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MOTHERS AND DAUGHTERS
DIFFERENT CODES OF BEHAVIOR

Thirty years ago all the people working on family history could easily fit in one elevator. Now it has become a recognized and important sub-discipline of social history. In the beginning people thrashed around trying to define the field, borrowing theory and methods from sociology and anthropology and applying them to historic data. As they experimented with various models, it became evident that traditional historical procedures still had their advantages. The family, as the basic unit of human life, could be approached as historians study other institutions, by examining its structure, the relationships between its members, its place in the broader social milieu and its ideology. This is roughly the approach I will be using today.

Where does the historian of the family start? The most important source is collections of family papers which may include business correspondence, account books, wills and inventories, school bills and family letters. Right below us, in the Smith College Archives and the Sophia Smith Collection, there is a gold mine for family historians. The Amherst College Archives and Special Collections at the University of Massachusetts have smaller but choice collections. My students and I worked in these archives during a graduate course last fall. This paper is an attempt to celebrate the holdings of these archives and the people represented in them.

This afternoon I want to share with you the letters of some of these families, chosen at random, which permit us to reconstruct the way a family functioned, their

thoughts, their reactions, the relationships within the family unit. I limited myself to correspondence between mothers and daughters because most of us in this room have been daughters. Everyone in the room had a mother. The letters provide an insight into what held a family together. Each family had its particular aim; its image of a "good" family; its own social and religious rules. I will refer to these as the code of behavior which a family followed. Because a major function of the family is to prepare its members to leave the household, I looked in the letters for the affect of the code of behavior on daughters. Did a particular code encourage dependence or independence? How did different families cope with maintaining the delicate balance between family unity and autonomy?

A New York family, the Kellogg-Dunhams, had a tradition of family newspapers over several generations. Your facsimile is from the earliest of these, written in the fall of 1848. The layout of contemporary newspaper was meticulously copied with a masthead, the divisions into columns and different departments: foreign news; editorials; business reports; fashions and want ads.

The paper was a family enterprise based on another family enterprise. Edward Kellogg, the son of a New York banker, was converting an old linseed oil factory into a flax mill in Ulysses, N.Y. buying an old farm house as a residence. His sisters Harriet and Amelia left the family house in Brooklyn to help fix up the farm and take over the housework, although they had little experience in either capacity. On their arrival Harriet wrote immediately to announce their safe arrival. Four days later she wrote again with news of the state of the farm and the factory. It must have become obvious to her that, in addition to making bread and pies, she was

going to be stuck with the weekly letter home. By the following week Volume 1, Number 1 of *Our Home* was in the mail with Puss and Lil (Harriet and Amelia) as editors.

The sense of humor of the two young women spilled over into the newspaper, as well as their pride in their adventure and new-found independence, and their desire as the " New Settlement" to keep in touch with the "Old Settlement". There are wonderful vignettes: a want ad for " a person well versed in removing tar, oil and paint from cashmere and calico clothing, requiring no remuneration but willing to be useful", the reports on their evening Literary Circle ploughing through *Paradise Lost*, and their delight when they finished it, A special feature was " The Housekeepers journal", dedicated to their mother, where Harriet recorded the weekly production of the kitchen: 19 loaves of bread; 15 pies; 6 bread puddings, 4 quarts of applesauce-- at most this was all for four people.

Our Home was meant to amuse the rest of the family and to convince them of their daughters ability to manage and to set a good table, in the phrase of the day. The family code was based on responsibility and the mutual support of all its members, qualities which Harriet carried over into her marriage to Carroll Dunham in 1853, The family paper was also continued, if intermittently. Under Harriet's direction *Tanglewood Twigs* , " a home paper for pleasure and profit of the house-circle of Tanglewood Mansion " was produced by her children. As grown men and women, several of them scientists, one an established woman author, they revived the custom with a magazine appropriately called *The Phoenix* . All the articles in *The Phoenix* were to be based on original sources. While its life was brief,

the tradition had survived for thirty-seven years, a tribute to the cohesion of the family and its commitment to a lively intellectual life, starting with Milton.

