

The Reminiscences of Emily Knox Reynolds

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Introduction

To state that Emily Knox Reynolds was one of many pioneers who established the Pennsylvania “common school” is perhaps sentimental; as it is obviously true. Raised in the early nineteenth century in the wilds of northcentral Pennsylvania, where the border between New York and Pennsylvania was blurred (and remains so today), she, like many educated women of her era, came from humble origins.¹ Teaching was an honorable means for young women to escape a life of unpaid hard work and drudgery. Emily, at the tender age of 17, welcomed the modest economic opportunity and social mobility that school teaching afforded.

For many of the early common schools, hiring female school teachers, or school marms, was the best means of providing an “elementary” education. In an era steeped in “Republican Motherhood,” female teachers were seen as natural instructors of young children.² Women were viewed as being more morally virtuous and stable than their male colleagues. Given the relatively brief school year (in some places only six weeks), the men available for such employment tended to be economically unstable at best and, unless they were clerics, morally dubious at worst. In particular, more than a few schoolmasters were dismissed due to chronic drinking. As one late nineteenth century social pundit declared, “Teaching is a profession for second-rate men and unmarried women.”³ But the most obvious appeal of female teachers was of economy. Districts simply did not have to pay women a “man’s” (living) wage. Despite low pay, and dismal working and living conditions — teachers were boarded with various families within the communities — thousands of women sought employment as teachers.

Many of these early teachers also kept diligent records, not only of their charges but of their own experiences. Although dictated to her daughters in the 1890s, Emily’s recollections are particularly valuable for their detail. She makes careful mention of the texts used (most published in Pennsylvania), songs sung, and standard disciplinary practices (whipping). For educational historians, the richness of her memories provides great insights as to what the profession was like for one particular teacher in rural Pennsylvania.

Emily's reminiscences are also valuable for their descriptions of daily life in early Tioga County, Pennsylvania. There is an obvious fondness for both the area and the residents. One of the last areas of the state to be settled, it has had little in the way of economic prosperity or, for that matter, historical study. Much of the history of the area exists as folklore, with tales of rugged pioneers and settlers nobly scratching out only the most minimal of existences.⁴ Emily's stories reflect both of these conditions. She is a vivid storyteller, and her stories include tales of seemingly unending hard work.

Today, Tioga County, where Emily lived and taught, remains sparsely populated and painfully poor, with only rural sociologists, educators, and social workers showing professional interest. Not surprisingly, as in Emily's time and with her own children, its principal export is its youth. But despite the seemingly never-ending poverty, there is a vitality to the area. Story-telling remains a strong tradition, with the local university, Mansfield, boasting an annual "story-telling" festival. Additionally, the region has started to market itself as a hunters' and fishermen's paradise, and some towns and boroughs have become quite adept at attracting tourists' dollars. In many ways, the area is as rural and "wild" as in Emily's day. One can spot a number of tiny and fragile buildings along little traveled township roads, structures which served as schoolhouses in an earlier era. If there is little written history of the region, these solitary structures serve as important reminders of a pioneering past. Emily Knox Reynolds's memories are an important addition.

This memoir is now part of a collection of private genealogical papers. Both Emily's and her husband's recollections were sent to our mother (Anna P. Lugg), from a distant relative in California. She has graciously allowed her academically over-eager children to edit Emily's reminiscences for publication.

MY EARLY LIFE

Academy Corners, Pennsylvania

I was born January 10, 1826, in old log house with a frame addition, at Academy Corners,⁵ Deerfield township, Pennsylvania. I was the fourth child of William Knox (Jr.) and Sallie Colvin Knox.⁶ I had two older sisters: Almira, and Dolly; and an older brother John Colvin.⁷ My parents later had two more children: my sister Caroline and my brother Jim.⁸ My grandparents, Joshua Colvin and Dolly Kassler Colvin, had moved to Deerfield township in northern Pennsylvania, in 1809. They came from the Holland Purchase, Herkimer County, New York State.⁹ When grandmother and grandfather Colvin came into the country their wagon broke down. They put their five children, Sallie, Gaylord, Philo, Betsy, and Ruth on the two horses and plodded on till they came to the Trowbridge's house.¹⁰ The Trowbridges lived in a one room cabin and had only potatoes and salt for supper; but they shared what they had with

the strangers. People helped one another back then. The next day grandfather Colvin found some young men who helped him mend the wagon. They were the Knox boys.¹¹ Thus, William Knox (Jr.) met Sallie Colvin.¹² My grandparents then bought the best half of William Knox (Sr.)'s farm and settled there, on the Cowanesque River in Deerfield Township, Pennsylvania.¹³ Their daughter Sallie was ten when they settled in the new home. William Knox (Jr.) and Sallie Colvin lived on adjoining farms until 1815, when they were married. Sallie was only sixteen when she married, and William, the oldest of the Knox boys, was nineteen.

One of the earliest things I remember is the way my father, who was a great hand for a good garden, put down a board to mark the rows while I held the seed for him to plant. My clearest memory of father is the way he looked in the garden. He was a short and stout man, not like the rest of the Knoxes who tended to be lean and taller. Father had had a hardy pioneer training and was completely indifferent to bodily discomfort. He would work in the snow bare-handed and would chop wood in the winter in his shirt-sleeves. He gloried in his unusual physical strength. It was said that in wrestling he could throw any man in the county. I do not remember much about my mother in that house, nor about any of my brother and sisters. But I do remember my mother as always being very delicate; and I remember how tender father was of her, for all his strength. About the house itself I remember that there were big old trees around it and that, south of the house, there was a pond called "the cove" in which were wild black geese that had been caught and tamed there. They used to go "squawk, squawk" and their long black curving necks looked almost like black snakes.

My very earliest recollection is of a visit from Uncle James B. Colvin, my mother's brother, who came from the Holland Purchase, when I was three years old. He brought my sisters and brother and I the first candy we had ever seen. This candy was made from a kind of colored sugary paste cut in to the forms of men and women. In my mind's eye I can see Uncle James as he took the presents from his valise. He was tall man, with a tanned, freckled face and eyes full of fun. He was jolly; very much like my son Way in disposition.

Knoxville, Pennsylvania

When I was about four (1829 or 30) father moved to Knoxville, a little town named after my grandfather William Knox.¹⁴ Grandfather Knox was one of the earliest important settlers in that region. His son, James Knox, born in 1800, was the first white child born on the Cowanesque River. At Knoxville we lived in another log house with a big frame addition. The house was set way back from the road on a bench of land. The path from the house went down a little hill and out through a pair of bars.¹⁵ In the yard were large old apple-trees. One was a tremendous tree with big sweet apples; but the one

I remember best was a small tree so bent as to form a seat a few feet from the ground. In this tree I used to sit and eat the lady-finger apples from the branches above. These apples were little at one end, pear-shaped, or as we called them "sheep-nosed," and they were pink and white; as pink and as white it seems to me now as the painted-lady sweet-peas. I really think I can recall the flavor of those apples yet.

Our land went from the back of the house down to the Cowanesque River. Between the house and the river was a big orchard. The one-story house faced north and south. In the log part were the kitchen and two bed-rooms, and in the "plank" part was the big sitting-room with the fire-place, and another bed-room. The long stoop extended all the way in front of the kitchen, the sitting-room, and two of the bed-rooms. In the kitchen was another great fire-place. In one of our bed-rooms was a chest painted red in which was a red great-coat with double capes, a trophy from some British soldier. It was an event to my sister Caroline and I when we were allowed to open the chest and see this coat. This coat was later made up into a heavy quilt which was used in the family for fifty years. In the plank bed-room there was a curly maple bureau, and it was the delight of my life when sister Dolly cleaned out the drawers by emptying all the contents on the floor.

In the sitting-room of the Knoxville house was the first clock I ever saw. It was bought from an agent who came through the country from Connecticut. The clock cost \$24.00 and was a great wonder through-out the neighborhood. It was large, with a looking glass in the lower part, but it did not come down to the floor. Once when Caroline and I were bouncing apples to mellow them we broke the mirror in the clock. Father was digging up elder in the back-yard—elders are the meanest things in the world to dig up!—and we went right out and told him. "Well," he said, "I am glad you told me," and he never spoke about it again. My grandmother Colvin had a similar clock, except that her clock had a picture in the bottom part. Over the picture she used to keep hanging a string of small blue egg-shells. Under the clock she hung a row of phials filled with essences. The end bottle had a goose-quill in the cork and held oil in the bottle to oil squeaky doors.

One of my clearest memories of the house in Knoxville is of the fires in the big fire-places. I remember how they used to build the fires. When there was a big bed of coals in the fire-place it was time to bring in the new back-log. The men struck an ax in the end of the big log, hauled it in over the floor, and then rolled it into place with hand spikes. Then they put a smaller log on top of it, then a fore stick, and finally piled smaller wood all around. At night we covered the fire up because we had no matches, and if our fire went out we had to borrow fire from a neighbor. In the fireplace we had iron andirons three and a half feet high, and a long iron shovel. I never saw a cook stove till I went with mother to visit Uncle Arch Knox's house in Knoxville. He and

uncle Alba Knox had each bought one.¹⁶ These stoves were so long that they could take in almost as long wood as the fireplace, but they were very narrow. They had four boiling places in a row, and back of these an elevated oven. Mother did not like the stoves. She said she did not wish her fire in any dark, shut-up thing like that.

Beside the fireplace in Knoxville stood a dye-tub in which was colored the yarn for the weaving. Blue, the favored color, was made from indigo, and it never faded. Peach leaves were used to color yarn a beautiful yellow; and if we wanted green, we put the yellow yarn into the blue dye. The yarn had to be taken up, wrung out, and aired every other day until it was the right color. We dyed some linen yarn fawn-color with copperas, and some blue with indigo; and then wove these into striped cloth for dresses and aprons. Such clothes lasted forever. My sisters and I had a linen dress for summer and a pressed flannel dress for the winter and considered ourselves well dressed. We didn't have to make a new dress every time we turned round! Every women knew how to spin. In one of our bed-rooms were always the big wheel for wool and tow, and the little wheel for flax. On the little wheel hung a gourd with water in it to wet your finger when spinning.

Another household belonging was the soft-soap barrel. The first thing that we did during the spring house-cleaning was the soap-making. Every house-keeper had a barrel set up as a leech. In the bottom of the barrel was put first a layer of straw, then some lime, and then the barrel was filled up with wood-ashes, maple ashes being the best. This mixture was wet down a little at a time. The lye would begin to run within two or three days; but to do good work in soap-making it had to be strong enough to bear up an egg. Every house keeper had a three-pailed iron kettle (i.e. holding about thirty-six quarts) that they kept out of doors, either set up on sticks or hung by a chain from a pole supported by two crotched sticks. Into this kettle we put the grease that had been saved during the year, the fat from the hog-killing, remnants for the table, etc. We then poured in enough lye to eat up the grease, boiled it, reduced it with water, and that is how the soap was made. With the soap-making over the house-keeper felt that she had taken a fine step toward accomplishing the family's spring house-cleaning. Our hand-soap and soft soap were made the same way: first salt was put into the soapy mixture; then it was boiled down; this mixture was then poured into molds; and finally the molds were left up in the attic to dry. Another thing done differently was that we canned no fruit in those days, but we preserved pound for pound. The usual way of keeping fruit was, however, by drying it. We sometimes had half a bushel of dried berries, and sacks of dried corn and dried pumpkin. The roof was the favorite place for drying.

Just in front of the porch of our Knoxville house was the bake-oven. It was built of brick, round with a square front, roofed to keep the rain off, and

seemed to me to be as big as a little room. I used to peer in at the flames and think that it looked like the fiery furnace from the Bible. My mother was a good cook, as was her mother before her. I can remember seeing mother use the old iron shovel to draw out from the depths of this spacious oven: custard pies, apple pies, baked Indian pudding, spare-rigs, stirred-cakes, baked apples, baked pork and beans, big loaves of Indian bread, white bread, raised biscuits, and sometimes geese and turkeys.¹⁷ I especially remember sweetened biscuits. These biscuits were sweetened with shaved maple sugar; and when you ate them, you came upon little lumps of sugar. I can see yet the bread and pie and cakes ranged along the stoop to cool. My father's favorite dish was boiled Indian pudding. It was made of Indian meal with chopped dried fruits such as apples, currants, berries, etc. It was served with a quart bowl of cream sweetened with maple sugar. Father always ate the pudding first, because when such a pudding was coming he did not want to "spoil his mouth" with meat and potatoes. Mother used to send food to the men working in the fields. She always made a fresh cheese to have cured and ready for the hay-makers. At four o'clock I used to take the cheese and sweetened biscuits to the men. They would all gather under a big tree to eat the luncheon. They used wooden platters for dishes. We kept these well scoured up with rotten stone and turpentine.

