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when a man finds in a single spot fun, rest, satisfied affection, a well of wisdom and in addition all kinds of outlets for his creative energy, there is but one explanation - he is a wise man who knows when he has what he wants. The only man I know who seems to have done this is Owen D. Young. He finds them all, possibly more, things I have not discovered, in a narrow valley of New York State which he calls home.

No matter how grand the register - how royal the guest book in which he signs his name, he always writes after it - Van Hornesville, N. Y. - not Park Avenue, New York, though he has quarters there housing wonderful treasures - not the Connecticut shore, though on it he has a week-end home with a boat in which he does something he calls fishing - none of these - always Van Hornesville.

There is no surer way to set him talking than to use the name. He loves to tell you of the place, its people, his life there.

"Why has Van Hornesville such a hold on you?" I asked him once.

"How could it be otherwise," he answered, "It's in my blood - my roots are there."

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"It must have been over two hundred years ago that the first Young or Youngs came to America in one of the groups of German refugees, driven from the Palatinate in the persecution of the Hugenots. They found their way to London but London could neither house nor feed them, having troubles of her own, so Queen Anne shipped them to this side of the water promising them land. At one time there were so many of them in the village of New York that they almost doubled the population.

"When New York could not hold them they began to scatter up the Hudson - West into the Valley of the upper Mohawk.

"The records seem to prove that it was around 1750 the first of our family found his way into what is now Herkimer County - Peter Young, my great great great grandfather. Later, a few of the refugees, among them one or more Youngs, cut their way up a tributary of the Mohawk, the Otsquago Creek, which comes tumbling down into the river near the present town of Fort Plain.

"These first pioneers took to the hills, clearing them, avoiding the valley. They supplied their own needs, created their own little trading settlement with a school, a church. Nothing is left of that settlement now - they called it Squag for short.

"The valley of the Otsquago did not have its chance until the hills were conquered - were yielding enough for somebody to use the water power going to waste there. That happened around 1790 when a Dutchman from New Jersey, Abraham Van Horne, came prospecting into this part of the country and saw a chance.

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"He put up a grist mill and a foundry - started a distillery - and a general store - built himself a good house. Soon he had a busy settlement. It was called Van Hornesville after him. His daughter Eva was my great grandmother.

"When my father and mother were young people in the '40's Van Hornesville must have been a pretty lively place, for Mother used to tell about the factory which made calico - the factory house where the owner lived - the boarding houses - the shoe shop - the cheese makers. I remember she said that the women who worked in the calico factory were lucky if they made $6.00 per week, working from seven to seven with only a half hour for lunch."

One cannot listen long to Mr. Young, talking of the settlement of the Otsquago Valley, of the changes in the life and in the occupations of the people, without seeing that for him it is an epitome of the industrial development of the United States and that its experiences, its changing conditions and the way they were handled, give him hints in struggling with the problems that come his way, as the head of one of our greatest undertakings - the General Electric.

To M & A. "What did they do about this in Van Hornesville when the town was an industrial center?" is what he asks himself and usually finds an answer and a pertinent one in his recollections of his mother's talk, her description of the early times, of the town in its heyday. Then translates into modern equivalent

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"I have often heard my mother tell," he said once to a group of his associates when the question of unemployment and what was to be done about it was under discussion. "I have often heard her tell of what happened to the people in the village when a depression came. Of course they had business fluctuations then as they do now. What did the people do about it - working people? There was a shoe maker, none too thrifty as they measured things in the village. When money came easy he spent freely; when hard times came and there was less demand for shoes he was idle. But he did not starve for he had a place of his own - a cabbage patch back of his house - a cow - some pigs. He could pick up fire wood almost anywhere. In his cellar there was a keg of sauerkraut, a pork barrel and a bin of cider apples. No matter how bad the times, he did not go hungry or suffer from cold. Our workers today do not have a cow nor a pig - not even a cabbage patch. They have no reserve of salt pork, nor sauerkraut, nor cider apples in their cellar - not even a cellar. They can't pick up fuel free when they are out of work.

"Our modern factory workers are not more spendthrift than a hundred years ago, but hard times are vastly more tragic now. It is all right to preach thrift, but that does not change the fact that unemployment today means tragedy in a sense our grandparents could not understand. Somehow or other, we must work out a substitute for the cabbage patch and the pork barrel."

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You see why I said at the start that Van Hornesville was for Owen D. Young a well of wisdom.

