

*A*  
*History*  
*of*  
SPRINGSIDE  
SCHOOL

1879 — 1954



I want to thank everyone for the help, interest, and encouragement they gave me in putting together this "History." First I want to thank Mr. Henry Paul, Mr. "Billy" Whittem, and Mr. Frank Stone for the information they gave me of early Chestnut Hill and the first days of Springside. Without them I never would have had a start.

Then I want to thank all those who wrote letters. Without them I could not have continued.

ELIZABETH MOORHEAD 1881

ELIZABETH COCKRAN 1883

KATE KELSEY 1893

JANIE BOULEWARE LAMB 1909

DOROTHY DISSTON NALLE 1910

POLLY POST BREWSTER 1911

EMILY DICKEY JOHNSON 1911

MARGIE TYLER PAUL 1918

DICKEY DIXON MOHR 1920

CAROLINE BOURNONVILLE 1924

SOPHY DISSTON FREED 1933

JANE KENWORTHY 1934

MARY JANE HAWLEY SWAIN 1934

BINNY SCHWARTZ KAMPMANN 1938

MARY COX MUIR 1941

HELEN SCHOFIELD LUKACS 1943

MARY ANN PFINGST STULB 1950

MISS GERTRUDE ELCOCK

MISS ELIZABETH M. CAMPBELL

MISS MARION A. CORWIN

MRS. WILLIAM EARLE SANDMEYER

MISS ELEANOR E. POTTER

We are indebted to Joanna Logan, Register, '49, for the attractive line drawings.

I thank you one and all.

*Jessie Williamson Disston, 1911*

# *A History* *of* SPRINGSIDE SCHOOL

*1879 — 1954*

With love and gratitude we dedicate this History of Springside School to all the members of our Faculty, both past and present, in the certain knowledge that they are and have been the essential strength that has nurtured our School, its ideals and traditions, and brought us flourishing to our 75th Anniversary.





Springside School in 1885

## *"Look Backward and Forward and Keep the Faith"*

*"The future is the special province of the young, of you and your companions throughout the land!  
Schooled in the lessons of the past, unaffrighted by the present, you look ahead with confidence."*

DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER.

The character of an individual begins to take shape almost from birth. After passing the Biblical three-score and ten, one can truly say, "I am a part of all that I have met." Just as a person's character largely determines his destiny, so to a marked degree is it true that the long range value of a human institution depends on the basic ideals of its beginnings, its adjustment to change, its expanding usefulness, and its devotion to its finest traditions.

In 1954 Springside has been celebrating its 75th anniversary. To understand and fully appreciate its individual character and unique place in the Chestnut Hill community, it is important to gain the perspective of the past. These annals hope to recapture some of the colorful flavor of the days "when we were very young," to give some vignettes of people who have been instrumental in creating Springside's peculiar charm, and to emphasize the ever broadening scope of its activities.

Jessie Williamson Disston has most generously given her time and energy to compile this Springside history. She assembled, read, and arranged most of this material from records, memoirs, letters, sketches,



covering the years 1879-1954. As this work is therefore in a sense of multiple authorship, no serious attempt could be made to unify the style nor to balance the relative importance of events of a picturesque past, now known to few, with those too close to us in time to have an air of permanence.

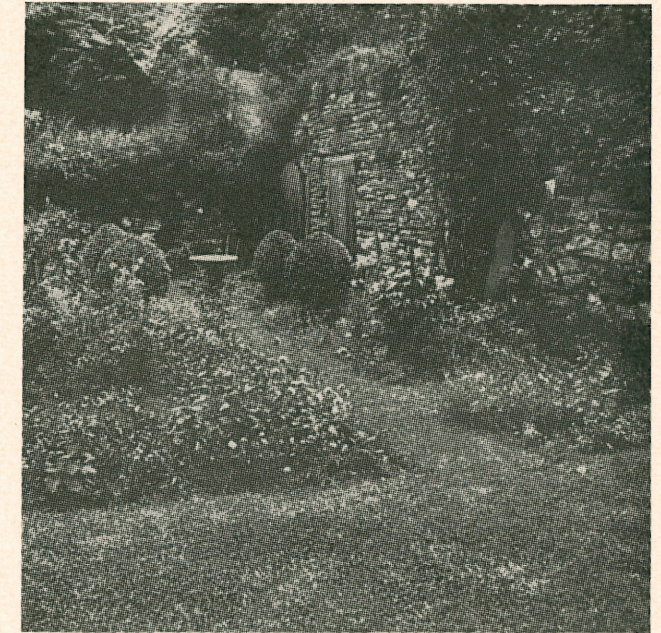
In the three quarters of a century of its existence, many changes have naturally taken place in Springside, in the community, and above all, in the world about us! In the last two decades of the 19th century, the United States had almost recovered from the ravages and prejudices of the War Between the States. By 1900, with startling suddenness, we became a world power and took on the staggering responsibilities of a Caribbean and Pacific empire. In the first half of this century we have engaged in two (some would say, three) global conflicts and shared in the aftermaths of each, which continue to affect, in varying degree, all the inhabitants of this terrestrial ball.

Whatever changes have come over the years in curriculum, in the improvement of the physical plant, whatever even the powerful impact on us of the political, economic, and social revolution still in progress, the Alumnae of Springside **keep the faith** that the basic importance of molding character will still endure.

In contrast to the benevolent supervision and relative security of a homelike atmosphere which Springside girls enjoyed in yesteryears, graduates of today expect to take their places in a complex, admittedly dangerous, but challenging atomic age — an age in which there are manifold opportunities for active service to mankind. To justify **our faith** in Springside's destiny, let us review our beginnings, summarize the evidences of our growth, and so resolve that by 1979 we shall look back with even greater pride over a Century of Progress.

## *We Recall Country Life in Chestnut Hill*

To appreciate Springside in its early days, one should know a little of Chestnut Hill as it was then and the background of its founders. Rural life was still present in Chestnut Hill. Where now a variety of stores, trolley, and railroad stations have loomed up, there were then mere large tracts of spacious rolling farmland, with giant chestnut trees in every field. Most of the area consisted of large farms or country homes, for in those days Chestnut Hill was known as a summer resort. During the summer months, wealthy Philadelphians would leave the heat of the city for the placidity and coolness of country life in Chestnut Hill. The land where our school now stands was originally part of a farm belonging to Justus Donat, whose property took in most of the surrounding country. The main occupation of his farm was raising cows, which could be seen peacefully grazing in sloping pastures up to Bethlehem Pike, with its toll gate at Township Line. The spring from which our school gets its name was the source of a stream which flowed through the farm and



The Springhouse



collected in a pond further down the hill. A spring-house, which is still standing today, was built over it. Here, in the dripping coolness, Justus Donat kept his meats, butter, milk, and cream.

Justus Donat sold his farm by splitting it into several lots and selling it to various individuals. As the years went by and the community grew, the property became filled with privately owned homes and small stores. On the corner of Bethlehem Pike, Harkinson, a confectioner, established a store. Next door was a barber shop which became quite well known on account of a new hair tonic that was used by one and all. This "sage" hair was concocted by the barber himself, Conrad Grebe. Next came Mr. William Whitem's pharmacy. Mr. Whitem's son, Billy, was, by long odds, the most popular person in Chestnut Hill. He persuaded his father to install a soda fountain! The plumber for the community, John Gunser, who lived next door, was called in for all emergencies — pipes or otherwise! The rest of the block, stretching to Norwood Avenue, was purchased by two Southern ladies, Miss Jane Bell and her sister Mrs. Comegys, who were moving their recently founded school, which one alumna wrote, "consisted of two houses

still standing between Prospect Avenue and the Reading Railroad on the south side of Summit. It was connected by a walkway between the first stories for the convenience and better protection of the 'young ladies'."

