

The woods were a little farther away to the east; and there I used to hunt, usually with a small shotgun. But an old Kentuckian who was known as Kentuck had an ancient long rifle muzzle loading with percussion cap. I enjoyed hunting squirrels with it for one couldn't miss. But hunting was only an excuse for wandering in the woods which was the greatest joy of my life.

We first went to the Maple Grove school about a mile to the west. But since we didn't live in that district after a couple of years they made us go to our own school two miles to the east. Since much of the road to the east was partly through the woods, we didn't mind the extra mile. Our teachers in both schools were quite good, sometimes men, sometimes women. My brother Walter and I seem to have been the best pupils for if there were any prizes we always won them.

At the end of one year our woman teacher judged that Walter and I were equally good and gave us collar buttons for prizes, because, she said we had so many books we wouldn't want any more. We did have more books than any other family in the community, maybe a half a hundred. The first interesting books that we had were: a huge volume, "A History of the Civil War" which we called the "War Book". We almost wore it out looking at the pictures of Generals, Statesmen and Battles. I had read it through by the time I was ten years old.

The next book of importance was a subscription book, "Bible and Commentaries" that was composed of the story of all the books of the Bible so written as to be within the comprehension of a half grown child. From this I got the beginning of my knowledge and love for the Bible.

A distant cousin Sina Morris who lived with us had an old school reader that also contained the story of Joseph and other stories from the Bible as well as many stories from Buffon's Natural History. The ones I loved best were of the Arabs, their tents, camels, homes, etc.

We discovered that there was a school library in the possession of one of the directors, consisting of nearly a dozen books which we immediately proceeded to devour. One set was Macaulay's History of England.

Probably our best teacher in those days was a middle aged farmer with a beard who had been a soldier in the Union Army. Sometimes during the dinner hour he told us stories of his war experiences. Like most ordinary soldiers he was quite young when he entered the service and so did some foolish things. When they were going into Nashville on the train he saw a cow and drew his musket and shot her and now older and wiser he greatly regretted robbing some needy family of their milk supply. He was the one who told of his fright when seeing the onrushing yelling Confederates at Gettysburg. And he spoke sadly of the enemy going down before their withering fire.

There was another character in the neighborhood, a Mr. Crowder six feet four and weighing at least two hundred pounds and wearing size fourteen shoes. He had been in the Confederate Army and was with Stonewall Jackson when he was killed. Jackson was on his horse while his soldiers were lying down.

Another ex-Confederate soldier Sam May a friend of ours had a missing finger and one day I asked if he got a pension and he replied, "No, I was on the wrong side".

My father and mother were members of the Baptist church at West Point the ghost town I have mentioned as the debarking place for the Santa Fe trail ten miles southwest of Rosier. It was too far to attend often so we went to the Presbyterian church a mile and a half



north. Eventually a Baptist church was built a mile north of the Presbyterian church and when I was seventeen after a truly soul shaking experience I joined this church and was baptized in a nearby pond.

The church was being built and I did the painting. My father, being a cabinet maker, constructed the pulpit. (Long after when the railroad came through and Rosier was moved to Drexel on the railway, a Presbyterian and a Baptist church were built in Drexel. There was a cemetery at the old Sharon Presbyterian church and this and the church building were taken over by the cemetery association. My brothers, Walter and Harlow and my father and mother are buried there. Recently (1948) the Prairieview Baptist church has discontinued and the building has been sold.

When I joined the church I soon began teaching a Sunday School class, teaching a class in vocal music and leading the choir. The organ was played by a young girl Edith Groves, the principal basses were Rufus Gentry and Colonel Miller (Edith and Colonel were afterward married) and the principal sopranos and altos were the Corbin sisters; there were five of them though one was too young to be in the choir.

I went to the country school until I was fifteen when I probably was at least as far advanced as the teachers. Then I worked in the mill or hauled wood or coal for the engine.

The coal was mined about twelve miles south of Drexel. Some mines were strip, some tunnelled into the side of the hill and some shafts of no great depth.

Usually I drove two mules and several times I was able to pull other wagons out of the mud with my team alone. At one time I had four, two horses and two mules.

In the year 1891 the Kansas City Southern railroad was built four miles away so we had to move the mill. I learned carpentering in rebuilding the mill and either ran the engine or worked in the mill. My brother Harlow started a drugstore in the new town and ran it for over fifty years until he died.

I now realize that my small Godgiven abilities were always pushing me into positions of leadership and it was not long after I became a Christian that I felt an urge (from the spirit of God, I believe) to prepare for the ministry. My father and mother were earnest Christians and impressed their sterling Christian qualities on all of us children.

But my brother Walter probably had a greater influence on my character than any other individual. Although he was more than three years older most of our boyhood we were about the same size, and constant companions. He was always the leader, being older, and his leadership was always for good. He was the saint of our family and always rang true. It was because of his alert mind that we were always the only family in our community that had many books and he gathered information from far and wide.

