

There had been some boys or girls from our home in school at Winchester most of the time since about 1882, and Virgil had been graduated there in 1886. Father had named his youngest boy for Mr. James W. Terrill in 1885. But now Mr. Terrill had built his college in Decherd, Tennessee and Mr. R.A. Clark was principal at Winchester Normal College. The Mary Sharp College for women had been discontinued for a few years though Dr. Z.C. Graves who had been head of Mary Sharp for 46 years was still living in Winchester.

Mr. Clark had known our family for a good many years and of course knew that the supply of boys there was not yet exhausted. It must have been about the middle of August 1900 that he hitched his good bay horse to his buggy, drove the 30 or more miles and in the afternoon crossed the PaintRock River at the ford and drove up to our house. John Bouldin was then 72 years old and enjoyed talking with a man like Mr. Clark as much as he always had. I don't remember how long they talked that night, but not too long I guess.

After breakfast the next morning when the bay horse had been hitched to the buggy I was appointed to ride with Mr. Clark down to the river-side and open the gate for the professor. When the buggy stopped for me to get out Mr. Clark said to me "Well, George, fix yourself up and come over to school." And that was exactly what I wanted to do.

Schools mostly began in August in those days so that the Christmas holidays would be as nearly as possible at the middle of the thirty-six weeks school year.

There were no dormitories at the school but there were many nice homes in Winchester that for many years had been taking the students and furnishing room and board for about \$10 a month.

I arrived on the morning train on the first day of school. Many students had already arrived and naturally some had been there before. Some homes were full and the bus driver was good about helping the students find homes. The second place I inquired at had room for me. It was Mrs. Jim Smith who lived near the old opera house East of the square. She had a good sized room upstairs with two beds in it and three boys were soon making themselves at home there: Henry Barton, a senior, Robert Whitman and I.

Mrs. Smith had several other boarders, business people in the town and some children including Middleton, Students who went to school with us. She served good meals and in every way was a good hostess to us.

Winchester Tenn. August 1900
School has begun.

Monday.

There are no classes on Monday. But we all go to school at the same hour: 8:00 A.M.

Mr. Clark conducts chapel as usual.

Then the four Literary Societies meet in their rooms on the third floor. We take our choice. Boys have two, girls have two. I joined the Eclectic Society. Mr. Bledsor was our sponsor and advisor. He met with us once or twice a year.

The forenoon was ours to use. We elected officers and committees for the half-year. The highest honor was to be elected chairman. I was elected chairman in January 1902 after Edgar Bond and I had won the debate over the Clark Society in December 1901.

Every Monday each society has a debate among its own members. The subject for debate was usually some live current question, and since the societies were not large everyone had a chance to debate fairly often, and the Literary Digest was the most popular magazine in the Library.

Four boys took part each Monday in the debates and there were other numbers on the program such as current events et cetera.

The Critic's report was an important item on the program. Mr. Lee Matthews was our faithful Critic in the fall of 1900, and he helped me no little to get rid of the "Alabama Colloquial" of that time. Mr. Matthews went on to Yale in 1901, studied for the Christian Ministry and spent his life as pastor of a Presbyterian Church in the West.

Tuesday through Saturday 8:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M.

We had an hour for the noon meal and most students took all meals at their boarding places.

Five days a week, seven hours a day, in the study hall if not in a class in a class-room. There was no teacher on duty in the study-hall but there was good order there and all our time in the study-hall was spent preparing lessons.

I had five reguaar teachers, including Miss Young our music teacher.

Mr. R.A. Clark was principal as well as Treasurer and Business Manager. He taught all mathematics from Trigonometry up;- all History and all philosophy including Logic and Ethics. He conducted chapel services as a rule six days a week and it included parliamentary law and a good deal of memorizing portions of the Bible. It was customary in our day for every student to memorize the last five chapters of Romans.