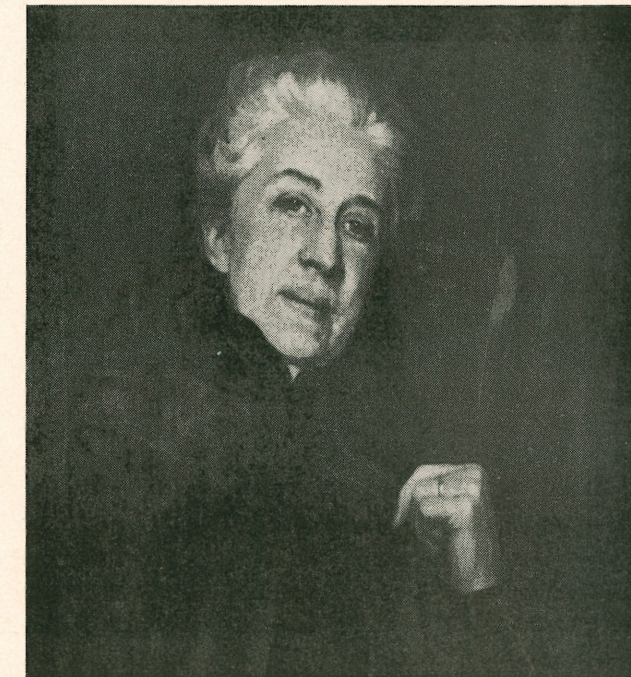


## Miss Bell and Mrs. Comegys

Miss Jane Bell and Mrs. Anna Lorraine Bell Comegys were daughters of John Bell of Tennessee. Mr. Bell, a statesman, was born near Nashville in 1797. After graduating from Cumberland College in 1814, he practiced law until 1827, when he was elected to Congress; he then became Secretary of War in President Harrison's Cabinet. In May, 1860, he was nominated for President by the Constitutional Union Party and was defeated by Abraham Lincoln.

Mr. Bell's two daughters were born in Knoxville, Tennessee, and were brought up in the luxury and graciousness of the South of those days. As most of their savings were lost when the Confederacy collapsed, Miss Bell came North, after the war, to join her sister. Miss Bell and Mrs. Comegys were of entirely different personality and appearance; their only likeness was their deep and sincere devotion to the South.

Miss Bell, the elder, was a tall, striking woman, with a strong face and a well chiseled head, with a



Miss Bell



proud lift to it. Her stately appearance carried an air of ominous calm. She talked very little; she possessed a gracious manner, great self-control, and a keen insight into the character of her pupils. She was a strict but a very just disciplinarian. The students stood in awe of, but highly respected and loved their dignified principal. In describing her they write: "She was remarkable for her sympathetic understanding. We went to her freely with all our little troubles, and she never failed in interest and kindness."

Mrs. Comegys was the widow of Walter Douglas Comegys. In her early married days Mrs. Comegys and her husband had occupied the house on Montgomery Avenue in Chestnut Hill which in 1954 is the home of Mr. Edward Hopkinson. After her husband's death Mrs. Comegys declined the invitation of her father-in-law, Judge Comegys of Delaware, to live with him. She preferred "to wear out rather than to rust out." The school was the result of her ambition. This venture took courage, as many Chestnut Hill men had fought in the war, and bitterness was general. Expressions such as "whipped-in Southerners,"

"Rebels," "Traitors," "Copperheads" were common. Miss Bell and Mrs. Comegys, however, went ahead.

Mrs. Comegys was handsome, charming, with a place of her own in society. She was a prodigious conversationalist. She had a beautiful voice and would occasionally give concerts in "Christian Hall," now the Public Library. In writing of Mrs. Comegys all the girls spoke of her wonderful voice and her humor. One girl wrote: "I well remember how I used to linger outside her sitting-room door, when she was at the piano, listening to her sing operatic arias. Her wit kept us alive." Another wrote: "She had a wonderful voice and a keen sense of humor. I recall that the neighborhood boys (who were gentlemen, but not above flirting with our girls) used to stand under the windows and throw kisses to us. Mrs. Comegys, one evening, took a place by the window when the boys appeared and returned their kisses and invited them to come in for the dance that evening. Finding out their mistake, the boys fled." She seemed to understand the girls' opinions and feelings and was always persuading her sister to be more lenient.

## *We Start as a Finishing School*

In the late 19th century, schools for girls did not as yet concentrate on what is now regarded as an education. They were known as "finishing schools," for the girls were merely given an education needed for them to "be ladies and make good, obedient wives." Their studies were chiefly: history, English, French, painting, sewing, and, of course, Latin and "Social Etiquette." Springside followed the general standards of the day. The school was then called "Mrs. Comegys' and Miss Bell's English and French Boarding and Day School for Girls." There were no set number of grades; after certain work had been accomplished, Mrs. Comegys and Miss Bell considered you "finished." It was quite customary for the day scholars whose families wintered in the "city" and summered on the "Hill" to be enrolled in Springside for the first two and the last two months of the school year, and to attend a city school in the interim. Thus the families felt free to come to the Hill before the first real heat and to return to the city before the first cold of the winter.

On the wall, facing you as you came in the front door, hung an inked bristol board with the words: "Her voice was ever soft, gentle, and low, an excellent thing in a woman." This met all comers and was fully impressed on the young ladies during their school years. School opened at 8 A.M. in the southeast corner room. Recitations were preceded by the entrance of Mrs. Comegys in rustling black silk, carrying a lorgnette. With a smiling salutation she greeted the girls at the desks, and then came five minutes of prayer. The teachers were chiefly from New England. Miss Emma Lunt taught Latin; Miss Stickney, mathematics. A shy middle-aged woman, Miss Mary Witham, taught grammar. Popular Miss Piper had the children's room. The French teacher, Sophia Dorian, a Parisian, presided in the impressive "French Room," which had glass paneled doors. Later on in France she was stoned as a Dreyfusard, and dogs were set upon her as she trudged from village to village begging clemency for the unfortunate Jewish Army Officer, Alfred Dreyfus. The corner front school room



had in its center a table of eight desks, each one covered with green oil cloth and each with its high-backed, low-seated chair. There were also the less honored varnished yellow desks and chairs along each side of the room. This retreat served for advanced study. Here Mrs. Comegys taught American history, conducted question and answer fashion; here literary interpretation was taught by her slender well-bred niece, Mary Yeatman; and here, on Fridays, came a red-bearded young lawyer, Henry Pancoast, who taught "English Literature." His helpful textbooks on the subject, published later by Henry Holt, were used in the school for years. Fräü Hennig was the German teacher; Miss Gaylord expounded Maury's Physical Geography and botany; and tiny Miss Sidney Jones taught penmanship in the "Queen Victoria" style. Still others were Miss Cunningham, who instructed us about the starry heavens, and Miss Leonard and Mr. Himmelsbach, both of whom taught piano. Upstairs, over the front school rooms, Minton Pyne, a sarcastic Englishman with a beautiful voice, gave singing lessons; and in the attic study, a young southern Impressionist, Hugh Breckenridge, taught painting.

You may surmise these early pupils were not always so prim and well behaved as Mrs. Comegys desired. They, too, had their pillow fights.

At times, the warning bell at the Reading Railroad Station (the one that rang three minutes before train time) would ring at odd times, or maybe the bell at St. Paul's Church would peal mysteriously.

One boarder of the nineties, describing their Sundays, said: "Every Sunday, five minutes before service time, the doors of St. Paul's Church would open, and the boarders, with chaperone, would march primly down the aisle. They would file one after the other very respectfully into the five or six pews that belonged to the school.

