishments and gracious manners, and mother instincts in their
classes every day?”

Always, in soliciting support for an idea, Mrs. Stone’s attitude is that
surely the recipient will agree with her aim if he or she only under­
stands it well enough. She took recalcitrance and refusal in stride,
giving as good as she got. To Roger W. Butterfield, who objected that
women professors would surely create a constant turnover in the
faculty because they were more likely to leave upon marrying, she
cites the frequency of male faculty members’ departures for greener
academic pastures, and then adds, tongue only slightly in cheek, “As
far as I have observed learned women are not apt to be very attrac­
tive to gentlemen.” She did become impatient with the constant
question—still only too familiar today—of where a qualified woman was to be found. "The newspapers . . . contain every week a list of women fitted for places that it was once deemed impossible and incredible that they should ever occupy," she wrote.\textsuperscript{305} And after all, the alumnae lists of the University itself generated one hundred new names annually.

In pursuing her causes, Mrs. Stone generally sought expert advice. In this latest quest she wrote to Mrs. A. A. F. Johnston, principal at Oberlin, asking her reaction to the project and requesting a description of her own situation. Mrs. Johnston wrote back most genially, stating her salary to be exactly that of her male counterparts and agreeing completely with Mrs. Stone's object: "It is very certain that if young women are to be educated in any school there should be women on the faculty."\textsuperscript{306}

After this enormous outlay of energy, the outcome is obscured by time. The professorship was not endowed—there was no such chair until 1955—and Eugenie Galloo did not get her job, though she lived in Ann Arbor for a time, awaiting it. The Auxiliary Association dwindled. But the regents resolved in 1894 upon a policy of nondiscrimination in hiring, and two years later Dr. Eliza Mosher became the first woman on the University of Michigan faculty—with the rank of Full Professor. This time it was neither Mrs. Stone's candidate nor her particular plan which made history, but it was certainly her relentless foot which opened and kept open the door. After 1893, her attention turned to fundraising for the new women's gymnasium and for a structure to house the women's societies of the University. In her heart she cherished an ideal: a coeducational university with residential colleges housing thirty to forty women, each under the supervision of a matron and a female faculty member.\textsuperscript{307}

If anything, this steady, careful interest in all aspects of women's development deepened with time. Her travel, her club work, her great correspondence, her reading, all seemed to confirm her sense that this was woman's critical hour. Reviewing Duties of Women in 1881, she cited Cobbe's understanding of "this rising tide of womanly energy which seems so strongly to characterize the present time," ushering in "a new era of civilization."\textsuperscript{308} In nothing was the purposeful movement of history so clear to her as in the gradual, painful emergence of the female principle and its concomitant, the improvement of individual female lives.

She listened with sympathy to a lecture by her old friend Mary Livermore, "in which she said that the darkest page of history to her was the manner in which one half of the human race had been regarded
and treated. It was the enigma of the world to her. She could not understand it. She could not think of it and she could not talk about it.”

It was less an enigma to Mrs. Stone than simply a darkness from which humanity would emerge. Combatting this darkness was a spirit larger than individual women, embracing many messiahs and renaissances. In paintings of Madonna and Child, for instance, she saw “one of the ways in which a gentler spirit must make its way into the world to ameliorate this ruling spirit of selfishness and cruelty. It was not so much the homage and worship paid to one woman—one ‘Madonna,’ one ‘Holy Child’—as it was an unconscious prophecy of the heart, of a new spirit that was to rule in the world.”

The most interesting and extended treatment, though lighthearted, of this view of history is her “epistle” to “My Dear Friends of the Colonial Club” from her foremother, Anne Hutchinson. As well as a clear feminist treatment of aspects of colonial history and patriarchal religion, it is a disguised autobiography of sorts. “The meanderings of the blood are very curious. Whether it was the remembrance of [Hutchinson’s] story, or there is a distant affinity between myself and Anne Hutchinson, hers has always been to me a wonderfully interesting character.”

Hutchinson’s persecutors bear a striking resemblance to Haskell and Company. The purpose of the “epistle” is to bring her female audience to see itself at the crest of an historical tide, borne along by the power of the idea whose time has arrived, but flanked by “your foremothers to whom you owe a debt of gratitude greater than you can at all conceive.”

The clearest link between Hutchinson’s trials and Mrs. Stone’s own is her association of the suppression of the human spirit with the perverted religious establishment of a patriarchy bent on its own self-perpetuation: “But my sisters of this Colonial Club, do you realize that there has never been practised in the whole history of the world any cruelty so cruel, any wrath of man so merciless, or any vengeance so unrelenting as that which has been visited by man upon his brother man, and especially upon his sister woman, in the name of the mild and gentle Jesus.”

She clearly views the discussion group which Hutchinson, to her undoing, formed for Massachusetts women as a forerunner of modern clubs, political in its implications and dangerous to the Puritan heirarchy in simply bringing women together. “They were fed with husks instead of the sweet, simple truths of Jesus; and sometimes my natural wit, and a sense of [the Fathers’] holy pomposity got the better of me and I met them with repartee that was not wise or best or discreet, and bitterly did I reap as I had sown as we always must do.”

Her description of the Puritan woman’s life, an attack upon Milton’s
doctrine of the ancillary status of women, is also a rare treatment, for her, of the subject of sexuality and women's right to their bodies:

Very hard was the lot of a wife and mother among our Puritan ancestors. They thought they founded their creed upon the Bible, but John Milton and John Calvin were quite as much their teachers as the scripture writers, prophets or apostles. John Calvin's instructions to his friend, who was to look out a wife for him, were, "As to beauty it was no matter so that she be not repugnant to me. She must be obedient, industrious [sic], pious, economical, and know how to take good care of my health." Our Puritan forefathers were true Calvinists in their requirements for a wife.

It is terrible, my sisters, to think what so-called piety made the lot of women among them. A woman must bear a child once in eighteen months, or two years at most; for thus only could she fulfill the law of scripture: 'Be fruitful and multiply.' To be the mother of many children was thought to be the most religious duty. The pulpit must not be silent on this point, but alas! their religion in this respect often had its roots in the lusts of men than in Bible authority and doctrine.

They were the most unrelenting sticklers for the entire, slavish obedience of woman to her husband, and entire obedience to his wishes in all things. It was emphasized in the marriage vow and repeated very frequently from the pulpit. Well do I remember the emphasis of all things. Let woman but breathe a thought of her right to her own person, the gallows was before her at no distant turn as a witch or a heretic.

But Anne Hutchinson's gathering of women was itself a sign and token of the demise of the patriarchal spirit. And the descendants of that club, the diverse associations of women in the nineteenth century, were only one indication that the new spirit, struggling to be born in Hutchinson's day, was at last abroad: "There is no more marked feature of the age than these associations. The Babe of Bethlehem is born, and has even now too far escaped the search of Herod to be overtaken."

The religious metaphor should be understood in the context of Lucinda Stone's understanding of religion as myth, the symbolic accounts of universal and historically repeated human experience. In her thinking the spirit of Christ—loving, forgiving, egalitarian, humanistic—took many forms throughout the ages, and lately had adopted female form. The newly apparent power of women—their inherent power and the social, political, and educational power they were creating for themselves—presented a challenge to their male contemporaries: "a new spirit of Pentecost in our midst, teaching the men of this age something, as the unbelieving Peter was taught in another age, that men and women belong to the same category of human beings and that women are not necessarily bent on mischief when they come
together under pretext of seeking to ameliorate some of the ills that in weighing, alas, most heavily on many classes of their own sex, must so much hinder the real advancement of all the common human family.”317 Most of her thinking on the subject is infused with the idea that a culture is judged by the position of its women, so that there was no higher calling for a man who wished to benefit humanity than to benefit womankind. Only by such cooperation could the historical promise be fulfilled:

The woman that is to be, such as has been prophesied of, and promised in myth and in oracle; in priestess and sybil; in poetry and art; in some of the Ancient Civilizations, and in the Madonna of the Christian Church, is not yet born. But she will come in the fullness of her time, when the world is ready for her—“To serve the world raised up.” It may be, to bring a sword upon earth as did Jesus—a consequence, not a purpose. But sure I am, that the “Kingdoms of this world” will not become the “Kingdoms of our Lord,” nor will true prayer and worship be offered to Our Father until, men learn to develope and utilize the mental, moral, and conservative forces of all the members of the human family, both men and women, and until men and women shall work together for the common good—each for all, and all regardful of the lowliest part of the whole.316

All the action on behalf of women, on every front, served this cause and prepared the way for “the woman that is to be.” She, of course, was every student Lucinda Stone had taught in the Female Department, every club woman she had encouraged. Her entire purpose might be defined as leading them all to believe that in their own personal evolution lay the progress of the race. In the last quarter of the century, when coeducation and suffrage were not vague dreams but, as far as Mrs. Stone was concerned, relentless inevitabilities, she reminded her women readers, with her wonderful irony, of the truly dark ages not so long ago, when women “had scarcely dreamed of citizenship except when they were assessed for taxes and when they were going to be imprisoned or hung.”319

Now they must prepare themselves for the ballot. The national amendment struggled through every Congress well into the 80’s, and then submerged for a time. In 1890 the two estranged offshoots of the original suffrage movement, the American and the National Woman Suffrage Associations, closed ranks again. But meanwhile, state and local suffrage bills had taken up the fight. And it was the West again where inroads were made earliest, starting in Oklahoma in 1870. In the early days of 1891, a municipal suffrage bill passed the Michigan House of Representatives, but then lost in the Senate by a 117-14 vote. Senator Marden Sabin, one of the nay votes, suddenly received, in
mid-March, a petition signed by hundreds of Kalamazoo women, with
a cover letter from the formidable, to him, Lucinda Hinsdale Stone.
Their subsequent correspondence offers a unique glimpse of the Old
Guard in confrontation with the New Woman. Sabin’s letter of re-
response to the petition is itself a priceless capsule summary of the
romantic anti-feminism that helped to stall equal suffrage for another
thirty years. Apparently Mrs. Stone had argued the equity of female
suffrage on constitutional grounds.

This question of Women Suffrage is one to which I have never given
extended attention—I have an inborn idea however that all men are
created free and equal; and have also a belief that under our Consti-
tution women are Citizens of this republic—They may have therefore
natural and fundamental rights to all the privileges of citizenship in
this country—

However:

On Account of the exclusion of women from participating in the
general right of citizenship in other countries, and from the fact that
they have been given a place in our civilization as the architect and
preserver of our American homes, no forms of law have been pro-
vided giving her control of affairs of state—This has not been so much
from a spirit which would deny their equality with men or from a
deprecation of her work as a factor in building upon civilization, as
from an idea that she is from nature, and habit of thought better adap-
ted to exercise her particular genius in moulding the forces which
eminate [sic] from our homes and from our social life—... she has no
more reason to complain about being shut from the ballot box than
have the angels of heaven whose grander sphere is in the peculiar
realm appointed to them by God.

If we grant that by our original laws women are citizens, and that
they may leave our homes and go to the polls, will this course have
a tendency to purify our elections, ennoble our political status or
make our laws better? I cannot believe that it will—I am not fully
familiar with the results of women suffrage in the states of our Union
where it is allowed, but the newspapers contain no intimation of any
Utopia in the northwest.... A woman of modesty and grace and of
keen appreciation of the Eternal fitness of things naturally shrinks
from this rougher contact with the rugged world—She makes our
homes beautiful and surrounds them with all that makes humanity
pure and kind and noble, but is in ill accord with the jargon of the
Board of Trade and the excitement and trickery of political camps—

We can only imagine Lucinda Stone’s exasperation when she reached
the line about angels in heaven. On the 21st of March she wrote back
to Sabin, opening all her guns. Again her letter is carefully calculated
for a particular reader. “You say in the opening,” she begins, “that this
question of Woman’s Suffrage is one to which you have never given
much attention. I think this is just where the difficulty lies with most men and women. They have been born into certain ideas and they accept them without question or consideration until something calls their attention to them, or startles them to thinking whether such ideas be right.” In other words, she is sure he will soon get over his ignorance and thus his opposition. On to the issue of women deserting their homes for the ballot box:

Mr. Sabin, the society ladies in this town have spent more time at whist . . . and dancing parties this winter than five times their number of women who ask for Municipal Suffrage have spent in work for this object in five years.

These parties have done nothing for them intellectually, nothing for the world morally or spiritually. Would it not have been better for them to have been looking after the proper education of the children in our schools—of the sanitary conditions of our school rooms—of the morals and manners of our children in the street, which they would have been if they had been on School Boards?

Her facility in making the political activist sound more like the housewife than the housewife can only be admired. The particular inequity in the developing educational bureaucracy was of paramount concern: “I want to see women on our School Boards; nine tenths of all our teachers are women, employed for the sake of economy and public funds”—that is, employed because they could be paid vastly less than men. A good many women, she thus implied, were already out of the domestic bubble, of sheer necessity. And those who remained within it, she argued, drawing upon a time-honored argument for the education of women, could not in fact adequately fulfill that glorious role which Sabin described: Mothers cannot teach their children “how important and solemn are the duties of citizenship without themselves knowing and feeling for themselves those duties.”

Next, the appeal to her husband’s authority: “Mr. Stone was a man who, if he saw a thing was right, did it. We were accustomed to talk these things over together,” she remembers sadly, and she paraphrases James Stone’s response to the suffrage question:

This may be a very unpopular thing; it will be ridiculed, but it is right, it is righteousness, it is but a righteous extension of our Declaration of Independence and it will come to seem so. To make women, citizens, subject to a law, judged by a law which they have had no part in making, is not just. To make them pay taxes, without representation, will, I am not afraid to prophesy, yet come to be acknowledged as unjust, as taxation, without representation, seemed to our Fathers. They revolted; so will the world revolt from this injustice.321

On March 30 Mrs. Stone wrote again to Sabin, this time more personally: “Sometimes this subject floods over me with such a fulness of
meaning, that I can not see how others can be insensible to it, or sleep over the injustice of it."322 On April 2 Sabin responded with a letter which Mrs. Stone could only have regarded as at least a partial victory: "I see force to many of the ideas presented, but have not found arguments which have entirely overcome and settled the questions which have been naturally suggested to my mind," he demurred. But despite his "inborn ideas," he promises that when the bill comes up again, "if we find that my vote will cause it to pass the Senate, I think I will listen to the respectful request of your petitioners by changing my vote in its favor."323

So much hammering for such a little chink in the wall; yet that was primarily how Mrs. Stone's energies were consumed in the last years of her life, for her name and her pen carried force. She became a charter member of the Michigan Women's Press Association, founded in Traverse City in July of 1890, and she lent them their motto: "Let us, as women, learn to put down self and work for a cause." She contributed widely to various papers and journals, including Kalamazoo's Daily News and Gazette, son Jim's Detroit Post and Tribune, the Charlotte (Michigan) Tribune, and national publications such as the Woman's Journal and The New Unity. Several days a week she was on the road, organizing new clubs and visiting old ones throughout Michigan, many of which she belonged to as a charter member, such as Benton Harbor's Ossoli Club, named for Margaret Fuller Ossoli. In Kalamazoo, in addition to the grandmother of women's clubs, the Ladies' Library Association, she organized the Frederick Douglass Club for black men and women. In 1890 the General Federation of Women's Clubs came into being at an April conference in New York City, attended by delegates from seventeen states, including three from Michigan. Soon thereafter, in anticipation of the Columbian Exposition, otherwise known as the Chicago World's Fair, in 1893, Isabella Clubs—named in honor of Columbus' royal sponsor—were chartered throughout Michigan and the nation. These clubs had as their primary purpose preparing women to attend and understand the World's Fair, especially the exhibitions in the Women's Building. As a member of the Fair's education and fine arts committees, Mrs. Stone was given the task of organizing Isabella Clubs in Michigan's Fourth Congressional District early in 1892.

Her Club Talks and other correspondence are filled with the rare advantages of the exposition, especially in works of art. The Women's Building was, for her, a monumental affirmation of her idea of the female principle in history, finally coming into its own. The structure, she wrote, "has been set there to teach generations of the God given,
human powers and capacities, never before officially recognized in all the history of the world but waiting to be utilized in our republic yet to be.” As the Fair was intended to record four hundred years of human progress, the Women’s Building announced “this new thought, that art and genius and noble work for the civilization and uplifting of the race, is of no sex—and that God needs all the power of all his children and has a place for them—and that will be the highest civilization in which the race has learned to utilize them.” She must certainly have believed that that civilization was at hand on May 18, 1893, when the delegates of the General Federation of Women’s Clubs met for the Council Day Program of the Fair’s Congress of Women. The audience represented 31 states, 156 clubs, and 20,000 women as Lucinda Hinsdale Stone joined Julia Ward Howe and other luminaries on the platform. And Mrs. Stone’s portrait hung in Michigan’s exhibit at the Fair, thanks to the Women’s Press Association.

One year later Mrs. Stone made her last appearance at a national congress of the General Federation, this time in Philadelphia, where she made her report as Michigan’s Corresponding Secretary. At home, the local Isabella Club, having formally expired the previous spring, reconstituted itself as the Twentieth Century Club, “her last and best-loved club,” and elected her perpetual president. One of its early acts was to confer honorary membership upon Fanny Barrier Williams, a black woman excluded from a Chicago women’s club.

Refused access to the L.L.A. quarters, the new club moved its meetings from Mrs. Stone’s Lovell Street home into the relatively new and controversial People’s Church, which Lucinda Stone had helped to create after the death of her husband. The new assembly had grown from the First Unitarian when a member left money for a new building which then took a new name, reflecting the social gospel Lucinda Stone fully supported. People’s Church seems to have established then an atmosphere very much like the one it maintains today, acting as a communal meeting place rather than a temple, and taking on social issues as legitimate concerns. Mrs. Stone began teaching Sunday classes there and continued them until her death. The remarkable Caroline Bartlett, who had come from ordination in South Dakota to the old Unitarian Church and had helped to engineer the transition, became a fast friend of Mrs. Stone, forty-four years her senior. Rev. Bartlett spoke on her favorite issues, food inspection and municipal sanitation, for the Twentieth Century Club, which had followed the trend of the national club movement away from self-culture toward a broader concern with social and civic issues. Other programs concerned child labor in the South, the treatment of youthful offenders in penal institutions, and the opera-
tions of the juvenile court—traditionally female areas of concern translated into public terms. "Do all the good you can" was the club's very practical motto—a bequest, of course, from the perpetual president, whose life for the past fifty years had been an intersection of great ideas and vast movements with individual and local efforts.

VII

On Sunday, September 30, 1894, Lucinda Stone turned eighty. Caroline Bartlett took an idea from her friend’s seventy-sixth birthday, when a surprise party had been thrown at the Lovell Street house. She sent letters to friends around the country, inviting them to a surprise birthday "service" at People's Church. Jim Stone and his family appeared in town on Saturday and the next morning's service began without any knowledge on Mrs. Stone’s part that it was anything out of the ordinary. During Rev. Bartlett’s sermon on the theme of harvest, a portrait of her was slowly unveiled, later to hang in the Stone parlor of the Church. As she saw her own face appear, "Mrs. Stone started slightly, pressed her hands for a moment to her face, and then leaned a little upon her son, as if for support."328 Bartlett had written a hymn for her, and her "pet grandchild"329 Blinn, aged ten, who spent each summer with his grandmother, came up with a poem:

Dear grandma is eighty years old to-day;
Her hair is soft and silvery grey;
Her kindly face has many a wrinkle;
But through her glasses her eyes still twinkle,
    Just as they've always done before.

Her hands are not strong as they used to be,
But she is ready as ever to do for me,
And for other boys and girls she loves so well;
And such nice stories she has to tell
    Of things she's seen on the other shore.

She's crossed the big ocean eighteen times,330
And visited people in other climes;
But she loves her own country the best,
And her grandchildren better than all the rest;
    For they are her very own, you know.

And now, darling grandma, dear,
May you live many a year,
And teach me to be good and true,
    To try to live and be like you.331

This occasion, like the reunion, reminded Mrs. Stone of the impact of her life upon others. Perhaps in her widowhood that message was even more welcome. The letters from many of those others poured in: "I
knew her to be a beautiful soul from the first time I saw her serene face,” wrote one. Rachel Foster Avery, secretary of the National American Women’s Suffrage Association, wrote that “[a]ll younger women who are now entering upon the heritage which Lucinda H. Stone has done so much to make theirs, should be taught, as my own three little daughters shall be, to gratefully reverence her name.”

“How grateful we are,” wrote another admirer, “for her persevering endeavors to make us fit company for ourselves.”

Julia Ward Howe contributed, as did fellow Michigander Anna Howard Shaw. Mary Livermore wrote, “You have been a wonderful leader of women, and have had the courage and insight to utter the right word at critical moments.” But one letter, perhaps above the others, gratified her:

Please tender to Mrs. Stone my loving and honoring appreciation of her great work for women; not only Michigan women, but the women of the nation and the world owe her very much for her persistent efforts to secure the perfect equalities of educational opportunities for girls. And what a revolution she has witnessed! Give my best love to her, and tell her that I am marching on toward her high attainment of the fourscore. Mrs. Stanton will be seventy-nine on November 12th, and I shall be seventy-five on February 15th, 1895. My! how old those years used to sound!

Susan B. Anthony

It was, truly, harvest time. Grandson Charles, a Saginaw dentist, had married Louise Marie Schirmer on August 24, 1892; and on November 26th of 1894 Louise gave birth to the first Stone great-grandchild, Clement Albert. Charles’ sister Carrie was about to enter the University of Michigan, thanks to the efforts of her grandmother to insure that its doors would be open to her. Lucinda Stone’s health was no longer stable; illness during the summer of 1894 had prevented her attending a conference at Bayview to organize the Michigan Federation of Women’s Clubs, representing nine hundred women. But she was asked to draft its constitution, which was ratified in Lansing on March of 1895, and she was elected to its Board of Directors. The November Congress of the General Federation in Atlanta, which she did not attend, elected her an honorary Vice-President, along with only Julia Ward Howe and Jane Croly, founder of Sorosis.

The sole surviving piece of correspondence within the Stone family is a letter from Jim to his mother on the eve of her eighty-second birthday in 1896. Toward the end of her life, he wrote almost daily, and this letter is a moving picture of the relationship between the mother and her sole surviving child:
Detroit, Mich. Sept. 29, 1896

I had intended to go out to Kalamazoo tonight and surprise you by spending your birthday with you, but it is quite impossible for me to get away. We are very busy at the office and I am needed here every minute.

It is a great disappointment to me that I can not go for I wanted very much to be with you on your 82nd birthday, for my darling mother, I cannot tell you how near and dear to me you are, nor how much you are in my thoughts. How I wish that I could stay the hand of time and keep you well and strong as long as I live. We are all that is left now and you were never so near and dear to me as now. It comes to me with overpowering force how much you are to me and it is a precious memory to me that so far as I know I have never given you conscious pain or sorrow. No cloud of difference has ever come between us—there has never been anything but love and tenderness... between us. God grant us yet many years and more of loving companionship.

I have tried to think of some remembrance to send you but I can’t think of anything that you especially want and will have to leave that part until you come in.

Blinn encloses a letter and Lucile and Webster will write tonight.

Bless you my darling Mother.

Lovingly,

JHS

Lucile herself, on the 100th anniversary of her grandmother’s birth in 1914, painted an intimate and valuable picture of Mrs. Stone in old age:

I can remember distinctly her many visits to our home in Detroit. I can see her now, in her long Plymouth cape walking up to the door leaning on my father’s arm, her hat a bit awry[,] her arms filled with books and her face beaming with smiles of welcome for her three grandchildren. We always followed her straight to her room, hugging our pets for Grandma Gee, as we called her[,] always had a welcome for our kitty and a place was promptly arranged on her bed for kitty to take a nap—One of the first things Grandma would say was, “Jim[,] have you some pens for me[,]” whereupon my father would produce a new box and a huge sheet of stamps and Grandma was ready to begin her work.

Grandmother’s arrival was usually followed by a host of callers. Such eager, friends. I have passed the parlor door on my return from school and seen her talking earnestly with someone and heard something like this. “I know that women are fast coming into their own,” or “I am just as certain as I am sitting here that someday in our age we shall fly in the air.”

Grandmother had two characteristics which I remember especially—her kindliness toward all mankind. She tried to help everyone by word or by deed—She had blame for no one—Her cry was always,
"He did the best he knew how, and he will do better the next time."

Her other characteristic was her childlike simplicity. Her soul was full of the wonder and beauty of life, whether a butterfly or a sermon, and whatever she learned to give to others. She was a rare interpreter of life—One little personal incident I remember more than others—I was not more than five years old and we were taking a horse car ride—I had my knees on the seat and was looking out of the window up to the sky and telling her what a beautiful place heaven was. "My child[,]" she said, laying her hand on my arm, "Heaven is not in the sky[;] it is everywhere on earth where there is goodness and love"—

... I remember the library in my grandmother’s home[,] the many read bookshelves, the heavily laden desk, the familiar figure seated at the desk, the light falling across her face so saintly with the soft mull fold across her brow, fastened with the familiar star and cres[cent pin ...]

From this desk she launched her final local project: soliciting funds and books for the Channing Library of People’s Church. It began with the gift of a bookcase from the family of William Henry Channing, Unitarian minister and author, who had been marginally involved in the Brook Farm experimental community. It was, as Mrs. Stone conceived it, to be a representative collection of works on “higher thought and spiritual living, books on sociology, biblical criticism, human brotherhood, the new spiritual thought called Christian science, the humane treatment of our fellow creatures, and lower animals, books on peace and arbitration instead of war” in short, many of her own chief interests. Again her pen went to work to call upon old allies and illustrious names, including that of Andrew Carnegie, who received a lengthy letter of solicitation in July of 1899.

As usual, hers was not a universally popular cause; even the conservative wing of the Unitarians regarded People’s Church as suspect, and a Dakota minister had described it as “a conglomeration of Atheists, agnostics, deists, retrograde Jews, hypocritical Episcopalians, backsliding Methodists, traitorous Baptists, reprobate Presbyterians, big-headed Congregationalists and heretical Catholics . . . . If there ever was laughter in hell, it was when that sacred name, the divine livery, was stolen from the threshold of Heaven by this audacious woman, minister, as she calls herself.” But more congenial spirits, such as Mary Livermore, responded enthusiastically:

I have kept posted concerning the “People’s Church,” and I also know what you are doing for the establishment of a Channing Library in connection with it. Both are very noble, and I am glad Kalamazoo is so fortunate as to have a minister like Mrs. Crane, a church like the People’s Church, and a good motherly, saintly woman like Mrs. Stone to found a Channing Library for it. I shall be most happy to donate the Channing Library a copy of “The Story of My
Life" . . .

I agree with you entirely. Notwithstanding the wrongdoing of the
times in many directions, a new spirit has come into society that is
destined ultimately to regenerate it. It is kindly, loving, upholds a
lofty ethical standard, is patient and tolerant, "rejoicing not in iniquity,
but rejoicing in the truth." I catch a gleam of the glory that is coming,
from afar, and am glad for the world that a better day is dawning.

Yrs. truly,
Mary A. Livermore

One clear sign for Mrs. Stone of the spirit she and Livermore saw
moving in the world was the first National Congress of Mothers, which
met in Washington, D.C., during the winter of 1896-97. Mrs. Stone
made her last trip outside Michigan and stayed there with an old pupil,
Lucia Eames Blount. The Congress was the perfect symbol of the
female principle loosed into the public sphere and encouraged to
prevail in society, bringing about "truly a new renaissance of which it
may be said, dux femina facit." The Cuban crisis sharpened the
issue, as she saw a new war spirit infusing American life. While in fact
she favored American intervention in Cuba, she loathed the militarism that accompanied the emergence of her country as a world
power. Somewhat earlier, responding to the growing practice of military
drills among schoolboys, she had written, "I heard some one say the
boys were learning 'a manly bearing through this military drill.' We may
have a perverted notion of what is manly." She believed, perhaps
with her husband's image in mind, that "it does not of necessity follow
that a man is weak minded because he is mild and gentle. Often the
gentlest are bravest and there is no strength like the strength of mild
self-possessed patience." In Washington in the winter of her eighty-
second year, she considered the ironic proximity of the Mothers' Con-
gress to the corridors of power on Capitol Hill: "How have the finer
forces, of which I have been so strikingly reminded of late, been at work
to call that national congress of mothers in Washington this winter, to
sow new seeds in this garden that shall spring up and bear fruit for
the regeneration of the nations in their ideas about war!" As she
looked out across the city to the Capitol one night, she prayed for a
hastened unity between the mothers gathered there and the fathers
currently at work on the crisis: "Oh, how I wish there were some wise
mother-hearts among that committee! And there will be sometime."

Some persuasion was necessary to draw her up onto the platform
where she was applauded for the last time by a vast congregation of
women. Later she met the First Lady, Mrs. Cleveland, whom she
admired. During the winter she spent a week or ten days in Anacostia,
at Cedar Hill, the home of her old friend Helen Douglass, whose
husband had died the previous year. In a letter a year later Mrs. Douglass refers to “the broad landscape that so ministered to your pleasure here.” There she was introduced to black Washington—a former senator, a criminologist—who confirmed her faith that black Americans, like women, were moving by their own long-repressed energy into the mainstream of American life.

Helen Douglass is the single correspondent from whom most letters to “My dear dear Mrs. Stone” survive. They seem to have written with some frequency after the Washington visit. Mrs. Douglass was at this time making her living on the lecture circuit, speaking before women’s clubs, civic groups, suffrage organizations on such subjects as Hittite and Egyptian culture and her prime concern, the dangers of the convict lease system in the South, regarding which she seems to have had a bill in Congress. On two occasions she speaks of visiting the Grimke sisters, the second dynamic duo in the American suffrage movement, suggesting that Mrs. Stone had met them during her stay. Twice she speaks of coming to Michigan, to speak at People’s Church and in Grand Rapids, but there is no evidence that these trips materialized. The rising tide of lynching in the South was in the forefront of her mind. In a letter of March 24, 1899, she mentions “the last horror in Georgia but twenty miles from where our silent President is staying. When we have killed off all the Fillipinos and murdered a few thousand more of our own citizens in the South and hugged a few more ex-rebels to our national bosom, we may wake up some morning to find our house afire—and singing of ‘the white-man’s burden’ will not put it out.” In her travels she found Northern audiences “universally ignorant of the great barbarity being practiced upon the colored people south.”

Having seen her so recently, Mrs. Stone was reminded of an incident on one of her trips abroad in which Frederick Douglass had been excluded from a reception given by American Ambassador Fearne in Athens. Mrs. Stone described it in one of her Club Talks, stating that Douglass had been “very pale, for the Fearne slight had pierced him.” To this Douglass’ widow responded with a formidable self-possession reminiscent of her correspondent: “Thanks—a thousand thanks for your letter in the Kalamazoo paper. How it brought to mind those days in Athens of which I had been especially thinking. I have never thought, however, that the Fearne incident made upon Mr. Douglass the impression you imagine. Indeed, I never gave Mr. Fearne a thought, did not even know as much as I should, about so small and insignificant a person.”

Often Mrs. Douglass mentions a Stone grandchild whom she ap-
parently met and refers to as “my little Philosopher,” undoubtedly the poetic Blinn, the apple of Grandma’s eye. A letter shortly before Christmas, the year following Mrs. Stone’s sojourn in Washington, reflects the loneliness of widowhood which Mrs. Stone surely shared:

I had sent me yesterday a reputed communication from Mr. Douglass—which tends to give the opinion that there must be a deal of fraud practiced by the spirits, or else they consider humans as lacking, to an extraordinary degree, in that most useful possession—sense—a bogus message—anyway.

I have had my Christmas gift—it was a dream of last night. I was standing by a window, and in a deplorable spiritual state and depression, when there came in through the window a single note of a bird, so clear and sweet and entered into my soul just in time to save me from spiritual sin and darkness and vivify a latent determination to righteousness. When I awoke I felt that I had had my Christmas message.

I have a family occupying the rear of my house so that I am, in one sense, no longer alone. They are very kind and accommodating.

With all Christmas greeting and love, and for auld lang syne,

Yours affectionately,

Helen Douglass

These true and false communications from the other world must have interested Mrs. Stone, who, as she aged, became more and more sure of the possibilities of a life that transcended individual perimeters. She read Minot J. Savage’s _Death and Beyond_ and corresponded with the author, and she began to speak of “glimpses of the other world.” On November 15, 1897, she joined the Theosophical Society. Theosophy, as it became popular in the late nineteenth century through the writings of Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, can be seen as an outgrowth of the kind of religious thought Mrs. Stone had pursued after her split with the Baptists. It drew from Indian religion and emphasized human spiritual capacity and the transmigration of souls. Occult sources were sometimes employed, and though we have no idea how fully Mrs. Stone subscribed to these notions, we do have a horoscope, probably in her own handwriting, in which “Mrs. L. H. Stone, Sept. 30, 1814” is described. If this is indeed a late self-portrait, it is a most interesting one:

The native is generous, proud, ambitious, serious, with a great love for the arts and science; restless, fond of travel, making many changes in life, through journeys, an acute penetrating intellect, good scholar and writer, fond of occult studies. Has suffered from sudden heavy losses, money difficulties and from ill disposed neighbors, and from enemies. Happy and congenial marriage, but much suffering through children [from?] either denying or destroying them. Successes in life
due to the native’s strong persevering aspiring nature; reverses the outcome of conditions. The indications for age are some anxiety about money matters and some ill health, but competence, respect and honor to the end.\textsuperscript{355}

That grim middle passage of her life is still obviously vivid. In June of 1897 she had a brief correspondence with Daniel Putnam, former professor of Latin, Ecclesiastical History, and Natural Science at Kalamazoo College from 1855 through 1867, thereafter Acting President and Instructor in Mental and Moral Philosophy during the 1867-68 academic year. Putnam had gone on to head the State Normal School at Ypsilanti. A letter of June 18 shows how strongly both the sunlight and the thunder of the College years remained in the landscape of her memory:

It has been Commencement Week in the Baptist College, where I spent twenty of the most vigorous years of my young life in the most earnest and useful work that I knew how to give, to what I then thought the best causes, and I now think that such work must have been accepted in its imperfection; for there is scarcely a week, even now, in which I do not get letters from old pupils full of gratitude and love and the most tender remembrances... No one ever fails to mention the chapel exercises, which they remember the best and prize the most of all their instruction, and the more as life goes on and becomes to them more serious and sacred. For which of these works have I been stoned—deemed worthy of death by the Baptist denomination of Michigan?\textsuperscript{356}

At the close of this year, Susan B. Anthony wrote once more, soliciting a written contribution for her own biography and indicating that the two old sisters-in-arms had recently seen each other—for the last time—in Kalamazoo. “I shall also record you and your good husband among those of us, who at once saw that any just interpretation of the 14th amendment must secure the ballot to women as well as to black men.” The letter is signed “With great love.”\textsuperscript{357} Somewhere around this time she also received what must have been a final letter from Elizabeth Cady Stanton. Her eyes failing during the years before her death in 1903, Stanton writes a sprawling script over four pages which permit a fascinating insight into both the compromising politics of women’s suffrage and the esteem in which the writer held the reader:

Dear Mrs. Stone—

I was very glad to get a line from you after so many years of separation. But I have not forgotten the pleasant day I passed under your roof and our exciting campaign in Michigan. It would be a great satisfaction to me to talk over the situation with you, of what seems to be our next step in progress. Educated suffrage should now be our demand. The [potent?] objection our opponents make to women
suffrage is "doubling the ignorant vote." I should like to have every state so amend its constitution as to forbid all those who cannot read and write the English language to exercise the suffrage. . . . This would hold this immense foreign vote, increasing year by year, at bay for at least five years, and lengthen the distance from the steerage to the polls. . . . An educational qualification would stimulate our native population to seek education as the only way to the polls. . . . If you read the Woman's Journal, you will see there is quite a difference of opinion on this point. I am well, have no pains or aches, can hear as well as ever but cannot see to read though I write without spectacles. My hand has not lost its cunning, nor my mind its strength, but failing eyes handicap me at every point. With the best wishes of the season, health and happiness and that peace that passeth all understanding sincerely yours.

Elizabeth Cady Stanton

As her own health began to fail—a letter from Helen Douglass suggests bronchial trouble—Lucinda Stone finally agreed to be cared for, and Charlotte Anderson moved into the house on Lovell Street. In her later years, she continued to spend her summers at Highland Park, Grand Haven, Michigan, with the devoted Blinn and other family. In 1896 and 1898 telegrams of congratulation and gratitude came from the General Federation of Women's Clubs conferences in Louisville and Denver—similar telegrams going on the latter occasion to the two other honorary vice-presidents and to President William McKinley. And the sustaining joy was the letters from old students, especially her girls. "They are among my most enjoyable, intellectual, and literary correspondents. With few exceptions, they are growing women. Having learned how to learn—which they will all remember, was the most I ever professed to be able to teach them—they have instituted schools for themselves, compelled sometimes [by] very hard circumstances to become their best teachers, and learned to draw lessons, as Mr. Emerson once said in a lecture to them, from 'frost and fire.'"

On some occasion she was asked to write about "What I Would Do If I Were a Girl Again" and, casting her mind back to the Hinesburg maples, she seems to have chosen, in addition to more foreign language study, skills of self-sufficiency: "I would learn the use of tools—how to make things," a talent, she staunchly maintained, as suitable for women as for men. "I would learn to swim and to row a boat, and as far as possible would practice all those exercises that would bring me into communion with out-door nature, as a companion, mother, friend."

Certain now that death was not the end, she appears to have regarded the afterlife much as Keats did—as a repetition of earthly life, "but in a finer tone." It was the logical conclusion of her evolutionary
philosophy: “A higher development of all the faculties and enjoyments that constitute real life here.” When she speaks of the time “when we get up higher” it is often unclear whether she refers to heaven or to a superior position on the evolutionary scale.

Weakness and imminent death seem to have been but another set of constraining circumstances within which she tried to function as fully as possible. “When she was feeble and suffering,” wrote Caroline Bartlett Crane (she had married in 1896), “I would go in and sit down by her, and ask of her health. She never had more than a moment to spend on that topic. Very quickly whatever was on her mind would come uppermost. It was some new book that seemed to her a blessed message to the world, or perhaps it was some well-worn volume which she would pick up, saying, ‘A new light came to me this morning on this passage from Emerson,’ or, it was something that she wanted done, never for herself, always for another. People were constantly coming to her for all kinds of help, and she was always giving to the limit of her power. And she would remember to interest them to go where her feebleness forbade her going, and to help her to help.”

One of her last letters was written in January of 1900, to the Ladies’ Library Association, then suffering internal strife. She begged the membership of this her first club to look beyond themselves: “I never go by this building, my friends, but I look up to its closed doors and windows and ask what is it doing for Kalamazoo? . . . It is for the people— the people—that this building should be used as sacredly as a church.”

The last surviving letter to Mrs. Stone is, most appropriately, from Rachel Foster Avery for the National American Woman Suffrage Association, dated January 9, 1900, asking her to attend Susan B. Anthony’s 80th birthday celebration on February 15th, where a seat on the platform would be reserved for “one of the band of early workers for this noble reform.” But as the party was taking place, Mrs. Stone’s condition worsened. She wrote her last note to Jim on February 6, though he continued to write daily. On the evening of March 13, 1900, she slipped into unconsciousness. Granddaughter Lucile, seventeen at the time, recalled that, “it was not a mournful occasion, we passed softly in and out as she lay slipping away. And yet I remember even then she was striving to give of herself to others. For a moment as I lingered near her it seemed almost as if she sought to speak, her hand tried to reach mine and her lips to move, tho’ no words came.” Rev. Crane spent the night by her side, reading her favorite poetry—“Rabbi Ben Ezra,” “Crossing the Bar,” The Twenty-Third Psalm, the Beatitudes. When she read Whittier’s “Eternal Goodness,” Mrs. Stone’s eyes opened, and
she occasionally pressed Rev. Crane's hand in affirmation. By 2:00 she was completely unconscious, and shortly after 9:30 the following morning, she died.

Her funeral at People's Church two days later, on March 16, was preceded by a private morning service in the house on Lovell Street, attended only by family and close friends, and conducted by Rev. Crane. The People's Church ceremony allowed all of Lucinda Stone's constituencies to be represented. Her three local clubs—the Twentieth Century Club, the Douglass Club, and the Ladies' Library Association—attended in force, wearing flowers to identify themselves. The violet-colored and violet-covered casket lay in the Stone Parlor. "A great personality has passed from our midst," said Rev. E. C. Smith in his eulogy. "A royal soul has gone to its reward." Afterwards her body was interred in Mountain Home Cemetery, alongside those of her husband, her mother, and her two oldest sons, a short distance across Main Street from the College and the site of her old home.

President Arthur Slocum eulogized her—reportedly mildly—in the Kalamazoo College chapel. At their 1900 biennial convention in Milwaukee, the General Federation of Women's Clubs unanimously passed the following resolution:

Resolved, That in the death of Mrs. Lucinda Hinsdale Stone, Ph.D., which occurred at her home in Kalamazoo, Michigan, March 14, 1900, the Woman's Club Movement and the cause of women and education, humanity and progress, have lost one of the foremost workers of the age and one who made an impress on the life and thought of her time not exceeded by any other woman.

Resolved, Also, that we pay the tribute of our loving recognition and appreciation of the worth and work of this great and gentle soul, and that we dedicate ourselves to that high idea of usefulness of which her long life of eighty-five years was a full and constant expression, the highest possible development of self for service to others.

The Twentieth Century Club of Kalamazoo failed to raise money to erect a Stone Memorial Building; finally they convinced the State Federation to donate $5000 to the University of Michigan for interest-free loans to women students in the name of Lucinda Stone. In 1903 the first recipients were Misses Hooper, Iveson, and Harper, the last of whom was black. Carrie Stone's portrait of her mother-in-law was given by the L.L.A. and Twentieth Century Clubs to the State of Michigan: the first portrait of a woman to hang in the capitol in Lansing.

From the mass of eulogies which followed her death it is, once more, difficult to distill something meaningful, something specific. Belle Perry borrowed from the language of the General Federation's resolution
Lucinda Hinsdale Stone in old age
emphasize an important distinction: "Her life and character stand out strong and forceful as an example, not of sacrifice of self for others, but of the highest possible development of self in all ways for service to others." Though again and again associates speak of her devotion to the needs of other people, she was no martyr and her life bespeaks none of the traditional self-oblation to which women, as she knew only too well, were trained. If that had been her bent, the catastrophes of her life would surely have buried her. Instead, she taught herself to use adversity and opposition to feed the self-possession on which her old students comment so frequently. She combined an ideal of womanly service, American individualism, and a nineteenth-century faith in progress with her own tough, generous heart and vital intellect to make herself, above all, a survivor.

"But we love best to remember her," wrote Irma T. Jones of Lansing, "as a lover of women, seeking always everywhere to win them to the highest, the purest, the greatest, the holiest of which the soul is capable." In her schooldays in Hinesburg she learned what a handicap womanhood was, and then proceeded to make a career of convincing other women that it was an enormous strength, an untried power on which human progress itself depended: "The world waits for the coming woman. Such as she is to be is not yet born—nor the coming man either." Always, as she herself put it, she saw Minerva in "a typical woman," and it was the common woman whose appeal to her was strongest. The young student with a wavering sense that her mind might be a resource; the older woman, denied early chances, given to a life she found increasingly hollow; the poor woman fighting for survival for herself and her children; the black woman battling the two mammoths of racism and sexism; the female teacher working diligently within an oppressive bureaucracy to make a career of what others saw as a job—in these she saw the future, and to these she left her challenge: "The woman's era, is it? Is woman's work, woman's influence, to be the leading element in that new Renaissance of whose dawning light none of us can be insensible?"
Chapter III

“Miss Dieb”: Frances Diebold

Josephine Csete
Frances Diebold
as a high school senior, 1917
Frances Diebold is very proud of the fact that she was born on Bastille Day. Arriving on July 14, 1900, just four months to the day after Lucinda Hinsdale Stone's death, she was to carry on the tradition of women in higher education. She actively served Kalamazoo College for forty-four years, becoming a revered member of the community, a teacher extraordinarily beloved, as Lucinda Stone was. A history of Diebold is a history of the college over four decades. More than to its structure, to the growth and development of its spirit she continues to contribute a concern for the individual and an involvement with those who have helped it grow.

I

Frances was the first-born of Frank Diebold and Elizabeth Lynch-Whalen. The Diebolds and the Lynch and Whalen families had come from Europe to rural Wisconsin in the early 19th century. Frank Diebold's ancestry is associated with Alsace Lorraine, and Elizabeth Lynch-Whalen's goes back to the Scotch-Irish in the British Isles. Frank, born in 1873, and Elizabeth, born in 1876, were both raised in farming communities of rural Madison, in settings greatly influenced by European roots. As young adults they went to the big capital city, Madison, a marvelous expansion of experience and a gold mine of career opportunities for the high school graduates. Frank became a sandstone contractor, constructing public and commercial buildings from the geological wealth quarried from formations in and around Madison. Elizabeth became the buyer of chinaware for Kornhauser's, the department store of that day.

Madison provided not only career alternatives to their farming background, but a departure from their provincial outlook. Frank and Elizabeth had an inclination toward creative growth that the cosmopolitan Madison encouraged. Perhaps the Diebolds' liberal attitude was also fostered by the diverse backgrounds of the settlers of Wisconsin. As Frances Diebold comments, "The whole state is the queerest state. That's where the Progressive party originated as an offshoot of..."
the other two, and Wisconsin has had a couple of Progressive governors. Their most famous Progressive political figure, of course, is Robert La Follette. But that's Wisconsin. . . . The Wisconsin citizen is a very independent citizen, and is he Republican, is he Democrat? I don't know. Maybe Democrat or maybe Republican. I mean, you never guess. You can't tie them down. . . . The citizenry of Wisconsin is nonconforming in every way, every way. . . . especially in religion."

The immigrants brought this nonconformism with them. "I think that in every way, how things begin influence[s] what things become. And so, yes, I think that the settlers had much to do with that. . . . In Wisconsin they were German, Irish, Poles—Milwaukee is famous for its Polish sausage—and English; really quite a mixture in those that settled there. I think that prevails today." They came together with "different points of view, and they still prevail. And a rigid line of behavior is not one of Wisconsin's characteristics." Frank and Elizabeth were to sort out and improve upon the opportunities they found in this liberal community, and to pass on the best to their children. They gravitated toward intellectual pursuits.

Frances Diebold says that her life "has always been somehow mingled with the academic," thanks to her mother. "In our leisure time she would somehow always direct our activities; we never had play activities that were haphazard. Somehow, though we didn't realize it, she really directed our life. I mean when we were free from school, she would say, 'Well let's go on a picnic,' so we'd go on a picnic. But where'd we go on a picnic? Somewhere on the University campus, or to one of the lakes. We never found time on our hands. And then in the evening when my father would come home he'd say, 'well, well, Bess, shall we go for a drive?'" He would hitch up the horse. "So they'd be in their real seats and my brother and I would be on our funny little seat [that our father had made] by the dashboard, and we'd go for a ride." The two children rode backwards. "Oh, we just delighted in that—I remember we saw—we thought we saw—much more than they saw."

Frances Elizabeth Diebold credits her mother and father for her happy childhood and wholesome guidance towards her future, as well as for her name: "Well, I'm named after my mother and father. My father's name is Frank, and my mother's name is Elizabeth. But my father always called her Bess, and her friends and so on called her Bessie. Why he called her Bess, I don't know. And my brother is named after his very good friend, Marshall John Parkinson." She very seldom uses her middle name, Elizabeth. "I don't know when that's
been used. I just never have used it, or it's never been used; put it that way.”

Madison's social activities revolved around its two lakes. In the winter there was horse racing on Lake Monona and skating on Lake Mendota. On Sundays a young couple could be seen among the other skaters, each pulling a sled behind. Trundled and bundled up, the wide-eyed Frances sat against the back of the sled her father pulled, while the lighter load of her little brother Marshall, three years younger, was towed by her mother. The family of parents and two children was very close; if they weren't skating on a particular winter Sunday it was because it was a racing day. Frank would prepare the bay mare winter racehorse that he was so proud of and hitch it up to the buggy to take his family to the lake. The horse, the Diebolds' year-round transportation, had to do double duty. Frank attached the special harness at the lake, and his wife and children cheered from the side of the track as he raced. It's not the win-loss record that is remembered years later; it's the fact that they did this together.

Since they were close in age, Frances and Marshall shared many interests. Rather than Frances being a protective big sister, the two explored their world together. In wintertime one of the popular sports was runner-hopping. The delivery wagons would slide on sled runners in the snow, and the friendly drivers would slow their horses to make it easier for the neighborhood children to run alongside and jump on top of the runners for a ride. "You had to learn how to hop on and then hop off. We'd go in one direction—and it was fun to be on one of these delivery wagons for a time, then hop off, and then wait for another one that we wanted to ride. When we went for a certain length of time in one direction, then we'd all get off and ride another one back—we didn't have to walk." She doesn't remember teaching Marshall the art of running alongside and hopping on. They probably learned it together. "I'd say those came unbeknownst to us. I presume he pointed out some things to me first, and I pointed out some things to him first. I don't remember an activity that one could label "being protective of my little brother.'”

Frances' favorite books as a child were the Tales of Peter Cottontail. Her mother read them to her until she could connect the illustrations with the words. She would amuse her parents by turning the pages and telling the story, pretending she could read. She had a favorite doll with a china head, arms and legs, real hair, and a hand-painted face with eyes that closed. Frances played hopscotch and ball, climbed trees, and loved marbles—especially the almost transparent ones with
a beautiful yellow glow. “You’d have to give many marbles to get that one from the other person.” All the children had colored sand stores and would exchange or negotiate for these small glass vials of different colored sand. “We had a vocabulary that only the other kids could understand.” Her first school was Draper Elementary, where Miss Marvin, the professional, heavy-set principal, and Miss Worth, her energetic and inspiring fourth-grade teacher, created deep impressions. Every day she walked home from school with Ramona Hayes, her best friend all through grade school, whom she trusted even with her most prized possession, her tricycle.

The big black tricycle with a wide seat, bicycle wheels in back, and a tiny wheel in front steered by a single long handle provided one of the high points as well as the tragedy of her childhood. “Did I tell you about the time way back when I was a little kid—the only one who had a tricycle? This little seat and two big wheels back here and a little wheel in front. Oh, did I love that tricycle. . . . I was the cock-of-the-walk. Everybody wanted to ride my tricycle. And the seat, well, if I were of a generous nature I’d let somebody ride with me. If they wanted to drive it with this handle, yes, all right, but that was a privilege. I mean that tricycle was a status symbol as far as I was concerned—for me.” One day she and her parents came home to an awful truth: “there was no tricycle. My brother had sold it to the junkman. Oh! And my folks had gotten that in Milwaukee. And I had had it a long time. It was an old tricycle by then, but he just thought, ‘Well, he’ll give me a few pennies and who cares whether this tricycle is here or not?’ And my folks saw how it affected me—oh, my tricycle gone! They tried to locate it.” They called all the junkmen in Madison, to no avail. “But instead of [Marshall’s parents] understanding to the nth degree his behavior, that was one of the most severe punishments he received. My folks just couldn’t understand why he had to take that unto him to sell my tricycle. No, he was an outcast with all of us, my brother was. And he remembers it too.” She let Marshall ride it, “but no one ever gave him the privilege to think that he could sell it.” After this rift in the family rapport was overcome, the Diebolds bought bicycles for both Frances and Marshall, who spent hours riding in and around Madison.

Their mother was the dominant force in their lives: “Somehow that mother-figure entered in. She was quite an influence. And when I think back on all of that, one must remember there wasn’t such a thing as radio, or TV, and all the things one is exposed to nowadays. And my mother made for these educational experiences, I think. She was a very innovative person. . . . way ahead of her time in realizing little kids are capable of picking up something.” Bess was more concerned about
developing her children’s minds than with maintaining her own domestic image, “Keeping a house just so, and being a figurehead — the mother figurehead of a family. I don’t think those things entered her mind.” The joy or learning remained important to Bess even in her ninth decade, when her great-grandchildren were visiting. Finding that Marshall’s grandchildren had never seen fruit growing, “she was the one who said, ‘Oh let’s go out to the peach orchard.’ You see, again, even with these little kiddies, her thoughts were doing something constructive, educational for these little imps. She was quite a directive person, but you didn’t know she was directing you.”

The threesome explored the world together, and to the children their mother was a wonder of fearlessness and freedom. “In the days of fall, when we little imps were free for my mother to take care of, we would go hickory and hazel nutting. Filberts. Pff! They’re nothing but hazelnuts!” Frances and Marshall clearly remember the time their mother climbed high into a hickory nut tree to toss the harvest down. “She was so high,” laughing and joking as she swung from branch to branch, her full skirts flying in the open air far above her children’s heads. They were frightened and called for her to come down, but Bess laughed at them and continued in her merry way until her little ones started to cry. Then she realized how worried they were and came down to comfort them, and to assure them that she wasn’t going to get hurt. They brought the nuts home to dry. Frances remembers being intrigued because the hazel nuts came out in clusters, and the hickory nuts’ thick outer shells split open as they dried — the earliest scientific observation of a budding biologist. Recalling this early memory, she realizes that in some ways it was a different world. “What could happen to you now? A young mother and her two children alone in the woods — you’re afraid to move alone.”

In the summertime their mother would often take them to a favorite spot for picnics. The obviously named “Picnic Point” stuck out into Lake Mendota. It was here that Frances and Marshall, along with many other Madison children, learned to swim. She and her brother shared a Shetland pony. Diebold credits her parents for being ahead of their time in keeping their children constructively occupied, as she remembers the nutting, the swimming, the pony and more. “We weren’t exposed to situations whereby we’d get into trouble, or where we were bored” — at least most of the time.

Diebold easily accepted the relationship with the University that her parents created. “Now, you see, Madison’s a university community, so my background has always been with reference to education, a university. Well, my brother and I never heard of anything else except we’d
be graduates of the University. Not of any college, but of the University of Wisconsin. So that was something that was a part of our life, all through growing up. Where we lived was never too far from the University. And my mother would take us there for all sorts of activities, all sorts. Well, for example, they had beginning convocations, comparable to what we have here, but the whole student body met together to hear the president and some of the officials, you might say, introduce these students to some of the points of view held by the University. My mother always used to take us to those. I don't see how she had the strength to do what a family does, and yet know that these two whippersnappers might appreciate the University crowd, and hearing ideas and comprehending whatever they could. But she always took us to those.

"So the educational process hasn't been, in my case, just decided by myself. It's been guided by the opportunity that my mother exposed us to." Because they saw the same people at many events, the children began to identify with outstanding personalities. "As human beings we always pick out role models . . . and many times, from my point of view, a role model becomes evident in your life. Oh, you're like eleven, twelve, thirteen years old. I don't think it's evident to you when you're just a kid, before that, before the teens. But in our case, seeing the academic world, and these activities my mother took us to—we picked out, as youngsters, role figures [and said], 'Well, I'm going to try to be like that.' Way back there, before we were ten . . . . Now for example, a figure that comes to mind—imagine remembering it—Genevieve Hendricks. 'Can I ever grow up and look like her? Could I ever grow up and have her dignity, her ease of meeting people?' She didn't meet me—I didn't count. But I saw her meeting other people, and she played a very important role on campus. She was an outstanding figure. Not that ever a little imp would have recognized it." Students who were interested and active in campus occasions were attractive to the "little imp," no doubt to her parents' delight. "And another person was Janet Duree. Now don't ask me, but there was something about her that just made me think, 'Oh, wouldn't it be wonderful if I ever grew up to be like that individual?' . . . My brother was the same way . . . . I think that one of the role figures early in my brother's life was Al Tormey . . . . You see, we used to discuss this afterward. I mean the two of us. So we became aware of the people we picked out to emulate . . . that role figure we pick out because of the number of times we see them. I don't think that one acquires a role figure just by a glance. I think you have to see an individual under various circumstances. But that was something that many growing
kiddies aren’t exposed to.” Her glimpses of these campus sophisticates gave her precedents for behavior in new situations later on. “We don’t really realize how much we picked up because my mother was so interested in making us aware of what an educated community indulges in.