Inside the house we had a tin bake-oven which was set in front of the fire-place. In this we made milk-rising bread, but it was a slow job. My brother, sisters and I used to be so provoked when, in the evening, just as we wanted to gather round the fire, there would be that old tin bake-oven taking up the room. We had also an iron bake-kettle. This kettle had three legs and was set in the coals. The cover was also hollow in order to hold hot coals. Mother made biscuit and pound-cake in this, and it baked excellently. It made fine chicken-pie, too. It was usually in one corner of the fire-place, opposite the tea-kettle. The fire-place also contained a long crane with a dozen hooks on it, and this is where we cooked the regular meals. My mother made the best Indian pan-cakes I have ever eaten. We had white bread often but it was not always easy to have good white flour on hand. Once when S. X. Billing's mill gave out because of low water the neighbors clubbed together and made up a load of wheat which Mr. Inchco took to Williamsport and had ground.¹⁸ Great was the rejoicing when he finally drove back into town with the white flour!

I do not remember very much about my brothers and sisters in this Knoxville house. I can just remember when my brother Jim was born; and I have a vague memory of seeing him in a pink dress, but nothing else definite comes to me. All I can recall about my brother John is the way he used to sit under a tree reading. Father would call to us, saying, "Come girls, you'll have to pick up the apples. John isn't good for anything when he has a book." I also remember how John would sit on the fence and drink in every word the men

had to say about politics. The only practical thing I remember about him is that he was a famous berry-picker. John used to make us keep two rules: first there was to be no eating of berries till picking for the morning was done; and the second rule was that the first berry must be thrown over the head for good luck. Oh yes, I do remember how fond John was of good things to eat! He lisped a little and he would call out, "Mother, Mother, Dolly is eating all the plum preservth." Poor John! It was books and preserves that ended his life.¹⁹

My sister Caroline and I were nearly the same age, so we had much in common. We had little escapades together. Once we went to play on North Hill and stayed until it was too late to go to school. We were afraid to go home, so we stayed on the hill till four o'clock and then went home as if we had been at school as usual. Unfortunately for us, Uncle Joel Stebbins had been up to the pasture after a horse, had seen us, and had asked father what we were doing there. The only whipping we ever had from father was in punishment for that deception. Another time Caroline and I had chicken-pox together. We slept in the trundle bed and father brought us odds and ends from the corner grocery store to play with, broken side-combs, pipes, etc.²⁰

Caroline and I began to go to school before we were six (1830 or 31).²¹ I hated to go and when it was time to start I used to go to the water pail on the stoop and drink and drink, to put off the moment I had to leave. I remember two of the Knoxville teachers. One was Rhody Horton, a very dressy girl. She had a fawn-colored Gainsborough hat of fur and trimmed with light blue ribbon. Rhody whipped Caroline once but Caroline took the whip out of her hand. When mother heard of it she whipped Caroline again. I don't think that was right. One whipping was enough. Another teacher named Amasa Smith was famous for teaching Murray's *Grammar*.²² His greeting to a stranger was often, "I suppose it would be hard stalling thee in grammar?" That was to start a discussion on grammar and show how much he knew. Poor Amasa Smith went blind afterward.²³

The one school-book that impressed me the most was *The English Reader*.²⁴ One of the selections in that book was, "The Death of Voltaire the Infidel". In it were such sentences as "Death is Hell!" and others with many dashes and exclamation points. Once I was sitting by my mother in the back entry of our house watching a fire that was burning over on South Hill, and the horizontal and perpendicular lines of flames seemed to me just like the punctuation used in "The Death of Voltaire." One book we used was called *The American Manual*,²⁵ another was Cobb's *Speller*.²⁶ I am sure I must have studied geography before I was nine because we little girls used to hide behind the desks where the big girls put there shawls, and pick off the bright fuzz to make mats. I know we pressed those mats into the shapes of countries. The most interesting thing I can remember about the school is the way we used to make bright

scarlet ink by steeping the balm bows. With this ink we would draw pictures of flowers and animals.

There was one book that impressed me more than any book in the school. I brought this book home from a neighbor's house where a Sunday School was held. The book was half on Intemperance and half on Slavery. I can yet feel my anger about the injustice to the little black boy who was plagued by the other boys and who cried and tried to wash his hands white at the pump. That book so burned itself into my mind that it colored all my life afterwards. I have always hated intemperance and slavery as few men and women do, and I trace my feeling to that book.²⁷ And for that reason I have always realized the importance of looking out for the reading of the young.

Our school-house was our church too. When I was very little, the services happened to be under the charge of the 'Howling' Methodists.²⁸ I remember going to a service with mother when she was so disgusted that she got up to leave; but members of the congregation caught her by the dress to keep her. These Methodists so offended against good sense that thinking people were driven to the other extreme. For a long time after this the chief men of the town were Universalists.²⁹ Uncle Arch Knox was a Universalist, but he used to go to the Methodists' meetings to keep the boys in order. I have seen him get up and box one boy's ears and then set another down hard on the seat. The only two things that really seemed to flourish in Knoxville at that time were Universalism and consumption.³⁰

Sometime near to 1816 grandfather Joshua and grandmother Dolly moved away from Deerfield. In 1830-36 they were living in Spring Mills, Potter County, Pennsylvania, where their sons Gaylord and James had farms.³¹ Some of the strongest memories of these years Knoxville are the visits to grandfather Colvin's. Grandfather wasn't smooth like grandmother. He was a Yankee, and angular. While not exactly a rough man, he was not by any means a saint, and he certainly swore sometimes. They use to tell an interesting story in the Colvin family about his haying in the early days. Grandfather Colvin had a built a new log barn. He had also raised a fine crop of hay. Then in the face of an approaching storm, Grandfather got all the hay into the barn, except for one hay-cock. During the following storm the barn was struck by lightning, and hay and barn together burned. Grandfather was terribly angry but he did not swear this time. He just went out and pitched the one remaining hay-cock into the flames, saying, "Take the whole thing!"

Grandmother Colvin had been Dolly Kassler. She was German. Perhaps that is why she used to say right out along in her ordinary speech "Oh my God!" She was always pretty and was as plump as a bird. Once a man said, "Uncle Josh, you set an awful lot by your wife!" "Well," said grandfather, "why shouldn't I? I had an awful time gettin' her and she's an awful nice women." He always called her "my old Dolly wife." One of grandmother's

finest possessions was a table cloth brought by Uncle Abe Hathaway from the Holland Purchase. It had an oval center filled with woven figures of peacocks, deer, horses, fruits, and flowers. This table cloth was used only on 'state' occasions, so when it was brought out for us we were in high feather. Grandmother had also very thin silver spoons. Her big deep-blue plates with pictures of houses and people walking and bars to be let down were given to me afterwards, but I left them at Almira's and they were used up to bake pies on.

One of the visitors we had at the Knoxville house was my mother's sister, Aunt Betsy Colvin Hathaway. She stopped with her husband, Uncle Abe, when they came from the Holland Purchase. She wore a red bombazitta shawl with raised flowers and black dots. She and mother were sisters but they did not look alike. Mother had a very fair skin with brown eyes and dark-brown smooth hair. She put on caps as soon as she was married as all other women did. Sometimes she wore green glasses because her eyes troubled her. But she was always a very pretty woman. I know she was staid and self-repressed. Once I came home from Uncle Colvin's she hugged and kissed me and got me a piece of pumpkin pie. Caroline looked on at this in open-eyed wonder because a caress from mother was so unusual. My family use to say that I suited mother best because my disposition was smooth, quiet and orderly. Caroline, however, irritated her by being disorderly and "hetchelly"; but Caroline was always more generous than I.

I have been telling about my life in Knoxville till I was nine (1835), but when I was six (1832) two great events occurred in the family: first, my oldest sister Almira was married; and second my father died. Mother had been called to Spring Mills, by the illness of grandmother Colvin. Almira was to have been married soon anyway so it was thought best to have the ceremony before mother left. Almira was only sixteen but her fiancée, Mr. Horton, was about thirty. He had been a clock-maker in Connecticut and he could do many other things. For instance, he could full cloth, and he was a first class builder and painter. He was a spruce, refined, nice-looking man, and mother was glad to leave Almira with him. I remember odd little things about that wedding. I know mother had baked a stirred-cake to take to grandmother. Then just before the ceremony father went up to the fire and poked it, and it burned on one side.³² During the wedding Caroline and I sat on mother's trunk, which was packed for the journey. Of Almira I remember only her dress. It was a pink and white pin-stripe trimmed with points, and it was low-necked.

After a while, when we heard that grandmother was getting better, father went to Spring Mills to bring mother home. But he was taken down with pleurisy and died there. He was only forty-one. Mother at thirty-three was left a widow with six children. I can not recall a thing about the funeral except that someone baked half a bushel of doughnuts over the kitchen fire-place. I

also remember that when mother come home she sat down perfectly quiet, and took Jim in her lap.

After that Caroline and I took turns living with my sister Almira Knox Horton who lived just across the road from my mother. My sister Dolly went and lived with Uncle Arch Knox. My brother John, who was fourteen, went down to Lawrenceville to clerk in Ford's store. So mother only had two children to care for at home, either Caroline or I and Jim. We lived in the same house three years longer, and then mother died. I was nine then. Mother had gone again to Spring Mills to see grandmother; there she was taken ill, and there after many weeks of suffering she died. She was brought home to be buried but I remember almost nothing about the funeral except the coming of the relatives. I know Uncle Joel Stebbins and Aunt Ruth came because they tipped over coming down Fork's Hill. One other thing I remember and that is how Almira took me on her lap and cried and said, "Oh, Lenky, we haven't any mother." Almira was always good to me. She would get up and hold me nights when I did not feel well. Father and mother were originally buried side by side; but when that burying ground was moved, the bodies were taken up and put into one grave in the old Carpenter burying grounds near Academy Corners. When father was taken up the coffin was opened because Dolly *would* see him. They say that for moment he looked as natural as life, and that then the body all fell to dust.³³ When mother died she was thirty-six and had already grandchildren, Lon and Mack Horton, Almira's children. Thus ended my Knoxville life.

Spring Mills, Pennsylvania

After mother's death I went to live with Uncle James Colvin and his family at Spring Mills, Potter County, Pennsylvania, and I stayed there till I was nearly eleven (1836 -37). One of the things I remember best during that year and a half is the zeal with which I read the *Old Testament* and *Pilgrim's Progress*. There was a low lean-to roof that I could climb up on, and it was there I used to take the big picture Bible and Progress. I would lie down and study the pictures and read the stories. Then with what anxiety I followed Christian, especially when he had to go by the lions - and they were only stone lions after all. I was so glad of that. My favorite Bible stories were of Ruth and Daniel. And I was so glad to have Daniel safe. I don't know why I loved the Bible so. I was not naturally religious. I do not remember ever praying or thinking about God or being afraid. But I loved the Bible stories. When children came to see me our greatest pleasure was to go over the pictures and stories. I would tell what I knew and the children would ask questions and wonder.

I can remember a curious kind of party Aunt Catherine gave. It was a spinning party. The invitations were sent out by my carrying a head of flax to each of the guests. I can see now how the flax looked in the basket. It was soft

as silk and pale yellow. The flax was braided loosely and tied at the head. Each guest was to spin the flax and bring it back on the day of the party. Then there was a fine supper. You had to be a good spinner or you were not invited. This was in the days of logging bees, raising bees, husking bees, apple bees, when neighbors turned in and helped each other. Quilting bees were common, and good quilters were very popular.