The farm which the first Youngs cleared, a tract of one hundred and sixty acres, looked across from its highest point to great billows of land, hilltops and valleys - the foothills of the Adironacks. It lay just above the village, possibly a half a mile away - a steep climb.

It was here in 1856 that Jacob Smith Young, the fifth generation of the family in the Mohawk Valley, took his bride, Ida Brandow - a girl of seventeen, born only a few miles away in the town of Springfield. And it was here, eighteen years later, Owen D. Young was born. It was here that he passed his boyhood.

It was a lonely life for an only child - a household of grown people only - no neighbors nearby, no play mates. It was lonely and as he grew up it was more and more a life of labor. As soon as he was old enough he went down the hill to the district school on a bluff above the town. But he came back at night to chores.

You will not hear him talk long about those early days of his on the farm without realizing that he had many chores and that he took them seriously. There was the filling of the wood box - helping with the milking - helping with the churning - turning the grindstone - running errands - and in his vacations, as he grew up, long days in the field.

"What kind of a worker was Owen," a friend asked his mother once, possibly a little doubtful about his energy.

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"He was a good doer," was her answer. "When there was anything to do he helped out whether it was his chore or somebody elses.

"He really did work - worked too hard. Long before he was strong enough he used to follow behind the harrow. They cut grass with a sickle then, one man following another and they used to race. Our hired man often came in to complain that Owen worked so fast that he cut him out.

"He's always been that way. when he started doing a thing he went right through with it."

"Mind?" she was asked, and she answered,

"The parents in the Young family never believed much in dancing after their children's fiddling."

I doubt if anyone ever heard Owen D. Young say that he enjoyed the work that came to him in these boyhood years, but like it or not, he certainly never shirked or grumbled over it.

Many a man who as a boy shared in the hard labor on the farm has shaken its soil permanently from his feet when once he had escaped. But this was never so with Owen Young. The feeling of his race for the land was too deep in him. His people, all the people about him believed in farming. It was their business in the world - they respected it. Any other occupation of man was second-rate compared to farming. Anybody that did not own land, cultivate it, was a little suspected. It was the farmer who fed the world and

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to be a good farmer was the best thing there was in the world for a man. They expected their children to carry on and when it happened, as it did happen, that this Owen D. Young was the first in the line of his people on the hills above the Utsquago Creek to choose another walk in life there was much wagging of heads among the neighbors and no little heartaches, possibly some doubt in the minds of both his father and mother.

He did choose another walk, as we know, chose it when he was still a boy; went to college, studied law. By the time he was thirty-two he was a member of an accredited Boston firm - "doing well" - yet never in all these years of preparation for another field of work did he lose, for even a day, his interest in the farm where he was born. All of his vacations were spent there - hard at work. It was - and is - an abiding interest.

"I have never been pried loose from the land nor shaken myself from the pull that drives the man back to his home acres," is the way he puts it. And he never will be.

If the land had a strong hold on him - this land of his people-there has been always in Van Hornesville a still more powerful bond - his Mother. A very great person - this Mother of Owen D. Young. She was a woman of ninety-two when I had the honor of meeting here, slightly bent, slightly wrinkled but with a look so undaunted, a smile so genuine, a step so alert that there was no sense of years in her. She was alive to the tips of her fingers.

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You knew at a glance that here was a powerful personality - one in which strength of will, judgment, humor, self-reliance, loyalty, serenity, steady affection, were joined. She was the kind of woman that the good earth sometimes makes - a product of generations of wrestling with the land and conquering it; of going with it step by step in a logical process of growth - never blind to the hardships - never pretending that it is easy - only agreeing - and conquering.

To Owen D. Young his mother was an unending source of joy and interest. His appreciation of her personality was both affectionate and understanding. He liked nothing better than to talk and laugh with her.. Indeed it was a rare thing to laugh with Mother Young. She had one of the most infectious laughs I ever heard, youthful, lusty. She loved to visit, loved jokes, good stories.

"She is such good fun," her grandsons and their young friends used to declare.

One of the things about his mother that particularly interested Mr. Young was the way that she had gone along with him intellectually.

"The curve of my mother's life," he told me once, "steadily rose after she was sixty-five. Until then it had been very nearly a level line. Her interests were confined to a radius of not over ten miles. She knew practically no one outside of this - saw no one, except it might be now and then when she went to Fort Plain to buy something not to be had in Van Hornesville. I went to college

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in 1890 and then the curve began to rise. She took in my life. My associates began to interest her - my new studies, geometry - trigonometry, psychology.

