CHAPTER II

A Country Youth and a Country College

The first days of a boy in college are generally lonely. To be sure Owen Young had a friend both in the President and in Caleb Fisher, then in his last year in the Theological Seminary. But on the campus of St. Lawrence he was farther removed from them - much farther - than he had been when he was the object of their interest in Van Hornesville.

He had his way to make but he had something in his very appearance on which to make it; a face that you looked at twice, particularly the eyes, something eager about that face, a mind behind, alive, curious, capable of enthusiasms, efforts.

Compare the picture of him in his Thirteenth year at the East Springfield Academy with that taken in his Sixteenth year when he entered St. Lawrence. The boy is now awake ready for anything, a little too sure of his scholarship. Mark Hollister's praise, Dr. Hervey's faith had given him confidence. Why should he bother with Freshman mathematics? He asked for advanced work. The professor agreed to an examination. The first question presented him:-

"Two and two equal four. And why?" He didn't know. If he could learn that in Freshman mathematics he better go along with his class.

Digital Image, 2011, The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library.

And go along he did. Ask anyone of the remaining members of the faculty at St. Lawrence in those days what kind of a student he was and they tell you dryly that, "if they had known what they had they would have paid more attention." But of this they are all sure and show you records to prove it that his work was good; probably he would have had a cum laude on graduating if such an honor had been given.

His classmates looking back tell you, "He was a good student, but not a book worm. It didn't seem necessary for him to study; he studied just hard enough to get along nicely in his classes. He apparently never tried to be Number One in anything."

There is a suspicion among some of them that Young had a theory that a college man should establish a reputation as a student during the first two years of his course so that as an upper classman he would have more time to devote to outside interests without any loss of reputation or standing. The theory was that any question of doubt in the class room would be resolved in favor of one with an established reputation as a student. An ambiguous answer, for example, might be ascribed to temporary lack of facility of expression rather than to lack of knowledge of the subject.

This theory worked perfectly on one occasion. A class in English history was reciting in the old chapel of Richardson Hall. The professor in charge who was getting a little deaf sat

Digital Image, 2011, The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library.

on the platform which was some distance from the students. Young was asked a certain question, the answer to which required quite specific information which on that occasion he did not happen to possess. This was unusual, but it was so that day. He accordingly arose and in a very low voice apologized for his inability to answer. The professor who had not heard a word of what Young had been saying said,

"Your answer is correct, Mr. Young.

If the faculty did not recognize at once what they had some of his classmates had an inkling of it. The college boarding hall was too small to accommodate all of the Freshman Class of 1890, so Owen Young found quarters with three of his classmates in the house of a Mrs. Simmons. It was not long before the class and the college were speaking of these boys, so accidently thrown together, as the "Simmons Gang." It was not long, too, before the class, college and the gang itself were admitting that the boy from Van Hornesville was its leader.

"He was modest in speech and in action to the point of repression," says one of the gang, "but gave the impression of inner power, self-possession, mental alertness, a trifle awkward physically, reserved, but at once his mates discovered that he was master of himself and his surroundings. They never had any doubt of it throughout the four years they were together."

An opportunity to show his qualities as a leader came at the start. The interest of the upper classmen of the college

Digital Image, 2011, The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library.

in Freshmen is usually centered in the kind of material they will make for the fraternities. The upper classmen at St. Lawrence seemed to have felt that the Simmons Gang was unusually good material and each of the two fraternities set out to win them.

Owen Young was in no hurry to give in. He was looking the ground over. He rather enjoyed the interest of which they were the center. One of the members recalling his attitude at this time speaks of the prudence, foresight and sense of humor with which he viewed the situation.