“You see, my mother used to take us to the socials, commencement, May fêtes, some of the plays put on, some of their formal parties. The thing to do, at that time, if you wanted to see these beautiful parties, was, if they were held in a place where there was an area for an audience, [to] be a spectator . . . . For the Junior prom, that’s where we were, up in the balcony. Now, imagine my mother taking care of personal things all day and having energy—I don’t know how my mother did it—energy enough, and interest enough in the development of young personalities to do those things. She was way ahead of her time, my mother. Oh, my father too, but especially my mother. Without saying anything directly, but indirectly making us aware of the importance of education. Feeling at home with, or friendly with, the academic world.” Bess was providing Frances and Marshall with experiences that she had missed. Frances did not realize this at the time, “but as I became mature, oh yes. Oh yes. I think those thoughts must have gone through her mind many many times. ‘Believe me, these youngsters are going to have opportunities that I did not have.’ Oh yes. But not then. No, those were just good times, and, well, we were satisfied doing that instead of being in a lot of mischief . . . . But you see it made us both aware of human behavior—under different circumstances.”

Diebold believes she gets her daring to be different, her nerve to do what she believes is natural regardless of what others may think, from her mother. Frances Diebold dared to teach in college and to maintain her beliefs in spite of pressures from the mainstream—just as her mother didn’t bother to wear gloves and swung freely from the high boughs of a hickory nut tree. And yet, Diebold, like her mother, is radical within tradition. Her mother instilled in her a respect and appreciation for the academic; a convocation, the spirit of Christmas, the concept of unity in a wedding band are important. But the mother raised her children to be free thinkers; while Diebold delights in some traditions, she is horrified by “symbolic indulgences” in religious and other groups that are shrouded by “mysticism that hasn’t any sense. I don’t see how a thinking person could indulge in that stuff.” Bess and Frank Diebold stressed the importance of education, urging their children to enjoy—beyond tradition, custom, habit or trend—thinking.

When the foursome was together, there was special magic. “Every
afternoon in the summertime my father and mother took us for a drive. I mean that was part of our daily activity, that when my father came home from work, and after supper, we all would get in the buggy—and I told you about this little seat—and we'd go for a ride. And we'd go out the drive and around Lake Mendota or out in the country. There are many many places in Madison that are very picturesque to drive through. And my mother, I think, got us to behave and take our naps in the afternoon. If we wanted to go for a drive when my father came home, we had to take our nap. And then when she would dress us, after our naps, we had to stay clean. She said we could play, 'but be very careful if you want to go for that ride.' And believe me, we wanted to go for that ride. And so I remember with a good deal of pleasure, summertime, nutting, going on picnics with some of my mother's friends and also those wonderful family drives at the end of the day.

"One time, for some reason or other, Marshall and I did something that we shouldn't have, and I think we got dirty too—and my mother was just not going to change our clothes again, and she said, 'No, you're not going for a ride. No. Your father and I are going, but you aren't.' And so she sent us up to bed after supper. Well, I'm sure that she and my father regretted very much that they hadn't taken us. My brother and I were very piqued, and we had a pillow fight and broke the pillows—and all these feathers—and OH! That was the most fun! But oh, that poor woman and all those feathers around the bedroom. But we had a wonderful pillow-feather fight. Oh boy."

The family was quite self-contained; in Frances' memory there was little significant involvement with other people. She saw her paternal grandparents, who lived on a farm near Madison, when the larger family gathered together on holidays, but the senior Diebolds died before the grandchildren could get to know them well. Diebold remembers, "Really the only grandparent I recall with maturity is mother's mother." Catherine Lynch-Whalen played an important role in the development of Frances Diebold. Born in Ireland, she emigrated with her family to rural Madison when young. Apparently the family returned to Ireland, while Catherine married Wales-born John Whalen and stayed. Elizabeth was the middle child of three. Her foreign-born father enlisted as a non-commissioned officer in the Civil War. During a confrontation he was shot, fell from his horse, and was later to die of his wounds. Catherine Lynch-Whalen raised her children on her own.

Catherine came to live with her daughter Elizabeth's family in her later years, at the invitation of Frank and Bess, who were concerned about her living alone. Frances and Marshall, at nine and six respec-
tively, loved being alone with their grandmother, for she was a wonder­ful story teller. "We didn’t want anyone else around or else she wouldn’t tell us stories.” The children would go to their grandmother’s room and sit spellbound as she spun tales set in Scotland, Wales, and Ireland. They came to know the names of the many characters as the stories interlaced.

Whether by necessity or natural tendency, Catherine was a very independent person. As the widow of a Civil War veteran, she received a stipend. Every month, regardless of her age or the weather, she would go alone to collect it. “Nobody could go with her; that was her trip all by herself. I can see her get ready and get on the streetcar to go up to the GAR office to get whatever. She was quite a person.” Living with her daughter’s family quelled neither Catherine’s independent spirit nor her cheerful industry. “Because she was a very independent soul — surely must have been, although as a kid you don’t know those things — I’m sure that she was very helpful around the house, and probably made it possible for my mother to have so much freedom with refer­ence to taking us to the campus and to all those various activities I’ve mentioned to you. I wonder if she could have done that if my grand­mother [hadn’t been] there. I don’t know; see, as a kid, you don’t know those things. But, no, she was mentally alert, as I recall, and perfectly competent, until her death.” Catherine Lynch-Whalen died at seventy-five, but not before she had enriched the lives of two of her grandchildren, coloring their days with tales about the land of their heritage, and providing an example of independence, dignity and spirit.

One day Bess took her children to see the circus parade enter town. Frank had the horse harnessed before he left for work, and she hitched it to the buggy before they started out. It was quite an exciting event for Frances and Marshall, watching the clowns and the brightly dressed performers, seeing a lion for the first time as it rolled by in a cage. They had barely caught sight of the elephants when their horse, amazed by the huge grey creatures, bolted. Frances and Marshall were having great fun as their runaway buggy careened around the central square. They were a part of the pageantry until the horse got ahead of the parade. Bess drew tightly on the reins but the horse continued at its reckless speed as the two youngsters on the seat beside her laughed in delight, heedless of the danger. When finally a man was able to jump aboard and stop the horse, the circus and the elephants were far behind and out of sight. Bess was pale, but kept her poise, and thanked the gentle­man as she refused his offer to drive the still-skittish mare home for them. She cautiously took to the back streets to avoid the parade’s
Diebold remembers the great excitement of the episode, but more importantly the demonstration of her mother's character. "She was a strong person, yes sir, and in retrospect I think she was a person who could cope with any situation. You know, if something came up spontaneously that was not typical, I don't think she would wring her hands and say, 'Oh goodness, what am I going to do now?' I think she just handled it," just as she held on to those reins.

Frances inherited some of her mother's bravery, physical as well as intellectual, as she demonstrated on one of the family picnics with a neighbor, Mrs. Burger. "Well, this summer day we went out beyond Picnic Point...[to] part of [the University's] farmland. There was this little area that was fenced in, and so my father suggested to my mother that if we were going out there, [we should] just put the horse in there, unhitch it and put it in there. It would just have a more relaxed time—as a horse. And so we kids were having fun and I thought, 'Oh, now wouldn't it be fun to go in there and just ride the horse around?"' The horse, however, wasn't used to being ridden. "So I said, 'Marshall, just lead the horse'—remember it had its harness on—'move the horse up to the fence and I'm going to get on it.' Oh yes, my mother and Mrs. Burger are somewhere else. And so I got on the horse. Oh I had the best time walking around, and going around. And that darned horse—evidently the gate was a little bit open, and finally that horse went right out the gate. And soon as he was out of the gate, did his speed improve! I was by myself with the horse—just the two of us. And so the momentum increased, and what happened to this crazy little mutt on the horse? Be-boppity-foof! Fell off! And that horse just stepped over me. I mean, oh, animals are intelligent. But that horse, instead of stepping on me, or kicking me or anything, just in his stepping, just loped over me, and went on. And of course you know where he went. He went home.

"And so when my mother and Mrs. Burger realized here they were with children, way out miles from Madison, 'What are we going to do?' And Mrs. Burger—isn't it strange what you remember?—said to my mother, 'Well Bess, this is a lesson for life.' Well, at any rate, when my father came home, he thought, 'Oh-oh, I wonder what's happened?' So he hitched up the horse again to a different buggy or whatever,... and he went out. And oh, was my mother glad to see him. But I remember she said to Mrs. Burger, 'Don't worry. We'll just be staying longer than we intended to because Frank will see that and he'll come after us.' So she wasn't as worried as Mrs. Burger was. So he did. And here we went home with the buggy being drawn by whatever this was he had the horse hitched to... I was reprimanded for not having more
sense than to do a thing like that. But oh, I said I had so much fun. And I wasn't a bit scared, when the horse stepped over me. And same way on him—he behaved all right. And so I had a wonderful experience my brother never had . . . . Well, I always was adventurous.

Besides recommending University farmland for picnics, Frank Diebold insisted that all dairy products come from the University farm. "Eggs and butter and cream and milk all had to come from the University, the dairy, the poultry barn, and the milk barn." As early as Frances can remember, every Saturday, "unless whatever we had wouldn't do 'til Saturday," the family would pile into the buggy for the ride out to the farm. It was great fun to be in the barns, watching the cows that were much larger than she was, and observing how so many chickens were kept. "But we all liked to go to the dairy because we wanted to have some of that delicious buttermilk. That was a real treat . . . . My mother had these two crock jars, [about four pounds each,] because one of them would be there to be filled [with butter], you see, in the dairy. And it would be all ready for us to take when we'd go, and then we'd leave the other one." Later on, when there wasn't enough time for the whole family to go to the farm, Frances or Marshall would drive the horse over to get the supplies. But Frances was never to forget the times they had gone together, and the weekly drink of buttermilk that she and Marshall shared with their father.

Frank Diebold was a quiet man in comparison to his bird-like, cheerful wife. His daughter believes he was inclined to be nonconforming himself and would have liked to climb trees and go on picnics with his wife and children if he hadn't had to work. Instead, he supported his family, spent as much time with them as he could, and championed their activities and dreams. He was very supportive of his children's education, and Diebold feels that she would have had a very different childhood if her father had thought her mother subservient to him. "He was ahead of his time in reference to his attitude towards women."

Frank Diebold respected his family, and did not discourage his wife's climbing hickory trees.

The era of her early childhood closed when the family moved to University Heights, adjacent to the University. Frank and Bess Diebold would live at 129 Lathrop Street until his death in 1949. Frances had left Draper School and felt much more mature when she started Randall Junior High. Even though she had not yet realized the influences of the role models and her family upon her life, Frances' predisposition to certain activities was a preparation for her future career. She collected fireflies in junior high with a friend. Examining them through the glass walls of the jar, she was possessed with wonder. How did they
light up? Her interest in science increased when she had the opportunity to study further at University High School. She laughs as she reconstructs her parents' reasoning in sending her there: "My brother went to Central High School and I went to University High School.... Oh, and I imagine that since he was a boy and I was a girl, my folks thought, 'Well, that's a journey, but a fellow can make it.' University High was not very far from where we lived, so, 'For a girl, that's where we'll send her.' Now I don't know, but I can just imagine." Her daily attire all through high school was a middy suit, navy in the winter and light blue in the summer. She would wear only middy suits made by the Hoffman Company, custom-fitted and mailed to her from Chicago. This luxury, along with the only tricycle in the neighborhood and the Shetland pony, illustrates the attention the Diebolds gave their children. They were not wealthy, but were persistent in enriching their children's lives without spoiling them. She fondly recalls the instructors in her college preparatory courses: "Miss Sabin in Latin, Miss Skinner in English, Miss Owen in history, Miss Sheidweiler in biology. Now imagine recalling those names. And they surely were all individuals." Female teachers predominated in the lower strata of education.

However, no outside individuals mattered as much as her immediate family. Childhood train trips to Milwaukee were special treats. Bess took the children to visit her sister there, but Frances has no vivid recollections of time spent with aunts, uncles or cousins. She remembers better the day-long family trips in the horse-drawn buggy. "Our life seemed to be complete among ourselves, together as a family unit even in our activities." Frank and Bess Diebold had worked very hard to create an environment conducive to their children's physical, intellectual and emotional growth. "I do think my parents were quite an exception for their time—I don't see any difference in reference to what Marshall and I were allowed to do. . . . But to think that we were a family unit, even in our activities—well, from the point of view of recall, it's a very precious memory."

At sixteen, when she graduated from high school, the energetic, nimble, clear-eyed and witty Frances had acquired a strong sense of self from her cohesive and supportive family. Assured by several strong female role models and imbued with a belief in education and a desire to be part of the academic community, she felt no limitation in being female. This self-assurance is the foundation of her belief in the importance of every individual, upon which her own style of teaching and way of living were to be based. But just as her family had nurtured individuality, it had also given her a strong sense of the value and power of relationships, a basic credo in her life. "To me—what happens in a
life-cycle is very much on the individual, but what we are is based a good deal upon our associates . . . . I can’t accept the idea that any one person accomplishes anything by him or herself. That is, these individuals who say they're self-made—I think that phrase is so false. I don’t think anyone is a self-made person. We all gather help from some sort of a guiding hand . . . . You see, also in one's life, I think that as a developing personality [one says], “Well, that’s something I admire; I’d like to be that way.” And I think, although you aren’t definitely aware of it, you incorporate some of those characteristics that you appreciate and admire in others within yourself.” She defines the dominant factor in her own life as “interrelationships. And I think myself, inherently, that much comes out of interrelationships. The results of something are primarily due to whatever kind of relationships are established—for whatever reason.” This principle, the primacy of the individual in relationships, in turn influenced her choice of biology as a field and her approach to teaching. Following her family’s influence, she would freely pursue her deep interest in nature.

II

“Education was always a part of my experience.” Although the parents had finished only high school, they made sure that neither Frances nor her brother Marshall questioned getting a college education. The innovative Bess had built the desire for as well as the enjoyment of learning into her children’s activities. “Learning was a part of our life. Without saying anything, that’s what she instilled in us.” This familiarity with and appreciation of the academic world also inspired Diebold to teach. “It seems to me I always wanted to be affiliated with a college—with a campus atmosphere.”

Diebold chose a profession very natural to her. Just as she had a lifelong interest in the academic and pedagogical, the years of going on picnics, nutting, learning about the family horse and pony, and enjoying evening buggy rides out into the Madison terrain instilled her fascination with biology. “I was always intrigued by natural phenomena . . . . Nature was a part of my being.” She chose a field of biology that dealt with individuals and their relationships. “Well, why did I choose zoology? Plant life is important and I respect it, but I think my attentiveness to animal life was because it was something I could hold on to, something I could feel. I could see a contour in it. They moved about, they interacted, and that intrigued me.”

When Diebold entered the University of Wisconsin in the fall of 1917, she had already decided to major in biology. However, her early
college years were powerfully affected by World War I. When first asked about the war years, she became uncharacteristically reticent and simply responded, "Those were interesting years." Among the tests, lab work, and volunteer work at the Red Cross, the absence of male students was felt. Jack, a student in the College of Agriculture and five years older than sophomore Frances, volunteered for the war. He stayed on in France to work for the Graves Registration Bureau. From his family, she learned of the death of her sweetheart. He had died of pneumonia and was buried in France. There was no funeral or grave to visit to alleviate the pain of losing the man she planned to marry.

In spite of losing friends and loved ones, Diebold insists upon some of the positive changes the war brought. "I think that was the beginning of a more active expression of one's feelings, on the part of women, than had been true before. I think that women, because of that war situation, were much more outspoken as to their real concerns about many things, many things." She emphasizes the importance of educational opportunities opening up at that time for women. "I mean by that, opportunities to teach, other than just first grade, kindergarten. Roles in education were more widespread for women. With a few exceptions." Although she saw World War I as the time of liberation for women, she is not aware of its influence upon her. She saw it as a liberation for "women as a group. I presume it did influence me, but I'm not aware of it. But it must have, because I'm a part of the women's group." When asked if she believed this movement had helped her in her career, she responded, "Now I'm a strange subject to ask that of, because I have never in my life felt hindered in what I wanted to do, nor have I felt that because he was a male, he had a better break than I did as a female." She credits this freedom to the way she was raised by her family and the liberal university town she grew up in. She was in her early adolescence when women were marching for suffrage. When women got the vote in 1920, she said, "How dumb; that should have been true years ago."

Many other changes were occurring in Diebold's life during her college years. Her father gave up his winter race horse and remodeled the barn into a garage for his first car. Frank Diebold had built one of the earliest homes in University Heights. There had been lots of space to let the horse graze, but as the academically inclined subdivision built up, the pastures disappeared. "I learned to drive on that Roadster, a Ford Roadster. My folks bought that Roadster; at any rate I learned to drive with that darned thing. Bompity! Bompity! Bompity! Bump!"

Diebold not only enjoyed the challenge of a higher education, but also observed closely the personalities and the teaching methods of her
instructors. “During my freshman year . . . one of the outstanding personalities, as being a wonderful instructor, was Miss Dooley . . . remember I can call her name that easily . . . Miss Dooley in English. I always thought it was a privilege to have had her in English. Oh, she was a dynamic teacher!” She taught an introductory course in Freshman English. “That's what they called it—they didn't call it Rhetoric—they called it Freshman English. Oh, goodness, I anticipated and looked forward to those classes so much, because of her. And she was a small person, in a way, except well filled out, dark hair, brown eyes; but oh my, how she could capture the interest of the class and hold it.” She credits Miss Dooley as one of her models. But she believes in learning from associations whether they are positive or negative, and, in her freshman year she met up with the antithesis of Miss Dooley. “I had a minor in French, but my freshman year I took Spanish. Can't tell you the man's name, but he was, I presume, what you call a Castilian Spaniard, because he was light-haired, blue eyed, and I think he was bored to death with having to pay attention to these young kids. Because he just hated to use the board, but when he did, he'd pull his shirt sleeves down, and write on the board. And then by writing on the board his shirt sleeve would go up to his cuff, you know, so when he put his hand down, he'd pull his shirt sleeves down so that they'd match. Now isn't that awful to remember? But that's what I remember. And that was enough Spanish for me. I thought, 'Oh no. No, I don't want to expose myself again to that kind of an instructor.' And he was very good-looking; I mean, you couldn't keep your eyes off of him. He was attractive—but he knew it. If he had been less aware of his good looks, I think he would have been a better instructor and I also think the students would have liked him. But, oh, we couldn't stand him. His habits took over, and that kind of a silly habit [inhibited him as a teacher], because you knew that he was thinking completely of himself.”

From the positive example of Miss Dooley and the negative aspects of her justly nameless Spanish teacher Frances Diebold took important lessons as a future teacher. Her education courses, on the other hand, had little to teach her: “Hated 'em!” She used some of the information, but personalities in her own education played a more consequential role. Dr. Miller, director of student teaching, was influential, but for the way he taught rather than what he taught. Her great delight in the Education Department was that she practiced taught in her own alma mater—University High School.

Academics were only a part of her life at the University. A gifted athlete, she joined a University tennis team and remembers the black
bloomers she was required to wear. “Styles today are more natural; this is the way it should be.”

Diebold worked in the registrar’s office during the summers and vacations, the only job she had before she began teaching. “Again you see, all academic.” She helped get the grades out during spring vacation and the summer break, and even while working in the summer she went to school, graduating with more credits than necessary. She fondly remembers a course in Greek Mythology with Professor Grant Showerman, in which she found a relationship between Greek thought and her own scientific realm. She was a liberal arts student well before the concept was firmly established.

In June of 1921, one month before her twenty-first birthday, she graduated from the University of Wisconsin. With her teacher’s certificate and her senior (“baby”) thesis, “Turtles: Their Habits of Respiration,” solidly behind her, she prepared to enter the professional world.

In the fall of 1921 Miss Frances Diebold assumed her first position, teaching biology at Stevens Point High School, about two hundred miles north of Madison. She had gone into high-school rather than grade-school teaching because she felt she could deal more seriously there with her field of knowledge. She bought her first car, a tan Chevy coupe, after her first year at Stevens Point. Staying in close contact with the biology department at the University, she heard about an opening for summer teaching at Eau Claire Teacher’s College. The summer of 1922 was to change the course of her life. “My experience at Eau Claire made me realize how wonderful it would be to teach in college.” Diebold returned to Stevens Point for a second year but decided, “‘No, you just knuckle down and get your master’s degree.’ I knew I had to have that in order to teach in college.” The following summer she returned to Madison to begin her advanced degree. Knowing she didn’t want to continue in high school teaching, she had resigned from Stevens Point, regardless of the fact that she had no prospects for the fall.

A chain of events that Diebold calls serendipitous led her to Kalamazoo College that fall. It began with “the friendship in graduate school, the friendship that prevailed between one of my advisers at Wisconsin, Dr. Pearse, and Professor Praeger,” head of the Biology Department at Kalamazoo College. “Professor Praeger wanted somebody else in the department because—he must have been in his 60’s. He had had a heart attack and Dr. Hoben [the President of Kalamazoo College] said, I imagine, words to the effect of ‘Well, Praeger, you need some help; we better get some help for you.’ And until then he was alone in that
department. Of course college population was such that one position was enough; I mean, most colleges of that time had these various departments, and there was a single person to represent the department. So that's why he was in search of help. . . . Dr. Pearse [had studied at] the University of Chicago and also the University of Illinois. And so had Professor Praeger. They knew one another—they were in the same field and so on. . . . So here at Kalamazoo when they wanted someone in the biology department to help Professor Praeger, then he got busy and he thought, 'Well, one of my best sources would be to get in touch with Dr. Pearse.'"

Diebold had informed the University that she was not returning to Stevens Point. "But in the meantime, when I told them in the zoology department that I wanted to move on and go into college teaching, Dr. Pearse, Dr. Arthur S. Pearse, that summer phoned me, and he said, 'Would you like to go to Kalamazoo and teach?' I said, 'Where's Kalamazoo? For goodness sakes, what kind of a place is it?' You can imagine the conversation.

"Well, that particular summer I was going to summer school. . . . I wanted to get started on my advanced degree. . . . And he had written and so had Dr. Hoben—you know, the same old story, wanting your credentials and so on. So I had corresponded with the president, Dr. Hoben, and also with Professor Praeger. And Professor Praeger was going west to study, to do some field work, in Nebraska and Montana and Wyoming, in that area of the United States. And so he suggested that on his way out, he would stop and have an interview with me. And of course he had my address and so on, and also I presume, when Professor Praeger showed an interest in this candidate, he talked to Dr. Hoben." The Hobens had a cottage at Oconomowoc, a resort area not far from Milwaukee or Madison. "So, Dr. Hoben also said that he'd like to have an interview with me. . . . And since he was going to spend a goodly portion of the summer in Oconomowoc, he'd just make a short trip up to Madison to see me some day. Now remember, I was going to summer school. I had a note from Professor Praeger saying that he was on his way; he couldn't say exactly when he would make Madison, but it would be this particular day. Okay. Well, when I got home from summer school that day, who was sitting on the davenport except this strange figure with his goatee—very distinguished-looking person. I thought, 'Oh, I don't like facial adornments.' I never have liked facial adornments on men. And here he was . . . . I'd bet he was close to six feet tall, but he was distinguished looking, quite different. And I thought, 'For heavens sakes, that can't be this man Praeger,' but it was. And just imagine, insignificant me, at summer school, causing this
important personage to wait for me in my home! Boy! . . . My reaction was 'Oh, what a fumble this is, what a way to start out.' But we hit it off all right. The thing that stands out in my mind—in recall—is this personage. I don't remember anything about what we talked over, but I do remember it was very pleasant. We talked about Dr. Pearse and I told him some of my impressions of his friend—his graduate colleague—and so on.”

A second surprise came a week later. “And in the meantime, Dr. Hoben, President Hoben, had written, and said that his family, his daughter and one of his sons wanted to go to Madison to do some shopping, and that he would phone me and be seeing me this particular day. Okay. But instead of phoning, he just went out to our house. He showed up. And my poor mother—well, at any rate, when I got home this particular day, here was this figure sitting. ‘Who in all the world is it? That can’t be the president of Kalamazoo College!’” Surely the president of Kalamazoo College should look even more imposing than a biology professor. Instead, Diebold saw a slight, unassuming man—and he too, much to her chagrin, had been forced to wait for her. “He was a small person, about 5’7″. You know that isn’t tall for a man . . . . He was an interesting person to see, but he was just another human being. But his charm, his magnetism, was himself, was the way he expressed his personality. You couldn’t forget it; he was a very magnetic person.” Diebold found herself thinking: “‘Oh how interesting; this is the biology instructor and this is the president . . . . Well, for a president to have a period of relaxation, enough to sit in somebody’s home, until they appeared, what kind of a person is that? To not become impatient and say, ‘Well, will you please tell her blah blah blah blah . . . get in touch with me.’” No, here he was sitting in our easy chair, waiting for me to appear.

“After interviewing these two personages, I received a letter, I think from Professor Praeger first, but he was out on his field trip [in] Nebraska, Montana, Wyoming. The gist of his note was that he thought that we could get along together, and he was really interested in me, and if I would like to, he’d like to have me as his assistant. ‘But,’ he said, ‘of course, this can’t be official until President Hoben makes it so’ . . . . And I can’t remember if he knew that Dr. Hoben was also interviewing me. But at any rate, then, a bit later, I had this letter from the President of Kalamazoo College, saying he thought that—and it was typical Hoben—he thought that I might enjoy throwing my lot in with what he was trying to do here at the college. And he’d like to see me as a member of his faculty—something like that. And so I thought, ‘Well, that’s interesting. Now these two have to get together.’ Okay. So, finally that
was all established, and my contract was such a simple little thing. It was just a letter—typically Hoben—saying that what he wanted this to be was a fellowship in learning, a community of young and old learners and so on. My letter, that was the only contract. And if that appealed to me, that kind of an environment, would I just please sign this and return it. That was it. So different. Oh, so different from the way things are done now.

III

However, when Frances Diebold first rolled into Kalamazoo in her tan Chevy coupe, her good impressions of President Hoben and Professor Praeger and her attraction to the idea of a fellowship in learning were overridden by the startling realities of a rudimentary college. The faculty were few, and grossly underpaid and overworked. Diebold had not realized how cosmopolitan her life in Madison had been until she encountered Kalamazoo College in 1923: on a hillside that sloped into a swamp stood rambling Bowen Hall, the site of all classes and faculty offices. There were a single dorm for men and one for ladies, an already outdated gymnasium, and an athletic field that wasn’t even wide enough for football. A single circular drive served the little campus, with wide spots for stopping in front of Wheaton Lodge, Bowen Hall, and Williams Hall. “The mechanics took over, or the superficial took over, momentarily. That’s right. They did. ‘Oh goodness, these buildings; you have to trunch up these stairs of Bowen Hall, three flights to this auditorium and that’s what they call chapel.’ I mean the mechanics disappointed me. I think it seemed to me provincial compared to the capital city of my state. The University, with its beautiful buildings and its lawns and its decorative shrubbery and so on, was such a contrast to this very simple, to me primitive, unit of education.”

The Kalamazoo students would walk downtown in line for Commencement to the Baptist church. “And at Wisconsin, ff! You wouldn’t think of that. Even then. But yes, to me that was provincial, it was primitive and provincial.

“When I arrived, I thought ‘Oh, my Lord, what a provincial place this is; oh good heavens, I can’t take this. I’m not going to stay here. They have funny ideas: the women all have to wear gloves when they go up town, they have this crazy chapel every day. How provincial can you be in college? . . . I don’t know, I don’t know if I’m going to last . . .’ I wouldn’t unpack my trunk. No, I wouldn’t unpack my trunk. I thought, ‘No, I’ll stand it maybe until Christmas, or the end of the first semester, and then I’m going to tell them I’m going home.’”

Serendipity intervened once again, and very soon: “On the first Sun-
day, well, maybe it was the second Sunday, because as I recall we had a lot of stuff to do here on this campus—the whole faculty. But at any rate, one of the first Sundays, Miss Tanis, Mildred Tanis, who was chief move-all in dramatics, asked me if I wouldn’t like to go to church with her and out to lunch. And I thought, ‘Well, how nice; I guess I will.’”

Mildred Tanis came to be one of those whose individual efforts for the little college Diebold most admires: “Oh my, she did a lot for drama, she really made the drama department, and the next person who I think was very outstanding in drama of course was Nelda Balch. Yes, those two. Much should be made of Miss Tanis, more than has been. She was a splendid instructor and a splendid director of drama. Wonderful drama was put on during her service here. Well, Mildred Tanis was quite proud of this little car of hers. I don’t know if you’d even know what kind of a car it would be. It was a Ford coupe, one of those boxy Ford coupes. And she was proud of it—but closed-in cars were not very prevalent then; they were in, but [there were] mainly open cars, and then you had all the curtains that you put around it. Well, this was a Ford coupe, and she had saved her money, and her parents in no way helped her buy that car. So she was very proud of it. She picked me up and we went to the Presbyterian church. The pastor of the Presbyterian Church then was Dr. John Wirt Dunning, and Dr. Dunning was quite a poetic person. My, he had such a gift of language. I had heard of him as one of the outstanding pastors in Kalamazoo. And I bet you can’t remember the title of a sermon that you’ve heard, but, oh my, why should I remember the title of Dr. Dunning’s sermon? But you’ll see why I did.

“His sermon was entitled, ‘Painting Sunsets on the Morning Sky.’ Do you get it? Exactly what I was doing here about the college: painting sunsets on the morning sky, making these prejudgements, making these conclusions about what kind of a college it was, long before I had any right to do so. And it surely gave me a big poke; it was what I needed. And of course he had a splendid development for that topic. And surely it set me to thinking, afterwards, when I got home.

“Well, after that sermon we got into Mildred Tanis’ very cocky little Ford coupe and she said, ‘Do you know what celery fields look like?’ I said, ‘No, I only know celery when you buy it.’ She said, ‘Well, I want to take you through the north part of Kalamazoo and show you the celery fields.’ So in this little boppity-boppity coupe, she took me all through the northern part of Kalamazoo, and showed me what celery fields look like in this rich black muck. Kalamazoo doesn’t have that anymore, but Kalamazoo used to be an outstanding celery center. You’d mention Kalamazoo to anyone on the outside, and they’d say ‘Oh yeah,
Frances Diebold

Kalamazoo celery. ... That was an eye opener to me, to see celery
growing in these beautiful, black, well-cared-for fields. Of course they
were all—the farmers or the celery raisers—Hollanders, were all Dutch
people.”

Diebold's eyes began to open to the possibilities of Kalamazoo and
its college. “Each day I thought what I was doing about this place, and
I thought, 'Well, maybe you better, you better unpack that steamer
trunk and give it a year's try. All right.' Some of the things that I was
amused at then became some of the very, very important entities that
make this college.

"One of them was chapel, not the fact that you had to go to chapel,
but the ideas expressed by the people who gave talks in chapel. And
the idea that a student body was brought together, each day, for some­
thing different than just the academic—just coursework.” Chapel was
never “a church”; it was a forum, where ideas could be exchanged. The
whole faculty participated and anything could be discussed. “The
whole student body was exposed simultaneously to those ideas . . . .
People have different views, but it serves as a point of departure . . . .
Chapel was one of the choice things that I looked down my nose at
when I first came here. [It provided for] intellectual examination of
ideas—that to me was choice.”

A happy living arrangement also eased the adjustment. The Praegers
had found lodging for her in the home of their friends, the Dunstans,
on Bulkley Street. “The Praegers thought that I'd be good for Mrs.
Dunstan and she'd be good for me. Mr. Dunstan was an engineer with
the Buick division of General Motors. [But] they didn't like living in
Detroit, because they wanted their son to go to a school in a smaller
community. So they established their home here, their living quarters
here in Kalamazoo, and Mr. Dunstan commuted . . . and he'd come
home weekends. And so Mrs. Dunstan was home with her little son
Tom, and that was all . . . . There was a lot of space. And the Dunstans,
knowing the Praegers, thought that it would be fun for her to have a
person from the college.” For several years the Dunstans provided
something akin to the tight family she had left in Madison. The women
enjoyed each other's company and Diebold delighted in the privilege
of watching Tom grow up. “Yes, and that was so much fun. You see
Mrs. Dunstan was an impulsive free thinker too—I mean, we hit it off
nicely because she was very liberal in her attitudes, about life and reli­
gion and what is the thing to do. I don't mean she was a radical; you see
I've told you I'm very sympathetic with the women's movement, [but]
I'm not a radical . . . . So, we had many fine discussions, but we also
had a lot of fun. We'd take drives, we'd go out to eat, and so on, the
three of us. . . . That was a pleasurable experience because I was part of the family. The Dunstans and I did a lot—I mean Mrs. Dunstan and Tom and I did many things together. And of course when Mr. Dunstan came home, there were certain things during those few days he was there they'd include me in. So I never felt like a 'roomer,' in quotes, never. Never, with the Dunstans."

"And I began to appreciate these personalities that I met, that made up the faculty: the Hobens as a family, intangible things; there was something very unique and choice, from my point of view, after my first impression about this little place. . . . I realized this college was quite liberal—you could be quite free in what you thought of as religion. . . . To me, to be religious is to be living—to be alive within the panorama of nature. . . . I found—somehow—many people associated with this college understood my ideas. Personalities and interrelationships, some of the most precious things in life—to me, that's religion."

Diebold became especially close to Dr. L.J. Hemmes, chair of Philosophy and Psychology Departments and "the scholar of the campus," and his wife Gibbie. Their association would last the rest of the Hemmes' lives. "So one year led to another, led to another, led to another. After that [initial] attitude, my service to this college actively was forty-four years."

One of the most satisfying of these relationships was with Professor William Emilius Praeger. The distinguished, tremendously reserved gentleman had chosen a youthful, inexperienced but enthusiastic female as his assistant. This thoroughly unlikely combination was to make quite a team. With tremendous admiration and appreciation, Diebold recounts his background. "Professor Praeger was a dyed-in-wool Irishman. He was a good old Irishman, and the city of Dublin meant an awful lot to him. On his business trip for the family's meat-packing company, he went to Keokuk, Iowa. And in Keokuk he met his wife, Mrs. Praeger. That's the way he came to this country, so he was educated—his early education—in the British Isles. . . . He came over here as a businessman, representing his country, representing his family's concern; then he wanted to stay here, so he wanted to complete his education. He went to the University of Illinois, University of Chicago, and that's where these two personalities met: Professor Praeger and Dr. Pearse."

"I never felt at all inferior with Professor Praeger. Whether that was because of his European background, I can't tell you, I don't know. In Britain, his sister Rosamond was an artist, she was a sculptress, and her favorite subjects were little people, kiddies; she sculptured adults, but
she was very fond of doing young people. His brother was a naturalist . . . ; now, note I use the word 'naturalist,' not 'biologist,' because that term was used—well, you see, Darwin was a naturalist. You hardly ever hear of him referred to as a biologist. And people who were interested in the study of nature then, that's what they were called; whatever their field, whether it was zoology, or botany or histology, human anatomy, you name it, they were naturalists. Well at any rate, he as a naturalist was very interested in writing—Professor Praeger’s brother was. And he was very fond of Shakespeare. And one of his projects was to interpret Shakespeare as a naturalist. And one of the things that he was doing was to find out . . . , by reading Shakespeare, the number of different varieties of birds that played a role in his plays, in his literary accomplishments."

Diebold attributes her new mentor’s amenability to a young female colleague to his own family relationships. “Professor Praeger having two daughters, I never felt that he had any bias about male versus female, and that was wonderful.” Like Frank Diebold but with more traditional reserve, he encouraged his children’s endeavors and appreciated his wife’s collaboration. “Mrs. Praeger tried to supplement what he did here—I mean, having the students in and so on. Being in the academic world, you see, she found plenty to do other than just attentiveness to her children. But as an individual, a male, oh, his daughters just had to have a career. Whatever they wanted to do, that was splendid, they should. Any person.

“He was a very liberal-minded person; he accepted me at once. And I never felt that he was male and I was female, never. In fact, our relationship almost from the first was as if he were a favorite uncle of mine. And we always had that relationship. Meeting him and knowing I had to work with him, from my background, was nothing foreign. I mean, he represented something I was familiar with.” Praeger’s expertise in botany and Diebold’s in zoology balanced one another. "We dovetailed beautifully. Right from the very beginning. His field was plant life, ecology, so important today, and mine was more the laboratory end of the science, and primarily animal zoology. Even though he was this very straight and impressive looking figure—he really was—yet he and I were a team. Our rapport was very relaxed and very intimate. I mean, he was not someone I worked for, or someone who was head of a department; we were co-workers. What he wanted me to do, I wanted to do; and I’d talk this way to him: What I wanted him to do he’d do. I mean, we were a cooperative team from the very beginning.

“We hear so much about the liberation of women and so on today—those thoughts in my experience here never crossed my mind because
I never felt that Professor Praeger had a lower estimation of my ability compared to what his estimation of a man's ability would be. Never! Never, never felt that way. I was co-equal . . . In my experience professionally, even when I was a high school teacher, I never felt that I was an inferior individual, compared to a man. Now salary-wise, that's another thing, but everybody was underpaid at this college, back then, everybody."

Praeger's integration of his discipline with a larger world view was an important point of congeniality: "he was a naturalist. To him nature was very important. He and Mrs. Praeger were Unitarians. And to him, just nature was religion. Oh, that's Unitarian, broadly interpreted. And of course I think we got along so well from the very beginning because those were some of my ideas. I mean, to me, . . . this overall thing we call nature has great dignity and respect and is religion. I think just being alive is a religious experience. Just living. Without anything else, this coming into being, of life, to me, is religion. Professor Praeger used to say: 'We live by dying, and whenever we cease to die, we cease to live.' It is so. I incorporated it into my own thinking"—and into her general biology classes.

"He was a great respector of natural phenomena, and I think he became, in his life, especially in this country, very, very impatient with these people who didn't appreciate how valuable this nature was. He was an ecologist, an environmentalist, and he didn't appreciate being made fun of, but at that time, 'Oh well, he's just a naturalist . . . ' he's in that ecology junk. What's that?' But today, as you well know, we're finding out that the environment is most important. And it isn't everlasting, because of the human animal . . .

"And I think that I realized the basic importance of that through courses I had at Wisconsin, primarily Dr. Pease's. That was his field, ecology. And I'd say that he and his expressed ideas plus his coursework influenced me. So I was ready for the kind of guy Professor Praeger was. I understood that; I was ready for it. Well, at any rate, he had botany and the ecology side of the sciences. I, on the other hand, had the functional aspects, or maybe one might say the functioning of these living creatures as individuals. For example, anatomy, that's the individual. And then embryology, again the individual. And histology, again, tissues making up the body. My side of the biological sciences here basically stressed the functioning aspects of the individual. But that didn’t mean that in my coursework I didn’t emphasize interrelationships, because I think that’s part of me. I don’t believe I could teach without expanding it to the whole picture . . . That’s just my nature. And Professor Praeger, on the other hand, stressed the inter-
relationship of this group as over against this group out in nature. He stressed the group aspect, I'd say, of biology.

Within a few years, Professor Praeger reached retirement age, but Dr. Hoben knew his need for student contact and allowed and appreciated his continued teaching. Praeger and the now not-so-inexperienced Diebold reached their stride as a symbiotic team in planning the introductory biology curriculum. "Who had the original idea I don't know, because we sort of hit it off very well at first, as an older instructor and a young instructor that had a lot to learn. We decided that these two groups of beginners should come together and have what we call a general approach to the whole field of biology. General lectures. Who gave those general lectures? Of course this very well-informed, cosmopolitan person, Professor Praeger. So every week there was one lecture that pulled together both those taking botany and those taking zoology, and he would lecture to them, with reference to general principles of biology that applied universally, both to the plant world and the animal world. As long as he was alive. So he was retired, but oh, he wouldn't miss that. He had to have that contact with students. It was fine for Dr. Hoben — because it fitted in with his idea of a fellowship in learning, young scholars and old scholars discussing things together.

"Mrs. Praeger was related rather closely to the Birges, and Dr. Birge was Dean of the College of Letters and Sciences at Wisconsin. He was very interested in the ecology and the functional aspects of lakes; he was a limnologist. Then for a few years he also was Acting President of the University. He's a very interesting person. And to me it was just fascinating to think, here I was at this job, not knowing this man Professor Praeger, but indirectly, by his wife, he was related to the Birges, one of the Birges being quite significant in my life. That was an interesting chain of connections, from my point of view. And I thought 'Well, how do things happen? What coincidence.' Well, of course, I'm very impressed with coincidences that occur in life. I think it's fascinating to realize you never know when a coincidence is going to turn up, as you move along in your life cycle." Besides sharing religious views, a devotion to nature, a common background in the British Isles, and a felicitous mutual friendship with Dr. Pearse that brought them all together in the first place, Diebold and Praeger found another bond.

Diebold gives the name "serendipity" to these happy coincidences. Her ability to perceive magic in the mundane had enabled her to find potential in the unpromising landscape of Kalamazoo College in the fall of 1923, and she has continued throughout her life to live intentionally in the land of Serendip. "You live in the land of Serendip where you discover the unusual, the novel, the out-of-the-ordinary-and-common-
I appreciate people who practice serendipity. That term came from the writings of Horace Walpole. And he must have been a man of a good deal of fancy. And this land of Serendip, it can be any land. Most people look at what they see and interpret it just in an ordinary way. Then there are other people who see those things and say, 'Oh, that's an interesting thing. Huh. That's novel, that's unusual.' It's the same world, but a person finds something just a little bit unique in what is taken for granted or is usual, is commonplace, is ordinary. And some people do that more than others. I think that anyone who teaches must have—whether they know it or not—a sense of serendipity, in order to bring out the interesting things in their students, or pull these young learners with them, toward appreciating a body of knowledge.... To me the person of great imaginativeness and productivity, and ability to instill creativity in others, is the one who practices serendipity."

Dr. Allan Hoben had come to Kalamazoo College in September of 1922 to serve as President and Professor of Sociology. He was a man of diverse experience. During World War I he participated in the overseas YMCA effort, returning to become pastor of the First Baptist Church of Detroit. In 1919 he took the chair of Sociology at Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota. "And evidently he had within him this idea that he wanted to become a college president—to show what a college president could do with a small college. He must have had that for a long long while. And so he came from Carleton College over here to apply for this position. And I think I've told you about the story that persists about him? Of course it's all made up—I imagine a lot of it—and remember I wasn't here then; I came after he had been here a year." According to legend, "he just plunked himself on the stairs in Bowen and waited until someone representing the administration came, and told him point blank, 'This job I want. You won't need to look any further: I want this job.'"

Dr. Hoben's idea of a fellowship in learning, a collaboration of young and old scholars, appealed to Diebold before she met him. "I've told you that our family was a very closely knit group, and using the term 'fellowship,' we did things together, and enjoyed doing things together. In my experience as an instructor, I think that's what I appreciated most, these young learners and me; and I think that it overwhelmed me that these young learners were depending upon me so much to interpret a body of knowledge. Yes, I think I'm inclined to be that kind of a person. True. And of course that meant that this idea of a community of scholars young and old appealed to me." Hoben's ideal of a fellowship in learning would be perhaps the greatest inspiration in her career.
and personal life.

"Allan Hoben had, from my point of view, quite a wonderful gift of language. He was a trained sociologist, a man of good experience. He also was an ordained minister. Those two things, sociology and religion, or the ministry, I think dovetail very nicely. He could do much more as a sociologist because he also was an ordained minister. His ministry was more valuable because he was a sociologist, too. I think he had a greater perspective of life's problems because of his interests than he otherwise would have had—either as a minister, or just as a sociologist."

Dr. Hoben's unassuming personality belied his professionalism. His demeanor was "informal, but when I say informal, yes and no; I mean, you felt very at home with Dr. Hoben, and yet you sensed this was a very important personality. That is, as another individual you never took advantage of his informality, and with some people who are informal, well, you're informal too. Somehow, yes, that basic respect remained despite his great informality... He was the type of person that wasn't at all lazy, and things that needed doing he'd do. No matter whether it was something a president of the institution should do or shouldn't do, if the thing needed to be done, he'd do it. For example, he had an idea that the grove and the campus should have many more oak trees. Every fall he'd collect acorns, and some of these trees that you see here in this area are oak trees that he started by planting acorns with one of his children."

Diebold also credits Dr. Hoben with an open mind on the education of women. "His daughter was dean of some small college. He was very very proud of that daughter, and also of what she achieved in her life.... He respected an individual and what that individual wished to set as a goal in his or her life. Oh yes, he was also that kind of a person.... Dr. Stone must have been that way, or his wife; otherwise she just couldn't have expressed herself and have done what she did. Just couldn't. And I always think of Dr. Hoben's administration as sort of bringing up to date, or modernizing, Dr. Stone's administration."

Diebold started teaching at Kalamazoo College in 1923, after Dr. Hoben's tremendous energy had begun to stir the campus. In addition to the spiritual change in the community due to his ideal of a 'Fellowship in Learning,' the college had begun a physical change. Before his term ended, Olds Science Hall, Mandelle Library, Stetson Chapel, Trowbridge Hall, and a remodelled Tredway Gymnasium would appear. Other additions of his were the President's House and the Grove Houses. "Never had any difficulty in filling those faculty homes. His idea was that advanced students would have classes in those
homes, and in every single one of them the seminars were held. Yes, all
the senior students of whatever department represented by the prof
living in that house attended advanced courses and seminars there. In
fact, those were called seminar houses, seminar homes. . . . I don’t
think that any faculty looked on it as an added responsibility. I think
they appreciated that somehow they weren’t completely apart even on
the campus from the student body.” In contrast to those at most col­
leges and universities, students became an integral part of the home
life as well as the campus life of the professors. Rather than considering
it an intrusion, the faculty was happy to implement and broaden this
“Fellowship.” “They, too, pulled in students and they were learning
together. You see, Dr. Hoben’s idea was widespread, permeated all
activities.”

Hoben built the President’s home so he could be even more involved
in the college community. “His idea was that any president of a small
liberal arts college should be on the campus, and of course that is
typical of the presidents of all those eastern colleges. They all live on
the campus. He wanted that . . . One of the first things we wanted
to do—again, it’s fellowship in learning, all these individuals making up
a community—was to establish a place for himself and his family—
for the president, not just for himself, but for the president as such. . . .
Here was a small community within a larger community. A ‘college
community’ was a little town of its own, which gave these young
learners experience to better understand the larger community of
which they’d become a part, later on. I think he was a man who con­
ceived of a college as more or less apart, and rightly so, from a city.
But he was not a believer in the fact that when you were in college
your doings were completely different from those activities going on
in the city or in the town. They were simpler kinds of events, but
nevertheless they were comparable to the activities of the town.”

The story of the wassail bowl illustrates that although the college
was a separate entity, it still adhered to the mainstream standards of
the surrounding culture. “One Christmas party, I was on the committee
with Dr. Ernest Harper [in Sociology], and the Harpers were quite
sophisticated. He and his wife were southern—Kentucky—and of
course they were used to their mint juleps and all the rest of it; and so
Ernest Harper said, ‘Well, why don’t we have a wassail bowl? A real
wassail bowl.’ And I said, ‘Well, what’s a wassail bowl?’ He told me,
and then I did some reading to find out that it was a very common
English custom. It has a certain amount of liquor, spices, cider, and so
on. It’s sort of like a cider bowl—but spiked. And one of the committees
got together discussing that. We were in charge of the party, and we
all cautioned Ernest Harper, ‘Ah, you’d better not do that. Have your Wassail bowl, but don’t spike it.’ Although he was a nonconformist and didn’t pay much attention to your ideas, he thought, ‘Well, maybe we better not,’ for the sake of faculty members who we didn’t know would appreciate it—as well as the president.” Before the Christmas dinner Diebold introduced the faculty to the idea of the Wassail bowl and its background. Unfortunately, she failed to make clear that this Wassail, unlike the traditional, had no liquor in it. “At the college very soon after that, Dr. Hoben asked me if I’d come and see him. So I did. And he was quite perturbed that that might have been spiked, you see, because I talked about the regular, the real Wassail bowls, and going Wassailing, because you go from one home to another to another and sample their Wassail bowls. . . . and he didn’t blame me; he said, ‘Did Ernest Harper have that spiked?’ And I was so, so relieved that I could say, ‘no,’ that it was a Wassail bowl without being spiked.”

Dr. Hoben had a charm and a way with words that could move one to do almost anything. However, it was not his gentle coercion but his devotion to this college and Diebold’s respect for what he was trying to accomplish that caused her to fill in as director of women’s physical education in addition to her regular coursework, for two years, 1924-1925, after “being persuaded by Dr. Hoben, the little rascal. ‘Oh do it. Can’t you do it for the college temporarily?’ Oh yes, you’d do that for Dr. Hoben. . . . Well, he knew I was interested in physical activity or physical education. I was quite a tennis player, and the college was low on money, and the person who was doing physical ed. for women had an opportunity to go somewhere else, better position, better salary. And at that time we felt that, well, we couldn’t afford a full time physical ed. instructor. And he said to me, ‘Frances, you’re in biology, you can do it. Can’t you help us out and take over the women’s program?’ I primarily made group activities the physical ed. the girls had then, rather than calisthenics and all that, and we spent a lot of time in developing basketball teams. At that time there were three women’s—as they were called—literary societies, that were more social than literary, although the young women did give certain papers and literary critiques through the year. And so we developed basketball teams, not only with reference to classes—freshman, sophomore—but also with reference to these societies. And then we had a contest. . . . Oh yes, we had so much fun. And then we’d all meet at the end of the basketball season and have a nice meal; it wasn’t a banquet, formal, but we surely had a good time, all getting together and having some kind of a special feed. I know one time it was chop suey. And then we granted awards and so on. So during those two years there was much
interest prevailing with reference to athletics for girls, with athletic
group activities, centering around a team. Well, of course there were
some tennis players—that’s an individual sport; but the emphasis was
on group activity.”

As involved as Diebold was with the college during the school year,
every vacation and summer she went home to Madison. “Oh! You
couldn’t keep me. You couldn’t keep me here in summer. Oh yes, I
always went back home for vacations and everything else.” She had not
lost sight of her goal of receiving her master’s degree. She went to
school every summer at the University of Wisconsin and completed her
Master of Science degree by the fall of 1927. But even after that she
went back to school many summers until her father’s death in 1949—
to keep up in her field. “I think I told you that all my life I’ve been an
academic person. Didn’t I tell you that I think learning is fun? I really
mean that. It is hard work, but I think it’s fun. It’s stimulating but it’s
fun. Even though you grind through a lot, in perspective it wasn’t
drudgery.

“And one of those first summers after coming to Kalamazoo, I went
to summer school, to take whatever courses I could then, to get my
Master’s. And then there was an interlude of a year, because Dr. Hoben
wanted me to have an experience on another college campus, another
liberal arts college. One of the profs at Wisconsin in biology knew of
this opening at Whitman College in Walla Walla, Washington. So after
getting my Master’s, instead of coming back here, I went to Walla Walla
for a year, to teach.”

Margaret Rhodes a recent Kalamazoo graduate, filled in as Praeger’s
assistant. In the early fall, with her Master’s degree hot off the press,
Diebold started out of Madison in her familiar tan Chevy coupe with
her close friend Jean MacFarlane, “a Scot.” It was the young women’s
first chance to take a close look at a different portion of America. They
took the northern route across the Dakotas, Montana and up into Can-
ada, stopping to explore along the way. One day in the mountains far
from any town, the car stopped. Undaunted, Diebold lifted up the
hood, and although she had never fixed an engine in her life, examined
it as any scientist would. She discovered a broken hose, and was able to
splice it with some laboratory tubing she had found in the ever-present
jumble of her car trunk. The mechanic in the next town said it was
fixed so well that the women could have made it all the way to Wash-
ington. Diebold insists that she was just lucky.

Of Whitman she says, “Well, first of all, remember that I was only
there a year, and I knew that, and I don’t think anyone gets a feeling
of what they’re doing, or of what they are, or what that place is like,
until they've been in a particular locality for a while. And I don't mean that you develop that sensitivity even in two years. I think it takes a span of years to do that.” (Characteristically, she didn’t do much at Kalamazoo for the centennial in 1933 because she had “only been here ten years.”) “So, that you must remember: I knew that I'd only be there a year, and since I had my experience here, Whitman College was a very ongoing place, but it didn’t appeal to me, even negatively. The people were very fine; oh my, they were so friendly and accepted me. And the Biology Department was conducted in an entirely different way than this department. Their Biology Department was more formalized, and the students, I felt, were not welcomed as an intimate part of the department,’ as she knew they were at Kalamazoo. At Whitman, “they were students and this is the faculty, and you're here, and these are my courses and I'm giving them. Do you get what I mean? I didn't feel that the idea of a fellowship in learning was basic at that college, although it was a very fine college.

“The things I remember about Whitman are the activities that so many of the people affiliated with the college did. [Walla Walla] was just a small town, oh dear. And it was the only institution of learning. That's where the state prison is, and still is. My eye pops, I’m sure, every time I see something about the prison conditions there. But I’d say it was around twenty thousand, twenty-five thousand, something like that. And I remember, for example, taking trips with some of the faculty folks on horseback, going up into the wonderful, wonderful mountainous areas. Oh! That was the first time I had seen mountains! And also during that year I did mountain climbing, just primitive—I mean very simple, lower mountain climbing—but was acquainted with what it was to climb these high points . . . just baby stuff. But I do remember the wonderful, wonderful horseback rides. And of course I was prepared for that because in my life we were very acquainted with horses.” Diebold also remembers seeing her first partial talking movie there, “Seventh Heaven” with Janet Gaynor. She enjoyed the Pendleton Round-up and Rodeo that was held at the end of the wheat harvest, and was never to forget the end-of-the-day sun-glowsobscured the setting sun but refracted the light, creating a luminescence high into the western sky. Of course, it was too far to go home for Christmas, so she spent her vacation with some of her faculty friends and the six or eight people she lived with in the rooming house.

In her graduate work at the University, Diebold had renewed acquaintance with a friend from high school, Rudy, a student in the School of Engineering. She expected to end her professional career with the year at Whitman while Rudy traveled to South America as part
of a surveying team. They encouraged each other's interests, and had no fear that a year's exploration in separate realms would destroy their dream of having a home and family together. During the expedition, Rudy was drowned in the Orinoko River. A second romance had been ended, as had the first, by a sudden death. The two men were very different, but with each she saw the possibility of establishing the kind of family she so much valued. Diebold says she "never could recapture something that prevailed in each one of those relationships again." Diebold was in a career to stay. Her experience at Whitman had helped her appreciate Kalamazoo College. "Oh yes, I surely hoped that I could make my career here, somehow, centered here at Kalamazoo." When Diebold returned to Kalamazoo in the fall of '28, she was promoted to the rank of Assistant Professor.

After teaching another year at Kalamazoo, once again she left for the summer. Restlessly, Diebold was reconciling herself to a changed life plan as her dream of building a family disintegrated. "How I managed to put all of these things in summer I don't know, but evidently when I graduated from college, I was home very little, except for vacation times. But how often did I make that trip by car from Kalamazoo to Madison, through Chicago blah, blah, blah, and back again? Oh, I knew that route just blindfolded.

"But one of these summers the Cleveland Board of Health wrote the college and asked if we would have any women students interested in going there, this particular summer, and being in charge of the women in their various playgrounds. I think that there were four students, and when Miss Quimby [Dean of Women] presented that to them, they talked it over with their folks, [who] said, 'Well, we'd be more comfortable if there'd be a faculty member with them.' So Miss Quimby asked me if I'd be interested. And I felt, 'Oh, now, that's an experience. Maybe I would like that.' . . . It was another adventure." Diebold was to live with the four students, and each would supervise a different school playground.

"And when we got there and discussed what we were to do with whoever was in charge, they asked me if I would consent to be the director of the girls in this Negro playground. That was Dyke School playground. They said that I would deal with the girls, and there would be this young Negro man who'd be in charge of the boys. And he, oh, he was such a nice person, refined and tall—he was a senior at Hillsdale. So, at Dyke he had charge of the boys and I had charge of the girls, and that was an experience. And oh, was that ever an experience to deal with young black people! And I don't know if I could ever have done that, except for this Hillsdale senior and how well he handled the boys.
But neither of us had any difficulty with reference to fights or rebellion, against him, against me. We were really quite an interesting community. And yet we were warned, both of us, and especially I was—being white. It wasn’t an easy assignment. We might get into certain very difficult situations. And they warned him that they always had a black person—a Negro at that time—in charge of the boys and usually a Negro girl in charge of the girls. But this time they were trying it this way, since I was an older person.

