

CHAPTER LXVII.

GERMANTOWN HIGH SCHOOL

By Ruth

Ruth entered Germantown High School in the fall of 1918. She does not have the scholastic achievements to enumerate that Grandfather and Grandmother did, but she managed to be "meritorious" a good many times (that meant only one grade below C, which was "good" in any subject) and in her Senior year she was "distinguished" and graduated eighth in a class of something over two hundred.

It is hard to say which were her favorite studies in school because her favorite one, Music, was all taken outside of school hours. At that time the only music given was a one-hour-a-week course under Miss Moore, which was anything but inspiring. As Ruth recalls the work, we learned each song backwards by beginning at the last measure and working forward so that we got no sense at all of the rhythm of it. Of the other subjects, she liked dramatics and mathematics quite well.

Two afternoons each week and Saturdays from nine until one o'clock she studied at the Hyperion School of Music under Mr. Cresson, in piano. In her Junior year, for Christmas, Grandfather gave her a very fine violin which she began to study under Lucius Cole, then of the Philadelphia Orchestra. Senior year she added the study of voice under Herbert W. Greene. She finally graduated from the Conservatory (in piano) the same year that she graduated from High School (June, 1922).

It would seem as if Ruth ought to have been kept fairly busy with all these outside activities, but she managed to have considerable social life, too - thanks to her brothers. It is hard to differentiate what

happened which year, but no matter. On one occasion Charles took her to the Pelham Club and got her a dance with the Sophomore Class President from Penn. Such a thrill! She even remembers his name - Bob Gardner. She probably remembers it because she repeated it so often in telling all the high school "kids" about it. One time when George took her to a dance, one of the girls in the dressing room afterwards asked her who her man was. When she said it was her brother, they all roared and said, "Stop kidding us. No brother ever treated his sister like that!"

Of course, going to college dances at such a tender age, Ruth was bound to run into some embarrassing situations because the men, to make conversation, were very apt to ask in what year she was. Being very truthful, she had to tell them that she was just in High School. Usually they inferred that she was a Senior, but one man showed undue curiosity. When she replied in the negative to his question, "Senior, of course?" he said, "A Junior then, surely?" Once more she replied, "No." He still persisted, "A Sophomore?" So she finally said, "If you really must know, I am a Freshman." So, of course, he must have thought that she was either entirely too young to be out so late or frightfully dumb. She never was quite sure which it was.

One date Ruth remembers very well - December 13th, 1919 - when she met Howard Sanborn at a social at the First Methodist Church in Germantown. Some of the boys from Penn had been invited out for this occasion and Howard had brought his violin. Ruth played the piano - and so! Howard and George had become friendly through the musical club at Penn and thereafter Howard came frequently for week-ends out in Germantown. Of course he came to see George, but the odd part was that after George left for Harvard Law School, Howard had one more year at Penn, but he still came to Parlin's in Germantown. Wonder why?

During those years the house was full of music. As I look back now it seems as if we played from the time we got up Sunday morning until we went to bed at night. When Howard came out with his violin, George would play cello and frequently Brink (now Dr. Lester Hergesheimer) would bring his flute over. Sometimes a chap from Penn by the name of Alverson would bring his flute. When we were alone oftentimes we would go down cellar and bring up piles of old "rag" war songs, etcetera, and play for hours - George on his banjo and Ruth at the piano. Sunday seemed to be sort of "open house" there and Grandmother was always willing and generous in her supply of sandwiches, cocoa and cake for all who dropped in to play or to listen Sunday night. One guest who was coming for the first time, passed the house and stopped a few houses above to ask for Parlin's. He was told, "Go to that house down there where the piano is always going." "Suppose it is not going," he persisted. "Oh, it will be going," was the confident reply.

Grandfather and Grandmother were both good sleepers or Ruth doubts whether they would have survived these years. On one occasion a Methodist social was scheduled for a certain night, and we all trooped over. Upon arrival we discovered that not many had turned out, so that we were unable to play the games that the Program Committee had planned, so we suggested that they all come back to our house and dance. Which we did! Grandfather and Grandmother were both in bed, so we did not see them until the following morning. At breakfast Grandmother said, "How was the social last night?" At first we thought she was joking, but it developed that they had heard nothing of our racket the night before.

When we came in from dances and parties, it was a great temptation to go out to the kitchen and get something to eat. If nothing else offered, Ruth fears she must admit that occasionally we took a slice out of the Sunday

cake. We never could understand why Grandmother was so provoked the next morning. Now we can!

Ivy Ball (the Senior Ball at Penn) was, of course, the biggest event in the year. Howard invited Ruth and preparations were made weeks in advance - a new dress (of course) a surreptitious letter from Howard to Grandmother asking the color of Ruth's dress, so that when the flowers arrived they just matched her dress, much to her surprise, always. And then the Ball, starting at eleven p.m. and ending - but that ending was what got us into difficulties once. It must be here chronicled in order to warn future children and grandchildren not to make such a grievous error. Having arrived home from the dance somewhat after the milk man, we discovered the milk standing on the steps and, not being a Sherlock Holmes, we made the mistake of bringing it in and putting it in the ice-box.

When we finally arose from our downy cots around noon, we found the house all a-flutter because the milk man had failed to deliver the milk. When we suggested that they look in the ice-box there was much consternation and Mrs. Hartlett finally recovered herself sufficiently to go to the telephone and was heard to say, "Is this the Wawa Dairy? I just wanted to explain that the milk was delivered all right. The daughter of the house brought it in when she returned from a dance,"

But for all her interest in Penn, Ruth was active in High School, too, taking one of the leads - the part of Mrs. Bargiss - in the Senior Play "728" by Augustin Daly.

By June 1922 Ruth was scarcely sure whether she was graduating from Penn or High School she had spent so much time in both places, but the diploma read "Germantown High School."