

CHAPTER LIX

DOROTHY'S YOUTH AND EDUCATION

By Dorothy

Dorothy Elcome was born in Philadelphia on French Street on February 11th, 1901. Her parents were William Edward Elcome and Gertrude Scott Elcome, with Scotch, English and Quaker background. When she was about one and a half years old, her family moved to Olney, which was considered a suburb of Philadelphia at that time. At the side of the house grew a tremendous jinko tree which covered circuses, doll houses and all manner of things for several years. She found that kindergarten was delightful, grade school even better. Then someone in her family began to plan a new house farther out in the country in Oak Lane. Edith now belonged to the family and went with them in 1910 to this house which Grandpa Elcome had planned and supervised.

It was fun to play doll house in the front room on the third floor which nobody else used; to paper the walls, build roads, furniture or almost anything needed to make their play like real life. Doll playing gave place to dancing school, croquet, piano playing. Ever since she had played for class singing in the third grade, Dorothy had enjoyed accompanying and took every opportunity to use this gift. In high school she played for the choir and assembly.

Languages? Mathematics? She abominated both just as some boys hate baths. History and Physics (possibly because of the teachers) seemed most interesting. Chemistry could not be taken for classroom study at the same time as Physics, which seems too bad, for everybody ought to know something about it. She had one great pleasure - that of reading stories handed

in by one George S. Parlin for publication in the "Cliveden", paper of Germantown High School. Did she know that sometime later that author would become her husband and father of Steward and Edward? I think not!

Miss Mary S. Holmes and Dr. Harry Keller supervised the school at the time and made of it a leading high school of the city. Dorothy graduated from high school in February - what should she do with the half year before entrance into college? (Cornell, she thought at the time would be possible.) This was in the winter of 1918 just before the United States entered the World War. Teachers were scarce. What could be better than going to Normal School? Learning to be a teacher is almost as trying as learning from one, but Dorothy finished her two year course there, taught for half a year in the Hygiene Department and entered the University of Pennsylvania in the fall.

By this time George was a Senior, but he found time to make her acquainted with the International or Foreign Students House, where Mr. and Mrs. A. Waldo Stevenson acted as host and hostess; to take her to sorority rushing parties and add very greatly to the social gaiety of the year.

College was a great relief after Normal School, possibly because it was coeducational, partly because allowing more freedom of study. She doesn't believe the men enjoyed having women around as students because they used all sorts of ruses to make things unpleasant. A Women's Undergraduate Association was formed, however, and activities such as would be found in a women's college promoted. Dorothy became a K. A. T. and a staunch supporter of the cause of women.

Graduation took place in February 1922.