“And they of course had baseball contests. And the policemen in Cleveland got to know me quite well, because of course you weren’t allowed to have an overload on your car, in driving to and from different points in Cleveland. And it was an interesting experience just to become acquainted with Cleveland. Cleveland is some large town. I like it very much. Well, at any rate, I had my little coupe. My, I think it was another Chevy. And oh, there were balls and bats in back, you know, in the trunk. And there were a couple or more students inside with me, and then there were students sitting on the fenders, to go places. Those kids didn’t have money; ... poor black families, they couldn’t afford [the money to get] to different baseball games; and they either wouldn’t go, or else that was the way. And at first this one policeman stopped me—he must have told the others. I told him the situation and he said, ‘Well, that’s a good reason.’ And so they allowed me. Here was this car with these people on fenders where you weren’t supposed to be, and then this oversupply inside, hanging out the windows, and we’d go from one playground to another for these baseball contests. Of course I had to drive very carefully.

“I think that that was quite important in forming in me the type of response I have had since then with blacks. I think that it gave me an appreciation for their personalities, which were no different from other personalities. But I think that it helped to push me over that hump of having some kind of an inner bias. Because I couldn’t have—dealing so intimately with these black people and seeing nothing but blacks. And you know, it was sort of a shock, when I’d get home, and see these four kids from Kalamazoo; here, we were all white... But oh, those girls so appreciated it, that they had a chance to really participate instead of playing just a few games—just at Dyke.”

As a concomitant of her Cleveland experience Diebold was offered the directorship of the biology department at Spelman, a southern black women’s college. She visited the campus in Atlanta, Georgia, and was impressed by the president. However, she wasn’t sure she wanted to work only with women, and she wasn’t sure she could tolerate the segregation laws that prevailed. “And I thought, could I adjust myself,
adapt myself to that? I felt that I would be so belligerent that I wouldn't want to.” Professor Praeger wanted her back at Kalamazoo, and her friends, knowing her liberal background, warned her that segregation on busses and everywhere else would be intolerable to her. She would have only one white colleague. They felt that the change would be traumatic. The offer “was quite a distinction . . . but that somehow didn’t capture my imagination. I was more concerned about ‘Could I do justice?’ with reference to teaching just women and especially all black women.” She turned down the Spelman offer and returned to Kalamazoo to stay.

Diebold came back to this “primitive and provincial” institution to live through, and even prompt some of, its growing pains. To keep the hillside campus from eroding, the retaining wall along Lovell was built in 1930; the date sticks in her mind. She also recalls the tug-of-wars over the marshy Mirror Lake that stood where the gym and physical plant are now, at the bottom of the hill. In August of 1930 Marshall married, and Diebold cancelled a planned trip to Europe to attend her brother’s wedding. She was never to make it to Europe—the college was about to absorb as much of her energy and time as she was willing to give. Although Diebold was just starting her doctoral work in the summers, she would give this goal up, too, for the same reason.

Faye Klyver, Dean of Women, had taught two psychology classes. When she left, Dr. Hoben “hated to see child and adolescent psychology go out of existence.” In his enthusiastic and persuasive manner, he talked with Diebold about taking over until a replacement could be found. Of course, Diebold accepted. He originally had offered her the Women’s Deanship, but she had turned it down. She returned to Madison that summer to prepare for the courses and found the most serendipitous of circumstances: “that particular summer, there happened to be given a course in child psychology and [one in] adolescent psychology by this, at that time, quite noted authority in that field. This prof from Johns Hopkins, Dr. Brooks, was a visiting prof that summer and I think the fall semester, in the field of psychology. But in the summer those were his courses.” She went to the Dean of Letters and Science, Dr. Edwin Fred, and “asked him if he would grant me the privilege, and told him why, of auditing those courses, and Dean Fred was that kind of an individual, so he said, ‘Yes, go ahead, go ahead.’ I audited these two courses that summer, and when summer school was over, I organized what would be courses in child psychology and adolescent psychology. And you know, I had fun teaching those two courses,” which she offered from 1929 to 1932.

In the fall of 1932 a course in comparative neurology appeared. In
her efforts to enrich and expand the curriculum, Diebold designed this course to be cross-listed in both Biology and Psychology—one of the departments chaired by her good friend Dr. Hemmes, along with philosophy. Diebold had spent the previous summer taking a comparative neurology course at the University of Wisconsin, and, in addition to organizing the course, had found time to create her own lab manual because no suitable one existed. “There wasn’t but one comparative neurology textbook available.” Diebold wrote to its famous author, C. Judson Herrick, and was amazed at all the help she received. “To me, that was a significant experience in my life because I realized that it’s a small person who hasn’t time for others. It’s the snippy, small person. But the big, overall character that has insight into all things, many things, that’s the person who is generous with his time.”

As her first decade at the college drew to a close, Diebold was on her way to becoming a legendary teacher. Student letters reveal that Diebold always maintained a high degree of professionalism, a gleeful sense of humor, and consideration for every individual, both in and out of the classroom. When she first arrived on campus “that very young, dark-haired girl with the sparkling eyes and gay laugh” was thought to be “an upper-classman helping in the Biology Lab.” She soon dispelled any doubts about her professionalism. A new student comforted by her youthful zest would be shocked into realizing her professional integrity by the square glass jar among many others in her office, which contained half a fetus. Students were quick to realize that her love of knowledge and friendliness went hand in hand. She was a taskmater on her tests, presenting “grueling” three-hour final exams. When she resourcefully encouraged “sluggards” by betting they could not finish in time, she lost cheerfully. But students insist that Diebold taught more than just biology; she questioned “the why and the how, not just the what.” They were attracted to her classes for her personality as well as her subject matter. Wrote one biology major, “I still think I would probably have majored in Sanscrit if you had been a Sanscrit teacher.” And a non-major wrote: “Hardly a day goes by that there is not some use for what was learned in that class. It is not alone the facts but the habits of thought, and the philosophy of life. Only an outstanding teacher can provide a class with the materials of living.” Many of her students have gone on to become successful professional biologists because of her inspiration, but many many more found that Frances Diebold epitomizes in her teaching the fellowship of learning and the “gracious living,” in the truest sense, that are ideals at Kalamazoo College.

Diebold’s sense of humor enhanced the joy of learning she promo-
ted. She was capable of turning a mishap into an opportunity. When Dr. Praeger's pet alligator, which lived in the greenhouse, nipped her fingers as she was demonstrating the proper way to get blood cells out of an amphibian's or reptile's tail, she provided stained smears of Diebold blood to compare with that of the alligator. Her classes were often highlighted by such dramatic teaching methods. The "fellowship" was such that she enjoyed the multitude of pranks that were played upon her. The zipper on the ventral side of the mud-puppy proved the culprits' dexterity in dissection, and the cat bearing pig embryos improved everyone's powers of scientific observation. The biology lab was a home for some snakes a student had grown attached to at summer camp. Nobody worried when one disappeared during the winter, but Diebold was aggravated in the spring by the senselessly broken glassware. When she realized that it was broken by the snake coming out of hibernation and not by a disgruntled student, she laughed.

Her balance and integrity as well as her relationship with Praeger are illustrated by a student's anecdote:

"A Fellowship in Learning" played havoc with my plans to be an English teacher very early in my collegiate career and, as you may recall, it was definitely the fault of the personnel of the biology department. Dr. Praeger enrolled me and it took very little persuasion on his part to convince me that botany should be my freshman science. His generous grading created an interest and without too much aforesight, I elected "Zoo" my sophomore year. There, as I recall, Miss Diebold (you became a professor after my time), you definitely entered the picture, cornering me in the hall to inform me that those students Dr. Praeger graded well did not always prove themselves in your field but that "Comparative Anatomy" would be my course with you, nothing less. Your bright blue eyes twinkled as you spoke. You liked to tease the darling doctor by telling him that even your favorite students worked hard for grades from you. And frankly, your classes involved much hard work but, unless my recollections fail me, very few dull moments.

Many of Diebold's students have forgotten the details about the mogula, but all remember her friendly consideration. Long after graduation, the bull sessions in her office, the tea drunk from tin cans, the constant sharing of herself—in short, "the little things"—loom large. A friend and counselor to all, Frances Diebold "possesses the rare faculty of wishing to hear about your problems rather than tell you of hers." As she guided generation upon generation of students through, she contributed not only to their scientific background but to their maturation as worthwhile individuals. Trying the souls of all, she moved some to apply for medical school immediately rather than "someday," and her teaching assistants who volunteered to be in on the
fun soon discovered that they were learning a great deal more than they had expected. Above all knowledge, her happy and expectant frame of mind was contagious. She became known, with a mixture of fondness and respect, as “Miss Dieb.”

Diebold has always enjoyed being among young people. She appreciated the student body of the 30’s and knew its character, how it was different from the student body of other times. Kalamazoo College began to hold mock political conventions in the gym starting in 1932. High school students were bussed in as representatives to complete the conventions with placards, demonstrations, and even tomato-throwing. Diebold liked most the way the conventions drew the student body together. She also liked the symbolism: “It has to do with one’s native land, something I inherently understand.” The academic has a serious, reflective sort of symbolism for Diebold, while she saw the conventions as “fun symbolism.” Societies played a very important role for the student body through the 60’s. They were much more than literary societies, functioning as substitutes for sororities and fraternities, and primarily social groups. But Diebold found them provincial. “I thought they were the oddest thing to have.” Freshmen had to wear green caps—pots—until Homecoming, when the caps would be thrown into a bonfire. Diebold is personally glad that days of rites of initiation are gone: “Many things [did occur that] shouldn’t have occurred during those hazing days.”

Olds Science Hall was completed in 1928. It was engineered for chemistry and physics, but not for biology. Until Upton Hall was finished in 1956, the Biology Department was to remain in the cramped first floor of old Bowen Hall. Professors Praeger and Diebold didn’t mind not having a new place for Biology. They were willing to sacrifice because they supported Hoben’s ideals and knew that “something had to give” to make them work.

Diebold observed, rather than felt, the Depression. The faculty took a salary cut, but it was a small concern in comparison to the suffering of homeless people she saw waiting in long soup lines. Her father’s construction work fell off and her parents had to limit themselves, but the Diebolds had never told their children their troubles. She and Marshall would go home to visit, and stock up their parents’ home with staples on the pretense of planning to eat them while there. Diebold, fortunate to have a job, did as much as she could to help others weather the Depression, including the college.

The Centennial of 1933 was enhanced by even greater causes for celebration: the exhilarating atmosphere created by the physical expansion of the campus and the tremendous inspiration of Allan
Hoben's concept of a Fellowship in Learning. This spirit would support Diebold and the college through the difficult times ahead. Meanwhile, during the centennial year she became an Associate Professor, rare for a woman, especially in the sciences.

IV

President Hoben was of short stature, "but very large as a person. It's unfortunate because he should have had a longer tenure here, but he developed cancer...very ill: cancer of the bone. That settled finally in the spinal column. He was a very tenacious man, and even though he was quite ill, he had faculty meetings in his own home. That little man insisted that we continue our faculty meetings at his home. And here he was; I imagine his sons, [or] probably Mrs. Hoben, would prop him up on the davenport and he'd conduct faculty meetings in their living room. He shared his illness with faculty right away, as soon as he knew.

"The faculty at that time was very close. His illness, I think, had much to do with making necessary the pulling together of the faculty. It was really quite a close-knit group, and not only the faculty, but the students as well. I think that the whole college community was very, very much aware of the terrific energy that the president put forth to somehow, at least in part, realize his ideal. I think the students were aware of that too.

"Getting the students together for chapel, to him, was most important. So even though he was so critically ill, he insisted upon going to chapel once a week—talking, and having charge. One of his sons would bring him over, and some of his best speeches, best talks, happened during the time he was so ill. You see, his idea of chapel was that that was a central place for intercommunication. It didn't matter what it was about, something that was on your mind and you just had to share it with others, so that that idea, or group of ideas, could be discussed by the whole community; and for him, that was what he conceived of as Kalamazoo College. And from him, oh my, the wealth of ideas that students received through the years.

"Back then the chapel was differently organized, and also then faculty members participated all through the year, and there were some who just said, 'I'll take any other assignment that is mine as a faculty person except that I simply cannot speak in chapel.' I remember Dr. Walton. He didn't because he was inclined to stutter, and he said that the pressure would be so great that it would reveal this basic speech difficulty of his. But the faculty participated all through chapel meetings, all through the year, so you got a cross section, you see, of some of their
ideas. Now, some faculty members stuck to the traditional and rigid interpretation of the meaning of chapel, and their talks were all religious. Some of them just followed the routine of scripture reading and prayers and hymns and that's all. Quite a few faculty members did that. They didn't feel free, I imagine, within themselves to develop an idea before a group like that.

Diebold always chose a hymn with words by Tennyson which reflected her naturalist's philosophy: "Our little systems have their day and cease to be." "Tennyson was quite an evolutionist. He did a lot to promote evolutionary ideas in the humanities." She freely took her turn in speaking, sharing "something that was on my mind, and one [topic], I remember very well, was to me the importance of a personality, that I couldn't see it reduced to a bunch of check marks on a rating sheet." Dr. Harper, in Sociology, gave a chapel talk on sex roles: "It was on his mind and he had been reading all this furor over sex and dominance of sex and so on. He just had to get it off his mind. But that's primarily what chapel was, a forum for serious discussion of ideas in whatever field those ideas might be."

If a particular faction of the college community was disenchanted, Hoben's response was to create dialogue. "If Dr. Hoben was having trouble with the alumni or with the students and somehow there was no give—a stalemate was met—he discussed that with them. And you see, if you do that with the whole student body, no matter whether you agree or not, all discussion centers from a point where everyone has heard the same thing first-hand. Now in fireside chats, some of the ideas, if you weren't there, are transmitted to other students. But that surely isn't a widespread discussion that leads from a common bit of communication."

Hoben's faith in communication extended to his own thoughts about dying, which he recorded one evening in an essay entitled "Then I Sleep," later published in The Christian Century, January 16, 1935. "It's a beautiful piece of—well, a revelation of a personality and what a profession with reference to an institution means to that personality and I think you would understand how this college was incorporated within him. And I think that was one reason why he was a great administrator. Oh yes, this college was his—it meant a lot to him." With his readers he shared his sense of the beauty of life, intensified by the awesomeness of death:

It is now a year since the doctors told me. It has been a strange year, marked by the rallying of friends with such tributes as usually follow one's departure, and with an endeavor on my own part to define values and to keep the faith. Strange to say, one is challenged to keep
the faith just in those issues where he most needs to have the faith keep him. The summons to leave an absorbing task packed with the enthusiasms of youth, to leave a dear partner who with me is watching our five children entering or about to enter their careers, to leave a world palpitating with interests due for fruition or blight at almost any moment—such a summons, coming as I think twenty years too soon, certainly calls for thought and faith. . . .

Allan Hoben died on April 29, 1935. His ashes, as well as his wife's, by his request, are in the small chapel beneath Stetson. With deep respect, Diebold affirms, "That lets you know how much this place meant to him." In the summer of the next year Professor Praeger died of a heart attack at his cottage.

Denying the pain of their deaths, Diebold insists that the past is not significant except as it affects the future, but the two men meant a great deal to her. In 1923, when she had had no prospects for teaching in higher education, the brash Diebold had left a high school position because she wanted to teach in college. They had recognized her potential and had aided her. Praeger had had the faith to bring a young and inexperienced woman into a professional atmosphere and give her free rein. Hoben had inculcated in the college the ideals that intrinsically were hers from childhood. She had worked closely with them for over a decade. The years of fellowship with Praeger and Hoben had seen her mature as an individual and an instructor. They had supported her in attaining a master's degree and encouraged the broadening of her experience through the year at Whitman College. Largely through them she had become an integral part of Kalamazoo College. With their deaths, an era of her life closed, and Diebold felt the personal as well as professional loss of her colleagues and mentors.

Although the college was still fighting the Depression, the faculty as a whole upheld Hoben's spirit of rejuvenation through Dr. Charles Goodsell's temporary leadership. After Professor Praeger was gone, Diebold ran the department on her own. There was no money for a second instructor, nor did the college consider the number of biology students large enough to justify one.

In order to offer all the subjects necessary to a major in biology, she developed the plan of alternating courses: Upper-level classes would run one semester every other year, with others during the alternate years. Thus freshmen who needed Evolution, which was offered their first year, could take it in their junior year, and they had the option of taking its companion course, Comparative Neurology, as sophomores or seniors. However, Diebold's specialty was in zoology and laboratory work, and she just didn't have time to develop in what had been Professor Praeger's territory. "Professor Praeger was a field biologist. I was
a laboratory biologist. So since there wasn't enough for two full-time people, that part of biology suffered; the natural history side, the field biology suffered."

But the extemporizing Diebold drew upon the "Fellowship in Learning" concept to save Praeger's ornithology course. She honored Praeger's interest in field biology "by having his bird course continued, mainly by senior students who came in from high school [and] had an interest in birds. And then somehow, 'Yes, I'll do some reading and so on, and yes, I'll have the bird course.'" Knowing how as a teacher she sustained Hoben's persuasive attitude, it is easy to understand how students would respond enthusiastically to the challenge. "Sometimes it was a junior student, who had this background and an appreciation of bird recognition, who would take over and then have that for two years. So it was very, very incidentally emphasized as much as could be with the department as it was." This tradition continued through the late 40's and included a student named Lewis Batts who taught the course for two years. He was to return as Dr. Batts and teach it again, among his other duties.

In 1935 Diebold was named chair of the Biology Department, but not without a struggle. "I took a firm stand verbally." Apparently, with the confusion of the administration following Hoben's death, Diebold, the sole member of the department, with twelve years' experience, would have been denied the chair. The issue was probably not her lack of a doctorate, as Praeger hadn't had one either. For a woman to chair a science department was almost without precedent. But because she fought for what she believed was her right, and had an excellent record, as well as the support of her colleagues, she was ultimately granted the title. As she recalls, "My Irish temper got the best of me and I was very outspoken."

After years of experience Diebold settled into some aspects of a routine. Her lectures remained fresh and lively, she was always developing a new course or adding to the existing ones, and she never lost the energy and concern required to turn to a new group of faces every year and relate to each one in both a personal and professional manner. Every fall she returned from a summer's study at Madison, and a few biology majors came back early to help her ready the labs, order specimens, and distribute and prepare the already delivered specimens as required, in preparation for the coming year. The biology seniors enjoyed home-made cake or even escargot during their biology seminars, but most of all relished the time they had with the woman who had encouraged their personal growth as well as their scientific endeavors. Diebold was quite fond of the seminars, because they were an oppor-
tunity for people interested in similar things to enjoy learning together, a true "fellowship in learning" that reminded her of how she and Marshall had enjoyed and shared educational opportunities with their mother. She became known for some of her habits; she was not exactly regarded as an "absent minded professor," but she was famous for "ratty" worn-out labcoats whose pockets were filled with a five-year supply of pencil stubs and blue book exam paper. She likes a picture that was taken of her on her way from Bowen to Olds Hall because "it shows me walking from one academic building to another—to participate in my profession."

However, some aspects of college life she, and apparently many other faculty members, didn't care for, such as the annual faculty retreat, begun in 1938. "Oh—those were so boring.... After summer vacation that's the last thing you wanted to do." Diebold would rather have set up her labs and prepared her courses. Her profession was centered on the student and based upon the enjoyment of learning—and the retreats didn't help that. Of President Cole, who started the retreats, Diebold uttered one of the deepest personal deprecations a teacher could receive from her: "He was not serendipitous."

Under President Paul L. Thompson's regime, beginning in 1938, the annual funds were started, Welles Hall was built, teacher's insurance began, and Diebold carried on. Of him she says, "He was a very good businessman." She began publishing a newsletter for biology graduates and majors, "Among Ourselves." "I must have started it in the late 30's and it continued into the 40's." Many appreciative students kept in touch. She conceived of a newsletter to accomplish both her response to them and their continuing relationship to each other which she thought was so important. "So I started that—a communication just for biology folks...and the ideas expressed there all had to do with us, with the department and what they might be interested in." So the publication of the newsletter added to her workload. "And that meant that I had to get some biology major who was a good typist, a good note-taker that could decipher my crazy writing, to type it all." To make it unique and "just an attempt at communication...done by a person who didn't know anything about publication," she had it duplicated on yellow paper. She felt, "Well, when they see that coming, they'll know it's from biology.... And that was one of the things that I really enjoyed doing, but finally, oh, I couldn't do that and keep up with my work, with my field. All the reading I had to do and going to summer school to keep up in different areas...." Throughout the ups, downs and daily business of the college, Diebold was never diverted from what was important to her—her
relationships with students and the enjoyment of the learning they shared.

When Tom Dunstan had grown past "the influential years" the Dunstans decided to return to Detroit. Diebold began looking for another place to live. "It might have come out in conversation with a group of students that I was looking for a place or I had to move, and that oh, would I ever regret not being with the Dunstans anymore, because we had such a good time." Dorothea Dowd, a current student, conferred with her mother and asked Diebold, "Well, would you like to come and live with us?" So I moved from the Dunstans' to the Dowds' on Stanwood." Mrs. Dowd was an early graduate of the college. When she and her missionary husband returned to the United States with three sons and a daughter, "no other college would they go to except Kalamazoo." Diebold's new situation was different from the Dunstan's home, in which they had shared their meals and pastimes. "I wasn't incorporated in [the Dowd] family, but it was pleasant."

Diebold taught at Bay View College near Petoskey in the summer of 1939. Uncharacteristically, what she remembers the most is not the classes or the students, but the profusion of delectable blueberry pies and lambchops.

When the youngest Dowd child graduated from Kalamazoo College in the late 30's and the family dispersed, Diebold joined what she calls "a company of women." Mary Munro Warner had joined the faculty in 1925 as a member of the Education Department. She had been raised in the Kalamazoo area and had been a minister's assistant at her Presbyterian church and an instructor in education at Western, "but it was a teacher's college, a normal school—but a very fine one." Mary was a widow and an only child, living with her widowed mother. The older Mrs. Munro had been born in Scotland, and still retained the family farm in nearby Richland. She reminded Diebold of her own grandmother and of Professor Praeger.

Diebold believes the fact that Mary Warner was ten years her senior had a profound effect upon their relationship. "As life moves along, if you are a part of [an age] group, I think that your perspectives, your contentment, your reactions to the world all are in harmony. But if you come along outside that group, it's not the same... all [age] groups have a different education. An instructor has to be alert to that and never teaches the same. You can't; your living pictures are different... Now I don't mean that everybody has to be of the same age, because there's a variation, I'd say, in a group that passes on from one part of the cycle of life experience to the next... My attitude toward [Mary]
I'm sure was different . . . than if she had been exactly my age, or say a year or so younger." Diebold thought, "She's a senior individual—ten years older; how nice it is to know her."

"Mary was much more traditional than I, in what she considered the right thing to do, and ... you see, I don't think of the right thing to do. That's my nature. So part of my attitude was conditioned by the kind of person she was—plus the time variable in what her group experience [was] compared to my group experience . . . . Well, she was quite an influence, really, in my career because she was a person who—instinctively, would you say—accepted the amenities of life. I mean, it meant something to her to know about the correct way to set a table, the correct way to introduce. And all my life I've been a non-conformist. I don't know if I rebelled against those things, but my whole life has been very free. So to me, oh, a person, that entity, is important. These other things are peripheral to the person. And I think that's why I never paid much attention to them. That was recognized in Mary by Dr. Hoben. For years and years, even after Dr. Hoben's time, she was in charge of putting on all the banquets and the social doings. Those activities were done to perfection! Oh, she had a committee and so on, but somehow, Mary knew exactly what should be done. And it was done. She always was a meticulous checker. If things were ready, she always would make a final check."

Mary was, "in quote, 'more of a lady' than I was. Oh, conforming. Oh, you had to conform. She'd get very impatient with me because I'd go off on a tangent, you know." Mary thought Diebold needed guidance "in my dress, maybe." Diebold offended "by not seeing the importance of wearing a hat, for example, or gloves, or the way I sometimes would burst out in conversation. She was more reticent, more dignified, more reserved ... I think instinctively I respected her ... I thought, 'Oh she knows lots more about this and this community than I do. I better pay attention to some of the things she's emphasizing.' We were very good friends though ... although I did not agree with some of the things that she wanted to emphasize, or did emphasize. And she knew that. I respected her but she respected me too ... Her field I couldn't understand. I said, 'Oh, Mary, how could you go into this field of education?" Her old distaste for her education courses resurfaced with Mary, who "wasn't a subject matter person—like biology and English, and religion, and chemistry and physics. She was in this field that directed how to teach. And that never interested me. I thought, 'Oh well, I wouldn't do it that way,' when she was telling me some of the things they were doing in class."

Despite differences, the trio "did have a very, very nice relationship."
Mrs. Munro was a delightful person, and to me that was an experience, because she was a Britisher. I mean dyed-in-the-wool Scotch person. [In] my family, I didn’t have that; you see, my mother and father were both born in this country, and in Madison, provincial. And Mrs. Munro’s points of view did differ. She gave me another flavor of the British Isles." Diebold had been unaware of any generation gap between herself and Mrs. Dunstan, “because she was current,” and of course Mrs. Dowd was a mother-figure. Mrs. Munro, reminding Diebold of Ireland-born Catherine and her wonderful stories, was a grandmother figure. “Oh I just loved to hear her talk.” The "company of women" afforded happy trips to the Munro farm, which “reminded me of the trips I took with my folks to the University farm to get our cream and our milk, and our butter, and our eggs. So I became reacquainted with animals from the point of view of a farm community.” This experience was part of the satisfaction of “knowing Mrs. Munro and sharing her life.”

In 1936 Diebold and Mary attended the week-long celebration of Harvard University’s tercentenary. Diebold thrilled to the messages of internationally known speakers in all fields and respected it for being the oldest college in the nation. Mary went because she was “in education.” Mrs. Warner, of course, took gloves, while Miss Diebold, of course, did not.

World War II had been prefigured on the campus by the dramatic death of Acting President Dr. Charles Goodsell while speaking in chapel. “The Goodsells—oh, they were such delightful people. He was a very large man, over six feet tall, and I think, if I recall correctly, they had two daughters and a son—and all the children took after him. Well, Mrs. Goodsell was a goodly sized person too. But they were large people, large boned and very well filled out.” On October 25, 1941, Goodsell was speaking in response to the growing turmoil in the world. “He was giving his opinions of war and how nothing was ever gained by war and so on, a subject that was very, very important to him. We noticed he began to hesitate in his speech, and it didn’t sound like Goodsell. It was hesitant and not filled with oomph—as it was a little bit before or as was typical of his talks. And then finally this big body began to just tip and tip and tip. And Dunbar—of ‘Goodsell and Dunbar’; they were both historians—happened to be right near [the front of the] chapel and noticed this, and left his seat and ran and caught him before he hit the floor. That was the end of Dr. Goodsell.”

Pearl Harbor soon followed and the college community became in-
volved in the war effort. Diebold remembers the ASTP—Army Specialized Training Program—students that lived in Hoben Hall and attended her classes. At first she found it amusing to see them all standing at attention as she entered the room and sitting in unison when the leader signalled, "but later it was just normal." Certainly discipline was no problem. Although she found the military flavor they brought to the campus a bit strange, she believes they added to the college. They were good students, lively and "a constructive influence on the campus." While the boys slowly disappeared from the classrooms and Henry Overley had the student body sing "God Send Us Men" once a week in chapel, Diebold continued her classes.

She followed through in support of the war effort with what was expected of her professionally, but personally found it deplorable. "War doesn't accomplish a damn thing." She was not concerned with whether the ideas the Allies were fighting for were important enough to support or not; she lamented that humanity's mentality was capable of war. When asked, "What do we do when we're attacked?" she responds not with "Defend ourselves," but with "Could Pearl Harbor have been prevented? . . . If we don't nip the bud it gets worse—that's correct, but why do we have to have the bud?"

Her priority remained science. By 1943 she had created another biology course. The previous summer at Madison she had audited a class in the rapidly developing new field of endocrinology under Dr. Hisaw, who had begun at Wisconsin as a pioneer endocrinologist and was later to be recognized as a leading expert, continuing his career at Harvard. "That field intrigues me," says Diebold. She places it in her larger picture as "a pioneer type of course that eventually led to this emphasis on what we now call molecular science." As a field it reflects her belief in the significance of the individual, once again. "I think it's important because how this complex creature develops from this more simply organized cell is based upon secretions that finally form when these organ systems become specialized within this developing entity. It doesn't develop as a unified, well-related whole, unless it has the proper stimulation from these secretions."

In celebration of her twenty-fifth year of teaching at Kalamazoo College in 1948, her students through the years wrote letters of glowing and sincere appreciation and compiled the letters into an embossed blue leather album which was illustrated by one of her former students. "To Frances Diebold: In recognition of twenty-five years of inspirational teaching at Kalamazoo College. This book is gratefully dedicated in a spirit of sincere appreciation for the inspiration, friendship, understanding guidance and excellent training in the field of"
Frances Diebold in her lab. 1942
Biology—which she gives freely to all students.” All the letters are filled with recollection of classroom pranks and personal interaction, but one which says much about her relationship with the students was in poetic form:

“To Dieb”

1st voice: I sing of Dieb
2nd voice: Which Dieb—the Dieb skilled in imparting knowledge of
The bird and the bee,
Smooth and wrinkled pea,
The make-up of thee,
Louis Agassiz.
The echinodermata,
The phylum chordata,
The earth and its strata,
And similar data?

1st voice: Yes, she.
2nd voice: Or the Dieb, the delightful imp
Whose eyes twinkle and shine
With mischief benign
While hiding behind
Shy Innocence’s sign?
Who dislikes chapel and snow,
Zealous exercise, I know,
Early morning rises, ‘though
Eight o’clocks find her aglow.

1st voice: She, too.
2nd voice: Or the wise interpreter of consequence who helps
Set future goals,
Weigh present toils,
Contest our past holds,
Explain life’s controls?
She’s friend I will pledge,
Gay wit, you’ll allege,
A pillar of knowledge
This queen of “K” College.

1st voice: Ah, Yes, certainly she, ‘though one are the three.

It isn’t the ebullient praise that Diebold loves; it’s the fact that each one of the students cared enough to put time and effort, and a piece of self, into a volume that she treasures.

Diebold lived with Mary Warner and Mrs. Munro until the summer of 1950, when Bess came to live with her. “My father died in 1949. It was a decision my mother had to make about whether she wanted to keep that home, because that meant a lot to her too.” The Diebolds
had lived in their home for almost forty years. Frank died at seventy-six. Bess was seventy-three and had to decide whether to stay in Madison, which she had known all her life, or make a break. "He died in October, so she had a chance to think over what she wanted to do. It wasn't a decision that was just snapped like that. She gave it some thought. When Marshall and I were through college, my folks had that home fixed so there was a small upper apartment. . . . It wasn't difficult to rent, either. But she made the decision that no, she'd like to come and live with me, come here." The ritual trips to Madison ceased. "Summers were quite different, but I kept up in my reading and that's in the 50's. This great big brewing came with reference to molecular biology, you know, and DNA and RNA and all the rest of it, and that knowledge I obtained through reading. But until that time, I had these well known authorities that kept me on my toes by going to summer school at Wisconsin.

"So, what to do? It was her decision to sell that home. And then, coming here, looking around, where should we buy? Although she didn't know it, my thought was on her age, and how I didn't want her far from campus, so that unbeknownst to her I could check on how things were going, say at noontime. This little house happened to be vacant right down the hill from Trowbridge. If you look down the bank on Lovell, you look right into it, this brown house that sits up on a hill."

Bess and Frances Diebold were looking for a house to buy rather than to rent. The senior Diebolds had always owned their home. Diebold at fifty was going to have a home of her own for the first time in her career. But she did not concern herself with whether the garage was attached, or whether the floor plan pleased her. She cared only that it was close to the campus and for sale. "I think you establish a tradition of conduct, as an individual and also as a family. And no, they owned, and she wanted to own. So we bought that house. And it proved to be very advantageous, not only from my point of view, that I could get there so easily, but my mother enjoyed it. Very much."

Bess associated with the Kalamazoo College community "a little bit, but in an aloof way. She wanted to choose what she did—for example, coming over and hearing certain lectures—but she wanted to make the choice. . . . She liked to take a walk, always including the campus." It meant a great deal to Bess to continue to get her Wisconsin State Journal, to keep up with what was going on in her home town. Diebold would continue to order and read the Journal years after her mother's death. Neither of them ever forgot Madison.

Marshall's four children were of college age or married and came
for visits with children of their own. Diebold recalls how her mother was the same in character with her young grandchildren, and later her great-grandchildren, as she had been with her own children. "I remember when these little imps visited, her grandchildren. I mean now John and Janet and Jay and Jim. I think I've told you that when we were growing up one thing she had us do was to take naps. And sometimes if we wouldn't take our naps we couldn't go for our buggy ride. But when these little imps were down visiting—John tells this so graphically: this afternoon she had John and Janet upstairs taking their nap. And she always would lie down with them, pretending she was going to take a nap too. She thought that these two rascally monkeys were asleep. 'And so, somehow,' he said, 'she slid out of bed without making the bed move much, and lowered herself to the floor and crawled to the door.' And she hadn't quite made the door when he sat up in the bed and said, 'Grandma! What are you doing over there?' My poor mother, what did she have to do? He doesn't say what her reply was, but she had to get back in bed with them. And I imagine she had a whole lot of work to do downstairs."

During the time that Bess and Diebold were adjusting to the change in both their lives, the Biology Department had taken an interesting turn. A former student, Theodora Lula Coolis, better known as "Lulu Coolis," had become Diebold's assistant in 1948. Student teaching assistants had always been common in the biology department; now graduates were returning as instructors, and by 1950 five women were running the Biology Department: Frances Diebold, Lulu Coolis, Donna Legerstee, Hallie Ferguson, and senior Patricia Rohloff. "Oh, that was such an interesting year. Here we talk about women's lib and all that kind of junk. Well, women were emphasized way back there. Phooey. I mean, I believe in this women's movement; I've told you that. I believe in that and I think it should be. But it's over-emphasized. Way back there without anything being said, four women!" Coolis had returned after receiving her Master's at Wisconsin, Ferguson got special leave from Upjohn to teach a course, Legerstee handled supplies and records, and Rohloff was working for the department as a senior. In 1950, twenty-seven years after the first woman assistant was brought into the Biology Department, the all-female staff was accepted without protest—indeed, almost without notice.

During the same era, the devoted Dr. Stowe, Diebold's colleague in the chemistry department, directed the transfer in 1948-49 from the Thompson to the Everton regimes. Diebold remembers the committees that did a lot of work in preparation for the new president. The faculty worked very hard and as Diebold recalls, was always very effective at
governing themselves and maintaining the college until a new president and his staff took over.

The fairly unpredictable nature of Diebold's classroom caused one confrontation with the new administration. "It was a time when in the spring of the year every single person had a water pistol. Everybody. And of course it didn't matter, you could be shot at at any time with those darned old water pistols. And this time it was just before one of my 1:30 lectures in Bowen. I saw some of the biology students out in the hall with their water pistols and I said to one of them, 'Let me have that for a little while. I want to get even with some of these kids.' So, I had the water pistol. It was filled. And did I have fun! Some of these kids I wanted to get even with, I'd shoot this water pistol at them. And I said, 'Ah now I'm getting even with you for what you did.' And bingo! They were so startled. Well, as the class convened, that spread. And so, although I didn't notice at the time, they supplied themselves—a goodly number of the class—with their water pistols—all filled. Then, when the class met, I still had this water pistol, because I wasn't through with it. Before the bell rang, these two girls always sat in front and they always had jabber jabber jabber, so many things to discuss, of their private nature—something probably about their dates. It was during the time when girls wore what I refer to as plunging necklines—way down. Well, one of these young women was Joan—the other, Gladys. They were busy, busy, busy with their activity and there were other kids in the class waiting for the bell. And I said to them, 'Watch this!' And I aimed right at the V. Right at it. And I hit it! And, oh, that was so interesting. She ooooh, just froze. Oh, and class, well, that disrupted everything. Everybody laughed and thought that was a good one on them."

The class responded with a unified volley in the direction of their teacher. "Of course all the commotion was heard in the hall. And among those who heard the commotion was the president. So after my class, his secretary came to me and said, 'President Everton wants to see you in his private office.' At that time the President had an office in Bowen Hall, and a sort of a retreat, where he could do some of his work without being interrupted all the time here in Mandelle. . . . And I thought, 'Oh my, now what?' Never thinking that it was this. And so I said, 'Well, all right.' And the secretary, 'No, he wants to see you right now.' Well, I had no inkling . . . , because to me it was a prank and after that happened the class and I got down to business and we had a good session." She went to Everton's office and the two faced each other. "He stood and I stood." Then the President spoke: "Frances Diebold, don't you know that you have to act more dignified than you
[did], just this noon hour?' He said, 'You will lose all the respect of your students for such behavior.' And I said, 'Oh, Dr. Everton, no, I won't. Oh, those students know how I did that in the spirit in which it was intended.' Everton insisted, 'Oh, yes you will. They will not respect you.' I said, 'Oh, you just wait and see. I bet you that'—and I talked that way to him. And he said, 'Well, I don't know. This is really serious.' I said, 'No, don't make it serious. I've been here long enough, and those students know me well enough to know it's just one of those little episodes that I'm doing to get even with them. You ought to know what they do to me. But I don't take offense at that because it's just done in good fun.' That was the episode with John Everton. I had awful good fun and I'd do it again. I never gave any thought to what that kind of behavior might look like to someone else that was an outsider."

According to a reliable source, that was not all Diebold said. She responded to Everton's admonition with, 'I've been here through several presidents, and I'll be here after you're gone.' The same source said that was Diebold's first meeting with Everton. When asked about it, she answered, 'Now, I believe that's right.' In any case, the two certainly had each other's measure. As she looks back on the "water pistol incident" she states, "Oh my, I bet that class remembers that. I bet they haven't forgotten it."

Diebold admits to being high-spirited, but never excessive. "I think all my ideas focus around the same thing—I abhor extremes. Experiences in life should be open to everybody. I think maturity comes from touching these various experiences that any living creature is exposed to. But I think they have to be taken in a certain stride, all right, a reserved stride, not an abandoned stride." But Diebold acknowledges that she is indeed extreme for her day and age. "I think when it comes to intellectual pursuits or demonstrations with reference to what the mind can do—yes, I think I go to extremes. But I think that's due to my exposure to those things as a little growing kiddie." Neither mother nor daughter wore gloves. Diebold concedes that her mother was extreme for her time too. "I think she was different. Yes, I'd say she was extreme. In fact I think some of her friends must have thought, 'Well, Bessie, what kinds of things are you doing?' Yes, I think she was." Thinking back to the times her mother took her and Marshall nutting, she exclaims, 'See, that was extreme. Do you suppose any of her friends would take two kids out in a buggy to the woods of hickory nut trees and hazel nut bushes—and go nutting? And especially with a long pole for a mother to climb a tree. Huh! I should say not. That was very extreme, surely. Well, it was extreme on my part to ask one of these students for his water pistol and have the fun I did that day. But what
personality is conformed? I think they'd be awfully dull people to
know."

When students demonstrated their disapproval of administration
policies by turning around Stetson Chapel's pews or reversing all the
books on Mandelle Library's shelves, Diebold was not troubled. "This
campus is famous for some of the student activity, and that's all right.
It shows the campus is alive." As in the squirt gun episode, a little
chaos allows expression and shows spirit. "We're talking about
pranks—but it wasn't destructive. . . . They were annoying but not
destructive." In many such incidents the culprits were never caught,
and she admires that kind of group loyalty. She appreciates chapel
for the same reason; when everybody was attending, it brought people
together. Not that she thinks everybody should agree; she merely
wants them to communicate. For the same reason she dislikes having
visitors in class: "My class and I are a corporation," and a stranger
interferes with the established interaction between instructor and
students.

In the winter of 1950 a familiar face was working with the famous
Miss Dieb. Lewis Batts, a former student, had returned to teach with
her. When Diebold was allowed to expand the department she used
Professor Praeger's technique, personal contact. Batts had received
his M.S. from the University of Michigan and was working on his doc-
torate when he received a call from Diebold. The opportunity to work
with his beloved Miss Dieb, he couldn't pass up. Lewie had married
another former biology major, Jean McColl. "Jeanie and Lewie are quite
a team. Since Jeanie had this biology background, she took over his
courses sometimes. So if he happened to be sick, or if he happened
to be called out of town for something, professionally, she stepped
in to take his course." In fact, Jean taught all of her husband's courses
for a semester when he returned to Ann Arbor to finish his doctorate.

When Dr. Batts was added to the department, he balanced it out. Batts and Dieb, the environmentalist and the functional biologist,
"dovetailed" as had Professor Praeger and Miss Diebold. "He was a
field person, a field biologist. When Dr. Batts came here, one might
say that [area] was renovated, was modernized. The biology depar-
tment then had field work, had a field naturalist and a laboratory
person, which was me." Diebold fondly remembers her years working
with Batts, and when he reminds her of how supportive she was of
him as a young instructor she says, "Oh, but he was so supportive of
me. . . . That was a professional experience that I don't think many
people have—no punches pulled. . . . And what we wanted to keep
to ourselves—believe me those [things] were kept to ourselves. No-
body knew our business—unless we decided that those were things we’d talk about. We had a wonderful rapport, the two of us.”

In the early 50’s a team of researchers visited the campus, conducting a study on the productivity of scientists (PhD’s in a scientific field) by various midwestern liberal arts colleges. In 1952 Origins of American Scientists was published. Kalamazoo College had done very well in the ratings, and the biology department had scored particularly high because of Miss Dieb. “There is clear evidence,” read the report, “that the superior effectiveness of this department in the training of modern biologists stems almost entirely from the influence of this remarkable and dedicated woman teacher. . . . With the coming of Miss Diebold the curriculum was considerably expanded, and, above all, laboratory techniques and procedures were developed, bringing biology somewhat closer to the allied fields of chemistry and physics.” In the limited time they were on campus the remarkably thorough researchers managed to obtain a clear perception of Frances Diebold’s unique character and her effect upon the department. “The teaching load of the department has been excessively high because of the limited number of staff members. . . . Undergraduate assistants have been used extensively, numbering from eight to ten a year over the last two decades. Their duties have been concerned with the laboratory program. It is perhaps noteworthy that a course in ornithology taught by advanced students was offered for several years to provide opportunity for student enterprise. Weekly seminars have been held and appear to have contributed greatly to the social cohesion of the group, serving in a way as an effective departmental club.

“It appears that this department, despite its comparative neglect by the administration, has maintained very effective morale. This is to be attributed almost entirely to the personal qualities and professional accomplishments of Miss Diebold, who has come to occupy an almost revered position in the Kalamazoo community. More than other [science] departments, biology has attracted women as majors, and indeed several of these have continued to the doctoral level. It is significant that the number of majors rose steadily from the late 1920’s onward. The department in recent years has achieved a production of future scientists approximately three and a half times normal expectation for a liberal arts college. Considering the disadvantages under which it has operated, one is tempted to prize its achievements above those of either chemistry or physics.”

The college displays a commemorative plaque, prominently placed at the bottom of the hill where the view is surrounded by the dignified Georgian academic buildings. On it are listed the college’s outstand-
ing achievements, “chartered in 1833. . . Instruction has been given here longer than at any other Michigan school.” The college considers another achievement significant: “This pioneer school has won national renown as a liberal arts college with special honor in teaching of the sciences.” Frances Diebold played a central part in establishing and maintaining the reputation the college treasures.

V

In spite of this accolade the college was in trouble. “K” had never fully recovered from the long Depression years. The college had struggled to maintain itself, slowly eating into its endowment. To Diebold, who had persevered and made the best of those difficult years, the coming of the new President, Weimer K. Hicks, in January, 1954, was like a reawakening. The inspirational Hicks combined forces with the chair of the Board of Trustees, Richard U. Light, to lead the college into a period of growth and rejuvenation. As far as Diebold is concerned, Dr. Hicks is on a par with Dr. Hoben. “Of these men that we’ve mentioned, the college became a very intimate part of the lives of these two people.” When Diebold thinks back to how she was persuaded by Dr. Hoben to teach physical education and to take over old or develop new courses, she says, “I think people that Dr. Hicks would appeal to would do the same thing for him, for a different reason. Dr. Hoben and Dr. Hicks were different personalities, but each person had the ability to not only direct, but to appeal [to] and get the best out of the participants in this little community—each man, but in different ways. And during [Hicks’] administration he gave some splendid chapel talks. He could gauge the pulse of his audience in a very interesting way.” Hicks’ acknowledged forte was fundraising and “nobody could tell him how to put on a campaign to get funds, but the academic was in the charge of the faculty. From the very beginning he emphasized that—and kept his word.”

Dr. Hicks’ first financial task was to fund a new building for biology. Dr. Hicks himself admits, “Frances gave me more excellent material to help sell the memorial, by her record, her work, and her reputation. And Origins of American Scientists was invaluable.” Diebold recalls, “Dr. Hicks, when he came here, said that no one could tell him the rules and regulations in raising money. He knew how to. But, ‘the curriculum,’ I can just see him pointing at us, ‘That’s your prerogative. Yes sir, you have to do that.’ So when this money was available to build biology—it was referred to as the biology building before it was named—Dr. Hicks called us in, Dr. Batts and me, and said to us, ‘Now that’s your baby, and you go ahead and work with the architect and
see that it has all that you wish.' And Dr. Batts took over; he did that. I just couldn't, I had to attend to my own academic affairs... so he spent hours, he and the architect together, to construct and arrange the rooms that make up Upton Hall. Of course Dr. Batts consulted me, 'and that's where I'd like to have my office, where I'd like this, the seminar rooms and so on.' The two of us—many of the things that were in the original Upton are our ideas. The person who discussed those ideas and whether they were feasible—that was Dr. Batts with the architect.” The effort was completed in 1956; Diebold moved out of the first floor of familiar Bowen Hall to a specially designed building.

The 50's intensified the furor of activity in Diebold's life. In March of 1954 she attended the National Science Foundation conference “to discuss ways in which research may contribute to the teaching and training of undergraduates, and of the type of support needed in such programs.” She was supervisor of the Selective Service College Qualification Test in 1955, a test similar to the SAT that granted deferment for those who scored high enough to go to college. She was very pleased to be the one chosen to present an honorary doctorate to Margaret Mead in 1957, considering it one of the highlights of her experience at Kalamazoo College. "My, that meant a lot to me. To think that this mutt from Wisconsin was chosen to present for a degree this world figure. But I did.” With his customary insight, President Hicks had invited one of the women faculty members to introduce the first woman ever to give a commencement address at Kalamazoo College, which was then 124 years old. “My, that stands out, that commencement.” The entire campus was busy in 1957-58 celebrating the 125th anniversary of the college. 1957 was also marked by the death of Dr. Stowe, her associate in Chemistry, another person who had worked very hard to benefit the college.

The tremendous emphasis placed on the sciences in the 50's also affected Diebold's life. It was recognition that Diebold had already devoted thirty-five years to the Kalamazoo community, as well as a growing realization on the public's part of the importance of science, spurred by the Russian Sputnik, that brought so many honors her way. In 1958 she was named "Woman of the Year" by Kalamazoo's Quota Club, a group for women in business and industry. In 1959 she also attended the University of Chicago's celebration of the 100th anniversary of Darwin's Origin of Species.

In 1958 and 1959, "two honors that came my way, to me, I couldn't understand, and I was very very touched by them." When Phi Beta Kappa established a chapter at Kalamazoo College in 1958, it invited the faculty to recommend members of the staff to become honorary
members. Diebold and Walter Waring, Professor of English, were nominated. "And how they chose me, don't ask me, but that touched me very much. And not only that, but when they pick out a faculty member to become an honorary member, that person has to be cleared by their own university. That nominee has to be acceptable to them. And to think that Wisconsin said, 'Okay, go ahead'—oh my, that impressed me very, very much. I felt so indebted [both to] Wisconsin and to my fellow faculty colleagues here in this college, to think I was worthy of such a thing."

Diebold views the honorary doctorate from Ripon College the following year as another example of serendipity in her life. "Life is so full of coincidences. And was that flattering. When I got this letter from Ripon stating that I was to receive this honorary degree, I thought, 'Oh, you rascally Dr. Hicks, you.' So I ran down to his office, with the letter. And I said, 'You should have told me what you were doing!' He just shrugged, 'I had nothing to do with that.' I said, 'Oh, Dr. Hicks. Now please, square off with me; you must have had.' He said 'No, I really didn't.' And he too [had] received an honorary degree from Ripon, earlier, while he was at Beaver Dam as headmaster in this academy. But he laughed when I said that. Because he said 'Why, you're going to join me!' Well, as I found out later, the person who pushed that was the president of Ripon College, Fred Pinkham, Eleanor Pinkham's brother-in-law. That's why I'm [talking] about coincidences. Fred Pinkham married Helen Kostia, a biology major—was she a nice person. They were a couple in college. And Fred Pinkham went off to war and in a mine explosion lost one of his legs. . . . He was in the educational world for a long, long while. He became certified in teaching, so did she, from Mary Warner. And then he advanced from high school teaching to college teaching and was in this whole area of administrative education. He received his Ph.D. in that area, and then became President of Ripon. . . . Well, while he was at Ripon, this particular year was one that emphasized the importance of science to education [and] to educating the public, the populace—all over, not only in the United States but all over the world. And that year he chose to pick me as one of the honorary degree receivers. . . . I can't understand it. It was quite moving to think that a former student, with his sweep of experience, would pick out little me to be one of the recipients of their honorary degree. . . . To me it has a more basic interest in that it shows the close-knittedness of this college historically—I mean that pattern of intimacy of relationships. See, back to my old idea now of interrelationships. It's carried further than just life here in the college. In prevails even outside the campus. And this is an
Diebold flew to Ripon, Wisconsin, for the presentation. Her brother and members of his family attended, as well as some of her old friends. She returned in time for commencement to find students waiting to greet her at the airport with a banner which read something to the effect of “Welcome Home Dr. Diebold.”

Diebold had devoted all of her energy to helping the college rather than furthering her own career. It had never occurred to her that she was sacrificing something. The ideal on which Kalamazoo College was based appealed to her, and she wanted to further it. She had sung in the Baptist Church choir for three years and enjoyed being a member of the Altrusa Club, a group of professional women who met for Tuesday luncheon and lectures. But the luncheon ran too close to her 1:30 lecture and she had given up both the choir and club when she decided she couldn’t continue her activities and run the department “the way it needed it.” She had also passed up opportunities for personal research. “No, I didn’t have time. See, that’s where I lost out. Instead of having the courses at Wisconsin count for something, toward an advanced degree, I devoted that time to furthering my own courses and introducing new courses. And you can’t do both. You just can’t—you can’t manage concentrating on your own individual investment toward a higher degree, and at the same time work out new courses that somebody asks you to give, like Child Psychology, Adolescent Psychology, and Comparative Neurology. You see, that had to come from someplace. So there wasn’t time for anything else.” So the Ripon degree was a recognition of the tremendous effort she had put into her profession, and in a way the honorary degree atoned for the one she could have attained. “This meant an awful lot to me.” One might even say she had earned it.

Reflecting on the honorary Phi Beta Kappa membership and the doctorate, she says, “Yes, those are two surprizes that in my professional life are still very significant—I still am amazed.” Of the 50’s she recalls, “That was an awful busy decade.”

1960 opened a decade of its own trials and tribulations. Olds Hall, home of chemistry and physics, had to be closed for repairs, so Upton was also affected. Dr. Hicks wrote in the 1960 Boiling Pot, “The year was likewise a nightmare for the sciences, in which students and faculty waited patiently for a modern Olds Hall, and then concentrated a year’s laboratory work in one semester. From sunrise until midnight embryonic scientists struggled to compensate for the lost hours. We trust, however, that the new facilities were worth the patience and the wait.” Diebold recalls that time: “Yes sir, we had to telescope. A lot
of things were telescoped then, to make way because of the work being done. Oh goodness . . . And then Olds was renovated. What it needed was a complete new system of plumbing, oh so much, so much. And cleaning, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera. At that time they put in plastic tubing. They thought, ‘Oh now we’re set; now chemicals won’t erode the metal and we won’t have any leaks.’ Plastic is not the kind of tubing they should use. It isn’t used very much anymore. But then it was the thing to do. So because of all that work going on, and chemistry [having] to be accommodated, everything had to be telescoped.”

Commencement time of 1960 brought an even larger challenge to Diebold. President Hicks spoke to the faculty about the necessity of a year-round college calendar because of enrollment growth and fiscal efficiency. Diebold was one of the members of the Educational Policies Committee, charged with working out the revolutionary “K Plan.” She modified customs, habits and beliefs formed over thirty-seven years of experience in order to support something that would ultimately improve the college. But she fought to keep everything she felt was necessary, as well as to throw out everything that wasn’t. She believed the plan of alternating courses would not work in the new on-off schedule. She doubtless had difficulty in conceiving how her densely packed semester courses could be compressed into ten-week quarters. Having for decades taught more than the customary work-load and still maintained close contact with students, she probably approved the reduced work-load because it enhanced the professional dignity of her colleagues, but didn’t feel the need for it herself. She may not have agreed wholly with the new plan, but she worked to make it a good one. She remembers how she and Dean Laurence Barrett, the chief proponent of the K Plan, would work things out. “Sometimes our opinions did not jibe. And I think you gather I am rather a direct person. He’d come into the lab, oh, that rascally Barrett. And he’d get on top of the lab table, cross his legs and sit there just like a little Buddha. Or a big Buddha. There he’d sit, ‘Yakety, yakety.’ . . . I was down here sitting in a chair. So here I was looking up at the Buddha. Oh dear. Yes, I have many many fond memories of Barrett, Larry Barrett. Oh, what a character. Sometimes you’d just like to punch him! Buddha, Punch a Buddha. And then he’d come across with something that was oh, so delightful, and so to the point, and so constructive. . . . We had many such sessions.” She was hashing out differences with an associate who had come to the college on a plan, which attracted young, inexperienced but promising instructors by starting them at a salary substantially higher than her own. Diebold had supported the plan that brought Larry Barrett because of the same
philosophy that caused her to work for the K Plan, placing the college's interests before her own. As Dr. Hicks writes of her, “Loyalty was another quality which characterized Dr. Diebold. When she differed with a person, she said so, openly and frankly, but when a decision was made, she sought to back it 100%. Never any subterfuge in her. Direct, open, frank, but loyal.”

Her new students had their doubts about this “openness” when their first papers were returned with a set of hieroglyphs that included letter grades (sometimes), series of pluses and minuses of varying sizes, and any number of checkmarks. She laughs when she recalls her grading system. “Oh, so you heard from them about my A plus plus, and the A minus minus and B plus minus and checks. One check or double checks. Oh, they all caught on . . . Yes, I know the students used to talk about that, but they accepted it. When I tried to explain, I never had reverberations that were completely derogative. I think that finally the students accepted my weird mechanical device of estimating their ability. But I explained it this way: Now, for example, ‘excellence’ is quite high, always has been, in my idea of achievement. Something done with excellence is rare. So when a student got an A, without any modification . . . boy, did everybody know. Oh goodness, did that go around. [But] sometimes a paper was done very, very well, but in my opinion [was] not quite complete, with reference to excellence. So that paper would get an A minus and maybe I’d put a tiny little plus (the size of my pluses meant something). But to me that meant that paper was almost complete, but not quite. And the same way would be true of B’s. See, here would be a paper that was very, very good, but not quite an A, so that would be a B plus. Then there would be a paper that didn’t quite come up to that B plus, so I put a plus and a little minus, B plus minus.

“And checks I used primarily with reference to laboratory work, and assigned written projects that were the same for everybody, because I think when you have an assignment, identical for all the students, there is cooperation and exchange of ideas in that group. What you get may not be just one individual’s pursuit of that particular problem. It may be modified and added to, by what that student discusses with others in the group. Whereas if you have an assignment in which a student chooses what to do, you have all these varied kinds of projects in a group. To me, that represents more definitely an individual effort. So those I did grade, by way of letter. But where the project was identical, like laboratory work, they were checks. And if a person got check check plus, boy, that was excellent. And just a check, hmm, comme ci comme ca. And if you got a check and a minus, well, you better
watch out.” There was one thing below a check minus. “Nothing. You know why I did that? I knew they’d come up and ask me why.... So it’s a way of showing shades of gradation with reference to accomplishment. Those students understood that finally.” They knew that the baffling grading system signified personalized attention. She refused to evaluate an individual’s work with a prefabricated grading system. Even when filling out recommendation forms for her students, she would cross out the entire page of boxes to be checked and write a letter of recommendation on the back, closing with a statement: “I refuse to reduce a personality to checkmarks. If you wish to translate what I have written here to such a system, you are free to do so.”

