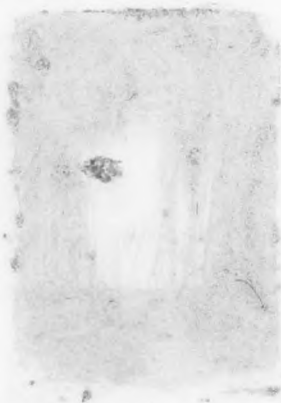


GRANDMOTHER WITH CHILDREN



Grandmother, Charles
and George



Clarence Howard Sanborn



Grandmother and Ruth



Charles and George



Charles C. Parlin
Aged $4\frac{1}{2}$ months



Ruth, Howard and John

WHEN YOUR PARENTS WERE YOUNG



Charles C. Parlin
Aged 6



George Steward Parlin
Aged 4½ months



Miriam Boyd Parlin



Dorothy Elcome Parlin
Aged 4 months



Ruth Parlin Sanborn
Aged 22 days



Clarence Howard Sanborn
Aged 8 months

CHAPTER II

BABIES

By Grandmother

The 22nd of July, 1898, is etched on Grandmother's mind in indelible lines. She went down into the "Valley of the Shadow of Death", returning triumphantly happy with a man child. That child grew up to be the father of Charlie and Camilla.

Grandmother asked every thirty seconds to see the baby, and it seemed an eternity until the nurse brought him. As the nurse stooped over and opened up the blanket around her precious bundle, the little pink rascal was thumbing his nose. This set Grandmother off into such gales of laughter that the nurse became alarmed. "Oh, you must not do that. You must not laugh so hard," said the nurse. The look of comical dismay on her face made Grandmother laugh all the more.

There came a time, barely two weeks later, when all the laughter went out of Grandmother and the world looked dark indeed. A message came for the nurse about bedtime that her mother had been suddenly stricken and was in a critical condition. The nurse had everything prepared for the night and left with all her baggage immediately. With her exit Grandmother's morale went to zero.

Grandmother suspects it was only a bluff, but Grandfather appeared to feel fully equal to the occasion and to view it most cheerfully. It was his summer vacation. He had absolutely nothing to do, so why shouldn't he take care of the baby? He would sleep in the adjoining room with the baby beside him, just as the nurse had done, and all would be well. He sat there talking Grandmother out of her gloomy forebodings and had just about succeeded

as he has on so many occasions, when a wail arose from the next room.

Before he left Grandmother, he made her promise not to get out of bed that night whatever happened, as he could do everything. Probably the baby did not cry all night. There must have been some periods of silence, but Grandmother cannot recall them. Her impression after these thirty-three years is that neither the baby nor anyone else in the house slept that night.

Ever and anon, added to the baby's wail, could be heard Grandfather's whistling. Grandmother could hear him moving about the room and occasionally hear his foot tap-tapping on the floor. One of the favorite stories with which your great grandmother regaled visitors for a long time was a graphic and colorful account of how the articles on her dresser shivered and moved that night, occasioned by the vigorous trotting Grandfather gave his two-weeks old son, in the room just underneath hers.

Morning came at last! The poor baby, tired out, went to sleep and slept all day! Night again! "Would it be a repetition of the previous one?" we asked ourselves. No, it was not as bad, but it was some time before the baby got back to correct ideas of day and night.

Very soon, as Grandmother became stronger and confidence came in her ability to care for her young son, the baby became as good as any child could be expected to be, with the abominable method of feeding then prescribed.

Charles had the wisest look in his eyes. Grandmother felt when he was the merest infant that he understood what she said, and she formed a habit of talking to him as she would to an adult. He learned the names of things at a very early age and would do things told him, showing he understood. He never used any baby talk but when he did begin to use words, they were perfectly plain.

Extracts from Grandmother's Diary of 1899

January 21 - Have been getting the baby to sleep for over two weeks by playing on the piano and singing.

January 22 - Baby is six months old and weighs a little over eighteen pounds.

February 13 - Baby plays on the piano and turns the leaves.

March 16 - Karl Mathie spent evening here and got the baby to sleep.

March 19 - Used the Royal Scroll first time. Baby could point to Jesus on the larger pictures when you asked him, before we put it away.

June 8 - Took baby to church for first time. Carol Maxson was baptized.

August 10 - Baby took two steps holding onto furniture.

September 5 - Mrs. Bishop took baby and me riding. He wouldn't let the horse walk a step. He kept saying "Gee up".

November 3 - Baby walked clear across the living room for first time.

December 31 - Of all his Christmas presents, baby likes his book best. He can now point out everything in it. He rarely had to be told a second time.

