

CHAPTER LXV

COURTING RUTH

By Howard

"Your secretary has stood throughout his term of office for progress. As he looks back over the year, however, he is not sure that he has been successful in his campaign. We are an old organization with a record of years of conservatism. But let me urge upon you younger men that we cannot continue unless we progress. Your secretary has listed some of the progressive suggestions which he has made during the past year.

"It has been the practice of this ancient society to observe one night a year as a night in which visitors are invited. At this evening the former members as well as present undergraduates are invited. It has been our custom during these meetings to have a group of rather uninteresting and dry speeches. It was the suggestion of your secretary that this year we have a more popular type of meeting which should end up with a dance by a recognized orchestra."

He pointed out to the members that such an event would be exceedingly popular; that our progressive spirit in comparison with our neighbors, the Philmatheon Society, would rapidly make ours the leading literary society on the campus. Your secretary regrets that this suggestion was not taken. (Summary of Howard's report to the Zelosophic Society of the University of Pennsylvania as his term as Secretary ended.)

Two years earlier girls were a great nuisance to Howard. He must admit that Ruth caused the change.

A year came when Howard decided that he would like to give Ruth a present. At the same time Ruth had said that she always opened her

Christmas presents as soon as they arrived, whereas Howard had always had a fast rule that they should be opened only on Christmas Day. Finally he decided that he would take her present down on the train after New Years and mail a special delivery letter telling her it was coming. In order to make the letter more unusual, he wrote it in circles. Thus the words went around and around in constantly widening circles until the entire page was filled with a design which seemed much like a spider web. After holding the letter all day she finally opened it Christmas Eve and caused the family much amusement. This story is told because of the fact that although Ruth's family enjoyed it, it was very apparent that it was a poor way to court Ruth.

Ruth invited Howard to attend a dinner and dance of the Hyperion School of Music in which she studied piano. The dance came on Saturday night and Howard invited her to go canoeing in the afternoon.

In the morning Howard ordered a corsage. They made arrangements to return to the Foreign Students' House after canoeing to dress. In charge of the House at that time was a Christian Association Secretary that we all called "Big Chief". Howard arranged to dress in his study. As we returned from canoeing, Big Chief said a box had arrived for me and that he had left it in his study. Howard found the box containing the corsage and when he had dressed, he took it down and gave it to Ruth. He suggested that they carry it unopened to the dinner. When they arrived at the Hall, Ruth with much eagerness suggested that Howard open the box. Howard did so and was startled to find - not flowers, but 2 x 4 filing cards. It seemed that Dr. Stevenson (Big Chief) had been using flower boxes as filing cabinets. As the cards had been very much mixed up in their ride downtown, Dr. Stevenson was not well pleased. Howard had to take Ruth back to the house and actually find the box of flowers before she was thoroughly convinced that his Yankee training had not overcome his desire to please her.

Howard visited George Parlin very often during his Sophomore and Junior years at college. The beginnings of the family orchestra were made during these two years. Senior year found George in Harvard Law School. It was noted that Howard again continued to visit. Ruth claims she did not suspect that entire year that she was a real attraction to him. In fact, Howard very much disliked leaving Germantown and Ruth after graduation.

Howard's first job was with the Western Electric Company and paid twenty-five dollars a week. He laid out a budget which included three dollars a week for amusements. The first week Ruth was persuaded to visit him. Ruth was always very conservative and Howard's expenses had never run high in entertaining her. This was his first chance in New York and was his first opportunity after he was earning his own money. The amusement allowance, however, was so far exceeded that Howard had no interest again in keeping a budget and it has been discarded ever since.

Successful courting of Ruth was not easy. Howard originally headed this chapter "Persistence Wins." When he finally succeeded he saw no reason that everyone should not know.

Howard is proud of his consistency. If any young man can find as fine a girl as Ruth, he advises persisting. But where can he find such a girl?