It was her ability to communicate with each student as an individual that helped her maintain strong relations with the constantly changing student body, all the way from the formal, even staid classes of the twenties to the individualistic rebellions of the 60’s. She remarks, “Oh, that change. Well, just imagine what an instructor lived through to see all that.” However, she did have her points of inflexibility. “For example, I just couldn’t be an instructor and face the men in their old darn facial adornments.” She would request the students to shave their beards. “When those were coming in—that slovenly dress and those horrible facial adornments—I just couldn’t take it. There before my class, seeing that ugly face that I knew was not like that. I just couldn’t. And so I decided, ‘Well, if they want to take your work, you must clear with them your attitude. And if they want to read into it as... pertaining to the way I look at sex, that’s their privilege. I can’t help that.’ So I called in these individuals and talked to them as just friends, student friends, and told them, however they interpret my attitude toward their facial adornments, that was their privilege. But I said, ‘I just have blocks, mental blocks—I can’t continue with my ideas when my eyes sight you and you and you. And would you please either not take this course, or would you please have your face clean-shaven.’ And all through, I never had any difficulty.... But again, here I am, extremes you see. A contained moustache, to me that’s okay.... And also I told these students when I talked to them, ‘You. I bet you anything that part of the reason you’re doing that is to gain attention.’ And I said, ‘You don’t need to do that. I know you’re a male. And what you think you’re gaining, from my point of view, I don’t know, because you aren’t. My reaction is negative to that kind of adornment to gain attention.’ So I imagine there were many student discussions about Dieb and her attitudes. I’m sure there were. And then, when the course was over, a new group of students attend class. And they knew there would be a young person with facial adornment. They would just wait to see how
long that student would keep it. . . . So the students were championing
me, you see, as well as that student." The years following her retire­
ment were even more rebellious. Diebold concedes, "I wonder if
students would have cooperated with reference to their beards. I won­
der if I would have had to put up with it—I don’t know."

But this woman who constantly refers to students as “learners” or
“young learners” did get away with it, possibly because of her belief
in the idea of a fellowship in learning. Even when education was more
formal she approached students on a personal level. Although she
couldn’t tolerate a bearded man, she was very careful to make it clear
that it was her “block” speaking, and that she cared about the per­
sonality under the beard. She prized the strong personalities in her
classroom: “Oh no—I don’t care for bookworms.” How much did Miss
Dieb pick up from her students? “Depending upon, I think, your
sympathy with young people—you catch on quickly or you don’t
catch on.”

Diebold is basically in favor of the kind of personal expression that
characterized the sixties but she thinks there are some positive aspects
to the old restrictions. “If there were some rules, I think that there
would be more of a common meeting ground. The students might get
together and gripe. . . . There are very few issues here that lend them­selves to student body discussion—and I think that’s unfortunate.”
She’d like to see some regulations for the same reason she supports
chapel: she’s for anything that will bring the student body together
and give them a common point of departure.

With the enlargement of the student body under the K Plan, the
department acquired two more instructors. Dr. Samuel Townsend
came to “K” in 1961 with training in molecular biology, and Dr. David
Evans joined the department in 1966. He was a naturalist but had spe­
cialized in invertebrate zoology. Dr. Evans was the first biology instruc­
tor since Diebold herself who had not graduated from Kalamazoo. But
he was redeemed by having received his doctorate from, of course, the
University of Wisconsin.

Diebold continued two years beyond retirement age because Dr.
Hicks encouraged her to stay on. “Yes, the last year he said, ‘Now just
take it easy. You don’t have to teach. Just be around.’ And I said, ‘Oh,
Dr. Hicks, you’re using a good deal of psychology. You know my make­
up well enough to know that I’d never do that.’ And I can just see him.
He sat back and just chuckled, just roared. Because that’s true, I didn’t.
I kept my courses the same way I always did. I had to. I wouldn’t
have been happy.”

Diebold had been considering retiring because in 1965 her mother,
Bess, at eighty-nine, required constant attention. But the biology majors, led by Suzanne Hammer, organized a schedule to stay with her. "When she was ill, she had to have somebody, the doctor advised, just to be there with her. She lived until she was ninety-one. And so, from my point of view, 'How on earth will I ever manage this?' The biology majors just took over. Well, they took over directing it; they asked many students outside of biology if they were interested in such a project, to stay with my mother when I wasn't there. They took over. My, I don't know; I wonder if that could be done now.

"The biology assistants and I met. I asked them if they would meet with me and I wanted to talk with them about a personal matter. And, my, before I had even finished with the problem, 'Oh, Dieb, never mind. We'll take over.' And there was such a fine person; he was a pre-med [who] was going to get his medical education and go back to his country. I'd say he was a Persian. And he said, 'Now, I want to stay with your mother in the evening. You don't know what it'll mean to me to be in a home.' He didn't want anyone else to come in the evening except himself. So he was the one who stayed evenings with my mother. Then during the day these students who were in charge had shifts. They made out a schedule. . . . And some of them could stay an hour, some of them could stay two hours. And oh, they impressed upon everyone. 'Now, remember, everything depends upon you. Don't you be late. Don't you substitute. Don't you slip up.' There weren't any slip-ups. And none of them wanted to be paid any other way except with money, so every Saturday I had to go to the bank. . . . I had little piles every week. Now don't ask me how long that was. I'd say my mother had to have that kind of attention for at least two years. I know it was longer than a year. But just imagine: for two years my students, biology students, the biology assistants took over. . . ."

For Bess the benefits were far more than physical. "Seventeen years after my father's death, she had an enjoyable time. I think one of the things that kept her alert and, in quotes, 'alive' was the fact that here existed student contacts—with biology majors we'd meet there once a year at least. And then one of the faculty groups called the Social Science Group met at different homes which would include our home. So she had that rapport still with her. . . . She'd sit in the davenport, my heavens, some days I'd come home and she'd say, 'Did you know this, Frances?' I didn't." Bess loved hearing about what was going on. "Of course! That's why she lived to be ninety-one!" It kept her in contact with the college, "with youth. She wasn't at all segregated, as an older individual, as is true if you go to a nursing home. Oh, I think nursing homes are terrible. Well, at any rate, some of them would read
the letters that they'd received from their dates, from their boyfriends, from their home." Bess came to know some of the students very well, learning "whether there was conflict in the family or not. But students—you see in my life students here at this college have played a very important role, from the time I landed."

VI

On June 5, 1967, an article appeared in the Kalamazoo Gazette entitled "Four Decades at Kalamazoo College: Dr. Frances Diebold to Retire From Biology Department This Week." The article concludes: "Miss Diebold plans to garden at her home at 1147 W. Lovell. 'After all,' she asked, 'doesn't everyone like to be out-of-doors?'

At a dinner in honor of Diebold's retirement and Emeritus status Dr. Hicks, in introducing her, committed what he calls "one of my worst goofs." He said she had served the college for thirty-four years. Diebold recounts the event: "And I got up and I pounded on the table and said, 'Well, you don't know even simple arithmetic?' And I said, 'I'm using your phrase that you used when you had an altercation with Averill. You said to Averill, "Dammit, you can't treat me that way." And I'm saying to you, "Dammit, Dr. Hicks, you can't count." You—'23 [from] '67, how many years is that?' He said it was thirty-some. And then at the very next faculty meeting, he called me up in front where he presided always at faculty meeting and presented me with this lovely bowl of forty-four beautiful red roses. And apologized. . . . My, that was a day—forty-four—I never had so many roses all at once. And so when I came over to school the next day, of course I took some of those roses to Kay Stratton, to the President's office and the Dean's office, just around, and thanked them all, to show my appreciation for that dinner. I shared them. I shared them with the campus."

Upon her retirement Diebold received yet another volume of letters from former students. She had become a legend: The alumni expressed surprise and disbelief that she was retiring. "What's this??? You leaving the classroom??? You belong behind that podium, topped with its sheath of yellowing manuscripts!!!" She had already taught the children of alumni, and others expressed disappointment that their children would not have the privilege. No one assumed that her retirement meant a cessation or even a lessening of her influence. Many alumni had returned to visit her, continuing to value Miss Dieb, the counselor and friend.

The letters recorded for posterity her inimitable sense of fun. "Perhaps I remember the refreshments more than the content of the seminars—the baked snails, and other exotic delicacies—and the fact that
you always put ice cream in your coffee instead of cream or milk.” A student remembers a poem written about Diebold that was the backdrop for an altar in the histology lab. An offering plate was provided for anyone who swore upon messing up a slide.

Most importantly, the praise tells how Miss Dieb through forty-four years never lost her touch. “You have not only taught Life Science but life itself.” Her lecture technique is vividly remembered even fifteen years after her retirement: “She was an excellent teacher. She would always start off at the beginning of a quarter with a more or less question or a thread which she would then weave throughout the entire series of lectures. Sometimes one wouldn’t know exactly where the lectures were going, or where they would end up. However, she always, by the last lecture, had woven a tremendous masterpiece of knowledge and insight and would end the class with a wrapup which tied everything together and made a very lucid and beautiful piece of academic information. She was a great historian so we not only got the facts of science but also a great deal of the flavor of the personalities involved in the development of the sciences that she taught.”

Still, after forty-four years, retirement was difficult. She has always been known to keep her inner feelings to herself, but occasionally they would slip out. Such a thing happened when in her last year the biology majors took her out for pizza and beer. Diebold had enough beer so that her honesty came out; she told everybody exactly what she thought of them. While her estimations may have been accurate, they were not necessarily tactful.

In the same year Diebold was retiring, her mother died in January. “But remember, she was ailing. Nevertheless, her death was sudden. To both my brother and to me, it was such a relief to know that she died in her own home, not in a foreign habitat, a nursing home or a hospital. We both are most grateful that didn’t need to happen to her . . . and most grateful that the students pitched in and made it possible for her to be in her own home and have a good deal of pleasure through these students in her last years. But I didn’t enjoy in any way seeing my mother . . . incapacitated.” Diebold adjusted to these two major changes in her life by spending more time with her family. “That particular year I spent a lot of time in Minneapolis with my brother’s family. Jim was getting through college and the kiddies were in that interesting stage of being not quite adolescent and yet they were. You don’t realize that, but at any rate that was an interesting time to be with them. And so that helped to re-establish my functional equilibrium with reference to my perspective of life, after retirement and after my mother’s death, being with my own family.”
Although both had been expected, the death of Bess, perhaps the greatest force in her life, and retirement from a post where she had spent forty-four years, with its threat of a break in contact with students, were very hard on Diebold. But her colleagues and friends saw no indication on the surface of the turmoil that must have been going on underneath. Part of what helped Diebold adjust to the changes in her life was the philosophy of life derived from her own field. The biology of life cycles provided a context for her retirement and her mother’s death: "because of the way I look upon life cycles, my mother’s death also fit into a pattern. There comes a time when things terminate, material things as well as immaterial things. Some are more long-lasting than others. . . . And then one has to recapture an outlook on life and an outlook on the institution and go on from there. So in thinking of my mother’s death in that year, as I cogitate it, [it] fitted into a pattern that had been my method of thinking all through my life. And the shock was great for a while, but then the readjustment came rather in a rhythmic sequence."

Diebold was going to remain as busy as ever. She never believed in jogging or other sorts of “artificial” exercise, but she still rakes her own leaves and does a lot of walking. Not lost in T.V., she prefers the fantasy of radio. She continues to read in her field. “I have kept up in my scientifics, oh my, yes, and that isn’t easy. That takes time. You can’t do a lot of, in quotes, ‘extra-curricular activities, volunteering.’ You can’t volunteer for this, that, and the other thing and expect to do anything constructive in your professional field. You just can’t. There isn’t time for that. So I chose to keep up with my field, and that meant in every way.”

She has hung on to some other things she’s unwilling to give up. “The last car I bought, and I should have bought another one, but it is very nice. I’ve had Buicks before, but I just love this Buick. A Buick ’61, four-door. It’s black and it’s red and white inside. Oh, these new cars having the upholstery dark—I don’t like them at all. . . . As a family, we become attached to things that we love, including cars. We’ve never been a family, not my brother or I, [to turn] in our cars. This Buick that I bought in ’61, I like very, very much. And I’ve been tempted to turn it in and get a new one but then I think, ‘Oh, but I know you so well.’ And the reason it runs so well is because of Mr. Post down here at this station. . . .”

She has also retained her usual drink before dinner. Prohibition, in her eyes, was an extreme measure, and “again it ties in with whatever’s wrong with me, that I don’t like extremes. Oh yes, I like a cocktail.” She varies her choice of a before-dinner drink, but “my two favorites are
Frances Diebold

manhattans and martinis, and I like to change back and forth. I don't like any ice in them; I want the real thing." Preferring two olives in her martini, she adds, "if I have one olive, I resent it if it's a wee one."

Diebold says she never thought much about retirement because she didn't pay much attention to her age. She never felt old until her family started treating her that way when she turned eighty. "I never realized how old I was until my brother and his kids showered me with all these notes and flowers and candy. Really, my age didn't mean anything to me. I didn't think of it as 'Here you are now, and you're going to be up here and then you're going to go on the down side of the plateau.' Not until my 80th birthday, never." Her 80th birthday hit her as retirement did—a fact. "Yes, I never thought of those things. And the same way with retirement. I was in my stride and I just kept going. And then, from a practical point of view, in retrospect, I think I said to myself, 'Well, this can't continue. You know there's a deadline and you have to meet it. Just like there's deadlines with reference to classes and labs, and this is it. This is finale, period.' So it didn't phase me one way or another. I knew that was it. I wasn't worried about how my leisure time would be filled up. I don't think I ever thought about those things, because I've always been a busy person."

Looking ahead, she does not fear death, but would prefer to meet it on her terms. "There are two people that I envy, Dr. Goodsell and Dr. Hightower. If only a life cycle could end that way. Dr. Goodsell, nobody remembers [him] except that way! As Dr. Goodsell. You have no memory of him in lingering illness or incapacitated. There he was. Surely it was a shock to those he left, but that's not what I'm talking about. I'm talking about this human creature and a life cycle. And [very vital], that's the way you remember him. Hightower was chairman of the Soc. Department for many years and he was mayor of the city a few times. . . . He was a very fine instructor and what he did best was to organize. He excelled in doing committee work and as a faculty member I'll bet you that Raymond Hightower in his life belonged to more committees and was chairman of more committees than any other faculty member, including administration. That's where he performed best. My, he could pull things together. And he was chairman of the committee that had much to do with this Kalamazoo Plan, and here he was, attending a committee meeting at Welles Hall, last spring. And Caroline Ham and he chit-chatted before he went out of the building after the meeting. They parted; she went to her car and he went to his car, got in his car—evidently it started okay and started to go, and it ran into a snowbank. And that was the end of Dr. Hightower. Maintenance saw the car . . . ; then they found him, but he had gone. As I
say, he's another one of the people I envy. What a way to go. Again, he was doing what he liked best to do. I presume he had his notes about that committee meeting and his mind was full of what he was going to do and so on. And that's the way you remember Hightower. You remember Hightower just performing his committee duties and being consulted about student affairs and college affairs.

"Yes sir, and to me that's the way life cycles should end. . . . I hope that I have the experience of a Goodsell or a Hightower. But we never know what life has ahead." Not death but incapacity represents the final threat to the usefulness and strong individualism on which she has based her life. "I think it's awful to see a human being at the end of the life cycle, decline, decline, decline, . . . . And yet I have all that biology as a background. I think nursing homes are awful. Oh! You aren't an individual anymore." After eighty-two years, nothing is brand-new, but there is much to wonder at. She's watched so many things change, and knows that the evening buggy rides of her childhood are no longer possible. She muses "there's an enormous amount of realism—of truth—in 'life is but a hollow dream.'" Great people, no matter how valuable they have been in their lifetime, cease to be; one makes a niche, but a tiny one, in the panorama of nature. Her philosophy, tinged with both resignation and faith, is that of one on familiar terms with the cycles of life: "Yes, accept things as they come."

Since retirement Diebold has not been forgotten by the Kalamazoo College community. On May 30, 1968, she was honored at the annual meeting of the American Baptist Convention in Boston, accompanied by Dr. Haydn Ambrose, representing the college. "I went to Boston to be presented with this award, by the American Baptist Convention, as being chosen an outstanding instructor in a Baptist college. And this time I'm sure that that grew out of something that Dr. Hicks did. . . . As I understand it, the American Baptist Association recognizes an outstanding teacher in one of the Baptist colleges every year. And that year I was the one representing Kalamazoo." In her speech she "tried to develop the idea of the reactions of a scientist to religious concepts or church-related concepts."

Diebold also wrote an article published December 29, 1968, entitled "Women in Science: Mankind's Quest For Truth Continues" for the Kalamazoo Gazette to commemorate the expanding role of women in science and the admission of women to Yale in the approaching fall. Diebold wrote, "These examples illustrate that today women are widely recognized as being worthy of choosing careers in science. . . . We are told that traits such as ambition, position, power and status characterize those who seek society's rewards. Historically, such seekers have
been predominantly men—and this remains so today. However, there are countless chances for women to succeed scientifically in almost any specialty and to experience society's rewards—even though as women achieving, they may not acquire power and position.” Her own life is living proof.

Diebold has been called a “feminist to the bone,” but has never been a placard-waver. Instead, as a free individual and a woman, she has carried out her philosophy of “working from the inside.” Rather than fighting for changes, through her competence she has commanded respect which has allowed her to make changes. She wholeheartedly supports aspects of the women's movement that place value on every one. Always referring to a person as an “individual” or “this personage,” she cites Dr. Mary Calderone's views as embodying her own: there are as many differences between men and men, and women and women, as there are between men and women. To concentrate on the differences between men and women is fruitless. Not an extremist, Diebold grants that she is an adventurer. From the childhood horse-ride through the squirt gun episode, she took risks and impetuous steps. She had to act, “irrespective of the consequences,” and she won.

Even years later Diebold's scientific and personal contributions to the college continue to be remembered. The 1976 Homecoming included a special tribute to Dr. Frances Diebold, Emeritus Professor of Biology. Saturday, October 23, was “Frances Diebold Day” by proclamation of the mayor. Of it Diebold comments, “I blame Hightower for this but I don't know who it was. I had this big document, the mayor of the city proclaimed it that, and I had the key to Kalamazoo. . . . Oh my heavens, was I ever flattered—of course it was all political . . . Yes, those students surely had fun. I remember that day very well. There was some kind of an article in the paper . . . . and at that Homecoming, oh, those students who talked surely got even with me. They related some of their experiences. Of course everybody just roared; everybody had a good time, at my expense. And of course Lewie Batts played a role there—and so did Jeanie. Oh that was a real fun day—I enjoyed it.”

In the same year plans for the Frances Diebold Scholars Program went into effect. Over the following years a $100,000 endowment was raised “to support several upper level students whose interests centered in biology.” The Diebold Scholars “will reflect Dr. Diebold's qualities: a dedication to scholarly effort, an understanding of the role of life sciences in all of man's knowledge, and an appreciation of the necessity of ethical values in the realm of science.”

And in the fall of 1982, fifteen years after her official departure
from the college, the Student Commission initiated the Frances Diebold Award for the faculty member or administrator who, in the students' judgement, has made the greatest contribution to campus life. "About the students offering that award in my name. This student said, 'Would you honor us by letting us use your name for an award?' And I said, 'What? Well, goodness, if you're thinking of such a thing—naming an award in my name—that's an honor to me. Goodness, not the reverse.' And I said, 'Any way, you don't know me. How can you do that?' And this young woman said, 'Oh, well, by reputation. By reputation and tradition.' And I said 'My goodness, my heavens, what an honor, but how could I say no? . . . And I look upon that as quite a compliment since it was a student—to think that students as a group, or a representative of the student body as a commission, would be thinking [of] a project that relates to faculty participation in student activities. To me that was a compliment. It's refreshing—I was pleased to know that students were at least part of the time thinking along those lines."

Students who have not known her want to name an award after her because, as a former student wrote her in 1967, "Even though you may not be in the classroom, your delightful, indelible influence will surely continue to inspire each generation of students . . . ." Diebold never had children of her own, but her concern for individuals created an atmosphere in which she and her students have been, and remain, friends together. In the most serendipitous of circumstances, she proudly discusses the lives of scores of "sons" and "daughters" who are doctors and others who insist that she has helped them toward satisfaction in life.

But she displays concern over excesses she sees living in a college town. Of a pre-football game melee, she observes, "I don't like extremes, but these students, they're going to college [and] you hardly see one of them without their darned old beer bottles, their whiskey flask or whatever. They're always guzzling . . . . It's not only abusing what is, in quotes, 'the thing to do,' but it's abusing this entity, this precious entity, your body . . . . [One] Saturday I thought 'No, I just can't indulge in cocktails anymore.' Of course, it passed."

From her Lovell St. vantage point, or from the balcony during weekly Chapel services, she watches her little college with unabated interest. "This college has been very good to me. I have no axes to grind . . . . That doesn't mean I didn't rebel. But I think my rebellion was understood." She adds, "I don't think I could cut myself off from the academic world because it's been a part of me all these many many years." She was shocked at Homecoming '82 when she met a former student who is just one year
younger than she. She also recognizes that she has done much for the college, as it developed from "a provincial [to] a growing kind of institution, and today it has become quite a sophisticated small college. There are certain airs it puts on that don't belong to it, even in its sophistication . . . it's amusing. New courses have fancier names—but it's the same old ideas." But something more basic, she believes, has changed: "I think I'm the only one who emphasizes that idea, the fellowship of learning, anymore."

In one of my final interviews with Dr. Diebold, she had just been talking with her friend Dr. Richard Stavig, who came to the college during the expansionist 50's and pioneered the foreign study program. "Stavig . . . looked at me this morning and said, 'Gee, if I reach your age and have the opportunity that you're having to interview young kids—you're still part of the mainstream.' And I said to him, 'Oh, Stavig, an old stogie like me. Imagine what they must think of me.' Oh, we laughed so . . . If you talk about being attuned to times, I live in the present, and I like what I do. This opportunity to talk to you was a new education for me. I enjoyed it. It's been fun. Surely, it has taken up time and taken away some things that I might have preferred doing, but not in the act of seeing you. They were stimulating; they were fun. I think that's what Stavig meant, that I was in the swim of things."

Having touched profoundly yet another life, Frances Diebold continues to be and give of herself. "In summing it all up, I presume you'd say this would be the truth throughout my life, but especially since retirement: hunting for the dull moment? I'd still have to find it."

VII

My journal records my first meeting with Dr. Frances Diebold when we both attended in late August of 1982 a student's slide presentation on the women in her family. The elderly woman in navy slacks and a light fall coat seemed the most likely possibility of the group. She sat quietly, not stiffly, but patient and feminine, without being overly prim. Her grey hair was swept up, comfortably surrounding a face not scored but softened by wrinkles. Her skin was beautiful. As I sat studying her, she turned and looked in my direction. She smiled candidly when our eyes met. Her bright blue-grey eyes looked directly into mine with charm and intelligence as the smile warmed. It showed self-posssession and a little shyness at meeting eyes with a stranger. I unconsciously smiled back, and found myself hoping that she was Dr. Diebold. My first thought was "How pleasant she is."
When the presentation was over, I approached her eagerly and introduced myself. I was a bit taken aback because she spoke with reserve, unlike the smile I had received earlier. She said she could see me as many as three times a week; call her in the fall. Well, it was a start.

She phoned me the next morning about 9:30. I was struck by how soft and high her voice was. She had dropped much of the stiffness of last night; now she sounded as if she had a (small) bee in her bonnet. She was eager to speak with me for "just a few minutes" in order to clarify a few points.

Intentionally wearing a skirt, I waited for her in the basement of Mandelle. I asked two clerks, "Excuse me. Have you seen Dr. Frances Diebold this morning?" carefully enunciating the name. "Oh," one asked the other, "has Dieb been in yet?" I was shocked at my own ignorance: A woman who had been retired for fifteen years was familiar to everyone but me.

"Oh, Miss Csete," Dr. Diebold chirped as she led me down the hall to a lounge. "How do you feel about this Women's Interest Group?" which had sponsored the previous evening's program. I leaped into our first real conversation with an honest answer. She emphatically agreed, and enthusiastically told me that when she first met me she felt relieved, having not known what to expect from a senior interested in doing a Women's Studies project. Still walking down the hall, she turned to say, "When I saw you, I thought 'Thank goodness, she's feminine.'"

Our "few minutes" turned into an hour and a half. We covered everything from the women's movement to the European influences in American life and the purposes of higher education. As we left the building, we paused outside Mandelle, not yet willing to part, vehemently discussing our views on the presidents in both our lives, Reagan and Rainsford. We finally managed to silence ourselves and said our goodbyes until the fall as we started in opposite directions. Walking away, she turned and lifted her arm in the salute that I was later to understand was a fond farewell she has always given students after a discussion.

My journal continues: "There are generations between us. I'm not saying we see eye-to-eye. But after our second meeting I am very enthusiastic about working with and relating to her." But I still had no idea what I was in for.
Frances Diebold in 1966, the year before retirement
Chapter IV

“Lone Wolf”:
Pauline Byrd Johnson

Ruth Ann Moerdyk
The last time I officially interviewed Pauline Byrd Taylor Johnson, the front door opened before I had a chance to knock. "I was watching for you today because I wanted to see if you cut across the grass or not," she said with a mischievous grin. It did not surprise me that she was curious to see whether or not I cut across her lawn to reach the door—I had not, much to her approval, I'm sure. From the moment I met Mrs. Johnson it was clear that she was not the sort of person who would welcome such an infraction.

On the last of twelve visits to her home, Mrs. Johnson had confirmed one of my favorite impressions—I could never be certain of what awaited me when her door opened. Tuffy, the once-stray cat who earned her name by scaring an alien dog out of the yard, might be attempting an escape. The phone might be ringing, or Easter, a sad-eyed English spaniel, might be barking. On one occasion I was treated to the incongruous sight of Mrs. Johnson, a short, slightly stooped, grey-haired woman, resolutely attempting to wrestle Brutus, an equally strong-willed Great Dane, away from the front door and into a sitting position. I've forgotten who won the struggle, though it seems likely that Mrs. Johnson did.

Taking my coat, she would almost inevitably apologize for her house's state of disarray, most of which seems to be restricted to her study and to the dining table, which is always covered with papers. "I never cared much for housework and I hardly have time for it these days. There are too many pests like you running around who want some of my time." Again, a broad smile covered her face.

After my coat was hung up, I entered Mrs. Johnson's living room of pale yellow walls and green wing-backed chairs, each with a table beside it. The tables hold lamps, porcelain figures, and periodicals such as The Atlantic, American Spectator, Harper's, and Christian Science Monitor. The walls are covered with pictures and prints, including a portrayal of Daniel in the lions' den. A piano stands against one wall,
and on the opposite wall there is a fireplace. In addition to an old wind­
up clock, the fireplace mantel holds photographs of several of Mrs.
Johnson's ancestors. While sitting in a small book-lined room adjoining
the living room, listening to Mrs. Johnson's articulate, expressive voice,
I have grown familiar with each figure.

Photographs of Robert and Frances Bradley, Mrs. Johnson's great­
grandparents, stand next to each other on one end of the mantel.
Robert Bradley has a rather narrow face with fine features and soft,
thoughtful eyes. His hair is white, carefully combed, and parted in the
middle; a white beard completes the image. Frances Bradley has a
square, broad, full face with widely set eyes that seem somewhat sad.
Her gray hair is pulled back, making her appear slightly stern.

"The Bradleys came from Kentucky—it's a very fascinating story," said Mrs. Johnson, gazing into space and tapping nervously on the arm
of her chair as she recalled the litany of her family's history. "Robert
Bradley was the son of his owner. His mother was a woman whom
George Bradley, a very rich plantation owner, apparently loved. They
had six or seven children, and instead of their being treated as those
children usually were, which was simply to be brought into the world
and sold, George Bradley was very good to his mistress and kept those
children on the plantation where they would be safe. He even had a
school for them that was in a back field somewhere until it was dis­
covered by the law and he had to discontinue it. Grandpa Bradley, for
a Negro, was quite well-educated. All those children could read and
write and so on.

"When Robert Bradley was a young man, he fell in love with a slave
girl on another plantation and his father bought her so that they could
be married, and that was Grandma Bradley, my grandmother's mother.
So they lived there for several years—they were simply servants. They
farmed and kept house on [George Bradley's] plantation. And then
George Bradley, being a very smart man, knew that civil war was in­
evitable, and he knew the only protection his children would have
would be himself, and so he talked to them and convinced them that
they should go north. Some of them, of course, didn't especially want
to go. They were comfortable and for Negroes they were very beauti­
fully taken care of. Well, anyway, he gave them gold, he gave them
money, and free papers, and outfitted them with covered wagons and
whatever it was they needed, and sent all these married children north.
He must have been an exceptional man to give them all free papers
and money and equip them and send them north. The only thing I
know that he said was when he was saying good-bye: 'It doesn't matter
what anybody says or does; remember that you are the aristocrats.' That
was quite an unusual thing to say to half-Negroes.”

By now, Mrs. Johnson’s face wrinkled in concentration with the effort of remembering the details of what she had been told as a child. An old family Bible lying on the coffee table provided some forgotten details. An article from a February, 1932, Kalamazoo Gazette is stuck between the pages and announces her grandparents’ sixtieth wedding anniversary. Information about their families is also included, and we learn that the Bradleys were from Henderson, Kentucky. The Bible also informs us that Mrs. Johnson’s grandmother, Flora Bradley Hill, was born February 19, 1854.

“My grandmother was a little girl, four or five years old, when they came north. I remember her telling stories that kids along the way would hang along the fence and say, ‘Nigger—you’re nothing but old migrants. Why don’t you go back where you came from?’ One child died on the way north. And they would stop along the road at night and with a bonfire and kettles and stuff they cooked their food. That was quite an experience.

“I can’t tell you about some of [George Bradley’s children]: Some stopped off in Ohio, some went north into Wisconsin—I never had any contact with them. There was one family in Illinois that I did meet one or two members of. My folks came to Decatur [Michigan], my family and another. And don’t ask me about them,” she said with a laugh, anticipating a question. “I don’t know. Anyway, my folks didn’t stay there long. They were attracted to this area and bought a farm in Oshtemo on that road that’s known as Parkview. So Grandpa Bradley settled there and farmed.

“When I was at Kalamazoo College, Ernest Balch was my history professor and one time he was talking about Negro settlers and he said, ‘When I was a boy there was a very fine Negro family whose farm adjoined ours.’ It turned out that was Grandpa Bradley. He knew Grandpa Bradley.

“He died when I was very tiny. I was probably a year old, something like that. All I knew about him was people talking about him, always very admiringly. Grandma Bradley, the slave girl, I remember very definitely. After her husband died, Grandpa [Hill, her son-in-law] built a small cottage for her on his property so she could be independent. I was in high school, starting high school, when she died. It must have been about 1916 or ’17—just before the world war.”

A photograph of Mrs. Johnson’s maternal grandparents, Forrest and Flora (Bradley) Hill, stands on the mantel next to that of Frances Bradley. He is seated in a large, high-backed, ornately carved wooden chair. She stands next to the chair, one arm behind her back and the
other reaching behind the chair. He is a tall, vigorous-looking man—bald, bearded and dignified. A large book lies in his lap. Next to him, Flora Hill appears to be a slight woman, and her hair is pulled back from an oval face with beautiful sparkling eyes and a bit of a smile.

A second family Bible reveals that Forrest Hill was born October 11, 1852, and that they were married February 15, 1872. They had eight children, five of whom survived into adulthood.

"My grandmother did the most beautiful knitting; she was sixteen years old before she had a pair of stockings from a store. And she knitted them for the rest of the family, too. She earned her money by picking berries from the marsh.

"They met at church, I think, out in the country someplace. I don’t remember. I guess it was love at first sight; I don’t think either of them ever went with anybody else, and they lived together for more than sixty years. She was just as gentle and placid as my grandfather was aggressive. He would tell his stories and she would say, ‘Now Forrest, that’s no way to talk.’ They had a happy, lovely, married life. I’ve always admired her very much—quite a powerful character, but she never raised her voice and never spoke unkindly about people. And she was patient with me—I know that must have been hard.” Apparently recollecting some of the trials she put her grandmother to as a child, Mrs. Johnson laughed softly and continued. “But as gentle and ladylike as she was, when it came down to it she had an awful lot of power and influence over that big powerful he-man, and he respected her very much, very much. Of course, it was a love affair; they loved each other all those years. She was almost a hundred when she died. We were hoping she would live; it was fifteen days before her hundredth birthday. She was living with us then, Mother and me. I wasn’t in the room when she died, but Mother was, and her last word was ‘Satisfied.’ I think that’s beautiful. Satisfied—what more can you ask for than that?”

Another scrap of paper stuck into a Bible provides more information—handwritten on a piece of paper, Forrest Hill had begun to write an autobiography. He didn’t get very far; we learn only that he was born in Howard Township of Cass County and that he lived with his grandparents until he was twelve, when he became a farm worker. “I don’t remember seeing this before,” said Mrs. Johnson. “You see, I do have all kinds of things all over—it’s just that none of them are organized.” She looked at the paper thoughtfully for a moment and then, gazing into space as though she could see her grandfather, continued the narrative.

“Grandpa Hill was raised in Niles, Michigan, and I don’t know all that much about [the Hill family] because they all died off. Those people said that they were always free, that they had never been enslaved.
That might have been true; there were a few Negroes in the country who were free men. His grandfather brought him up. I remember the name Gamaliel Hill—that was his grandfather. His own father left his wife and two children and left for California in the gold rush. So Grandpa didn’t really know him, and his mother died shortly after [his father] went west. So those two children were with their grandparents.

“They lived in Niles and he married my grandmother and they lived out West Main, out in the country on a farm, and then he decided he would have a better chance to make money working on buildings and roads and streets instead of a farm. So, when his children were little they came to Kalamazoo. He wasn’t a servant and he instructed all of us, his family, that we are not servants. He was a contractor, a teamster, and earned money by using teams of horses.”

A brick from Kalamazoo College’s Bowen Hall lies in a corner of the room in which we are sitting—when the building was torn down the brick was given to her as a remembrance because her grandfather had worked on the building. “Grandpa was connected with many of the old places; I’ve forgotten most of them. He built a road, Long Road, I think. I was a young girl, about eighth, ninth grade. He was always very ambitious for me to use what he called my education. He wanted me to keep books for him, but I guess he soon saw that it wouldn’t be very well done. But I always remembered all of the arithmetic and book work that had to be done for that job.”

On a ride through the neighborhood in which Mrs. Johnson grew up, Judge Charles Pratt, a lifelong friend of Mrs. Johnson and her family, tried to recreate a Kalamazoo of celery and pansy marshes and large parcels of land for me, a youngster who finds such a landscape difficult to imagine. Driving down Long Road, he smiled pleasantly. “Oh yes, I knew Forrest Hill, and I worked for him on this road the summer I was thirteen years old. He was a strong man, a big man, and a hard taskmaster. But a hard worker, too. He would pick up a shovel and say, ‘This is the way I want it done,’ and it seemed like in just a few shovel-full he would have a wagon full of dirt and stuff, ready to haul away. I was so impressed with that man.”

Mrs. Johnson smiled with pleasure at the report of Judge Pratt’s evaluation, and continued discussing her grandfather. “Grandpa retired on his savings, absolutely. There was no such thing as Social Security and he was his own employer, so there was no pension. That’s another thing that he taught—never earn money that you don’t save some of it. I always followed that. And I believe it. Grandpa lived on his savings. He wasn’t a rich man, but he was well-fixed, and he left good property. And there was insurance, too. After he died my grand-
mother lived with us, but she was never a pauper.

"Well," said Mrs. Johnson, laughing softly, "I could go on forever. Grandpa Hill is my hero; he is the man I have always adored. I think of all the people I have ever known he was the wittiest and cleverest. And he had a wonderful sense of humor. He was kind, generous, but also a very strong character. I've never seen another man that could come within sight of him.

"My grandfather was one of the members of the African Methodist church here, Allen Chapel. My grandmother was a Methodist and they started going to the white Methodist church that was down on South Street. Well, my grandfather had a gorgeous voice and my grandmother had a beautiful soprano voice and they had sung in the choir [of their last church]. Now they learned that coming here to church no one mistreated them, but all they could do was come and sit down and listen to the sermon. So, against his convictions about a separate church, he joined [Allen Chapel], because it was their conviction that you can't be a very good church member unless you served, yourself. So that's how he happened to do that.

"He believed in us using our mentality and whatever talents we had, and all of his children went to school. And when he wasn't doing something else, he always had a book. And this is why I'm so interested in slavery and the Civil War. Many of [the people who had been slaves and soldiers during the Civil War] were still alive in his day and he would make an effort to go to Detroit or Jackson or somewhere to hear them speak. He was very much interested and then he would tell me those things and read about them.

"Grandpa retired about the time when trucks began to be used for work like that. He never owned a truck, but he would have if he had stayed in business. For a short time they were in Chicago and had an apartment with [one of their daughters] who taught there. But Grandpa was a farm boy. They didn't like Chicago so they came back here. He did yard work, he did a lot for the church, just things like that. He was always active. And I'll always remember the day he was taken to the hospital; he was eighty-five and he was up at five o'clock to do something out in the yard. That was his lifestyle. He was in the hospital only three or four days before he died, and I don't know what [his illness] was. It wasn't a long siege, or anything dramatic, like it's popular to have today." Looking me in the eye proudly, she concluded. "We are not a sickly family."

The children of Forrest and Flora Hill ended up in a variety of occupations. George worked with his father, and then earned a living at various repair and handyman jobs in Kalamazoo. Mabel became a teacher in the Chicago public school system. James, after quite a
struggle to get training, became a mechanic, and owned a garage in Detroit, then New York City. Etta became a hairdresser.

But the only Hill child whose photograph stands on Mrs. Johnson's mantel is her mother—Edith Belle Hill. In late middle age, she has short, dark hair and her eyebrows arch slightly above a face that bears a close resemblance to her father's. The strength and determination seem almost to emanate from the hearty, kind face.

"Oh yes," said Judge Pratt, "Mrs. Johnson's mother was a lady. Her parents saw to it that she was a real lady."

Such a description would certainly please Mrs. Johnson, as she fairly glows with love and admiration while speaking of her mother. The same glow is apparent on the face of Mrs. Johnson's daughter, Joanne Allison, as she remembers her grandmother. "She was very strong, very kind—just a wonderful, kind person. And she had to be strong. She had to be father, mother, head of the house. Raising me, buying a house, sending Mother to college—she must have been an incredible person. I always go back to that word—strength. The women in my family have all been absolutely strong. Unyielding. Unbending. Extremely honest. Wonderfully kind. God-fearing."

According to the Bible's record, Edith Belle Hill was born April 14, 1877, and married Oscar Byrd on April 18, 1900. They had two children, a boy and, of course, a girl. The family was not together for long. "I never knew my father, really, and I have a picture of him somewhere, I guess, but I don't know where. When I was a baby he and my mother divorced. He had discovered that he was not in love with my mother, as beautiful and charming as she was; he was in love with his childhood sweetheart. So—just decently, but I think horribly and cruelly, he told her that he was leaving and going to be with his love. I never saw my father and his wife until I was about twelve or thirteen." The position of a divorced woman with two children and no employable skills is still hardly enviable; it must have been much less so during the century's first decade. "I've always been so proud of my mother that she never said one unpleasant thing about him," Mrs. Johnson continued. "And her heart must have been broken, because she was in love, I know she was. She could easily have embittered me or turned me against him. She did not. He was just a man that I never came in contact with.

"We went to my grandparents' to live. My grandfather owned property on what was then Parker Street; now it's Pioneer. So we went there until my mother could save enough money to buy a home. I was very little; I don't think I was two years old. I have no recollection of it at all."
"Mother went to a beauty school in Buffalo, New York, for a year or so. I suppose Grandpa lent her the money. She was an expert in that area, and she had no intention of being a servant. She was very smart; she didn’t open a shop because she didn’t want that overhead, but she went to people’s homes. She had some of the most outstanding women of this town as clients. You can’t work as hard as she did and save money and accumulate property and branch out too much. That wasn’t her way of doing. She was very quiet. She had friends, but her responsibilities came first, always.”

No photographs of her paternal ancestors stand upon Mrs. Johnson’s mantel, though when questioned about them, she got up and took a picture of Abner Byrd, her grandfather, from the dining room wall. Standing next to me and holding it with care and pride, she showed me the photograph. Abner Byrd, seated in a chair, is muscular, bearded, and astute looking.

“Abner Byrd is the one in the family who fought in the Civil War. I was very proud of that because that took initiative and effort and patriotism, things that I think are appropriate. He was a free man. I don’t know much about the background along the way, but before the Civil War there were many thousands of Negroes in the United States who were free and the Byrds were apparently part of that group. He and his ancestors lived in Ohio. He came from there and joined this Negro settlement in Cassopolis. I don’t know too much about the background in Ohio, but they were fine people and for a Negro he had a good education. He married the woman who became my father’s mother—and I think [her] people had probably been runaway slaves. I think there’s a connection there with slavery, but you see, they had lived there for quite a while and had accumulated money and property.”

Cass County, of which Cassopolis is the county seat, lies southwest of Kalamazoo, and a large proportion of the early white settlers there were Quakers who soon linked themselves with the Underground Railroad. It has been estimated that one out of every four fugitive slaves, approximately 15,000, passed through Cass County, since it was a convenient link to stations in Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois. On the trip north, although Canada was often the original destination, some of the runaways remained in Cass County. The only recorded instances of slave catchers entering the county are in 1846 and ’47. Vague stories of Mrs. Johnson’s paternal ancestors’ involvement in these incidents survive.

“There are many interesting things about [the Byrds]. They fought the slave catchers who came north—slave catchers would come up
from the South and capture free Negroes and take them back and sell them. Or if they could find a runaway slave, well. ...” Mrs. Johnson’s voice trailed into air, perhaps not wanting to consider the fate of such an extraordinarily unfortunate person. “One time some people came up through Indiana, and came to Cass. And [the residents had] attacked those people and had run them off and taken their horse and wagon, and the wagon was then pushed into a lake. They were going to enforce their citizenship. They had to be people who resisted slavery, who saw it for what it was. You see, they had great big private farms, and they felt they were human beings and that slavery was a wrong thing, no matter who supported it. And the fact that they had character and the courage either to run away, or if they were free, to leave slave territory, where they would be safer, shows a good deal of independence and determination to be what America stood for. I think they had that although they weren’t educated; in the air were equality and justice and fair play for everybody and they intended to have it.”

II

The last photograph on the mantel is a relatively recent photograph of Mrs. Johnson herself, holding a copy of Beyond Racism, a book by her former pupil, the late Whitney Young, Jr., former executive director of the National Urban League.

“I was born February 5, 1904, in Bronson Hospital, which was quite unusual in those days.

“My mother and my father lived on Michigan Avenue; there was a row of houses and mainly colored people lived there. We didn’t live there much after I was born. We lived with my grandfather on Pioneer. I suppose he had about ten or fifteen acres. It was quite a little bit, because in the early days he used to farm there—he raised corn and had a nice big garden. He had a barn and a barnyard, and kept his teams on the property.”

Property records show that Forrest Hill had owned property on Gardiner Street before buying the property on Pioneer, in a previously all-white neighborhood. “When they first came in from the country he bought over there, but it wasn’t a neighborhood he cared for, so he sold it and bought the other property. He saw this property he wanted, and it happened to be owned by a very liberal-minded person, Homer Brundage. That acreage was fine. While Grandpa was negotiating for it, some white people in the area found out about it and they protested to Mr. Brundage, and he said, ‘Forrest Hill is a very fine man and I can’t see any reason why he shouldn’t buy
here just as well as any other place in town, and as long as he's the kind of man he is, and has the money, I'm going to sell it to him.' The Brundages were very outstanding people in town, and he would do about everything that he wanted to do. So Grandpa got that property. And I remember as a little girl, many white neighbors never spoke to us at all, never acted as though we were alive. And Grandpa had kind of a missionary spirit and tried to convince other Negroes to buy in that area. He saw it as a kind of integration, you see. And a few other Negroes did buy near there. I remember about five or six families bought up on Bronson Boulevard. [Whites] called it nigger heaven. But as time went by, those folks made a lot of money off that property."

Soon after Pauline moved into her grandparents' home, a pattern of spending a great deal of time alone throughout her life began to develop. As a young child, the death of her brother and playmate, Ogden, contributed to her solitariness. "My brother died when he was about seven, so I must have been about four or five. It was lonesome when he wasn't there because we used to play hide-and-seek, hop-scotch, and tag. Those were my favorites. I loved to play tag because you had to run so fast. Active games are what we liked to do. After he was gone I didn't have any kids to play with; white children didn't play with colored, so I was pretty much alone. We exchanged visits once in a while with the Pettifords, a Negro family who lived on Balch Street, but in general I was alone.

"Some of my first memories, of course, are very happy ones. I was a much-cherished child, and I was the child there, so I got all kinds of love. I remember so many things it would be hard to tell one, I guess. My grandfather had a gorgeous voice, a sweet bass voice, and he loved to sing and he loved nursery rhymes and things that would amuse me. He would sing to me every night—he would sing and do things with me on his knee, and ride me on his shoulders.

"Oh, such happy memories," said Mrs. Johnson, clapping her hands with delight, and recalling one of the rhymes:

"Higglety-pigglety, my fat hen,
She lays eggs for gentlemen.
Sometimes nine and sometimes ten.
Higglety-pigglety, my fat hen."

Her hands moved with the rhythm, and she stopped, silent for a moment before continuing. "I can hear his voice—I sound like a squeaky mouse. I was once so well-versed in nursery rhymes that I could almost have written a book just from memory.

"And I told you about the slave stories. I was with my Grandma Bradley a great deal; she lived in that little house [on the Hills' prop-
tery]. She told me stories and she had beautiful long hair and she let me comb her hair and do things that a child thinks are very nice. But in all those years she would tell me stories about slavery and when she was younger. Many of her stories were about escaping slaves and the way slaves were treated and about masters and their relation to slaves, and stories she had heard about coming to this country from Africa. There were many stories like that, and about being brave and courageous. An uncle, a brother of hers, I guess, decided he wasn’t going to be a slave. He was with real unkind slave-holders, not George Bradley. Uncle Isaac ran away and his masters chased him, of course, and he hid in a swamp. I think she was telling me that to make me brave and able to endure things. He stayed in that swamp all winter, for several months, because they were so determined to catch him that they never relaxed their vigilance. Uncle Isaac would have to go under water and just come up for a breath over a period of time. And of course they would leave and he would hunt around to get anything to eat—unthinkable things to eat. But he survived for several months in that cold, terrible place. Finally they let up a little and he got away, and he got to a free Negro’s cabin and that was the first decent food he had. They dried his clothes and gave him other rags to wear, but most of all, they gave him food. And that man made it and got to the North and got free. She was so proud of him—Uncle Isaac; all these years and I wouldn’t remember that story if she hadn’t told it so many times and emphasized his courage.” Mrs. Johnson’s voice dropped at the end of the story, considering its impact for a moment. “Oh, she talked about people like that, and about trusting God and not hating people that were cruel to you—that always seemed hard.” Again, her voice dropped a moment.

“I always remember that she never talked to me without emphasizing the importance of an education. I must learn. The only salvation for Negroes in America was education, was learning, and if I learned things nothing could make me a slave. Nothing could ever be taken from me if I put it into my mind. I could have gold and jewelry and stuff to put in my pocket, but anybody could take it. If you get treasures in your mind, that’s yours. Oh my heavens, that was almost a daily discussion from her, although she never had a chance to learn and never learned to read and write. She painted it as the biggest ideal to live for. And [she emphasized the need] for her race, for Negroes, to learn. My goodness, I never knew anyone who emphasized learning as much as she did.

“And I’ve had pets all my life. My grandfather raised hunting dogs. I’ll always remember—I had to be very small—his favorite dog was
Rosie, and Rosie was just a little dog. I had braids, and she and I would play on the ground and Rosie would take hold of my braids and pull me onto the grass."Laughing heartily, Mrs. Johnson recalled the scene with obvious delight. "She was a lot of fun, and a very good hunting dog."

Mrs. Johnson rose from her chair suddenly and walked over to pick up the cat, which had apparently been batting playfully at an object not intended for play. "You bad cat! Sometimes I wonder why I ever took you in. I'm going to have to put you outside for a while." Turning to me and fondly scratching Tuffy's ears, she said, "This cat has destroyed some very fine pieces of mine—excuse me for a minute, please."

With that task accomplished, Mrs. Johnson relaxed back into her chair and continued. "One of the reasons that I take such good care of animals is because of my grandfather. He had horses, and no matter how hard he worked and how tired and hungry he would be, he'd curry his horses and feed and water them before he would go and clean up and get some food himself. Somebody asked him about it once and he said, 'Well, when you're not hungry yourself you forget how it feels to be hungry, and the horses can't do anything about it unless I take care of them.' The same with his dogs—they were taken care of. I'll always have that in my consciousness—I am responsible for helping creatures and if I don't take care of them, I am being cruel and selfish when I should be generous. I notice that's about the first thing I do in the morning—a lot of times I don't have time for breakfast. But they always have breakfast, and supper, too."

Again we were disturbed, but this time by the telephone, and I casually picked up a copy of Ashley Montagu's *The Natural Superiority of Women* lying on a nearby table. The inside cover is inscribed with Mrs. Johnson's name and the words, "The owner could have told the author this fact and saved his effort. But—boys will be boys!—as we know!" written in her own hand. I idly wondered about the words a moment, but when the phone conversation was over, decided to pursue Mrs. Johnson's childhood further.

"Well, I do have all that in my background, which was fun and pleasant. And my family prepared me for school by telling me how it was such a desirable opportunity." She recalled some instruction: "I must be a good girl and do my part and everything would be fine. And I did. But I think to the day of my death I will remember my first day of school. When I came home I walked with a little girl who lived about three blocks down the street and around the corner. We liked each other and she insisted that I stay and play a while. Her mother wasn't home and we had a wonderful time. I can just feel the
wonderful time it was that we had. I remember we played hide-and-go-seek—I had hidden under the bed and gotten totally covered with dust. I thought that was funny. But anyway, in the midst of our games an older brother came home and we ran downstairs to meet him. He didn't say anything to me and I had a funny feeling, so I went back up and waited for Sylvia to come. But I heard him say in a very insulting tone, 'What's she doing here?' Well, I could see something was wrong, and when Sylvia came up she said, 'Well, I can't play any longer, I have to do some work.' So I went home. The next morning when I came along, her brother and this girl and an older sister were leaving the house. No one spoke, and they showed me that I wasn't welcome. Well, that was the most shocking, terrible experience, and when she was away from them in school she said, 'I can't be friends with you anymore. We don't associate with people like you.' And that was my first glimpse of a different world. It was a shocking, terrible experience because I hadn't done anything wrong that I knew of. I could write a book about that one experience. The embarrassment. The humiliation. The wonder... and I guess fear that entered into it. And the dramatic contrast. We were just crazy about each other and laughing and giggling and having so much fun and then it immediately changed.” Remembering the incident seemed to sadden Mrs. Johnson, and she tapped her chair while trying to think of what to say next.

Pauline Byrd, who carried the nickname Polly throughout her youth, attended Kalamazoo’s Vine Street School through the eighth grade, and graduated from Central High School in 1922. During the vast majority of those years, she was the only black in any of her classes. Approximately two percent of Kalamazoo’s population was black at that time, though it was not yet heavily concentrated on the city’s north side. But because of the neighborhood in which she lived, she was the only black in her elementary classes. High school education for blacks was still considered to be a superfluous oddity, apparently by both the white and black populations, so she was the only black in her high school graduating class. It was a time when most whites had not yet learned, or did not feel compelled, to be subtle about their racism. Mrs. Johnson recollects her school experiences during those days with much more sorrow than indignation.

“A lot of the children called me ‘nigger’ and ‘coon’ and ‘darkie,’ and the popular ‘black’ today was an insult then. Some wouldn’t take hold of my hand if we played a game in a circle because they thought I was dirty. Usually I wasn’t chosen for things, although I was a very good player. Very active and so on. But I usually was not chosen until last. And I was very ambitious—we had spell-downs and as a rule I was one
of the last ones up. But the teacher would choose captains to choose sides and always I was the last chosen. I was a good speller but they didn’t want me. And for a little child I can’t tell you how hurtful those things are. And then I would talk about it at home and my family would always give me encouragement and tell me to try again. If I would be better, well, people would have to be nice to me. That was hard to believe when you’re little.

“[I]’m so thankful that my family was not the kind that would teach me to be resentful and vindictive. One of the things my grandfather said that I’ll never forget is, ‘If they call you a nigger,’ (and he explained what nigger meant—an inferior, backwards, dishonest person), ‘that doesn’t mean that’s true, unless you do these things. So now, Pauline, the thing for you to do is to conduct yourself in such a way that you prove that they’re wrong.’ I never at any time was taught, ‘Well, call them a bad name back’—I better not do that, no. In fact, I didn’t know any bad words anyway. I remember I came home one day feeling very self-important and said ‘doggone it,’ and my grandfather said to me, very seriously, ‘Young lady, we don’t talk like that in this house.’ The worst I ever heard in my own home was ‘poor white trash,’ and they weren’t saying that as a name to call somebody. They would say, ‘Well, I wouldn’t worry about so-and-so doing that to you; if he were a fine person he wouldn’t. He must be of the poor white trash class.’ I’m glad I was raised with a sense of balance. I must do my part and be a decent person and be superior to the accusations that were being made.

“I was told, and I found out later that it was true, that white people believe that all Negro women were immoral and indecent and open to any kind of misconduct. They said, ‘Always be friendly and nice but keep white men at a distance. Don’t get familiar and don’t get too friendly, because you don’t know what they are thinking.’ And I have thought many times, I wish they had told me about Negro men, too.” Throwing her head back in laughter, Mrs. Johnson said, “Now there was prejudice.” A moment later, she took a more serious tone of voice again: “Yes, I must keep my moral conduct above suspicion, and I’m grateful for that. If I’m a lady and conduct myself properly, a man has to do so.”

The emphasis Mrs. Johnson’s family placed upon her individual responsibility for the actions and attitudes others take toward her has been a major influence throughout her life. She was taught that obstacles such as racism and sexism must be confronted almost exclusively on an individual level, and they were not to be used, even in the remotest sense, as an explanation or excuse for failure and disap-
pointment. If she only tried harder, success was bound to come. Such an attitude seems somewhat alien in a contemporary setting that has seen, and to a certain degree incorporated the view of, movements that seek to address racism and sexism on a broader, more collective level. But Mrs. Johnson's confidence in the power of the individual, and her family's sense of propriety and class, have been the source of much strength and success; in recent years, it has also been the source of serious disagreement between herself and other members of the local black community. For the young Pauline Byrd, her family's attitudes must have created a heavy burden, because no matter how hard she worked to gain acceptance and approval, she was impeded by racism. It was impossible to fulfill the responsibility that had been placed upon her. Mrs. Johnson does, however, acknowledge the racism she encountered as a child, and relates her childhood experiences to many of her current views.

"I have a theory that I've been thinking about lately. When you're treated unkindly yourself, it either makes you weak and unkind and vacillating, or you see the evil of it and it makes you the opposite. I believe the opposite struck me. I had known nothing but injustice all through school. Sitting in class and putting up my hand and not being called on or not being given a chance until everybody else had. Not being a part of activities—I'm mad about dramatics and we were going to have a play and I wanted to be in it. But one girl said," Mrs. Johnson wrinkled her nose and raised her voice to convey the attitude, "'They never had colored fairies. They wouldn't think such a thing.' The teacher went along with her and they wouldn't let me do one single thing.

"But I had wonderful support at home—people whose ideals were high and whose convictions were really superior. First of all, I had to be a good girl. I must be obedient and respectful. I must do my part; if I have an assignment I must do it. On top of that, with us there was always the Christian principle of loving and forgiving, and the golden rule, do unto others as you would have them do unto you. All those things were a part of my life, of my daily teachings.