"One day," says this gentleman, "Young casually suggested that if the members of the Simmons Gang acted as individuals some one might loose out in the finals. We had never thought of that. With a desire to hurt no feelings, which was entirely characteristic, he pointed out that this catastrophe might be due to no fault of the individual, but merely because each fraternity might become discouraged, thinking that the other had the inside tract. To be sure, to be sure, well what could we do about it? Well, said Young, collectively we constitute one fifth of a whole class membership and can as a group scarcely be ignored if we hang together. Furthermore, said he, with just a gleam of a twinkle in his eye, what a lot of fun we could safely have being entertained by both contestants while we were making up our collective minds. Thus did a future captain of industry weld a unit! The sequel is of little moment, but it may be stated that the scheme worked perfectly, and that the entire gang was

Digital Image, 2011, The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library.

gathered into the fold of Beta Theta Pi, no one accepting until he knew the others were safe."

He led his gang and soon his class. Here he won lasting gratitude by a masterly bit of cunning in saving the class's face in its Sophomore year at a moment when it found itself in a very tickelish position.

Briefly the Sophomores had undertaken to put the Freshman in their place by a hazing which made so much noise in the college that President Hervey was obliged to take notice.

"He called us together," one of the culprits has recorded, "and administered a proper rebuke. We would be let off on this occasion by an apology to the faculty, and to the members of the freshman class. 'Gentlemen,' he said, 'you must tell the class that you are sorry for what you have done.'

"There was silence for a moment and then Young arose and said, 'Doctor, it was not our wish to do anything of which the faculty disapproved; and we are willing to do anything you ask us to do; but the fact is, we are not sorry for what we have done to these freshmen. If we say we are sorry we shall have to lie about it. Still if you ask us to lie, and you say it is the proper thing to do under the circumstances, we are ready to lie.'

"The good doctor winced a little, then allowed just the trace of a smile to appear, finally withdrawing the demand for an expression of sorrow to the underclassmen."

You do not have to probe long into the Owen D. Young of today to suspect that he must have led his forces out of more than

Digital Image, 2011, The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library.

one embarrassing position by smiliar tactics.

One of Young's classmates testifys that,"Owen Young gave all the time to study which he could spare from outside activities!"

The first outside activity in which he distinguished himself was in the beginning of his Junior year, 1892. It was an exciting year politically. Young was a Democrat and Democrats were not popular in either the college or St. Lawrence County at that time. Any open expression of their views was looked on with disapproval. One of Young's associates agreed with him that something should be done about it.

"We realized," says this gentleman," that our party called, so we gathered a few rather weak minded seniors who shared our views and persuaded them to hire the town hall and preside. Then we organized a joint debate - three on a side.

"Our very effrontery brought out a huge audience. 'A good time was had by all.' The debate became history. But there was one faithful Republican, the manager of the cheese factory, who was stricken to the heart. He just couldn't understand why we hadn't been arrested as nuisances, and said so profanely. This led to some unguarded remarks on both sides in the course of which we told him that he would be sorry after election when he would have to haul down the fine large Republican campaign banner which floated over his factory. He opined that he would be eternally switched if he ever hauled

Digital Image, 2011, The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library.

it down and we were incautious enough to reply that if Cleveland won and he didn't do it, we would.

"Well, Cleveland won and the Republican banner still flew, spoiling an otherwise Democratic Heaven on earth. And so one night the banner came down. The halyards had been tied to the pole from an upper window, and it was along lean miscreant who lent his inches to another for a platform from which to reach them. The cut ropes were used to tie shut the door of our quondam enemy and the banner was carefully weighted with stones and thrown into the "Grasse" river.

"The next issue of the Canton Plaindealer contained a display "ad" to the effect that the villains were known and that if they would return the flag and apologize they would be forgiven, otherwise the law would be permitted to take its course. We were only boys and one at least had a funny feeling at the pit of his stomach. But no one peached. Each successive morn found us in our beds, and each night ended a day free from arrest and finally we came to the conclusion that while we might (justly) be suspected, we had not been seen, and were not destined (because of that particular escapade) to be branded as criminals."