"Then I went to Boston. This was a long leap and the curve rose as she followed my legal studies. Then I married and she and father visited us in Boston - a great trip and the curve of interest took in Boston, its ways, its history, its sights.

"Then we came to New York and she came to see us and that was another new world - the curve of interest was rising and rising.

"And then it was Europe. She was keenly interested in the subject of Reparations - in the men involved. She had her individual opinion of Stresemann and Poincare and the rest of them.

"As the curve rose her reading enormously increased. In my youth we had only one weekly paper and her interest in that was in the local news. Then later when I began to read more we had the bi-weekly Albany Argus. But it was many years before she was seeing a Daily paper - interested in the news of the country at large.. At the end the world and its leaders were hers."

I asked Mr. Young if it was "in spite of Owen" as I had been told that in 1928 she voted for Hoover.

"She certainly voted for him," he laughed, "though she never actually believed in Women's Suffrage; always said the electorate was low enough and that to double it and put in a lot of people that knew less about what it all meant than those that were already exercising suffrage seemed to her nonsense. She would never

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register - never vote until Hoover ran for President. She knew him. He used occasionally to drop into the house in New York for breakfast - sometimes she was there. She liked him, so when the election came she registered and voted for him.

"I think a desire to appose my Uncle John had something to do with her voting. You should have known Uncle John. He had a mind as keen as a knife blade - wit - gaiety - and he and Mother were always at it. They quarreled over Hoover and Smith in the most excited and delightful fashion. I laughed until I ached listening to the two of them and I really think that Mother was quite as interested in neutralizing Uncle John's vote as she was in supporting Hoover."

"Mother's Young's gaiety of spirit - her interest in the daily life of those about her was matched by her courage and serenity in times of trial. Heavy ones came to her and those she loved but she stood always a bulwark against despair."

When her life on earth came to an end as it did in May of this year she lay in her last sleep unchanged with the same valiant and tranquil look on her face that she had carried through life.

Here you have then the two forces which have bound Owen Young to Van Hornesville:- Those deep Young roots and this great personality.

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The time he gave to the "home farm" as it is called while he was a student at college and at law school, may have been less in years while he was settling into law practise but his interest never abated. He meant to keep that farm - run it himself.

"It was not until about 1903," just a little under thirty you see, so I have heard him say, "that I had money enough to take hold on the farm as I had always meant to do. Father and Mother were getting old. They had been nearly fifty years on that hilltop and I felt it was time for them to go to the village. So I bought them a house there and undertook to make the farm pay better. Our cows were not good enough. So whenever I was at home, Father and I would drive around to State Fairs or auctions, wherever he heard that there was a likely cow for sale, and buy it. I could not afford to pay over $75.00 in those days but that was the way I began my herd. I realized that one hundred and sixty acres were not enough for a well-conducted dairy farm if you were going to make any money, so I began to buy land, bought the two adjoining farms. That was the beginning.

"Today I have a herd of one hundred and fifty Holsteins - one of the best herds in the world, I do believe. Yes, I am a farmer, I always have been one - always shall be one."

Ask people in Van Hornesville what kind of a farmer Owen D. Young is, and if they sense a bit of doubt in your tone - an implication that he may be a "gentleman farmer" - an "agriculturist" they are quick to disabuse your mind.

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"He is a practical farmer who knows his business," they will tell you.

Perhaps the best evidence of his ability that we have is from his Uncle John. I take it the more I have learned of Uncle John that the last thing you could drag from him would be a prejudiced opinion, particularly about one of his own family. He was always emphatic about Owen D. Young's farming.

"He is a darn good farmer," he would say. "Whoever nicknamed him the "plow boy of Van Hornesville" had it right. He doesn't have to take anybody along when he buys cattle to make sure that he doesn't get cheated."

On ~~particularly~~ the last point I have what I consider conclusive evidence for last Spring in Arizona I knew of his putting genuine cow boys to shame in guessing the weight of a steer. → See 15 new copy

Yes, Owen D. Young is a practical farmer, but one who is not only interested in his own herd and land, but in the herd and land of his neighbor. One who is quite as keen in helping them succeed as in succeeding himself.

This man is really trying up on the hills of Van Hornesville to help solve the farm problem. In his judgment the farm ought to be the best home in the world. He knows some of the reasons why it has not been so in the past. Can these things be corrected? Can the farm be made to yield more than shelter and food - its life be made as interesting as it is healthful and secure - its loneliness

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cured - its heavy labors lightened? He believes so. And that is what he is trying to prove.