People never hesitated in those days to call upon each other for help. One night a woman was sick - our nearest neighbor though three quarters of a mile away - and Aunt Catherine had to go to take care of her while Uncle James went two and one half miles on foot to Whitesville for a doctor. It was night and Uncle James came to the bed where I slept with baby Albert. "Now Lenky," he said, "we have to go away. You mustn't be afraid. You just stay in bed with Albert." While they were gone there came up a terrible storm with a heavy fall of snow. It drifted and piled up on the porch-roof so that the old porch-posts gave way and the roof fell with a crash. I had no idea what had happened but I pulled the covers over my head and waited for daylight. When it was light, I crept to the window and saw the black posts sticking up out of the snow. That was a pretty forlorn experience for a child of nine. But children were expected to be self-reliant then.

Children were expected to help with the work, too. I used to go way up to the potato-hole to get potatoes when it was so cold that I had to chop the dirt away with an ax. Even when snow was falling I used to go to the big spring to wash the potatoes. Uncle James was a very kind sympathetic man, but he did not get on in the world in those days as Uncle Gaylord did. Uncle James would rather go hunting than to church any day. That was a great sorrow to Aunt Catherine for she was a very devout woman. But one good result of Uncle James' hunting was that we had plenty of venison, pheasants, and other wild game. One thing Uncle James despised beyond another was a dude. When Arch Colvin first came home with tight trousers Uncle James was simply enraged. He wondered how any one could willingly make himself ridiculous.

While I was living with Uncle James, the April I was nine (1835), there was an extremely fast run of sap so that he could not well leave the sugar-bust. Uncle James had me to go up to the pasture and let down the bars so the cows could go in after the morning milking. I did so and then thought I would go over to the sugar-bush where Uncle James was. I went along by a zigzag path through the woods, picking up and eating beechnuts that had lain under the snow all winter and now were swollen. They tasted like they had been boiled. Without noticing it I wandered from the path. Suddenly I looked up and could not tell where I was. Of course I was terribly frightened. I ran and screamed and seemed to lose all self control. I ran and ran. Once I even came out on the hillside near our own potato-hole. I could see the very ax I had used and the spring where I had washed the potatoes. I could also see the

smoke curling up from our own chimney; but I was too thoroughly frightened to recognize anything. Then I saw Spring Mills over across the valley and I thought to run there. Instead I turned in the opposite direction, plunging straight into dense hemlock woods. I was screaming at every jump. Uncle James heard me and started after me; but he could neither over-take me or make me hear. He later said that the screams grew fainter and fainter till finally he lost all track of me.

Uncle James then went to the farm and put a boy on horseback. He sent the boy in all directions to call out, "A child is lost in the woods!" Soon a great number of men, on foot or on horseback, most of them carrying guns so as to signal if they found me, were on the hunt. They soon came upon my tracks in the snow. They said afterwards that I must have traveled twenty miles that day. Sometimes I ran around in a circle. Sometimes when I saw what seemed to be an opening in the trees I would plunge straight for it without any consciousness of obstacles. They found places where I had floundered through snow-drifts up to my knees. I was right on the edge of a windfall, and if I had worked my way into that I could never have been found. For in the windfall the fallen trees lapped and over-lapped and the bushes had grown up between in a perfect triangle. Once I saw the prettiest pair of deer. At a distance I thought they were dogs. They were young and had no antlers. They did look so pretty as they bounded along together.

I traveled about in this way all day over the snow and wet leaves. I had had nothing to eat since the beechnuts I had found in the morning. About five o'clock it began to rain and I knew I must find some place to stay. I soon came upon a big tree that had been chopped down and had lodged on the stump, making something of a shelter. Under the tree trunk was a kind of nest of leaves and moss. The men said afterwards that this was probably the nest of some wild animal; and that since it was the only one chopped down in the forest, had doubtless been felled to dislodge some wild animal in the branches. I went to a tree that had been struck by lightening and peeled off the dead bark, taking strips and standing them up against my fallen tree trunk. Then I crept in on the leaves and pinned up my little red blanket to the trunk in front of me. I curled up and soon was asleep. About six o'clock Uncle James, Grandfather Colvin, and Mr. Forbes, a neighbor, came upon my red blanket. They disagreed as to how I should be awakened. Mr. Forbes said they must take right hold of me or I would be wild as a deer and run right away. The first I knew I felt someone pulling me, asleep as I was, out from under the blanket. It was Mr. Forbes who was a great big man with long gaunt arms. I was frightened enough, but once I saw Uncle James pleasant face and then I knew I was all right.

Grandfather Colvin, a bent and feeble old man, had followed the hunt all day; but when he knew that I was safe he sank down by a tree, saying, "I feel as

if I could never take another step on God's green earth." Then, in a tremulous voice with tears, he began to give me directions as to what I should do if I ever got lost again: "Oh, Lenky, remember always to follow a stream of water down, for water always comes out somewheres." But Uncle James said, "Never mind now, father; we've found her." Then they shot off guns and the other men began to gather in. I can see yet how the neighbors looked at me as they came straggling in. One of the men made a cup of leaves and got me some water to drink. Ever so many men had put something to eat in their pockets for me, so I might have had a feast if I had not been too excited to eat. Finally Barney Crandall took me on his back, and other men took turns carrying me till we came to the place where the horse was. The old Dan Cobb took me in front of him on the saddle and we started for home. Aunt Catherine had supper ready, and I remember we had fresh veal. Finally I curled up in bed and went to sleep hearing Uncle James and Aunt Catherine talking matters over and wondering if they had been to blame.³⁴

Chicago, Illinois

When I was ten a great change came in my life. For some reason there was at that time a real exodus of the Colvins to Chicago. In 1836 Uncle James, who had saved up his wheat money to pay expenses, took his wife Catherine and the children Albert and Mary and went to or near to Chicago. Uncle James was thirty-one. The others who went were Aunt Ruth Stebbins, twenty-five years old; her husband, Joel Stebbins; and their son Archibald. Grandfather Colvin, then sixty-four and grandmother Colvin, then fifty-four, followed their children the next year and took with them Mary Ann, George, Nancy, and Elisabeth Hathaway. George, the youngest, was then about twelve.

All these Colvins are quite clear in my mind because my husband and I visited them in 1873 after the fire.³⁵ Uncle James' farm was then considered worth about \$1,000 an acre. Part of it ran up to a sort of island, a hill rising up out of the prairie and heavily wooded with oak-trees. It was called Blue Island. Uncle James said there was some talk of extending the city out to their farm. He raised berries. He also had a field of corn so high that my husband could hardly reach the ears. He had a comfortable white frame house. Albert was married and he had another white frame house on the place. They took us for a drive to a great park, the finest we had ever seen. The lake was all along the park. The houses there were not burned, but we drove through the burned section. We picked up some doll's dishes all melted together as a souvenir.

On this visit we were especially interested to Mary Ann Colvin. As a young woman she had very nearly lost her sight. She was eager to try every possible remedy, but the family tried to dissuade her fearing that she might only do herself harm. But one day she heard of an Indian doctor who said he could

restore sight. In spite of all opposition she went to him. She had to stay many weeks in the little hotel where he was. He bound her eyes with some kind of herb salves. Every time he took the bandages off she could see better; but the cure was not complete before there was an epidemic of cholera. The doctor said that if a member of his family should have the cholera he would leave Chicago. Unfortunately his child came down with the disease, and Aunt Mary Ann was terribly frightened for fear the doctor would go before she was cured. So she undertook to treat the child. She made huge mustard and flour pancakes on the hotel griddle and wrapped the child in them and it got well. The doctor cured Mary Ann's eyes. Her sight was always perfect after that. She never had to wear glasses and as an old lady she could do the finest sewing with ease.

After Uncle James went west I went to live with Uncle Gaylord Colvin at Spring Mills for one winter and went to school with my cousin Frank who was just my age. Aunt Ruth had had seventeen children, among them being four or five pairs of twins, but fourteen of the children had died in infancy. Perhaps that is because Uncle Gaylord and Ruth were cousins.³⁶ Uncle Gaylord was a very thrifty, fore-handed man who had accumulated a pretty fair fortune through his country store. And Aunt Ruth was a notable housekeeper. My chief work here was to help Frank get water. We drew it up the hill from the race on a sled or carried it in five-quart pails up a steep bank in which steps had been cut.

Lawrenceville, Pennsylvania

The next spring (1837) I went to Knoxville to stay with Uncle Arch Knox till my brother John came for me in July. Early in the spring he had married Adeline Kilbourne, daughter of Judge Ira Kilbourne of Lawrenceville. John married before he was twenty-one and before he had begun the study of the law. At the time of his marriage he was in company with John De Pew in the mercantile and lumber business. The partnership was dissolved soon after John's marriage because the firm broke down. Then he began to study law with William Garretson of Tioga. As soon as John was settled he came up to Knoxville with Adeline and took me down to live with them. He had already taken our brother Jim to Lawrenceville and Mrs. Powers, the wife of Dr. Sim Powers, took care of Jim until John began keeping house.

I lived with John till I was seventeen (1843). During this time I went to school off and on but with no steadiness. My brother John was practicing law and editing *The Lawrenceville Sentinel*. He was closely absorbed in his business, but he was very kind when anything was brought to his attention, and he was very careful about me. When I went out in the evening he often came to see what kind of company it was. But there isn't much I care to remember during that six years. My schooling was of little importance but I do remember

Town's *Definer and Speller* and the value of which I feel to this day. Another valuable was Colburn's *Arithmetic*.³⁷ We also used Olney's *Geography*.³⁸ I do not recall any interesting reading of this period. From the time I was eleven my life was full of work. I believe I never had any rest till my five children were through college.³⁹

While living in Lawrenceville, I used to sometimes go to pleasure parties. We had cotillions but I was never infatuated with dancing, and I never went to any public dancing party. My two best girlfriends were Mary McDougal and Molly Murphy, but Mary complained that when the other girls wanted to play I always had some ironing to do. When I first went to Brother John's I remember being left to prepare the tallow for dipping candles. Water was put in the kettle to make the tallow rise to the top. I hadn't put in water enough and I tried to fill up the hot tallow by putting in cold water. The tallow sputtered and flew all over the stove and floor. In my fright I ran and called a neighbor, Mrs. Mosier. I can see now the way she looked when she saw the mess. She threw up her hands and exclaimed, "Sodom and Gomorrah!"

One of the pleasantest things at Lawrenceville was a singing-school taught by a blind man named Lemuel Rockwell. I was thought to have a very good voice, and I loved the songs we learned. One song was:

Down in a green and shady dell
A modest violet grew
Its stalk was bent, it hung its head
As if to hide from view.

And yet it was a lovely flower
Its colors bright and fair;
It might have graced a rosy bower
Instead of hiding there.

We learned to sing *The Lord's Prayer* like this:

Our Father in Heaven we hallow thy name
May thy Kingdom holy on earth be the same.
Oh give to us daily our portion of bread;
It is by thy bounty that all must be fed.
Forgive our transgressions and teach us to know
That humble compassion that pardons each foe.

The *Soldier's Return* was a favorite song. It began:

The bugles sang truce for the night-cloud had lowered,

And the sentinel stars a watch in the sky.

When Fay Knox came to see me in Wellsboro he knew that song all through and we sang it together. I learned also some songs that I used afterwards when I was myself a teacher. One was:

The bell, the bell, I hear it ring
Its final notes of ding, dong, ding.
I love its notes, I love its sound;
It widely floats in echoes round.

Another school song was:

Where once stood the old long shanty
With slab seats and counters scanty,
Black-boards, maps and charts in plenty
Now hang round the common school.
And our merry singing
Through the welkin ringing
Is the story bringing
That we love to go to school.

When I taught the little song "Children go, to and fro, singing merrily, merrily," the children changed it to "Singing Emily, Emily, Emily." Those old songs do come back to me. One is:

Come, come, come
For summer now is here.
Come out among the flowers,
And make some pretty bowers.
Come out among the posies,
Cull violets and roses.
Come, come, come,
For summer now is here.

Here is another:

O come to the garden
Dear maids of the school
And rove through the bowers
So fragrant and cool.
We'll gather the lilies

And make a bouquet
To give to our teacher
This warm summer day.

Then there was a cuckoo song:

I am a cuckoo,
My name is cuckoo,
The children call me cuckoo,
And should you ever forget my name
I'll always tell you cuckoo.