He was a Junior; he had proved that he was a good student if he gave his mind to it; he had asserted his political independence; he began to see things about him in connection with the college that ought to be looked after. They were not exactly his business, but he had had the habit from boyhood of

Digital Image, 2011, The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library.

trying to straighten out a thing that offended his sense of order and propriety. There was the college monthly, The Laurentian. It had never since its beginning been an a self-supporting basis. Young knew all about it evidently, for in his Junior year we find him active in its business affairs as an Assistant Editor, later as Business Manager. His hopes and his success he voiced in an editorial which appeared in The Laurentian in April of '93. It was a clear exposition of the situation. It may be called, "Owen Young's First Financial Statement."

Here are excerpts from it:-

"The present business manager earnestly desires to carry out the financial policy adopted a few months ago, which has proved economical, and hence desirable. The scheme involves the co-operation of every friend and subscriber of the paper. It asks most of all that you deal with it on business principles, and promises in turn to give you a thorough business administration. The paper for a long time has been burdened by debt, retarding its progress and not a few times threatening its life. It is useless to explain again the original causes, or to measure out blame to individuals. Excuses have often been urged, but never were they the means of securing a dollar to help the paper out of its embarrassment. The blame has been attributed to early mis-management, but no person ever cared to aid us on that account.

Digital Image, 2011, The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library.

"The fact is that we have the debt, which in these later years has been diminished, rather than increased, showing that the paper is more than self-sustaining. But we can never hope to pay the debt from so small a margin, which should go rather toward making the paper better. For the last four months The Laurentian has been running upon a cash basis. Experience has shown that the debt is dangerous as well as burdensome, and has shown as clearly that the paper itself cannot pay this debt. The responsibility belongs to every one interested in the paper and in the college. This is the plan we propose. Are there not twenty alumni who will each subscribe Four Dollars which will pay the debt? Half of that number have promised to do this already, and are there not ten more? It will never be easier to pay this debt than now. Will not that spirit which makes this the most prosperous year for St. Lawrence, aid us as well? When the June number is issued can it not contain the twenty names, and the welcome announcement, "out of debt?"

It did!

The achievement made Owen Young something more than a good student, a generally liked and trusted college mate. By one stroke he had become the leading financier of college affairs.

To those who knew how the boy had been handling his private finances this was no news. As a matter of fact his financial ability had been already well demonstrated by the successful way in which he had handled his little income. As I

Digital Image, 2011, The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library.

have already pointed out his father was turning over to him something like Two Hundred and Fifty Dollars a year. It was for him to manage it. I have before me the little account book he kept the first year he was in college. It cost him just Two Hundred and Sixty Seven Dollars and Ten Cents and that included everything - tuition, board, laundry, classroom, books, vacation trips to and from Van Hornesville and Seventy Five Cents for a necktie.

By the time The Laurentian was on a paying basis Young was committed to another enterprise - one which had no trace of self-interest in it, that is it meant nothing he wanted for himself, but something which he wanted for the college - a gymnasium. He did not want it for himself because exercise as the gymnasium taught it, games, sport, interested him only as an onlooker. He had a natural disinclination to physical exertion and still has.

"He won't pick up his own hat if it blows off," a friend is said to have once commented.

He laughingly says, "As a boy on the farm I had exercise enough for a lifetime."

But he believed in a gymnasium for the students and for the college. When the agitation for one began he was one of the first to join in it and one of the most practical in driving it ahead.

But there was opposition from the Board, the faculty and some of the alumni and one objection urged was that a gymnasium was

Digital Image, 2011, The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library.

an extravagance for so poor an institution.

"There seems to be an idea, far too prevalent," Young wrote in The Laurentian under the heading, Progress and Parley, "that in proportion as one interest is promoted another must be neglected. It needs only to be mentioned to be apparent that all this rests on the assumption that one interest in college life is antagonistic to every other; which, of course, is false. Because subscriptions are made to the gymnasium it does not follow that the library must go without books or that The Laurentian must go in debt. A man's college life is far too elastic and expansive a force to be all bottled up in scientific formulae or expended in grubbing out Greek and Latin roots. Athletics may teach you to curve a ball, and mathematics teach the nature of the curve, without ever coming into antagonism.