"Then when I went to school and had difficult problems and I would come home and talk about them, they were always loving and understanding and kind, but they would say, 'We're with you if you're telling the truth, if you're doing all that you possibly can. But you have to prove that you are right.' And Mother would go down to the school and intelligently ask what was wrong, what was going on, and get the facts. I always knew that she loved and trusted me, but I wouldn't have dared to lie and say something that I knew wasn't true. Then after
they were convinced that I was right, my mother or grandfather and grandmother would discuss it. 'What has happened is not right. But you have to learn as you go through life that many, many times things happen that are not right and you know they're not, but that doesn't excuse us for being unladylike or dishonest or telling a lie about it. We have got to hold our head up and be above the people and the circumstances we are facing.' That was hard for a child, but thank God, that's the way I was taught.

But, on at least one occasion, Forrest Hill's patience was pushed to the limit, and he took more direct action when his temper took control. Mrs. Johnson recalled the incident, which seems to be one of her favorite stories about Hill. "I was about in the seventh or eighth grade when a boy started being unkind and pushing me and pulling my hair and doing all those things, and I had complained about it at home a number of times. At last Grandpa said, 'Well, I've heard enough of this.' And this was a rich boy in town. Anyway, Grandpa hitched up his horses and went over to his house. In those days it wasn't customary for Negroes to go to the front door of a rich white man. But Grandpa went up to the front door and knocked and this boy's father came, and [Grandpa Hill] told who he was and why he had come: 'You have a young son the same age as my granddaughter and he has started being very annoying and I just wanted to tell you about it so that you can have him stop.' [The man replied], 'Well, I don't know what I can do about it.' Well, Grandpa was a big, tall, stately, powerful man and he said, 'Well, I thought I would talk to you first and give you a chance to correct your son because he has touched my granddaughter for the last time. If he ever does one thing to her again, I will take these hands and break every bone in his body.' All the time he was staring into that man's face." Mrs. Johnson's voice grew louder while telling the story, and she lifted clenched hands in order to communicate her grandfather's anger fully. Then she began to laugh a bit. The boy's father replied, "'Well, all right, Mr. Hill, I think we can take care of it.' And this boy changed entirely and that ended it.

"Grandpa would not only have beaten up the boy if that had gone on, but his father too. He would have. I've heard him say many times, 'You must always give white people a chance—talk to them, explain, make things clear. And I try, but if they don't understand, one of the best ways to educate a white man is with this!'" Mrs. Johnson slammed a fist into her open palm, and one could only wonder how many times, and how effectively, Forrest Hill resorted to his last tactic.

Encountering racism at school must have been particularly frustrating for Pauline Byrd. While pursuing what was to become a life-
long love and profession, education, she was confronted daily with attitudes and obstacles that militated against learning, and implied that she could not, or should not, attempt to gain an education. "They taught things in the schools much as they do now, only more seriously: reading, writing, arithmetic, spelling, drawing, and music. We had a little, but not too much, formal physical education. And I'll always remember a fifth grade literature teacher who was nice to me. She was probably only civil, but I thought she was wonderful because she recognized me and let me read to the class and let me do things that the other teachers wouldn't. Once in a while you'd get a teacher who was fair and decent, but in general. . . ." Mrs. Johnson's voice faded away as she considered what else to say. "One of the things I hated most, but that other children loved, was when we took a trip someplace. We'd go to visit a fire station or the library. I always had to walk alone and I never had a teacher who saw to it that I had some kind of companion. I hated the days for trips more than anything else, and I always wished that I could be out of school. But we weren't the kind where the kids stayed out of school. I didn't talk about stuff like this at home; I always felt kind of embarrassed so I kept it to myself. And I never yet had a teacher who scolded or questioned a child who called me a nigger. My mother or grandmother would say, 'Well, tell your teacher that John does that to you all the time.' As a rule, the teacher would just look off and ignore me. What she was doing, I as an adult can see, was saying, 'Well, you are a nigger.' She never saw it from my point of view.

"I have to be honest; gradually I always made some friends. I would have to—I was always friendly and outgoing and so on. But it always took time and effort, and many times there would be unpleasant reversals. We would be going along nicely and then their parents might find it out—'You don't associate with nigger people.' That's why I was a good reader. I had to do something to pass the time and I liked to read anyway, so when the kids wouldn't play with me after school—and in school too—I always had a book.

"But I always dreamed of having friends, of having fun, of having a good time, and not always having it held against me because of my race. My folks always said, 'If you behave yourself you will have friends and the teachers will be nice to you.' And there was a long time that I really thought I was bad, and had done something that I didn't realize, because people treated me as they did. I thought I was a bad girl, and I tried so hard not to be. So I was always hoping to be accepted."

In addition to attending school, church was a very important part of Pauline Byrd's early life. Her family were members of Allen Chapel, the local African Methodist Episcopal church. But that situation
changed early in her life, and she and her mother became Christian Scientists, a circumstance that was to remove her somewhat from the local black community, as did her education in later years.

"I was about in the third grade, I think, when I came home from school sick. I was real sick. Mother got our doctor and it turned out that I had a serious form of heart trouble—leakage of the heart. So I was put into bed and taken care of. That was in the fall, and I never got out of bed, I never did anything, until spring. In the meantime, one of mother's clients was in Christian Science, and she, caring about this sick child, told Mother that Christian Science could cure her. Well, Mother thought it sounded nice but we'd always had a good family doctor and she wasn't going to experiment with me. The diagnosis was very serious and he had had a consultation with other doctors. I could never be active again if I lived; the chances were that I wouldn't live. That was kind of a terrible sentence. I think it was in May or June that the doctor decided he would take a short vacation. [Mother's client] said to Mother, 'Now that your family doctor is away, why don't you take this opportunity to try Christian Science?' Mother didn't think much of it, but there was no hope for me and I hadn't improved, so she reluctantly went to the Christian Science practitioner. And she has often said that in all those months that was the only time that anything encouraging was said to her. So the [practitioner] told her what one would have to do if one were to have Christian Science help—that it depended on prayer and trust in God and so forth. Mother was impressed but she said, 'Pauline has to have a certain pill to keep her alive. Otherwise she'll die. I think I will try it but she has to have that pill.' And the lady said, 'Well, I'm sorry, but you can't have Christian Science and medical help.' Then she quoted from the Bible, 'Ye cannot serve God and mammon.' You can't have both. So the interview was completed and something made Mother say, 'Well, I guess I will try Christian Science. I will go home and get rid of the medicine if you will pray for her.' So the woman took the case and Mother went home, and—I've heard her tell it many times—she had a whole dishpan full of medicines and she took it and put it down the toilet. Well, the next day I was up out of bed and in a day or so I was active. When the doctor came back in a week or ten days, I was away from home roller skating. [The doctor] almost had a heart attack himself.

"I would have graduated a year earlier except that I was in bed so long."

Returning to school, Pauline returned to all her old problems. "I had a teacher who was unkind to me, consistently unkind to me, and it looked as though I could never get rid of her. When I left one grade she
Pauline Byrd Johnson was transferred to another, and I finally had her again in high school. Well, one day after I had finished school I met her on the street. Her specialty was arithmetic and I was very poor in arithmetic—I've always thought it was because I was so desperately afraid of her that I never understood what it was that she wanted me to do. As we talked on the street that day I said something about being poor in arithmetic and always wishing I could understand. She said, 'All Negroes are poor in arithmetic; they simply don't know how to do it.' And thank goodness I was smart enough to say, 'That isn't true. My father is colored and he was an expert with figures and worked with the Singer Sewing Machine Company as an accountant. So all Negroes aren't poor in arithmetic.' I'm awfully glad I said that to her, because by this time I was beginning to realize that many white people were accusing us of things that they didn't know anything about. That's one of those tiny victories that mean a lot to a person.

Pauline's knowledge about her father's profession had probably been acquired during a visit with her father and his wife in Gary, Indiana, at the age of thirteen. "He and his wife invited me to be a guest in their home for several days. My mother wanted me to go; she thought it was important that I do so. He was tall and dignified looking and clean and well-dressed, that's all. He had gray eyes, I remember that, and a serious face. He was very friendly, and kind of pleasant, as I think about it. Some friend of his spoke about me being about the age where I would be going with boys, and I do remember my father having a twinkle in his eye and saying, 'Well, they'll have to come by me if they go with her.' And I thought that was kind of funny because I wasn't around him. Evidently he had kind of a sense of humor, but that's about the only thing that I do remember.

"It wasn't long after I met him that he died—three or four years, I imagine. He was my father but I had never sat in his lap and heard stories or played games, so when I was told he was very ill and was going to die, I wasn't moved by that. Why would I be affected by the death of a man that I just knew was my father?"

Perhaps Mrs. Johnson wanted to change the subject, because she rose to fix us a cup of coffee. "But," she said, "it may not be very good because I brewed it, and I hardly ever brew coffee anymore. Do you take sugar?" I shook my head. "Well, I didn't think that you would." Upon returning, she once again began discussing school.

"I remember in history we had teachers telling us about slavery and saying, well, there was nothing so bad about it. It was just that the Negroes had to do the work and they would come home at night and play their banjos and dance and have a lot of fun. Well, Grandma
Bradley never gave me that impression; she told about people being worked almost beyond endurance. That was her version of it. Well, naturally in those days I didn’t know—here was an illiterate slave woman telling one thing, and educated white teachers saying another. I wasn’t sure who to believe, until I got old enough to realize that the actual facts about slavery were never told. Still haven’t been. We just didn’t exist—people weren’t proud of keeping records of slaves. It was just a part of the atmosphere at the time. You didn’t write about people that didn’t exist. Negroes weren’t even considered human beings. A slave owner as a matter of business would keep records of names and so on. But as far as writing about them, that wasn’t done. And during the [Civil] War the exploits of black soldiers were touched very lightly because they didn’t exist as human beings. And as time went on, that grew to be a social attitude, that you just ignored Negroes. But most people don’t realize that.

Early in Pauline’s high school career, her mother bought a house on Millview Avenue, in the Westnedge Hill neighborhood. Again, they were living in an all-white area, partially motivated to integrate the neighborhood somewhat. “It was a very lovely little place; it took some courage to live there because many neighbors didn’t want us there and never spoke to us. There were some English people that lived next door to us and they were nice. People from Europe didn’t have the same race consciousness about our inferiority. We’ve always been friends with those people—that made life easy; they were lovely. Some Dutch people moved into the house west of us and after a while they were very friendly. We were very quiet, orderly people—church-going, did washing on Monday and all the things that people were supposed to do. The people in the next house up, they were very nice. Down the hill from us, those people said, referring to us, ‘Hasn’t our street been disgraced enough?’ There were colored people who thought it was terrible that we lived in a neighborhood like that.

“I walked to school every day; that was a wonderful experience. I walked up the hill and down the street to Central. And then when I went to Kalamazoo College I walked, as a rule. I walked because streetcar fare was expensive—you could buy a lot with that money, so as a rule, I did that walking. And that’s one reason I was so vigorous and strong then.”

Pauline had been trained well in the practice of thrift and economy. Care with money was emphasized by her family, and the thrift that made it possible for her mother to purchase a home made a strong impression on Pauline. “My mother was the best-organized, smartest woman I ever knew. Once a week, Saturday night, we would sit down
at the kitchen table. She always had me sit there, and she would empty out the money that she had made that week. And she would put aside a little pile—'This we save for taxes.' We burned coal, and Mother would get hard coal, which was more expensive, because it would keep the house cleaner. In order to do that, she would have to order coal in the summer. [She would make other piles]—'And this is for our fuel ... And this is for food ... And this is for clothing ... And this is for church ... And then the last one, if there was any left—'And this is for Pauline's education.' She had six or seven piles. Every week of her life she put money aside for those purposes. Now if, after she felt she had made a reasonable division, she had some left over, then we could walk downtown and see a show. You see, the theatre was very inexpensive and if we walked, we could do it. That is the way I learned how to save. She was always very careful. She never said we were poor—a lot of people would say how poor we were; she didn’t have that attitude. You just take what you have and use it wisely. I remember our nightclothes she would make out of inexpensive cotton cloth, or my grandmother would do it. [Mother] said, 'If I can get something together for under a dollar we'll be just as comfortable as ... ladies with silk nightclothes. We just might not look as fancy.'

"We read together and played. We didn't play too many games, but we would take walks. If we had the magnificent sum of fifty cents we might go to a movie. And the distance we walked, we thought nothing of it. In order to do things you have to make an effort; we never even thought about it. There were streetcars, too, but you saved ten cents if you walked. That was part of our life, to save, to do without when you could. That woman was wonderful to pay for that house. And when I went to Kalamazoo College people couldn’t believe that I could go there. Mother had that money all saved and it's only because she worked toward it little by little. But when you only have a little it always adds up."

At that time, high school education was still considered an oddity by many blacks in the community because it simply wasn’t a useful commodity in terms of the jobs that were available. "The jobs were all menial. That’s why it was so unusual for my grandfather to build roads and streets and things like that. That was quite unusual. There wasn’t a single Negro in Kalamazoo employed to do anything but menial work—household jobs, cooks, and waitresses, maids, washerwomen. And the men would have table-waiting jobs, janitor jobs.

"I had lots of jobs. I took care of kids; I stayed with them evenings when their parents were out. I did a lot of baby-sitting; I don't think I ever did much else. But I always had more work than I could handle.
I actually got so good that they paid me fifty cents an hour, and that was wonderful. One woman liked me; she was crazy about me and wanted me with her children because I spoke beautiful English and was good with kids. I would play games with them and tell them stories. So she was discussing me with my mother, who did her hair. She said, 'Pauline is so wonderful with children. She ought to do something along that line. She ought to learn to be a good housemaid and a good nurse so she can always take care of children.' Now, you see, as smart a girl as I was, she still couldn't see me as anything except a servant. And she was interested—she wanted me to go on and be a good servant and get a good place in life.

"In those days Negroes didn't go to high school. That was almost like going to college. They would say, 'There's no sense in going to high school—what do you want to go with those white people for? You don't need a high school education to be a maid or a cook. Why do you do that?'"

Dolly Brown Davis, another life-long friend, confirmed that assessment. "I guess I didn't think too much about Pauline going to school, but some folks thought it was pretty strange. But it's what she wanted to do and it's what her mother wanted her to do, so I didn't think much about it. That's just the way it was. She was real nice and friendly and very studious. Her mother was anxious for her to get an education."

Judge Pratt recalled, "Mrs. Johnson was always well-dressed, well-groomed, dignified, and well-spoken. Her family was prideful of their position and justifiably so. They always did what they were supposed to do in order to be good citizens. I've known Mrs. Johnson as long as I can remember, and she was raised as a lady. There were right things and wrong things, and you did the right things. Education was important and her mother wanted to make sure she got an education. That was one of the right things. She was the only black in her class. There just wasn't much reason to go to school. There was nothing for Negroes to do—there was no outlook and no opportunity. But there were always a few who would go out and accept the challenge. And I remember that she played the piano and sang beautifully. She was a real lady—there aren't many of them around anymore."

Other friends from that time remember Pauline Byrd as a stunningly beautiful young woman whose sense of humor helped her survive, a delightful person and a good conversationalist with great charm. "I never thought of her as different from anyone else," said Katherine Dukette Rogers, a friend since they were in fourth grade together. "But she wasn't among those you invited to your home. I don't suppose any of us thought about it back then."
The Central High School Delphian of 1922 bears testament to Pauline Byrd's exclusion from activities throughout high school. She is among the few members of the senior class with no activities listed beside her photograph. "I wasn't expected to participate and I wasn't permitted to, and by that time I became proud enough that I wouldn't push myself where I wasn't wanted. I had been rejected enough by then that I simply said, 'I'm not going to ask and I know they don't want me.' But," she said with an amused smile, "I think it's too bad that I wasn't in the Glee Club."

"We had Latin and algebra, which I hated—we had that mean teacher I had way down in the grades and that made it difficult, because she hated colored people and she knew I couldn't learn... You can't learn with an attitude like that working against you... but I made it. And we had English and history and physical education, which I loved. I had two years of French and I loved that. Geometry was hard, and chemistry. I foolishly took a millinery class, because I can't thread a needle. I didn't want it but I took it for some reason; that was a waste of time. I'm not gifted at all in handwork. Cooking I liked; that was interesting—easy, you know. English and history were my favorites."

In addition to occupying herself with studies and work, Pauline Byrd also had piano and voice lessons through a large portion of her youth. During World War One, the Frederick Douglass Community Center for Negroes was established, and she spent a large amount of energy and time in activities around the Center. "My grandfather was one of the founders of [Douglass Center]. Negro soldiers would come into town from Camp Custer and they had no place to go. They stood around on street corners and got into trouble—they couldn't go to church all the time. A few people like Grandpa thought there should be a place for these boys to eat and visit and have a little social life. Several [people] got together and they rented some rooms on North Burdick Street, and they hired a woman to be in charge, and they had activities for those boys, and then she did things for the rest of the community. And then they got some money from the city and built a building and expanded. Kids could go and play games and stuff, and they had dances and games and plays and drama. It was a very nice place."

Although Mrs. Johnson attempts to put a good face on her high school years, she does acknowledge some anger. "I had to [get angry]. A girl in our class had some pictures the other day [at the class's sixtieth reunion]... evidently I had given one to her. But there's an expression on that face that I don't like; it's a happy, enthusiastic face but the eyes say something very unpleasant, and I think that tells a great deal, quite a lot. I don't remember what I was angry about one time [at the age of
sixteen]; I think it was some injustice, which bothers me a great deal. I tried not to let those things penetrate and most of them I cast off. [But] one incident, I remember, made me so furious and angry, but I don't know why, and the consequences of that anger influenced my whole life. I went home and got sick. I had a backache that almost killed me—I went to bed and stayed in bed for three days, suffering in pain. Well now, I always use my head; I said to myself, 'Now look here, you got angry at what somebody did to you. It didn't hurt them a bit; it made you sick. Now are you going to let other people make you suffer like that for the mean things they do?' And the answer was, 'No, this is the end. I’ll never let anyone affect me this way again.' And I don’t think anyone ever has, and I’ve had some bitter experience. But always I have tempered experience with the truth, the good that I know about people, and I never allowed myself to lose my poise and balance. So that’s why I say that experience largely controlled my life. And once in a while people have said that I’m too easy-going or I’m not smart enough to know when people are being insulting. Well, you know, that’s not the answer. It’s that I understand what is making you horrid, and I’m not going to let that control me. I’m not going to let injustice or greed or selfishness or prejudice affect me. When you have control of yourself you have control of the world; the world can’t bother you.” Gazing at me steadily, Mrs. Johnson smiled, and a little bit of a laugh entered her voice. “You might not believe that, but if you live long enough you will. I’m always right.”

“You see, in the very depths of hell if you have a vision of goodness and beauty and loveliness, you see beyond where you are and that is true in my case. In tenth grade I was feeling pretty downcast and this teacher gave us an assignment to study and memorize the Declaration of Independence and the Preamble to the Constitution—‘We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal...’ And then there was another passage about life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Now this thing amazed me because it said what my folks had said, but in a different way. I think there was a time when I wondered if my family was telling the truth when they said if you were a good person you wouldn’t have any problems, though I think there was probably a basic conviction on my part that they were right. And it was [after the memorization exercise] that I said to myself, ‘I believe this. This is the basic doctrine of what America says. It’s what I’ve been told all the time and I believe it. I love this and I’m always going to support it.’ And I always have, and I’m not kidding—I’m dead serious. People often say that when folks don’t know what else to do, they become patriotic. Well, that isn’t true in my case. I’m patriotic because I believe in what the best side of America is.”
Pauline Byrd in 1922, the year she entered Kalamazoo College
In pursuit of her goals and ideals and those of her family, Pauline Byrd entered Kalamazoo College in the fall of 1922. "I didn't want to go—I had no desire to go to Kalamazoo College. We had saved all my life for me to go to college and I had never had any fun in school because I was ostracized socially, and I am a fun-loving person. I wasn't invited to be in any of the clubs, and there were some for bright students, and I was always excluded. All that stuff hurt very much and my intention was, when I got out of high school, to go south to a colored school where I could not only get an education, but also have some fun. That was my intention. Well, as the time drew near for me to graduate and we were talking about it I said I would like to go to Howard University. I didn't know if I could go there—I knew it would be expensive. When I expressed a desire to go south for school, my mother said, 'No, that isn't the thing to do.' I remember I was angry and hurt and disappointed. She said, 'You live in a white man's world. It's important for you to learn to think and act and talk and do everything with white people. If you go south to a colored school you're going to be separating yourself from the general population. That is segregation and it's the thing we have always tried to work against.'

"Well, it was lovingly said, but it was like having a dagger in my heart, because I was so hurt and disappointed. I guess I've indicated that my mother was head—her word was law. In those days kids like me didn't argue, but I was really disappointed. I never said anything, but inside I was angry for a long time, about a year, I think. Negroes weren't able to do the work at Kalamazoo College, that was generally accepted, and my mother never thought that was a reasonable thing. I had gone all through school with white kids and had high grades; why couldn't I go there? And if I just pushed a little bit, I could do that. Well, naturally I have that attitude of not having people ahead of me, so I had to work hard. It was a matter of establishing myself and making the adjustments, which was not an easy job."

"Pauline's mother was anxious for her to do really well," said Dolly Brown Davis. "Girls didn't go to college back then—there weren't many jobs. You had to be a teacher, and if you were colored you had to go south, or find a colored school. Some men went to college, but if you were a woman, mostly you had to keep house. You couldn't even really find a job unless you knew shorthand, and my father said it was a bad idea for a colored woman to work in an office. There just wasn't any future in getting an education."

In the fall of 1922, when Pauline Byrd entered Kalamazoo College,
the school's total enrollment was 377 students, and the College had only five buildings—Bowen Hall, Stockbridge House, Williams Hall, Ladies Hall, and a gymnasium. Mirror Lake, at the bottom of the hill, had not yet been filled in. Plans were underway for the construction of Mary Trowbridge House, which would be completed in 1926. Several clubs and literary societies existed, as did six varsity sports for men. The faculty numbered twenty-two, including President Emeritus Herbert Stetson, who taught education, and President Allan Hoben. Pauline's first year at the College was also Hoben's. Stetson was president when she was admitted as the only black in an entering class of 152 students, and the first black ever to attend Kalamazoo College.

“In those days we had a personal interview with the president before we were admitted; Dr. Stetson interviewed every single student. I still remember the look of consternation and surprise on his face when I came in. Evidently he hadn't been told about me. But I passed the interview successfully, and I remember turning around at the door to say something that I had forgotten or wanted to say. And that look of surprise and amazement—I'm sure he was shocked at what he had just done—letting a Negro into the College. But he was a perfect gentleman and couldn't have done much else.” Mrs. Johnson dropped her jaw and opened her eyes as wide as they go, imitating the expression she had caught upon Stetson's face when he thought the interview was completed. She broke out laughing, and finally was silent for a moment.

“Dr. Stetson taught education and psychology, so I had him quite a lot. He was a wonderful man and I'll always remember—I think he told it himself—that for thirteen years he was never without pain for a minute. You'd never suspect it; he kept up his work. Part of that time he was president. When I think of all the people who are always talking about their aches and pains, it's nothing compared to what that man went through. And he was a brilliant man; he was beautifully educated. It's an honor and a privilege to have known him, I think. And I learned so much [from him] about seeing the good in people no matter how they treated me—seeing what they stood for aside from the race issue. To me that's important. Naturally you'd prefer that they accept you as a human being, but as long as that isn't likely, then you pick out the good and let the other go.

“[Dr. Hoben] would have chapel once in a while and I always remember one of his chapels made such an impression on me: We were in this world to help each other, not necessarily ourselves. He went on down the line. [For example], if you have good legs, it's so you can
run errands and do things for those who do not—who can’t walk or who
have no legs. He was a man of high ideals."

During her years at Kalamazoo College, Pauline Byrd worked on the
Index and the Boiling Pot, and was a member of Alpha Sigma Delta,
a women’s literary society. “We began to appreciate that Pauline had
real talent as a writer,” said Shirley Payne Lowe, a classmate of Pauline’s
at both Kalamazoo College and Central High School. “We got her
involved with work on the Index staff and as associate editor of the
Boiling Pot. We valued what she produced for us. I am sure that a
number of us really believed that we were making Pauline very much
a part of our lives. I know now that we could, and should, have in­
volved Pauline much more in our personal lives, not only to give her
a sense of belonging, but to enrich our own understanding of people
different races, cultures, religions, and other separating forces we
encounter in our lives.”

Mrs. Johnson continued, “I wasn’t expected to do social things; I
was just automatically excluded. I was crazy about athletics and such,
but by that time I had been ignored so much that I didn’t even bother
to go to the games. So I went to very few things of that sort. It was a
matter of going to college and going to work.” Referring to her work
on College publications, she said, with a smile, “You see, it was hard
to eliminate somebody as good as I was. It’s interesting that some of the
kids who were head of [the Index] didn’t want me on, and never
called me into staff or general meetings unless they just had to. So even
with [the Index], whatever I did was mostly individual work. The
same is true of the yearbook—the meetings to carry on the work—I was
just automatically excluded.”

“It’s not surprising that Pauline would remember things that way,”
said Katherine Rogers. “That could well have been the case.”

The isolation and aloneness that Pauline Byrd had experienced
throughout her life continued in her activities at Kalamazoo College.
They also became increasingly characteristic of her life away from the
College, as the distance between herself and other members of the
black community began to grow.

“I remember one little thing... We had chapel every day and once
a week the students conducted chapel. Anyway, the boys sat on one
side and the girls sat on the other, and when we came to the aisle to
march out we would walk with the person we met on that side. Well,
some of those boys, when we would meet, wouldn’t walk with me, and
I would have to walk out alone. That’s just a little thing, but it was hard.
And some kids never spoke; there was that attitude. And then there
were people who would be friendly [on campus] but not if you met
them downtown. A few were the same everywhere, and those girls were way outside of the social setting in which they lived."

"The gap between me and my own race also began to grow. It was considered out of place and silly and stupid to go on in school. And if you're not willing to be a lone wolf, you better go along with people. So I studied every night—there were no social things at the College for me. Once in a while there would be a dance or something at the Methodist church or the Douglass Community Center, and I would go to those. But my life was very limited and very narrow socially. As years went by it became more unfriendly. No matter what a hard time I had establishing myself with white people, black people felt I was being a white folks' nigger and so on—they judged me that way.

"For example, one day I was walking downtown with another student, a white person, of course. And a man who had been a friend of my family for years was walking the other way. I was going to say hello to him and such, when we met, but suddenly he just turned his head the other way, and wouldn't even look at me. I heard later that he had told someone, 'That Pauline Byrd thinks she's too good to talk to anyone. She didn't even say hello to me the other day.' Well, how could I say hello when he refused to acknowledge my presence like that?

"For several years, I tried to do both, [to be Christian Scientist and] go down to Allen Chapel and attend meetings and be helpful. I wanted to do it out of loyalty to Grandpa. And I didn't want to break with them completely. But they were very rude and unkind to me because I attended a white church. I remember once, there was a special day—Mothers' Day, I guess—and all of us were to bring plants and present them to the church. I remember I had something or other and the chairman [of the event], a woman who knew me very well, and she knew I was prepared, wouldn't even call on me. I was so insulted. I said to myself, 'You don't have to be treated that way. If that's the way they feel, forget it.'

"I had a boyfriend then, and he thought I was foolish to go to college. He urged me not to go, and a lot of colored people did. 'There isn't any point in your doing that. It's a waste of time and a waste of money. You'll never be anything except a cook, a maid. And you don't need an education to work in a white man's kitchen.' I heard that over and over and over. So this boy tried to make me quit school and get married. And I'm crazy about school. I've always been crazy about school, I really have. I love it and I miss teaching and the things that have to do with it. But anyway, I apparently liked him really well, but I couldn't imagine quitting school in order to get married. That was outside my range of thinking. In the meantime, a girl came to town and they started going
together. I, of course, knew nothing about it. I had a very strict program: He and I could date on Friday or Saturday and I could see him for a while on Sunday. But all during the week I studied. That was my choice; I had always done that and I loved to study. Well, it appears that he met this very attractive girl and finally—I don't know how things came to a head, or somebody told me he was going with somebody else—I asked him about it and he said, 'Yes. Polly, you come first and if you will marry, I'll forget her.' Well, we had a discussion about it because it was kind of serious. And he said, 'Polly, you come first. We should get married. This other girl has got quite a hold. But if you will marry, I'll forget her.' I'm real proud of myself, and I was young and ignorant and insecure; I said, 'Well, if that girl has gotten quite a hold, I guess you better take her. You don't want me and somebody else has a hold on you.' So I took off his ring and handed it to him and said, 'Well, I guess then that we'll end it.' So that ended it. I have never hated that girl and I have never hated him. I can see now, as years have passed, probably I was in love with him; I didn't realize it then. I am of the disposition that if I give you my word I mean it. And I think that of you. When he always said how much he loved me, I thought he did. Well, if you love somebody then you don't have another person. I never thought of another man. And my mother never said, 'Pauline, you should marry him. Pauline, you should finish school. Pauline, you should do this or that.' It was for me to decide. She left it. As much as she loved me, she left that decision up to me. That was a very kind and fair thing to do. But as I look back from the standpoint of an adult, I can see that that had to be a very hard experience because he was the only young friend who was close to me. I was with all those white kids in college and had no social outlet. So that left me pretty much alone. And I've never felt the same way about a man. However," said Mrs. Johnson, breaking into a smile, "it gave me more time to study and I was glad for that."

It was also during her years at Kalamazoo College that Pauline's mother remarried. "She married a very fine man, Reuben Battles. She wouldn't consider marrying [before then] because she didn't want anyone to be unkind to me. Mr. Battles was head waiter at the Park Club. That, for a Negro, was a top job, with a lot of money and many contacts that were very helpful. I was kind of spoiled and selfish, and didn't like sharing her with someone else. Nothing could change our relationship, but I remember thinking, 'What would she want to do that for?' That was a hateful attitude. But it wasn't very long before I was away anyway. I was just thinking about myself and what I was going to do—getting out, leaving. [I called him] Papa Reuben, and I don't
know how that happened, but his name was Reuben and in those days people didn’t often call older people by their first names; it’s just one of those kid things. And I suppose he just called me Polly. I suppose he thought I was a nice girl. That shows how you can deceive a man. We liked each other very much. They had a happy, but not a long, marriage. I suppose it was ten or fifteen years and then he died.”

Pauline lived with her mother and Battles on Millview Avenue. “When my mother bought property, she bought it in an area where there were no Negroes. And one of our friends died and the husband didn’t know what to do, and they had this little eight- or nine-year-old boy. Mother said, ‘We’ll keep Sammy until you know what to do.’ I was in college and this little boy stayed in our home. Parkwood School was just a block from us. When school opened Mother went there to enroll him. Well, you could tell they had some questions about it. They didn’t think he should be enrolled there because he would be the only colored child, and Burdick Street school was just eight blocks down and there were a number of colored children there—we should take him there. And Mother said, ‘No, now he can run home to lunch from here, and this is our neighborhood.’ She insisted. Right there was a breaking down of segregation. Sammy went there and the kids liked him and they had fun playing, and so on. Mother and my stepfather went to PTA meetings. That little kid must have stayed with us a couple of years. There were no problems. It wasn’t that we were so crazy to be with white people; it was simply that we were showing them that we were part of the community and we were not going to be held back.”

While her mother struggled to show herself to be a responsible citizen, Pauline Byrd continued her own struggle. It seems that things were particularly difficult for her in the field in which she chose to major—English. “The English department head was one of the most prejudiced persons I have ever met. I always had straight A’s in English, never anything else, but he consistently gave me B’s. One of the girls who worked with him and happened to be a good friend of mine asked, ‘How does it happen that Pauline Byrd always gets B’s when she’s always been an A student?’ He said, ‘Because I wouldn’t give a Negro an A, ever.’ Just like that. So there were those things to overcome and I have such a stubborn disposition that I went ahead and majored in English even though I knew what his disposition was. And he never did give me an A. But, at the end, I wrote something that pleased him. Dr. Stetson asked us to write a paper telling of our plans for life, and I left that assignment for the last thing Sunday night. In order to get it done, just to have something to hand in, I remember so definitely writing what I didn’t mean: I’m going to go down south and work with my
people and try to help them.' And apparently Dr. Stetson read that and some of our letters at a faculty meeting. Oh, overnight I became the most popular person. I didn't know until some time afterwards what had happened, but that same Dr. Simpson who detested my race, and me, of course, met me in the hall and asked if I wouldn't like a copy of *Tess of the D’Urbervilles* that a publisher had sent him. Why, I almost fainted. That was the first time he had ever been decent to me. And this fellow wrote such a fine recommendation, and in it he said, without knowing it, exactly what white people think about us: 'Miss Byrd is a fine student, she's punctual, she's accurate ...' and so on, all of these qualities, '... even though she's a Negro.' But that was a fine recommendation from the head of the English department, even though he had been consistently unfair. But I got wonderful training in English; he was a brilliant man.

"And Miss Diebold is a woman I have always admired, though I didn't know her too well. I always felt she was unprejudiced—I felt that she was very gracious and friendly. Ernest Balch was the head of the history department, and he was a wonderful man. He was the first one who was very gracious and kind to me. Dr. Balch probably [made the greatest impression]. He was so kind and smart and warm.

"Kalamazoo College definitely did influence my direction because there were some very wonderful people there whether they liked me or not—professors whose thinking was very honest and high-type and emphasized hard work and objectivity and so on. I would have to be influenced by the people I came in contact with. After all, they gave me a different approach to life than I would have known, had I not gone there. I think as much as I hated it [when I had to go there], Mother was absolutely right. She was aware of the forces in the world and she knew that segregation doesn't put you in harmony with, in keeping with, the activities of a community. Now, because of going there and because of the influence of the people I associated with, I had a very high standard of ... performance. I got that at the College. My expectations of what I did and of what my students did were always very high because of my experience there. That atmosphere had an awful lot of good high idealism.

"And I remember the day I graduated, I had a feeling of happiness and accomplishment, and the ceremony was held outside and my family were all there. It was very nice. But I do remember being a little disgusted that I didn't get higher honors than I did, through no fault of my own."

At the time Pauline Byrd graduated, the class of 1926 had only fifty-six members—relatively few gained any academic honors. But
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Pauline earned at least one award during her years at the College. During her junior year she received honors in her minor field, French. And, although she wrote her class's senior will, she wisely omitted anything she may have wished to leave to the institution. Her class prophecy simply states, "Pauline Byrd became a social worker. Her background in college prepared her, and her pleasing personality aided her greatly in attaining the success we all wished her."

"Although it was many years before any other black students attended the College," said Dr. Romeo Phillips, Associate Professor of Education and Music at the College, "I don't think it can be denied that she prepared the ground for others to follow. She was certified as a teacher at K. I got curious about that one day after I met her, and went and looked up her records. I have known her for several years, and she had told me that she applied to teach in Kalamazoo, and left her interview with the distinct impression that they just threw her application into the wastebasket."

IV

"I didn't even know that I wanted to teach for sure when I finished college," said Mrs. Johnson. "But it was the main thing open to me. I went to the University of Chicago for a year and worked in social work, but after I had spent that year in preparation I knew I didn't want to do that.

"I got a scholarship [to the University of Chicago] and Mother supplemented it. I don't remember if I worked in Chicago; it seems like I did, but it couldn't have been very much because the University was very strict with its requirements. I had lots of studying to do so I couldn't have worked very much. I lived with this aunt of mine who was a teacher and had a home there. Her husband was a teacher, too. They gave me free room and board, which was very nice. I wasn't sure what I wanted to do, so I took social work—casework and all of that. I was in class with a Negro woman for the first time in my life and I caught myself thinking, 'Now what is that colored woman doing here?' I was so used to never seeing them.

"I liked Chicago. I was crazy about the Art Institute and the library. The zoo—I used to go there quite a bit. They had two-storey busses and I remember always trying to go on top because it was interesting to see. There were a lot of things that I liked about Chicago. It never seemed to me as bad as they said it was. Maybe that's just because I didn't see the bad."

After a year at the University, she ran out of money. "I knew I had to work; I knew I had to make a living. Even then I had sense enough
to see that social work would be a lot of nothing and details. Nothing that was the real serious kind of work that I would like to do, and I still think it is. And I got a job; that’s how my ideas became pretty well set against social work. I got a job in the YWCA in some town in Ohio—Columbus, I guess. And it was a waste of time. You see, I’m a worker and I want to accomplish things. There was a colored YWCA and a white YWCA. Of course, I was at the colored one, and they were nice enough people, but they weren’t doing anything. I suppose I thought they should have groups and be studying and learning and reading and discussing, not just always having a good time and being very casual. I couldn’t see that there was anything that was really valuable, that met my standards, anyway. We didn’t do anything—I think that was my contention.

“So I came home again and somewhere in there I went to Western for a semester. For a number of years there I used to go to Western whenever I got the chance.”

Pauline Byrd’s first teaching job was in Calvin Township of Cass County. The county’s black population was concentrated in Calvin Township, so all of her students were black. She began teaching there in the fall of 1929. “I was right in the country.... And it was interesting to me because some of my ancestors helped settle that area. My father had gone to that school, and some of the same seats and desks had been there when he was a child, because his name was carved on some of them. I was in a country school, one room, eight grades. I lived down there and I stayed in a farmhouse. That was a very interesting, enjoyable life. I learned to stand up for myself—they would laugh and make jokes among themselves: ‘Oh, the teacher thinks she’s so good and thinks she’s so much better and so smart.’ I don’t know, they would probably ask me questions that I couldn’t answer—how many bales of hay in a wagonload or something that would be unreasonable. But they just enjoyed doing things like that.”

Teaching in Calvin Township was Pauline Byrd’s first experience living and working in a community of blacks, but she still found herself to be something of an anomaly. Her education and socio-economic class separated her from the farmers with whom she was associating. In addition to being viewed as a bit of an oddity because she was an educated teacher, she was also constantly reminded that she wasn’t filling her proper role as a woman.

“Ah-hah—I learned a lot about how improper it is to be twenty-three or five or whatever it was and not to be settled down and having a home and raising children. I’m not like most girls [for whom] that’s the biggest thing in their life, their biggest expectation. I always wanted to
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go to school and learn and have a career; I think that was the biggest thing for me. Most women were not career women. If you got married that was your career, a desirable goal for any respectable woman." Her singleness was a slight embarrassment. "But I don't think it bothered me to a great extent or I could have done something about it." With that remark, Mrs. Johnson fell into laughter again, and a mischievous grin covered her face, leading one to believe that she could indeed have done something about her marital status.

"That was an enjoyable life. I'll never forget one incident. I was raised very lovingly with the kind of people who never had anything to drink. Never. And I still don't. Well, the farmers were having what they called a threshing bee at this house. They would go there and have a big get-together and then go work on [another] farm and so on. So, this time when I got home from school they had been there all day long and they were having dinner and refreshments and so on. And one man who made beer brought a keg of beer. Well, I can say that I was kind of an object of amusement—they always had fun kidding and teasing and saying things that embarrassed me very much, really. So they insisted that I have a glass of beer. Well, I didn't want to drink beer, but I couldn't stand to have them making fun of me and saying I was weak and, you know, all the stuff that ignorant people say. So at last I took a glass of beer, and this is where I learned a life-long lesson. I drank part of it, anyway. And I can still see it: there was a great big couch in a room next to where the social things were going on, and I went in and lay down on that couch and stayed there for hours. Well, when I came to myself I said, 'Well, that is the last time I will ever do anything that will weaken my mind and put me at the mercy of other people.' And I never have. I never touched anything before nor since, but I can't say that I wasn't drunk because I was. So I never had any trouble after that because I knew the effect. That's the only thing I'm always fussy about... my thinking. I don't want anything to happen that will interfere with my thinking in any way. And I've tried not to let it. And I thought, too, that there isn't anything that couldn't have happened to me in that condition and I'm not going to put myself at the mercy of other human beings. So I learned a whole lot right there.

"Those are the years I began to find out that I was a school teacher. I really liked to teach school. I like to work, and people who teach boys and girls have a lot of work, if they put their minds to it. That's where you have to be a good teacher in order to succeed—you really have to work. And I had never been in a one-room school before and it was very interesting; I learned a great deal."
"I had twenty-five or thirty students. Their parents were farmers, usually people that owned their own homes. It was just in the social structure to send children to school. If they went to high school, it was up to them how they got there. One family would have a car and several children would pay a little to go with them, things like that. But they almost always made it. And some of them that didn't care, especially, just quit after the eighth grade.

"I learned to let children learn from others, and I learned to organize a class so that the third graders would listen to the fifth graders and so on. And I worked like the dickens for the seventh and eighth graders because they had to pass some sort of examination that was given by the public schools. In order for them to go to high school they had to pass this exam. It tested their knowledge of things like history and science. That would prove whether or not I was a good teacher—that's how I saw it. So I learned a great deal about organizing and planning and working very carefully for them to learn the fundamentals. Math was not a subject which intrigued me, but the fact that I knew how to study enabled me to do the work. I would study at night and make plans constantly; that was the way to do it. The other subjects I didn't have to study so much for. There isn't anything you can't do if you're willing to make the sacrifices and planning that is necessary. If a teacher is a hard worker, there isn't any better educated child than a country boy or girl; I've seen that many times. But if a teacher isn't dedicated to work, the kids could behave like a bunch of chickens. At first I didn't know if I was teaching well, but my kids got high scores on the test.

"I stayed in Cass a year or so and then I met a very interesting man from Kentucky—a Michigan man. He and his wife had gone to Kentucky to work and they told me about a colored school at Lincoln Ridge, which is near Louisville. [Lincoln Ridge Junior College] was a boarding school, because it had been decided that Negroes couldn't go to Berea College. So, some of the churches began this school at Lincoln Ridge, a very lovely place, really. There were some people in South Haven connected with that school, and they heard about me, and they came and talked to me about this very fine Southern school. And there was so much they felt I could do there. So they wrote to the principal and recommended me and I applied."

So, in the fall of 1930, Pauline Byrd began working at Lincoln Ridge Junior College, a school for college-age black youths which also incorporated a school for local children. Whitney Young, Sr., was the school's principal, and the teaching staff was composed of both blacks and whites. "I had several [responsibilities]. Number one, there was a school on campus for children, and I was a head teacher. I was to show
Lincoln Ridge seniors how to teach and at the same time I was to have a couple grades. And then I stayed in a dormitory and was responsible for the girls.

"I had an experience that always amused me. There was a little girl and her name was Pauline, and she was the meanest, most... well, she misbehaved because she wanted to. One day her mother came to see me; she had come to beat me up because I had mistreated her child. In my ignorance I didn't know that." The student had told all the kids that her mother was going to beat up the teacher. When the mother came into the classroom, Miss Byrd said, "Good morning, come in, have a chair. We're doing so-and-so. If you'll just excuse me a moment I'll be right with you." And I went right on, instead of being afraid. I didn't know that I should be afraid. And [she] sat there and listened and became convinced that I was working. And, you see, I wasn't beaten up. What a disappointment that was to that little girl. And those ignorant Negroes, they're in a different world entirely, and the way you solve problems is to hit people, and that girl had said how mean I was to her. I must say, I'm not mean to children, unless making them work hard is mean. I had never been struck in my life. That had never occurred to me that that would happen."

In addition to her job responsibilities, Pauline also enjoyed a bit of a social life, and says that once again she could have married. "The man was a widower, a prosperous farmer, and his children were very interesting, lovely kids. He had riding horses, so on Sunday afternoon I would read, or ride one of his horses. And one time I remember that man helping me down from a horse and holding me by the hand a little bit too tightly. I realized I'd better not ride his horses anymore. You see, if I had been smart, I could have done well. I guess it's always hard for me to figure that stuff out. I think I would have liked to get married but I had this idea of a knight in shining white armor, rather than a practical thing. Always the impossible. I thought once in a while, 'Why didn't you do this?' or 'Why did you do this?' But I guess [marriage] never appealed to me at the time. And then years go by and that's gone—I'm very stupid sometimes.

"And the other kids I was crazy about were the principal's children—and it's not because he was the principal. Those children knew what they were in school for. I had Whitney Young in one class. He was a terrific, talented, wonderful, brilliant little boy, and I gave him a lot of my time. And I've always been proud that he gave me the credit for his being what he was. I guess in our correspondence through the years, I said things that influenced him. And later he was a Rosenwald fellow—they had meetings for Rosenwald fellows in Chicago and I had talks
with him then. He was also invited by Western to come here and speak—that was the last time I had a personal talk with him. I taught him about democracy and justice and fair play and so on—so he said.

"But I only stayed [at Lincoln Ridge] a year. I could have gone back but I didn’t like the South. I think I loved the country and the beauty and the landscape, all of that. But I didn’t like the social system. Things change slowly. The Civil War had been over, freedom had been granted for many years, but it takes time for conditions to change. For example, as crazy as I am about reading, we couldn’t go to the public library in Louisville. I bet Lincoln Ridge didn’t have as many books as I have in this house, and we could not go to the public library. To me, that was a crucifixion right there. We couldn’t use the public facilities. And I saw, in Louisville, for the first time, over a drinking fountain, ‘Whites Only,’ and on toilet doors and so on in public buildings. If you went to a white person’s house you went to the back door; it didn’t matter who you were. I didn’t like the fact that you had to go to a colored church. If there were a concert or a meeting—you couldn’t go to a white church.

“I have a bad habit, as I may have told you, of looking people in the eye. A Negro shouldn’t do that, not to a white person. I told you about walking down the street, and a woman looked at me so I looked at her. I told somebody about it later and they said, ‘Why did you do that?’ ‘Do what?’ ‘You don’t look white people in the eye—you don’t do that.’ It wasn’t safe, it was dangerous, and I would be in danger without even knowing it, you see. And I don’t want to live and not be able to look you in the eye.

“I had a clerk in a dry good store call me Pauline. I had written a check or something and they had learned my name. Well, that was very much out of order, so I never went back to that store again. Today we think nothing of [calling people by their first names], but it’s not because of color.

“So it was the social set-up that I objected to. That was the main reason I didn’t stay. I didn’t have enough vision to see any change. I guess my whole outlook, though I didn’t realize it then . . . had been toward integration—toward living with dignity as an American citizen. I didn’t like the kind of life that I would have if I stayed there. At that time I probably couldn’t put it into words, but as I look back I think that’s probably it. Nobody had mistreated me, especially, and I was paid very well for those days. When you look at it, it was not too bad. It’s just that I was wanting something I didn’t deserve, thinking I was as good as white people.”
“So then I came back, naturally, I came home. I was a worker at Douglass, I was a volunteer, and that’s when I met Chester Taylor. He had to make an impression or I wouldn’t have married him. He was a very fine fellow, he really was—he was smart and hard-working. A good athlete. It was a fun thing. We danced and went to games. He was older; he had been out of school and had gone back [to Western Michigan University]. He did a whole lot of things. So we married. And my grandfather rented the little house he had built for my great-grandmother, so he put his tenants out and let us have that house. He went to school, for a while and then he began to paint houses. It was a very congenial marriage.”

From this marriage a daughter, Edith Joanne, was born during 1933. Remembering that time, Dolly Brown Davis said, “Pauline wasn’t too happy about being pregnant—it wasn’t just what she had planned; she had other things in the way of school and teaching on her mind. Her mother and I would get together and make baby things and stuff like that, and she stayed upstairs a lot. After Joanne was born, she was pretty happy. But, you know, sometimes when you’re not quite ready for something it’s hard to get used to an idea.”

Mrs. Johnson confirms her lack of enthusiasm at the prospect of motherhood. “Pregnancy caused me quite a lot of difficulties. I had a very strong opinion that I didn’t want to bring children into the world to face the tragedy and the difficulties and the race experiences that I had faced. I didn’t see the point of bringing another life into this world to face all that suffering. I didn’t mean to have that happen. Another reason is, as I’ve indicated, I am interested in a career. I am interested in work and it never seemed to me that having children and having a career were compatible. But I thought Joanne was very lovely and attractive. I wasn’t impressed by the idea of taking care of her; my mother did most of that. She was very, very matronly, and she loved children and just took over. I don’t know if Joanne would have had such a good babyhood if my mother hadn’t been alive and in love with her and hadn’t kept her and done the basic work. I can’t say one hundred percent that I would have been a model parent. I can’t imagine being unkind to a child, but I can imagine neglecting her in order to do what I wanted to do.”

Marriage and motherhood caused Pauline Byrd Taylor some confusion. In a relatively short time, she was thrust into roles that she had not anticipated for herself and may have felt unprepared to fill. In addition to this, marriage and motherhood threatened to keep her from accomplishing goals that had become important to her—namely, the pursuit of a career and the independence that would come with it. She was too far along her road by this time to pull up short.
‘[Having Joanne] probably is what decided me I didn’t want to be married. I didn’t want a repeat of that experience. I saw no point in it. So I did something I’ve always been ashamed of. I divorced him. He hadn’t done anything wrong except marrying me, and I wasn’t satisfied. I didn’t care for staying at home and keeping house and doing domestic things. It was boring—who wants to spend all their time doing that? I am a woman who wants to do things, and all I could see was sweeping and dusting and getting meals and taking care of a child stretching out ahead of me, and that looked very bleak and uninteresting. He was very surprised. We didn’t quarrel; I’m not the quarrelsome type. I had no good sound logical reason for divorcing him. If he had done something maybe I wouldn’t feel [ashamed], but he hadn’t. And I suppose he was very much surprised. He had no idea that there was any objection; he wasn’t thinking in those terms. He was a decent man, just mistreated by a spoiled, self-willed girl. I’ve always wondered why my mother didn’t give me a good lecture. Maybe she did and it just didn’t sink in. She could have scolded me and told me to stay married, but she was the kind that always let me make my own decisions. I think one older friend of my mother’s said, ‘How Pauline could give up a man like that, I’ll never know.’ He was a very fine-looking man. If we had lived together he would have been a very prosperous businessman. I can see that now. But I just thought we were always going to be poor and live in that little house. I didn’t want any part of it.”

Her divorce marked a major turning point in Pauline Byrd Taylor’s life. Acting against social standards and expectations, she had chosen to pursue goals that were incompatible with generally accepted roles of women. A step as drastic as divorce was, at that time, makes it clear that she was determined to pursue goals that were important to her, and she thought would be fulfilling and challenging. In addition to depending upon herself a great deal, Pauline had a mother who provided support that made it possible for Pauline to pursue her goals.

“After I divorced [Taylor] and decided I would make teaching my career, I went back to school at [Western] for a year.” Then she returned for two years to the country school in Cass. “I was in the country in another farm house. I tried for a short time staying in [Cassopolis] but that didn’t work out. Getting back and forth was hard and expensive, and you need to be where the children are, so I soon gave that up.”

Joanne stayed in Kalamazoo with her grandmother after a brief time in Cass. “I thought it would be nice for her to go to that school with me, and that was one of my mistakes, because she didn’t care for it and I had to be careful to be strict with her, as I was with the other children. And with my working, I didn’t have much time to devote to her, so it
didn't work. She was about four or five and she needed a kindergarten or a play experience. Down there you didn't have a kindergarten, and it was a little beyond her capacity to go to school all day long. After a very short time I had Mother come and get her."

Because Edith Byrd Battles was once again living on Pioneer Avenue, Joanne soon began attending the Vine Street School, which her mother had also attended as a child.

After teaching at Calvin Center for the 1937-38 and 1938-39 school years, Pauline Taylor was to make another move which would remove her further from her family in physical terms. "I decided it seemed crazy to have all this education and fool around in a country school. So, I had applied all over the country, every place that a Negro would be acceptable. I had an aunt who taught in Chicago and she urged me to apply in Gary, Indiana. She had a very influential friend and she and her husband recommended me to this friend. I had applied there and hadn't had any attention, and they recommended me and then he passed my name down to the administration, and they wrote to me and I went down for an interview. There is where my real career began, because Gary was quite a place. They had separate schools in those days, entirely separate, and for the first time I was with professional Negroes. When I went to Gary I had a Negro principal and assistant principal, and a big faculty, all Negro. That was a brand new experience for me, and certainly a learning one.

"I remember the supervisor stating that my credentials seemed good. However, there were three things I had to do in order to keep my job. I had to know my subject matter—well, I didn't have any concern about that. Number two, I had to be morally upright—they would put up with no loose conduct. Well, I had never had much trouble there. But the third one—'And you have to keep order in the classroom.' Well, I thought I could do that but that was the worst; I thought I was going to be fired, it was so terrible. The story was, and I think it's probably true, that if you can teach in Gary, you can teach anyplace in the country.

"Those children—I had tenth or eleventh grade—came from some of the most deprived, low-type backgrounds you can imagine. Their folks had come up from the Deep South to get jobs in the steel mills. I heard it said that some young people never knew what it was to sleep in a cool bed. They slept in shifts and there were four or five in bed at a time. They were so poor. Accompanying that was a lack of interest in education. They only sent their children to school because the law required it. Many of them I couldn't understand any more than you could understand a person speaking Arabic or something. So, I had black
English; I had a regular program when I found I didn't know what they were talking about. I had a number of people who lived in the North and could understand [the Southern dialect]. I would have them interpret for me what was being said and then I could write on the board the phonetic spelling, as well as I could, of the words they had used and then I would write the meaning of the word. On the board I had lists all the time, and I had them keep a notebook and I kept a notebook. It's wonderful, how eager they were to learn to speak like me."

Order in the classroom did indeed prove to be the major project. "Those kids were just terrible trouble. They specialized in raising the roof. And they intended to get you fired, that was just part of their fun. And I didn't intend to get fired because of my pride, number one. Number two—I needed the money. I was brought up quietly and gently, and the kids I went to school with didn't misbehave; I didn't know anything about that. I never learned anything about it in teacher training. There were two reasons why I kept my job. Number one, I was a good story-teller. In order to get them interested, I started telling stories, and they loved it. Then I would stop at a very strategic point. Then I would say, 'Now we'll get on to school work and if you work well, then tomorrow I'll finish the story.' Little by little I got them under control. And when you get students interested, that's all you need. Number two, I could hold my temper; nobody thought I had a temper and I thought I didn't either. But one thing that annoys me more than anything else is noise. And a certain boy used to come in every morning and he would open a locker right inside of the door and he would slam it two or three times—oh! unbearable! And at last I forgot I had control of my temper and he did that, and I was young and strong, and I reached back and slapped him with all my might. And I said, 'If you ever do a thing like that again you will have to pick your head up out of that window, because you won't have a head left on you!' And the kids were horrified.

"Well, we were told never to touch a student, and I took that seriously, so I gave them some work to do, and went right on back to the office and resigned. And Mr. Anderson, the assistant, looked at me so funny. I said, 'I'm resigning because I just slapped a boy and I'm not supposed to do that.' And I can still see that dignified gentleman, a very fine man, smothering a smile, and he said, 'I think we can work it out. I wouldn't advise you to do that again. You see if you can't control that.' That started my way to success. Those kids were scared to death of me. That is the secret of my success—a slap that almost took a boy's head off, and telling them stories. So I worked and worked and we became such good friends. And this is where I learned that no mat-
tter how bad kids are, if you let them know that you are really interested and you really want to help them, it changes their attitude. And they changed, they really did. It was a liberal education—I learned there, I'm sure, more than I ever learned in school about human nature and how people live and think.”

During the six years Pauline Taylor worked in Gary, she lived in a variety of places. She stayed with a friend and her family for a year, and then she moved to a boarding house. For the last couple of years she lived in another teacher's home. She did consider buying property and moving her family to Gary, but decided against it. “I wouldn't have taken my daughter there for anything, as much as I wanted to be with her. But I began to learn the differences between Negroes; I didn’t realize there were people you wouldn't want to associate with and people you wouldn't want your child to associate with. She stayed with Mother and went to Vine Street School. Those were kind of hard days, to be separated, but it was the only sensible thing to do. I did think of buying a small house there and having Mother and Joanne go there. And if we lived far enough away from my school, she would go to another colored school that wasn't quite as rough. But Mother thought that was a silly idea, since we owned property here. And even I saw that wasn't too smart, and I just settled down to the fact that we would have to be separated.”

“I used to visit her in the summer, sometimes, and she would come home almost every weekend on the train,” said Joanne Allison. “I remember I was always very excited when she came and very disappointed when she left. She would bring me gifts—chocolates and things from Marshall Field’s, books, cashews, things like that. And nobody in Kalamazoo had things from Marshall Field's then; that was quite something. Sometimes it seemed like she was almost a stranger, but she was a good mother; she was under a lot of pressure, being in her thirties and being a bread-winner. I think she wanted a life of her own, but she also had responsibilities to her mother, her daughter, her grandmother. It must have been very hard. And growing up around all those women just overwhelmed me, I think.”