You see why I said he has found in Van Hornesville an outlet for his creative energy.

One of the ways he has taken to help his farmer neighbors is never to do anything that they cannot do if they will. "Anyone of you," he tells them, "can build up a herd as good as mine if you will begin as I did, nearly thirty years ago, and work at it uninterruptedly - intelligently."

When his manager talks to him about building modern and elaborate cow houses he will not listen. "I do not want any better buildings than my neighbors can have. Fix up the old ones. I want to prove to these people about here that fancy cow houses are not necessary for good herds.

The barn his father used on the home farm he uses. It has been repaired, made sanitary and comfortable, electricity put in but it is little if any better than his neighbors can have.

I once visited the quarters of his prize bulls. They were building new pens and there seemed to be considerable doubt in the mind of the director whether "Owen" would approve. He had a little fear he might think they were getting them too good, better than his neighbors could afford and he "wouldn't like that."

All of the local farm problems become his to be dealt with in a practical fashion. There is the matter of handling milk,

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-milk in that part of the world, as in so many others, is collected by a Dairy Association. But the terms of payment offered and accepted by the farmers seemed harsh to Mr. Young, for the Association never paid in full for the milk it took. Three fourths, let us say, of the bill was paid in cash, enough to enable the farmer to run his plant. The other fourth was paid by certificates which were not redeemable for five years. The result of this was that the farmers around Van Hornesville never had money to buy anything outside of the actual expense for their product. It meant that they were always in debt for things that they wanted; that they bought on the installment plan; probably more, as the temptation is, than the certificates would pay for on the day of their redemption.

Now why should he not correct that? He had money to invest. Why should he not invest it in the farmer's certificates and give them cash for their one fourth so they might have the added stimulus of a monthly profit in hand? It was arranged and so it goes today. It may not be a bad thing for the Dairyman's Association to know that Owen D. Young holds the farmer's certificates instead of the farmers themselves.

Interested as Mr. Young was in the farm problems of the community it was inevitable that sooner or later he consider those of Van Hornesville itself. Van Hornesville had run down badly since the days of its industrial prosperity in his mother's girlhood. The cotton mill, all its little industries and shops had died. The Civil War, the railroad, (which passed it by) the mail catalogue, all the

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ever changing modern ways of doing things had contributed to their end. The one long street of the town now disfigured by ruins - torn down buildings - deserted lots - fields once fertile were swamps. Mr. Young did not like it. There was the fine old stone mill which Abraham Van Horne had built falling to pieces. Why not restore it - set it going? It could serve the farmers of whom he was one. Today it is a busy and picturesque spot in the town.

He bought ruin after ruin and cleared them out. He made a park from a swampy spot in the center of the village. He bought the remains of the old Van Horne house, once the pride of the village and restored it to be the home of his daughter. Bought another tumbled down house of fine timbers and good lines to be restored as a home for his son. He wanted his Mother to have flowers through the winter and he put up an unpretentious greenhouse and sent a man from the village, who seemed to him to have a taste for that sort of thing, to a good nursery to be educated for the place.

Another rich man, if he had wanted to stay in the part of the world where his fathers had been before him, might and probably would have gone onto one of the beautiful sites above the village, built himself a chateau - a manor house - a villa - a thing that had no relation in the world to the development of the country. He would have put high walls around it and planted things that never had been seen or heard of in the Mohawk Valley. But Owen D. Young did not see things that way. He really did not want

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to have anything, do anything, so much better than what his neighbors had or did, that they would be separated from him. The Youngs had helped clear and build this country. He wanted them to go on clearing and building. ~~them~~. If he ever put "big money", as they called it, into Van Hornesville it should be spent for everybody. He soon was spending "big money". Along in 1923 he decided to bring electricity into the town - at his own expense. → See 17a new copy

It is a whole saga in itself - this electrification of Van Hornesville from the day the first pole was put up to the hour Mother Young at the switch board in her back hall - there was no other place in town for it - turned on the lights.

It is a legend in Van Hornesville that after that it was she who "put the town to bed." "Lights out at nine o'clock" was her rule and if anyone protested she was obdurate.

"Owen says to keep the lights burning every night, but it would cost a lot of money and I don't think he can afford it. I guess it's up to me to do the saving for the rest of the family."

That first illumination of Van Hornesville aroused the whole surrounding country. They thought the town was on fire and kept the telephones ringing for news. Then soon after Christmas ~~were~~ came and lighted tree in the new park - and then the electrification of the Young farms. Water and lights, milking machines and grindstones, separators and churns, washing machines and vacuum cleaners, hay hoists and corn cutters, all run by the new power.