During my boyhood we had no Baptist pastors of our church who had even a high school education. Yet they were Godly and useful men and influenced me in a profound way. A young pastor of the Presbyterian church, Mr. Shields who afterward went to Siam as a missionary influenced me greatly. Elam Henderson the son of a Quaker family, who later went as a missionary to the Caribbean, a graduate of Earlham College, Richmond, Indiana gave me a kindly push.

August 13, 1892 our church insisted on licensing me to preach and in September I went to Wm. Jewell College and entered the Preparatory Department.



The teachers in the College were nearly all old men good and true and still doing valuable work on classic lines but the instruction in the Preparatory Department was hardly equal to the standards even of that time.

Dr. John Priest Greene a minister of great ability and character had just been elected president but had not yet had time to reorganize the faculty. But the situation that displeased me most was the fact that the college was for men only. I was now twenty-two and had been used to a normal association of men and women in all walks of life. This was something entirely new and I didn't feel at home. After a half year I decided to leave Wm. Jewell and enter Ottawa University, a coeducational college forty miles west of Drexel in Kansas. (Many years later Wm. Jewell became coeducational.)

The Ottawa Indians were pushed out of Canada by other tribes into Illinois where they left their name. Then the government moved them to Kansas and the college was founded for them, by our Home Mission. But again they were moved to Oklahoma and so the college continued as a Baptist college.



## Chapter 6

### OTTAWA UNIVERSITY

1893-1898

I certainly felt more at home at Ottawa University, Ottawa, Kansas. Some of Walter's old friends welcomed me and found me a place to live. I found that I was so far behind in Latin that I was put in a second section and had to take a special examination the next August in order to be transferred to the first section. I just got a passing grade in that examination, the only time I ever got below 90. In fact, on graduating from the Preparatory Department, I won the prize for scholarship. I felt rather mean about that since they were about to award the prize to one of the girls, Mary Abbott, when looking over my grades I discovered that a mistake had been made in addition and on reporting the mistake the prize was awarded to me.

Walter's old friends, Hageman and Kirfoot, were not great men and never achieved great notoriety but they left a lasting impression on me for good by their sincerity and helpfulness. Hageman spent his life in Kansas as a minister and Kirfoot as a lumberman in California.

Most of the faculty in contrast to that of Wm. Jewell were young, perhaps too young; Miss Dicklow, of Canadian French extraction (Duclo) was a middle aged woman who taught modern languages. In a year or two she went back to Canada and became Principal of the Baptist Woman's College in Toronto, Moulton.

Fortunately the "Grand Old Man" of Ottawa, the teacher of mathematics and astronomy, Milan Lester Ward, who had been at Ottawa almost from the beginning of the institution was there and was to be there for many years to come for he lived to be over ninety and had a more profound influence on the College and its students than anyone ever connected with the institution. More of him later.

Prof. Potter, one of the young teachers, professor of Latin, was one of the best teachers of Latin I ever had. He later spent his life at the University of Iowa.

One of the best parts of my education was my membership in the Philatathean Literary Society. We had no fraternities or sororities, but the two societies the Philals and the Olympians.

Aside from athletics in which I took little part our whole extra curricular activities centered around these literary societies, College Christian Associations, Church Sunday School and the Glee Club and singing in Oratories.

I took an active part in the Y.M.C.A. and my senior preparatory year I was sent to Student Volunteer Convention in Detroit, I was entertained in the home of an Episcopal deacon which was a pleasing experience. I met casually Dr. J. R. Goddard and his young son Frank with both of whom I was to be associated later in China as lifelong friends.

I had the privilege of hearing Hudson Taylor, the founder of the China Inland Mission and whom I saw in China not long before he died. We knew his older son and his wife very well as missionaries in China.

There were many other notables, such as A. J. Gordon, A. T. Pierson, Geraldine Guinness, the wife of Hudson Taylor's younger son, Robert E. Speer and John R. Mott.

I was elected president of the Y.M.C.A. for my freshman year and the following summer I was acting secretary of the Ottawa City Y.M.C.A.



At the beginning of my last preparatory year there appeared at an early called meeting of our class only three people: my roommate Jones and a new class member, a little fifteen year old snub-nosed red haired girl by the name of Ivy Thompson. (I was not very favorably impressed with her appearance.) But much more about her later.

I liked all my studies, though mathematics was hardest for me and I often had to burn the midnight oil to stay near the top of the class. I thoroughly enjoyed Latin, Greek, German, French but especially history and thought some of becoming a teacher of History. Then there was astronomy, geology and botany.

We had a place southwest of Ottawa where we studied the fossils of ferns in the sandstone. But the limestone outcroppings just east of Ottawa were more interesting and this Rock Creek region was a rich field for botany.