Despite, or perhaps because of, her isolation from her family, Mrs. Taylor found a broad variety of things to do in Gary in addition to spending large amounts of time and energy on teaching and class plans. Sometimes the social events and groups and people she spent time with didn’t meet her standards. Her rather serious disposition and her conviction that time should be spent usefully kept her from fully enjoying some of the pastimes available to her. She may even have considered some of them to be inappropriate for someone of her education
and class. "They had clubs—literary clubs and things that teachers would be interested in. I went a little bit to a bridge club. Now, you can imagine I wouldn't be interested in that; as soon as I could I got out of it. Wasting time. And there was a white WYCA, but they were beginning to get interested in race relations. I remember going to meetings there and studying or talking or whatever we did.

"That [time in Gary] was pretty much my first experience with members of my own race on a widespread basis, and educated people and so on. I guess I expected more from people. Most of them were as common and ordinary as the uneducated Negro servants I knew here. They weren't interested in ideas. Standing for something. Understanding something. Seeing more than appears on the surface. And my conviction is, and it started then, that some of the worst kids are that way because they are intelligent, and their intelligence has never been reached, developed, guided, directed. I saw that many times—but the average teacher there wouldn't care, wouldn't have the same kind of interest that I did. They were interested in a good time—card games and dances and so on. There wasn't a widespread degree of professionalism, and that is what would interest me."

While in Gary, Mrs. Taylor also did some writing for two black papers. "I wrote for the Chicago Defender and the Pittsburgh Courier, too. I wrote about things happening in town, and did character sketches and things like that. That's when I first started collecting money. Both of them paid me ten dollars a week and I put it right away; I never touched it. I think most likely something happened in school or the town and I wrote it up and sent it. [The Defender] immediately accepted it and called and asked if I would continue doing things. And then after I started writing for the Defender I understood that the [Chicago office] of the Courier needed somebody. I was immediately hired. That was interesting and fun. And what's more, you see, it cut into my socializing, because I had to write at night on my own time. If I had left teaching and stayed in that field, I might have been a big shot, because I do have a natural ability to write and that could carry me a long way. I guess I thought a lot about it, but my duties and my responsibilities come first. I knew I could make money as a teacher, but as a writer, who knows? I never knew whether I could make a living. By this time my mother was getting along in years, my daughter was growing up, and I had bought my grandfather's house, and that money I saved from writing was the down payment. I always take care of my responsibilities and I always pay my way. With a teacher's job I knew I could make it.

"So I stayed there and taught, and those kids cried when I resigned;
they were crazy about me because I was interested in them. The average teacher, I hate to tell you, isn’t really interested. It’s a mechanical thing. But I’m very humanitarian. And it was a matter of personal victory to me, and so I worked my head off for them to learn. They appreciated somebody who didn’t just give them something to write and then sit down at her desk and forget them.”

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“Once I came home on spring vacation and the Kalamazoo schools were having a conference at Western. I had no business there but I love education, and so I went, and at the end of their sessions there was a discussion period, and I took part in it and I expressed my opinion about something. When it was over, a lady, a white lady, came over to talk with me and said, ‘Why don’t you apply to teach here?’ I was very much taken aback because I had applied here. And I told her that I had a good job and liked where I was and had applied here years ago and had been insulted and didn’t see any point of doing it again. And she said the Board had passed a resolution that people will be hired on the basis of qualifications and merit, regardless of race and . . . ‘I would very much like to see you apply.’” This was Pauline Taylor’s first contact with Clara May Graybill, a supervisor in the Kalamazoo school system, with whom she worked on several projects. “And so we talked, and she insisted. Well, I was being very successful in Gary; by this time I was ready to be advanced to supervisor or something like that, and the money was good in Gary. I hated then to leave. But I have that missionary spirit and that attitude of, ‘Well, I’ve got to do something!’ And so I did apply and I was immediately accepted. This same woman told me, and it made me laugh, when the Board knew that a Negro had been hired, they weren’t so sure that they wanted to do this. They were sorry that they had passed such an advanced resolution. But they had to vote me in because my credentials were so much higher than my closest competitor. If they refused me, they’d have to say that it was racial prejudice, and they didn’t want to have that stigma attached.”

Clara May Graybill remembers, “In Kalamazoo, because of housing, blacks were pretty well concentrated in a few schools, but no school had a large number. Kalamazoo had [no black teachers]. When Mrs. Taylor applied we needed teachers and it seemed a fine opportunity to introduce a change which Mr. [Loy] Norrix [the superintendent of schools] was interested in making. Because of general public interest, due perhaps to the general tone of the Roosevelt administration, and Mrs. Roosevelt’s writing and speaking, there was a readiness for rethinking old policies. Blacks were speaking out and challenging the
whites—'Liberty and justice for all, as the flag salute intoned. Mrs. Taylor was, like most of our applicants for positions in Kalamazoo's schools, well-groomed, courteous, and exceedingly well-prepared and recommended. She seemed superior (as she proved to be) in intelligence. She had perhaps more reserve than many applicants. Her record of superior achievement at Kalamazoo College was, of course, greatly in her favor.

"I suppose there was some criticism of the Board for hiring a black teacher. And I know there were people who didn't like rocking the boat at any time. But I can't really recall any incidents specifically. Her mother had some friends 'in high places', as I recall—that may have helped to downplay any criticism."

So in September of 1945, Mrs. Taylor became the first black to teach in Kalamazoo, taking a cut in pay and effectively sacrificing any opportunity to advance into administrative positions. "My being the first Negro teacher was no small feat," Mrs. Johnson was later to tell her friend Shirley Payne Lowe. "It was accomplished with some degree of success because of my early training at home. To do this without fighting and ill-will and recrimination, to wait for people to accept me as a human being, to make prejudiced students like me because I tried to help them learn and because they finally saw beyond my skin color, was my task. Not with a background of fear and bitterness could it have been done."

Kalamazoo, at that time, was still the home of a great deal of overt institutional racism. A study conducted in 1947 by a local committee (of which Mrs. Taylor was a member), with the assistance of Fisk University, documented a great many of the problems and prevailing attitudes of the time: "[A] tendency [exists] to relegate Negroes, regardless of income or cultural attributes, to the least desirable sections of the city." An estimated eighty-five to ninety-five percent of residential plats in the city were covered by racially restrictive covenants. "In addition to restricting covenants and informal real estate agreements, there has been support for a segregation policy from the Federal Housing Association which refuses to insure loans for Negroes in 'predominantly white' neighborhoods, or for whites in 'predominantly Negro' neighborhoods. . . . Negro patients are accepted at Bronson [Hospital] but because of stated hospital policy, those Negroes requesting ward service are given private or semi-private accommodations at ward rates to eliminate anticipated objection by other patients in the wards. . . . Service refused in restaurants and other downtown places is frequently mentioned by Negro citizens as a problem. In Kalamazoo there is no place where Negroes can buy beer freely, except at one club, a place re-
ported very undesirable and completely separate."

The economic position of blacks, as reported in this study, also shows large disparities and injustices. Over three-quarters of the employed black women who responded in the study were in service occupations; one quarter of the men held service occupations, and semi-skilled labor was the next largest category for men, with twenty-three percent of respondents placing themselves in that category. Few or no blacks were employed in the town's major industries, the paper and chemical factories. "It has been reported that one [paper] mill did consider the possibility of putting Negro women operators on the night shift, segregated from other workers. Local Negro leaders were asked to secure candidates for the jobs. Potential applicants were carefully screened and an entire unit of young women was selected. All had some high school education; several had been to college; and one or two were normal school graduates or college graduates. But the project was cancelled. According to management, the white operatives had objected, stating that they had no inclination to work on machines which Negro girls operated at night. One or two of the better-educated applicants were offered positions as maids in the ladies' rest rooms." Similar problems also existed for male job-seekers, of course. "The manager of one of Kalamazoo's largest firms, who at first said that his company had 'no policy in regard to Negros' later said in the same interview that some Negro applicants had answered advertisements for workers but the personnel manager was instructed to inform Negro applicants that no vacancies existed. This same employer feared complications in the use of game rooms, lunch rooms, and toilets. . . . A spokesman for another leading company said that his firm did not hire Negros because there seemed to be enough jobs elsewhere for them; furthermore, there was a plentiful supply of labor from among white applicants. . . . The existence of a ceiling on promotion or upgrading was admitted by every employer who hires Negro workers. One large company whose officers disclaim 'any policy of discrimination' admittedly restricts Negros to janitorial work and car loading. The ceiling here for Negros is foreman of all-Negro loading crews. Although this company was currently in need of over two hundred workers, Negros were scrupulously kept from production jobs."

It was certainly not the most advanced nor the most open-minded community in which Pauline Taylor immersed herself upon returning to Kalamazoo, once again taking up residence on Pioneer Avenue. "I thought it was important to [come to Kalamazoo] because of the race situation. I've always been concerned with and interested in the races working together peacefully and with understanding and respect. The
way [Miss Graybill] presented it to me, that Kalamazoo was trying to work toward improving race relations, toward integration, it seemed to me that it was something that I needed to do and should do. That's why I gave in against my own desire to stay in Gary and applied here.”

Her aunt, the Chicago teacher whom she had always admired, discouraged the move from a secure academic future to what was sure to be a battlefield: “She said, ‘Oh Pauline, don’t do that. You’ve made such a sacrifice so far—don’t just keep on giving of yourself. You’re going to do something if you take that job that will require you to give so much of yourself—I hate to see you do it.’ But by that time I had pretty well made up my mind. I simply felt it was my duty. Having spent my entire childhood with white people, I understood a good deal about the situation and I had lived through that with reasonable success.

“The greatest challenge was, I guess, to be able to do the impossible. It had been driven into me from the very first that I was inferior to white people and I learned, as time went on, that was a common conception, that Negroes were inferior. Well, I never accepted that. If we were inferior, why were we able to do the things that we had done very successfully? Also, being of Christian influence, I didn’t believe God made one race inferior to another. It was just a matter of some people not having the opportunities, and that would make them appear inferior. So it was a desire to prove the oneness of man, the equality of man,” that compelled her to come back to Kalamazoo.

Said Miss Graybill, “It was too bad that we were a bit timid about the possibility of criticism so that we assigned her to Lincoln School, where there were perhaps more black children than in any other elementary school.” She was initially assigned to replace a teacher at Central High School who was retiring, “But when school was about ready to open I was notified that this teacher was not going to retire, so that the high school job would not be available. But they said, ‘We have an elementary job in literature at Lincoln School.’ One of the reasons for my success in life is that I’ve always been able to outwit white people. At that time there were three certificates—early el, later el, and secondary. I preferred the latter. So when they said there was this possibility, I said, ‘Oh yes, I can teach there, I have an elementary certificate.’ And I was suspicious then, and I’m still suspicious, that they did that to get rid of me, but since I had the credentials and they offered me that job, I stayed.”

At Lincoln elementary school Mrs. Taylor taught literature to children in grades three through six; many of her pupils were black. “I worked very hard, and I had many obstacles. Some people called Dr. Norrix and said they thought it was unfortunate that a Negro should be hired. I my-
self had to settle a great deal in the classroom. I think it was better that I wasn’t hired [in Kalamazoo] the first time, because by this time, I had six or seven years of wonderful experience, so I knew pretty well how to teach and how to deal with parents, so that left me pretty free to deal with the race problem. There was a big stumbling block, because I always had to overcome resistance, from both sides. When I was hired and went to Lincoln that first year, a [black] preacher and several other well-known people in the community said [in a meeting with Norrix], ‘As long as there is going to be a colored teacher we want all these colored kids to be in her classes.’ Dr. Norrix said, ‘Now, you’re asking for segregation, and what we’re trying to do is break down segregation. If we do what you ask, we’ll be supporting exactly what we are working against.’ And I had it hard with some colored people who did not want a Negro teaching their children, as much as they wanted freedom and integration. There were one or two whites who made some little objection, but I’m just the wrong type for people to object to. I don’t fly into a rage and all that. If you make me angry I’m not likely to let you know it. I just stand up and say what I’m going to do. It’s independence, I guess, or stupidity.

“One of the best ways with children is to be nice to them and make them like you—so I was very successful. [The students] had been brought up [thinking] that white is superior to black, and with every class there was always a period of getting to know you, getting adjusted, establishing my status. After a while it doesn’t take long. Even the child from the most prejudiced home—if you keep on being fair and decent and objective, you win him. It did take longer with some than others. But as I saw it, that was my challenge, and it wasn’t long before I won the general bunch who weren’t too indoctrinated. Then the others came along. You see, a grade means a whole lot to a person, and their parents would say, ‘Oh, that nigger woman, she doesn’t know anything.’ And they’d do as they pleased. Well, I was always glad for the first marking period—that brought a lot of people to their senses. I kept very careful and detailed records, and when I could prove what they had done or not done, that this is what they had earned and their grades were absolutely fair—well, then, there was a different point of view established. Some of those same kids who were so bitterly opposed to me, when they saw that they had to work, by the end of the second or third period they were different people, and by the end of the semester a lot of them were my friends. They saw they were getting something and they were being treated fairly and justly and graded on the basis of what they did. You can’t beat that with most children.”

Clara May Graybill remembers, “We had an intercultural workshop,
for years, in the local branch of a generally accepted professional organization among elementary teachers, the Association for Childhood Education International. Mrs. Johnson was very witty—some of her insights into white people's foibles were really devastating. But she always made us laugh at ourselves—she didn't display bitterness or contempt. But she always did often make us squirm over our inconsistencies, and sometimes arrogance and rudeness. I used to think she was a bit hard on other blacks who didn't grasp opportunities to be forthright, even if it made whites uncomfortable.

"She is a dyed-in-the-wool Republican, and I'm a confirmed Democrat, so there are times when I think she is 'unenlightened,' which we would both laugh about were we to discuss certain things. I suppose her very stubbornness... in some discussions, to think of herself as 'having a corner' on all possible aspects of a matter so that she couldn't loosen up to consider another point of view, has been an asset in some of the difficult situations which we whites have caused. But she has been... successful in helping many, many people in many, many ways... and she can be very gentle and sympathetic, very forgiving and kind."

The intercultural workshop for teachers was one of Mrs. Taylor's main activities early in her years teaching in Kalamazoo, and her involvement with that organization lasted several years. She was also a member of the state intercultural education committee, and served as a curricular consultant on intercultural education at conferences of the state department of public instruction. "I was a hard worker. Clara May Graybill started a group of teachers of all disciplines who were interested and worked together to understand boys and girls better. We had luncheons and dinners and programs with speakers, and we had many discussion sessions talking about race relations and living in respect and peace and so on, with people of different races. We had those meetings once a month and then smaller committee meetings in between. And then we branched out and would share our time and thought with a church, and with city officials, anybody that was interested. And we would always present to the administration ideas about improving attitudes—enlarging and improving attitudes. It was a very fine organization. We exchanged teachers between the different schools; [one teacher] came down to Lincoln and took my classes and I went down to Vine and took hers. We made exchanges like that. And we took children on weekend trips; we would go someplace and have the whites and the blacks all mixed up, playing games and having fun and learning. We did things like that to extend understanding. And we would invite parents in, getting parents to meet a black
teacher, so they would get used to the idea. We studied and discussed things about understanding people of different races—their contributions and so on. We also worked on finding books that would be helpful to various kids. Among ourselves we met and discussed whether or not they would be helpful to boys and girls. We tried [to effect changes in the curriculum] but such changes come slowly. I am not in a position to say, but I imagine it had some effect. I remember some literature teachers who read reports and read articles and poems [by] blacks, [and] reports about black literature. So, we had considerable influence.

"There are things in life that you don't overcome overtly, that you don't overcome by arguing and fighting, but by just going ahead. It was my conviction that if I could teach boys and girls successfully—even some of them who were very incapable, as well as disobedient and bad-acting—if I could do that then I would be proving my ability as an educator, a teacher. I think that's probably the basis of my success, aside from the fact that I'm very fond of children. I never gave up, I never accepted the stereotypes that were handed out. For instance, I had students whose parents would come in and say, 'My son simply can't learn. He's very slow.' And I had, in the cumulative folders, statements like that. Well, I read them and was aware of them but I never let them influence me. I accepted boys and girls as people of ability, some whose opportunities had been less than others, but every one capable of doing something. The success that I had proved that I had to be right about it. And I like to be proven right anyway. And I learned in those days that there were many poor whites and those children were just as limited and just as ineffective as ignorant black children. Those little white kids had never had a chance, and it was my job to give them a chance and to act as if they were human beings. And many of them went forward. And if a teacher just plain likes children and is fair and just and interested and all of that, children respond and they did. I had very, very little trouble with children after I established myself as their friend."

In addition to her work in teaching and in the area of intercultural education, Pauline Taylor was a member of the American Association of University Women, the YWCA, and the Council of Social Agencies. She also was active at the Douglass Community Center. "I was the first woman to be president of the Douglass Community Association. Any program that we did I usually took part in. I didn't have any time to waste, between that and teaching and having a girl of my own. But my mother was alive and active, and she did the housework, so I really didn't have to do that. There were many evenings I wasn't home; there
was always some demand at Douglass."

The program at Douglass Center during this time had many facets—dances, dramatic presentations, a story hour, and a physical recreation program, among other things. "In general [we did] those things that touched people's lives and helped them set an example for other poor people to follow," said Mrs. Johnson. "I was a leader in trying to get integration—there's another story about how I disagreed with my race. We had always fought for the opportunity to be part of organizations, to take part and associate. But, I have never seen it fail: When we are in charge of something we eliminate white people. Some folks didn't want to let white kids use the gym, for example.

"I just marvel to think now of how white people shell out money to Negro organizations. That was such a fine place, and beautifully run, but we had a constant battle to get United Way, or something like that, to give us a bit of money to pay for a director and the help we needed, and then to keep up the place. Negroes don't need that. Oh boy, we went to meetings and talked and explained our needs and tried to play on their conscience, I guess."

The era immediately following World War Two brought increased civil rights activity in the United States. The war had altered the nation's political consciousness somewhat, and these changes were manifested on many levels. This atmosphere generated circumstances that took Pauline Taylor to New York during the 1947-48 school year, during a leave of absence from her teaching. "In that time there was civil rights work going on in different spots in the country, and at New York University there was a group of people working very hard in that area. Kalamazoo had made such a remarkably unusual step, hiring a Negro, that two or three different people from their staff came here and observed and lectured and took part in school activities briefly, and got acquainted with me. And they recommended that I apply for a Rosenwald Fellowship. So that's how that happened, and I was accepted.

"I could go to any university in the United States to study, and I went to New York because of its large Negro population and this organization at the University. They were developing a human relations department—in those days we called it human relations instead of race relations; as a matter of fact I helped lay it out. I helped work out course subjects that would be more helpful than others, and so on. We had staff meetings that ordinary students were not included in; I was always invited and always had something to contribute.

"I did [take classes] too. I've forgotten the names of them. I got all A's too—that is, the smart professors gave me A's. Some of the others gave me A plusses. They really did. It was wonderful to be with some of
The finest minds in the country. New York University wanted to do specific and pointed work towards improving race relations, so therefore, from my experience I could share a lot of ideas with them. And during that year I met a lot of very famous Negroes like Walter White, who was head of the NAACP, Langston Hughes, the poet—I have a lovely picture of him somewhere; I got him to come to Kalamazoo to speak—and Philip Randolph, who organized the sleeping car porters... Mary MacLeod Bethune...

"New York was a great city; I was crazy about it. It was very large, very cosmopolitan. You had to know how to be good to start with, in order to stay good. It was large; it had opportunities if you wanted to take them—opportunities for good or for bad." She especially enjoyed the theatre. "And it was interesting to go into Harlem and see face to face things that I had read about. But I think probably I spent most of my time with the students I worked with, and I lived in a nice place, a YWCA, not far from Times Square. That's the first time I ever saw people lying on the street drunk. I can still see a great bearded man covered with newspapers lying on a bench in Times Square—that was winter. It was just acquaintance with life that was interesting. Everything you do, you learn, if you have sense enough."

Her experience in New York gave her increased confidence in her interpretation of racial issues. "I saw that their thinking wasn't too different from mine and I even dared in some cases to feel that my thinking was more practical than theirs. So, that was bound to give me self-assurance. Not one of them had had the kind of experience that I had. It might not sound much to you, but for a Negro child to start kindergarten and go through the grades and so on into high school, and to be alone and yet establish her identity, and prove [her] equality—that is a unique experience. I always knew where I was going—where I wanted to go; I didn't know for sure I was going to get there. That makes a difference. And I think that Mother and different ones said things like, 'Well, you've always been a smart girl, but when you came back from New York, your qualifications were much more pronounced. You were much more sure of yourself.'"

After earning her master's degree at New York University, she was offered several good jobs in New York, one at a private school. But she left New York for Atlanta University where she spent the summer teaching human relations to other black teachers: "That was a very frustrating experience. I was always in the habit of being successful and having students respond, but these were the most difficult and stereotyped people that I have ever taught. It was difficult to get through the walls that they had built up all these years, and being teachers, they
probably thought they knew everything. It wasn't a stimulating experience as far as I was concerned. And it was hard to work in weather so hot that you could see the heat waves rising around you. There were too many obstacles as far as I was concerned. I could have worked at Atlanta; I was offered a very attractive job at the University. And the state education department of Arkansas wanted a Negro, and I was offered that position. But I had some friends who advised me not to do that. It was a high-paying and prestigious job, but again they told me that my temperament would get me into trouble. Thank goodness I had sense enough to listen. I saw again that the Deep South was not for me, just as I had glimpsed it in Kentucky before. I think the truth is probably that I would have been lynched or killed, or put in prison because without intending to I would have broken a tradition, or maybe even a law, that wouldn't have applied to me here. One Southern woman liked to warn me, 'When you see a white person in the street, look away,' instead of walking down the street as if I belonged on the sidewalk. Looking white people in the eye and expressing my opinion, that was out of order. . . . I wouldn't go on a Jim Crow car. . . . People were horrified at my audacity and I thought nothing of it. . . .

VI

"I felt that Kalamazoo offered a challenge; it needed a great deal more than had been given it. It was just starting on the road, and I felt the work had just begun and I should go on with it. In the meantime I couldn't get any Negroes to come here because they weren't going to put up with the hardships you had to face. So there was no one to do it but me. I have given up an awful lot in order to convince white
Pauline Taylor in her Central High years, during the fifties
people that we are intelligent, that we are decent, and that we can live as citizens the same as they. I took that as my personal responsibility. But you can’t do that and just grin and laugh and play games. I have taken a lot, but if you know what you’re taking and why you’re taking it, then you’re not being subservient; you’re simply outwitting somebody. That’s been my intention, always to win. And I have won. But it’s not the kind of battle most people are willing to take part in. In general I never let people be ahead of me. Isn’t that teaching white people something when they’ve been trained that the dumbest white person is smarter than the smartest black person? That’s part of your heritage and it has been my job to reverse that.

“So I went back to Lincoln and taught for a year. By that time I didn’t like it because they had taken out the literature part and I had a plain sixth grade class. I had taught there successfully and I think the eyes of the administration were on me more than I had any idea. That’s why they moved me to Woodward. Woodward was a much better school—prestigious. Most teachers would have liked to be at Woodward—that was quite an honor. Now I was promoted to junior high; that was going forward as far as I was concerned because I prefer older children. I was with rich kids from some of the best Kalamazoo homes. But basically you’re teaching children to study and work and behave and understand. So all of those things are pretty much the same. The way you apply them is a little different according to the children, but the basic methods are the same. Of course, these kids were older, too. I think at Woodward I had eighth and ninth grade. I may have had seventh grade, but I don’t think so. So naturally getting used to their way of thinking took time. But teaching is about the same.

“There I had to establish myself all over again—assuring people that I knew what I was doing. And there I had to work really hard because of the people I was dealing with. At Woodward it was a different type of white person and they planned to get me out, I heard. And all of a sudden I realized one time that something was going on. A group of parents complained that I was too easy, I didn’t give enough work. Well, that surprised me greatly because no one had ever said that about me. So I said, ‘Well, I can fix that.’ So I changed the assignments and gave them harder work. And then the same ones complained that I was working the kids too hard. I was being attacked, you see. By that time I was suspicious so I went right on with my work. They did complain to Dr. Norrix. Well, there were a lot of interviews and stuff. By this time the administration was pretty much on my side. And Dr. Norrix said, ‘If you can prove that Mrs. Taylor has done some wrong, we’ll look into it. But what exactly has she done?’ And then, there’s always a hero:
Al Connable. The Connables were some of our richest, most prominent people, and I had had two of his boys. When he heard about this he sent a letter supporting me. I don't know that I had ever seen him before, but I had done so much for his boys. When Al Connable spoke, those other people shut up. So that was my own hard work plus that man's support.

"In those days we had a pretty rigid curriculum we were responsible to follow. James Weldon Johnson is one of my favorite writers so I always managed to read him [in classes]. [His writings] weren't in our textbooks, so I must have had somebody get them out of the library. We read Paul Lawrence Dunbar, too.

During her six years at Woodward, Mrs. Taylor had also continued participating in the intercultural workshop, and joined in some activities and discussion groups at the YWCA. In addition to this, soon after the death of her grandmother, Flora Hill, in 1954, she and her mother moved, despite efforts to keep them from purchasing the place they wanted. "I left Grandpa's old place reluctantly, [and] the real estate board absolutely would not sell, would not show, property to a Negro outside of certain areas. If you were determined enough, if you worked hard enough, you could always get around that. But not many of us were willing to pay the price. I remember my mother and I saw a place, a modest place. It was in the hands of a realtor, and he never would have thought of selling it to us. But we did see it; it was good property. Well, I did a crazy thing and Negroes have done things like this before and lost everything." She told a white friend her situation and asked her to take the money and make a down payment in her own name. "That was a crazy thing to do, but I was sure she wouldn't mind. So I gave her the money and she paid it down and then the next day she turned it over to me. And the realtor was so mad. He said to somebody, 'Well, the coons got that property.' Well, we did. Not that many people would go that far to do what they wanted to do. But I could see no reason why I shouldn't have it. I lived reasonably decently. There was no reason to eliminate us out there."

Soon after that, in 1955, Mrs. Taylor was transferred again, to teach in Central High School. "About that time, the principal said to me, 'How would you like to go to Central?' And I said I didn't care to, as much as I had wanted to before. I enjoyed Woodward. I said no, I'd just as soon stay there. He asked me a second time a few days later and I refused. The third time he asked me he said, 'Well, I'm not asking you to go, I'm telling you that you are going.' I was transferred to Central. There was some kind of money problem and the ninth grade at Woodward was being transferred to Central. . . . I was transferred
with another teacher who hated colored people. He sent us with two classes, so that's how I got to Central; and again I had work to do, and again I won the game and stayed there fifteen years or so. But it was a gradual step-by-step thing. It was hard work every day. Those kids would come by the door to my room and say, loudly, 'That's a teacher?'

It might not sound like much, but every day it was kind of hard. The atmosphere was hostile. You never knew what area a knife was going to be thrown or an arrow shot. But it's my intention to win.

"It was a case of knowing my work and not allowing myself to be angered or upset or disturbed by race prejudice, and of being determined to win people instead of fighting with them. That takes a lot more strength of character." While speaking of her experience at Central, Mrs. Johnson got out yearbooks from her first and last years there. "When yearbooks came out, I used to set mine out on my desk for anyone to sign who wanted to. Now look." The first yearbook is clear of any signatures or autographs—a definite sign of her reception by the student body. The second book is full of autographs, senior photos and announcements of graduation. She was clearly proud of the struggle and victory that the two books represent. Placing them carefully on the table, she continued discussing her early years at Central.

"The only kind of criticism any principal ever gave me, I'm kind of proud of. I taught summer school one of those summers, and a couple of boys who had never been with a Negro before were so horrible and rude and unbearable I just had to report them to the principal. He called them in, and when he heard some of the things that were happening, he said, 'Boys, what you ought to do is get down on your belly and apologize to Mrs. Taylor. But instead of that, you get your books and whatever you have, and you get out of this school and don't you ever come back.' Well, I was quite taken aback. Now, when they left, he said, 'I tell you, there's one thing about you I don't like—you take too much. You should not have allowed this.' I tried to explain that my method was to work patiently and slowly and try to win people over. But I was working with people in a short period of time who were so radically unapproachable, it seemed impossible. If I had them for a semester or a year, I could have taken care of that. Well, I've always remembered that—'You take too much.' Well, yes, but if you have a reason for taking, then you're not as dumb as you sound. So, anywan, that's my worst experience. But I always won out, and some of those people today speak graciously of me and experience in my classes. And," she said, shaking her fist mockingly, "I think that's better than winning on the basis of 'I'll mow you down if you don't do right!'”

Criticism of Mrs. Johnson for taking “too much” seems somewhat
ironic in light of the fact that she was, and continues to be, criticized sometimes because of what is seen as belligerence. Her certainty of opinion and her outspokenness have often been perceived as unwillingness to deal with other people and their views. At the other extreme, during later years, the criticism made of her by the principal was to be translated into other terms by some members of the black community who accused her of being a “white man’s nigger,” or an “Uncle Tom.” It seems that either criticism—that of passivity or belligerence—is based on a misconception of Mrs. Johnson and a failure to understand her methods. She had always been taught to think of herself as an individual with individual goals and tactics which required different behavior depending on the context. At times, by appearing to be passive, she was able to implement slow changes among the students with whom she was working. At other times, outspokenness was essential if she was effectively to convey her point. And at all times, Mrs. Johnson has acted with integrity, assuredness, and self-respect, referring her tactics to no judgment but her own, and always confident of her actions and motives.

In addition to her teaching and other activities in the community, the fifties brought other major changes into Mrs. Taylor’s life. She and her mother lived in a couple of different homes throughout the early fifties. Finally they settled in a home back on Pioneer Avenue, where they were living when Edith Belle Hill Byrd Battles died at the age of seventy-eight, during 1956. “That affected me a great deal—I’ve given you the idea that I’m kind of a loner. She and I understood each other and admired each other, and I always adored her. And you won’t believe this, but she thought I was just about perfect. We had a happy relationship. I’m not the kind that cries and does all that, but I suffered inside a great deal for a long time. One woman said, ‘Pauline is so cold and hard she wouldn’t even cry about her mother.’ Well, there are other ways of suffering. I believe there’s no reason to make a big todo in front of people about such things anyway. It’s none of their business. That’s exactly the way I felt about it, and I’ve never done it. But that was a very hard experience, really. And that’s really the reason I married the second time. I was so lonesome and broken up, I thought I needed another human being.

“When Mother died I sold the house we had lived in happily and bought another place [on Sprague Avenue], and Clifford Johnson and his wife lived across the street with his mother. His wife died. Well, then he was left alone, and one day he called, many months later, and asked if I would go out with him. So that’s how it started. After that
we started going together, and to everyone's surprise, I decided to marry him. That was a little over a year after Mother's death. He was good company and a lot of fun. But serious, very hard-working. He had many qualities that I admire in a man. And many people were surprised that I married a man who wasn't a college graduate. He was a chef at one of the outstanding places in town. Now then, I was embarrassed by a lot of people for doing such an unbecoming thing as marrying a chef. But I began to look beyond the externals. [Later] he became a bail bondsman for the city of Kalamazoo. At the same time, he was shrewd, and he always made money. I remember our sitting right here on this floor counting a pile of bills, not one time, but many times. It was just a fun, interesting life. He was very romantic. I was just looking through an old diary the other day. He had given me two boxes of candy and he had written, 'This one is for my wife ... This one is for the charming girl I fell in love with.'"

Soon after their 1957 wedding in Stetson Chapel, Clifford and Pauline Johnson purchased the home in which Mrs. Johnson now lives, on a corner of West Main Street, in the Westwood neighborhood. "He didn't like the idea of living in his wife's house. We hunted everywhere; at last one day I was driving down Main Street and saw this place and saw it again and again empty. I guess a corner lot isn't so desirable—I don't know why it didn't sell. Anyway, I saw the realtor's sign, so I guess they tried to keep us from getting in. They did everything unkind, even to circulating a petition to run us out. But Cliff was smart; he went to an outstanding lawyer, before we put any money down on this place, to have him do some research in this area, to see if there was anything that would jeopardize our investment. There had been a clause that no undesirables, houses of prostitution, or Negroes could buy [property in that neighborhood]. But a law revoked that. We thought the house had much to offer, and the neighborhood, too. It was our duty—we lived respectably and we knew we would be teaching white people a lesson that all Negroes are not dirty and disorderly. Well, that petition got so far that a man read it who knew my family, and he read it and said, 'This can't be. Is this the Pauline Byrd I used to know?' I think he tore it up. Somehow it got stopped; I don't know what he did. So, every morning before I went to school or Clifford went somewhere he had to pick up nails in the driveway.

"We did a lot together. We were saving; we were going to go on a trip around the world together. We liked to travel; we went to Mexico, and California, and out East—we went around the country quite a lot. I
don't care for cards, but to please him I played cards. And he was so
nice as to take up my religion and go to church. We did church things
together. He had never been especially interested in that, but it pleased
me that he did that, and that takes a lot of time—to study, to learn.
He read a lot; we discussed things. He was well informed, and politi-
cally very well informed.

“Cliff was the finest fisherman I have ever known. We had friends
in a great deal, and I would say, ‘How many people are coming to
dinner, and shall we have fish?’ And he would say, ‘Sure, what do you
want?’ And that man would go out and come back with more fish than
we needed. When we first married I fished with him, a little bit. But
what I'm interested in is books. To me that looked like such a crazy way
to spend time—for me to sit there and wait for a fish to nibble. He
bought me a gorgeous fishing outfit and the last time I went with him
he was so mad at me. I took a book along and was reading and I did
something and that expensive pole and stuff were lost because of my
insistence on reading. But he never again said, ‘Don’t you want to go?’
And I was glad of that because I didn’t want to go. And that ended it.”

Mrs. Johnson's second marriage did not last as long as she would
have liked, however. In 1967, Clifford Johnson died unexpectedly. “I
didn’t know he had any trouble with his heart. He worked awfully
hard. I'll always remember, I had a friend in for coffee and he came
home late, seven or eight o'clock, and I can still see him leaning up
against the counter [in the kitchen]. That was funny, I thought, and
he spoke to us and excused himself. He'd had a hard day, and if we
didn't mind, he'd go lie down. My friend saw more than I did that
something wasn't right, so in a few minutes she left and then I went
upstairs and he had gone to bed. We had a long, serious talk. He had
had a misunderstanding with his brother, and that had caused a bit of
dissension between us. I knew his brother was not right and Clifford
worshipped his younger brother, and no matter how unfair this man
was, Cliff would never acknowledge it. But this last night he said, 'I
see you're right. He has tried to cheat me. And you don't ever need to
worry again; I'm all through as far as he's concerned.' So we had a very
serious, intimate talk. He was lying in his bed and I was on my knees
beside the bed listening and talking. It was a beautiful experience, to
perfect understanding, the clearing away of the only problem that we
ever had. And that ended. The next morning he wasn't up as usual. I
was surprised and I called him, which I had never done. There was no
answer—that was it—he went to sleep and he died. It was overwork
and heart failure. It was a shocking experience, but I will say I would
prefer an active man like that to go that way [rather] than to be sick and
waste away. That would have been a horrible thing, as hard as it was; I
won’t say it wasn’t. But I never had too much trouble [filling time]. I
loved school and I was teaching, and the biggest problem was finding
out that [coping with Cliff’s death] was hard.
“So you see, I was only married for a short time in my life. One time
when I was a girl and I didn’t know what I was doing—I did every-
thing wrong; I accept that I did. Then I was in love, and that only
lasted a short time. So, I think I’m supposed to be alone. But, if you
know any rich bachelors . . .” Mrs. Johnson broke into mischievous
laughter at her last remark, asserting the sharp sense of humor that has
helped her survive painful experiences and memories, including the
loneliness that followed Johnson’s death.
In addition to her married life, and continued activity in the com-
munity, Mrs. Johnson taught throughout the sixties. The mood of the
era created changes in the attitude and atmosphere in the Kalamazoo
schools, and they did not fail to affect her. “[The sixties] brought many
changes. I had taught long enough that I was having no problems with
racial things—teaching was the order. And then that great upheaval
came, with changes. I was thrown backwards into problems that I
thought were entirely in the past. And at the time I retired, that
previous year, Martin Luther King had been assassinated. And that is
when a lot of trouble broke out. So my last year and a half were very
unpleasant, because race prejudice was at the highest I have ever seen
it in Kalamazoo. And again I became a victim. My race said, ‘Well, if
she didn’t always bow and scrape to white people she couldn’t stay
there.’ Well, they didn’t know; they had no idea. They wouldn’t have
done what I did all those years. Imagine not just facing the enemy, but
living with the enemy. Think of going into a teachers’ meeting and not
having anyone willing to sit next to you. It’s not very comfortable. It
sounds kind of funny afterward, but think of things like that day after
day. You still have to be a lady and be courteous. You have to be a
thinker and a contributor, and you have to act as though you don’t
notice such rudeness. That’s just one little thing that got broken down.
No one helped me. I had no gang marching in, singing, parading. It
wouldn’t have done any good to quarrel; anybody can do that, and I
don’t follow that method. That doesn’t mean I was cringing. And if you
said something of a despicable nature about race, that doesn’t mean I let
you do it and not say anything to counteract it, because I did. I
probably have told you this: I believe in justice and in being fair and
honest. If you are just and if you are fair and honest, you treat all boys
and girls alike. Now, considering differences in personality, and all that,
you can’t treat everyone alike. But you lay down basic rules that every-
one follows. That's what I feel, and if I had Martin Luther King's son in a class, I would treat him the same as anyone else. That is something I am very proud of—I don't ever have to be ashamed I was nice to somebody because of race."

It is not surprising that Mrs. Johnson would feel some antipathy toward the civil rights movement, even though she shares many of its goals. But the tactics and rhetoric of civil rights activists were opposed, in many ways, to the methods and attitudes she carried in her personal struggle against racism. The frustration and anger of many of the nation's blacks had reached a boiling point, and demands were being made for rapid change in the United States, demands which were supported and presented collectively. Mrs. Johnson, on the other hand, feels that racism must be confronted individually, through proper, established channels and activities; the basic structures of authority and of the economy in the United States are not to be questioned. For her, with patience, persistence, and dignity, racism will be eliminated. She also feels that, to a large degree, she has overcome the constraints and attitudes of racism in her own life, and insists that one must see beyond the issue of race to judge people solely as individuals. Racism, for her, is a problem only for those who allow it to be so. The civil rights movement stands for attempts to eliminate racism and racist institutions on a broader level, and approaches racism as a social problem that impedes the attempts of individuals to live as they choose and pursue their goals. The conflict between Mrs. Johnson and civil rights activists is clear: The civil rights movement not only took an opposing approach to a problem she had fought for sixty years, but also challenged the validity of principles upon which she had based her life. It threatened to devalue her struggles and the accomplishments she had achieved through her own tactics and approach. An age had passed and another had superseded.

"I had a very bad experience with some students in the classroom accusing me of being racist because I didn't take part, and I never would, in protests and whooping and hollering and all that stuff. I had fought successfully all my life by being quiet and law-abiding and orderly. I was a reasonable American citizen, and now they wanted me to do something entirely against my principles. And I had countless problems with white kids and almost insuperable problems with black kids. I never did feel Negro children were especially mistreated at Central, if they did their part, if they did a reasonable job. But they insisted they were being mistreated. The sixties were very difficult. It was an attempt to put into practice things that were so unreasonable. Those were pretty difficult years for me. As much as I hated quitting
teaching, I was almost glad to be getting out because of the extremes to which civil rights people were taking things. And not one of them gave me credit for working and having peace and harmony and order. And what else do you want when you're teaching? They insisted it was because I was a 'white man's nigger.' I had no character, no strength. If I had I would be fighting and contending. But the whole idea of civil rights is doing what you're capable of doing—that's what I believe.”

VII

Her retirement in 1969 took Mrs. Johnson out of the thick of the fray in the Kalamazoo public schools, at least to a certain degree. But she has continued in many activities in the community which still manage to keep her well occupied. “Oh, I don’t dare tell you what I’ve done since I retired,” she said, as a sly smile covered her face. “I might have to be arrested.” But such a fate seems unlikely; for the most part, Mrs. Johnson has engaged in altogether respectable activities since retiring. She has written a column for the Portage Headliner, a weekly paper, for the last ten years, and some of her writings have also appeared in the Kalamazoo Gazette and the Christian Science Monitor. In addition to this, she still expresses a desire to write a book or perhaps two. She is a member of the Civil War Roundtable and is frequently called upon by local libraries and historical associations to make historical presentations.

Her activities in local politics and other organizations have earned her various forms of recognition, including Kalamazoo College’s distinguished alumnus award in 1976. Through her writing and her frequent attendance at Kalamazoo Board of Education meetings and city commission meetings, she has gained a local reputation for being conservative and outspoken about those issues which concern her. The organizations which have occupied most of her time, however, are the local Republican Party and the Christian Science church.

Her Republicanism, which some might find incongruent in a black woman, has deep historical roots. “My grandfather [when he was a boy], whenever he could, went to the polls on voting days with his grandfather. They would go early in the morning, and sometimes they would have to wait all day long, because a Negro in Michigan could not vote unless a white landowner would vouch for him. And even though Gamaliel Hill owned his own farm he would have to wait for a white man to say, ‘Yes, I know Hill. He’s a good man. He’s a farmer.’ And Grandpa told me in all those years of his childhood, never in all that time did a Democrat vouch for them. ‘Therefore, Pauline,’ [he said], ‘you be faithful. Abraham Lincoln was a Republican, and he worked..."
for our freedom, and the Republican farmers were the only ones who would give us a chance to vote. And don’t forget that. And I haven’t.

“I have been active in the Republican Party [since retiring] and have been on the executive committee of the county Republicans. And I have been program chairman for, and president of, the [Republican] women’s group. I’ve done many things. I don’t know what I like most about it—being informed, I guess; knowing what is going on behind the scenes and what causes certain things to happen. I just like things that are mentally stimulating and challenging. If I had started younger, I probably would have gone into [local politics]. But I was so absorbed with teaching, and I don’t think you should divide your efforts.” Mrs. Johnson’s only attempt to gain elected office was met with defeat when she ran for the local Board of Education.

“I also used to be a member of the NAACP. Always. And I was an active member. Everybody in my family were strong supporters of the NAACP. It wasn’t until busing [became a central issue] that I dropped my membership. Busing is not educationally sound, and results have shown it. And it has not improved race relations.”

She also has held a variety of positions in the Christian Science church. “I wouldn’t be surprised if I weren’t anti-religious, if I weren’t Christian Scientist. I don’t really care for most black churches, and lots of what I have seen in white churches is hypocritical. Christian Science is really a study of the Bible, I think that is what has held my interest. Christian Science teaches so much about forgiving and loving and kindness and trust and so on. It has profoundly influenced my life. I’ve always had an attitude, I suppose it was cultivated in me, of working and proving to the world that colored people are decent and part of society. I’ve accepted that as my responsibility. The ability to carry it out, I think, should go back to my religion.”

Because of her various activities and interests in the community, Mrs. Johnson has also gained a reputation for being somewhat controversial. “The first time I encountered Mrs. Johnson was during the debate over school busing locally,” said Romeo Phillips, president of the local chapter of the NAACP. “And she was against it, so of course, we disagreed. And all I can say is that if I can’t have her as an ally on an issue, I certainly would rather not have her as an adversary.” Mrs. Johnson is aware of, and takes a sort of pride in, her reputation as a formidable force to be dealt with when she chooses to direct her energy toward an issue. “I know some people think I’m controversial—I feel sorry for them,” she laughs in a sarcastic tone of voice. “I suppose if standing up and saying what you think and believe is controversial, then I am.”

The basic political analysis which Mrs. Johnson uses to understand
the position of blacks in our society is actually quite common; it is, however, not a position shared by many blacks. For her, the problems of blacks are rooted in their concentration in our country's lower socioeconomic strata. The failure of blacks as a group to obtain success and acceptance in our culture is, then, due to a failure to take advantage of existing educational and economic opportunities. Racism is a product of class divisions rather than an entity in and of itself which creates and perpetuates divisions; it will cease to be a problem as more blacks enter the economic mainstream and pull themselves up the ladder. Programs such as court-ordered school integration, affirmative action, and special job training are unnecessary, in her opinion. She uses herself and her family as an example in support of this analysis. "I have to admit, though, that I've never been really hungry; I've never had my back up against the wall," she said. "Maybe I would be different if I had. And I did get a lot of support and strength from my family—that was important. I guess that's an advantage that lots of people don't have. So, I don't know for sure what I would think if I hadn't had those things." But her outspokenness in supporting a position relatively unpopular among blacks has, at any rate, created enemies for her. Despite the alienation that such outspokenness has a potential to create, she is happy with her life and satisfied with her position; and she has established good friendships and interests beyond the realm of political debate. Isolation seems to be a foreign concept to her, at this point in her life.

"I think I'm very happy. What would make me happier? A box of chocolates every day and a nice young bachelor I could show how to spend money the right way—I guess that's about it. And I feel a part of the community, and I'm happy doing the things I do, though I've always thought I should have done more. I've had exceptional opportunities—I could have done more. But people seem to respect me, though I sometimes wonder why.

"I often think of this—my folks were all pioneers, of course. One ancestor who helped settle Cass told the most interesting story. Snakes were prevalent down there, and this man used to put ropes and stuff around his pantlegs to keep snakes from running up his pants. That's one thing. Another is that he never knew what was going to happen, so he always had a gun with him when he worked outside. So he would work holding on to the gun and the plow at the same time. He described it very graphically and I have thought about it in relation to myself. I was doing the same thing. I was clearing the way, working with legitimate tools but always keeping protection. Not a gun, maybe, but protection all the time. I had to keep alert against enemy encounters and
overcome them, and yet not appear to be fighting."

On that note, I switched off the tape recorder for the last time, gathered my things, put on my coat, and reluctantly prepared to leave. "Well, you pest," she said, smiling, "are we finally done? Now that I've gotten rid of you I can get down to some important business."

Her parting remark was characteristic, just as her greeting had been, and I thought of how much I would miss our friendly banter. Chances are that after waving good-bye to me and closing her door, Mrs. Johnson simply sat down to rest, after the strain of a two-hour interview. But somehow, that she was resting seemed to me to be important business. The simple fact that Pauline Johnson and others like her, who fought a lonely fight to clear the way for others and refused to compromise themselves, continue to exist seems to be extremely important business.
Chapter V

“Spaces of My Own”: Nelda K. Balch

Cheryl M. Limer
Nelda Kurtz at twelve, 1928
"I was always going to be in theatre . . . and I was always going to be a teacher. I was always playacting and reading poems and things in church . . . I was either playing school and having my brothers be pupils, or teaching my brother to play piano—he still remembers that, though he never got beyond a few scales . . . ."

It comes as no surprise to anyone who knows Nelda Balch that she felt her calling to theatre so early, and that her response to it was enthusiastic from the start. One expects some of her dedication to her discipline and to her students to have been inborn, as well as her love for theatre. But what brought that spirit out in her, what sparked the imagination? She herself doesn't know. What made her pull through the hard times, when her creativity would be taxed beyond its limits, when her own spirit would have to be enough for four hundred people? The answer includes a great respect for education inherited from her parents, a need to live up to the expectations of parents and teacher that became a drive to excel, a yearning to be different, and a fund of energy sufficient for two people. All of this grew into a legendary independence. But it must be more than that—an infinite list of cause and effect relationships could never explain a complicated woman like Nelda Balch. One other important ingredient is her sense of the significance of her chosen work, along with a determination not only to keep it unsullied by compromise but to bring it to light for others as well. So she set out on a career in an academic field that did not even exist in most places when she began, taking on the giants of the status quo. One wants to call her courageous, but she declines: "I never thought of it as taking courage—just perseverance and some sacrifice of comfort and sometimes personal dignity . . . ."

Nelda C. Kurtz was born on July 13, 1916, to Robert John and Lydia Schnittker Kurtz on Kelley's Island, a small spot of land off the cost of Ohio in Lake Erie. Her father, the son of German immigrants, worked in the stone quarry of Kelley's Limestone Company, after which
the island had been named. He had, as a young man, wanted to go to medical school and become a doctor. But just as he and two others were about to set out for school, his father injured his ankle and could not work. The responsibility for supporting the large family until their father could return to work fell on Robert because he was the oldest. "It has always been my regret [but] my father adjusted. He was always there when there were accidents in the plant where he was cashier. He kept the first-aid kit, and would often drive the thirteen miles into town with someone who was injured and watch the doctor. He would tell us at night what had happened and enjoyed, I think, telling us the bloody parts . . . . When we got bruised, he could bandage us up and put iodine on it, which is what one did at that time—and when it hurt, that was good . . . ."

Nelda’s mother, Lydia Amelia Schnittker, also descended from German immigrants, grew up in Pittsburgh. She had to quit school after the sixth grade in order to go out and work. She washed, sewed, watched children and did domestic duties for various families. She remembered these times clearly even in her last few years: "My mother lived to be ninety-two and a half, and in the last two years her memory was of course very keen about those things, and she would regale me with the stories of how she had worked and could remember the names of the people she worked for—a woman who was having a second child and so forth . . . She was a very good seamstress and made wedding dresses for all of her sisters—and then bought her own." One of Lydia’s older siblings became acquainted with someone who lived on Kelley’s Island and who extolled the charms of rural life there. Grandfather Schnittker had been born on an island called Ruegen off the coast of Germany, and both he and his wife wanted to get the family out of Pittsburgh and to a place where they could have a garden, raise chickens, have a cow. Once on the island, Grandfather Schnittker got a job as time-keeper or foreman; Grandfather Kurtz had never learned English sufficiently for such a position and consequently had to work hard in the quarry.

Lydia married Robert Kurtz at twenty-two and devoted herself to raising children after that. "It always sort of seduced me, the idea of what she could have done in her own self-development. My mother was college material; she had lots of the arts in her, in her tastes and her interest and her ability in music. She just never had time for it. You just didn’t leave your family and do something else at that time. Now, I’m not saying that she didn’t contribute a lot. She found her satisfaction in being a mother and a wife and a community member. She belonged to the church organizations, and she took other women here and there—
she was one of the first people on the island to learn to drive. . . . But I have some faint regrets that there weren't both the financial opportunity and the [necessary] attitude for her to have done something that would have furthered her own talents.”

Nelda was the third girl in what became a family of eight—the next three children were all boys. Her position in the middle of the family developed an independent, self-motivating streak in Nelda which later became her distinct characteristic, the driving force in her career. “I think I became an independent, almost aggressive person sometimes because I was in a large family, and because there isn't much to being the third girl. The first two children—the first two girls—are fine, but by the time you get to the third girl, there's nothing new about that . . . and there you are. And then along comes the first son and he becomes very special, and there's a second son, and then the third son is the baby, so there you are in the middle. For a while you are sleeping with the other two girls, and finally you've got to take care of two brothers. You feel yourself shifted back and forth. And I think with two older sisters, one tries to be different. Our family was such that we all had blue eyes and blonde curly hair (except one who had straight)—we all looked like my mother and father. And so you're always mistaken for another sister who is very close to you in age and size; you get to disliking that. You want to be different. How can you be different? You can't change the color of your hair or the color of your eyes . . . so [you] become independent in different things that aren't connected with the family in the same town. I don't know if I thought of it consciously. . . . I'm sure that I didn't at the time. I know I just hated always to not have a distinct personality. . . . 'Oh, you're a Kurtz, we can tell—which one are you?!” It may be that, dreaming as a young girl of looking different, special, of being far away doing important deeds, was Nelda's first inclination toward the magic transformation of theatre. Her response, in any case, was true to her future vocation: She began to carve out a distinct role for herself.

Nelda was probably also influenced by the women in her family, whom she describes as strong-willed and very capable, possessing a “quiet independence.” Although her father was transferred to Alpena, Michigan, when Nelda was six and his family followed him up into the northern wilderness, she did not lose contact with her parents' large families. “We were growing up during the Depression and there was very little money, so there wasn't a vacation as such each year, but every four or six years there'd be some kind of a reunion in Ohio, which we all considered home. We had a large family . . . ; in my mother's family, the Schnittkers, there were eleven
children, and in my father's family, the Kurtzes, there were nine children, so I've many aunts and uncles. And both families lived on Kelley's Island. So I remember the times we would pack into the car and drive down to Kelley's Island. It's a very small island—something like four by eleven miles or so—and there was a little [Evangelical] church. Since before I was born, my relatives had been involved in the activities of the church. An uncle was a postmaster, an aunt was a school teacher...; other members of the family would come in from Iowa and Pennsylvania and they would rent out a hall downtown—downtown was one main street that went from one end of the island to the other, from back bay to where the boat docked. For two or three days we would all collect. The cousins would stay at various homes—some aunt had to take us in; that kind of thing. Sometimes some aunts or cousins had come over from Germany and were still speaking German. So there was a great deal of excitement and flavor about those days...

Nelda's family lived prudently and economically, and she believes they would have done so even in good times, by virtue of their conservative German heritage. But times were especially hard, and although she doesn't think she missed anything growing up during the Depression—she assumed as a child that everyone lived as simply as her own family—she does remember the hardships her father faced providing for the family, especially in the snowy, undeveloped North. "Even though he was a cashier-bookkeeper in the company, he still had to take on a job at night as a Customs Officer meeting the foreign boats that came in to Alpena... for $40 a month. It must have been very difficult, because he had to drive thirteen miles out into the wilderness, really, to the quarry [for his daytime job]. Then in the winter it was particularly difficult because sometimes they had to go by sled, and so they would sometimes stay overnight, or for the week (they had a cookhouse there) because the roads weren't plowed regularly."

Christmas was also simple—the excitement was in the season and in the family. She remembers all the children gathering at the top of the stairs Christmas morning, waiting until the whole expectant, excited group of them had gathered before descending the stairs. "[For presents] you'd get a soup bowl, and in it was an orange which you thought was a treasure, and some hard candy and maybe a few nuts, particularly Brazil nuts. And then we got one big gift which could be a book... When the boys got old enough, one of them [would get] a pair of skis or a sled, a wagon, or a baseball and a bat... but if we girls got a book and a handkerchief... maybe a doll, that would be a big gift. Cookies from grandma [would come] in a box—you know—and maybe a handkerchief in the cookies... That was it. I heard people, even my own
age, talk about having bicycles in the family and I realized that even with three boys we never had a bicycle—skis were cheaper. I sort of thought everybody lived that way . . . ."

At school in Alpena, Nelda's diligence and success in her studies endeared her to her father, particularly. "I think my parents had some preferences. I think they would disagree if I really faced them with it, but I think my father favored the girls and my mother favored the boys. The boys were younger and the last one was the baby—Mother was so busy with the young children that the girls sort of got along. My father championed the girls; he would have championed anything we did and approved it. It never entered his mind that education was for the male members; education was for those who wanted it or those who could handle the work. Studies were all-important to him. You had to get good grades. He's bemoan the fact that his sons weren’t doing as well. They were in athletics and just not studying as much in high school as they should have. Women were equal to men in our family because they were paying more attention to their books; they were superior in a way, I think, in my father's eyes. My parents respected education so much and they wanted us to get on with it." Nelda was spurred on, perhaps, to even greater levels of achievement than she would have reached by her own determination, not simply to please her parents, but somehow to make up for what they had not been able to do. She did, in fact, consider enrolling in nursing school—a sort of tribute to the interest in medicine instilled by her father—even though she admits that the sciences were not particularly her forte. The timing was not right for that either, as she would have had to wait a year after high school in order to enter—and that, at age seventeen, felt like forever.

Always on the honor roll, with her name in the local paper for having received straight A's, she does not think her academic record was difficult to achieve, only uncomfortable for her siblings. To her it didn’t mean a great deal. "You realize that you're in a small school and that the person who is smarter than you [are] became the salutatorian because he had only been in the school two years. He was very bright and went on to get a scholarship at Yale and sailed through the sciences with flying colors . . . but you just happened to be four years in one school [with] one point difference in grade point. . . ."