When winter comes
The woods are my home.
In the summer I sing in the meadow.
Thus lives the cuckoo,
Thus mates the cuckoo,
And all the little cuckoos.

Another song about a bell had this stanza:

But when I hear the slow death toll
Over hill and valley roll
I feel so sad to think that I
Must like my sister Mary die.
And then the bell shall toll for me
When I can neither hear nor see.

The Mother's Lament was a song much liked. I recall portions of it:

Methought when years had rolled away
That thou wouldst be my aged stay
And ofttimes have I dreamed to see
The boy, the youth, the man, in thee.

Bring cypress from some sunless spot
Bring me the blue forget-me-not,
That I may strew them on thy brier
With long-drawn sighs and gushing tear.

The grave shall be thy cradle now,
The wild flower on thy breast shall grow,
For God hath lain thee down to sleep

Like a pure pearl below the deep.

I remember, too, some little poems in one of Aunt Adeline's books. There was one with a picture of a girl, her hair blowing about her face, and beginning:

Whither art thou going pretty Antoinette?
Thy little feet thou'lt surely wet.
And don't you see, the wind and air
Are playing about your face and hair?

Lady my feet I often wet
And it has never harmed me yet.
I love to have the wind and air
Playing about my face and hair.
My old nurse who watched my slumbers
And told me stories without numbers,
Is now to ill to work for pay,
She grows poorer every day.

Custards, broths, and jellies good
My mother send to her for food

I have forgotten the rest of it. There was another called *The Pet Lamb* and in it the little girl said "Drink, pretty creature, drink." When I was fourteen came the Harrison campaign. One of the popular songs was:

What has caused this great commotion,
Motion, motion, the country through;
Oh! It's a ball that's rolling around
For Tippecanoe and Tyler too,
And with them we'll beat little Van!
Van, Van he's a used up man!
And with them we'll beat little Van!

A song for Henry Clay when he was for the second time a candidate was:

Get out of the way, old Kentucky.
You've run twice and you're unlucky!

This was to the tune of *Old Dan Tucker*. In the Polk campaign was a song beginning:

Hurrah, hurrah, the Whigs can't scare us!
We're for Polk and George M. Dallas!

In that campaign I remember seeing a band wagon filled with girls carrying a banner saying, "Give us free trade and equal rights and we'll protect ourselves."

My brother John's house was very well furnished for that time (1837-43). There was a high post bedstead with a tester extending over the whole bed. The bed had curtains, valance, and bed-spread made of cream-colored, brown flowered chintz, bound with brown. There was also a dressing table with a mirror and little drawers. In the parlor there was a claw legged round center table covered with a linen cloth, scarlet and white, woven in flowers and shells and birds. That cloth cost six dollars. On the table stood an astral lamp that gave the softest light possible. The globe was of ground glass. We used whale oil, but if that happened to be out we could use any kind of grease and get a good light. There was also a very gay yarn carpet with wavy green stripes, having a watered effect, alternating with stripes of many colors. This was the best carpet - and it was home-made - till we bought a flowered wool carpet with geometrical figures and flowers.

The walls in John's house were papered, but literally nothing hung on them. People thought it was silly to checker up the walls with pictures or anything. I remember one lady who framed the Presidents in old mirror-frames, and we thought she was such a goose! She hung them very high in a row. Our parlor curtains were made of thick and thin checked lawn with wide knotted fringe. They were hung from an oval shelf over the window. One curtain fell straight down and then was looped to one side. The other one was put on the board length-wise so that it made a valance at the top while the end of it which fell down over the looping of the other curtain. I have ironed those curtains many a time and the fringe all had to come off each time.

Another evidence of what then was counted elegant living was John's gold-banded china and solid silver spoons. The house was everywhere spoken of as being unusually tasteful in its appointment. The first time I ever saw a marble-topped table was when Mr. Haskins of Whitesville took me to his newly furnished parlor and asked me proudly if John C. could do better than that. Mr. Haskins had a big piano, too, and there were not many of them in that part of the country at that time. The flute and the clarinet were the popular instruments. Bass viols and tuning-forks were used in churches.

MY LIFE AS A TEACHER

Klipnocky, Pennsylvania

When I was seventeen (1843) I decided to go live with my sister Almira Horton in Knoxville. John gave his consent and I set off. But on the way I

visited a Mrs. Culver at a little place called Klipnocky near Elkland. Their school was in need of a teacher and Culver's suggested that I should take the examination⁴⁰ and try my hand at teaching. When I was through the examiner said, "She has done as well as the majority of the teachers. I think your school will be in good hands." The school was held in part of Mr. Hubbell's house, and I had about fifteen scholars, big and little. I got on very well, I think. At least, since they paid only \$1.00 a week and board, I presume the teaching was as good as the pay.

While I was at Klipnocky Mrs. Culver told Mary McDougal and me that we might have a party if we would do all the work. We gave the house a wholesale cleaning up; putting things so successfully out of sight that poor Mr. Culver could not find his good clothes till the next morning and had to spend the evening in the kitchen. We trimmed the rooms with evergreen and things looked fine enough. We had a great time getting supper. There proved to be no fine flour in the house for the biscuits, and the only way to get it was for me to go to the mill. I mounted Mr. Culver's horse with the man's saddle, and hurried off, coming back in triumph with a bag of flour in front of me. In those days I dare attempt anything. Mr. Culver had fun over the invitations. Mary wrote them and there was one fastidious young man who she especially wished to please. She wrote and re-wrote his invitation a dozen times before she got one she was willing to send. A wag in the house saw the discarded sheets, gathered them all up, and delivered them to the young man in question. Mary said I had insisted on inviting all the Yahoos in Klipnocky and that I should entertain them. We talked and laughed and sang and marched and had a gay time.

Boarding Around

The system of "boarding round" which I began in Klipnocky was continued through the years of my teaching in the common schools. There were many disagreeable things about this system. Sometimes I had to go into very crude family life, even into places where the entire habit of domestic economy, eating sleeping, spinning, and weaving, would be carried out in one room. If one person wished to go to bed early the rest of the household considerably "looked up the chimney." I have been in some places where there was so little room that I had to have two children sleep with me. There was absolutely no recognition of the necessity for hygienic conditions. The beds were usually in recesses called bed-sinks, and trundle-beds were under the beds. There was no way to air these bed-sinks, and there was never any thought of airing the bedding. A notable house-keeper was one who made the beds the minute people were out of them.

Other conditions were equally primitive. Commonly the women cooked the best they had for the teacher. Once some people sent for me to board with

them that week because "they had just kill a calf." Though I did not consider myself a prodigal I was very ready to exchange salt-pork and cod-fish for fresh veal, so I accepted the invitation. At another time a little boy said to me, "Our folks don't want you to come to our house till we've killed hogs." I had to take a lunch to school and I became absolutely sick of the inevitable biscuit and cake. Once after such a lunch I went hungry to a new place and they had only bread and milk for supper. I used to suffer much from the cold. The schools began in May and good housekeepers would get ready for me by banishing the fire to some out-kitchen, taking out the andirons, cleaning out the fireplace, and filling in the opening with ornamental bushes.

There was a great deal of jealousy through a neighborhood if a teacher seemed to like one place more than another. When I went into a new district I make it a rule to go one night apiece to each of the families represented in the school. Then I had the situation well in hand and I knew what families would be the most sensitive to any slight and I tried to take my week with them among the first. Going about in this way it was hard to keep free from the feuds of the district. But I resolved to hold myself perfectly neutral or if I said anything at all on the subject of the feud to those on one side it was in excuse of the other side.

One rather trying thing, going about as I did, a young girl and unprotected, was to make young men keep their distance. But I did it. There was one young fellow with whom three of us, his sister and nephew and myself, were going a piece down the road. The others, for fun, ran and hid in a green recess down this road. I looked a long way down the lonely road and was frightened because I could not see them. I said, "Where are Mary and William? I must go home." "Oh, no," said the young man, and he suddenly put his arm around me and kissed me. I was very angry and I never forgave him for taking such an advantage of me. I gave his sister 'Hail Columbia' for leaving me alone with him. I also told Mr. Culver, who likewise gave the young man a piece of his mind.⁴¹ Mr. Culver was from New York City and he said, "I'd risk that little Knox girl anywhere. She has grit." During these days I had many lessons to learn in the way of tact, firmness, forbearance, and self-control.

One pleasant thing was the cordiality of the people. There were various reasons why they used to fairly tumble over each other to get the 'school-ma'am.' To begin with, all difficult questions were saved up for her to answer. They were dreadfully astonished if she proved deficient in any direction. Most people thought one dollar a week just for teaching was big pay for an easy job; and they expected the teacher to make herself useful from house to house. I had begun at fourteen to cut and make my own dresses, and my dress-making skill was soon discovered and counted upon as a resource. I used to show the girls how to make their own clothes and how to make themselves look attractive. I remember one day a great gawky girl came to school with a bundle and said,

"Say, my ma says you may cut my dress if you'll do it for nothing, and I told her I knew you would." One source of annoyance was that my personal belongings were thought to be temporary family possessions. I remember hearing one little boy bawl out, "Say, ma, ain't you glad teacher is comin'? We can use her fine-tooth comb a whole week." I used to have to hide my combs and brush and even my tooth-brushes to keep them to myself. All my sewing things, my scissors, needles, thimble, thread, pins, were common property.

One thing people liked to have me come for was my singing. I used to go to the house so tired that I was limp, but it was the regular evening's entertainment to hear the teacher sing songs. They would gather round the fire, old and young, while I sang long story songs, like ballads. One began:

Of a rich counselor I write,
Who had an only daughter.
She was a youthful beauty bright,
Now mark what followed after.

The story was of a man who went to a lawyer to find out the best way of getting this bright beauty without exposing himself to the wrath of her parents. The lawyer advised the lover to have the girl go on horse-back to his house, take him up behind her, and ride away. Then *she* would have stolen *him*:

Then make your plea
That she stole thee
And thus avoid their fury.
Sure this is law
I will maintain
Before both Judge and Jury.

They never dreamed that teaching was hard work. I remember one of my friends who taught and lived on the farm at home. When she come in at night her mother would say, "Now you must get supper. I've been working all day."

One valuable thing about boarding round was that the intimate knowledge of the children in their home life gave the teachers a great advantage. It made her know their real needs and it make her sympathetic. It also kept the parents in close touch with the schools. And then the primitive conditions I have told about belonged only in the early part of my teaching. It was while I was a Klipnocky that I made up my mind to fit myself as thoroughly as possible for teaching. After I finished teaching in Klipnocky I went up to Uncle James Knox in Academy Corners; and there attended a select school taught by Dr. Rob Fraser. Here I did my first earnest and steady work with books.

After this school I visited around my relatives for some months. When I went to Spring Mills I had a fine mantle of blue black morino with a shawl cape. The under part was gathered on a yoke and the cape part was bordered with velvet a finger deep. It came clean to the floor, was wadded and lined and had a velvet collar.⁴² Mr. Cobb said it was the finest cloak that had ever come into Spring Mills. At the same time I had a sky-blue silk bonnet that turned straight up in front. Mary Packer said I always looked the best of any girl in our set.

Sharon, Pennsylvania

In the early part of the winter (1844) I was with Aunt Nancy Jones at Sharon on the Osweo River, and we used to see the Indians going about with their papooses on their backs. They brought baskets to sell. Aunt Nancy's band-boxes and her big baskets for storing things were almost all of bright Indian manufacture. Once when I was teaching in Sharon I saw through the window a monstrous big Indian in a blanket with a gun. I hoped he would pass by, but when I peered carefully out of the door there he sat filling his pipe, and he made me know by signs that he wanted to light it. I gave him the only chair in the room, and there he sat by the stove puffing away at his old pipe. I called up the classes and the old fellow grunted out his pleasure at hearing the children read. As soon as one class would go back to their seats he would beckon for me to bring another up. He did not care about the girls but he would chuckle out loud when one of the boys did anything. After a while he bowed himself out in the politest manner.

