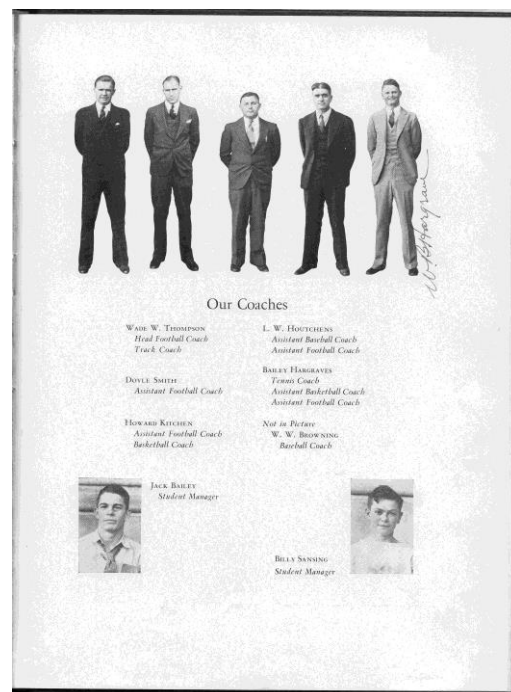
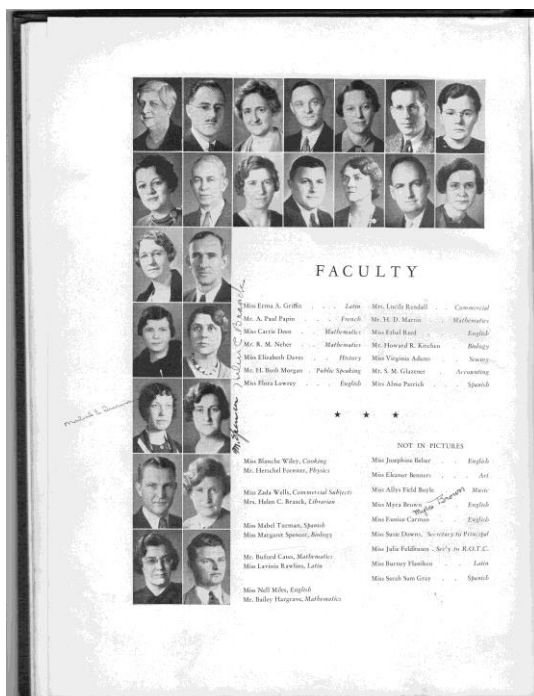


5-21-01

Favorite Teachers

On the whole I've generally liked my teachers even though it sometimes took me a while to realize that they were pretty nice, after all. I remember Mrs. Bone, and Miss Walters, among others in grade school. Mrs. Bone taught geography and penmanship and had a husband who had been horribly wounded in World War I. I found geography fascinating, but now I recall Mrs. Bone's sour disposition and business-like attitude toward her interesting subject, and think, perhaps, the subject rather than the teacher was what I really loved. Miss Walters taught math, giving the impression it was a subject everyone would find stimulating and interesting. I was in her classes for at least three years, and quadratic equations are what I *think* I remember getting excited about with her. Actually, I'm not at all sure I met them in the fourth grade - high school seems more likely; nevertheless "Miss Walters" is the name I remember as a favorite teacher, whether she taught me quadratic equations or not. Paul assures me that she didn't, not in grade school. Maybe it's decimals that I remember in her class. I like them, too.

In high school I discovered "puppy love" in Mr. Hargraves' classes. Whatever he taught was special to me, even the mental arithmetic drills he put us through for the final five or six minutes of most classes. He was able to show us painlessly in those quick drills the value of whatever the most recent math facts he had introduced to us. Since he taught algebra, I'm sure that I learned about the beauty of quadratic equations in his class rather than in Miss Walter's class. He was young and, I thought, very handsome, as well as single. I was sure he'd wait for me to finish college before we got married. Not many years after high school, I discovered that not only had he married but he was a really homely man, with unruly, wiry blond hair and a serious underbite, which probably gave him a witch-like guise when he got a bit older.



The teachers who really influenced me most and who leave me today with the fondest memories were demanding and unswervingly strict. At the time I was sure I hated them. Miss Secrest was my fifth-grade teacher. She humiliated me before the class when I turned in a messy paper on which I had sought to obliterate a mistake by blacking out a paragraph with vigorously applied pencil marks. She pointed out that a neat line drawn through my mistake would have been sufficient; she had too many student papers to grade to add several lines that I didn't want her to see, and the smudged black area offended her eyes and rubbed off on her fingers. She taught writing (composition, that is) and whatever arithmetic was included in fifth grade.

