

Chimook Alta.
Sept. 13 1919.

Dear Mother:-

I said I would tell you what Selden & Coral think of Mary as far as I know. The first time I heard Selden speak of her was a year or more before I became acquainted and Selden had met her on a visit of Coral to Chimook. At that time he said, "That Miss R. is certainly a model of efficiency. She is the kind of girl you ought to marry." The next time I can remember Selden's speaking of her was when he came back from Calgary a couple of years ago (after spending the winter there). He didn't know that I was interested then in Miss R. but was under the impression that Bird was. Bird every once in a while finds out that some girl is quite wonderful but never does anything about it and soon cools off. Selden said at that time he thought the two younger sisters were very homely & unattractive and the father illiterate and he didn't care to associate with them. He didn't consider the family "up to snuff." Several times he has said that he considered Mary clever and he said she was pretty last summer. I don't believe he has a very high opinion of her however. I think likely

he overestimates her cleverness rather than the contrary
 Of course Selden's & Coral's opinions are largely formed &
 suppose on Sarah. Sarah come to teach in Chinook ~~just~~ before
 the marriage. Mary's sister Florence now has Sarah's position
 and was offered the position when she already had another.
 although a close friend of Coral's ~~had~~ applied for the place. This
 girl Mrs Mitchell is a sister of High School principal. It is
 quite a tribute I think to what the school board think of Mary's
 teaching. It is impossible that Mary would be close friends with
 Coral or her sisters - for one thing her view point is so different.
 The Fowlers consider themselves aristocrats for one thing. Coral
 speaks of some people as being "impossible". She used that word
 of a niece of Mrs George (the fat lady who was always at church
 who married the young fellow who works her place. True she
 is ordinary but well meaning, but Coral wouldn't want to
 have her included in motor & camping party ~~to~~ the river. ^{within our own} Selden
 & Coral were so pleased with their first camping party &
 party of farmers whom they knew further down the river were
so different - really quite "farmers" to use Evelyn's word.
 I felt quite ashamed when several times friends of mine
 have been at the house that they must have seen that Coral
 rather looked down on them. I remember one man
 whom I introduced and he held out his hand to shake
 hands and Coral didn't see it, I don't mean on purpose
 but the cordial feeling that would have prompted her to
 notice him a little more wasn't there. A friend of Selden's
 and mine who sings in the choir a good character but slow
 and not very fancy (an Englishman) was in Calgary
 a few days when Selden spent the winter there and
 he didn't know a soul but I guess Selden didn't

3.
consider him high class enough to take up to coll on local
family. Of course city people are always more conservative
in picking their friends and less cordial to ~~mere~~^{what their} acquaintances.
Local also has the trick of laughing at people for mistakes or flaws in their characters or especially for any evidences of stupidity or lack of sophistication. Of course all these things just suit Selden. Another Fowler trait is a sort of independence so that they are not influenced by what others say and resent views different from their own. I guess the Rogers all have that too and so have I.

I didn't realize how different Coral & Mary were in their view point till I saw them together. I really felt ashamed of the fun Coral poked at different acquaintances that I had felt was perfectly admissible before. Sarah is much more this way than Coral and she doesn't have the same sympathetic attitude towards her pupils. I remember once one of Mary's pupils took a bouquet in to Sarah and Sarah reporting it said "I don't know what ~~that~~ kid (or I'm not sure but she said "But") of Knights is bringing me posies for," and then said quite a few things about the funny or bad things about the girl. Mary would have been very pleased with the flowers I think.

Sarah is just crazy about dancing while Mary practically never dances. Sarah's stock jokes are sort of almost irrelevant things or sarcastic remarks about people or sometimes jokes about fellows or kissing

or things of that sort none of which are the kind of things that would interest Mary. You can see they would not be congenial. Sarah didn't lose her place but resigned, but she nearly lost it largely through being a principal factor in having a son of a school trustee from joining a select dancing club "The Younger Set." Please don't think I'm trying to run down Sarah or Coral as they are much above the average in many respects but if you have Coral's & Selden's opinions you should see pretty how they arrive at them. Sarah's first impression of Mary was that she was "bossy" and that she claimed she knew about everything that came up in our work. Mary is quite a bluffer like Euclina but hardly bossy though she is very independent. I can only imagine ^{Sarah's} later views but I know Mrs. Rideout apparently changed from being an admirer of Mary's to the opposite. Once Coral reported to me when school convention was held at Chinook that Sarah had said that Mary (in public for teacher's benefit) had taught her class a perfect lesson, demonstrating how it should be done.