I taught at that school, in Sharon, on and off for two years (1844 & 1845). Two summers (Summers of 1846 & 1847) I taught in Spring Mills and lived with Almira.⁴³ I sewed for my board. Every Saturday I made two shirts or two pairs of pants for the boys. There were so many children in Almira's family that she baked up a bushel of flour a week, I sewed mornings and evenings too; however, I do not remember much about these years. They are indistinct to me.⁴⁴

Academy Corners, Pennsylvania

When I was twenty-two (1848), I went to Academy Corners to school.⁴⁵ I was there most of the time for two years (school years 1848-49 & 1849-50), though whenever my money gave out I had to stop and teach a term to get more.⁴⁶ Of course I dressed simply; and as I did my own sewing, I could make a little money go a long ways. Despite this economizing, I never looked shabby; for I knew how to manage my clothes. The school at Academy Corners was taught by the Prices and a Mr. Smith.⁴⁷ Sam Price told me he would give me the praise of being the best student he had ever had. I think he meant the most attentive and earnest. I know how to make things clear, and I used to

help the dull girls, and of course I gained much from that. It was here that I began the study of Physiology,⁴⁸ and it was a revelation to me. I was not very well so I tried to put every lesson in practice. I think that was really a turning-point in my life. I learned the value of fresh air, and learning to do arm exercises.

During my time at the Academy Prof. Smith told me not to study English Grammar any more, I knew it well enough. I took up Astronomy but it was not well taught and I did not like it. I did almost no general reading. I studied so hard, and worked so hard, that there was no time for anything else. Yet my life had some gaiety in it. One of our chief pleasures was to go to the chapel and march. This march was a complicated affair, single and double and quadruple, in and out, up and down, and we kept time to a lively hunting song which we all sang. It began:

A southerly wind and a cloudy sky
Proclaimeth a hunting morning.

The chorus was:

Hark, hark! forward!
Hurrah! Hurrah!

It was at Academy Corners that I first met my husband, Newell Reynolds. He had been there two terms when I entered in the winter. I had heard of him from a young man who told Dorcas and me about the school and the people we would meet there. This young man said that there was one very promising young student named Newell Reynolds at the school. He also told me that Newell Reynolds was from Troupsburg (New York). I said to myself, "Can any good thing come out of Troupsburg?" Later when I actually saw the town, I said that the smartest thing Newell ever did was to get on a horse and ride away. I do not remember when I first met Mr. Reynolds; but I remember seeing him now and then at socials and marches. Mr. Reynolds said afterwards that he used to feel much pleased because he thought I was especially nice to him; but that it rather took the wind out of his sails when he found that I treated everyone that way. He used to build fires to pay for his board; and the cellar where he kept his wood was under the rooms where Carrie Teal and I were rooming. He remembers that we threw cookies down to him, and perhaps we did; but then, we threw cookies down to Bill Price too. A part of Mr. Reynolds work was to ring bells, but if he wanted to go away he could always get substitutes. We girls thought it was great fun to act as bell-ringers. The old bell rope would fairly lift us off our feet. and the bell had the sweetest, clearest tone.

We girls boarded ourselves. When I first went there I lived with three other girls in the North Garret Room. Maria Outman's brother Jim roomed with us but he had to go away nights because there were only two bed-sinks in that room. In the other Garret Room were Mr. Reynolds, Henry Simpson and his sister, and Mr. Griggs and his sister. Later ten girls of us boarded together in another place. Our rooms opened off from a hall in which was the common cooking-stove. We did our baking on Saturdays. It was a great trial if any one of our number happened to be slow or a slouch. I can remember one girl who never got ready to begin her cooking till the rest of us had cleaned up the kitchen. Then she would sozzle around. One thing that tried me was to have the girls keep their own room nice, but not to fill any responsibility about the hall and stairs. I couldn't stand such house-keeping as that. We were not allowed to housework or visit or even talk during study hours. But Bedlam broke loose when study-hours were over. With permission we were allowed any visitors we pleased in our rooms. All light had to go out when the retiring-bell rang at ten o'clock.

The next fall (1849) I returned to the Academy from Elkland, where I had been teaching the summer term. Elkland was another school on the Cowanesque. It was there I saw my first sail-boat. It was made there by Tom Allen, Mr. Cone, and some others. It was named after me, "The Emily." I think I never went out in the boat, but I remember how pretty the sails looked on the water. Back at Academy Corners, Ann Davenport, Sarah Buckley, Laura Bowen, and I decided to board together and took two rooms at Caleb Short's house. One room was the bedroom. In the other we cooked and ate and studied. Laura and I cooked together, and Sarah and Ann did the same. Laura had some things sent form home already cooked so I paid more money than she, so as to make it even. That was really the pleasantest time that I had at school. I did not mind the work and the girls say that I always did more than my share. You see, I knew how and had been used to it.

I was at this time already engaged to Mr. Reynolds. He, of course, wanted to stay over at our rooms a good deal, but I sent him home when the study-bell rang. We had become engaged the preceding spring during a drive up to Spring Mills.⁴⁹ The people in Elkland could not see what could make a gay girl like me take a fancy to such a sober fellow as Newell Reynolds. As Tom Allen said afterwards that I could see farther than any of them. Mr. Reynolds and I were really very unlike. Mr. Reynolds was devotedly pious and was studying for the ministry, and I was not at that time even a professing Christian. Then, too, Mr. Reynolds had a great deal of romance and sentiment, and I was practical. He was full of schemes about which he was enthusiastic, but he was easily cast down if they did not carry. I was never so elated as he, nor so dejected. I was more even-tempered and steady.

I can remember quite a good deal about the way woman dressed in those

days. No one wore under-flannels then, though I just recall one old woman who wore red flannel for her rheumatism. Women wore flannel skirts, and heavy quilted skirts. Worsted skirts often had as much as four pounds of batting in them and were coarsely quilted. Silk skirts, on the other hand, were much lighter and were quilted with feathers into various fantastic patterns. Women sometimes wore two of these heavy petticoats to make her skirts stand out. We wore warm stockings, home knit, and in the summer tow-colored ones knit from linen yarn. When I was married I had eleven pairs of white woolen stockings that I had knit myself. After they were washed I hung them up in a garret window to bleach.

When I was a child I always wore a calf-skin shoes with leather strings. It was then a great event to get a family shod all round. If we could get the shoes home early enough we covered them with grease and hung them in a warm place till all the grease was absorbed. That made them waterproof. My first pair of rubber over-shoes came when I was a young lady. We had, however, for riding in cold weather deer-skin over-shoes trimmed with beads and fur.

Our corsets opened only in the back where they laced up. In front was a place to slip in the corset-board which was of thin hickory and was 1 and 1/2 inches wide. There were also places for hickory stays. At one time women laced themselves so that they had to draw up the strings by the bed-post, and not infrequently they slept tightly laced. But there came a reaction from that, and for a time corsets were thrown away altogether. Dresses were made with long points front and back and the skirts were gathered on to the waist. I can remember, too, when girls wore tremendous bustles and hoops. They grew bigger and bigger and then suddenly collapsed. The mutton-leg sleeve was the rage when I lived at Brother John's in Lawrenceville (early 1840's). There was a separate lining of brown holland, starched very stiff, dried over a form, and tied into the sleeve to make it stand out. We usually bought regular starch but sometimes we made our own out of potatoes or corn.

In my younger days red and black or red and green checked flannel was the common dress goods, especially in the country. One very dressy and expensive article of apparel was the long shawl. It was a long piece of silk, real lace, or white crepe trimmed with lace or knotted silk fringe. It was about half a yard wide and nearly long enough to touch the floor on each side. The lace in the back fell prettily over the bustle.

When I was young lady I wore my hair down over my ears and brought it up in the back in braids over my comb. My hair was very heavy, and a very dark brown. The boys always knew when I was getting tired in the school for then I would push my hair up over my ears. At this time I had hair-pins but when I was quite a young girl I never saw a hair-pin. Children sometimes had their hair fastened up with a goose quill. Usually both women and children wore combs to hold the hair up. Sometimes ladies wore three combs on a side, each

one being put into a curl of hair, and a big comb for the back. One of my great desires as a child was a brass comb. They were made of a flat band gaily painted with flowers. The teeth piercing the band made loops at the top and looked like hair-pins stuck in. Almost everybody wore ear-rings, some little and round and some ridiculously long. But I never had my ears pierced.

While I lived at John's I had a caleche made our of pink chambray. The cloth was shirred onto bamboo rod, every other rod being shorter than those on each side of it. You could shut the caleche back like a carriage top, or you could pull a string and draw it forward if you cared to shield your face. A pretty cloth when I was a young lady was balzarine. Caroline had a balzarine dress. It was open-worked and striped with fawn-color and blue. Mousselaïne was a material like the shallies we have now. When I went to Academy Corners I had a leather trunk with brass nails. The older trunks were of deer-skin.

Bulkley School District Deerfield Township, Pennsylvania

For the two years (1850 -1852) after my time at Academy Corners, I spent the time in teaching or in going to school at Alfred Center. Of the schools I taught, the most important were a summer school in Spring Mills and a winter and a summer term in the Bulkley district. I hated to take the Spring Mills school because I had to leave before Commencement, and I wanted to read the essay I was writing on "The Women Question." But it was a great honor to be chosen for the Spring Mills School; and it was \$8.00 a month. So I went even though I had to leave before Commencement. The Bulkley school was the most trying one I ever had. I had taught a summer term there before; but then the pupils were mostly children. Parents used to send their children when they were hardly more than babies. Sometimes a little child would go to sleep in my lap while I heard a class. I kept shawl and a pillow, and when a little tot began to nod I put him comfortably to bed in the closet.

I didn't whip a child that summer. That was so unusual that it was noised abroad and really stored up trouble for me. At that time whipping was the universal mode of discipline. I have seen teachers draw through the fire a long pliant rod of willow twisted together for whips so as to harden them. Now the winter school was quite unlike the summer one. Then I had big boys, two from out of district. All went well at first and I did not have to use the whip at all. But one day four big boys deliberately staid out. This happened after I had been troubled for some time by having the big boys come in late at recess, after I had repeatedly said that I expected them to come in at the first tap of the bell. The boys were Alick Wass, a big burly boy of eighteen; Rush Whitaker, a slight gentlemanly fellow of twenty-two; and two younger boys about fourteen named Thorpe and Clark. Alick and Rush did not belong to the district; and the directors of the district had told me that if they made the

least trouble I should send them packing.

I waited till three o'clock. Then I told Frank Bowen to cut me four of the biggest whips he could find, to tell the younger boys that they must come in at once, and to tell the older ones that if they were ever coming in it must be at once. They all came in. Rush was as white as a sheet. "Boys," I said to Alick and Rush, "you know that you don't belong in this district. If you wish to go home now is your chance. If you stay here I shall punish you as I do the other boys." Then I whipped the two younger boys but not very hard for I did not really consider them to blame. Then I whipped Rush, and hard too, but he never flinched. Alick cringed a little but he stood it. I sent them to their classes and went on with the school. I did not know what the people would think. But those were the days when children were not coddled into learning. Parents expected their children to be punished, and directors stood back of their teachers.

The next day Thorpe's old grandfather said to me, "I am glad we have a teacher that can govern the school. And I'm glad you dared tackle the big boys and lick 'em out." Lias Clark's father said, "Why didn't you take a chunk and knock them down?" "Oh, people wouldn't like that." "Let 'em make a fuss if they daah! I'll see to 'em!" When Alick went out he said, "We thought that school-ma'am didn't have much spunk but we was devilish mistaken. I'd never have stood and took such a lickin' from a man." Emer Bowen was pleased through and through. He piled my plate high that night and said such an afternoon's work deserved a good supper. It was a week before I could raise my hand to my head, but that winter school settled my reputation as a teacher. Once Frank Bowen heard a man in the post-office say, "I hear that down in the Bulkley district they are paying twelve dollars a month for a woman teacher. I *should* think they might pay a little more and get a man." "We've had a man every winter before," said Frank, "and we have never had so good a school as this winter." Women teachers were allowed in the first place only because they were cheaper than men. As a rule ten dollars was the highest wage for a woman when a man was paid fifteen.