Mr. Clark was a member of the First Baptist Church and on Sunday morning taught a Bible class there for young men. I tried as hard to be at the Bible class on Sunday mornings as I did to be at school on week days.

The first class I had in Mr. Clark's room was Logic. The members of the class were seniors for the most part, and from the first day I was impressed with the way they had come to the class prepared. Mr. Clark asked Irenus P. Keith to give a definition of Logic. Mr. Keith replied "Logic is a practical science of the principles or laws which govern the various forms of correct thinking or thought." Just what was in the book verbatim. So this plough boy was properly impressed. Irenus P. Keith represented the Clark Society in the annual debate in December 1900 and his side was victorious. I heard that one of the judges of that contest said that Keith would make his mark in the world. I wonder if he went West as many did in those days.

Later I had Ethics under Mr. Clark, and again I was the only one in the class who was not a senior. The other members of that class were Misses Rowena Stanley and Mary Norton and Mr. Henry Barton my first room-mate.

Trigonometry and Analytics were the only branches of mathematics that I had under Mr. Clark, and I have always been sorry that I didn't have a full year of college algebra under him. But it may be that algebra was not in the vogue it is in now.

Such history and Bible knowledge as I got from Mr. Clark was mainly from his Sunday Bible class or in his course in Ethics. He was always interesting when he talked about Socrates or Philo or Aristotle, or when he discussed the great migrations of history, and as the repeated waves of peoples that flowed into Western Europe. He said that was the most important part of history to him.

There being only four of us in the class in Ethics Mr. Clark sat by a table in front of the platform in the chapel and taught us. That was the only class in which one of the older teachers is remembered to have taught sitting down.

Mr. Clark must have been about sixty years old when I knew him and he seemed always to have his mind full of things that seemed worth while and which he had made his own. He must have learned a great deal of what he knew as he went along teaching people whom he fully expected would be leaders in the world of thought.

One is tempted to spend much time regretting that more time could not have been spent at the feet of men like Mr. R.A. Clark, but we shall have to keep our balance and try to see that the curse taken was necessary and unavoidable, and that though the hours spent with such teachers were all too few, yet they are all the more precious because of their fewness.

M^r.J.M. Bledsoe.

Mr. Bledsoe must have been about the same age as Mr. Clark. He was evidently a great student of languages from his earliest days. How regrettable that we did not find an opportunity to ask him "a thousand questions" about his life and studies. He was no doubt an Alabama boy but must have been sent to Europe when a child or very young man.

My first regular classes under Mr. Bledsoe were Latin and English Literature. He was always on his feet in front of the class, and every minute of time was used. In all my hours in his classes and ~~in his~~ he never said or did anything that hurt my feelings. On the other hand every hour was so full of that which was good and valuable that I could have approved heartily of what one of his former students is quoted as saying at Mr. Bledsoe's funeral in 1906: "He was the wisest man I ever knew.

Begging the indulgence of my readers, I would here leap over about five years for a story and then get back on the regular line again.

It was in June 1906 just a week before I was married and just a few weeks before Mr. Bledsoe's death. I had just come from Louisville where a few days before I had received my Th.M. from the seminary. I had come by Winchester to have a little visit with Miss Maggie Lee and her family, for she was the lady that at last had said "yes" to me. Mr. Clark knew what it was about and kindly asked me to spend the night at his home. That was the only time I remember having a very enjoyable talk with Miss Alice Clark.

The next morning it happened that Mr. Clark and I met up with Mr. Bledsoe in front of the Home Bank. Mr. Bledsoe remembered seeing me in Louisville, Kentucky about a year before. He was in Louisville attending a Confederate Reunion. I was a conductor on a street car just then, a car that ran on Main Street and 18th Street. It was a sunny afternoon in early summer. My car was running north on Main Street and was almost empty. When we had passed 4th Avenue I saw Mr. Bledsoe walking along well dressed on the side walk in the same direction that the car was going. I was on the rear platform looking out for business, when I saw Mr. Bledsoe and recognized him. Just then he recognized me and we waved at each other and went on our respective ways.