One of the girls in the class persuaded me, against my inclination, to go with her across town to visit Miss Secrest. I was surprised to discover that she was a nice, warm person who was delighted to have two students ride two street cars and one bus across town to visit with her. She gave us iced tea and cookies and led us into some easy conversation. She was human, and she was FUN.



Members of the committee of judges for the A. Harris & Company four-year scholarship awards to Southern Methodist University are pictured with the students who have received the awards at the first gathering of students and judges, at a dinner given by Arthur L. Kramer Friday night at the Hotel Adolphus. Top picture, left to right, are the committee members, Mrs. Alex W. Spence, Zellner Eldridge and Miss Eva Allen Freeman. Below are the students, left to right (front row), Mary Frances Hickman, Betty Wolfe, Jeannette Ruth Parker, Barbara Corkern; (back row), Ben N. Ramsey, Ed Rowe, Percy D. Williams and Vincent Baker. Officers for a permanent organization, to be known as the A. Harris Scholarship Club, were elected.

to R. M. U. was held at a dinner given by Arthur L. Kramer, president of A. Harris & Co., Friday evening at the Hotel Adolphus when officers for a permanent organization of the scholarship students, to be known as the A. Harris Scholarship Club, were elected. Officers are: President, Ben N. Ramsey; vice president, Mary Frances Hickman; secretary-treasurer, Ed B. Rowe; and historian, Jeannette Ruth Parker.

Guests at the dinner included Vincent Baker and Barbara Corkern, graduating from S. M. U. this year, who received the awards in 1936; Ed B. Rowe and Mary Frances Hickman, winners in 1937; Ben N. Ramsey and Jeannette Ruth Parker, 1938 winners, and Percy D. Williams, Jr. and Betty Wolfe, 1939 winners.

studies next year. Miss Corkern has the lead in the senior class play, "As You Like It."

Ed B. Rowe, a junior, is a member of Alpha Phi Omega, honorary service fraternity; of Phi Eta Sigma and is president of the Biology Club. Miss Mary Frances Hickman has been elected to Mortar Board, top honorary organization for senior women.

Ben N. Ramsey, sophomore, is unopposed in his race for editor of the Rotunda, college annual. Miss Jeannette Ruth Parker is a member of the Y. W. C. A. and president of the League of Evangelical Students.

Percy D. Williams, Jr., was chosen president of the Cyren Ephraim, composed of the ten outstanding freshmen. Miss Betty Wolfe has been elected to the freshmen honorary scholastic society.

Special guests were Dr. Umphrey, Lee, president of R. M. U., and Mrs. Lee; Mrs. Margaret Evans and the three members of the committee of judges for the award, Mrs. Alex W. Spence, Miss Eva Allen Freeman and Zellner Eldridge.

At the conclusion of the dinner, especially designed keys were presented to the award winners.

The 1940 award will be made during the June high school commencement exercises.

Annual Award

Each year the award is made to a boy and a girl graduate from the high schools of Dallas, University Park or Highland Park. Their need for financial assistance in acquiring further education is one of the first considerations, Mr. Eldridge said. Their capability as students, indicated by their standing in class, is another, but high grades do not form the sole basis for selection. Mr. Eldridge emphasized the time spent by the committee, first in eliminating the applications on basis of scholarship and reports from family members to a workable number and then in personal interviews with each student. Mr. Eldridge said much attention is given to emotional quality and stability of students interviewed, the main thought and purpose of the committee being to select students for the scholarship awards who give best indication of ability to turn back to the community in worthwhile citizenship and contributions of merit and progress, values received from expenditure on an education. The only obligation of these students is to do the caliber of work which will best enable them to fulfill their promise to the community.