Alfred Center, New York

During these years (1850-1852) I both taught and attended school at Alfred Center. One winter while I was at Alfred Center I had to go home because my cough was so bad. I had had poor health for several years. I was very thin and as pale as a ghost. They all thought I would die of consumption. Broken by illness as my school-days were, this Alfred life was of great value to me. I think the people at Alfred Center rated my ability much higher than it deserved. The marks used to be posted and I was 100 in everything. I never let anything come between me and my work. My teaching made me clear and exact and so aided me as a student. My favorite study was Robinson's *Higher Algebra*. I can

remember working two hours on a single problem.

Prof. Kenyon was a great personality among us at Alfred. In any class we could judge how the preceding class had recited for if things had gone wrong his blue eyes would be black as coals and there would be two red spots on his forehead. He had curly red hair that looked as if it were full of electricity. His face was slightly marked with small-pox. He had a fine figure and was always well dressed. I can see him now as he used to come in carrying his shiny black silk hat on his thumb. His manners were courtly to people he respected, but he was a perfect bear to the deadbeats in his class. He used to say, "I want to frighten a third of these students to death. They then will clear out and the rest will be good for something." He was so straight-forward and honest himself that any touch of sham or cant irritated him beyond measure. One silly father came saying he did not want his daughter to study geography and arithmetic, he wanted her polished right off. Prof. Kenyon's eyes blazed and he blurted out, "It's no use trying to polish a pumpkin." His vigorous mind and sterling character were a powerful influence on every student at Alfred. They all loved and admired and feared him. To me he seemed the greatest man I had ever known. It was an education just to be in the school where he was. His lectures on the conduct of life were so strong and practical and stirring that they seemed to become a part of our minds and character.

During my life at Alfred, and also before that time, one of my great anxieties was that I was not a Christian. I had begun to be much disturbed down in Elkland.⁵⁰ In Alfred I tried to pray but could get no actual sense of the presence of God. I remember standing one spring morning on the little bridge at the foot of the hill. Everything was fresh and beautiful, and suddenly I seemed to know that God was in every bush and blade of grass. That made me happy; however, I had heard so much about sudden conversions when a great burden of sin rolled off, that I could not trust my new sense of peace, until I found by inquiry that many people never had the experience of sudden conversion. I felt better then, but I did not join the church till after I was married.

MARRIED LIFE

Troupsburg, New York

Though Mr. Reynolds was at Alfred, I did not see much of him during these years. We lived in different buildings and had to get permission to go to a reception-room to see each other, not a very satisfactory arrangement. If Mr. Reynolds had permission to come to my room, my room-mates were always there. We did not intend to marry till Mr. Reynolds was through school; but several things conspired to make us break that resolution. Mr. Reynolds was determined that I should teach with him at Troupsburg, and I had done so for two years (1850-1852), both of us boarding at Nathaniel Reynolds' house.⁵¹

In some way that did not seem a suitable arrangement, yet Mr. Reynolds would not hear of my going away to teach by myself.⁵² Then we found that marriage during the college course at Madison, the seminary Mr. Reynolds planned to study, was considered grounds for expulsion. We knew the course of study must be taken by slow stages with intervals of teaching to get money to go on with. So if we were to be married at all for a number of years it must be at once. Finally, we went down to Dolly's in Knoxville, and Uncle White married us just four days before father started for Madison. It was really hazardous to marry under our conditions. My health was poor and we had no money. Plus, Mr. Reynolds' education was still far from complete, but in spite of all we were married.

After Mr. Reynolds went away in May (1852) I visited some relatives until early fall when he came back. Then we went on together to teach school at Troupsburg. Our school was in the old hotel where Myra was born the next March (1853). The school in Troupsburg was very prosperous and the next year (1854) we moved into a new building. There I began housekeeping with a sick baby and seventeen boarders. I kept on with my teaching besides. Fortunately, my sister Caroline was with me, and she helped in the care of Myra. I had one inefficient girl to whom I paid \$1.00 a week. It was a very disagreeable place. We were terribly crowded. The furnishings were insufficient. We had no cellar and no pantry. The ground around was all rough and broken. Provisions were very dear, butter being twenty cents a pound and other items in proportion. My work really went for nothing for we did not make a cent over the cost of the materials on the boarders. They paid only \$1.25 a week, and Mr. Reynolds was so generous in making deductions in the bills that some of the time we hardly came out even. Myra was so sick that I seldom had a night's sleep. I used to teach a big Algebra class and hear her screaming at the top of her voice till the sweat would drop off me like rain. Fortunately after her birth I became much better in health or I could not have endured this life. Despite all of these problems, the school was a great success both financially and in reputation.

At the close of the year (1854) Mr. Reynolds went in May to Wellsboro to teach the summer term in the Academy there.⁵³ I stayed in Troupsburg in the boarding-house and boarded the hands who were building a little house in which I was to live while Mr. Reynolds completed his course at Madison. It was a terribly hot, dry summer, the hardest summer of my life. Sometimes I had a girl and sometimes I didn't. Kate was born here in August (1854) a few weeks after father came back from Wellsboro. The little house was done, all cleaned, and ready to use. However, Mr. Reynolds had made such a success of the Wellsboro school that he had taken it for another year. So when Kate was three weeks old we packed up bag and baggage for Wellsboro.

Wellsboro, Pennsylvania

I rested a week in Knoxville with the children while Mr. Reynolds and Caroline went on to Wellsboro to settle the house. Father had to begin teaching at once but on the first Saturday he drove over for me. We were not in very good condition. I was so feeble that it was three months before I could get out of my chair without bracing myself, and Myra was still constantly ill. The house was only partially settled, the carpets being merely laid down in breadths. We had only one inexperienced colored girl for help, but we began taking boarders at once and we did their washing as well. The boarders were Mary Smith, Fanny Bixbee, James Bosard, Ira Smith, Henry Williams, George Pierson, Philander Reynolds, and some others. That was very heavy work again. When the Wellsboro ladies came to call on me I had to see them with Kate in my arms and Myra hanging to my skirts crying. I used to wish I was in Jericho! The first picture I ever had taken was an ambrotype and it was taken in Wellsboro. I held Kate in my arms. They were rattling papers to keep her still and I laughed. My daughters have always liked that picture.

The next fall term (1855) I taught half a day and had Miss. Carol to look after the children for her board and room-rent. She was the severest old maid! She could manage Kate very well for she was young enough to stay put, but Myra was beyond her. Myra would run to her Aunt Caroline saying "Tarrol's a tomin'" and Caroline would say, "Tarrol you leave Min alone, I'll see to her," but I usually had the child to dress. Caroline loved Myra very much. She had lost her husband and her two children before she came to us, and she took right to Myra and humored all her whims. Myra was so sick she needed constant care. So it was a great relief to me to have Caroline there.

We always had a great deal of company. There were so many comers and goers that I hardly knew how many to plan for. Once during that fall (1855) while I was teaching two loads of father's relatives came unexpectedly to dinner. They got to the house just after we were through eating and I had to cook a new dinner for them. While they were eating another load appeared. They said they wanted to surprise me. There were cousins upon cousins and the beaux of cousins, till glad as I was to see them, I almost wish Mr. Reynolds had been born a friendless orphan. Father's school was a great success. He was a remarkable teacher. He knew instinctively how to arouse interest and how to make people think. No matter what he taught every one at once cared about it, but he liked science best. He was also very popular in town because of his lively, social nature. All the soberness of his youth disappeared as soon as he found his powers.

In the spring of the first year (1856) at Wellsboro Mr. Reynolds went to Madison for three months. Caroline and I stayed in Wellsboro with the children. During this time I made a visit to Almira in Spring Mills. When Mr. Reynolds came home I found he had invested in quite a library. He had

bought some theological books, but notably eighty volumes of *The British Poets* for which he had run into debt. He said they thought in Madison that no library was complete without these *Poets*. He used to read them a great deal at first, but after awhile he was too busy. Mr. Reynolds had only this one term in the Theological Seminary. They told him he had such good habits of study that he could buy books and work by himself almost as well as if he were in college. For a time he kept on with the school in Wellsboro and everyone said it was a great mistake not to make teaching his career. But his heart was set on being a minister. He was not successful in getting a church in the east so he decided to go west on a venture. He selected Knoxville, Iowa, mainly because of the familiarity of the name. There really was no more reason why we should go to one place rather than to another since we were going west.

Osceola, Pennsylvania

We had all our goods packed and marked "Knoxville" when Mr. Reynolds happened to meet old Mr. McLeod on the street. Mr. McLeod was a great Baptist and he wanted father to stay in the state, so he said, "If you'll go somewhere on the Cowanesque I'll see that you get \$600.00 from the Educational Society, and the rest can be raised in the field." Mr. Reynolds went to look the ground over and decided to accept Mr. McLeod's offer. But it took a long time to get all the arrangements properly made. Andrew Bosard was determined we should live in Osceola and he circulated a subscription to raise the salary. It was finally determined that father should preach at Knoxville and Osceola and live Osceola. These places raised \$100 a year each, making the salary \$800.00. We boarded a month at Mr. Van Zile's. Myra was three and a half years old and sick most of the time. Kate was two (1856), a healthy, strong child. When they played together if Kate got angry at Myra her characteristic expression was, "Come, dokker, with your muttard and your men'ten." Poor Myra was well acquainted with doctors and their mustard and medicines in those days.

We moved into the house we were to have almost before it was finished. We hung up bed-quilts for doors. The next spring (1857) we moved into the Slosson house where Will was born. While we were in Osceola Kate had a very serious attack of the croup. She was always worse at night and I had to be up with her. She always wanted me to sing. One night, after many songs, I said in despair, "Oh, I don't know any more." "I'll tell you what to sing," she exclaimed. "Sing, 'Oh Mr. Banjy, what a naughty Banjy to kill Philly's chicken when he didn't want you to'." She gave me the tune as well as the words. It was her version of Mr. Van Zile's killing his son Philip's chicken while Philip was at school. This was the favorite song of all my children. Kate was certainly a remarkable child. When we lived in the Slosson house the girls took their little chairs and went to a select school. There the prize for excellence was a

little metal bird to hold the sewing, and Kate nearly always took the prize. Myra did not like to sew.

At that time Myra and Kate were just of a size and very pretty-looking. I dressed them just alike. Once they had lovely dresses made out of my fawn-colored nun's veiling. The dresses were low-necked, short-sleeved, and bound with velvet. They had little sacques with flowing sleeves and faced back with blue. A man named Crandall gave the girls some straw hats, brown in color, and trimmed with blue plaid ribbon and with straw dangles round the brims. I never saw the girls nicer but Dr. Humphrey said, "If you want your children's eyes put out let them wear those hats." The ambrotypes of the girls were taken Osceola. I dressed them up in fine shape but the artist sent them back and said he wanted them in their school-clothes. The square cut of their hair was their father's work. They always wore little velvet rolls to keep the hair back. We liked those pictures very much. Kate did not like to have her picture taken but Myra was deeply interested.

We used to be very proud of the way the girls could speak pieces. The first time they spoke they stood up, one on each side of Ida Seeley. Kate's piece was:

How pleasant it is on Saturday night
When I've tried all week to be good.

At this point she laughed and broke down and hid behind Ida. Myra spoke her piece bravely through, distinctly and with good emphasis. It began:

Oh, dear children be generous.
If you have but half a stick of candy,
Give someone a bite of it.
Let no boy or girl say I have nothing to give.
Give kind words and pleasant smiles to the weary-hearted.

Mr. Reynolds spent a great deal of time teaching the girls. When they were very little, before Myra was five (1857), they could tell from an outline map all the states of the United States and Mexico. Kate was a very good speller. She came home from school one night greatly distressed because she had missed "knowledge." "Don't you think knowledge with a 'k' is too big a word for a little girl like me?" Myra did very well in mental arithmetic. She could stand up and work out quite hard examples in her head. She learned her letters from the kitchen stove. Mr. Reynolds taught the girls to read by buying primer after primer of about the same grade of difficulty, so that after the first one they could read right off without studying the words much. He did the same with the other readers as they came along; so that the girls gained great ease and never had the slow, halting, sing-song manner of many children.

It was funny to see Myra sit down in her little chair when she was five and read the paper. The neighbors thought she was making believe. Mr. Reynolds also used to have the girls stand up and tell a story or talk on some topic. He never took so much pains with the other children.