This book had colored flags of our own, Germany, France and Switzerland. It also had colored pictures of several kinds of flowers. In an incredibly short space of time, he could point out everyone when asked. When you asked him to point to the daisy, he would first point to the picture and then, with a roguish smile, at me. Very shortly after he got the book, he and I went to New London to visit the Dicks. When he became restless on the train, I entertained him with the book.

A cultured, refined looking old gentleman across the aisle was evidently taking this all in. Presently he crossed over and said: "Pardon me, madam, you are a young mother and I am an old man. I feel I must tell you that you have a child with a most unusual brain. Don't try to teach him or force him in any way. Let him develop naturally."

Now we have come to the summer of 1900. We were all agog with pleased expectation of the arrival of a little sister on Charles' birthday! Six long, weary days dragged out their length and, then, on July 28th, George came! We forgave him, at sight, for being a boy!

He was one of the best babies that ever lived. In spite of the poor understanding of babies' diets, aforementioned, George was fully as good as any of the modern babies are. When he was only a few weeks old, Grandfather's college roommate, Fred Jackson, and his wife came to visit us. We never hushed up any noise on account of the baby. Mrs. Jackson was amazed. "Why," said she, "when our babies were small, we went around on tiptoes and spoke in whispers or they never would have slept at all."

Grandmother would sit in the living room visiting with them by the hour. Mrs. Jackson said: "If one of my babies went without crying that long, I should have been sure he was smothered or choked to death."

Extracts from Grandmother's Diary of 1901

January 19 - George has sat up by much propping for two or three weeks, but now he begins to sit up independently. His favorite pastimes are pulling newspapers to pieces and listening to the telephone. He has known his name for about two weeks. He seems to be more fond of Charles than of anyone else and is so pleased when the latter talks to him and pays him some attention.

February 14 - George sits on the floor and plays with toys now. He will whine a little when Charles goes away, but soon gets over it.

March 24 - Charles made an auto of my piano stool. I expect he will ruin it, but he does have such fun.

April 5 - Charlie took the children out for a walk. They saw some Belgian hares in a store window. They had seen rabbits a number of times at a neighbor's. When they got back, Charles said they saw some rabbits with Belgian hairs on them.

April 12 - At last I have a rest from the story of Cinderella which I have had to tell every night since Christmas. Now Charles wants no bedtime stories, but I have to sing "Fawn Footed Nannie" over and over again.

April 15 - George has a vocabulary of six words. He calls Charles "baby".

April 24 - I was writing a letter and Charles was bothering me. I gave him a copy of Bodenhausen's Madonna without saying a word. He looked at it long and earnestly, then said, with long pauses between: "Pretty baby, pretty mamma too. Guess mamma's getting her baby to sleep."

May 14 - Charlie was putting on his hat to go back to school today. Charles said: "Where are you going, Papa?" "To school," his father replied. "What grade are you in Papa?" quoth the schoolmaster's son!!

August 7 - George pulls himself up taking hold of the furniture.

August 27 - George takes a few steps by himself. He takes streaks of going around and shaking hands with everybody in the room over and over again.

September 5 - Charles called to my mind today something about the eyes of the cookie birds on his tree last Christmas, which I know to be correct and which no one could have brought to his attention since.

September 15 - Charles has taken to preaching. He will stand on the chest and get off a great lingo, waving his arms and gesticulating vigorously. He talks a great deal about President McKinley. His first suggested method of punishment for the assassin was to have him put in a house with no people in it at all. Later on he thought he ought to be put in a dark room and have bears eat him up.

November 10 - Charles has a fad just now for Cock Robin. When he went down in the basement with his father last night, he said: "My, it's dark. I'm not afraid but the lark is because he said:

Who'll be the clerk?

'I,' said the lark,
If it's not in the dark
I'll be the clerk."

November 17 - George is very sympathetic. He cries every time Charles or anyone else does.

December 4 - I took Charles to Mrs. Heads for Aid Society. He calls my green dress my "church dress". This evening he wanted to know if I wore my church dress because I was boss. I said I was not boss, I was secretary. "Oh," said he, "I didn't know whether you were boss or chairman."

The spring before George was two years old it became very hard to get him to take a nap in the daytime. Grandmother tried all sorts of devices and was usually engaged at the task for an hour or even longer. It was this that worried her mainly in leaving home with Charles for two or three days. Grandfather said that was all right - he would put George to sleep when he came home for lunch. To Grandmother's surprise, on her return Grandfather reported no difficulty whatever, so he was given the job permanently.

The first day George greatly enjoyed having his father put him to sleep. It was a grand lark. At the end of a half hour no progress had been made. Grandfather had to go back to work, so he shook the baby a bit and said: "Father's through playing - go right to sleep," which George did. The next day the shake and command was given at the end of ten minutes and worked. The third day Grandfather said: "Father can't play today, go right to sleep." Thereafter as long as George took daytime naps he went to sleep on Grandfather's command.