The standard form of family communication was, of course, letters. Before telephones, before e-mail, letters knit a family together. A weekly letter home from an absent family member was not required, but it was expected. Many mothers and daughters, my mother and grandmother among them, wrote each other daily. In working with some twenty collections of family papers this year, I have been made aware that it was the women who transmitted the family news, made judgements with regard to social behavior, gave advice about children and worried about appropriate clothing for all occasions. Technically women had more time, but sons away at college wrote less frequently. Fathers wrote even less, often adding a paragraph at the end of the mother's letter. In these collections the mother emerges as the fulcrum of family life. Whatever may be said about the dominance of the patriarchal family in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the letters are evidence that it was the mother who transmitted and embodied the family code.

One of the most comprehensive series of letters come from the Porter-Phelps-Huntington family, now preserved in the Amherst College Special Collections. The family maintained a large farm in Hadley, Mass. from 1752 to 1960. The collection is an historian's dream. From generation to generation the family never threw anything away and, when separated, they wrote each other constantly, leaving a wealth of letters behind. We have time for only one generation. I have chosen the letters of Elizabeth Porter Phelps and her daughter, Betsy Phelps Huntington.

Betsy Phelps, born in 1779, grew up on the farm imbued with the standards

of her family. They were among the founders of the town, her father was a lawyer, prominent in state and local politics. She knew her social place and her responsibilities: to uphold the family name; to preserve the farm; to follow the moral and religious teachings of the Congregational church; to be loyal, responsible and obedient to her beloved mother and father. Like all young girls at the time she assumed she would marry a young man of similar up-bringing and status and would give him the same loyalty and devotion she had shown her parents. This code is implicit in the letters between her mother and herself.

The first letters were written when Betsey went to visit relatives in Newburyport and Boston in 1794. Visits were a means of widening a young woman's acquaintance and an opportunity to meet appropriate young men.

Elizabeth's letters reflected her anxiety about daughter's traveling, her affection and her concern that her clothing was sufficiently fashionable and properly starched.

The family was serious about their religion and probably very pleased when Betsey became engaged to the Reverend Dan Huntington, the Congregational minister in Litchfield, Connecticut. Their aspiration for a good marriage had been met. On New Year's Day, 1801, the wedding was celebrated in the living room at the farm, the couple departing by sleigh that evening for Litchfield. Betsey was twenty-two, Dan twenty-seven.

On January 6, Betsey wrote to say they had arrived safely, through snow and ice. Five days later, her first Sunday in the new community, she wrote that " my husband sends his most respected regards and tells you that I am my mother's daughter...likely to please his friends and fill my station with propriety. " She had

done what was expected of her. The letter continued, however. " I want you to come and see where we live and become acquainted with our friends. I cannot feel at home until you have been here. I want your opinion of everything and everybody."

Her parents heard in these words a cry for help and departed for Litchfield immediately. On her return a month later, Elizabeth wrote: " My dear daughter. I have been writing to you a great deal in my head since we got home. I want to tell you all I feel and think. We did not feel in half as good spirits as when we got to Litchfield. ... In short your father expressed his feelings in terms rather too strong, considering we found all things had gone as well as we could possibly expect."

Betsey's reply was far from her mother's composure. She was anguished by their departure. " The morning after you left was to me very melancholy. I went upstairs to your bedchamber and it was long before I was decent to be seen." The reason for the hurried visit was then made clear, at least as clear as anything involving sexual relationships was permitted to be clear in eighteenth century New England. " I should be an ungrateful wretch," Betsey continued, " were I not satisfied with the unwearied attention and tender regard of my husband-- and surely I may now say that he is one of the best of men...(combining) goodness of heart with that affection for his wife which make our sex happy. I have been much more happy than before your visit. I make this confession to you to whom I may say anything and be forgiven."

Three days later, however, Betsey was still uncertain about the ardour of her husband's attentions..." Do tell me, dear mother, how long this attention to my happiness from my husband may last. I know it cannot continue always and I am

desirous to know how long to expect it. I have made my mind in the old fashion to "love, honour and obey".