"We need a gymnasium, primarily that physical culture may be advanced to a place in college life commensurate with the importance of health and sound bodily development, and secondarily that our students may meet with those of others colleges on the athletic field, and in this way create a stronger undergraduate interest here. This is what will make all students loyal alumni."

The college got its gymnasium and to this day they tell you on the campus that it was Owen Young who led in the movement which finally gave college athletics at St. Lawrence the very creditable place they hold today.

His interest was characteristic. He liked to see those about him getting what they wanted - liked to see them happy.

Digital Image, 2011, The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library.

detested their loneliness + dissatisfactions.

"Tell me what you remember of Owen Young in college." I once asked a distinguished judge of the North Country, a Freshman when Young was a Junior.

"I will tell you the incident I best remember + the one which I believe gives the clue to his character. I had just come to Canton. I knew nobody. I was shy and homesick. I sat on the ground watching a ball game and wondering if anybody would ever speak to me. I felt a hand on my shoulder and somebody said, 'Do you like baseball? Do you play?' It was a junior. Upper classmen didn't speak to Freshmen at St. Lawrence, at least so I supposed, but this was a junior, one everybody knew, Owen Young, talking to me! My pride in the incident broke my homesickness, gave me the courage to stay on, get acquainted. It is the greatest thing I know about Owen Young."

It is easy to believe on this showing that the young man stood high among his fellow students, became the accepted leader in the college. The faculty itself recognized this and the humorous and understanding Dr. Charles Kelsey Gaines, a member of the faculty then, as he is now, will tell you with a chuckle that he soon found that if he wanted to persuade the students to do anything it was well first to have Owen on his side.

Digital Image, 2011, The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library.

While all of this was going on Owen Young was piling up at St. Lawrence much that was to be of value in the profession on which he had decided - the law. In at least one course the college offered he received a training and a practice which was admirably suited for a young lawyer - that was the course given at St. Lawrence in Parliamentary Law.

As parliamentary law was ordinarily handled in colleges at that time I doubt if he would have gotten much out of it but under the stimulating and practical treatment given it by the professor in charge, Dr. Charles Kelsey Gaines, Owen Young did get much for his future work. Dr. Gaines was a resourceful teacher. His specialty was English but as Dr. Hervey once observed it was "not a chair but a settee" in which a professor sat in St. Lawrence in those days. When parliamentary law came Dr. Gaines way he set his wits to work on a plan which would vitalize the thing for his pupils.

The course extended through two semesters. The first Dr. Gaines gave to the study of the text; in the second he organized what was known as the Sophomore Assembly, the class being turned into a parliament over which he presided. This parliament elected officers and divided itself into two parties - the one in power and the opposition. A bill was then prepared and introduced by Dr. Gaines.

Digital Image, 2011, The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library.

"Cliff"

Young and his classmate, Spurr, took particularly lively interest in this assembly, seizing every opportunity to test the rules and practices. A time came when they both objected to a ruling of Dr. Gaines himself. Now the constitution allowed in such a situation the formation of a faculty committee to which the objectors could appeal. But the young men were a little doubtful about this - Dr. Gaines might be displeased. They had both liking and admiration for him so they decided not to exercise their constitutional right until they had found out how he would take it. Going to him they told him that they did not like his ruling and they would like to have a faculty committee appointed to pass on it.

"Of course that is your right," Dr. Gaines told them. "Go ahead."

And so a committee was selected. "Of course," said Dr. Gaines when he talks of the episode, "the committee knew very little about parliamentary law. It was not hard for the boys to convince them that I had been wrong and they over-ruled me and probably enjoyed doing it."

The decision was a tall feather in the caps of Young and Spurr and an unquestioned stimulus to the assembly itself.