After church, back to dinner, then our afternoon walk, two by two, with teacher following. Later, afternoon tea with Mrs. Comegys and Miss Bell (which was the highlight of the day), a light supper, and to bed. We were allowed no studying, no sewing; we could write letters home or read, provided the book had been approved by the teacher on duty."



"There was no uniform then, but all the girls were dressed somewhat alike in ankle length skirts, tight corsets, starched 'shirt waists' with high collars and leg-of-mutton sleeves, small sailor hats, and high buttoned shoes. You could judge a girl's age by her hair. It was either in a large pompadour with knot atop her head or in long flowing curls."



The rules for deportment were strict. The following will give you some idea of the times:

#### Regulations

In the morning each girl is required to dress herself appropriately and neatly. Her hair must be combed simply and smoothly. Should she fail in this, she will be sent back to her room after breakfast to dress herself properly. She must give a full half hour to careful dressing and putting her room to rights. Whoever fails in these conditions must report tardy (at morning roll call).

Girls must not leave their rooms, except for good reasons, after 9:15. Neither must they ever visit during the periods for dressing. If these regulations are not heeded, they must report visiting out-of-hours.

When girls are dressing the doors must be closed. Every room has a screen, so that each girl can be required to be as modest as she is in her own home.

In school, no thin muslin waists can be worn in the cold weather. After cold weather begins, high shoes, or low shoes with gaiters, must be worn.

A fine will be imposed upon all those who break the rules.

No newspapers or magazines are allowed in the rooms.

#### Exercise

Morning walks 10 minutes

Recess 10 minutes

Afternoon walk One hour

The morning mail can only be claimed after a ten minute walk.

Claiming the mail is the evidence that the agreement has been kept.

In bad weather, coats and hats are put on and a five minute tramp taken on the long porch. The porch is reached by the gymnasium door and the porch steps.

At recess hats and coats are put on in the upper hall. Five minutes for lunch in the locker room. Ten minutes for exercise in the open air.

The afternoon walk must be conducted according to the agreement solemnly entered upon.

In bad weather, without question, everyone must go to the gymnasium for a half hour to dance, or if this is occupied, a walk of twenty minutes on the long porch is required.

#### Agreement

1. The privilege of walking alone has been given provided the girls are willing to regard certain restrictions.
2. Are you willing to promise not to go out of bounds?
3. Not to go to the station?
4. Not to buy anything?
5. Not to go to the shops?
6. Not to visit in the walking hours?
7. Are you willing to behave as every lady should on the street?
8. Will you use your influence to have the walk so conducted that it will be an honor to the school and a tribute to the character of the girls at Springside?

Please sign here.....

If you feel that you cannot promise to keep these regulations, please sign your name below, and arrangements will be made for you to take your exercise with a chaperone.





Lucia Polk Chapman



Caroline Susan Jones

## *Mrs. Chapman and Miss Jones*

At the turn of the century the school was bought by Mrs. Lucia Polk Chapman and her niece, Miss Caroline Susan Jones. For a year it was known as "Mrs. Chapman and Miss Jones' School." During that year Miss Jones made a garden by the entrance to the springhouse. Because of the beauty of the garden and the uniqueness of the spring, Mrs. Chapman named the school "Springside." And Springside it has remained since.

In many ways Mrs. Chapman and "Miss Susie" were similar to their predecessors. They were both southern ladies with a deep love for the South. Their family fortunes were ruined by the War Between the States. They, too, were quite different in personality and temperament.

The biography of Mrs. Chapman's father, Leonidas Polk, a cousin of President Polk, is fascinating reading for its intimate picture of a southern family of distinction and its vivid account of the War Between the States. Mr. Polk graduated from West Point in 1827.

Later he resigned from the Army to become the first missionary bishop of the Southwest, then Bishop of Louisiana. When war came, he returned to the Army on the Confederate side with the rank of Lt. General. He knew Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson intimately. He was killed at the Battle of Pine Mountain, Georgia, in 1864. Anyone who has read this biography of the "Fighting Bishop" (the name history gives him) will understand that Lucia Polk Chapman had a goodly heritage.

Mrs. Chapman was short in stature but held herself beautifully; her eyes were dark and snappy; her hair, when she started teaching, was already white; her skin was lovely. She was dainty in clothes, as well as manner, but firm and definite in all her dealings. One girl describes her: "Standing out, of course, was Mrs. Chapman. As a boarder, and a young one, I had much more to do with her than with Miss Jones, who took the scholastic end, Mrs. Chapman being more the house-mother to the boarders. Though stern, Mrs.



Chapman was a wonderful person, always fair and a rock of dependence. Her desk, at the end of the second floor hall, was a place to which one was glad to go on one's own with problems. I remember thinking that Mrs. Chapman's dresses were quaint and old-fashioned. She was Czar of the whole place, even of Miss Jones (in my opinion)." Mrs. Chapman especially loved the children in the Junior school. After the present building was obtained, she used to go down daily to enjoy the children. She would stroke the hair back from one child's face, fasten another's frock, open a desk to praise or gently chide. "Well! Where have you been?" asked one of the kindergarten boys after she had been ill. His teacher quickly apologized. "Don't," said Mrs. Chapman. "It makes me happy to know that he missed me."

Mrs. Chapman was extremely interested in everyone — fair, downright in her opinions, and a wonderful sport. All who knew her loved her. Despite a slight lameness, and the loss of an eye in a tragic Hallowe'en accident, she never referred to a disability nor to the adversities suffered by her family as a result of the War Between the States. Naturally the

conventions of Mrs. Chapman's youth (which had been very gay) had changed when she came to Chestnut Hill. She once told the boarders that if anyone saw her sitting in her parlor with her knees crossed, that person would receive a box of candy. The prize was never won! If a girl was guilty of a faux pas, Mrs. Chapman could lift an eyebrow most effectively, but she never brought up any misdemeanor or mistake after the initial rebuke. When anyone, girl or teacher, was ill, she was gentleness itself.

Caroline Susan Jones, the daughter of Joseph and Caroline Davis Jones, was born in New Orleans. She was tall and slender; she held herself erect and with poise. She had reddish hair and was a striking-looking woman. One boarder writes: "Miss Jones was very sweet and gentle. I imagine the older girls, whose studies were behind, didn't fare too well with her. But to me she was just a sweet, very mild person." Another girl says: "I remember my love for the teachers, especially for Miss Jones. She seemed able, by her wisdom, to draw forth that better nature. Miss Jones was always a true gentlewoman, graceful, poised, and soft-voiced."

## *The Curriculum Grows and Frivolity Holds Its Own*

To keep abreast of the times Springside's curriculum was gradually expanded and academic standing had more importance. The class of 1910 was the first to receive diplomas. To qualify, one had to pass a certain number of subjects, Latin being required. The girls who passed the required number of subjects, substituting some other study for Latin, received a certificate. Class Day of that era was something unbelievable. "Dressed in white mull ankle-length dresses (they did not have to be alike), with a corsage of yellow daisies and blue cornflowers tied with the school colors and pinned at the waist, wearing white shoes and stockings, we marched in to 'that awful funeral march.' Very prim and proper, up the aisle we went between rows of the parents and the students. We marched up to the stage, in front of which had been placed a black, coffin-like box. We seated ourselves between the stage and coffin, had our past, present, and future read, and the valedictory given. Then with due solemnity we marched around the coffin and threw our 'copybooks' into it. We were not

allowed to use our textbooks, and we could not burn even our copybooks — that was wasteful! Then standing in back of the coffin, facing the parents, we sang the class song, followed by 'Auld Lang Syne' and 'God Be With You 'til We Meet Again.' While singing these last two, we firmly clasped each other's hands. This was followed by tea in the parlor for the graduating class and the class parents. Graduation itself was not made much of. The parents were not allowed to come. The whole school would assemble in the three first floor classrooms, A, B, & C, which opened into each other by large sliding doors. Miss Jones would read the year's average of the girls who had been promoted and those on the honor roll. Mrs. Chapman then awarded the prizes that had been won, and home we went." By 1915 the Class Day had been altered somewhat. The costumes had changed to "white shirtwaists" with high boned collars and white skirts, still with white shoes and white stockings. One 1915 graduate speaks of "the orgy of weeping just before we entered the gym! But we made up for that





Senior Class Play: 1919

later when, with fiendish glee, we burned our books in a huge bonfire in the drive outside the gym. I wonder if the coffin was used to start the first bonfire."