Elizabeth was not pleased by Betsey giving into her grief in their bedchamber, and even thought of saying they would not come again. But she continued to provide her with advice: "Continue to deserve the love and esteem of your tender and kind husband and I doubt not that you will enjoy it....The love and friendship of your husband will continue as long as you live, I trust, but that very particular attention will likely in some degree abate....Tis all right to enjoy every mark of love and kindness you receive."

Dan Huntington was a kind and thoughtful man. When his parishioners complained that his wife should accompany him on parish visits, he refused them. He wished to protect her from such demands. However, during their courtship no one, not even her mother, had prepared Betsey for sexual love. Clearly from her letters she thought Dan was brutal and unnatural in his demands. But by March she could write that she now had "that confidence which can soften every care." By August she could say that the harmony between her husband and herself continued, "indeed I think it increases." The social mores of the day made the transition to marriage difficult for a young woman. Only after her marriage could Betsey learn about sex. For the first weeks she felt assaulted and frightened. These particular letters give us a rare glimpse into the fears created by a propriety so strict it denied the existence of sex in marriage. Betsey's fears were overcome. She and Dan had eleven children.

The birth of children created another bond between mothers and married

daughters. Elizabeth Huntington was always in attendance when Betsey suffered an "attack", the euphemism of the day for labor and delivery. Childbirth was cloaked in a special vocabulary. When Elizabeth's daughter-in-law Sally had a baby, Elizabeth wrote to Betsey, "This day about 11, Sally had the warning I always had, but felt very ill. About 12 perceived herself somewhat unwell. The doctor came about 2, chatted awhile and left. The three Aunts stepped in and long before 8 we had a fine baby boy." Elizabeth's major concern was that the baby, at a mere nine pounds, was too weak to survive. Betsey wrote to Sally after the new baby and let her into her "fatal secret," meaning that she too was pregnant.

Betsey's deliveries were not easy. Pregnant with her sixth child she wrote: "Some gloomy reflections rise unbidden to my mind, owing doubtless to my particular situation and the hour of trial I must before many months expect." She urged her parents to come only when it was convenient for them, "your presence at a certain time is always agreeable but as it is a fatiguing and anxious affair, I do not insist on it. Perhaps you would enjoy yourself better to be here after I get about." Seven years later, after the birth of the ninth child, Elizabeth wrote: "Oh may the wonderful deliverance of God, granted to his distressed handmaid, in the midst of great distress and danger, be most gratefully remembered by all of us....I pray God, a proper remembrance of those trying scenes may never be lost from my mind, never to render me overtroubled should you be in a state of pregnancy again, but to strengthen hope and confidence in the Lord." Three more children were born.

When Betsey panicked in the early months of her marriage, the family code had strengthened her. Her responsibility and loyalty to her husband never flagged.

Because his salary was inadequate, Betsey took in incorrigible young boys as boarders which, added to their own children, meant cooking for fifteen or sixteen. The youngest child, Frederic Dan, became a minister like his father, converted to the Episcopal Church, became a bishop and established a dynasty of Episcopalian clergymen. The family spread out from Hadley as the sons and grandsons became rectors of churches in eastern Massachusetts and New York state. Maintained as a working farm, the Hadley house served as a summer center for the family.

The Charles Brewster family in Northampton demonstrate the economic realities which faced a middle-middle class family with a small retail business in the nineteenth century. When the father died suddenly, the mother and the three older daughters worked in order to educate the three younger children and to maintain the family home as the enduring center of their lives. In the course of this a relationship of reciprocity and equality developed between the mother and daughters. The family code was survival, but survival included obtaining an advanced education, service to the community and intellectual fulfillment for each family member. The letters are particularly apropos because they provide a rare view of the role played by Smith College in the life of Northampton. Without the College the Brewsters could not have achieved their goal.