That summer we all went to our Sunday school picnic. When it came time for George's nap, Grandfather spread a blanket under a tree, put George on it said: "Now, George, go right to sleep." As usual, George closed his eyes and you could hardly say "He went to sleep" for that would seem to involve time. It would be more accurate to say "He was asleep". Some of the elderly women of the church were sitting nearby and they looked horrified. One said: "If he were my baby, I should never expect him to wake up. That is nothing more nor less than hypnotism."

Fortunately for the length of this chapter, Grandmother did not keep a diary for the next few years.

When George was about four years of age, he was given a piece to learn for the Easter program. As he had a bad cold, he did not go to the church for rehearsals but we drilled him at home. George would shout the piece out with great emphasis. "But, Georgie," says Charles, "that is not the way to speak a piece." "Yes, it is," says George, "that's just the way Dr. Carmichael preaches." When we once got the picture that George viewed himself as the preacher and was imitating the pastor, it was too funny for words.

The program was given in the church auditorium and on that Sunday morning when it came George's turn, he went up and stood directly behind the pulpit. Not a vestige of the little fellow could be seen, but his voice loud and clear filled the church. He had given about four lines when the Sunday School superintendent fished him out and brought him around in front of the pulpit. Nothing daunted, George began over again and spoke his piece very well.

On the way home that day, Charles said: "Why did you do that George? Why did you stand where no one could see you?" "Well," said George, with an injured air, "I'd like to know if that isn't where Dr. Carmichael always stands when he preaches."

A whole book could be filled with accounts of George's year in second grade. His teacher was Miss Nettie Garret, now Mrs. Oscar Berger of Seattle. She was an excellent teacher and she thought George a wonderful pupil. That Christmas the lower grades gave a party in the gym, to which all the parents were invited. To Grandmother's surprise, George was called on and gave the Christmas story as recorded in Luke in a truly wonderful manner for a child of that age.

Afterward Grandmother said to George: "Why didn't you tell me you were on the program?" "Oh," said George, "I did not know it until this afternoon." Sure enough, Miss Garrett told Grandmother later she had not told him until just before they went into the gym. She had read the chapter to them and George had asked several times to have it repeated. Then one day she had discovered he knew it by heart. That night at home George repeated the entire program for us, songs and all.

George came home from second grade one day looking very disconsolate. His father, thinking to cheer him up, said: "Well, George, how are

you getting on in school?" "Not at all," said George, "not at all." "What is the matter?" asked his father. "Well," said George, "we had one of those new ones today" (a practice teacher from the County Normal). "I was telling them all about the Eskimos and was telling them all right when the big wide one came in." (The boss of the practice teachers was a large woman.) "She listened a minute and then stuck out her hand and said: 'Say, sonny, sit down and give the rest of them a chance.'"

It was this same year that Grandmother was asked to give a talk at Junior League one Sunday afternoon. She took Charles and George with her. She started her talk by telling the story of St. George slaying the dragon. When she used the word "armor" she asked for hands of any children who could tell what armor is. George's was the only hand that went up. He was sitting on a front seat; when Grandmother called on him, he quickly stood, turned facing the room, and talked on armor for about five minutes, telling all Grandmother knew about it, and more. At the close of the meeting, the superintendent congratulated George and, turning to Grandmother, said: "That was a fine idea of yours to have George take part and you certainly had him well trained." Grandmother did not have the nerve to tell her how surprised she herself had been. It did seem so incredible.

Even after the boys could read, for a long time their enjoyment of books ran away ahead of their ability in that line. Hence, Grandmother read to them a great deal, especially Sunday afternoon and for about an hour before bedtime. At one time she was reading them from "Stories of the Badger State". That chapter was on "Old Abe the War Eagle". In connection with the reading, Grandmother told them how she had attended a grand army reunion in Milwaukee with her father when a little girl and had seen Old Abe with the regiment of soldiers he accompanied throughout the Civil War. Now

Old Abe was dead, but he had been stuffed and Grandmother had since seen him, natural as life, in the historical library at Madison, where they too might see him some day. Later when the Capitol Building burned, the boys wept over the loss of "Old Abe".

One of the neighbors had marital troubles and there was talk of a divorce. Just about this time Grandfather took Charles for a ride on his sled. Charles was fussing with the collar of his overcoat. "What's the matter," asked his father. "My coat's divorced," said Charles. "What does divorced mean?" asked his astonished father. "Unhooked," says Charles.

"Oh, Papa, we have a new game," says Charles with great enthusiasm. "George and me are catching honey bees and putting them under this glass." "I am afraid," said his father, "one of the bees will sting you and you will cry." "Oh, no! the bees won't sting us," said Charles. "Well," said his father, "I will leave it to your best judgment, but my judgment would be against the game." At night when his father came home, Charles sidled up to him and said: "Say, papa, one of those bees did sting me. I didn't cry, but it hurt awful - George and me have decided not to play that game any more."