One year I represented our society, the Philals, with a classmate, Milt Cannon, in debate with the Olympians. We won. But the following year Nort Atkinson and I again debated with the Olympians. Our subject was the undesirability of Socialism. We had the affirmative and lost and one reason was because in order to refute the arguments for socialism we made a pretty thorough study and I became convinced of the value of Socialism. Two of the principal books that we studied were Henry George's "Progress and Poverty" and "Merrie England". I have remained a convinced socialist all my life and spoke for it in my classes in Ethics in Shanghai. I was sorry however when the atheists of Russia adopted it. For I do not believe that it ever can be made a real success without leaders of sterling Christian Character. So I have been delighted that it has been coming gradually in Great Britain and in other West European countries and has made some progress through the Democratic party in America.

I had chapel singing for some time and was also leader of a male quartet: Barker, Overlander, Wareham, White.

The summer of '96 I supplied the little church of Oxford in southern Kansas, boarding with Mr. and Mrs. Abbott. Mr. Abbott was an uncle of Mamie Abbott, one of my classmates, who afterwards spent her whole life as a teacher in a Southern Woman's College. The Abbotts had two daughters, Esther 15 and Alice 13. Alice afterward graduated from O.U.

I enjoyed the church work, especially with the young people. Oxford is on the Arkansas River and one family grew twenty acres of watermelons for the market. I sometimes helped them load the melons and if one dropped we ate only the heart, um! good!

There was an abundance of rain until the corn was ready to ear. One afternoon it cleared but at sunset thin clouds covered the whole sky and the setting sun reflected its blue and purple and gold over the whole vault of heaven from east to west in an unforgettable glory. The next morning the hot wind began to blow and by night the corn rattled in the fields like November.

During this summer the Abbotts and I made a visit to the home of Mr. Via who had formerly been pastor at Oxford. The Vias had gone when Oklahoma was opened for homesteading which was only a short time before. They lived in a sod house and he had built a sod church.

The summer of '97 I supplied the church in Lyndon, the county seat of the next county west of Franklin county where Ottawa is located. I also preached there Sundays during the next year, my senior year and the summer of '98.



One of those I baptized there was Ambrose Henry, a colored boy who later entered Ottawa U. to study for the ministry but unfortunately died before he graduated. The Henry family and two other negroes who were not Christians were the only colored people in the community. So the Henrys were very welcome members of our church. I visited them sometimes staying overnight. Mr. Henry had asthma and sometimes so bad he could not lie down at night. Philosophically he said, "I've only got fifteen more years to suffer from it." He was then 65 and I supposed he meant that death would release him, until he added, "All my folks had asthma until they were 80. And they all lived from 80 to over 100."

Chester Topping and his sister were very active members of the church, the old Dr. Topping, the father, was not a member. He was a brother of Sanford Topping, superintendent of the Baptist Sunday School of Ottawa. They were both uncles of the Toppings of Japan (Mrs. Topping is still living in Japan 1942). I lived with the Toppings and baptized Mrs. Topping who had been a member of another church. She was a wonderful Christian woman.

Here lived the McCoy family, mostly girls. They later moved to Ottawa to send the girls to college. Etta Joe was then over 20 and later became superintendent of the Kansas Reform School for Girls. Bernice was tiny, graduated from O.U. became a doctor, applied to go to Shaohsing, China, but failed to pass the medical examination. Etta Joe (Now Mrs. West) and Dr. Bernice, a pediatrician both live here in Whittier. The latter became a Commander in the Naval Medical Service in San Diego during the war.

In the spring of '96 there arose an unfortunate difficulty between our class and the President. We had asked permission to hold a class party in a downtown restaurant and supposed the permission was granted. The next morning at chapel the President asked us to meet him in a classroom. There he announced that in an adjoining classroom Miss Norris had a written apology for us to sign and called on Nort Atkinson to go to Miss Norris and sign the apology. Some of us arose to follow then the President ordered us to sit down but we went followed by the whole class, then the President stormed into the room, had the apology read and said, "You will sign this or be expelled." Whereupon we boys, about two-thirds of the class, marched out of the room. All the girls signed the apology but Ivy Thompson. Miss Norris had not noticed that she had not signed and later when the girls came out and when asked why she hadn't signed, she said, "If the boys were expelled, I wanted to be expelled too." We carried her in triumph off the campus.

Prof. Ward and Dr. Atkinson, the chairman of the board, got busy and reinstated us. Then it was discovered that Dr. Colegrove was insane and that he had been insane once or twice before. He resigned went to the Northwest and went into the real estate business. He had been principal of a Baptist Academy in New York state and when called to Ottawa was Professor of Latin in Colgate University. Some years later he was on a snowbound train in the Rockies and committed suicide by cutting his throat. He was an interesting speaker and a talented man.

Almost all the young men on the faculty were Colgate men and several resigned at the end of the year. Their places were taken by men from various institutions, so that the College gained by having this experience of men from a wider field.

My senior year was a busy one; I preached on Sundays at Lyndon.