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Hard worked farmers and hard worked farmer's wives watched the miraculous lifting of burdens - figured on cost - calculated whether increased product would pay for increased expenses - dreamed of freedom and pleasures they had come to believe were never to be theirs, all of which Owen D. Young had had ~~xxxxxby~~ in mind when he put in electricity - to make them want it and willing to work for it.

The electification was a great thing for Van Hornesville and the town was very proud of itself. But a greater thing came to it soon after - came in disguise of disaster - the schoolhouse burned down - the schoolhouse to which Owen Young had climbed through all his boyhood - a little one-room box of a district school, dingy, small, often I fear uncomfortable, but still a schoolhouse and it was in ashes.

The township of Stark, in which Van Hornesville lies, has a school superintendent whom Mr. Young once described as a "burning volcano" "concealed under a quiet exterior", and this Silas A. Kinney by name "burning volcano" began seething with a great idea as soon as he heard of the Van Hornesville fire.

"Why," he asked himself and quickly so wrote to Mr. Young, "Why should we not replace the old house with a modern up to date schoolhouse? It would fit in with your village improvements and would be the pride of Van Hornesville, and the whole town of Stark. Why not make the best little schoolhouse in Herkimer County?"

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I can imagine how that letter must have stirred the imagination of Mr. Young - how he must have seen at once that here was a chance to cap all that he had done for his old home, a chance to guarantee its future, for if the children coming on could be trained to make the most of themselves and of their inheritance would not Van Hornesville be sure of a continuing life - might it not become a model of what a country school should be? What a contribution to the farm problem that would be!

I take it that there was never any doubt from the time Mr. Young received the superintendent's glowing letter that he was not committed to the idea, though it was some three months before he was able to get to Van Hornesville and talk the thing over with the authorities of the town. He had a plan ready for them - the gist of which was - that he would give Van Hornesville a new school if everybody would join with him, according to his means, in working out something of which they could all be proud.

His part and their part were put down in a series of proposals which were to be voted on at a meeting of the town, which was what happened. The vote was practically unanimous.

The town and the man did not stand alone in the enterprise. The township, county, State School authorities must be consulted; must agree to their plan; an architect must be found. But never did an undertaking have more sympathetic and generous co-operation from outsiders than theirs did when the spirit of it was grasped; when it was realized that Mr. Young was doing his level best to make this

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a work in which everybody in the neighborhood would have his part! Moreover, that he had something much larger in mind than "the best little schoolhouse in Herkimer County" - that what he was thinking of was the best country schoolhouse in the State - the United States - not a one-room affair but one with many rooms, class rooms, work rooms for boys and girls, a library, and wonder of all to them - a community hall, "with movies!"

It was to be a school in which every side of their lives was to be stimulated, which would open their eyes to the wonders and possibilities of their farms, the lovliness of the natural world - put them in touch with the finest things in the world of the day outside their valley - and it was to be a beautiful place - one they would be proud of all their lives; all this brought a glow to every man and woman asked to help. Here was something worth their best and they gave it.

There was no delay. As soon as the frost was out of the ground the clearing of the site began - all Van Hornesville standing around to watch it, talking it over - in the grocery, on the street corner or by their firesides in the evening.

A stray photographer finding his way into the valley looking for what there might be of interest to "take" came by.

"What are you doing here?" he asked of one of the men working on the excavation.

"Why, this," he told him, "is our new schoolhouse. Owen D. Young lives in this town and he is giving it to us."

"Does Mr. Young come here often?" asked the photographer.

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"Yes," said the workmen, "that's him.

The amazed young man looked over to see a tall figure in shabby trousers and muddy shoes, energetically at work with a pick axe. He could not believe his eyes.

Ask Mr. Young how much he worked on that excavation and he will tell you, "Only while they took my picture!"

His joy was in watching the people at work, realizing that he was getting what he was after - the co-operation of everybody in the undertaking.

No part of the building of the schoolhouse aroused in Mr. Young and in the villagers more interest, discussion and experimenting, than the choosing and fitting together of the stones for the walls. The building was to be on the simplest of Colonial lines, perfect for its purpose - perfectly suited to its place in the narrow valley with the background of lovely hills. The local stone gray, often streaked and splashed with blue, rose and green, was to be used. The men sought far and wide over field and hill bringing in what they considered proper stones, often big "round-heads" which split gave the color and warmth of tone, they sought.