Dr. Gaines believes that this course did much to develop Owen Young's natural inititive, his willingness to accept responsibility and that it served him well later when he was at

Digital Image, 2011, The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library.

the bar; that is, in this case he was getting a bit of what one may rightfully call professional or vocational training.

A genuine and practical contribution to his legal education was made indirectly in the four years that he was in college by the interest he took in the work of the county court held in Canton - the county seat of St. Lawrence County. In Young's time a group of rather remarkable men, lawyers and judges, handled the court, making it an admirable object lesson for the legal-minded. No sessions were missed by Young and his college mates who had the law as an objective.

In his four years in Canton Owen Young heard some of the leading lawyers of the state, followed two or three exciting murder cases, listened to wrangles over property; learned probably more than he had ever dreamed or than he could digest of human weakness and meanness, and he learned, too, not a little of the humanity that goes with the administration of the law when men are wise. He still tells of the impressions made upon him by the method a judge took to soften a harsh sentence that he had felt obliged to give. Laws in St. Lawrence County were strict against gambling and the Judge had fined a guilty culprit One Hundred Dollars for breaking the gambling law - One Hundred Dollars, and the man hadn't a cent. It meant a term in jail.

But that night, so the young man learned, the Judge called together a group of the lawyers in Canton with whom he was accustomed to playing poker and said,

Digital Image, 2011, The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library.

he was going to assess each of them Ten Dollars and pay the fine. The Judge and the lawyers evidently felt the injustice of punishing one they called, "a poor devil" for doing something which they were nightly doing in safety. There was an obligation when it was possible to soften the punishment which the law you administer requires you to give. A lesson - good for the law - and for industryt

But he was also learning how mercy may modify the administration of the law from another officer of St. Lawrence County, Erastus Backus, the sheriff. This sheriff had proved to be more than once a friend in need to Owen Young and a teacher as well. I have heard him called by old timers in Canton - "Owen Young's godfather." In the judgment of Erastus Backus, every man should have another chance no matter what he had done. "Give him to me Judge," he would say. "I'll be responsible. Ill make a man of him." And it is believed he often did, though there are those who say that more prisoners escaped from jail while he was in office than ever before or since. He could not believe that there were men who could not be trusted.

Apparently Erastus Backus was one of the first of our probation officers. His unusual attitude towards human beings was by no means lost on the open-minded young student from Van Hornesville.

He learned much, too, in the hours spent in the country courthouse, from watching the Chairman of the Board of Supervisors - Ebenezer Chapser. Mr. Chapser had his own way of listening to

Digital Image, 2011, The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library.

evidence. It was a leisurely way which deeply appealed to Owen Young. He never interrupted, rarely asked a question, was apparently asleep, but when the evidence was in he at once gave a digest and summing up which rarely left anything to be added.

"As a way of handling evidence it interested me tremendously," Mr. Young once told a friend. "Chapser had trained his mind to concentrate for the time being on the evidence alone. He did not allow himself to be diverted by irrelevant matters. He sifted and compared as the evidence developed and when it was all in he had his digest. Trained to concentrate, to judge as he went along, he never had to go back to pick up threads dropped by inattention or by outside interruption."

"That," his associates tell you, "is Owen D. Young in action today."

It was in June of 1894 that Owen Young graduated from St. Lawrence. The college oration with which he ended his course shows how his mind was working, something of his attitude towards life and things which was his at nineteen. All that we have of that oration is in The Laurentian's report of the Commencement Exercises of that year:-

"Mr. Young chose for his subject:-Morals in the Evolution of Political Science. The distrust and antagonism

Digital Image, 2011, The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library.