There was little in the way of theatre in Alpena; even if there had been professional theatre within reach of small midwestern towns, it is doubtful that Nelda could have afforded it. "I wonder what could have whetted my appetite for good drama when I was growing up; certainly not the high school plays I was in, which were poorly chosen and badly directed, nor the church plays with makeshift costumes and scenery. But
in my imagination those characters I played were alive and the environment actual." The imagination which would later turn hallways, attics, and any other workable space into viable theater space for her students was already at work, doing its transformations, if only inside her head.

What early theatre and speech training Nelda had came mostly from the minister's wife, who gave her elocution lessons. "She had three of us in the church [who] she thought had a particular talent, and we went to her home once a week. ... She and her husband, a very fine minister, had come up from the south. He had a D.D. degree, which was unusual for us. She would give me these Paul Laurence Dunbar poems in dialect. . . . I don't think there were any blacks in the community at that time. . . . It was the desire to act in plays which was uppermost in my mind, fed by my 'elocution coach,' the minister's wife, the teacher of my senior high English class, and [later] my interpretation professor and the college director, another dedicated and talented woman."

In the field of teaching, Nelda's first idol was her high school English teacher, Marie Grover, "for her emphasis upon the intellectual and the artistic, her serenity, her high standards for us, and her long, straight, black hair . . . ."

Nelda was a natural to continue on to college. Her sisters had taken commercial courses to be trained for jobs and were not as interested in going on with their educations. The siblings she felt closest to later went on to college as well, including the sister two years older than herself (her birthday is the day before Nelda's) with whom she shared a room until Nelda left for college. They shared interests as well, and her sister later followed Nelda's footsteps, going to the same college and majoring in speech, though she chose to teach in the elementary grades. Among her brothers, the youngest was closest to Nelda and the only one of the boys to go on to college. During her senior year in high school, Nelda was visited by a recruiting speech professor and debate coach from the small Methodist college, Albion, who was probably visiting Methodist Church communities. Dr. Kenneth Hance gave Nelda her chance to get to college. Through his efforts, she received a small scholarship, and he offered her room and board in exchange for some household help. She would eat two meals at the dormitory, finding another job to cover that and pay her remaining tuition. She lived with the Hances for three years. "I've always been very grateful to them. They took me in; they have a very small house, but they took in this unknown person to live with them for three years. They didn't really need my help—they did considerable entertaining, but I didn't do that much. I had a tiny, tiny room I could just turn around in, but it was off their parlor—their front room with a grand piano."
“Sometimes self-confidence is a role we play... I’m not sure—I may exude self-confidence, but there are times when I’m feeling very, very inferior, and I think I’ve had to fight that... You have to develop a kind of front that says, ‘I can take care of myself,’ which I didn’t feel once I got to college. I felt very insecure there.”

The first one of the family out into the world, the first one in college—at the same time that Nelda began to feel a sense of pride in her new distinction, she struggled with fear and loneliness; she had not yet found her own place in this new world. “My parents weren’t even able to bring me to the college; I was deposited by the bus with my trunk in front of the dormitory late at night, not knowing anyone there but this strange couple I was going to live with; I felt very alone. I devised all kinds of ways to get home—getting struck by a car while crossing the street... I don’t know how many times I [thought about that].”

If her problem in her family was being seen as too much like the others, her new burden was alienation. At Albion she was too much unlike the others, and living at the Hances’ home, while it made college economically possible, didn’t help her integration with the other students. Not until her senior year did she move into the dorm, with a job in the kitchen. Her lack of money made her different, as well. “The school was a prestigious sorority kind of school. I couldn’t afford that. [A few of us] started a little independent group. We were rushed at the beginning, but it was soon evident that we couldn’t afford to join a sorority. That was it. Many of the students were from the richer areas of Detroit—I think that made it rough on those of us who had no money.”

Until her last year at Albion, Nelda did not venture into the college coffee shop. Summer dime-store paychecks, awards from oratory contests, a library job at 30¢ an hour, an early morning cafeteria job that made her hands smell of butter throughout her 9:00 class—“If it was a dollar earned, it went into tuition.” And once in a while the minister’s wife in Alpena, her “elocution coach,” would slip a dollar in with a letter—“just between us two.” Nelda did find ways to get around lack of funds. In the same spirit in which the independent sorority was formed, she would make trips without benefit of a car. “Going to Detroit was a big trip for us because we didn’t have cars. Some of the wealthier students did, but we didn’t. So if we did go to Detroit to visit a friend, we hitchhiked. It was against the rules at Albion, of course. You’d get out on the road and the first person who would stop would be the religion professor...”

Despite Albion’s academic excellence, it did not offer much in the way of theatre. Dr. Hance was the debate coach, so of course Nelda had to
go out for debate, and though she did not consider herself much of a debater, she went on team trips and participated in competition. Debate involved a sort of aggressiveness with which she was never quite comfortable; the expository speaking modes were more to her liking: interpretation, discussion, oratory. "Oratory was fine—I enjoyed that. It was dramatic in a sense, so I did a lot of that work, and represented the college in contests which had oratory. I didn't get as much theater as I wanted. We didn't have a theatre; we had to perform in the high school auditorium. We got one night there, and we didn't have a workshop, so we didn't learn anything about props. I think I got a good background. My teacher [Beulah Champ] was a graduate of Emerson School of Oratory and was a very fine teacher in interpretation. But I learned very little about theatre as such."

Theatre at Albion was a part of the speech department, as it was at most colleges and universities. Bringing theatre into its own as a discipline and as an art on college campuses would be a major struggle—and success—in Nelda's future career. But as an undergraduate, she majored in English and speech, looking forward to graduate school for real theatre training. She was determined to continue beyond Albion, one way or another. During the summer after graduation, she took graduate courses at the University of Michigan, but to go to graduate school full time meant finding a large enough scholarship, and none seemed to be forthcoming. The University of Minnesota wrote of a possibility, but then she heard no more of it. Scholarships offered were not enough. So, although she did not particularly want to teach high school and feared it would eventually interfere with her plans for further training, she took a position teaching speech in a Petoskey high school. "Petoskey was known for its speech program, and it has always taken Albion graduates, because Albion was known for its speech program. My speech professor was very pleased that I was accepted for this job in Petoskey . . . but I wanted to go on and get more theatre. Then, while I was at the University of Michigan during the summer, a telegram came from the University of Minnesota. There was a teaching assistantship available—teaching eight hours a week. 'Will you accept it?' Well, I had to get out of this other contract, and I did it, after much soul searching. I felt guilty for several years afterwards. The superintendent was out of town at the time and he couldn't replace me immediately, but he said to go ahead. I knew the speech professor was very disappointed that I had given this up and left them in the lurch—that was July or something like that. I never regretted it."

Minnesota—another awkward transition for a small-town girl used to a
small-town college. And another strange world where Nelda Kurtz was an outsider, entering under circumstances very similar to those of four years before: "I went by car and train and was sort of dumped there to find my way. It was a very rough year because all the others were graduates of Minnesota and they knew the big school. Minnesota was very big [to me], coming from little Albion. The department head had many of his assistants teaching—he said, 'Here's the textbook; now do what you want with the class.' Well, that's all very well, if you know what to expect and have a little bit of confidence that you know more than those students. I was trying to teach a five-hour class with sophomores who were at that time as old or older than I. It was challenging. I had to take a course at the speech clinic, where they started immediately to say what was wrong with you as an individual—the type of training they might have been giving to stutterers and those with speech problems. I can remember the instructor saying [about my voice], 'Don't worry—by the time she's forty . . . . Don't worry!' But I lived through it, and went back for another year doing the same thing."

Graduating from Albion, Nelda had had no instruction in the technical theatre area, very few theatre courses, and a minimum of performance on stage; what she did have was a solid background in general speech, strong training in interpretation, and the example of producing valid theatre with no facilities. She could not really specialize in graduate school either; but concentrated on "catching up." For the opportunities which would later come her way, she was well prepared; general knowledge in fields as diverse as radio, speech pathology, public speaking, interpretation, and theatre was desirable for teaching in small colleges, as was her minor in English, since most speech departments were under that aegis.

She received her master's degree in 1938, after completing a thesis on truth and fictionalization in American biographical plays. But she returned for another year of study and teaching because she had not been able to find a job. The next year she found herself as a debate coach at little Simpson College in Iowa, at a salary of only about $1,200, with a master's degree and two years of experience. However, there was one advantage: Although theatre was again part of the English Department, the head of the department "didn't assume he knew anything about theatre" and let the theatre people do what they wanted. "I had to take the job because there were no others there. I had to take it as a debate coach and run the debate-forensics program, which was a very strong one in Iowa then. We went to nationals in Nashville, Tennessee; we went to Dallas; we went up to Minneapolis; we (I and four debaters who were about my own age at that time) traveled and we won many
[competitions] when we did oratory and so forth. But for the four years I was there, my problem was [that] I was not in the field I wanted to be in, but in a field I knew something about. I would rather have been in the theatre. They have since built a theatre, rather recently, but then they had a tiny little room with a little tiny stage and the only exit was off in the speech office, so you came down two steps into the speech office ... There were no wings, no backstage ... just a little platform; but they did some exciting things and everybody dressed in formals for opening night. It was sort of a cultural center for the town, which was south of Des Moines, but a very, very small town."

Making theatre happen whenever and wherever she could at Simpson, she also continued to train herself in what he firmly believed was her real field, studying during the summer in graduate departments at Yale, Cornell, Northwestern, the University of Oregon and the University of Bridgeport, allied with the American Shakespeare Festival at Stratford, Connecticut. Ultimately she had nearly all the necessary coursework for a doctorate, but she never settled in one place long enough to finish the degree, and to do so, she would have had to take courses she had been teaching for years. So she simply went on learning—that was the important thing. Simpson had enough potential in theatre to keep Nelda there, but suddenly the outside world interrupted.

II

During Nelda's four years at Simpson, World War II was brewing; by 1943 many of the young men she knew were headed overseas. Nelda Kurtz decided to enlist as well. "The fellows in my class were all leaving, going into the Navy, and in a very short time one of the outstanding ones, who had been in one of my plays, was shot down. I just couldn't stay there, teaching, when there was something I could do. That was the main thing, of course, but there was also, on the other side, getting out, getting away, getting into something that sounds adventurous and challenging ... so I signed up with the Red Cross. They were asking for girls to go over to England and elsewhere and staff club mobiles, which were big busses that had all the equipment for making donuts and so forth, with a reading room in the back. They would go out into a certain area and visit the remote air bases and give out donuts and postcards and welcome the boys and so forth, and come back. Or you could be a director of the recreational program and have your own Arrow Club out on an American air base.

"I don't know that I stopped to think when I made momentous decisions like joining the Red Cross and leaving my job that it took a year to get. It was much less than army pay with no later benefits
of any kind — we got nothing afterwards, the way the army did. Of course, we had not earned big salaries anyway where we worked [in the States], but we didn’t know where we would be sent, or what the conditions would be. Coming from a background where the farthest I had been at that time was Iowa, it was a major decision to do that during war time. What would happen when you came back? . . . There was no hope you would get the same job. My sister did the same thing, but it was easier by that time, when [she had] someone’s footsteps to follow in. I don’t think at that time that I waited at all. We were rather a small group, but among my friends it was the thing to do.”

Once again, without giving it much thought, she found herself in the role of the family pioneer, taking a first big step away from security and toward an unknown possibility, without many backward glances. “We might be living in tents or be billeted like the soldiers. It wouldn’t be just living on base and going to a club every night. We also knew that we had standards to uphold. We couldn’t have much of a personal life. We belonged to the enlisted personnel and not to the officers. We knew we would be separated from family and might not be able to write . . . We knew it wasn’t going to be a holiday. You got the gas mask training and you carried a gas mask with you and all that. By the time we got everything on our backs and on our shoulders and around our waists, we looked overloaded, just like the soldiers. But as I look back, I have no regrets on those decisions at all. I think I would have had regrets if I had listened to a lot of other people who told me to stay home.”

After preliminary training in Washington, D.C., at the Pepsi-Cola Center and at American University, she was sent to London where, after a week, she was dissatisfied. “You never got to know anybody; you’d rumble out in this big van twenty to thirty miles and come back at night. So I asked for a change—which the Red Cross, being as rigid as the army, did not like but did allow—and I was sent out to be the second girl in a big bomber base. I eventually got my own club. A club might consist of three or four Quonset huts together, containing a dining room, a library, and game rooms. The Red Cross girls organized a recreational program, and an English woman managed the kitchen and a food counter. It was really quite a big establishment, and in most cases there would be only one or two girls on the base. The 82nd Airborne had only one, since they had only a small [club]. I assisted in the hiring of the local staff and supervised all the activities in the club—game room, library, snack bar—and then planned special programs—birthday parties, contests, dances, tours to Stratford. At one club we worked with some very talented GI’s to present an original revue, but
this was wartime and the airmen were fighting or waiting to move. We were there to listen to those homesick boys, to provide them with a friendly atmosphere wherein they could read, write, paint, etc."

After sixteen months in England, Nelda asked to be sent to France, where she spent nine months at Orleans. "The staff was all French, and I had an interpreter. We had been billeted with English people in England, but in France we were in a hotel that the Germans had just left, so it was turned over to the Americans and that was a little more plush. We were billeted with the officers, and of course there were no women, other than the two Red Cross girls. We shared . . . we were within walking distance to our club, which was in the city of Orleans, very close to the railroad station."

Nelda had left Simpson, just as she was moving into the career for which she had waited so long, in order to seize the moment, to be where her talent and energy might really matter. And in doing so, she came to a confrontation with war which very few American women could know. "We considered an advance club at Metz; we only stayed there two weeks and then went back, but I got close enough, shortly after Patton marched in to the Battle of the Bulge, to see the dead horses, weapons, and artillery that were left by the wayside. In fact, I slept in the house that Patton slept in when I went up there; we had a little donut dugout just behind Patton's army. We felt very close to the war even though we weren't on the battlefield. We had been in the midst of the bombing on leave in London. Even though it was a relatively short time, it was very, very deep. I could say enjoyable, but war is not . . . It was an intense experience, being on airfields when you'd watch the crew go off and they were night-flying into Berlin and so forth, and then you'd count the number of planes coming back and know you weren't going to see the fellow you had wished well a few hours before. And you saw how young they were and what they were facing . . . So it was a time when one lived intensely and whatever relationships and whatever thoughts one had were very intense—probably never more so in my life than in that period of time. I made some very lasting friends. And I was really called upon to do things I didn't think I was able to do at that time . . ."

Returning home in 1946 required a rather abrupt readjustment for Nelda, as for most of those who had served overseas. Her first teaching job after her homecoming was at West Liberty State Teachers' College in West Liberty, West Virginia. "I had just returned from twenty-six months overseas, living and working with the active military, involved in life-death situations, and having spent furloughs in Scotland, London, Paris, Cannes, and Switzerland. Living in the girls' dorm, eating
all meals at a faculty table in the dining room, with no transportation to get out of this tiny mountain retreat, was most confining. Nor was the work challenging, since the speech program was a part of the English Department with no separate theatre facilities"—again.

With little community at all surrounding the college, much less one likely to support theatre arts, it must have been a tremendously oppressive environment for Nelda. The fulfillment of her war work was alive in recent memory, and what she really wanted at the time was to go to Japan with the Red Cross. But she was not reassigned, and she had to work, so she accepted a position at Linfield College, south of Portland, Oregon. The opportunity to go to Japan finally came, but too late; the president at Linfield balked at releasing her in the middle of the year. But all was not lost—in fact, Linfield turned out to be a significant turn in her life, for it was in Oregon that she met Donald Balch.

He was a high school coach when they met—football, track, and basketball. "Don was from the Northwest, raised in Spokane in a family of nine boys...there were two more [who died as children]. He came from a lumbering town where his father eventually bought a lumber mill and several sawmills. Many of these little lumbering towns have many, many bars, a sawmill, and not much else...The Northwest is quite different in spirit, in openness and frankness. I think people get culture shock when they go out there...He was a star athlete in high school and a leader in class offices and so forth. He went to the University of Washington on a scholarship, but...his soles [wore] through and he had no shoes to wear, so he finally had to drop out of school and find a smaller college. As a coach and an administrator, he wasn't afraid to call a big fellow in and give him a paddling—that was the way then. He was a big fellow—two hundred pounds and strong. I remember going with him to many of his games. We watched and got lots and lots of movie footage of football and basketball games...I became quite a fan of high school sports, and went on the bus with him frequently. I think he was more interested in theatre than I was in athletics. He became quite a fan of mine, quite a fan of the theatre, so we shared each other's work." In 1948 they were married in Alpena.

At Linfield Nelda was the head of the theatre program. As at West Liberty and Simpson, it was part of the speech department, but it did exist as a program and she was there specifically to develop it. For the first time in her career, she had the chance to devote herself to college theatre. "The goal was to build it as strong as forensics and with as much quality, and to get a theatre building of our own. The plays there were presented in an auditorium, and that had its problems. We did succeed in getting a building. An army building was brought to the
campus and then renovated. It housed the music department and the radio studio as well, but essentially it was for theatre. We dedicated that; the president was very proud of it. After I left, it burned to the ground and has not been replaced, unfortunately. As we were trying to get [it] built, I found another space. I am good at finding spaces of my own, and this space happened to be in a large reception room. We did arena there, so I got used to doing things in the round . . . because that space was better."

"Finding spaces of her own" became a hallmark. Nelda Balch's concept of theatre does not count a building as a necessity. "One of the things you don't have to have in theatre is a building. It is easier and you can build a program with a lot less work if you have a place where you can set it up and you don't have to re-set and get the chairs in every time; but you don't have to have a building to have a program. I think you can make theatre space and adjust to it."

For a time the Balches thought they had found their own perfect space. "My heart was lost to Oregon, both to my husband and to the area . . . Oregon was my country. We bought property out there and planned to return there eventually—not in the same jobs, but somehow." But separate careers proved problematic as well as fulfilling. Nelda couldn't get a release from Linfield when Don got a job at a school in the hills of Oregon. "He would drive in from the mountains for the weekend after a game—it didn't work out too well." So she left Linfield in 1952 to take a teaching job in Glendale High School, where he taught. Her restlessness in secondary teaching finally prompted in him a reaction which tells, more than anything else, the story of their marriage: "After two years of that, he knew that wasn't my forte and he told me to look for a job this time—'You get the job you want and I'll find something, no matter what.' So we were both at loose ends and had determined that we were leaving southern Oregon."

"I never intended to come back to Michigan, to stay in Michigan, to retire in Michigan—never in the world." But in August of 1954, while they were driving out to visit Nelda's parents, who still lived in northern Michigan, they passed through Chicago, where they heard about a job that had just surfaced at Kalamazoo College. They had to drive through Kalamazoo anyway, so Nelda called. Yes, there was an opening and she might apply. The full-time speech professor, Ethel Kaump, had resigned suddenly, and they were looking for someone to work half time in English and half time in speech, as well as for a full-time speech teacher. Speech was then required for graduation, so there were six or seven courses per semester. Theatre was practically non-existent.
Nelda and Don Balch on their wedding day, 1948
III

The last person to promote theatre at Kalamazoo College had been Eleanor Baum. In 1948 she had reorganized the College Players and instituted the arena staging of plays in Bowen Hall, as well as presenting an annual children’s show. But the quality and status of theatre arts at the college had long depended on the stubbornness and staying power of the faculty member who promoted it, and when Miss Baum left in 1950, theatre lay dormant for four years. But where stubbornness and staying power were concerned, the College hadn’t seen anything yet.

Nelda Balch had her work cut out for her. For equipment there were four floodlights, two spotlights, and some old costumes; no sewing machine, few if any props. And for a theatre, there was an auditorium space on the top floor of the oldest building on campus, Bowen Hall. As for money, the budget for speech was skewed toward forensics; as in nearly every college where Nelda had taught, debate was the drawing card. At Kalamazoo the budget for forensics was about $900 for trips, and so her theatre program attempted to produce three or four plays a year on $300, without charging the students. But she had been short on money and equipment before, and she had always been long on imagination and determination.

She recalls the Bowen Hall days as the age of miracles. “We didn’t even have a pair of scissors, an iron, or an ironing board. We had no make-up room—no mirrors. We did have flood lights and a couple of spotlights. We borrowed resistance dimmers from, of all places, the physics department. The first time we got area lighting, I sent my class (we had a large class in Introduction to Theater) to gas stations to get quart oil cans. They painted them black inside and then we put in a light bulb, and that was our lighting. We used them for a long time—I think we used them all the time we were over in Bowen. One can [do a lot] in theatre with a little ingenuity, but you’ve got to start with something. You’ve got to have electricity, you’ve got to have a cord and a bulb, and you’ve got to have some scissors and a needle or two. I can get along without a thimble; I can get along without a sewing machine, though we got one eventually. Maintenance was good help to us. They gave us all the old shower curtains—just plain old cotton denim, that heavy curtain material. We took that and any old cast-off furniture. I moved into a house and donated my old drapery material to the department. I must confess, all our costumes [had] the same look . . . . They were all made from the same drapery, only dyed in three different colors. My washing machine got going as a dye machine and also I took clothes home during productions every night and washed
The attic theatre in Bowen was more attic than theatre; the very strength that it took to climb the rickety stairs was reason enough for many to forego the performances—including, it was rumored, a few hardy souls in the physical education department. A letter written by a former student, James Donaldson, gives the view from backstage in those days:

Built before the Age of Ersatz Georgian Small College Architecture, Bowen Hall, with its heavy stone block foundation and towering brick-and-stone peaks, was much akin to those armories, Masonic Temples, court houses, police stations, railroad depots, and county jails which graced, if that is the word, the larger towns and cities in America at the beginning of the century. With more hall space than classroom space, roomy stairwells at either end with wide staircases which doubled and redoubled echoes of the slightest sound made anywhere within the place—in sheer dysfuncional massiveness, it was what guidebooks of the period would have described as a "noble pile."

Up on the third floor—the attic—there was a sort of "hall"—and I use the word loosely—with no windows; a largish room right under the timbers of the roof. There was also a long and narrow room which had a few windows, known as The Classroom—except during showtime, when it was known as the Green Room; this sort of transformation is what is known as The Magic of the Theatre. And at the far end of the large room—was a stage.

I mean to say that, Nelda Balch having gotten ahold of it, it had become a stage. About as deep as a dishpan, the plaster wall at the rear rounded up and forward claustrophobically to the proscenium; if humankind had been created five inches tall, this would have been their Hollywood Bowl. I guess that women's gym classes had once been held in the big room, and the platform at one end was in bygone times useful for chapel, graduation, and other small ceremonies—all they had to do was bring in some chairs. But what Nelda had brought in were hundreds of seats from a defunct Grand Rapids movie house—that's what I was told they were—and had had them anchored onto huge movable wooden risers. The seats could be arranged auditorium-fashion to face the platform—I mean the stage—or, and this was genius going itself one better, they could be placed in an open square along the walls for performances in the round. There was a light board, with all two dimmers, located in a closet halfway back in the auditorium; as far as I could tell, cues were given by telepathy, or perhaps, after the lights had gone down, with tin cans on either end of a taut string.

The point is, when the lights went down, the magic happened, though not without heavy effort on all sides. That last year in Bowen, Nelda directed a comical and sinister version of The Caucasian Chalk Circle—Nelda was introducing southwestern Michigan to Bertolt Brecht at that time, and with stunning success. (She was, of course, directing the student production for that quarter at the same time.) I found out then what "house manager" meant, and it wasn't just taking tickets and smiling at the President of the College; but also: closing the rickety double wooden doors at each end of
the rear of the house when the performance began; opening both sets of
doors again a little later on, after the building had quieted down for the
night, to let in fresh air (even in winter, it always got hot in the attic). Still later,
running back and forth to close the same doors when the train was about to
pass by, and opening them again after the whistle had faded away. Some
nights there were two trains. A "house manager" kept in shape that way.

The last show at Bowen, Somerset Maugham's *The Circle*, was done,
appropriately enough, in the round. Now, with the unused "stage" platform
chock-a-block with stored furniture and props behind the closed curtain, in
order to get from the south to the north end of the theatre you had to go in
the make up room (stage right end), down the back stairs to the second floor,
across the second floor hallway, up a corresponding set of stairs on the north
side of the building, into the makeshift prop room (off stage left), and then
out onto the playing area. All this time, just to reach the other corner on the
same side of the room. (Oh yes, with the premium on space, we dressed in
the toilets in the basement; and offstage quick-changes were an exercise in
acrobatics—or voyeurism, if you were a bystander.)

Despite the physically patched-together nature of the program, Mrs.
Balch was totally serious about it. The theatre program, for her, was not
merely a college entertainment, nor a small church-oriented school's
drama club. She wanted Kalamazoo College to vie for its place with
large, well-known universities in theatre, as it did in other areas. That
meant producing contemporary works as well as classics, experimenting
with new forms as well as the traditional. It meant bringing the real world
of theatre onto the college campus. But the campus—in particular the
administration—was not always ready for the real world to appear in
college theatre. The college was still fairly closely tied to the Baptist
Church, and so its already conservative attitude was influenced by pres­

sure from various visiting ministers as well. The realism of the newer
plays—John Osborne's *Look Back in Anger*, Eugene O'Neill's *A Long
Day's Journey Into Night*—raised many a complaint.

"It was a battle, really—very restrained, a very drawing-room-type of
battle. I was going to see that we got and maintained the kind of program
that a respected theatre department had to have in a college... We had
to maintain the same kind of standards that the big universities did. This
was hard for [President Weimer Hicks] to see. He laid down what he
thought were ultimatums, and I think he was well aware I was going to go
out and do the same kind of show that he or the ministers were objecting
to. There were many times I was called into his office because someone
was concerned about the kind of shows we were putting on. Not only did
he come from a background in which theatre and the arts were not a
great part of his life, so he didn't know what was going on in theatre or
the movies, but he also had to be [officially] responsible to the church.”

The first confrontation came with Osborne's *Look Back in Anger*,
produced in 1959. It had already shocked British audiences when it
opened in London in 1956 and was said to herald a new era in British
theatre. "It was about a young man who was rebelling against the status quo in England. He had married a young girl and he kept calling her mother a bitch. To call a woman a bitch ... that was one of the problems. I don't know that there was much swearing in it, but there was a scene which took place in their little apartment, and she was ironing in her slip. Now, we went out and found a slip that covered the person—that slip covered more than any evening dress or bathing suit. It was heavy and went way up—it was good cover. We didn't want the girl to be uncomfortable. I did write a special note in the program that filled the back page explaining that this was a play by a group of new playwrights in England and has some language you may find offensive. ... It was a serious show about a relationship between a husband and wife and how he was treating her because he was angry. It was also a very important show in the history of theatre.

"That particular weekend there was a conference of ministers on campus, and a minister came to the show. Dr. Hicks had not seen the play. I was called on Saturday morning to come to the President's office. ..." The minister had asked, "What kind of play are they putting on that my daughter says I should not go to?" And so, what was probably a student attempting to shield her conservative father became an insistence by the minister that future audiences should receive even more forewarning than Nelda's program notes. The Dean of the Chapel (who had seen the play and thought it very good) had to write an insert to be placed in the programs explaining further and in more detail the possible offensiveness of the play. That was the only way the President would allow the show to continue to be presented.

Then came Long Day's Journey in 1962, and a trustee complained that it was all drinking, swearing, and dope taking. Nelda was called in once again, but since O'Neill had stipulated in his copyright that nothing could be cut from his plays, she could not be forced to excise offensive material. President Hicks began avoiding the plays so that if confronted, he could say with clear conscience that he did not know what was in them.

Mrs. Balch did not believe in producing plays which included obscenity for sheer shock value; the idea was not to prove that she could produce whatever was in the script. The distinction between good or even classic plays which used swearing to further a solid artistic goal, and those which simply wanted cutting or were completely unsuitable was a fine one, but she saw it clearly. She cites one instance in which she did some cutting that would not need to have been done in a professional company, but which was necessary in a college setting. The play was Tom Paine, by Paul Foster. It had just been done on Broadway,
and when it was produced at Kalamazoo, the producer and Foster himself were brought in. The producer asked why Nelda had cut a scene which involved nude dancing behind filmy curtains. Nelda had thought it was interesting when done professionally, but knew it could not be done effectively at the college level. "I told him very frankly it was just a shallow part and the play was just as good without it. ... I think it is [too much] to ask of a college girl when it is her own local environment where she sees people the next morning at the breakfast table.... We are concerned not just with the standard of the audience, but with the development of the actor in our department and in the whole school, and also the development of the whole student body. That's whom we're playing for...."

In general, it was not nudity which caused the trouble in Nelda's struggle to produce the realistic plays of the late fifties; the more common problem was language. She told Hicks at one point that she was sure one could hear more startling language by standing under a dorm window than by attending one of her plays. And the novels used in some of the literature courses were not without their saltier passages. But Hicks was convinced that theatre was different, and that forewarnings in programs were not always enough. As time passed and Nelda Balch's talent and success became her best witnesses, he softened. "I think Dr. Hicks has changed ... [and] the President and I are still very good friends, so I have come through the battles unscarred.... I've really been fortunate in being able to ... do as wide a program as I have. Many small schools, church-related many of them, don't have the courage, or are just restrained.... But in theatre it is a battle to keep intellectual respect in your discipline ... [especially] when you have other departments that think theatre is just entertainment...."

While struggling to build a theatre program which stood up to her own standards of artistic integrity and excellence, Mrs. Balch worked to build a department as well. The Speech Department had been absorbed into the English Department just before her arrival; the theatre curriculum consisted of one class, which dealt with theatre "primarily from the point of view of the teacher or director of school, church, or community theater."

It did not even pretend to consider professional theatre. And the small number of credit hours given for speech and theatre courses was a telling sign: The school was primarily science oriented, and speech was at best the ugly-duckling discipline of the humanities. The "bread-and-butter" courses in speech were the required introductory courses.

Two years after Mrs. Balch came to Kalamazoo, five theatre courses were offered, including acting, directing and history of theatre, with the
option of a speech major carrying “emphasis on drama.” Some sort of production experience was required for acting, directing, and the new introductory course, which was now a “practical course in theater” and examined costume, make-up, lighting, and scene design. A real curriculum was in the works.

Meanwhile, she began to make way for theatre and speech to become a separate department again. Against her was arrayed a formidable opposition: those trustees who were disturbed by her choice of material; unenlightened faculty and administrators who just didn’t care; the chauvinism and discrimination not only in the English Department but in the administration as well; and political resistance from those who for various reasons could not see theatre and speech as a distinct department. But Mrs. Balch’s fighting spirit had been aroused; she remained at Kalamazoo because of the challenges, not in spite of them.

And though there were few women at the college, those few were making way for women to be accepted as members of the faculty and professionals in their disciplines. Mrs. Balch remembers Frances Diebold, “revered as a professor and a person when I moved on campus; I admired her ability to remain feminine (gentle and sensitive) and still hold her own in a masculine environment. She too, was a fighter. I shall always regret I wasn’t able to get her to perform in a faculty readers production. She wanted to and had the ability.”

Yet another obstacle in her way was the impression left by Ethel Kaump. She had been a very aggressive woman—a debater to the core—and though this sometimes insensitive aggressiveness no doubt helped to get what she needed for her projects, it left an impression of women in speech which was not particularly favorable to her successor and insured defensiveness in her old adversaries. But Mrs. Balch was not one to use power politics as such; even her opponents soon realized she was cast from quite a different mold. Laurence Barrett, professor of English, said she would probably have done little differently if her theatre had been part of the Physics Department: she would send her respects to the department chair and proceed to do what she thought needed to be done, gathering respect and support through her work, rather than attempting to rally it beforehand.

She is often described as “a lady, in the traditional sense of the word.” She did not compete with others, especially the men, on the same basis because of the context of the struggle. But she maintained a personal dignity, integrity, and professionalism for which she became widely admired. If it was felt that she used “feminine wiles” to buffalo the men into agreement, it was also a role she played so well that it was rarely resented. Gradually the respect she inspired began to extend to
her work as well, and the handicap left her by her predecessor was reversed.

The schedule for play production at the college had always been one that catered to the entertainment of the campus; Mrs. Balch had to change it to be able to offer a full, serious program. "When I came, there was a tradition—as it was in most places—to do a play around Homecoming; if people wanted to come on Friday and not go to the bonfire, they could go see the play. Saturday you forgot about the play because there were dances. Then there should be a play somewhere in winter; and then in the spring, rather than a play, there ought to be May celebrations. They had a pageant out on the Quad [around] the maypole—all the girls came down from the chapel in white dresses forming a daisy chain . . . then they did the maypole dance . . . I was not much for pageants or May Day shows. You can't get much variety in them and you have to give one-third of your precious production time to that kind of sameness when you've got a job to do. This idea that the drama department is here to do entertainment on certain occasions had to be met face on . . . I think I lasted through one May Day [but] it was more in the hands of the students . . . [Afterwards] I gave advice to any student who wanted to take it over. But we didn't ever do it as a part of a drama program, which was a change. The May Fete, as it was called, gradually faded out of fashion."

Mrs. Balch concentrated on getting support for her program by involving as many people as possible in the various aspects of good theatre. Beside the plays themselves, which she always chose with the goal of enlarging the experience of her audience and students in mind, she began coffee critiques in which faculty members or members of the community would come in and expand on the ideas in the play pertaining to their expertise. "We would always invite people who were related to the theme of the play. We were trying to get away from what it was apt to [be]—people coming and criticizing the production of the play . . . . It was to talk about and explore the ideas the playwright had promoted in the play. It was very exciting sometimes . . . ."

Another tactic for engaging the campus was born in 1957 when she introduced a new form of theater to Kalamazoo College, just as it was being introduced across the nation by Charles Laughton: readers theatre, in which drama comes from a combination of the language of the script and the imagination of audience—props, sets, and costumes are minimal—and is dubbed "Theatre of the Mind." Readers theatre uses language that lends itself to suggestion, getting the audience to work. And the audience does have to work harder to enjoy readers theatre.
The first show was Shaw's *Don Juan in Hell*. Mrs. Balch began by using plays that depended heavily on dialogue to make them work, and she cut and adapted them to make optimal use of the dialogue. The next three years saw *Under Milkwood* by Dylan Thomas, *The Cocktail Party* by T.S. Eliot, and *Major Barbara* by Shaw. But as she continued to work with readers theatre, she began to see the immense possibilities hiding behind the somewhat restrictive form, and she began to experiment. "I realized that [whole plays] weren't as interesting and really weren't as productive, although I tried to choose more plays that . . . worked because of the language. . . . So I adapted my own, got my own material and worked it around a theme or a particular person or a particular body of work. We did *The Tin Drum* before people knew there was a Gunther Grass. We did one on Updike, railroads, Hemingway, *The Romantic Spirit From the Past*, going back to the German theatre, and poems and Gothic tales from England. That expanded it, and we could use slides and we could use music . . . dance, singing, an instrumentalist . . . ."

These shows—particularly the scripts—are far from easy to put together. One needs a basic familiarity with everything that has been written on a theme or by an author in order to select material. The cutting process comes next—it is a long, arduous process and must introduce the elements that are in some sense theatrical; when the production is up on the stage and not around a fireplace, the theatrical elements must come largely from the material. All the necessary permission must also be obtained for use of the material. Mrs. Balch took a sabbatical one year for the purpose of putting together some scripts on some favorite subjects. She got them in shape for publication, but had a great deal of difficulty getting permission to print them, and no publisher would take them unless she had obtained the permission from those who were to be included. She did not have time to do the necessary traveling for that, however, and she had to throw herself full time into the program again upon her return. Even during quarters off, she was helping plan the next quarter’s program. After the scripts are prepared or obtained, Mrs. Balch takes a group of faculty and trains them to communicate what the author is doing with the language. And she has always made sure it was done simply and inexpensively, since she considers economy one of the joys of readers theatre.

Another of its joys for her is the way it helps the faculty. "It’s good for the faculty because it improves them as professors. It can’t help but improve their speech, and it puts a little dramatic, theatrical quality in their lectures. . . ." She envisions someday having a course for faculty to improve themselves in this way—but she probably has as much suc-
cess and elicits more enthusiasm as she guides them along in the process of producing a show. Readers theatre provides a sort of recreation as well—some of the faculty develop the real acting potential they never had time to explore. The comraderie that develops as the small group works “under fire” to produce the show is valuable as well—in terms of both what it does for the participants and what it does for the school. Even in a small-school setting, it is often difficult to get faculty to know one another, to work and plan together across the disciplines. The life-raft type pressure gives the group a cohesiveness otherwise impossible, and the fun-loving aspect of theatre gives professional relationships a new dimension. In fact, it is this comraderie which the faculty themselves tend to see as at least as important as any other benefit of readers theatre—and it is often this which brings them back, show after show. And it is this which justifies the difficulties of working within difficult faculty schedules, including the traveling some of the participants must do in the midst of the preparation. “I am amazed at the dedication of faculty who are willing to give up their time—and it is difficult, because they are all in a different time slot and they do so much traveling. I am amazed that I am willing to put up with all of the breaking up of the rehearsals and the scooting around behind rehearsal time . . . .”

Political Science professor Donald Flesche, a participant in ten readers theatres, pointed out that faculty present more than just scheduling difficulties. “We’re not the easiest people to work with; in addition to the fact that faculty are all prima donnas . . . they lack self-confidence in [performing].” Mrs. Balch, he says, is superb in “pulling out the best” in them. In fact, it seems that the self-confidence Nelda helps them to develop on stage is one of their greatest achievements by showtime. A poem by Conrad Hilberry of the English Department expresses it best:

Envoy
You have a way with actors, Nelda
and singers, freshmen who’ve never held a
script, carpenters who’d build the Eiffel
Tower if you should need it. But most of all
we like the way you take the faculty—
learned, perhaps, but hardly free
of inhibitions or of shaky knees—
and by your unrelenting skill, your ease,
your warmth, your belief in miracles, your tact,
you teach us to forget ourselves and act.²

Mrs. Balch’s skill with the form itself—everything from theme and material selection and casting to cutting away the difficulties and developing the strengths of her actors—is recognized by everyone involved as extraordinary. The number of times faculty readers use the words
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“excellent” and “genius” when describing her shows their admiration and respect for what she is able to accomplish. And the number of times she uses the word “joy” when describing the work she does with them explains why.

Readers theatre has one additional benefit as well: “Of course, for the theatre department, it is a wholesale blessing because it gives them knowledge of what goes into a production . . . even though readers theatre is a very mini-production in the use of theatrical elements of lighting, staging, costumes, etc. It makes them appreciate the theatre arts and they become loyal supporters.”

The 1958 production of Samuel Beckett’s Waiting for Godot was a courageous step, one which met the usual confusion and resistance, but also brought into Mrs. Balch’s life the champion that she and her theatre department dearly needed. “The choice of this particular play was a brash one, and inviting the audience to ‘sound off’ after the production was even more hazardous. So the perceptive comments and driving questions coming from the gentle lady with the strong voice among the confused and irritated spectators encouraged me—there was a place for the kind of drama that I wanted to do in Kalama-zoo. I had noticed this lady at other productions at the College; strangers were easy to identify, for only students and stout-hearted faculty had the will to climb the squeaky stairs to the fourth floor of Bowen Hall and sit on folding chairs in a firetrap auditorium.”

It was the very stir that Nelda Balch had been causing which had brought Dorothy Upjohn Dalton to Bowen Hall. She was familiar with its squeaky stairwell, though the theatre had changed much since she enrolled as a first-year student in 1910. She remembered how the stairs creaked even in those days: “If you weren’t in class and those stairs creaked, everybody thought you were meeting your beau on the landing.” Miss Upjohn left the college after her first year and transferred to Smith College in Massachusetts, where she had the opportunity to become active in theatre. After graduation and a year as assistant to the only theatre professor at Western Michigan University (then Western State Normal School), she spent a short time with a Chicago repertory company and then moved to New York, finishing a two-year program at the Washington Square Players School of Dramatic Arts in one year. The next decade she spent traveling from New York to Pasadena to Cincinnati, acting with theatre companies in each city. She also spent a year in Europe and a summer in a Woodstock, New York, artist’s colony. In 1929 she moved her family to
The second season in Dalton, 1965-66: a rehearsal of The Physicists
Kalamazoo to settle down. “I almost became a professional actress. . . . I went through a stage, like lots of young people do—especially when you go to New York—where you look down on your hometown. But after a while I began to see some very good points in my hometown.”

By this time the advent of talking movies had spelled the doom of professional theatre stock companies; she filled the void in Kalamazoo by joining with other community leaders such as the Carvers and the Chenerys to start Kalamazoo’s first community theatre, The Kalamazoo Civic Players. The Players found a permanent home in 1932 through the funding of Dr. William E. Upjohn, one of the founders of the Upjohn Company and Dorothy’s father. She was a member of the planning committee for the new theatre, called the Civic Auditorium. About the same time she served the first of two terms on Kalamazoo College’s Board of Trustees. “I was told by one of the trustees that the reason they wanted a woman on the Board was so she could provide a social life for the women at the College. . . . It made me so darned mad; if I belonged to the Board of Trustees, I wanted to feel that I had something of importance to contribute.” And she did. Refusing to throw even one party, she worked for more involvement for women both in the College and in businesses and organizations in the city.

She continued to act occasionally in area theatres and kept close track of virtually all theatre in the area, including the productions in the Bowen Attic. “I heard Nelda was doing some interesting things up there on the fourth floor of Bowen Hall. . . . In that tiny space. . . . Nelda did such a wonderful production.”

Mrs. Balch does not recall when the two, who were to collaborate so fruitfully, were introduced: “there probably never was a formal introduction. . . . The first year I was at the college I was aware of her interest in theatre at the Civic, but it wasn’t until the critique of Waiting for Godot in old Bowen Hall that I saw her in person. . . . I soon realized that wherever theatre needed cultivating, Dorothy Dalton was there to encourage it. New plays, playwrights, and staging interested her, not because of their novelty but because they broadened and extended an art she had studied and practiced. . . . [She] never limited her view to a particular kind of theatre. When many people objected to the language in Look Back in Anger and Long Day’s Journey into Night on our Bowen stage, she chided them and applauded the breakthrough.”

Mrs. Balch had found a kindred soul. Their mutual admiration and their enthusiasm and love for theatre became the basis of a firm, lively friendship, and Mrs. Balch thrived on the encouragement and support
of her perceptive colleague. Their heads were soon together on the
project of pulling the arts at Kalamazoo College together in a new home.
Mrs. Balch recalls this idea as "the beginning of a dream for us for a
particular theatre and a fine arts building. Her attitude, as was ours,
[was] that the arts have got to be together. And there ought to be an
interrelationship between the arts, even though on campuses that's very
hard to achieve. One [discipline] doesn't speak to the other." She had
felt the disunity among the arts on campus when she had tried to do a
musical and been forced to cancel because of lack of support from the
music department, an experience that was to repeat itself later on. The
new building, with its theatre at the center, would both symbolize and
create a new unity, benefiting theatre and the campus as a whole.

It was a time when many visions were getting a foothold in reality.
In the school year 1961-62, Kalamazoo College was transformed by the
institution of the "K-Plan". Designed to deal with a large influx of
students on the small campus and the high cost of building and main­
tenance, as well as incorporating several special learning features, the
K-Plan involved rotating students on and off campus on a quarterly
basis. The off-campus quarters were spent on vacation or what was
to become Career Development, Foreign Study for one or two
quarters, and an independent project as a major field requirement
during senior year. Classes would be taken three at a time during
on-campus quarters.

The immediate impact on theatre was that, with the many depart­
mental changes being made, the time was ripe for theatre/speech to be
set free as its own department. It was put into a division with the other
Fine Arts and was assured at least two faculty, since there were to be
no one-person departments. Credits were regularized—each was as­
signed one credit. And the speech requirement was dropped—now the
only requirement in the department was one distributional credit which
could be acquired in any of the fine arts.

There were other advantages, subtler than departmental status, for
theatre. The creators of the K-Plan, primarily Dr. Barrett, knew it would
cause some disruption of campus life. It turned out to cause more than
was expected—and activities which brought students together as closely
as theatre did began to be more important. It also was much more stable
than student-run activities which were forced to cope with changing
leaders almost every twelve weeks. And many more students were ex­
posed to the overall acceptance and support of the arts overseas, some­
ting which they rarely saw in the U.S. They usually saw more concerts,
plays, and paintings abroad than ever before.

Disadvantages were that Mrs. Balch was left with many more fre­
men and inexperienced upperclassmen to work with, since the majority of the upperclassmen would be off-campus a great deal of the year—and nearly all the majors would be off at once. And since the one fine arts distributional requirement was commonly fulfilled during the foreign study period, a much smaller percentage of students had any academic contact with Kalamazoo’s fine arts departments at all. The dream of a fine arts complex was thus in part a defense against the new Plan’s disruptions, as well as the fulfillment of a vision.

The planning of the new theatre space was not left to chance or, worse, the whims of an administrative planning committee. Dalton and Balch took the planning in hand and took it very seriously. Their decision to abandon the traditional proscenium stage, another characteristic step into the future, drew opposition. “We did decide to do a different stage because it was far cheaper. At the time I don’t think we could have funded a proscenium stage.” The open stage was then a novel concept. “The traditionalists in Kalamazoo advised President Hicks not to consider a change from the proscenium. Not Dorothy Dalton! She found out where there were theatres with open stages and proceeded to visit them, to talk to designers, to study the pros and cons. . . . One of the first things we did together was to find another theatre designed by James Hull Miller. We went to Western Springs [Illinois] to see the open stage he had designed there.”

Miller was engaged to design the theatre, and his fee included a workshop after the stage had been built, to teach Mrs. Balch and her crew how to build scenery for the stage. Mrs. Dalton, meanwhile, convinced Dr. Hicks of the wisdom of digging out an area under the foyer of the building for storage space, knowing from her long association with theatre that the storage he was sure would be adequate would soon be outgrown. She told him about the Civic’s having been limited by its lack of storage space until the Carver Center was built, and she argued that it was much cheaper to do the digging during construction than to have to go back and do it later. The president was convinced. “Before long it was filled with storage as well as a ‘black box’ arena stage for theatre experimentation which everybody was building at that time but which we hadn’t had the forethought to plan on.” The black box was christened The Dungeon.

Dorothy Dalton’s encouragement, as well as her expertise and her leadership in fund-raising, enabled Mrs. Balch to move into Dalton Theatre—and beyond. But it was still just the beginning of a dream—the opening of the building in 1964 brought problems with it as well. James Donaldson describes some of the early challenges of the new space—both in the structure itself and in the ever-present calamities of
theatre life:

James Hull Miller, the patentee of the type of stage of which Dalton is a version, had (as I see it) an almost Medieval faith in the all-purpose playing area, an area to which he did most curious things. We saw him inaugurate “his” theatre personally, via a lecture to the community on his own vision of stagecraft, which was delivered much in the folksy, down-home manner of the late Will Rogers. Miller was apparently convinced that if you had enough flat-top rectangular wagons of various sizes, and plenty of screens and archways built from 1 x 1” lath and covered in burlap, together with a few rudimentary chairs and benches—well, gosh, you could play about anything in such a setting. “Just move the stuff around.”

Our first regular play in Dalton required a mountain in key scenes, a climbable mountain. The mountain was built in two rollaway sections—Jimmy Miller wagons, but with papier-mache—but where to put the mountain when you weren’t on it? As someone said about this time, “There’s no wing space, no place for storing anything or anyone, when the gang switches go down in the light booth it sounds like the elephant is loose again, the cueing system broadcasts continuous FM-radio, and Ethel Barrymore could give a complete performance of _The Old Lady Shows Her Medals_ in the time it takes the curtain to close.” But we coped, and grew, and regrouped; we even took on what would be called in Jungian circles the Great Flood motif, for one day in the building’s second quarter, a waterpipe burst high over the catwalks, spraying lights, seats, stage and all, and flooding down into the costume rooms and areas below the stage. I shall never think of _Androcles and the Lion_, the second Dalton play, without hearing the constant dripping of water from the ceiling onto the plastic sheets that had been strewn across the seats in the house. Everyone pitched in in one of those typical Theatre Department risings-to-meet-the-crisis, and by opening night, fortunately for players and audience, the theatre was drier than Mr. Shaw’s play.

And then there was “The Great Turkey Foot Epidemic” on campus. . . . Some enterprising undergraduate had gone to a poulterer (I assume) and procured a considerable number of turkey and/or chicken feet, which he or she (or they) scattered indiscriminately around campus. You would pull out a book in the library, or open a drawer, or go into the toilet—and there might be a five-inch yellow turkey foot, smooth bone at one end and claws at the other. During dress rehearsal for Pirandello’s _Henry IV_, George Cross—an Englishman then teaching in the French department—had secreted one of these fowl feet in his coat pocket, and he made sure, as he went gadding about the stage, that everyone got to touch this mysterious object—pressing it into one’s hand, and the like. The chaos that resulted, as I could see from my vantage at the rear of the house, cast a pallor over the usually unfazeable features of Nelda Balch; she clearly thought the whole bunch, especially the crazily leering George Cross, had gone right off their rockers. Very unprofessional, under the circumstances.
The arts would begin to talk to one another as they took up residence elbow to elbow, with a single secretary acting as information central. But now, in the mid-sixties, the failure of communication was between students and faculty. The restless student activism of the day combined with what Mrs. Balch sees as a persistent failure on the part of the larger college community to understand the purpose of a theatre department, forming yet another obstacle—or perhaps just another version of the old one.

The students wanted to do musicals as part of their year's repertory—and rightly so, agreed Mrs. Balch, since musicals were at the height of their popularity and also often represented the students' only previous involvement with theatre in high school. The problem was that a musical required music—and that was not as easily procured as it sounded. "When we moved into Dalton, we did not plan for the first year to do a musical. . . . We had done a musical [in 1958]; we did The Boyfriend and very successfully. It was . . . difficult because we didn’t have a regular orchestra. We had to use a band man and he got together some pieces for our music—and he was only a part-time person. . . . We had a very small faculty and student body then, only about four hundred in the student body and not many theatre majors, and those who were, when I came, were speech majors, so their training was in speech. So after The Boyfriend we wanted to do another musical, and even got the script for it, but we had some difficulty in tying in with the music department. They were too busy; they had their own programs to do; finally we had to send back the scores and cancel it. Students somehow got the idea that because I was doing the other kind of shows—straight, serious shows. . . . I didn’t want to do musicals. But I knew the problems. You had to have music people, you had to have people to play the score, you had to have enough to sing in the chorus, and even using everyone in the student body who could sing, you weren’t apt to get a big enough group. . . . We had had that bad experience very recently [before moving into Dalton], but there was a group of students right after the first year who were gung-ho for musicals, and because they had had some experience once in Dalton, . . . they proposed doing a musical. They had one of our majors who was a pianist and had done a lot of high school directing—he would be at the helm of it; they took all the majors and the people who had been in our first year . . . and formed their own musical theatre. It was going to be a separate organization and it was going to use Dalton and do one musical a year."

The provost's attitude was most likely one of laissez-faire—he would
prefer to let students attempt just about whatever they wanted in the way of activities, reasoning that they would learn something in the process, and that unless the new project filled a real need on campus it would fade quickly anyway. And perhaps to many he sounded more reasonable than Mrs. Balch could acknowledge at the time—certainly the latter prediction turned out to be accurate. But years of fighting the attitude that theatre didn’t involve anything most ordinary people couldn’t do for themselves without special training made her immediately sensitive to the issue, and to its consequences. Unfortunately, few others were as aware.

Mrs. Balch went to the faculty and insisted that having a student-run troupe on campus would do much more harm than good to theatre at the college. A small theatre department trying to reach a professional level of production and to establish itself as a discipline did not need competition for people, time, and space. But the prevailing attitude was still that theatre was primarily entertainment, and the students carried the day. In the fall of 1965 they “got together and they spent their Thanksgiving vacation on campus making costumes. They took over the lower part of the new building. They put on a big musical.”

The next official theatre department show Mrs. Balch regards as “about the only flop I will acknowledge. We did not have the people. By the time everybody had been used and . . . the time for the regular production came along, we were very, very meager. We couldn’t ask the same people right after this huge production. I’m not sure they made money; in fact, I think there were a lot of problems that arose out of [the students’ financial management]. Financially, there were things that were never quite clear.”

The confusion and animosity surrounding the musical frustrated her because they impeded what for her was the paramount cause: “That did not help this small department that was trying to grow into a theatre, with equipment, and trying to build as a theatre arts discipline. . . . For a speech person, I don’t have as much success as I should have in communicating the philosophy of the arts as a discipline [and] selling the administration on the importance of theatre to the student—non-major as well as major—to the community, and to life at large. Theatre is a part of life. It shows us something about ourselves; it gives us a cause for celebration as human beings. . . . Theatre, if it’s good, deals with questions of the spirit and values. It doesn’t deal with how to make a fast buck; it’s deeper than that. I deals with the human spirit trying to cope with the short life on this planet—if it’s good theatre. Now, it may be that . . . we see Willie Loman, and we think it’s about how he was ousted after he had served long as a traveling salesman. No. It
deals with his approach to goals in life and his values and the values of the family. That is what good theatre is about and why it's so essential.” Of the difficulty of selling this view to the College community, she speculates, “Maybe it was [so difficult] because the college was entrench[ed] . . . as a science-oriented [school]. I shouldn’t say that because some of my best friends are scientists . . . .” She needed those friends, in fact, to decontaminate her office shortly after the musical fiasco, when a bitter student spread explosive powder over the room.

“The misunderstanding was the thing I was most unhappy about, as though I were against student endeavors, as though I were against musicals. It was just a matter that we could not at that point do a musical and do what we were committed to do as a part of the department . . . .” That commitment on her part was not in spite of her students, but because of them. What was regarded widely as mere entertainment she insisted was a vital part of a discipline, deserving serious consideration and professional guidance. “Physical theatre on campus [is] a lab that has the same relationship to its majors as the chemistry lab or the biology lab, and is as necessary . . . . Storage areas are [as necessary in theatre] as storing your chemicals, stuffed animals and the like . . . .”

And in her view, the students suffered most from a less-than-serious attitude toward theatre, especially on the part of their parents. “I suffer along with the students who come wanting to major in the arts and whose parents see the arts as recreational: ‘It’s all right to be a dilettante in it and do a little bit of work on the stage if you want to, but never, never . . . consider the discipline as a major. . . . You cannot make a living!’ I realize the importance we give the professions; we regret we don’t have a doctor or a lawyer among the many nieces and nephews and cousins that I am part of. But I suffer along with these students who really have a talent, who really need to find out if they have one, and have this yearning to do something in the arts. They go along with Father; they have to—that’s where the money is coming from. So they start out to be a chemistry major or a physics major or a business major, and by the end they flunk or they have personal problems, drop out and come back, and by the time they are juniors, they realize they have to get into theatre or art or music or English. Sometimes it’s too late.”

But Mrs. Balch’s dedication to the value of serious theatre in a student’s education is not merely disciplinary territoriality; it is part of a larger philosophy of liberal education: “If parents would only realize that [their children are not] necessarily going to major in it or use it as a vocation strictly. It will never go to waste. They can use it in some way. Maybe ten years later it is going to enlarge whatever vocation they finally end up in. If they go into foreign service, or some kind of manage-
ment, that approach to life through the arts will make them leaders of the future. It may take time, and they won't earn as much money right off because they are not prepared vocationally just yet, but give it time, give it time . . . [Attitudes] may have changed a little in music because parents can see a violinist, a pianist, a member of the symphony; he is visible and he is recognized as a talent. But a person who is designing the lighting in a show is not always that visible . . . "

She remembers a favorite example of theatre making its importance felt in the life of a student: "he was a chemistry major, very brilliant. He was in every show when he was on campus here, despite his heavy work, and it was not just a walk-on—he was a lead, one of our star people. He was in the summer show, Mother Courage, one of the most difficult shows we have done. He left here and went to Stanford University on a fellowship and got his Ph.D. His experience with drama had made him so enthusiastic about drama—Stanford didn't have much going in the department at that time—that he started his own drama program in the dormitory. He had shows going that got reviews in the paper. He sent back here and wanted our costumes . . . for Oh, What a Lovely War. We sent him costumes and some of our props. After he had been there a year or two, he decided his was not the spirit to be enclosed in a laboratory as a research assistant. He decided he really liked working with people, particularly children. He had done some things there with [anorexic] children . . . He broke away, left his fellowship at Stanford after two years, I think, and was accepted at McGill University, and became a doctor . . . Here is a fellow whose theatre helped him find the kind of thing he is best suited for—a doctor, working with people."