"It was beautiful to see the men laying the stone," Mr. Young told me once when he was talking about the schoolhouse, "putting them together experimentally and going off eyeing them saying, 'No, that is not right - change that.' Finally concluding, 'Now that is what we want.'

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"Of course this all cost a great deal more money than the architects thought it should, but we never could have gotten such a wall as we had in any other way. I remember once a young man from the architect's office came up here. Naturally enough he didn't understand what we were doing. The men were experimenting with a piece of wall and thought they had it nearly right, when he came along and said,

'I don't like your wall, you ought to make it like the wall of the old schoolhouse on the hill.' There was one up there that had been built a hundred and fifty years ago and his idea was to imitate it. Well, the head mason and his helpers laid down their tools and said,

'We'll wait for Mr. Young.'

"When I came I told this young man that we were not interested in imitating a piece of stone work a hundred and fifty years old; that our man had advanced since that time; they did not want to do that kind of work. They had a pride in their skill. They were working with their minds as well as with their hands. So I called the men back and said, 'Now, you make the best kind of a wall you know how to make. You are to take your time, study and decide what is right.' Nothing could have been more interesting than the way they went at it. It was probably the way that the cathedrals were built - not by copying plans but by giving men a chance to work out their own ideas.

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"Another thing that the young man did not understand, though our architect did perfectly, was that we were building more than a wall. We were building a community, building citizens, stimulating men that belonged here in this valley to new effort. An outsider probably couldn't be expected to realize that but that is what we were doing - what we have done. You see this is <u>their</u> school. Not my school at all. They built it. Why, there are men here that know where every stone in these walls came from."

One of Mr. Young's deep satisfactions in the work was that it brought him into close contact with one of his dearest and his oldest friends, A Dramatis Persona of importance in any story of his life - Abram Tilyou.

"Uncle Abe," as everybody in the township of Stark calls him, was from boyhood the closest friend of Owen Young's father. And when that "good farmer and good man," as his son once described him, died, in 1906, Abram Tilyou did his best to take his place.

"You must be a very wise man," I said to him last Fall at the time of my first and only visit with him, only a few months before his death in February, of this year, "Mr. Young has told me that you ~~were~~ are one of his wisest counselors."

"That is just Owen's talk," he said, though you could see he was glowing with pride. "I was his father's best friend. It is sentiment with him.

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"But he has been a son to me," he went on, "always wanting to do something for me. Of course there are a lot of the things he has offered to do that I can't accept. You know how it is in a place like Van Hornesville. Supposing I took Mrs. Young's car and chauffeur, when she wasn't using it, as Owen wants me to do. Why, what would the neighbors say? They would say that I was using Owen.

"You mustn't take too serious what Owen says about me - the stories he tells. He has a way of always turning them against himself - giving me all the credit. Now, there is that story he told over in Europe, time of the Dawes Commission about things always coming down in a conference like they were having to trading. You remember what he told about one of his old neighbors up here in Van Hornesville wanting to buy one of his cows. That was me.

"The way I heard it was that Owen said,

"'Uncle Abe came down and asked how much I wanted for a certain cow. I said, well I think it is worth about so much. Then he thought awhile and didn't say anything. Finally he got up and started off.

"' Uncle Abe, I says, how about that cow, do you think you want it?

Uncle Abe answered

"'Well, ~~he said~~, that is, ~~Owen said I said~~ so, 'it's too dear to take and it is too cheap to leave' And then he took it. not clear

"Well, now maybe I did say something like that, but the way he tells that story gives the idea that I had to pay him a

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a price that I thought a little too high. It wasn't like that at all. He gave me that cow for less than it was worth. He is always doing that kind of thing - always giving. When he tells a story about trading he always makes out that he is the one that gets the advantage.

"While we were building the schoolhouse here, he was always putting me forward. Did you ever see that picture of Owen and me? Well, we were taking pictures up here of what we were doing around the schoolhouse and Owen said, 'Come on Uncle Abe, I want you in this picture.' Well, I just held back. It didn't seem to me I ought to push myself into a picture with Owen. Of course I wasn't trying to do it, it was him, but it didn't seem to me proper. It was just his kindness, always trying to do something to make me happy, keep me interested. He couldn't stand it if he didn't think I was happy. It is a great thing for me to know him and have him like a son.