between governments and peoples suggest the need of some central force to bind them together. The moral law must be put into our politics; right must be substituted for narrow and selfish principles; fairness and open-mindedness for senseless partisan abuse. When Michael Angelo was asked to criticise the drawing of a fellow artist he took the chalk and drew a far more perfect form saying, 'I criticise by creation, not by finding fault.' What a lesson the church, literature, and art are teaching, the lesson our politics must learn, criticism by creation, not by finding fault. I should prefer to discard utilitarianism in poltical philosophy. The state is more than a more utilitarian machine for the protection of life and property; it is a moral organization founded on the eternal principles of right, to establish justice as the end for which it was created. No social theory can cure our disease. Socialism, free-trade, or prohibition cannot change the psychological peculiarity of these men whose intellects can persuade their conscience of anything; nor can it change an appeal from ignorance and prejudice to moral education and sound reason. The moral education and thorough culture of this Nineteenth Century should demand character in the men who administer political principles for practical results."

This rather abbreviated report can be explained. The rounding-up of his college life - the preparation for

Digital Image, 2011, The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library.

Commencement, had so engrossed him that he had failed to commit his oration as well as he should have done. He was only fairly launched when he hesitated - he had forgotten - but he proceeded. Listeners thought it a rhetorical pause - all but one - Dr. Gaines who had rehearsed him. He came up to congratulate him:-

"An excellent extemporaneous speech mr. Young - excellent!"

St. Lawrence did much for Owen Young. He had entered a shy boy - though / he did not show it - had learned to be at ease with all the varying grades of the college society; to discuss with his elders; to speak easily on his feet; to organize campaigns and to take the responsibility of their leadership, that is, he had learned without realizing it altogether to do what he had seen the lawyers and clients and witnesses doing at Cooperstown that warm day in May 1887, and he had found that he could do all this with the zest and pleasure which had so attracted him that day.

He had become an excellent strategist - learned to judge his own forces and to deploy them to advantage - to watch for openings and to lose no time in filling them. He had been given possibly his first notions that this is an old, old world; that it has come to be what it is today by a slow and costly evolution; / He had begun to realize something of his own rich inheritance of

Digital Image, 2011, The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library.

ideas, methods, experiences; to see that his business was to build on these and that there was plenty of building to do.

More than all this his naturally reverant attitude towards life - an attitude nourished in the little Universalist Church at Van Hornesville - had been broadened and deepened at St. Lawrence.

It was a liberal doctrine - that of Universalists - freed from over-much creed ceremonies and fanaticism. It taught love of God and of man and counselled both discipline and moderation - a good creed for a young man of Owen Young's ways of viewing things. It gave him few superstitions to unlearn and it left him at liberty to take his fellow man as he found him - to be slow to condemn.

A recollection which should not be over-looked is that of a Canton friend who knew him when he first came to college and has followed him closely since, Williston Manley of the St. Lawrence Plaindealer:-

"A slow moving young fellow, six feet and more of physical and a million feet and possibly more, of mental up and downness. Physically he was thin, mentally he was not thin but broad. His height was capped by a fascinating smile that never came off and the corners of his eyes were garbed with a perpetual crinkle and the orbits themselves with a perpetual twinkle. He moved slowly and walked loosely, as though there was always plenty of time to get to the place he was going, but even if he started

Digital Image, 2011, The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library.

late he always got there a little ahead of time. Even when he appeared to be standing still he was going ahead, and when he sat still and just smiled while others were waving their arms and talking, he was always getting somewhere, for before the others had arrived he would just say a few words and there you had it, the whole thing, all thought out and presented with a smile that took in the entire bunch, the whole thing, carefully thought out and arranged, a mature conclusion from an elongated kid, a conclusion all buttoned up and in a few minutes it would always have the approval of all the "arguefiers!"

"Not so much different between the boy I knew and the man as I see him now," Williston Manley tells you.

Ask this boy not yet quite twenty years old the questions which he today believes a college graduate should be able to answer if he is to be ready for present day demands. Here are the questions as Mr. Young put them to the St. Lawrence graduating class of 1931:-

"Have you," he asked the young people, "enlarged your knowledge of obligations, and increased your capacity to perform them?

"Have you developed your intuitions and made more sensitive your emotions?