For Mrs. Balch, the enrichment of theatre productions and the integrity of the department were always inextricable from her role as a teacher, which, even apart from success as a director, she took very seriously. "The rewards . . . come during the class time as you see people develop and the work that they do, but [they come later as well], as you see them go out into [other] fields and then hear about them and know that this idea . . . or this attitude . . . germinated in your class . . . " When a former student gets an unexpected break and writes back to tell her, she rejoices. Sometimes what she thought she was teaching and what students remembered and used are two different things, especially among non-theatre majors. But often the influence was more direct. Students reported that they were starting theatres from scratch in small colleges and communities and drew upon their years in Bowen, learning to do just that. Sometimes they launch a readers theatre in a hospital
setting, with patients as the cast. The attitude her alums carry with them as a result of her influence can be summed up in one word—integrity. Defined by one such student, it means "encouragement, tenacity, and a no-nonsense approach toward creating something worthy and important."

For this kind of teacher, a college campus is rich soil where learning is another reward of teaching. "It is bustling, it’s throbbing with ideas—some of them not very good—some of them needing to be tried out—but even a poor idea stimulates you. . . . I don’t know of any course I’ve taught that has ended, or that [has been] the same old course. Somebody stirs me, or I do some more reading for the class—something else opens up and I become more excited than the students in exploring something. I think at times I overwhelm them with the possibilities in my enthusiasm, because I’m finding it exciting. . . . [They] go away thinking, ‘Gosh, does she think we can possibly accomplish all this?’ I know they are not going to accomplish all of it and I’m not going to either, but I would rather have more out there to be done than find that [I’m ready] to close the door and I have finished. The classes are just doors that open into more literature, more research, more experimentation, more production."

For this reason, her move back into college teaching after the secondary school detour was a wise one. "I don’t feel I’d be happy in most high school situations. I suppose it is because when you have people who are interested in learning and in books and in the humanities—not just theatre but the humanities—you can both travel together. In high school you have to set up so many sign posts and urge them to pick up the load and take a few steps that you spend all your time figuring out how to motivate them. I want to get on with it and travel with them. I don’t think teaching in a college, particularly the caliber of Kalamazoo College, is an easy job. I say this not just from the standpoint of the amount of work that is demanded to keep up with, as well as ahead of, the students, because you find students who are far along in various areas that you couldn’t expect yourself to be as knowledgeable about (though you’d like to be). It is [also] hard because you are coping with young aspiring adolescents who are fraught with personal problems, vocational problems, academic problems, and just . . . growing and feeling very conscious of it. One has to cope with these things."

And one of the prices is criticism, with which any teacher must deal. But student criticism has always been especially hard for Mrs. Balch. "Any teacher takes criticism very personally. . . . I am never able to look at [student evaluations] until at least . . . a term or two have passed.
That isn't helpful, I know, to improve the class, but one adverse comment would send me into such hours of depression that I couldn't face another class. I always told myself I knew what was wrong anyway. I could wait a year and then read the criticism. I think we are in an environment everywhere—as well as in college—where criticism is the thing. It can be very sharp and cutting—unsympathetic, perhaps. Maybe that's the way we are as teachers, too." Despite—or perhaps because of—her resistance to criticism, she feels the necessity of its levelling effect. She kept copies of strong criticism she received from students, ministers, and others at her desk to read when she began to feel "too big for [her] shoes." And having trouble taking criticism, she finds it difficult to give it, especially at a small college where a teacher knows the student's personal problems. "I think ... the worst thing about teaching is that you have to grade the student—it's the hardest thing in teaching. I wonder if [a student realizes] the anguish that faculty goes through, wanting to give him the best grade possible but not wanting to further him in a fantasy that he is top in his field, or that he is a 'B' student when he isn't, or that this kind of work deserves a certain grade when it doesn't—and he will find that out in time. There is a certain amount of integrity that goes into it. A lot of hours of anguish go into it, at least into my grading, because I know the students, in some cases personally; ... it is one of the hardest parts of a place like Kalamazoo, and one of the best parts, that you are personally involved in some way. ... In a large institution you can go by the book: If he doesn't deserve [a certain grade], it can be discarded. You're not bothered about how his mother and father are going to take it and what his future is going to be because he didn't get the grade he wanted...."

When the teacher moves onstage as a director, the dynamics change: "we have a different relationship than we have in the classroom, because [we] have the same goal, which is to create a full and valid characterization. My job is to see that it is transferred to the audience. The satisfaction of dissatisfaction that reaches both of us if we haven't completed that picture—that's different [from] the classroom situation, where the student is working toward a grade. ..." In production students "become colleagues—with a little more to learn."

A prime example of this collegiality came in the summer of 1964, with the "culmination of a plan conceived by students and faculty several years before as they worked on the old Bowen stage and dreamed of the new facilities to be built."9 This group, many of whom would be graduated by the time the new complex was ready, "hadn't had a chance to be on a stage as such, and the resolved they were going
to have such a beginning as soon as we got into Dalton.” A small group
of ’64 graduates and recent alumni formed a professional repertory
company with Mrs. Balch, launching an institution that would bring
many alumni back to work at the college as colleagues in a truer sense
than ever before – Festival Playhouse.

“Dalton Theater was dedicated at the June Commencement; a month
later rehearsals were underway for Festival Playhouse ’64 . . . The hope
was for a permanent summer repertory company for the Kalamazoo
area; the goal, an enrichment of the regular theater offerings, both in
curriculum and in production.”10 There was probably more trepidation
than Mrs. Balch’s word “hope” acknowledges, for regular summer reperti­
tory theatre had been tried in the Kalamazoo area before and had never
lasted, and the technical challenges were considerable. Mrs. Balch recalls
that she “put together the first festival . . . without any instruction from
James Hull Miller;” — that came later, in the fall — “without anything that
we would normally have if we had gone through one season . . . . We
had a beautiful stage, and lights up there, but we were just learning how
to use them all.” They had their work cut out for them: That first year,
the Playhouse explored Absurdist Theatre – Ionesco’s The Chairs, N. F.
Simpson’s The Resounding Tinkle, Beckett’s Waiting for Godot, and
Frisch’s The Firebugs. The company consisted of eight alumni (either
theatre majors or experienced college actors), along with Mrs. Balch
as director and a designer/technical director. Undergraduates worked
with the company in The Firebugs and on the technical crew. “Free
of the confines of an academic framework, the company could con­
centrate on their roles and rehearse throughout the day.”11

“In August of 1964, Festival Playhouse opened in Dalton Theater with
a bill of three productions on three consecutive nights . . . , ten per­
formances in twelve days . . . .” The company thus “achieved an ensemble
effect impossible to reach during winter season and established a unique
rapport with the audience. Coffee-critiques and discussion sessions after
performances by special resource people furthered this rapport, allow­
ing the production to “come off-stage.”12

The next summer’s repertoire was planned “with an emphasis upon
foreign playwrights which complemented the foreign study program of
the College”:

Anouilh’s Amphitryon 38 brought a sophisticated high comedy to the
stage; Durrenmmatt’s The Visit continued the absurdist-expressionistic
school; Pirandello’s Enrico IV introduced the audience to an important
but seldom-produced dramatist. The company was enlarged to include
several faculty members and townspeople in one-role appearances;
and an advisory group of alumni, townspeople, and faculty served as a
sounding board. An experienced designer and technical director, Alan Leach, recently an APA fellowship member, was added to the staff. Perhaps most important, two courses were concurrently introduced into the curriculum, giving credit to undergraduates for both acting and technical work in the program; thus several summer quarter students acted in all three shows, and a class in theatre practicum worked backstage.\textsuperscript{13}

In 1966 the college's two-year sponsorship expired, and the Festival hung by its purse-strings. Mrs. Balch went to Mrs. Dalton, a member of the new Festival Board. Under her three-year grant the Playhouse continued:

Guest director, Richard Meyer, with experience as an assistant to Elia Kazan at Lincoln Center, brought fresh approaches to the program; professional actor, William Leach, playing in all three shows, added depth and richness. Playhouse '67 opened with a premiere mid-west performance of Megan Terry's \textit{Viet Rock}, followed by John Arden's \textit{Happy Haven}, and Becket by Anouilh. \textit{Viet Rock}, "built" by actors and the playwright in the workshop of the Open Theatre in New York, generated excitement by both its subject and style; Arden's wry play on old age combined music, masks, and social comment in Brechtian manner; the third show presented traditional material in a traditional mode. The improvisational approach used by the director of \textit{Viet Rock} developed an ensemble that gave spirit, unity, and inspiration to the production while providing a new learning situation for actor and audience. The "Now Theatre" had come to Kalamazoo.\textsuperscript{14}

Playhouse '68 again emphasized new works, including \textit{Tom Paine} — the first non-professional production of Foster's play, with the playwright in attendance:

\textit{Oh, What A Lovely War} carried on the improvisational techniques of \textit{Viet Rock}, adding more orchestration, projections, and audience participation. The third show, \textit{The Memorandum}, introduced to the campus and to audiences outside New York, Vaclav Havel, former resident playwright at Prague's leading avant-garde theatre. The theme of protest — protest against war and the Establishment, protest against tyranny, and protest against mad bureaucratic efficiency — was paramount in the plays. Ned Bobkoff was the guest director, and the company was headed by Earl Boen, Equity actor from Guthrie Playhouse. The increase in staff and salaries brought professional workmanship to the areas of choreography, music, and costuming; the specialized experience of the guest director and several of the actors added texture and richness. For both audience and actor, this was the most exciting season, the most worthwhile.\textsuperscript{15}

Festival Playhouse was, as they say in the theatre, “up” and rolling. It has lasted for eighteen seasons, now entering its nineteenth year of extending Kalamazoo College theatre into the community. To the campus, which is in full session during the summer since the K-Plan, it has brought workshops, guest directors, artists-in-residence, and the
stimulus of professional theatre. It has created a place for more theatre than the academic production season could allow, especially after the discontinuities of the K-Plan began to make themselves felt. And additionally, it encouraged alumni to bring back the experience which had molded their initial training at Kalamazoo.

"Some of them have just graduated and are being paid, and they come in as co-workers—that has been very satisfying, particularly when they can reach that state in their [own] thinking . . . and they do; they take hold of that very quickly. . . . [W]e have [also] hired back many of our . . . graduates years later, so they come back after they have been out in the field ten, fifteen, or twenty years. We’ve had Dail Willoughby come back to the Festival after he had gone out and painted and directed and acted; and John Bolin, who built a Festival Company and a stage patterned after ours at Berea College after he got his Ph.D.; and this is great. They come back and they can talk about problems that are similar, and you can see you have influenced them—I hope it was the right way. They are learning, they are not following—none of them will imitate any of us that way, but they have been inspired or motivated to do certain things, either the way we’ve done things or a different way, because of that experience. . . . That has been very rewarding and illuminating," and has also been the role of Festival as a teaching tool for Mrs. Balch.

In the early years, Mrs. Balch had done everything almost single-handedly, using students whenever she could. But as the department grew—from 1½ to 2½, officially—it “began to take on a more professional air. . . .” In 1966 Clair Myers joined the staff, and “things began to settle down into a respectable department with offerings that we could stack up against any school in our league.” Myers remembers his interview, which began with a telephone call. From her voice, “grand and big and sure,” he expected a “large grand lady.” Instead he found himself face to face with “a very, energetic, bright-eyed woman who was doing a play I had not read by a playwright with whom I was only faintly familiar.” He was given a glimpse of her notorious frugality: “Some of Nelda’s colleagues in the English Department accused her of sneaking me into town without contacting them. In truth, the whole interview must rank as one of the shortest and cheapest on record.” Four or five hours after his hesitant arrival in Kalamazoo, she had gathered all the information she needed.

“I have always assumed,” he said, “I was offered the job for one of two reasons. One, it was very late in the season—late May—and they were desperate and willing to take me on for one year to get over the hump. The other was that Nelda had seen the potential in this green,
green kid from Ohio. I am fairly certain that it was the former, but the latter is more in keeping with what I came to understand as Nelda’s remarkable strength—the willingness to go beyond the safe.”

Paradoxically, technical facilities were so limited that they were never the first consideration in choosing a show and thus somehow were transcended. “Nelda and I were both pretty naive about the technical ends of a production,” Myers recalls. “We did not know you could not do some things, and because our frames of reference were different, we did not get caught in certain technical binds. That gave us an incredible freedom to do almost any kind of play. Our central concern was the script and the actor. That is not sufficient when you have a more elaborate physical plant and a better trained design/tech team.

The one major difference between those times and now is that we talked about the show and the playwright and the need to do it. Nothing was talked about the physical requirements of the show and how it could or could not be done.”

During his seventeen years at Kalamazoo, Myers saw both dimensions of Mrs. Balch—the generous colleague and the tough professional. He remembers gratefully “her openness to others. Although I chafed at some of the policy choices and was always itching to ‘take over,’ Nelda never reacted except in a positive way. I only came to appreciate how open she was when I began to deal with junior members of the department and to give over some of my own cherished projects for the greater needs of the department and faculty. I must say I have come to admire Nelda more and more in that respect.

“I don’t want to mislead you about Nelda. She is not all sweetness and light. She is a tough cookie—almost like Churchill’s ‘some bird, some neck.’ When you have the angels, Dorothy Dalton, and integrity on your side, you can afford to be tough, determined, and even perhaps stubborn. When she is convinced she is right, you do not move her, even though she may see herself as an easily crushed individual. You have only to realize that she single-handedly moved theatre from the English Department into its own department under what were impossible political pressures. She also got the idea to build a theatre when there was no hope for a new one. . . . She also outlasted the narrow-minded members of the Board of Trustees who saw only the serious immorality of the theatre, and she even triumphed over the former president who would have been absolutely at peace with a nice quiet fun theatre activity on campus for appropriate occasions.”

When Myers took on directing and teaching duties and scene, costume, and lighting people came on board, there were three full-time faculty plus a part-time person. The curriculum was expanded—more acting
courses, an enlarged history of theatre course, lighting and film courses. And the emphasis had moved once and for all from speech to theatre. The new era was marked by an event that occurred shortly after Myers’ arrival and that for many people had marked the end of an era. Bowen Hall was razed to make way for a new student dining hall. The last vestige of the “Bowen days” of theatre fell; however decrepit and non-functional the building had become, the sense of loss was greater than for any other casualty of the growth and improvement of the physical plant.

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During these years of struggle and achievement, when Nelda Balch’s elegant carriage, constant enthusiasm, powerful will, and inexhaustible energy and ambition were becoming legendary on the campus and in the community, her strongest source of personal support was her husband, who was a school administrator at the Milwood, Woodward, and Lincoln schools. “As I look back over the years in Kalamazoo, I realize how much my husband, Don, contributed to my work in theatre . . . . My career was important to him during our entire marriage. His enthusiasm for any of my ventures always matched mine; his support brought him to many rehearsals and to every production, usually every performance of every production I staged. His criticism, kind but keen, helped me in many phases of academic life, and his encouragement and praise stayed me from giving up several times when obstacles, material and human, seemed too threatening to face. He believed in me when I didn’t. His image of me still stands as a goal, far away but very vivid.”

His supportiveness, plus the strength and independence of his wife’s character, led many to draw stereotypical conclusions about Don Balch. “Most people do not see me sitting down. I’m usually standing up, moving people around or managing something in rehearsal. People don’t see me in tandem. I guess you’d have to say, ‘Well, I wonder what her husband is like.’ He was not Mr. Milquetoast. It could be easier, I think, to see us two in tandem if I [had] someone as high-spirited in the harness with me. Some people saw my husband when he came to rehearsals to pick me up. At that time, even though we had two cars, I preferred to let him call for me because then I didn’t have to worry about the car, scraping off the ice and everything. I wanted him to come and I would try things out on him at home. He knew pretty much where I was going with something, and he would come to several productions, not just one night of it. He would be seen just sitting quietly as I carried on— that’s how we were seen in public. People seemed to think I had him in tow, which was not true at all. I think even people here on campus did not know him. He had his own life, of course, and
his own job to do. He was the principal of Lincoln. They had sixty-five or so staff and three or four rooms of Special Ed. Kids. He had a situation where there were almost as many fights among the girls as among the boys, and they used knives and so forth—you really have to be on your toes to control a situation like that. I went over there when they had PTA meetings and things.

"He was a member of the Y Club, the men's club downtown, and anyone who was a friend of Don's had to know something about what Nelda was doing. He was my best supporter. I just met a Y Club member at the apartment building about two weeks ago. I didn't know him, but he said yes, he knew Don through the Y, and recalled the occasion when Don pushed him into bringing a box lunch and coming to the performance at the playhouse with the group." The collaboration carried over into domestic life. Although Mrs. Balch generally cooked and cleaned and let her husband take care of the yardwork, if she needed his help he was always willing—and able. "There wasn't any problem about shopping or dishes or cleaning. He was the best floor scrubber . . . really a better cleaner than I was, so we [did] that kind of sharing."

Robert Smith, theatre professor at Western Michigan University and long-time Festival actor, remembers that the two had an incredible rhythm together. "Don was always there to support Nelda, but was never obtrusive. He must have had such a complete sense of himself and such inner security that her visibility never threatened him. He sold tickets, poured tea and coffee—and stood behind her."

In 1969 Nelda Balch was promoted to Full Professor, joining Mary Collier in Psychology as the sole female faculty member of that rank at the College since the retirement of Frances Diebold two years before. And in May of that year, Don Balch died suddenly while playing handball at the YMCA. Two hours after he had been in her office, she received a message and reached the hospital within ten minutes. For some unknown reason, no one was with him as she approached; she found him lying dead in an empty room.

The first years after his death were very hard. She threw herself into her work with more determination than ever. But she says she was "a zombie."

Close friends watched and offered what support they could. Things that the Balches had done together and places they had gone, such as Stratford, Ontario, for the Shakespeare Festival, were painful without him, but she forced herself to do them with the self-discipline which had brought her to this point in her life. Amidst loneliness and loss which perhaps no one fully comprehends, she was yet a fighter by nature. She says that the one "lifesaver" during this
time was her ritual daily walk. Always healthy and physically charged—in her youth she had loved running long before it was a fashionable sport—she took her brisk walks without fail every day. "No matter what, I had to get out of the house and I could walk along and rage and scream and let off my anger, my indignation with the world and whatever I had to do in accepting something."

The early 70's were still growing years for the department. Laurence Jaquith joined the staff in 1974 as a set designer. But still Mrs. Balch continued to be not only the head but the heart and limbs of theatre at the College. Jaquith remembers her constantly in motion, keeping a delicately balanced schedule through tight organization and personal attention to detail. She made sure the photographs of productions were taken, she filed, cleaned, and rearranged, she made sure windows were closed and a hundred other times were taken care of in addition to the major departmental chores. Her notes to herself on such details would often raise the blotter under which she slipped them by a few inches before the end of the term. So accustomed was she to doing everything herself that she never got into the habit of delegating. What wasn't volunteerer for she took upon herself as a matter of course. In fact, she sometimes had trouble leaving projects to others—she kept a finger in every pot as much as possible.

And yet, Jaquith says, "there is a spirit about her that makes you want to work." As Robert Dewey, Dean of Chapel, put it, once she decides to get someone to do a job, "it is impossible to say no to Nelda." Dewey has acted under Mrs. Balch in both readers theatres and regular productions and remembers her constant bywords in rehearsals: her reminders that the production was "a work in progress" and would not be truly completed even after the final show. As in teaching, directing opens doors rather than closing them for Mrs. Balch; nothing can ever be "finished" in the sense that its potential is exhausted. The concept can be hard to accept sometimes—actors feel confused and unsure under her direction if they do not adapt easily to change. And co-workers on other projects occasionally cringed at the number of times they heard her firm, not-to-be-argued-with voice declare, "I've changed my mind..." But when the production is up on opening night and the actors and crew behind stage are working up for the opening moment, the time for concern is past, and only the optimism that makes way for concentration prevails. Dewey recalls that she would come up to them all backstage, "dressed like a queen and smiling; she might say, 'It's a very high-quality audience,' by which we would know there were perhaps only fifty people in the house."
But whether they played to a "quality" audience or to one that had quantity as an asset as well, the productions bore her trademark, defined by English professor Conrad Hillberry: "subtle interplay among actors, loving attention to detail, careful timing, characterization that grows out of the lines themselves as they become part of the actors' experience. Her productions move, as it were, from within. Seeing her shows, you seldom think, 'What a brilliant piece of directing.' Instead, you think, 'Of course. That's the way it would have to be done.'"

The creation of the dramatic, almost magical, interaction with the audience, the illusion that strikes closer to home than reality, begins long before opening night. The script, of course, is the beginning. Mrs. Balch has often been acknowledged by colleagues, actors and students as particularly insightful in one of those early steps—casting. Almost as soon as the number of students trying out for plays began to increase, the K-Plan took its toll, leaving her primarily with freshmen. But she took the raw, immature actors she had and gave them technique and fire—she tapped the creative abilities of each one, veteran or novice. Barrett often encouraged his advisees to try out for a play, and even if he had to push them even to make the attempt, before long they would talk of little else. Mrs. Balch says one of the most important skills she has had to learn as a director is to trust her own judgement and instincts, knowing the student actors will grow and improve—and not allowing the students to limit themselves or her vision for them. She uses her actors, both student and professional, to help shape her vision of the play. She permits and encourages her actors to discover and create—if she likes it, it stands; if not, she says no. Developing her directorial concept from a reading, she nonetheless never allows the form to become frozen. Robert Smith describes her directing as a "fingertip process," saying that she realizes she is working with "a living form and living actors." The director has a vision—the actor and director work together to create the form, the character, the image, or the scene, but it is the director's vision of the whole toward which they work; the good actor knows this and adapts to it. And the Balch vision constantly changes as she sees new ways, forms, possibilities—if the actors can handle it. She works, after casting, with reality and human potential, not with the "ghosts" she may have in her head.

Smith says he sees qualities of Chekhov, Mrs. Balch's favorite playwright, in her. Her deep focus and intense seriousness toward her work are set in an overall context of humor, an ability to laugh—even at herself, and at the little trademarks people develop after the togetherness of a production.

And as James Donaldson points out, she was much more to her stu-
dents and actors than a good and amiable director: "Liesel Flashenberg, Nelda's secretary that summer, would call me on the phone: 'It's 9:20, and rehearsal's scheduled for nine.' Oh God. 'Is Nelda there yet? (stupid question)!' 'I've been here since 8:30,' said Lee, rubbing it in. 'She's been here since seven.' She's Been Here Since Seven (and often stayed til past eleven at night, need I add) is a highly suggestive characterization of Nelda's dedication to her students, her theatre, her college, and her art. For the many of us who have been associated with her, it has never been just a simple matter of, "Well, if Nelda is going at the theatre that hard, we've got small reason for complaint"—though her ability to serve as a model of leadership, and in the most astonishingly self-effacing way, is certainly a part of the picture. We should also speak of her as a diplomatic but indefatigable promoter of modern drama and enlightened theatricalism in this section of the Middle West—no mean task, and one requiring fortitude as well as courage. She is also a superb teacher and taskmistress, and an understanding and compassionate counselor and friend. She has seemingly inexhaustible patience with crews, casts, classes, companies, faculties, community—and yet I well recall she was always there when you, personally, needed her. When you stop to consider how many 'Yous' there have been over the years gone by, you begin to see the outline of the magnitude of her achievement."

Dalton Theatre had provided a place for theatre at Kalamazoo—and, as it turned out, a place for myriad other activities needing large seating capacity. "[It] seems odd, [when] we hear that Western has four theatres, and people say, 'Oh, wonderful!' [and yet] somehow they felt K was outrageous to ask for two. But you have to realize that Kalamazoo College didn't have an auditorium where people could meet. The chapel . . . doesn't work for pep rallies or senior class meetings. And Dalton Theatre was used for many meetings in the very beginning. Three or four luncheons were given on the stage to . . . publicize the college. [President] Hicks also held a wonderful buffet [in which] the table came up on the left [the front portion of the stage] as if from the bowels of the earth, with the lights shining . . . on an ice carving in the center. It was a very theatrical event. Freshman exams, Foreign Study meetings, large classes [such as] Biology were held there." The music department used it extensively, as did outside groups: "Western's French Department used it regularly, the Latvian Society used it, our Forum used it. It was scheduled for many activities during the day, which meant we had to move somewhere else. . . . We had to set up for rehearsal and we couldn't leave it up during classes. . . . So Dalton got a great deal of use,
and we were only one of the users. And if you're going to have theatre as a discipline, you have to have a laboratory to go into that you can set and design and have there for you." In ten years' time the lightboard, the last of an older style when it was purchased, was completely outmoded, and Dalton presented other technical difficulties for certain types of plays. It was time for another space.

Mrs. Balch convinced Mrs. Dalton, among others, of the need, and the duo set out once again to inspect stage designs. This time they had in mind a three-tiered thrust stage. They flew to Minnesota to visit about eight theatres, as there was no thrust stage anywhere in Michigan. In 1976 the new Playhouse opened, complete with computerized dimmer board and four-channel sound system. Three hundred spectator seats are arranged in a horseshoe around the stage, which juts out into the center of the auditorium. In addition, a shop, classrooms, and more storage space were built, and between the two theatres a single make-up room was added—no longer would dressing be interrupted whenever a male actor needed make-up while the women were dressing. The music department now not only had freer use of Dalton but took over the old dressing rooms for archives. Now the city of Kalamazoo had the full range of stages: The College had open and thrust stages, and Western Michigan University and the Civic had proscenium stages.

One year after the Playhouse opened, Mrs. Balch received a call from Claudia Daub, a former student—an English major—who had acted as lead in Dark of the Moon, the first fall-term play in Dalton. Mrs. Balch had not heard from her for a while, but knew "she had married an official in the Citibank and was living in Saudi Arabia for a period of time, a year or two, and knew she had grown to love that country and wanted to stay there forever." Claudia found Mrs. Balch in Florida "and asked if I would be interested in entertaining a group of theatre professionals from the Middle East. She was writing a plan for the State Department to introduce these theatre people to professional theatre in the U.S. She wanted to include at least one educational institution; [she] thought dearly of Kalamazoo College as a college and as a theatre. She asked if we would host them for two weeks and maybe do a play written by them. After checking with officials in the department, we decided we could handle that; she wrote the proposal and it was accepted. Then the next call came and she said, "Look, would you like to go and pick these theatre professionals?" She wanted two people to go with her and she had chosen John Jory, who runs the Louisville theatre (original theatre) and whose father was Victor Jory of the movies... . It was difficult to have the College release me because it would have had to be in May, after I was on the job here. They said no but Claudia called the
President and called the Provost and the word came: Yes, I could go for two weeks—they were going to go for three weeks. So off we went, just the three of us. It was truly a marvelous experience. It was marvelous because Claudia had so much respect for me as a friend as well as a teacher of theatre and she loved theatre. I'd never met John Jory before, though I'd seen him in New York once. The first stop was in Rome. We stayed there two nights . . . then we stopped in Cairo . . . and then went on to Kuwait and to Damascus. We were scheduled to go to three or four more countries but at the time there was political trouble and the State Department did not want us to go. We wanted to take a car and drive over to Beirut. We could have done it but it would have caused difficulty. But it was a very enlightening experience traveling for the State Department. It meant that one's arrival and departure were eased by officials. We met the top officials in the cultural area and some of the higher officials in the governments. We came back to the U.S. and put in our selections and then a group of about twelve came to tour the theatres and stayed about two weeks at K College in the fall.

"The next year I was called, not by Claudia, but by the representative of the Visitors' Program to see if I would travel across the United States with another group. The people from Syria had been pulled out just days before the departure the year before, but they had succeeded in persuading their government to let them go the following year. So it was just to be the group from Syria, and would I travel with them? They were hiring just the Americans to travel with them on a three-week trip across the United States visiting various theatre organizations. The group that had come to Kalamazoo had gone to Minneapolis, Chicago and New York. This trip was to meet this second group as they came to New York and Washington, D.C., stay there four or five days and go from there to San Francisco, Los Angeles, Minneapolis, Louisville, Kalamazoo, and New York visiting theatres. These people from Damascus happened to be more TV people but there was one playwright, and one was a poet. We'd be stopping at professional places. The only school we stopped at was Kalamazoo College. We went to Hollywood; we went to see Disney World. We had entree everywhere. When the State Department does this, they want the visitors to have an experience in American homes. So along the way, we had dinner in various homes in San Francisco, Los Angeles, Louisville. Although I've traveled in the United States, I haven't always had dinner in homes in various areas. They came back and stayed a weekend at Kalamazoo College, and then went on to New York when I met them and saw them off. Of course, everywhere we went we stopped to see plays and to talk to theatre people, so we saw plays, plays, plays and I got to know the visitors,
traveling with them.

"So that came about through a student who thought Kalamazoo College should be the educational institution and the theatre represented in the U.S. I think that was noteworthy when one considers the number of universities and large schools that have good theatres that could also have hosted the group ... and she being from New York State. I saw the real value of the experience in the way in which theatre could bring together people from all over the world. I believe so firmly, and it's the kind of thing the College believe in its Foreign Study Program, that it is through the personal interaction that we are going to better international situations, that we will better understand each other. I didn't know anything about the Arabs or the Middle East. During the war, I had been in France, and the College gave me a grant once to go with the Foreign Study Program. $1,000 to go a month abroad to see plays. We bought a car over there in Amsterdam and my husband and I traveled down into Italy and into Rome and back through Germany. I probably saw thirty-five to forty plays in that short space of time ... and over to England. I have gone back a couple of times since. The Middle East was to me the strangest and the most exotic; Damascus had a lot of French influence and I didn't feel strange there, but in Cairo, I did feel I was in a foreign country. In associating with these people, these theatre people, talking to them, you could talk even though the language in cases was a barrier, particularly with people from Jordan. We could talk about playwrights, English playwrights, American playwrights, but we couldn't talk about Egyptian playwrights; I can do a little better now because we had to do a lot of reading before we went and I bought a lot of books. We tried to do one or two Egyptian and Syrian plays here. Traveling with them, seeing them at work, and realizing what they were like, what they thought of America was very rewarding, but we ran into some very strong criticism both on posters and by word in Damascus by the students at the university there. This kind of relationship is where we should be going. I wish I could continue with it and I hope to continue with it, but changes in the State Department, retirements, etc., have left me out now and I am starting all over again to make contacts. It's a great thing."

VI

In December of 1981, Mrs. Balch's mother, whom she had cared for almost continually in the last few years of her life, died at ninety-two. The loss, though not unexpected, was one which was made even more difficult by another major turning point: her mandatory retirement from the College that year. And earlier, in July, her friend, colleague, and mentor, Dorothy Upjohn Dalton, had died. Before that evening's Festival Play-
house production commenced, Mrs. Balch came on stage to dedicate the performance to her intrepid fellow warrior.

Amidst so many endings, Mrs. Balch focused her energy on the continuity of the theatre department. Stuart Simpson, long-time business manager of the college, then living in Florida, knew of his friend's upcoming retirement and introduced her to Lowry Marshall, an actress at the Asolo State Theatre in Sarasota and the Simpsons' next-door neighbor. As the Simpsons had hoped, the two took an immediate liking to each other, and when Marshall applied for the position at Kalamazoo, she became Mrs. Balch's candidate. After she was hired, Marshall says, she never detected a trace of resentment, even though Mrs. Balch hated the thought of retirement and could have been expected to chafe at the thought of someone else carrying on her work. On the contrary, says Marshall, Mrs. Balch has been her greatest supporter, not only in her artistic efforts at the college, but also in her integration into the Kalamazoo community, giving her the advantage of the contacts and friendships she had developed over her twenty-seven years of service to the college and the town.

To Marshall as a newcomer, Mrs. Balch's accomplishments over those years were apparent: She fought the censorship fights that had to be fought, especially at a small church-related college, in order for the theatre department to survive and grow with artistic integrity. She pulled theatre out of its precarious position under English and built it into a strong department. She found the support to build buildings that made theatre a permanent part of campus life, and she took personal care that they were the best possible. None of this could have been accomplished by anyone less single-minded and determined and dedicated. But perhaps the most difficult and most important success has been the "spirit for theatre" that Nelda Balch brought to Kalamazoo. Theatre is accepted as a fundamental part of the liberal arts curriculum; its integrity as a discipline is acknowledged; and while there will be no end to the challenges or to the effort necessary to maintain what she fought to establish, theatre has a permanent place in the life of the campus, and in its life in the city, primarily because of Mrs. Balch.

At her retirement dinner, she sat through many speeches with a slightly embarrassed but pleased and dignified demeanor. When her turn came to speak, she began to read the disparaging letters she had kept in her desk to keep her feet on the ground—and to remind herself that her first priority ought not to be pleasing people. The dinner guests were treated to the opinions of offended ministers; communications from trustees who could find "nothing worth doing" in the plays she presented; irate reviews in the campus newspaper, The Index, which accused
her of “missing the mood [of The Glass Menagerie] entirely as well as miscasting three roles” (the same production received raves from the Kalamazoo Gazette); and a note from a student who had not been given the role she wanted: “Let’s not waste my time and yours . . . . I have no words to describe the pity, disgust, disappointment, bitterness, and foulness I have for this department.” Mrs. Balch’s message afterward was clear: “If you don’t offend someone by casting or staging, perhaps you are settling for the conventional, the traditional, or the popular. Try to expand the minds of your audience, your own capabilities, and your own vision. Don’t settle for box office.”

Clair Myers explains why the idea to name the Playhouse for her was shelved until after her retirement: “Nelda is not into being the grand lady of the theatre. I essentially tried that, I suppose, when I took over the Festival Playhouse from her. Although I had every good intention, she would have nothing to do with being a figure head. If she could not work in the center of things and do what she considered to be good theatre, she did not choose to be involved. She likewise was a problem when Dorothy Dalton wanted to name the building after her. It was only when it became clear that Nelda was not going to be anyone’s walking memorial that we decided to avoid the whole thing until she retired and then get back into the issue. As a result, I suggested that Dorothy write a letter to [President George Rainsford] outlining her desire to name the Playhouse for Nelda at an appropriate time and that [he] file that for the future in case Dorothy died in the interim. That is how you have the Nelda K. Balch Playhouse.”

She is also not into being retired, mentally or physically, in the traditional sense. The changes in her life in the past few years have been taxing, but she has forged straight ahead with the many goals she has yet to accomplish. This year alone, after a winter in Florida, she is directing another readers theatre in Kalamazoo in the spring. Then she is off to Kentucky to guest direct at the Berea College Festival in June, after which she returns to Kalamazoo to direct a show for Festival. Lowry Marshall considers her a great resource and has no intention of letting her knowledge and experience slip away. In the meantime, Mrs. Balch is also continuing research on readers theatre scripts she is interested in publishing, as well as on a biography of Dorothy Dalton. She wants to take theatre to the elderly, in the form perhaps of radio plays. And she is exploring other art forms for which she has had little time until now, organ music and drawing—nice, she says, because you can take it with you, and less stressful than theatre because you don’t have to show it to anyone or be around when they see it. “Retired” is wrong; better words might be “released,” “revitalized,” “renewed.” As James
Nelda Balch and her Playhouse
Donaldson put it, "Nelda's theatre is where Nelda is."

But Nelda's theatre is also wherever Nelda has been. The programs she fostered, the buildings she helped to get built, especially the one bearing her name, all serve as reminders of her influence. But most importantly, Nelda's theatre is wherever her students are, for in their work and their support of the arts her spirit thrives. James Donaldson's parting words express one student's recognition of this:

Very few of us have anyone else so influential in our lives, for whom we possess such admiration and trust, about whom we know so little in the way of mundane biography. But then, a great part of Nelda's "biography"—and this is true only of great artists and teachers—has been involved in providing substance and variety to all our individual processes of becoming; without her, we votaries of the liberal arts would be going about "scarce half made up." For what is all this about, anyway, this playmaking, designing, performing, whatever? The first makers of theatre knew it as a place, an event, a collective endeavor where the quotidian of life-as-it-seems intersects with the deepest and most vital domains of the human spirit. And at this powerfully-charged nexus of substance and spirit, there has been for us no better intercessor, counselor, guide, teacher, director and friend to have had, than Nelda K. Balch of Kalamazoo College.

But she herself always resists the spotlight, believing firmly that theatre is an essentially cooperative enterprise: "No one builds a structure, physical or intangible, by himself whether it be an organization, a production or an institution. In theatre group effort is absolutely necessary. Thus, many, many people should be listed as contributing to the development and growth of theatre on the Kalamazoo College campus. Mildred Tanis from the twenties and thirties; Eleanor Baum in the late forties, and my colleagues, Larry Gamble, Larry Jaquith, and of course, Clair Myers, who was co-partner all the way. Then I must add the guest designers and directors, the students, the supportive faculty members, the administrators, the encouraging audiences, and yes, the critics, bless them for being critical. Where does one stop?"

A few weeks ago Lowry Marshall received a letter from Florida, full of plans and suggestions for the summer season. At the end was the signature that says it all: "Ready and waiting, Nelda."
Epilogue

It was summer when the four of us first met to discuss this project, and at that time I think none of us really believed that a book would ever emerge. Now Michigan is giving definite signs of spring, and by the time we have this volume in our hands it will be nearly summer again. As a way to digest our experience, as well as to conclude these unfinished stories, we decided to describe briefly, each of us, what our involvement in this project has meant for us.

Gail Griffin:
I must speak first of this as a teaching and learning project. We all taught each other a great deal as we went along, about our subjects, about ourselves, about the College. There is no question that we four have developed a new relationship with the institution by coming to know it through the focus of an individual life. I imagine we take it more personally now. In asking three students to do publishable research and writing of a kind quite new to them, I have had to stretch as a teacher more than ever before, especially in finding some common ground on which my expectations and my own habits and style of scholarship and writing could meet and accommodate three different modes of operation, allowing them room to grow and produce their best work. Perhaps the greatest joy, for me, has been coming to know the people my students were interviewing, watching them all become engaged in the project, and above all, observing the relationships developing between authors and subjects.

My Lucinda Stone chapter has been the fruition of a ten-year-old yearning to try biographical writing, and it has been in every way as much fun as I thought it might be back in college. The challenges and mysteries of archival research have been very exciting; often I have felt like a sleuth on a hot trail and have delighted in the small discoveries which are so rewarding to someone submerged in another life.

As for Lucinda herself, she has dominated my waking hours, presiding over my life until I feel somewhat as her girls in the Female Department must have felt. In trying to bring a 1983 feminist perspective to her life, I have struggled for an accommodation with her from which I have
learned enormously. There are places in and around the campus that I no longer pass without seeing her. She has become my closest link to the traditions and history of the place where I work. As I have listened to her talk about teaching, in particular, I have come to a much fuller understanding of my vocation and of a woman's relationship to it. In wrestling with the tangle of fact and feeling surrounding her exile from the College, I have lived through her powerful contradictory emotions toward the institution to which she had given herself completely. And I find myself as inspired, almost overwhelmed, as her students were by her courage and energy in living out her ideal of continual growth and adaptation.

Finally, she has been the lens through which I have come to understand nineteenth-century American feminism in its diversity. Her belief in women, her faith in their untapped power, have moved me deeply, strengthened me, helped me to understand the Woman's Century and its implications for our own.

Josephine Csete:

The task is accomplished, a challenge that in the beginning was much larger than I was. Dr. Gail Griffin had the faith in students' ability to write this book that I can only now see as an affirmation of the unique ideal of Allan Hoben's and Frances Diebold's Fellowship in Learning. Over and above the development in skills and techniques, and the incredible honor of publication at the age of twenty-one, I have had the privilege of knowing Frances Diebold. Through her eyes my perception of Kalamazoo College has changed from an institution well known for high academic standards to a place much more personal, with a history and a spirit to be admired. The generation gap disappeared as she became a cherished friend. Rather than interviews, we had discussions, and Frances Diebold could write my biography. I learned to see serendipity in my own life, grew by grappling with her insights, and gained confidence to create my future as I learned from a woman who continues to create her own.

Ruth Moerdyk:

It's difficult for me to remember, anymore, the different phases of my attitude toward this project. I committed myself to it with confidence in the value of oral history as a way of learning about, understanding, and interpreting historical events and attitudes and their impact upon individuals. My knowledge of black American history is sketchy, at best, despite attempts to augment it within the last few months. But after
working with Mrs. Johnson I have gained an increased sense of the richness of that history and important factors in it. I have approached Mrs. Johnson as an individual whose story has value in a historical sense and in terms of the lessons others can learn from it.

The first time I met Mrs. Johnson, she seemed prickly-proper and difficult to approach. And it seemed that she cast several skeptical glances in my direction. I had heard rumors about Pauline Byrd Taylor Johnson—she was conservative; she was outspoken, she was extremely intelligent; she was both a leader and an outsider in the community. Some of the information I gathered before meeting her seemed contradictory. But no one had told me the two things that struck me most after our first meeting: She was intriguing and somewhat intimidating.

She is also my polar opposite in many ways: youth against age, black against white, habit and certainty against flexibility and uncertainty, conservatism against radicalism. The differences were frustrating and sometimes impeded communication. Early in the interviewing process I often felt frustrated and uncomfortable listening to her. I couldn’t imagine writing about someone for whom I had so little empathy. In addition to these difficulties, I became appalled at the presumptuousness and arrogance implicit in my role in this undertaking. It seemed incredible that I claimed the right to determine the essential factors in Mrs. Johnson’s life and interpret them.

These impediments occupied my thoughts for over a week midway through the interviewing process. It was necessary to find some ground for empathy between myself and Mrs. Johnson if this project were going to be successful. After some thought I found some threads which connect us, though they seemed tenuous at first: a somewhat perverse pride in taking an unconventional view of the world, self-reliance and the problems that brings, and, it seems, many of the same goals, though our approaches are sometimes diametrically opposed.

Finding these points of contact helped me to see the world as Mrs. Johnson sees it. What was important to her became important to me. I felt as though I could relate to her, and suddenly felt confident of my ability to communicate her story.

Since then, this project has been a pleasure, rather than a chore. I became comfortable with Mrs. Johnson and have grown extremely fond of her. But my affection goes beyond fondness—it reaches into a deep and deserved respect which I had no sense of when we began. I have learned many things through this project. But most of all I have come to admire Mrs. Johnson for her example as an individual who was determined to tap the internal reserves of strength available to us all, and who chose to take appropriate advantage of opportunities. Mrs. John-
son had to expend much of her strength and energy simply to maintain her integrity and dignity as a human being. By doing so, especially in her profession, she has made it possible, perhaps easier, for others to do so. It is essential that we do the same for others—perhaps that is Pauline Johnson’s main point.

Cheryl Limer:

I didn’t know much about theatre when I began to interview Nelda Balch. I had a sense of theatre as a discipline—though I suspect I’d simply gleaned it out of the air over three years at Kalamazoo College. It held a place in my experience quite separate from literature—but how, I was not sure. Mrs. Balch ascertained all this early on, and I was surprised—first, that it should be so important; and second, that such vagueness on my part comforted her somehow.

The importance of the whole issue has become clear to me since, and perhaps my vagueness was comforting in that I wasn’t likely to take much for granted, being ignorant, and did not espouse any prejudices against theatre. At any rate, she agreed to work with me, and soon we began interviewing in earnest, for we were to have only a few short weeks—Mrs. Balch was headed for Florida in November.

I had told my mentor, Dr. Gail Griffin, that this project was both the best and worst I could have chosen, as it forced me to use many of the skills that are my weakest. Interviewing was one of them. I never seemed to have the right questions, and I had a hard time thinking them up on the spur of the moment. Our conversations foundered frequently in the early meetings because of this, and Mrs. Balch was a little uncomfortable with the lack of direction. But she gradually put me at ease; I began not only to have questions but to feel more able to ask the ones I had. The direction took care of itself. I wished Mrs. Balch could have seen my improvement in subsequent interviews with others. She had been my instructor as well as my subject.

The instruction did not stop there; Dr. Griffin attempted to teach me the art of writing biography and the necessity of writing a lot, quickly and often. The lessons of Mrs. Balch’s story haunted me as well: Self-confidence is a role we play, and if it cannot be found within oneself, dedication is a good beginning as a substitute. And there is much more there for me—I think there is much for almost anyone who reads it. Biography tells us something about ourselves when it makes us think, feel, and see through the life of another. I hope what I have written will do that, as well as telling the story of a wonderful woman who deserves more recognition than she will probably ever be given.
NOTES TO CHAPTER ONE

3. Higginson, p. 146
4. Higginson, p. 138
7. Welter, p. 21
10. Burstyn, p. 73.
17. Higginson, p. 149.
24. Kalamazoo Morning Gazette, July 7, 1899, in the collection of the Kalamazoo Public Library.
25. Flexner, p. 162.
26a. Angell, pp. 21-22.
29. Newcomer, p. 15.
33. Laws of Michigan, March 18, 1837, 105.
34. Woody, I, 417.
35. Woody, I, 418.
37a. Flexner, p. 29.
42. Robert S. Fletcher, History of Oberlin College to the Civil War (Oberlin, 1943), I, 373.
43. Flexner, p. 342.
44. Charles T. Goodsell and Willis F. Dunbar, Centennial History of Kalamazoo College (Kalamazoo, 1933), p. 54.
45. Woody, II, 247.
47. Treatise on Domestic Economy, quoted in Cott, p. 174.
48. Dr. Hubbell, quoted in Woody, II, 238.
51. Quoted in McGuigan, p. 32.
57. McGuigan, p. 37.
61. Quoted in McGuigan, p. 57.
64. M. Burstyn, p. 93.
70. Burstyn, p. 93.
71. Burstyn, p. 91.
73. P. Moebius, Concerning the Physiological and Intellectual Weakness of Women, quoted in Ehrenreich and English, p. 28.
74. William Withers Moore, M.D., Address to the British Medical Association (1886), quoted in Burstyn, p. 95.
76. McGuigan, p. 56.
77. Clarke, p. 112.
78. Clarke, p. 21.
79. Clarke, p. 93.
80. Clarke, p. 120.
81. Clarke, p. 40.
82. Clarke, p. 178.
83. Clarke, pp. 125-126.
84. Clarke, pp. 54-55.
85. Clarke, p. 45.
86. Clarke, p. 39.
87. Clarke, p. 62.
88. Clarke, p. 68.
89. Clarke, p. 69.
90. Clarke, p. 82.
91. Clarke, pp. 85-87.
94. Clarke, pp. 142-143.
96. EAG, p. 93.
97. EAG, p. 258.
98. EAG, p. 279.
99. EAG, p. 166.
100. EAG, p. 137.
101. EAG, pp. 190-191.
102. EAG, p. 579.
103. EAG, p. 167.
105. EAG, p. 179.
106. EAG, p. 228.
108. EAG, p. 103.
109. EAG, p. 63.
110. EAG, p. 90.
111. EAG, p. 84.
112. EAG, p. 90.
113. EAG, p. 122.
114. EAG, p. 334.
115. p. 97, quoted in McGuigan, p. 57.
116. In America this argument was at least as old as the nation itself. Abigail Adams wrote to husband John in 1776, "If you complain of neglect in education of sons, what shall I say with regard to daughters, who every day experience the want of it. With regard to the education of my own children, I find myself soon out of my depth, and destitute and deficient in every part of education." (letter dated July 14, quoted in McGuigan, p. 10.)
119. Cheney, EAG, pp. 128-129.
120. Higginson, p. 148.
122. EAG, p. 137.
123. EAG, p. 82.
125. Angell, p. 3.
126. Newcomer, p. 15.
127. Quoted in Woody, II, 516.
128. Quoted in McGuigan, p. 36.
129. McGuigan, p. 36.
130. 1870 Census, cited in McGuigan, p. 17.
133. College, Market, and the Court (1861), quoted in Woody, II, 261.
137. Quoted in McGuigan, p. 21.
138. Quoted in Woody, II, 236.
139. Angell, p. 12.
141. Newcomer, p. 29. In 1887, a committee from the women's colleges at Oxford and Cambridge Universities borrowed the A.C.A. questionnaire to conduct its own survey, asking each college-educated respondent to have her sister or the female cousin closest to her in age who had not attended college respond also. 566 ex-students and 450 sisters and cousins responded. The marriage rate was similar for both groups, though low in both. The average marriage age was 26.7 for students, 25.53 for non-students. The students had a lower proportion of childless marriages (28% to 40%) and a higher average number of children per year (.36 to .27). And 84% of the students reported healthy children, as compared to 59% of the non-students. In all age groups, the students reported better health for themselves (Eleanor Sedgwick, Health Statistics of Women Students Cambridge and Oxford and their Sisters [Cambridge, 1890], cited in Burstyn, p. 150.)
142. Angell, p. 20.
143. EAG, p. 390.
144. Newcomer, p. 19.
146. Newcomer, p. 49.
147. Reports of the Commission of Education and Decennial Census, cited in Newcomer, p. 46.
149. Flexner, pp. 128-129.

NOTES TO CHAPTER TWO

KPL: the Stone Scrapbooks at the Kalamazoo Public Library

2. Kalamazoo Evening Telegraph, 1/30/1903.
6. Perry, p. 4.
8. Kalamazoo Daily News, 1894, KPL.
9. CT 11/15/81.
11. ibid.
13. Perry, p. 17.
15. CT 11/15/81.
16. Perry, pp. 21-22.
17. Perry, p. 10.
18a. Autobiography, KPL.
19. Perry, pp. 18-19.
20. Perry, p. 5.
22. Perry, p. 5.
23. Letter to T W. Palmer, 7/2/1891, KPL.
25. Autobiography, KPL.
26. Perry, p. 16.
27. Perry, p. 17.
29. Perry, p. 12.
30. Woman's Journal, 8/15/1899.
31. Reunion, p. 87.
32. CT 8/16/1891.
35. CT, n.d.
37. Perry, p. 47.
38. Reunion, p. 23.
40. Mollie V. Gibbs, q. Perry, p. 84.
41. Reunion, p. 23.
42. Rev. J. B. Fiske, Reunion, p. 50.
43. Perry, p. 32.
44. Quoted by Lucinda Stone, Perry, p. 82.
45. Perry, pp. 35-36.
46. Reunion, 22.
47. Kalamazoo Daily News, 7/14/1894.
53. Autobiography, KPL, p. 11.
54. Perry, p. 83.
58. Centennial History, Appendix II, Table 1, p. 98. All enrollment statistics, unless otherwise attributed, are taken from this source.
59. Centennial History, p. 43.
60. Centennial History, p. 57.
61. Centennial History, p. 43.
64. Centennial History, p. 44.
65. Reunion lists.
118. Reunion, p. 54.
119. J. B. Thomas, q. Perry, p. 100.
120. Julia McNair Tenney, Reunion, p. 57.
121. J. B. Thomas, q. Perry, p. 105.
122. q. Perry, p. 253.
123. Perry, p. ix.
124. Griffiths eulogy.
125. q. Perry, pp. 253-54.
126. Hoyt, 1
127. Griffiths eulogy.
128. Reunion, p. 43.
129. Perry, p. 182.
130. Lucia Eames Blount, q. Perry, p. 92.
131. q. Perry, p. 92.
132. Reunion, p. 41.
133. Reunion, p. 39.
135. Griffiths eulogy.
136. CT 6/15/1881.
137. q. Perry, pp. 253-54.
138. "Anne Hutchinson: An epistle from the same," KPL, p. 3.
139. q. Perry, p. 246.
140. q. Perry, p. 248.
141. Charlotte Tribune, 9/14/1898.
142. see Reunion, p. 43.
143. q. Perry, pp. 260-261.
144. Perry, p. 40.
145. Hoyt, 173.
146. q. Kalamazoo Gazette, 8/18/1899.
147. Education of American Girls, p. 204.
148. CT 11/5/1881. This is a very close paraphrase of Frances Power Cobbe in Duties of Women, pp. 39-40. Mrs. Stone seems to have used her sources rather loosely.
150. CT 5/1/1881, "Learned Women of Bologna."
152. Rossi, p. 248.
154. Frances Power Cobbe, Duties of Women (Boston: George H. Ellis, 1887), p. 64.
155. A reference to Senator Stockbridge, who built a house on the site subsequently.
158. Perry, p. 306.
159. Perry, p. 306.
160. Flexner, p. 86.
161. Flexner, p. 80.
162. Kalamazoo Gazette, n.d., KPL.
163. Perry, p. 82.
211. Episode, p. 115.
212. Episode, p. 110-111.
213. Episode, p. 92.
214. Episode, p. 156.
215. Episode, p. 56.
216. Mrs. Stone says 100 (Autobiography, KPL, p. 47); Starring says 58 (p. 90).
217. Episode, p. 28.
218. Centennial History, p. n.
220. Reunion, p. 86.
221. Autobiography, KPL, p. 44.
223. Reunion, p. 33.
224. Reunion, p. 56.
225. Reunion, p. 92.
227. Perry, p. 65.
228. Perry, p. 46.
297. "To the President and the Board Regents..."

298. Letter of 10/19/1891, KPL.

299. KPL.

300. 4/19/1891, KPL.

301. 7/2/1891, KPL.

302. Perry, p. 124.

303. CT 4/8/1894.

304. 10/12/1890, KPL.

305. CT 8/16/1891.

306. 4/28/1890, KPL.

307. CT 8/16/1891.

308. CT 11/5/1881.

309. Letter to Clara B. Moore, 12/4/1900, KPL.

310. q. Perry, p. 244.


317. CT 10/28/1881.

318. "Woman's Sphere," 1890. KPL.

319. Woman's Journal, 1/8/1898, KPL.

320. 3/17/1891, KPL.

321. 3/21/1891, KPL.

322. 3/30/1891, KPL.

323. 4/2/1891, KPL.

324. "Art at the Columbian Exposition," KPL.

325. Starring, 75.

326. Perry, p. 170.


328. Perry, p. 145.


330. If Blinn is accurate, several of his grandmother's trips are unaccounted for.

331. Perry, p. 148.

332. L. W. Learned, q. Perry, p. 151.

333. q. Perry, p. 152.

334. Lucy Crapo Smith, q. Perry, p. 151.

335. q. Perry, p. 157.

335a. q. Perry, p. 160.

336. Detroit Free Press, 10/16/1898.

337. KPL.


339. Kalamazoo Gazette, 1896. KPL.

340. The letter is in the KPL collection.


342. 8/4/1897, KPL.

343. q. McGuigan, p. 82.


348. 1/27/1898, KPL.

349. 12/22/1897, KPL.

350. 10/17/1899, KPL.

351. q. Perry, p. 316.

352. 10/16/1899, KPL.

353. 12/22/1897, KPL.


355. KPL.

356. KPL.

357. 12/28/1897, KPL.

358. KPL.


361. q. Perry, p. 205.

362. Letter to Mrs. D. A. Blodgett, Grand Rapids, 11/2/1890, KPL.

363. Kalamazoo Morning Gazette, 10/1/1899.

364. Perry, p. 360.

365. q. Potts, p. 50.

366. KPL.


369. If indeed this does not refer to her husband-in-law, then Lucinda Hinsdale emigrated west at some unknown date.


372. Hoyt, 175.

373. 10/2/1900, q. Perry, p. 184.


375. Letter to Clara B. Moore, 12/4/1890, KPL.

376. CT VIII, n.d., KPL.

NOTES TO CHAPTER THREE


NOTES TO CHAPTER FOUR


3. **Ne!fToes in Kalamazoo: A Local Self-Study**, a project of the Social Action Committee of the Kalamazoo County Council of Social Agencies in conjunction with the Fisk University Social Science Institute, 1947. p. 30.

4. ibid., p. 19

5. ibid., p. 33.

6. ibid., p. 42.

7. ibid., p. 12.


9. ibid., pp. 15-16.

**NOTES TO CHAPTER FIVE**


2. From Conrad Hilberry's citation of Nelda Balch on her retirement.


5. ibid.

6. ibid.

7. ibid.


10. ibid., 21

11. ibid.

12. ibid.

13. ibid.

14. ibid.

15. ibid.


17. Hilberry, retirement citation.
This is a book about pioneers

It begins with an account of the life of a woman who arrived in Michigan in 1843, when it was still mostly vast forest. It ends with the story of another woman, who arrived in Kalamazoo 111 years later to discover that the territory still needed considerable clearing. Between these are two other stories of pioneer women, both of whom likewise found at Kalamazoo College enormous challenges, great work to be done, obstacles of tradition and prejudice which never fall easily and might have thwarted lesser spirits.