After we got the car, Selden or later Coral & Selden used to invite Mary & me ~~to~~ occasionally to join them in some trip or for instance to a Chatagua at Youngstown. Practically always these invitations did not include Ruth who was at that time living with Mary so that as much as possible I didn't try to go out with them. Then too I didn't think it worth while to invite Selden & Coral to go with me to visit of the Rogers' home as I know they wouldn't have liked it. I used to go out there sometimes with Bird along too. Coral says he's likely to associate with

5.
anyone. They had a piano and we used to sing and play and take walks around the farm or maybe drive down to the creek. Sometimes we played on guitar, flute, a piano. Bird plays the flute and he hasn't much of an ear with the result that he plays often badly out of tune but I don't believe it bothered May at all though she has a very good ear. I remember her speaking about a soloist we heard at Youngstown and asking me if I didn't think she had been off the pitch on a certain note. I had noticed it ~~too~~ too, but very few people in the audience would have noticed it at all. I speak of this because often & often I have wondered if she really didn't see anything wrong in people whom she had to associate with but never criticized.

One soon after Selden was married Selden and Coral invited May & me to Sunday dinner. I don't think this invitation was intended for more than May but as Ruth was with her alone in the little shack I hardly thought it was polite and I gave some very strong hints. I also said that Florence might be up from her school too on that Sunday but Coral & Selden doubted if they would have dishes enough for that big a crowd. They let me deliver the invitation. Ruth & May come. Later one time Coral come up to the other place and said she wanted to invite me to my own birthday party the next night. I asked how big a party and she said one other. May was living with Ruth still. She went on in to town to deliver the invitation and coming back told me that May had said 'she was very busy & didn't see how she could come' but that if I could

make her change her mind ^{6.} the invitation was still open. Well I felt very badly about it and sore of everybody and I guess I acted cranky that night at choir but I didn't speak about it at all. It happened that just then Mary had come back from out home & her folks had I believe talked her into taking on an attitude that would keep me at a distance because without her fully realizing it I had got on ^{on better terms with} her than ~~she~~ had intended. ^{See she changed her mind about this.} Local couldn't have made a very long visit as she didn't even tell whose birthday it was.

Do you get the situation? My people evidently consider themselves too good for Mary's family. Of course she couldn't very easily speak it to me even when she tried to be frank the two or three times I saw her after I asked her to marry me. In a patronizing way Ellen & Local would include Mary in any festivities where I was present but by herself they wouldn't come for her society. I don't see how Mary could have failed to see how things were and the girls I'm sure would feel it more Rudy still. The sisters by the way have improved a lot - one is teaching in Chinook the other at the ditkin Stewart-Ruff school (Zaughlin school). Rath undoubtedly did much to prejudice the parents against me & likely Florence did too or she really is more touchy than Rath.

If I didn't really think that Mary could a lot more for me than she has even admitted to herself I would maybe try to give the whole thing up. The parents have

Mary thinks Ruth was with a party they thought probably hear her out she thinks Ruth is very witty and Flannery the most medical but I think she's a little bit of a snob. I suppose being you don't hope to see me now. Don't bother to give me any advice. I suppose being you don't hope to see me now. I'm sure after getting the facts more fully.

7.
certainly taken drastic methods to stop things and I will do nothing ^{now} if Mary comes, as I believe she does every thing will come out right, if she doesn't it is much better to finish everything ^{now}. Mary didn't have a happy wedding I'm sure. Last summer she must have gained ten pounds. This summer she lost weight. I'm not sure Selden would think she was very pretty any more.

Ruth told Mary once that she didn't want Mary even to marry but just to be her chum. Ruth has always been Mary's baby (six years difference about) and Mary used to stand between her & punishment when she was a kid. Ruth is really a warm hearted impulsive girl but she has the fault of ambitious people that she hates to be second in any thing and I know she is fiercely jealous of Mary at the same time that she loves her. I remember Ruth had a faded brown cloak rather shapeless that she was sort of ashamed of and even stayed home from church to keep from wearing it so Mary let Ruth wear her own pretty blue serge and she wore the old cloak not once but dozens of times in fact until Ruth got a new one. When Mary turned her inside out and put different buttons on it and a new lining etc so that it looked like new. Mary didn't seem to even mind wearing the old cloak.

There's no doubt Mary is pretty independent ^{and hasn't all the tact in the world.} If I had only seen her with outsiders I'd consider maybe she would be pretty difficult to get along with but she is very different with her family and she has always been nice with me & careful of my wishes.

This finishes all that need be said on the subject and I'd just as soon you didn't write any more about it. Don't give Carol & Selden any advice either. From their standpoint they are doing the best they can. Carol is very good about trying to keep down staff. Lately way they is ended anyway. Well.



Sunday, Dec. 9
to Dec. 14 = 5 weeks

3.00

3.00

25

6.25 - 10.00

6.25

3.75

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