The Brewsters were an old New England family. Charles Brewster, the father, was a direct descendant of Elder Brewster of the Plymouth colony. He fought in the Civil War. On his return he started a paint business and married Anna Williams, whose family were among the town founders. In 1880 they bought a fine old house at 18 South Street and enough surrounding land for greenhouses. The paint shop

became a florist shop. From the beginning it was a family business. Anna helped to run the store. As each of the six children reached twelve or so, they helped in the store, they learned to arrange baskets of flowers for whist parties, weave laurel ropes and make wreaths at Christmas. The business supported the family in what can best be described as genteel poverty-- as Charles once wrote to the oldest daughter Gertude, " we are all in usual health. Poor as ever but still respectable." Family life was full. There were walks in the mountains, picnics , calls on their numerous relatives and theatrical performances of Shakespeare and Dickens in the parlor.

This pattern was broken and the financial stability of the family threatened by the tragic death of Charles Brewster in 1893. Struck by a sudden heart attack, his death left Anna a widow at 50, with three daughters, Gertrude, Mary and Carol ranging in age from 24 to 20, and three younger children, Charles, Harold and Helen from 16 to 10. From 1893 to 1910, Anna, Gertrude, Mary and Carol exerted a collective effort to educate the younger siblings and maintain family life. Their letters in these years reveal some of the problems of educated working women.

For two years they tried to keep the florist business going, the main load carried by Anna and Charles. Gertrude, having graduated from Smith the year her father died, worked as assistant librarian in the Northampton Public Library. Mary was a journalist for the Springfield newspaper. Their first aim was to keep Carol at Smith where she was a sophomore. The importance of the college to the local community becomes very evident. Both Gertrude and Carol attended without paying any tuition under the generous provisions of Sophia Smith's will. The college also made it possible for Anna to make a living from the family house.

Smith had little dormitory space at that time. Anna opened the house to student boarders, thereby earning a cash income and assuring the upkeep of the house.

When Carol graduated from Smith in 1896, she added her earning capacity to that of the others. The daughters began to seek jobs further afield. Mary went around the world on a clipper ship as a journalist. Gertrude taught high school in Brewster, Mass., later in New Hampshire. Carol found a teaching position in Las Vegas, New Mexico and was drawn into new experiences. She lived with a Jewish family, attended synagogue with them and was delighted to be asked to decorate the synagogue for the son's Bar Mitzvah, writing that it really wasn't any different from decorating St. John's church at home for Christmas.

Anna's letters to her daughters were full of details about the Smith students. Writing to Gertrude she reported that she was reading *Oliver Twist* aloud after supper. "They had wanted one chapter but could not leave until we had three.." One student had asked Carol for advice about going to the Harvard-Yale game with her brother. Carol commented to her mother, "they never want you to advise them to do what they don't want to do", so Carol had suggested the student ask the Registrar who gave her permission because it was the event of the year. Anna disapproved, the student had a condition in German. All the students, she added were delighted that Gertrude was coming home for Thanksgiving. They planned to come to the station to meet her. The students became part of the family. Anna prepared three meals a day for 8 to 12 people.

The letters were cheerful but the financial strain and worry about jobs created a constant undercurrent. Teaching was not well paid and a seemingly secure

position could disappear if the school budget was cut. Gertrude or Carol were often back in Northampton, working at the library or, in Gertrude's case, for George Cable, the writer and editor.

In 1889 Carol wrote that she was sorry Gertrude had to go through the strain of applying for a new position. The following year Gertrude wrote to Carol, still in New Mexico, that there was a sudden vacancy at the Northampton High School and she should apply. Carol replied, disparagingly, that she would hardly have the courage to offer herself as a high school teacher because she had been teaching only "the common branches". Furthermore, if she left suddenly she would lose a month's pay and the city was already three months behind on her salary. She concluded, "I am so tired mentally and physically that the thought of running across the country and breaking into a new place quite appalls me."

A year or so later it was Carol's turn to help. She had been refused by a New York family because she could not accept a position as private tutor for less than \$25 a month. She thought Gertrude should apply because her specialties-- drawing, painting, French and literature-- would be more attractive and command higher pay.

