

Lettie Hollister 1909 Commencement Speech
A Twining MI school
Transcribed by Sandra Miller
Contributed by Sandra Miller

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This is apparently a speech my grandmother gave at her high school commencement in 1909. It was in Twining, Michigan, Arenac Co. Transcribed from the original document, which is crumbling, and in my possession, Sandra Miller. My mother Grace nee McIntyre Buyers gave this paper to me, daughter of Lettie nee Hollister and Hugh McIntyre.

1909 Commencement Speech

As the summer vacation drew to a close and the old school bell tolled once more for the commencing of a year of hard work blended with pain and pleasure, we find only one on deck to start our Senior Class of 1909 and that was Robert with his beautiful auburn locks. But knowing he found it lonely we find a new friend entering our midst whom we all recall is Nellie. We were very eager in regard to our studies when we find a tall slim brunette asking admission who we learn to look up to, for Mildred has several inches in height advantage of us. Now we have a hustling class of four and no more.

As days wore on we decided to organize our class and as only having such a small number we decided to have only President and Sec'y and Treas. Here again we look up at Mildred and elect her our leader. _____ have every reason to be satisfied. But to the other officer the verdict has not arrived for our time has been very much occupied by our faithful teacher trying to instruct us that ALL right angles are equal, and that the Pharaohs of Egypt were great men. After a time as we became more acquainted with our surroundings and feeling that we would surely find our last year in school very simple work, until one day the news was gently broken to us that we were to have a written test of ten questions on the most beloved subject of all our studies for each and everyone like to learn the tables of 10 millimeters make 1 centimeter in Physics.

As the old sayings go which has much truth that accidents must happen in the best regulated companies. So this class could not be expected to continue long on the smoothly running wheels of scholastic equilibrium. (e-kwe-lib'reum) / Everyone knows how astonished we were when we saw our brave and manly classmate Robert shyly and affectingly place his arm around his dear friend Katie while trying his mind with the mental arithmetic problems that we found so inspiring every morning.

Next we find Nellie so interested in her studies that even after school hours are over you can see her strolling toward the dear old school while the moon beams are gently shining, and she recited the long lesson never to be forgotten. Later comes our tall and stately classmate Mildred who has been struggling through her lessons and at the same

time trying to guide the feet and minds of the smaller pupils put in her charge from time to time [and] we find her a heroine for as a telephone pole was found to be short for the general welfare of the public, Mildred at once offered her assistance by holding the wires safely beyond all interference of the working world below until one of the equal height was found. And now if she is deserving a medal she certainly is a heroine.

Now as I have made you personally acquainted with our class of 1909, we will attempt to tell you of some of our struggles and tribulations. The first thing was to decide on our class colors, motto, flowers and pins but on finding a Henry Clay in our class we all entered into a compromise which ended with a glorious, promising feeling of being close friends. But now our expenses began to come before us and not way to meet them.

At this moment the important events happened in our history for we cleverly planned a supper with which the eighth graders joined in and gaining a few dollars we had a great desire to earn more. And knowing where there is a will there is a way we decided to show the public the real talent and ambition of our class. After soliciting the aid of some of our friends and much practicing, arguing and printing of handbills we appeared on the stage, one beautiful frosty December evening, in a comedy.

It would be useless to acquired universal fame, but such comedies and actors should not be confined to one production therefor our plans were to give the outside members secured the possession of a one horse slay and started for Santiago to bill the town and we did, for poor faithful Bill brought us home through a blinding snowstorm with complete failure written on every flake.

Then we all declared no more to roam thus we rested very peaceable until the thoughts of our final examinations and commencement appeared before us then who was to be who and the program until we found Robert perfectly fitted to write and give excellent expression to any oration and to Nellie who the power of looking far in the future the prophecy, to Mildred the solemn member of the class the valedictory. While the relating of the past fell to me and by the deep line of my forehead you see it has been one of hard thoughts and trying moments for there are so many things better left unsaid.

[NOTE: On another letter written by Lettie Hollister McIntyre, I was able to find the surnames of the 1909 class. Robert Esler, Mildred Townsend, (she later was to become the sister in law of Lettie Hollister McIntyre) Nellie Reynolds, Lettie Hollister. They graduated with the name of Rowland Hill on the diplomas. The teacher's name was Miss Lillian Palmer. Bill was the horse. Source: My Memories of Our Home in Arenac County, by Lettie Hollister McIntyre, written in 1974.]