One day Charles came in as George sat on the floor with a broken doll. "Charles, your head is full of totten," (cotton), said George. "No it isn't," replied Charles. "It is too," says George, "I just broke dolly's head and that was full of totten."

Charles had trouble reconciling various statements concerning Santa Claus. "My book says Santa Claus is pulled by eight tiny deer. How can eight tiny deer pull Santa Claus and all the toys for all the children?" "Santa Claus comes down the chimney wearing a big fur coat, but Grandmother tells me that fur burns very easily." "Georgie, how can Santa Claus get to

our house and to Rudolph's at the same time?" (Rudolph Schlicher lived in Terre Haute, Indiana, and the boys had heard their parents say that it took more than a day and a night to get to where Rudolph lived. "Oh," said George, not to be disturbed in his pet belief, "they have a Santa Claus for every town," and later George was seen making a bow before a newspaper picture of Santa pinned on the nursery wall. "I thank you, Santa, for all my presents."

August 2nd, 1904, Grandfather took Charles and George over to Mrs. Crocker's right after breakfast to spend the day with the Crocker children. When Grandfather went after the boys about 6 o'clock in the afternoon, he passed Mr. Hooper's house. Mr. Hooper sat by the window writing to his wife who was visiting in Appleton. This, in part, is what he wrote: "I hear they have a new baby over at Parlins. From the way I saw Parlin stepping it off past here a few minutes ago, I'll wager it is a girl."

Yes, he was right! And such a girl she was. The whole family just stood around and admired - yes, adored her. She had such pretty, delicate features and the cutest, daintiest little hands that you ever saw. Her head was covered with thick dark hair that curled up all over her head. The boys thought they were quite grown up now. They would scrap with each other, but anything Baby Ruth wanted she could have and anything she did was positively all right.

One day, when Ruth was just able to sit up on the floor and play with toys, the boys had a scrap over the possession of some toy. Finally Charles went away and left George in possession. George sat on the floor playing with the toy with his back to the baby. Suddenly the baby threw a block and accidentally hit George on the back of his head. Such a shriek as George gave. He thought that Charles had hit him.

Grandmother sat there sewing. She said: "George, turn around and see who really hit you." George stopped bawling at once and the look of anger on his face turned to affection. Another minute and he looked up at Grandmother, saying: "Mama, isn't she the cutest thing you ever saw."

Grandmother does not remember when Ruth first began to sing, but when Grandmother and Ruth went to visit the Dicks the January after Ruth was three, she could sing all of "Jesus Loves Me" and two or three verses of other songs. She usually sang them before she retired and again the first thing in the morning. This custom she adhered to on the sleeper going South, and Grandmother rather dreaded meeting her fellow travelers in the morning. However, one gallant Southern gentleman stopped at our seat when he went to breakfast and said those songs were the sweetest ones he had ever heard.

Ruth could speak quite plainly at this time, with the exception of a very few words. "Cookie" was one. She called it "tookie". Cousin Will was constantly framing questions that would bring out that word. It was on this trip that Ruth had her first ride on an elevator and liked it very much. Grandmother was quite startled the first time Ruth told her she wanted to ride again on the alligator.

Grandmother thinks she has taken these stories up to a point where Charles, George and Ruth can continue the narratives themselves. Charles has asked for the privilege of writing up Grace's babyhood and Grandmother really thinks it is due him, for he was such a help in her care.

Our maids in Wausau had either attended high school or members of their family had done so. In Boston was Grandmother's first experience in having a maid from an employment agency. Grace was such a tiny baby when we moved East, Grandmother could not think of leaving her in the care of a perfect stranger. Hence she felt she could not be away from home unless

Charles was there to look after the baby. Charles was then a high school Freshman.

N.B. By the editor. After this chapter was written, Ruth urged inclusion of two incidents.

Incident 1. When George was two, he had pneumonia and for the rest of the winter Grandmother rubbed goose oil on his chest before he went to bed, which she called "greasing" him. One evening a cottage prayer meeting was held at our house, and the next evening George asked his mother to sing the hymns. "Which one?" "The one," says George, "all about grease the bear." He was sure he heard them sing all about "Grease the bear." So Grandmother, perplexed, started to sing all the hymns. "That's it," said George, when she started to sing "What a Friend We Have in Jesus. All our sins and griefs to bear."

Incident 2. One day as Grandfather returned home, he saw water being thrown out the bathroom window. Rushing into the house he found Charles and George (aged 5 and 3) taking a bath. "You see," Charles explained, "Georgie is playing he's a house on fire and I'm playing that I'm the fire department."