The job hunt never stopped. Returning from a picnic in 1907, Anna and Mary met a friend on the trolley. They asked her whether it was true, as they had heard, that there was a vacancy in the Springfield High School English Department. The friend replied there was and Gertrude should apply. Networking, it would seem, has always been essential to women in the job market.

There was a division of financial responsibility. Gertrude bore the main

burden for the education of the two youngest, Harold and Helen. Anna was responsible for the house, to which everyone else contributed what they could. Gertrude paid full tuition for Harold at Amherst College, encouraging him to join a fraternity despite the extra expense. She then financed his graduate education at Episcopal Theological Seminary. Helen went to boarding school in Connecticut, then to college. For thirteen years the family energies were poured into education. The family house, with Anna presiding, remained the center of their lives. There are amusing letters in which Gertrude asks Charles or Harold for money to repay what she had borrowed from their mother. When things went wrong in their lives the siblings turned to Gertrude, again to protect their mother.

Far more than survival was achieved. Independence and responsibility were intertwined. Carol and Gertrude joined the faculty at the Northampton High School. Gertrude, as head of the English Department for 33 years, influenced more lives than any other member of the faculty. The daughters traveled widely in Europe and the East. Gertrude was the first woman to serve as a trustee of the Forbes Library, as Carol was for the Academy of Music. The family is still regarded as a model by the community.

Blanche Ames Ames, Smith College class of 1899, also worked professionally but she could pursue her career interests out of self-fulfillment rather than financial necessity. A gifted painter and illustrator, she became a partner in her husband's scientific work and a leader of the birth control movement. Money was never a problem. Her family owned woolen mills in Lowell, flour mills in Minnesota. Grandfather Ames owned the great yacht America. Wealthy they were, but the

family had a firm code of noblesse oblige and social reform. Blanche's grandfather commanded black regiments in the Civil War. The family espoused votes for former slaves, equal rights for women and women's suffrage. Blanche Ames Ames grew up deeply committed to these causes and completely devoted to her family.

However, she asserted her independence early. Visiting her Minnesota grandparents at fifteen she wrote her mother that she hated the idea of going to Rogers Hall, the correct school for girls in Lowell. "Saying I hate to go to Rogers Hall is not exaggerating. I don't often say I hate things and when I do, I mean it." She went to Rogers Hall that fall.

She entered Smith in 1895. Her letters to her mother were crowded with news of classes, friends, basketball games, debates, theatricals, the Glee Club. Emotionally patriotic during the Spanish-American War in her junior year, she wanted her friends to cancel their Junior Prom. In her senior year she was class president and began working seriously in the art studio.

Blanche had reservations about formal social life. In her junior year her parents asked her whether the family summer outing should be on the yacht. Blanche wrote sixteen pages in reply. Nine months away from home and mother was enough and she had set her heart on working on her sculpture that summer. On the other hand, she did not wish to be selfish. "But as for the experience of the society we should meet, I haven't much use for it. It makes me tired to go around being decent to a lot of dressed-up puppets that I don't care about. I am getting more and more to care very little about parties.....I can see Butler (her brother) scowling at my bluestocking ways. However (she ended limply) we would all have a fine time,

so paddle the family canoe the way you want and I will be in the happy position of believing in my family, right or wrong, always my family."

At the beginning of her senior year Blanche began a correspondence with Oakes Ames (the two families were not related). Already on the Harvard faculty at 26, Oakes had begun the orchid collection which would establish him as the world's leading orchid specialist. His greenhouses and laboratory were at the family residence in North Easton, Mass. In the winter he and his widowed mother and sister lived in their house on Commonwealth Avenue in Boston. Oakes wrote to Blanche tentatively at first, afraid of being rebuffed, but the correpondence quickly became a pleasure to both. Blanche's mother made no mention of Oakes in her letters, nor did Blanche discuss their deepening friendship.

Blanche graduated, retuning to Lowell in June, 1899.. They had reached an easy relationship. Oakes wrote anusingly in September, 1899 " I would like very much to see you before the end of the century." There were visits back and forth between Lowell and Boston. By November or early December their engagement was announced. That December Oakes was suddenly assigned to a botanical expedition to Cuba. Wanting to spend as much time together as they could, Blanche spent New Year's Eve at the Boston house, although her mother had telephoned her that afternoon to return to Lowell.