"I haven't any doubt myself of his being a great man - he is a great man. He is too good a man to be President. I don't like this public work that he is doing - too hard on him. Why, you ought to have seen him when he came home from France, looked years older. We all said so. That is what I don't like about it. This public work of his is taking too much out of him. That is the way we all feel about him up here."

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On the wall of the vestibule of the Van Hornesville schoolhouse there is a big bronze tablet on which the "names of the people who built our schoolhouse" are recorded. Mr. Young in ordering it stipulated that there should be "no Victorian ideas controlling either the character of the plate or the language on it." His wishes were certainly expected for at the bottom you read:- "This building was built by the co-operation of the men named above and many others who aided and assisted them and without the service of a contractor, a superintendent or a boss."

Nor was it Victorian to name on the tablet at the bottom of the list of leaders in the enterprise - architect, head mason, head carpenter, etc., etc.

"Abram Tilyou and Owen D. Young - Rocking Chair Consultants."

Nothing that ever happened to Abram Tilyou made him prouder than the knowledge that his name coupled with that of Owen D. Young was going down in history.

It was on the Fourth of July, 1928 that the school was dedicated. "A monument to the craftsmen of this community," said Mr. Young, in his inaugural speech, "and also a monument to those men and women who patiently and devotedly carried on as teachers in our old schoolhouse. They happened to be my teachers and therefore this building must stand for them."

From all sides came congratulations. To one great school man who had spoken of the debt the educational world owed him, Mr. Young wrote,

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"I am getting fun enough out of it so that nobody owes me anything."

He was and he still is.

I never heard him tell with more appreciative chuckles of any episode in connection with the school than last Spring, sitting on the veranda of his Arizona bungalow, he told me about the snow plow contest that he had staged in Van Hornesville a short time before he left for the Southwest.

"They had unusual snows there last winter," he said, "in some places they must have been ten feet on a level. The Principal wrote me that many of the children could not get to school. Of course we had to do something about that. So I suggested a contest.

"It came off early in March when I went up, as I always do, for Mother's birthday - March 11th. All the leading manufacturers sent their big snow plows. It was great fun to see them bucking those drifts. One of the machines had the misfortune to break a part and they actually brought the replacements from New Jersey by airplane , so that the plow could go back into the fight.

"The winner did wonderful work. It would march into those great drifts without a halt or a quiver , throwing up two feet at a time, then turn around in its tracks and throw up two feet more, ice and all. There were banks sixteen feet high along the road; when it got through and the road was open. I knew then

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that after this we would be able to get those children to school, however deep the snow might be."

From the day the school opened with its little faculty of teachers carefully chosen with the aid of the best of the advisors in the State it was the joy of the children of Van Hornesville. They over-run it. Built for fifty the numbers so increased that the beautiful library had to be turned into a classroom, much to Mr. Young's sorrow. You could scarsely get those children away from the school. Last Fall going in at five o'clock in the afternoon I found a half dozen of them, hanging to their desks busy with something they were too interested in to leave. Outside on the playground there were double the number. They would even let the school bus go and walk two, three and four miles in order to have an extra hour at this beloved school.

It was natural enough that the children in the district schools, outside, should look with envy on what the children of Van Hornesville were getting in enjoyment and advantages. Why could there not be a community school at Van Hornesville and they all go? I am not sure that their demand alone would have been loud enough if very soon the voices of their parents had not been added and I am not sure that these voices would have been added as soon as they were if it had not been for the pull of the weekly moving picture shows in the schoolhouse.

Once a week there was as good a movie as the principal could get his hands on free to all the parents and neighbors of the

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children in the school. But people outside the town wanted to come. The matter was put up to Mr. Young. He made a cunning suggestion - "Why not let all the parents who join the County Parents and Teachers Association come?" And it was so decided. There was an immediate swelling of the ranks of that organization. It was not long before the parents of the township were joining their children in the demand that the Van Hornesville school be made a community schoolhouse.

What did Mr. Young think about it? "Well," he said, "If the district will vote for it and the Department in Albany approves I'll enlarge the school, the district, of course, doing its part in certain ways which I will stipulate.

The campaign began at once and there was much excitement and a lot of fun for Mr. Young from the stories that came to him as to what was going on. The election came off the first of last May and was over-whelmingly in favor of the proposition - a hundred and fifty-one to twenty-four.

"By the will of the people I built," said Mr. Young.

And that is what he is now doing. I doubt if a man ever put a million dollars into an enterprise, and that is probably what the plant is going to cost him before it is complete, and drew from it as much genuine satisfaction as he has, and I think always will.