There was a play given each year by the graduating class. One year a French play was presented under the direction of Mlle. Audi; the following year an English one, under Miss Moses, who generally gave Shakespeare, but sometimes such plays as "She Stoops to Conquer" and the "Rivals."

The bakery on the corner of Bethlehem Pike had changed from Harkinson's to Stewart McNaughton's. The plunkets (sponge cake full of raisins), the big gooey cinnamon buns, hot from the oven, and the large dishes of ice cream for a nickel are things that are well imprinted on the minds of the girls of that day. Also the two Miss McNaughtons, who dispensed these goodies, are well remembered for their sweetness and for "covering up for us." "As we were not supposed to go to the bakery without special permission, if Mrs. Chapman or some other teacher came into the store while we were there, Miss Marion

would hustle us out the back door, keeping the said teacher in conversation until we were safely out of sight." All the pupils, especially the boarders, were up to plenty of pranks. "Spreads" took place surreptitiously at midnight when corridor teachers were enjoying a night's repose. As boarders' footsteps were efficiently muffled in the top coverlet from the bed, poor Mrs. Chapman wondered why her coverlets wore out so fast. Some adventurous, but foolhardy, souls once crawled from window to window on the third floor (along the outside ledge) to visit in other rooms. One boarder speaks of the "tea" with the teachers, another of the birthday parties they had for members of the basket ball and tennis teams. "Basket ball and tennis were the only athletics we had in those days. We had championship teams in spite of the big, full skirt-like bloomers that we wore for basket ball and the long skirts that we wore for tennis. To play on these teams you were given a written invitation; also invitations were issued to the various plays. These invitations had to be answered formally to Mrs. Chapman and had to be rewritten if not in correct form."



## *Regulations Are Tempered but Still Abound*

"Springside," writes one, "was a very homelike boarding school; one did not feel it was too strict. There were rules about lights out, etc., and not visiting after nine. We weren't punished so much as appealed to in a very reasonable way to be our best selves and to set a good example for others. We were allowed visitors, including young gentlemen, on Sunday afternoons."

According to the school manual some of the other regulations were:

1. No jewelry must be worn in school.
2. Simplicity in dress is required — A church dress, two short school dresses (sailor suits preferred), two simple dresses for tea, and a challis or light silk for evening wear — are all that is needed. A girl may not have more than six white shirtwaists and three flannel or two silk waists.
3. No magazines, newspapers, boxes of candy, nor any kind of eatables can be received except on the occasion of a pupil's birthday, when she may receive a basket of fruit.
4. Each girl should be provided with overshoes, artics, a golf cape or coat, a warm tam, umbrella, pin cushion, and two laundry bags. For her room she cannot bring more than six pictures or framed photographs, three china ornaments, and one sofa cushion.
5. Light woolen, merino, or wool combinations or equivalent undergarments must be worn at least from Thanksgiving to Easter. No slippers other than low-heeled pumps may be worn in the house except for dancing classes.

## *Some Reminiscences of Beloved Teachers*

"I remember the old house now," writes one, "with wisteria growing over it. I really learned to study then and to want to study, so the teachers must have been good. There was a French dining-room where we sat at meal time, by turns, for two week stretches. Three idioms each day were written on a blackboard for us to learn by heart during breakfast, lunch, and supper. We could speak only French while at the table. It was a great treat to most to sit here with Mlle. Audi, so loved by all, and Mlle. Jacques with all her pep; but some of us left the table hungry from lack of knowledge of the right French word. Brother! Did it make you learn French! I remember getting a kick out of Mr. Pancoast because he was so old-fashioned even for our girlhood days. He hated progress in the form of the telephone, especially. Poor man, think how he would have hated today with all its more recent inventions which take one away from the books he loved so much! Among the girls he was secretly known as 'the great god Pan.' Then there was Miss Moses, who was such an important and loved part of

Springside that I can't imagine how they get along without her. I recall her awful headaches, when we all had to tip toe in her wing of the building! Again I can see her frantically marking exam papers at once after the exam to quell the steady clamor of 'What did I get?' I can see her seated at one of our desks before the bell rings, a hectic flush on her face, a splitting headache, with one of the girls lovingly massaging the back of her head and neck to relieve the congestion. I remember Miss Dorsey's history charts, written in many different colored inks — so very complicated that we often wondered if she understood them. Then there was Miss Fleming, who everyone loved but who did have such a time keeping order; Miss Boyer, and her Math; Miss Waldo and the trouble she had with us and our split infinitives; Miss Sayre had the little children, and, though very deaf, she could hear three rooms away if we were talking. How she could cope with the wee ones I never could understand, but they all adored her and she accomplished wonders with them. Miss Heath



had athletics and aesthetic dancing. Of course, I think we all enjoyed (though many didn't admit it) the aesthetic dancing. The most popular of these dances were 'Maid of the Mist' and 'The Spanish Dance.' The dancing was done in clinging robes in the gym, though sometimes in the hot weather we danced on the tennis courts. To this day every time I hear certain strains of music, a picture comes to my mind of the Springside gym with Miss Watmough patiently playing the piano and waiting while Miss Heath, of the glorious red hair and infectious giggle, made up our minds for us to settle down and dance. Each Spring we would climax the struggle between teacher and girls by a dance exhibition for the parents.

During this era, as soon as school closed there was great hurrying and scurrying, with house cleaning to get ready for the "summer guests." Mrs. Chapman and Miss Jones took advantage of the big house and many bedrooms to make a home for young bachelors who wanted to get out of the heat of the city and for husbands whose families had deserted them and gone farther afield for the hot months.



## *Packed Like Sardines, We Live Through a War*

"In 1916," one teacher writes, "the Junior and Senior Schools were still housed in the building on Norwood Avenue. There were twenty-five boarders (chiefly southerners) and eight teachers that 'lived in.' Though everyone was packed in like the proverbial sardines, the atmosphere was one of informality and indefinable charm. There was the 'little dining-room,' where boarders took turns sitting at the 'French table.' For want of space, there were study halls in the big dining-room." Miss Jones taught Art, had conferences in every available nook or cranny, presided at prayers in the evening, and planned the schedules, with the able assistance of Miss Ellis, for at that time there was no secretary and no office! Mlle. Audi wrote all the bills for Miss Jones. Miss "Susie" was especially interested in planning weekends for the boarders, whether it was the theatre with ice cream at Sauters' or just an evening's frolic at school. The Staff at that time consisted of Mlle. Audi, Mlle. Jacques, Miss Moses, Miss Corwin, Miss Fleming, Miss Heath, Mlle. Gaugot, Fräulein Tietz, Miss

Ellis, Miss Elcock, Mrs. Chapman's two nieces, Miss Laura and Miss Frances Jones and Miss Reeve. Speaking of Miss Reeve, one girl relates that some mentally keen, but too bold, souls tried to break down Miss Reeve's dignity in Math class by shooting off water pistols at a given signal. They reported that it was a "flop." Miss Corwin tells that one Ancient History class group spent the weekend making crowns and costumes, then mounted a soap box in turns and impersonated Hammurabi, Cleopatra, Helen of Troy, etc., greatly to her enjoyment. She was cheered that something had sunk in. Then there was Mrs. Murray, a bonny Scot, who was housekeeper and Mother to the girls. The boarders knew how to get snacks from her at all hours. The teachers loved "bats" with her in town, when they took in a double movie and had supper on stools in the Penn Station. Here Mrs. Murray often remarked cheerfully — "It's drafty. A body feels it among her legs." One girl remarks, "Mrs. Murray, a darling old lady with white hair, had her desk at the second story hall. She was available for



complaints, disappointments, cut fingers, troubles of any kind — a lovely person.” This year (1916) hockey was added to the afternoon activities. A dramatic club was started for those in the four upper classes who had talent and wanted more dramatics, in addition to the Senior play. Also a glee club was started “which wasn’t taken very seriously — one took it to get out of some other class. We satisfied our egos with a concert at the end of the year, attended by long suffering parents.”