Oakes' letters and Blanche's diary reveal their feelings during their separation, providing insight into the problems of meeting the family codes during an engagement. There had been a moment of physical passion on New Year's Eve which disturbed both of them. Such feelings were meant to be strictly controlled. " I

do not understand myself," Oakes wrote on the train to Florida, " either I am ill with some ordinary disorder or my feelings are due to my love for you. Since Saturday last, I begin to wonder if love is not a kind of mental disease." The next letter may have referred to her decision to stay in Boston: " I hope you arrived in due season to satisfy " the Powers" of the wisdom of your action. Anyway, I am perfectly confident that in following the best dictates of our own minds we acted for good, let others hold what opinions they may. (Next time) you can travel with me and what a full pair we will be. Depending on each other, irrespective of society and its meticulous formulas."

Oakes wanted to throw off the bonds of social conformity to establish their own code based on their love and mutual interests. Despite the Lowell family's homage to independence, this would be regarded as too radical, as Blanche was only too well aware. Because her letters would not reach Oakes in Cuba, she turned to her diary. On January 3 she wrote, " For the first time in my engagement a disagreeable realization of what I am going to have and the responsibilities before me troubled me. When Oakes is with me, I have no such thoughts. But now I have known his sympathy, the family, although very dear to me of course, does not suffice."

She had begun to shift her loyalty to Oakes. Her family thwarted this instead of encouraging her. Oakes asked her to meet him at the Boston house on the day of his return. Blanche's mother said no. Blanche wrote " I entered upon...the hottest discussion of my life. Father joined mother, admitting they were unreasonable. Being engaged is useless as far as privileges are concerned and...leads to complexing problems. It takes all the life out of one when I should otherwise be so merry over

Oakes' return."

Several weeks later, after frequent visits by Oakes to Lowell, he invited Blanche to stay with his mother and sister and go to a play. Permission was refused. Oakes was furious. " I have tried hard to conform to the apparent laws of your house but I cannot account for this....If it is questionable for you to visit this house, then it is questionable for me to spend time in Lowell....The resolves I have made must be held until you and I can enjoy love and companionship without the dread of intervention."

Blanche took the initiative and set the date for the wedding for June,1900. Oakes was much relieved but wrote he would make no suggestions about the wedding or trouble might begin brewing. " Weddings," he concluded, " are the last gun a family can fire over the heads of their children."

He was wrong. The early years of their marriage became a struggle for power between the two mothers. Despite his rhetoric about equality, it was difficult for Oakes to break with his mother. Blanche had agreed that they would settle in North Easton near his greenhouses and laboratory, living with his mother in the great family house. She was hard and severe, restricting Blanche's every move. Blanche, miserably torn, made frequent visits to Lowell. Oakes was jealous of her loyalty to her family. She devoted herself to their two children and to painting the illustrations for what would become his seven volume work on orchids. Not until 1905 did he recognize that what he had said about equality and partnership had to be put into effect. They moved to a farm on the estate. Together they built their own house and began a joint life devoted to scientific scholarship, the campaign for

women's suffrage and birth control, and their own family. Blanche's code of commitment to social reform survived the matriarchal interference. Her attachment to her mother never weakened.

To move to the nineteen twenties. Nancy Hale rejected any code of behavior her family had. She accepted and exploited the sexual freedom of the twenties and yearned for an absolute independence so that she could become a writer. Her success in her career was made possible because her mother took over her family role. Nancy's "independence" was based on emotional, financial and physical dependence on her mother.