Three years of the time we were in Osceola (1857-1859) Mr. Reynolds was County Superintendent. Our income then from all sources was \$1,100 and we got a start ahead. I kept a girl and we were very comfortable. Mr. Reynolds was often gone a week, sometimes two weeks, at a stretch. When he come home his clothes always needed mending. The girls finally evolved this prayer for him. "O Lord, let some good woman mend his clothes. Don't let Colonel throw him out of the sulky. And let him find some warm little girls to sleep with." We loved old Colonel, our horse, as if he were a person.

In the last year (1859) we spent in Osceola Will was born on June 20. Mr. Reynolds had promised the girls a doll that could open and shut its eyes and could cry. He brought them downstairs in the early morning and showed them Will, a very dark baby with the blackest hair. Myra was greatly disappointed and she looked up in earnestly at father saying, "Father did you get the prettiest one there was?"

Mansfield, Pennsylvania

When Will was ten months (1860) old Mr. Reynolds was called to the church in Mansfield. He was also to teach in the Normal.⁵⁴ There we were going to settle down and I used \$100 I had laid by to furnish the parlor of our new home with. I got a three-ply carpet in woods colors: that is brown, green, and autumn colors; a hair-cloth sofa and rocker; a cane rocker and half dozen very pretty dark cane-bottomed chairs; and curtains of white embroidered mustard tied back with green ribbon. The room was large, taking forty yards of carpet. It looked very cool and fresh. Everyone admired it. We also bought father's first revolving chair, a sofa-lounge, oil cloth for the hall, and a carpet for the stairs, all for the hundred dollars. I can remember the prices now. The carpet was \$35.00; the sofa, \$15.00; the black chair, \$8.00; the cane chairs, \$10.00; the sofa-lounge, \$11.00. We felt that at last we were set up. I have never since had anything that I was so proud of as I was of that room. We had some pictures there: Webster, Clay, Calhoun, etc., in round frames. Once a minister came to our house, and seeing that picture of John C. Calhoun, he said, "The old Nullifier!" Then he turned the picture, face to the wall! It was a saucy thing to do but people had strong feelings in those days.

In this house Will had a fever-sore, and for months was very ill and needed constant attention. Fortunately Myra was a great deal of help. She was seven or eight years old and she could always take care of children. From that time on it always seemed the natural thing for any group of children to refer their disputes to her, and her decision was almost always taken as final. She was

very patient. Gradually, too, she became a great help in the house. She took naturally to house work and she would stay home from school any day to do the work. She began to wash dishes and to iron when she had to stand on a box to reach the table. When she was eight years old I was sick and she went into the kitchen and starched and ironed one of her father's shirts. Unfortunately she scorched it, but her father was still impressed. He said he would wear that shirt anyhow, he was so proud of it. Kate cared a great deal more about school than Myra did. She was very ambitious. Once when she was twelve and we were away from home she took up Latin on her own account. But she didn't like to do things at home. From that time on the great object of our lives was to get the children educated. We never took the pains at home with the other children that we took with Myra and Kate; but we sent them to the best schools. When it came time for a child to go to school, whether we could see the way through or not, away to school he or she went, and we got the money some way. The boys did not take to books as the girls did. Mr. Reynolds hired the girls to weed the garden by letting them go to school, but the boys had to be let off weeding if they would go to school.

Colvington, Pennsylvania

That winter (1861) Mr. Reynolds began holding meetings at Colvington. He was there five weeks and was home but two nights in the time, though he came down every Sunday to preach. There were one hundred conversions reported. The people insisted that father should move to Colvington to take care of this new interest. The decision was made very suddenly. Father came home at eleven o'clock at night and said the wagons would be there for the furniture the next morning at nine. And by noon the next day we and our possessions were in Covington. We had a pleasant roomy house but it was out of repair and old. Way was born there in September (1861). He was the prettiest, healthiest baby I ever saw. But when he was four months old he had the whopping cough. A physician gave him lobelia emetic which never worked off, and from that time until he was two years old he was very ill. We used to expect him to die from day to day and we always kept clothes ready for his burial. The doctors all gave him up and no wonder. He had a fistula, mesenteric consumption, and gathering in his ears, a cankered-sore mouth, a cankered rectum, and dropsy. He was so emaciated that when the bloat went down he did not look like a human being. For four months I never went regularly to bed. When the death-bell began to ring at any time people would say, "Way must be dead." But he did not die. One doctor began giving him a teaspoon of laudanum a day. When I thought he would surely die I let them give him anything to soothe him. But to the surprise of everybody it became evident that he was getting better. Then I thought of the future and of the effect the laudanum might have on him. Without letting Mr. Reynolds or the doctor

know I slowly diminished the dose until, before anyone knew what I was doing, he was entirely broken of the habit. People said it would be worth while following that boy through life to see what the Lord had saved him for. During this time we had moved twice, once into another and better house in Covington, and then back to Mansfield.

Mansfield, Pennsylvania

The arrangement for Mr. Reynolds to conduct a teacher's class in the Normal that had failed before because of insufficient appropriation, was now carried through. We moved into a new house. There we had a hard time. We afterwards found that in a closed-in part of the cellar there was stagnant water. That was doubtless the cause, or one cause of our ill health there. Way was still sick in the cradle. Myra and Will had scarlet fever, one on the lounge and one in the crib. Mr. Reynolds had a bilious attack and was stowed away on the half-bed in the parlor. I had intermittent fever in the bed-room. We had two old ladies who nursed the sick and they carried us through the siege. When we were all well we moved into a pretty little house where, for the first time, father had an outside study. Before this we had always given up the best chamber for a study. This is the house that Way bought afterwards and lived in when he was pastor of the Baptist Church in Mansfield. From there we went to another house where Emily was born (1861). From this house in Mansfield we moved to a farm outside of town. That was the pleasantest place we ever had, and the first house we owned and lived in.

At this time they were recruiting for the war. Those were hot times and had been for years before. Mr. Reynolds' family were all Democrats. Once when he came from a visit to them he told me what frightfully angry discussion they had had. I said I thought it was a great pity to let war opinions break up the peace of families. The next time he went I went with him and I made him promise that he would avoid all war talk. Hardly were we in the house before the subject was brought up, and in such a way that all my anti-slavery ideas were stirred up. Before I knew it I gave them what Mr. Reynolds called a pretty extensive piece of my mind. I felt as if I were in the house of my enemies. "Let's go home," I said, "I can not stay in this house over night." "Well, well," answered Mr. Reynolds, "you're a fine sort of peace-maker." I remember that Reynolds said that he would give me his head for a foot-ball if the South didn't whip out the North. Otis Reynolds was much milder in his views.

Mr. Reynolds had been making speeches for the war; and when a company was made up right there in Mansfield, they wanted him to go as chaplain. He thought it was his duty to do so. After the men marched away I felt so desolate. It seemed to me as if I could not carry the burden of the family without Mr. Reynolds. There had been a good many hard times in my life, and I never

could have gone through them if it had not been for Mr. Reynolds' constant helpfulness and sweetness. We never had a disagreement about governing the children. In fact, all our ideas were in accord except on the subject of spending money. I was the conservative member of the firm. I used to have to hold him back when I did not like to do it. He used to call me his balance-wheel, and sometimes, bedrock. In all our trying circumstances we never said a cross word to each other. Mr. Reynolds never failed me in any spot or place, in the family or out of it. Later in life, when my children were pretty well grown up, he was determined that I should make myself felt outside the family. I would never have left the chimney-corner but for his urging. He said women must come to the fore and he pushed me into my missionary and temperance work.

In the early days of my husband's absence, my life was all in my home. It seemed to me that I could not get alone. I had so much to do and no one to depend on. My anxiety grew and grew. One night I did not sleep at all, but I kept praying and suddenly the words seemed to stand before me, "Cast thy burden on the Lord and He will sustain." I said that over and over and by morning I felt perfectly resigned and strong. I went about my work happy and feeling equal to it. Then who should come walking in but Mr. Reynolds! When he got to the front he found that by some mistake Colonel Cox had already appointed a chaplain for the regiment. I tell you I was a happy women!

Finale

While this is where Emily ended her story, it was not the end of her life. From Mansfield she and Mr. Reynolds moved on to pastorates in Mount Pleasant (located outside of Pittsburgh), to Pueblo, Colorado, and finally back to Wellsboro. During this time Emily raised her children and set all five of them to college. Myra, Kate, and Emily attended Vassar, Will attended Penn, and Way attended Brown. All three of the girls eventually achieved their doctorates, with Katherine becoming a professor at the University of Chicago. Will became a judge and Way became a minister like his father. As was customary for the times, the only teaching Emily did after her husband stopped lecturing was religious instruction in Sunday School. However, she was very active in community affairs and was a guiding light in the local Christian Temperance Union (W.C.T.U.). She dictated her reminiscences to her daughters Myra and Kate, leaving a wonderful document of her pioneer life and her teaching. Emily Knox Reynolds died on April 8, 1904, at the age of 78, as the Victorians were wont to say, full of the wisdom of her years and in the bosom of her family.

Appendix A

From the *Wellsboro Agitator* of April 13, 1904

Biography of Mrs. N. L. Reynolds A Sketch of Her Life Work—Her Death and Funeral.

Mrs. Emily Reynolds, wife of Rev. N. L. Reynolds, pastor of Wellsboro's First Baptist church, died at her home in Wellsboro shortly before noon on Friday, April 8, 1904.

The chief cause of death was bronchial pneumonia, but she had been suffering from a complication of maladies and had been failing for nearly a month. She had long suffered at intervals with asthmatic bronchitis and had not been in sound health for more than two years past.

Mrs. Reynolds was born in Knoxville, Tioga county, Pa., and most of her noble life was spent within the county's borders. Her father was William Knox, of the family after whom Knoxville was named, and her grandfather, also named William, was a pioneer from the Mohawk Valley who located in 1798 in the Cowanesque valley. She was of a family six children and with her death expires the last member of her generation of the Knox family. One of her brothers was the late Hon. John C. Knox, one of the most eminent lawyers this county has produced, who served as a Justice of the State Supreme Court, as a Federal Judge and as State Attorney General. Another brother was James Knox, who became Judge in the same Federal district in Western Pennsylvania over which his brothers had presided.

Mrs. Reynolds' father died when she was only seven years old and she lost her mother four years later. She then lived about seven years with the family of her brother, John, in Lawrenceville. Hers was a strong, self-helping character, and she early began her work in teaching as an independent bread-winner. Before her marriage to Mr. Reynolds which was solemnized in Knoxville, May 14, 1852, when she was 26 years old, she had taught 21 terms. The elaborate observance of Mr. and Mrs. Reynolds' golden wedding anniversary in Wellsboro two years ago was in every way a memorable event and will never be forgotten by the host of local friends who participated. Mrs. Reynolds spent, in all, about twenty years of her life in Wellsboro, where she is universally honored.

After considerable teaching in common schools, Mrs. Reynolds attended the old Deerfield Academy, where she met her future husband, a fellow-student. She next sought more advanced instruction in Alfred Seminary, now Alfred University. After her marriage she taught with her husband for two years in the old Wellsboro Academy. From 1860 to 1866 she was a resident of Mansfield during her husband's work as the Baptist pastor in the borough. Next for five years she resided in Bloomsburg during his pastoral labors there. Then for nine years she lived once more among her Wellsboro friends during her husband's first pastorate there. The next ten years were spent in Mt. Pleasant, Westmoreland county, Pa., where her husband was for that time the Baptist pastor. Then followed a removal to Pueblo, Colorado, where Mr. Reynolds presided over the Mesa Baptist church for nearly six years, followed by a return to the Baptist pastorate in Wellsboro, where, surrounded by friends old and new, Mrs. Reynolds spent the last nine years of her noble life.

Mrs. Reynolds was the mother of five children, all of whom survive her, her death being the first break in the family. They are Dr. Katherine Lobingier, of Los Angeles, California; Dr. Myra Reynolds, of the faculty of the University of Chicago; Judge William P. Reynolds of Tacoma, Washington; Dr. Emily Reynolds, now resident of Ocean City, California, and Rev. F. W. Reynolds, of Mansfield, the beloved pastor of the Baptist church in Galeton.