In 1917 the United States was at war with Germany. The world and everyone in it were in a turmoil. Mrs. Chapman and Miss Jones were like rocks in a boiling sea. Their one idea was to keep life at school on an even keel so that the children would not feel the chaos. By the end of the year there were a great many of the Alumnae doing war work of some kind — Red Cross, volunteer hospital work and in the Army. Mary Kelsey (1896) resigned as President of the Alumnae, to leave for Europe to help nurse children in the war

torn districts. Miss Ellis took a year off to serve the Red Cross in France.

In the fall of 1917 the school received a wonderful gift! In November Delphine Dodge Baker ('17) had electricity installed throughout the school! Mrs. Chapman then proudly announced, “We are one of the few schools to have electric lights. We must remember never to light a light unnecessarily and always to turn it off when we are not using it. Electricity is expensive.”

In 1917 also self-government was started. It consisted of a Board elected by the girls, but to be eligible for nomination, one had to have a B average in her lessons. The President had to be a Senior. The first President was Margie Tyler (1918) who later as Mrs. Samuel Paul was to become Headmistress.

Some of the girls spoke of the infirmary. This was a small house off the gymnasium end of the building, entirely separated from the school. This house was destined to serve many purposes.



“Self-government teaches us to have trust in human nature, which creates happiness — unity in any community.” Year Book: 1919



## *The Birth of the Junior School and Other Beginnings*

The school was growing by leaps and bounds. The building on Norwood Avenue was fast becoming overcrowded. In June of 1918 Wissahickon Heights School, run by Miss Landstreet, closed its doors at the end of the school term. During the summer Mrs. Chapman carried on negotiations so that in the fall of 1918 Springside opened with a Junior and a Senior school. The kindergarten and first six grades were housed in the old Wissahickon School building at St. Martins, and the higher six grades occupied the building on Norwood Avenue. Mlle. Jacques was put in charge of French at the Junior School; Miss Sayre supervised the lower four grades; while Miss Elcock had the top two grades.

The first year book came out in June, 1919. The first May Day was celebrated with Polly King Miller (Class of 1925) as the first May Queen. In 1920 there were two more innovations. The fourth grade in Junior school gave a Christmas Nativity play which was beautifully done. A battery taken from Mrs. Dallam's car solved the problem of lighting the star.

The play was received with such enthusiasm that it has become traditional with the fourth grade; and each year old and young have looked forward to it as one of the bright spots on the Christmas calendar. The second innovation was song night at Senior school which has become a delightful tradition. There was another change in class day. Now the girls wore identical white dresses with tannish stockings and white shoes. Instead of corsages pinned to their belts, they had lovely sprays which they carried on their arms, still made up, however, of yellow daisies and corn-flowers. After their class day exercises in the gym, instead of burning their books immediately, the girls dispersed for supper. As darkness came, the classes from the sixth grade up gathered on the tennis courts, each class fortified with songs to sing to the Senior class, and the Senior class with a song to sing to each class in turn. The fire now had been moved from the drive outside the gym on to the tennis court. After the songfest the Seniors circled a fire and here burned their books. How very different from the coffin days!



"Of course this building was not grand like the Senior School. It had no electric lights. It had old-fashioned roller towels and beside the old-fashioned water cooler was a tray with agate cups."



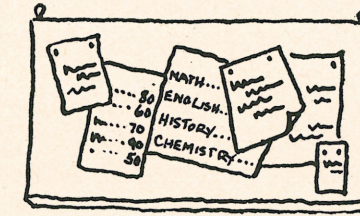
## *We Become a Day School*

At the end of 1921 the school had a great loss — Miss Jones died. Everyone in school missed her guiding hand. Feeling the great weight of the ever growing school on her shoulders, Mrs. Chapman sent out a notice that after February, 1921, there would be no more boarders. Arrangements were made for the boarders who wanted to finish the year to live with various families on the Hill. The loss of boarders left its mark on the girls. They had no more companions from the deep South — no one to jump up and run to the window exclaiming over the first snow fall and her first sight of snow. Some of the teachers still “lived in.” It was Mrs. Chapman’s home, and she was proud of it, so a family atmosphere still prevailed. She impressed this on the girls and expected them to behave accordingly. “I remember,” one girl reminisces, “being in the hall when Mrs. Chapman was coming down the stairs. She stopped in mid stair with a shocked look on her face. I really thought she was ill. ‘Caroline, ring the bell,’ she said, ‘and call a general assembly. I want everyone in the gymnasium at once!’ When

the school had gathered, she stood on the stage and gave a lecture on behavior in other people’s homes. She had found a piece of chewing gum on the banisters. When she finally let us leave for our classes, we each felt personally responsible not to let it happen again.”

After Miss Jones’ death Mrs. Chapman turned more and more to Miss Ellis, who, with her understanding and ability, took some of the worries from Mrs. Chapman. The studies were also changing at this time. The grades nine through twelve were known as first, second, third, and fourth years and were divided, each grade, into “College” and “General” sections. Not many girls went to college in those days, but quite a few took the college preparatory course. The general course replaced some Latin and Math with History of Art, typing, etc. The marking system was A, B, C, and D. If you had an A average in a course, you were exempt from the examination in that subject. Exam marks were posted on the bulletin board out-

side the gym on the morning after the examination. “In those days there was an Honor Roll that we all strove to be on,” writes one girl. “At the end of each monthly report period, in the morning assembly, with all faculty present, our average marks would be read aloud from the stage by Mrs. Chapman.



“Now, too, the Senior class had a ‘baby day.’ This meant we wore short skirts, socks, let our long beautiful tresses hang to our waists and usually adorned them with a large hair ribbon. We went through all our classes, lunched, and had regular athletics thus clad.”

In June 1924 the Song Night ceremonies became more elaborate. The eighth grade crowned the Seniors with crowns of white daisies.





## *We Acquire More Freedom and Build a Gymnasium*

With the departure of the boarders there was no longer a need for an infirmary. The "little house" became the home of Miss Frances Jones, later Mrs. Hall. The Senior school hours were from 8:45 until 1:00, the Junior school getting out at 12:00. The Senior school had sports and extra activities in the afternoon which were not compulsory. There were no afternoon activities at the Junior school until the mid twenties. Writes one girl: "We all went to one another's houses continually for lunch. Girls who lived at a distance would often eat lunch at Streeper's or Francelee's Bakery on the corner. But one could go home to lunch; thus there was plenty of time for riding, private music lessons and practice, going to the Orchestra, etc. Compared with the daily round of a school girl today, our lives were blissfully unregimented. At the beginning of each year Mrs. Chapman would give a little talk in assembly on the importance of Spring-siders conducting themselves in a refined and dignified manner in public places. We never knew how

she managed it, but any breach of good taste seemed always to become known immediately! Then we had another lecture on the importance of being ladylike. In general, I think the girls took these talks to heart and had a concern that their actions should not reflect on the school. There were no uniforms, of course, the only restrictions as to costume being **no** high heels or jangling bracelets and **no** lipstick. Infringements, which were not many, were effectively dealt with by the Self-Government Board."