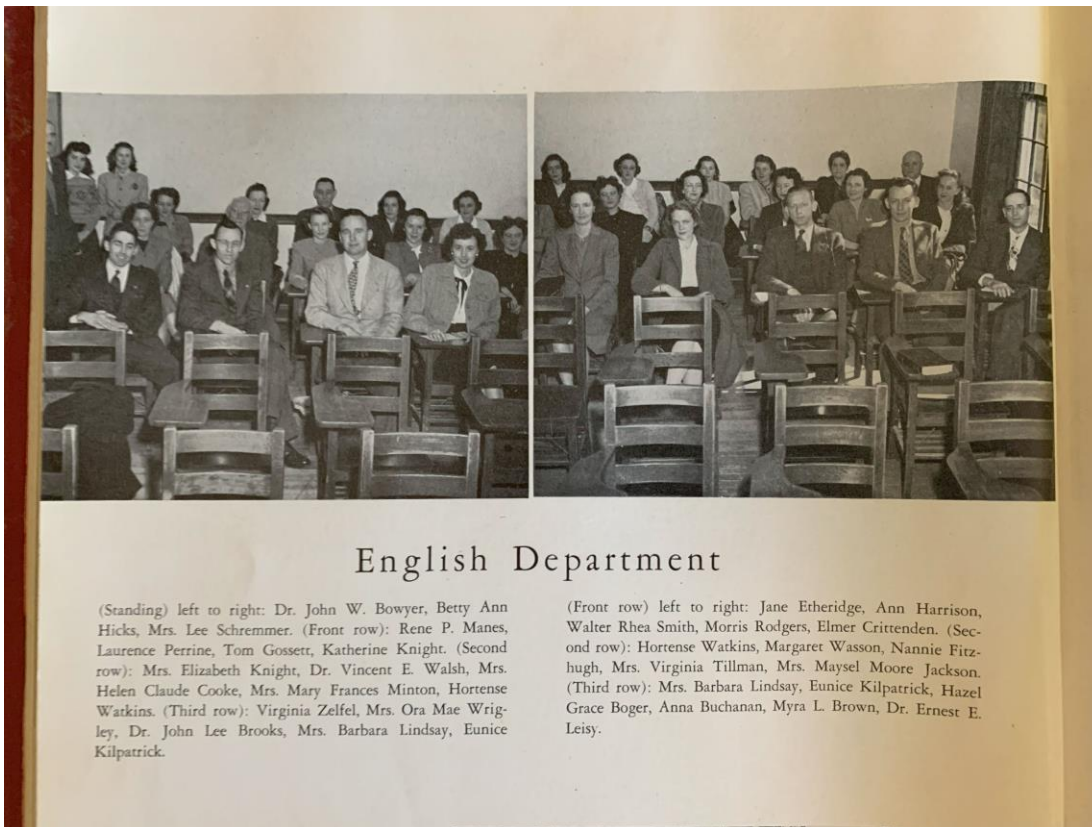
"The continuity of this scholarship is the factor which makes it such a fine thing," Mr. Eldridge said. "The scholarship award pays full tuition for the student who receives it for the four school years. Thus the student may see ahead to the completion of his plan and may pursue the full course of his college education with complete assurance."

All the winners not only have maintained good scholastic averages but have been leaders in student activities, it was pointed out.

Vincent Baker and Barbara Corkern, who received the first awards four years ago and will thus be the first to graduate, both are leaders in senior activities. Baker is president of the student association and has received a graduate scholarship from the university to continue his

Then, there was Miss Brown, a tiny bundle of energy, who demanded absolute attention in class and gave assignments that were hard enough to stretch us. I usually so up tight that I was able to see her only as a possible menace. It was a long time before I realized

that her reputation for being severe and determined to make all her students suffer was not true. We read *Macbeth*, *Julius Caesar*, and a lot of serious, beautiful literature in her class. I discovered in college that she had taught us to read, understand, and enjoy literature. I had to overcome a dislike of her based on her calling me Miss Heckman, a singularly ugly redhead whose name was too much like mine, Hickman, for my taste, with the additional onus of "Mary Doris" for her given name. I corrected her one day about my name, and she rather unpleasantly told me that Mary Doris was close enough, since I recognized she was asking *me* the question. Moreover, she badgered me for almost a year until I applied for a college scholarship I knew I'd never qualify for. I had already discovered that she was a wonderful teacher and that my initial fear of her was unwarranted. Much to my surprise, I was awarded the scholarship. I felt ashamed that I had initially disliked her.



But the story of my association with Miss Brown did not end there. A number of years later when I was teaching English at Southern Methodist University, the chairman sent for me, introduced me to a new member of the department - Myra Brown - and asked me

to show her around the department and the University. I remembered some of the doubts I had when I was first in her class; we became quite good friends even though she insisted on telling everyone what a good student I had been in high school.

Later when my children complained about how mean some of their teachers were, I had to struggle not to tell them, sentimentally, about the wonderful teachers I had. Occasionally I was able to persuade them to postpone judgment until they had a chance to get a little better acquainted with the teacher and the subject. They, of course, were sure that I was prejudiced by the fact that I was a teacher!