After a preliminary service at the Baptist parsonage early Sunday afternoon, elaborate funeral services were held in the First Baptist church, beginning at 2:30 p.m. and lasting nearly two hours. They were conducted by the afflicted pastor and his son, Rev. F. W. Reynolds, who had the fraternal assistance of Rev. A. C. Shaw, D.D. and Rev. Messrs. Joseph Dennis and William Heakes. Most touching tributes to Mrs. Reynolds' character were paid by her husband and son, Mrs. M. L. Bacon, representing the fellow laborers of the deceased in the temperance cause, Rev. Philander Reynolds, Mr. Reynolds half-brother, now the Baptist pastor at Gillet, Bradford county, and Mr. Reynolds' brother-in-law, Rev. Alanson Tilden, the Baptist pastor at East Smithfield, Bradford county. Messages of tribute and condolence from the three absent and distant children and others were read by Rev. F. W. Reynolds. Besides this son, Dr. Myra Reynolds was the only child of the deceased who could be present.

The congregation was overflowing, and included many who could not refrain from tears. The pulpit end of the church and the casket were decked beautifully with floral offerings, and a large choir, led by Mrs. F. A. Johnson and accompanied by Mr. James K. Horton sang affecting hymns. Mr. Horton also contributed beautiful organ selections.

Aside from her marked intellectual gifts, her attainments as a public speaker in the temperance cause and mothers' work in connection with the W.C.T.U., Mrs. Reynolds was always willingly accorded veneration and affection as the wisest of mothers and teachers and as a Christian leader. With her brothers she inherited a judicial mind, and all her life has rendered wise decisions as counselor of those who loved and revered her. Her unswerving loyalty to the highest ideals of conduct was wonderful and ruled her life and counsels. Her death was the serene, yet triumphant end of a saint.

For almost 50 years she was an efficient Sunday-school teacher, and in Colorado her ability and success as a public worker in the temperance cause were recognized by her election to the position of superintendent of mother's work in the State organization of the W.C.T.U. Courage, strong faith and cheerfulness were marked characteristics of Mrs. Reynolds and never failed her, nor those who, besides her husband and children, sought or were accorded her help. She was strongly intellectual, appreciated highly the advantages of liberal education and was untiring in labor and counsel to the end that all her children should secure those advantages, which they all eventually attained. Her death is regretted keenly and widely, but as her husband said at her obsequies, her family and family weep not for her who has entered a better home, but for themselves, deprived for a time of her helpful, cheering presence.

NOTES

1. Donald Warren (ed.), *American Teachers: History of a Profession at Work* (New York: Macmillan Publishing, 1989); Herny C. Johnson Jr. and Erwin V. Johanningsmeir, *Teachers for the Prairie: The University of Illinois and the Schools, 1868-1945* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1972).
2. Geraldine Jonich Clifford, "Man/Woman/Teacher: Gender, Family, and Career in American Educational History," in *American Teachers: Histories of a Profession at Work*, Donald Warren, (ed). (New York: Macmillan Publishing, 1989); Barbara Miller Solomon, *In the Company of Educated Women* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985).
3. See Michael W. Sedlak, "Let Us Go and Buy a School Master: Historical Perspectives on the Hiring of Teachers in the United States, 1750-1980," in *American Teachers: Histories of a Profession at Work*, Donald Warren, (ed.). (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1989); and Willard S. Elsbree, *The American Teacher: Evolution of a Profession in a Democracy* (New York: American Book Company, 1939).
4. James York Glimm, *Flat-Landers and Ridge-Runners: Folktales from the Mountains of Northern Pennsylvania* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1983); Philip Tome, *Pioneer Life: or Thirty Years as a Hunter* (originally published in 1854, reprinted Harrisburg: A.M. Aurand, 1924).
5. Actually, in 1826 Academy Corners was named simply the "Corners" (from the private papers of Anna P. Lugg, hereafter cited as APL).
6. William Knox (Jr.) was born Sept. 8, 1791 and died Jan. 3, 1832. Sallie/Sally Colvin Knox was born Oct. 11, 1798 and died March 25, 1835 (APL).
7. Almira Knox Horton was born Feb. 5, 1815 and died Sept. 29, 1887. John Colvin Knox was born Feb. 18, 1817 and died Aug. 26, 1880. Dolly Knox White was born Dec. 10, 1818 and died April 19, 1875 (APL).
8. Caroline Knox Lathrop was born Dec. 10, 1829, and died April 2, 1875. James Butterfield Knox was born Nov. 4, 1831, and died Dec. 22, 1884 (APL).
9. A reason that the Colvin family may have moved to Deerfield township is that another family from the Holland purchase, the Mattesons, had already settled in Deerfield; and had bought considerable land there.
10. Her Colvin Grandparents later had five more children named James, Nancy, Mary Ann, Arch, and George.
11. These were William Knox (Jr.), Archibald Knox, Alba Knox, and John Knox (APL).
12. Emily's father was named after his father, William Knox. They did not used Jr. and Sr., so neither did she. The editors have added Jr. and Sr. to help readers distinguish between father and son.
13. Deerfield Township is located in Tioga County, Pennsylvania, which was created from part of Lycoming County in 1804 (APL).
14. According to Edwin A Glover's *The Centennial History of Knoxville, Tioga County, Pennsylvania* (Elkland, PA: Elkland Journal Press, 1951), p. 17; William Knox (Jr.) operated a hotel, the Rexford House, in Knoxville approximately between 1824 and 1829. Given Emily's account of her move to Knoxville, it is more likely that her father operated this inn between 1829 or 30 and 1832 when William Knox (Jr.) died.
15. Bars are a type of gate used on a rail fence.
16. Alba Knox was named after Aaron Abla, a Massachusetts native who became Knoxville's first postmaster and a considerable land owner (APL).
17. All items called "Indian" were made with a rough corn meal (APL).
18. Glover, p. 23. Silas Billings built a large grist-mill on the eastern bank of Troups Creek in Knoxville in 1825. Emily is incorrect in referring to Silas's son Silas X, who operated the mill with his brother Charles F. after 1840.
19. One may wonder why Emily called her brother "Poor John?" He did not die young or grow-up to become a lazy good-for-nothing. The Hon. John Colvin Knox became a Justice of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court, a Federal Judge and State Attorney General.
20. Glover, p. 21. There were only two mercantile establishments in Knoxville at this time. One was owned by Silas Billings. The other store was owned by William Knox (Jr.)'s brother Archibald. It seems likely to the editors that this is the store she remembered.
21. Glover, p. 29. Emily would have attended the first and second schools built in Knoxville. The first was a log structure built in 1817. This was replaced in 1834 when Pennsylvania passed its common school law and a new plank structure was built. This building was turned into a barn and is still standing today (1996).
22. Lindley Murray, *English Grammar Adapted to the Different Classes of Learners* (Philadelphia: C. & A. Conrad & Company, 1808). This was

apparently an extremely popular and well published series. Starting in 1795, there are editions and "spin-offs" published for 1802, 1805, 1807, 1811, 1812, 1823, & 1824.

23. Glover, p. 30. While Rhoda Horton is listed as teaching in 1836, no mention of an Amasa Smith can be found.

24. Lindley Murray, *The English Reader, or, Pieces in Prose and Poetry* (Philadelphia: S. Probasco, 1826).

25. Joseph Bartlett Burleigh, *The American Manual*, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia: Lippincott & Grambo & Co., 1850).

26. Lyman Cobb, *Cobb's Spelling Book*, rev. ed. (Philadelphia: Joseph M'Dowell, 1835).

27. Glover, p. 16. While this is not an uncommon attitude for a woman of her education and time, Emily seems to conveniently forget that not only did her father own and run an inn, but that her Grandfather Colvin, along with his son-in-law Daniel Cummings, owned and ran a distillery!

28. Glover, p. 26. Knoxville was a center for a rather charismatic form of Methodism during the first half of the 19th century.

29. Glover. Emily neglected to mention the only religious sect that had its own building at this time in Knoxville. They were the Quakers or correctly, The Society of Friends.

30. Glover, p. 26. There is no evidence of an established Universalist church in Knoxville, or of any wide belief in Universalism at all. Emily's perceptions are colored both by personal experiences (i.e. the fact that her uncles were Universalists) and personal biases (i.e., her husband was a Baptist minister and could hardly have approved of Universalism).

31. There is no record of a Spring Mills in Potter County. However, Joshua and Dorothea Colvin moved to Bingham Township in Potter county in 1833. It is possible that Bingham Township or part of it was once known as Spring Mills (APL).

32. Perhaps Emily's father was not as sanguine about Almira's marriage as was her mother.

33. Professor Eugene A. Seelye of Clarion University of Pennsylvania and Retta Bostwick Perry of Elkland, Pa surveyed the Carpenter burying grounds in 1956. At that time they noted a grave stone marked: "William Knox, died January 3, 1832 aged 40 years, 3 months, and 23 days"; and, "Sally, wife of William Knox, died March 24, 1835, aged 36 years, 5 months, and 14 days" (APL). Unfortunately, upon current investigation (1995), the

marker(s) have vanished.

34. It is interesting to note that Emily's adventure in the woods happened approximately one month after her mother died.

35. Obviously, Emily is referring to the Great Chicago Fire.

36. This is very possibly the reason. However, given the primitive state of medical care they could also have died of medical reasons.

37. Warren Colburn, *An Arithmetic on the Plan of Pestalozzi, With Some Improvements* (Boston: Cummings and Hilliard, 1821).

38. J. (Jesse) Olney, *Olney's School Atlas* (New York: Pratt, Woodford, 1844). While it is highly improbable that Emily used this specific text, there was an Olney textbook series, which covered a variety of subjects. She probably used an earlier version of the text.

39. Emily gives the impression that she was a bit of a drudge in her brother John's home.

40. It was common at this time for the examination to be administered by local school board.

41. This incident obviously occurred at her first teaching job in Klipnocky.

42. It seems that Emily spent part of her earnings from teaching at Klipnocky on finery.

43. Apparently, Almira had by this time moved to Spring Mills from Knoxville.

44. The reader may have noticed a pattern to the parts of her adult life that Emily finds indistinct. They appear to be associated with periods of incredibly hard physical work.

45. This is the school that led the "Corners" to become known as "Academy Corners."

46. According to D. Lee Stoddard, "Schooling At The Corners," from *Old Deerfield, The First 150 Memorable Years, 1814-1964* (Elkland, PA: Elkland Journal Press, 1964) p. 15, the Union Academy was started by Samuel Baker Price and William Price on December 7, 1847. Emily attended this school during its second year of operation.

47. Stoddard, p. 17. Hannibal Goodwin was the first principal at the Union Academy. He was replaced by Prof. Young Y. Smith in 1848. Prof. Smith also only lasted a year. From 1850 until 1859 William Price acted as principal and Mrs. S. B. Price acted as preceptress. The school was leased to Prof. Anderson R. Wightman from 1859 to 1861. In 1862 the Price brothers returned to operating the school and continued until 1867, when the school was sold to Elias Horton, Jr. Mr. Horton and

his wife operated the school until a fire destroyed the main building and one of the two dormitories on March 1, 1871. The school was not rebuilt. An interesting fact is that Elias Horton Jr.'s parents were Elias Sr. and Almira Knox Horton, making him Emily's nephew (APL).

48. A type of early physical education which was basically a study of how to keep the physical body healthy. It advocated the novel idea that moderate exercise was good for both men and women.

49. Emily became engaged sometime during the spring/second term (1849) of her first year at the Union Academy. She would have been 23 at the time of her engagement.

50. Apparently the prospect of marrying a future minister caused Emily to think seriously about her religious beliefs for the first time in her adult life.

51. While this may sound as if it conflicts with Emily's working at Bulkley and Spring Mills, one must remember that there were three terms during a school year. Emily would work two terms and go to school during the last.

52. When Emily taught in the Spring Mills and Buckley districts she most likely stayed with relatives, so she would not be considered as being on her own.

53. Wellsboro is the county seat of Tioga County. According to Stoddard, p. 17, the academy in Wellsboro opened in 1824 and was in direct competition with the Union Academy at Academy Corners.

54. The Normal was Mansfield Normal School and is now Mansfield University of Pennsylvania.