By 1925 the need for a larger gymnasium became evident. Due to the school's growth, the large gym classes were so pinched for room that it was scarcely possible to have a whole class at one time. A larger stage was needed. Because of playing more and more outside schools in basketball, the need for a regulation court was paramount. By the fall of 1925, with Mrs. Chapman's planning and help from the Alumnae, we had a beautiful new gym!!

By now the attire for athletics had changed. We wore medium blue tunics, with white blouses and yellow sashes, and long black stockings with black sneakers. We were dismissed from the playing field if our tunics were not regulation length. This attire was quite an innovation but so much easier to play games in!



1910



1925



## *We Celebrate the "Sesqui"*

In 1926 Philadelphia celebrated the Sesqui-Centennial by a large World's Fair. This gave stimulus to the Junior school, which decided to put on a Sesqui-Centennial of its own. The results were amazing and rewarding. Each class had its own project revolving around that class' studies and depicting various phases in the progress of the United States from colonial days on. The children modeled replicas of famous houses and places — Mount Vernon, Valley Forge, an Indian village, the site of new Amsterdam, to mention a few. The group studying transportation made cardboard models of ships from the time of Leif the Lucky and Columbus to the modern steamer. They had covered wagons, the Pony Express, surreys, victorias, even the automobile. They grew tray after tray of bird seed for wheat ranches and tied bundles together to represent corn shocks. They had cotton fields and orange groves for the South and apple orchards for the Northwest. They studied American music and dancing and put on a pageant in costumes, made by the children with the help of the parents.

"Hanging in their gallery," wrote a Philadelphia newspaper, "are hand drawings of William Penn, Chestnut Street in 1858, the old State House. Their doll exhibit will almost rival the present one at the Sesqui, for their Mothers have lent heirlooms for their exhibit. In the antique corner is a ring belonging to Martha Washington, old books (one containing the signatures of Lincoln, his cabinet and Congress), old china and fans, guns and swords and dueling pistols. Their Indian exhibit is a piece of the old West transported. The Exhibition is attracting the attention of parents and teachers throughout Philadelphia." Mrs. J. Willis Martin, chairman of the Philadelphia Sesqui-Centennial, said, "The spirit shown by these children in their modeling collection and drawings should be an inspiration to all who are working for the success of the Sesqui." Because it was such a success it lasted a week instead of one day. The children organized a "Bureau of Information" and had guides to show and explain all the things to visitors.



"Their Indian Exhibit is a piece of the Old West."



## *The Junior School Grows and Other Activities Expand*

As both schools continued to grow, Mrs. Chapman found that she needed someone in charge continually at Junior school. In the Fall of 1927 she appointed Miss Gertrude Elcock Head of the school. In the Spring of 1928 the sixth grade presented the Junior school with a "beautiful much larger stage," which was a most needed and welcome gift. In 1929 the Junior school gave an historical pageant for the Senior school. It was presented on the stage in the Senior school gym, each class dramatizing a period in history. At this time by popular demand of the parents, the Junior school was served lunch. It was served, but with difficulty, on trestle tables in the gym. The food was cooked on a two-burner stove. However, the Junior school was soon to come into its own. By 1930 more room was needed and a large addition was added to the building. In the basement of this wing they had a full fledged, modern cafeteria! And with more class rooms, the classes were divided, making more workable groups. Miss Campbell's Nature Walks were a much enjoyed feature of the



"A full fledged cafeteria"

Junior school. Miss Campbell, herself, is dearly loved by two generations of alumnae.

In 1930 the Alumnae were also blossoming forth in plays, giving one a year. The Alumnae were very enthusiastic about the idea and were grand on the night of the performance but were very poor about the grind of rehearsing, so these plays were eventually given up.

The Dramatic Club was getting more active and presented two plays yearly. Admission was free as the expenses of the club were defrayed by an allowance given by the school, augmented by dues collected from the club members. The president read and chose the plays, being heavily influenced by the cost of the royalty to Samuel French and by the concern to have as large a cast as possible. A Faculty advisor "okayed" the selection, but the coaching was left entirely to the poor president, who usually had a part in the play herself.

Now the Self-Government was being taken more

seriously. One girl says, "The Board was tremendously looked up to and respected. Not a few girls who were called before it burst into tears, from sheer nervousness, as soon as they entered the meeting. If a girl was called before the Board three times, she had to return for afternoon study hall." One alumna writes: "The Honor System has been in force through all the years. It impressed me most at Springside. It gave each girl a sense of responsibility, something to live up to."

By now there were a few changes in the faculty. Mrs. Murray had been replaced by Mrs. Cubberly. Other newcomers were: Miss MacDougal, Latin; Miss Weston, science; Miss Bellas, eighth grade; Miss Robins, math; Miss Kinnard, math; Miss Conger in the Library; Miss Perkins, athletics; Mrs. Capolino, Art; Miss King, English and History of Art; Miss Moses, Mlle. Audi, Miss Heath, Miss Corwin, Miss Campbell, Miss Elcock, and Mlle. Gaugot were still with us. Miss Fleming was installed as secretary.



## *We Become a Corporation*

In the spring of 1928 the school was flourishing, but Mrs. Chapman was failing. The work and worry of the school were beginning to tell. Miss Ellis had been taking more and more responsibility. In May a group of outstanding business men met to discuss the future of the school. They approached Mrs. Chapman with the proposition of forming a Board of Trustees under Mrs. Chapman, Mrs. Chapman to have full management and final decision in everything, the Board to act in an advisory capacity and take some of the financial burden off her shoulders. On the advice of her nephew, Mr. Frank L. Polk, of New York, Mrs. Chapman turned this proposal down but requested that if anything happened to her, a board should be formed at once. She definitely liked the idea. A few days after Christmas 1930, Mrs. Chapman passed away. She was mourned by all who knew her. She was truly loved and respected, and she had been a constant inspiration to all who were fortunate enough to be under her. Immediately upon Mrs. Chapman's death,

Mr. Polk got in touch with Mr. Hamilton Disston to start the machinery of forming a Board of Trustees to take over the school. By mid-January, under the Chairmanship of Mr. Edward Hopkinson, the Board had been formed, the school incorporated, and Miss Ellis formally instated as Head Mistress. Miss Elcock remained in charge of the Junior school. The original Board consisted of seven men and five women: Mr. Hamilton Disston, Mr. Joseph Brown, Mr. Edward Hopkinson, Mr. Charles Day, Mr. Findlay Downs, Mr. William Kurtz, Mr. Frank Polk, Mrs. Marshall Scull ('98), Mrs. Francis McIlhenny, Miss Gertrude Woodward ('27), Mrs. Livingston Jones, and Mrs. Hamilton Disston ('11). Mr. J. Lawrence Stone was the secretary; Mr. Disston was the first President. Subsequent Presidents have been Mr. Findlay Downs, Mr. Philip Price, Mr. Samuel Gibbon, and at present, 1954, Mr. D. Alexander Wieland. The Board during the years has been increased to twenty-five members.

## *Miss Mary French Ellis*

Miss Ellis was born in Philadelphia and was a graduate of Bryn Mawr. Her father, Henry Clay Ellis, had been in the tobacco business, with offices in Philadelphia. Miss Ellis was dignified, natural, direct, and — above all — fair. She had a vast amount of common sense and ethical standards of conduct that Springside pupils recognized and esteemed. She had a well balanced understanding of the viewpoints of pupils, parents, faculty. She skimmed about the halls taking in situations with a penetrating, but tolerant glance. Teachers were free to go their way if they knew their course. Any pupil who had a tête-a-tête in her office knew what it was all about and made a mental note to that effect. Miss Ellis was more given to chuckling than scolding, as her funny bone was very prominent in her straight, svelte anatomy. She could always see an amusing side to any situation. Springside was very lucky to be in her hands at this time. As the girls talk of her, they say, "We loved her for her kindness, her courage, her nobility, and above all, for her fairness; and we miss her."