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I said at the start that it seemed to me Owen D. Young was finding in this country laboratory of his "fun, rest, satisfied affection, a well of wisdom, outlets for his creative energy."

There is something more. Van Hornesville is a touchstone where he tests himself. 3/1

I heard him say once that living in such a community as that, being a part of it, was a sure way to keep a man from thinking too highly of himself.

"When a man sits constantly as the Chairman of important Committees, as I do, he is apt to get an idea that he is a good deal of a fellow - a better fellow than perhaps he really is. I go up to Van Hornesville and the people look at me quizzically and say, 'Well, Owen what are you up to now?' They put me in my place. I know I can't fool them."

Van Hornesville is his touchstone and it also gives him that most important thing so hard to get in our rushing and confused world - a place in which he has the time, the quiet and the human touch so necessary to all sound thinking; and he uses it for thinking out problems ~~he cannot evade~~ - ~~problems~~ which concern us all.

Take the question troubling ~~us all~~ the country last winter - what should the Government do about the Soldier's Bonus? Congress and the Administration were having an ugly tug over the matter. The veterans wanted the three billions and a half dollars that the Government had promised them - in 1945 - wanted it now. Congress

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under the pressure was yielding. The Treasury - the Bankers of the country said, "No, it must not be done. That is more money than the country has available for investment - for building - for railroads. We need it to provide jobs, not to use in a temporary stimulation of our consuming power, as the veterans would use it." Neither side saw a middle ground.

A.tr63 The Congressional Committee in charge called on various citizens - among them Mr. Young - for their opinions.

"I did not want to go," Mr. Young told me talking over the matter. "I did not know anything about the soldier's bonus. I told them so. But the committee insisted. Of course when a Government committee wants a citizen to testify it is his business to give the best that he has. Since I must go I must find out what I did think about it. So I took the documents in the case and went up to Van Hornesville - sat down alone and said to myself.

"Supposing that I, Owen D. Young, had given notes to a lot of my fellow townsmen up here - notes for a thousand dollars each, due in 1945, and one of the fellows came to me and said,

"See here, Owen, my wife is sick and has got to have an operation. I haven't any money. Couldn't you discount that note now or part of it at least?

"And another came and said, Owen, I've got a mortgage on my house. Unless I can raise a thousand dollars by the middle of next week it will be foreclosed. Can't you discount my note, help me out?

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"Another came and said, Owen, my car is dreadfully shabby - bad business - I want to buy a new one. Can't you discount my note? And another - See here, I have never had a bath room in that house of mine and my wife wants it - the children want it. Can't you discount my note?

"Well, now ~~kkkk~~ would be my duty in that situation? Of course I must get the money for John whose wife must have an operation and for Joe - I can't let him lose his house. But I don't have to get it for Tom. I need a new car and can't afford one. Pete never had a bathroom in his life. He can get along another year until things are easier.

"So I call them together and say - I am having a hard time myself. It's very difficult for me to put my hands on money to meet my obligations and emergencies; but I'll get the money for you who absolutely must have it but I won't give it to you who want it for things that you can get along without for a year or so.

"As far as I could see that was the situation of the Government - there were thousands of veterans in tight places. The Government ought to find money to tide them over.

"But there were thousands and hundreds of thousands of others who didn't need the money. It should not be given to them under the circumstances. There was my text. And on that text I wrote my speech.

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"Some of my friends down in Washington to whom I showed it said, 'This will upset the applecart. This will put a new idea into Congress' head. They will compromise on the thing. They won't vote three and a half billions but they will vote more money than we ought to spend.' Yes, I said, but how about the veterans who are in want? They of all people in this country should be considered. You've got to find money for them. I had to testify. I could only say what I thought and I did say it."

The results are familiar. The speech showed a way out though unfortunately his advice was not taken in full. The man in need was not separated from the man not in need.

It is a wise man who knows when he has found a fountain - a fountain of mental and spiritual health from which to drink when weary - sad, "at his wit's end" - a still wiser one who uses his fountain. You can trust a leader who has this wisdom never to go far wrong. ^ End Nue

Where did Owen D. Young learn all this? How has he been able to hang on and develop this most valuable of all aids to sound judgment - right action?

Did his education have anything to do with it? Is it because of his education or in spite of it that he understands and insists on the conditions necessary for him if he is to get the best from his mind and conscience?

What kind of an education did he have? What are his ideas of education today? Is he trying to aid youth in its struggle to

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find itself?

We will consider that next month.

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