Well in June 1906 at Winchester in front of the Home Bank, I don't remember how the subject of my approaching marriage came up. (I was married about a week later at a home about six miles north of Winchester). Of course Mr. Bledsoe knew the young lady concerned, for he had been her teacher as well as mine, and he just remarked to me, "If she is not a jewel, then I am as badly fooled as you are." And now after 55 years of married life it seems to me that he expressed his opinion very exactly as was his custom.

That was the last time I saw those two revered teachers, though Mr. Clark lived several years and once wrote Maggie and me a much appreciated letter after we went to Japan.

When will two such men as Clark and Bledsow meet again?

Perhaps several other teachers and no doubt several bright earnest students helped Winchester get its reputation at Yale whereby graduates of Winchester could enter the Junior class at Yale without examination and a number of them were able to earn their expenses at Yale by tutoring other students.

Mrs. Ela Reed Clark

"Miss" Ela was the only lady teacher in the higher department of the Normal when I was there. But she was a real teacher and the school would not have been the same without her. She lived in the country some miles from town and came in a buggy every morning bringing one or more of her own children who studied with Miss Lizzie Clark who had a primary department on the first floor of the building.

Rhetoric was an important part of the English course in those days and Miss Ela was our teacher of Rhetoric. If anybody slept or took it easy in that class I was too busy to find it out. The work was interesting and gave one an interest in better and more effective English.

How to read poetry and "scan" was also a part of the English course under Miss Ela.

She also taught a class which I liked in Geometry.

She Trained both boys and girls in public speaking and put life into any public programs given by the school.

Prof. George A. Buist

Mr. Buist was a native of South Carolina and was a graduate of Furman University before going to Vanderbilt for post-graduate work in science.

He was brand new as a teacher when I was a new student. He was young and looked frail, but there seemed no limit to his energy nor to the number of things he was interested in. The first semester in 1900 he had a class in Geology—a large class containing several seniors. Mr. Buist was always interested in the "utility" of things and early in the course he came to the delta of the Mississippi River. He couldn't find any use to which to put a place like a delta—just great reaches of sand. It seemed a good chance for a fellow from the farm to help the young teacher out. So I volunteered with "It looks like they could raise cane on it." I wondered why the class roared—but nobody had to tell me that "cain" is pronounced like "cane."

Mr. Buist soon had a lot of us boys playing brass instruments and I was given a tenor horn—my only attempt to play a musical instrument.

After Geology came Biology and we studied the fern and then the earth worm—getting a bit of Botany and then of Zoology.

My second year—when I boarded at Mr. Eli Cambron's very near the college—Mr. Buist taught us both physics and chemistry and Miss Alda Cambron said I tried to prove everything by physics and chemistry.

I Try Teaching.

I was not yet twenty years old and it seemed that I was destined to "make a crop" every year till I was twenty.

So after New Year's in 1901 I was called on to help on the farm again. Mr. Clark said "It is a mistake," but I ha^ave never learned to argue with my father.

In June or July 1901 I noticed that nothing was said about a school at the Bouldin School House that summer. My cousin by marriage was the Trustee. It was a long Sunday afternoon and my parents said they would walk up to visit this cousin. This was my chance. Just as my mother passed by me I said "Ask cousin B. if I might teach a school here this summer". He agreed, and before the end of July I was teaching, getting a second grade certificate by taking an examination.

The twelve weeks were soon over and I had some \$120—the largest sum of money I had ever had. I got a local merchant to order me a suit of clothes (tailor made) and I was off to Winchester again.

By now I was twenty, and if I happened to know the answer and another boy didn't he would sometimes remark "an old school-teacher!"

This time, and the first time in my life I was able to stay in school until early June. We always paid \$5.40 a month tuition in that school and that had to pay the teachers.