## *The Depression Arrives, but We Advance Academically*

It was not only a definite transition period for the school, but as the crash of 1929 had come, all private schools were feeling the results of the depression. During this difficult time private schools were skating on very thin ice, as all will remember who had anything to do with schools at that time. Public schools were overcrowded; they had a hard time coping with the sudden influx of children. And, of course, it was the reverse for private schools. Many people just could not afford to send their children. Miss Ellis and the Trustees bit in and held on. It was very hard going for a couple of years, but with the loyal support and cooperation that all the Faculty gave Miss Ellis the school survived those difficult times. Miss Elcock was a tower of strength. She was also much admired and respected by the girls, one of whom has written: "She was always very kind and fair. She expected us to be and to do our best. We tried very hard not to let her down."

By this time the "little house" had become a

cafeteria! One could still go home for lunch but those that lived at a distance readily turned to the cafeteria.

In spite of the hard times the school was advancing academically. A 1934 graduate writes: "The classes of the preparatory group were very stimulating. We went along at a great clip and did well in the College Boards. If you had a B average, you only had to take two exams at the end of the third year and two at the end of the fourth. That we were better prepared for college than lots of girls who went to other schools is attested to by the fact that at Wellesley I was exempt from Freshman English after the first six weeks and allowed to join a Sophomore class; placed in a Junior French class after being given a placement test; and given special permission to take a course in economics not ordinarily open to Freshmen. Other Springsiders had this same experience at other colleges."

Faculty members still with us at this time were Miss Bellas, Miss Weston, Miss Thornton, Miss Mac-

Dougal, Mlle. Audi, and Mlle. Pechin. Miss Corwin was also still with us. Of her one girl writes: "Miss Corwin was one teacher who tried in every way to help me. I never hesitated to turn to her. She treated you like an adult, and, probably most important, we all respected and liked her."

Of Miss Weston the girls say: "Her classes were very stimulating. She had a good sense of humor."

## *We Become an Accredited School and Acquire a P.T.C.*

To meet growing college requirements it was necessary to have the school accredited with the "Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools." When the application was made, it was found that though our scholastic standing was high, our school-hours were not enough to meet state requirements. To rectify this, in the fall of 1934 Springside became an all-day school. Thus, in the Fall of 1934 Springside also became accredited.

Miss Campbell, Mrs. Lennon, and Mlle. Finemain were still with us at the Junior School. "Mrs. Lennon," writes an alumna, "was our favorite teacher. We had her for both first and second grades and were thrilled when she was 'promoted'."

Caroline Bournonville had been assistant to Miss Fleming since 1927. One of the girls writes: "Carrie was always ready to help in any way; her sincerity and untiring efforts won everyone."

In the Spring of 1934 the Junior school made quite a pageant of May Day. They took us back to Medieval Days, presenting a May Day of that period. They had old English traditional songs and dances, roving minstrels, court jesters, tumbling acts, knights-in-armor and ladies-in-waiting, and, of course, the May Queen and May Pole dance.

During the thirties the Junior school had two "mis-haps" (as a teacher mildly puts it). First, the school



caught fire! Very fortunately it was on a Saturday when there were no children in the building. It started in a closet in the gymnasium and was detected before the damage was too great, but the episode will long be remembered by those responsible for the school. Second, (this will long be remembered not only by Springsiders, but by everyone living in that locality) the gas main on Willow Grove Avenue blew up, doing great damage to all the houses in that vicinity. The explosion broke every window in our beautiful new wing of the Junior school. This also had its fortunate side in that it happened before school hours, so that no one was hurt by flying glass.

In the winter of 1932-1933, to bring the teachers and parents closer together, there were get-together teas given each month for the mothers and the teachers. These teas developed, in 1934, into the Parent-Teachers' Council. And, since then, this organization has grown into a large hard working unit of the school.

By the early thirties the extra activities had in-

creased. Besides basket ball, hockey and tennis, there were now baseball, golf, a walking club and a camera club, and by 1935, lacrosse.

In the spring of 1935 the Board of Trustees received quite a jolt — Miss Ellis resigned! In spite of the Board's protests she was adamant. Miss Ellis was deeply interested in the school and keenly aware of improvements that could be made, but in her independent, self-effacing way, she was convinced that it was best for her to retire. When she made a decision she was as granite as the hills of Vermont to which she later went to spend 15 contented, busy years. The Trustees then turned to Mrs. Samuel H. Paul, who consented to take the position of Head Mistress if Miss Ellis would stay on for two years as advisor. This Miss Ellis consented to do, providing she was given the job of teaching and not the title of advisor. Her feeling was that she would be there when needed, but, as she put it, "not in the way." So in the fall of 1935, Springside started a new era in the capable hands of Margaret Tyler Paul ('18).

## Mrs. Samuel H. Paul



Mrs. Paul was born in Chestnut Hill, Philadelphia. She was the daughter of Dr. Corydon C. Tyler, a much loved Presbyterian minister who devoted himself to his Chestnut Hill parish for forty years. Mrs. Paul, a graduate of Bryn Mawr College, had been Director of the Philadelphia School of Occupational Therapy before she came to Springside. She had an intimate knowledge of a community in which she was born and bred and of a school in which she had prepared for college. Her ease of self-expression, quick perception, flow of nervous energy, and charm of manner contributed greatly to getting things done. One alumna writes of her: "When Mrs. Paul, on quick-tapping feet, breezed into a room, she sparkled in a way that brightened everyone and everything about her! Dull statistics bounced with excitement when Mrs. Paul wove them into her little talks, and all of us felt her magic, as with shining blue eyes and lilting voice, she unfolded her plans and hopes for the School. Because of her effort (and who would have had the heart to tell her you wanted to take the 'General' course, when she was so eager for you to be in the 'College' section!?) the trend toward further education started, and before Mrs. Paul retired, about 90 percent of the Seniors were college bound. She had a genius for enlivening meetings, for creating wonderful schedules, and for soothing fiery dispositions. Without being a Pollyanna or a preacher, she was at all times a gentlewoman, endearing herself to hundreds of Springsiders."



## *We Have a French Fair, Uniforms, and a 60th Birthday*

While Springside by now was on a firmer basis, all schools were still feeling the depression. And as the world worked its way back to an even keel, all schools worked back to normal. By 1940 the school again needed extra class rooms.

In the spring of 1936 the Junior school gave a French fair. They had a Punch and Judy Show, a merry-go-round, sang French songs and danced French dances, everyone in costume. The children spoke French while selling candy, cake, and articles they had made. It was quite an undertaking and went off beautifully. "I am sure the children learned a great deal of French, and I know the mothers were duly impressed." Lively Mlle. Finemain, with her enthusiasm and gaiety, ensured the success of this venture.

One girl writes: "In the fall of 1936 the school acquired a schedule clock. With this the bells rang automatically, which was a life saver to Carrie who

previously had had to run downstairs each period to ring the bell." "And the picnic," writes another, "given to the sixth grade by the Seniors, was such fun; and there was the thrill of the midget teams and really playing outside games. The speeches that the girls had to give in front of Assembly—they were horrible! Also being a Senior and having to take my turn conducting Assembly! Miss Corwin and the way she made history so interesting (for me anyway)—all these things stand out so vividly in my mind when I think of Springside. And how proud I was when in both my Junior and Seniors years the basket ball team was undefeated!" Another girl writes: "I remember Mlle. Pechin and how she impressed upon us the verbs that take 'etre' instead of 'avoir'."