"Have you discovered your mental aptitudes?

"Have you learned enough about the machinery of society

Digital Image, 2011, The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library.

and its history to enable you to apply your gifts effectively?

"Have you acquired adequate skill in communication with others?"

Would he in 1894 have understood his questions of 1931? There is evidence he would have known what you were talking about - evidence that already he was respecting his intuitions, feeling the pull of obligations, seeking for clear expression and as for his emotions they have always been strong-alive-if entirely in hand. The seeds of these remarkable questions were at least sprouting in the Owen Young of 1894.

And now for the next step - the law school. He had already decided that it should be in Boston. There were two reasons for this, sound human reasons. The first was that by this time the most important thing in his world was being at least within calling distance of Miss Josephine Sheldon Edmonds of Southbridge, Massachusetts, who through the influence of Dr. Hervey, an old friend of her family, had entered the freshman class of St. Lawrence.

Owen Young was not slow to note the young woman from Massachusetts, even though she was a Freshman and he a Sophomore.

"I hadn't intended to take any interest in the Class of 1895," he once said at a college banquet where everybody was reminiscing, "but I found I had to after discovering the merits of it" - the merits apparently being Miss Josephine Edmonds.

She was a beautiful and brilliant girl and brought honor to the college by her scholarship as well as her character. Long

Digital Image, 2011, The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library.

after Josephine Edmonds left St. Lawrence Dr. Charles Gaines of the Greek Department could pay no higher compliment to a student than to say, "Your work is almost as good as that of Josephine Edmonds."

She was more than a book worm. The Laurentian in 1896 under the title, "A Plea for Culture" published a sensible and well written paper in which Miss Edmonds argued that it was part of the duty of a student to acquaint himself with the things of the present.

"This is harder," Miss Edmonds remarked, "in our small college, away from the centres of culture; but it can be done. If we cannot hear the finest music; if we are unable to see noted paintings and to hear the men renowned in science and in art, we can at least know about them, so that when we do at length hear and see for ourselves, we shall be ready to appreciate with the full advantages of trained knowledge.

"All these should be a part of our education, of which our college training is but the beginning. In itself our college education is but narrow; its broadness lies in the possibilities it opens up before us."

Now Miss Edmonds had decided to take her senior year at Radcliffe College and Radcliffe College is in Cambridge, Massachusetts, not quite so easy to reach in 1894 as today but even then only a suburb of the city of Boston.

His friends, Dr. Hervey and Caleb Fisher, both New

Digital Image, 2011, The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library.

England men, wanted him to have the experience of Eastern contacts. Caleb Fisher was particularly insistent. He had kept up his friendship with the boy - was well placed to do it, for he had taken a church at Herkimer on graduating from the Theological Seminary and one of the places that he most frequently visited was Mother Young's in Van Hornesville.

"He used to come to the farm in vacations," Mother Young would say, "suddenly without any warning. A message would be sent up from the village store, from the only telephone in the neighborhood, to the effect that Caleb Fisher was at Fort Plain, and either Owen or his father would have to hitch up and go over after him. As like as not he would bring five or six other people with him. He was a big, hearty man who spoke of preaching as "hitting it up."

Now Caleb Fisher was as generous as he was hearty and informal and in the summer of 1893 he invited the boy to spend the vacation with him in New England at his expense - a wonderful experience. Never before had he been farther away from home than Albany. Now for the first time he saw a great city, went to Maine where Caleb Fisher was to fill a pulpit.

"We went down by boat," Mr. Young says reminiscing. "I remember how sick I was. We stayed a week there and had a wonderful time; people were very good to us; we were invited out to dinner, supper, taken on trips and picnics. Then we came back to Boston and saw more sights and then I remember I went over to Southbridge to see Mrs. Young and spent a night there. You can believe that when I came back to Van Hornesville I had a great deal to tell the folks."

Of course that visit clinched it. He would study law in Boston.

Digital Image, 2011, The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library.