In 1936 uniforms were required for the Senior school, which consisted of a navy blue woolen skirt with a blue or yellow regulation blouse, a yellow or navy sweater or schoolblazer for winter; for summer, a blue or yellow regulation poplin dress.

By 1939 Mrs. Bohlen had taken the place of Mrs. Cubberly. New faculty members were: Mrs. Racey, Latin; Miss Sterquelle, 7th grade; Miss Krick, English; Miss Johnston and Miss Vare, athletics; Miss Sewell, music. Mrs. Porterfield had come as secretary in place of Miss Fleming. She was assisted by Nitsy Brown, a Springside alumna whose jolly presence enlivened many a dull moment.

In 1939 Springside had its sixtieth birthday party. The celebration began with a luncheon in the gym at the Junior school. We then went to the Senior school where Mrs. Hall unveiled a portrait of Mrs. Chapman, painted for us by Joseph Capolino, who donated his services. The Alumnae gave the materials. This was followed by a mother-daughter Alumnae dinner in the Senior gym.



During dinner we were entertained by a teacher-mother-pupil pageant of the sixty years of Springside. It was remarkably done and kept us in a gale of laughter, comparing the past with the present.



## *More of Us Go to College, and Faculty Must Live Out*

By 1939 more girls were going to college. In June fourteen girls took College Boards, entering Bryn Mawr, Vassar, Smith, Wellesley, Holyoke, Swarthmore, and the University of Pennsylvania that fall. The school lost Miss Elcock as Head of the Junior school, and Miss Elizabeth Balmer replaced her in the fall of 1939.

In the autumn of 1940 the Senior School needed more classrooms, so the resident teachers started "living out." Their third floor bedrooms were converted into a large, airy study hall and three classrooms. In the winter of 1943-44 the school had a drive for a teachers' pension fund under the able leadership of Mr. Eric McCouch. With the backing of the Alumnae and parents, the fund was an accomplished

fact by June — a really remarkable achievement for which Mr. McCouch deserves great credit.

In 1944 Mrs. Mary Prentice took the place of Miss Balmer as Head of the Junior School. While at this time our Senior School was full to overflowing, the enrollment at the Junior School was small because of the low birth rate during the depression. During the next ten years of prosperity the enrollment grew from 80 to 210 children. Mrs. Prentice has taken this almost three-fold increase very efficiently in her stride and has still managed to be a personal friend and wise counselor to each and every Junior Springsider.

In the spring of 1945 Mrs. Paul resigned giving the Trustees a year to fill her place. Miss Eleanor Potter came to be her assistant and in 1946 became Head Mistress.

## *Miss Eleanor E. Potter*



Miss Potter was born in Omaha, Nebraska. Her father, Mr. Elbert Leland Potter, became so intensely interested in social problems (he worked overseas with the Y.M.C.A. during World War I) that he sold his printing business and devoted the rest of his life to social work, retiring only recently as Chief Probation Officer of the Juvenile Court. Miss Potter's mother, long a prominent Omaha civic leader, eventually became Head of the South Omaha Branch of the Family Service. Miss Potter, a graduate of Nebraska and Columbia Universities, had taught in Tower Hill School in Wilmington and in Francis Parker School in Chicago before coming to Springside. She is an enthusiast and is vitally interested in the community, constantly putting into practice her social philosophy. Of pioneer stock, she is a hearty, wholesome, spontaneous, outgoing person, tireless in meeting the varied demands made upon her.

An alumna writes: "Miss Potter brought with her a refreshing midwestern friendliness. Her enthusiasm and interest in the community soon brought her friends and admirers. How she manages to remember the name of the camp a seventh grader's little brother attends is incredible. But the fact that she does has endeared her to many. Her vim and vigor are matched by her patience and sensitivity. All who know her respect her intelligent appraisal and wise decisions in personal relations as well as in school policies. Her loyalty and devotion to Springside are unsurpassed."



## *We Remodel and Acquire "8008"*

As in the past, Senior Springside has kept on expanding physically and academically to meet the varied demands of the times. In 1949 the "little house" (originally an infirmary for the boarders, then Mrs. Hall's residence, next our first cafeteria) was made into a home for the janitor. The basement of the Senior School was remodeled to provide for a convenient attractive cafeteria; the library was moved to the 3rd floor to make room downstairs for the offices; and the gymnasium received a new floor. The curriculum has been steadily broadened and many students participate actively in community projects. The music department has grown and improved to such an extent that in March, 1953, the Glee Club sang with the Philadelphia Orchestra.

In 1949 Springside started having two or three exchange students brought over yearly by the American Field Service — an experience that has greatly enriched the life of our school. To date students have come from the following countries: Finland, Sweden,

Norway, Belgium, France, Austria, Germany, and Denmark. The girls have been very enthusiastic about American school life, especially extra-curricular activities, informal relations between students and faculty, and self-government — all of which are unusual in European schools. A number of Springside girls have gone to Europe during the summers to live with families over there and, in several cases, to visit the foreign students we have so much enjoyed having in Springside families.

In recent years it became apparent that the Junior School building was inadequate to house the increasing number of children. An "Overall Planning Committee" was formed, consisting of the chairmen of all Board committees, to consider the problems of Junior School expansion. As a result all the rooms are attractively decorated in cheerful colors, bright with modern indirect lighting. The kindergarten room has beautiful murals of Mother Goose rhymes illustrated by Mrs. Lloyd Van Sciver. Eventually an architect

was employed to remodel "8008" when that dwelling was purchased in 1952 to provide new classrooms and an art studio. The Overall Planning Committee also

authorized an increase in our transportation system so we now have one large yellow bus and three station wagons.

## *We Merge with Miss Zara's School*

The addition of "8008" to the Seminole Avenue facilities increased the capacities of the Junior School and resulted in an expansion of our sixth grade from an average of twenty students to forty. Simultaneously, it became evident that the increased scholastic program inaugurated by the faculty was taxing the facilities of the Senior School building. Greater opportunities were provided in music; more courses were added in science; the program of dramatics was expanded. All of these improvements required additional classroom, laboratory, and auditorium space.

Consequently, the Admissions Committee, by the spring of 1953, found that it was no longer possible automatically to admit the graduates of Miss Zara's School to our seventh grade. On being informed of this necessary decision the Board of Miss Zara's School decided to explore the possibility of a merger of their

school with Springside. After professional advice had been obtained from the School of Education of the University of Pennsylvania and independent studies had been made by committees of both Boards, a basic plan was finally agreed upon which resulted in the legal merger of the Miss Zara School Corporation into the Springside School Corporation in July of 1954. Beginning in September, 1955, when the complete physical merger will have taken place, the pre-school and grades 1, 2, and 3 will be housed at Moreland Avenue, grades 4 through 7 at Seminole Avenue, and grades 8 through 12 at Chestnut Avenue.

This brief description of the merger does not attempt to cover the hours of devoted endeavor generously given by Board, Administrative, and Faculty members of both schools. To them the entire community expresses its gratitude.



## *We Have Great Hopes for the Future*

Now on our 75th Anniversary our dream is of a new school—all of Springside under one roof. To bring our dream nearer to reality, Dr. and Mrs. Henry P. Brown have given us the most wonderful 75th birthday present imaginable—twenty-six acres of beautiful land in the heart of Chestnut Hill! We are sure that the same spirit of loyalty and devotion to

Springside that permeates the pages of this history will raise our “dream school” on these lovely acres. We are equally sure that Springside’s ideals and traditions will continue to develop women who will grow, like Emerson’s banian of the forest, “yielding shade and fruit to wide neighborhoods” of mankind.