Growing up in Boston, the daughter of two well-known artists, in 1928 Nancy married Taylor Hardin, an aspiring writer like herself. They moved to New York. In February, 1930 a son, Mark, was born and immediately handed over to a full-time nanny. Nancy continued her full-time job as a writer for Vogue, a job she felt unworthy of her and a distraction from her serious writing. Christmas that year was spent with Taylor and her mother in the family house in Dedham. "L'il Mark" was left in New York with his nanny. In March Nancy gave a party for some of her friends to meet Mark. Count and Countess Roussy, the Lessers and Nancy's boss, Mrs. Snow "all admired him intensely. Everyone says he looks like an English child, not an American child at all. He is such a company child and shows off so beautifully and is such a pride to his mother." In May 1931, Nancy began to discuss a divorce from Taylor in an off-hand way.

When her first novel was published in 1932, Nancy found little satisfaction in it. By then she and Taylor were living apart. Nancy complained to her mother, "I

never get asked out to dinner, or ly by beaux who interrupt my work." Her mother was always sympathetic, " I do see your difficulties. You need a simple life and you enjoy and can be a part of a complex one-- and the two clash. I wish I could work it out for you but it isn't possible. I suppose you are the only one who can."

Her mother, Lilian, encouraged Nancy in every effort she made to take care of Mark. In September 1934 she wrote, " what a lovely thing you plan to do. I mean getting up at 9 a.m. and having some time with Mark before you leave for work." A month later Mark was with his grandmother in Dedham. Nancy left for Reno in November, having met another writer, Charles Wertenbaker, before she left.

Mark's visit to his grandmother lasted four years (1934-1938). Lilian did not complain. Less than a year after the divorce she wrote to Nancy, " It really does begin to look like business, doesn t it, for you and Charles ? " There was no opposition on her part to the new marriage. Charles was a journalist in New York. The two were married in October 1935. Lilian was amusing about a wedding present. She would not send them a cut glass bowl or a cheese scoop. Perhaps she should send a crewel work canvas reading " God Bless Our Home".

The second marriage was more troubled than the first. The couple moved to Charlottesville, Virginia. Another son, William, was born in 1938 and joined his grandmother and stepbrother in Dedham. Nancy divorced Wertenbaker in 1941. Before the divorce she was writing her mother about her new beau, Fredson Bowers, an English professor at the University of Virginia. " He's not very beautiful," Nancy wrote, " but what comes out of his head is beautiful." She ended rather weakly, " anyway he's a nice beau."

Several months later she was more definite. " I feel as if I ought to tell you that I am sort of considering marrying Fred Bowers. Don't worry about it....I'm going to keep on considering it a lot more. He may be just a little professor and not make much money, but he is a fine scholar and has a mind like pure gold and illuminates all the things I care most about....Don't worry about it. I seem to have turned into the big cautious girl of all time. "

Lilian Hale replied immediately. For the first time in all their correspondence she was direct, almost blunt, in her disapproval. " (You say you like him.) I liked him too which hasn't very much to do with the matter. I like a lot of people-- but to marry them? ...the fact that he isn't like the other two seems to me of very trifling value. You could be wretched with someone without one of the former husband's faults or virtues. What are his feelings about marriage? Is he unselfish, wanting to build up, by a certain amount of self-sacrifice, a splendid thing?

" I have reproached myself that in the past I haven't said and done more to express my own well-founded fears, ...now...I see I am going to be about the same and let you decide for yourself. ...I'd like more facts...How do you mean, ' he has a mind like gold', brilliance, soundness or goodness? Of course a man like him couldn't help but illuminate his fiancée's spirit. If he can keep that up all through a marriage, it would be a miracle."

" You may be a cautious girl at last but in all previous generations, people thought nothing of waiting for years, not perhaps to make up their minds but for conditions to be right and they usually turned out to be happy marriages."

Four days later Fred Bowers pleaded their case to her mother. Nancy was not

rushing into marriage this time. Both of them had made mistakes in the past.

"Nancy has tried different ways of life and the people who represented them. I think now, in a sense, she is coming home because she thinks we can begin to be to each other what you and your husband were and from Nancy's account of your life, I know no better." In a year the two were married. And Fred was right. At thirty-four years old, Nancy accepted a code of behavior. The children joined her and Fred in Charlottesville, Nancy managed to balance the demands of family life and her writing.

So, what about family codes of behavior and the independence of daughters? No code we have looked at included a provision for daughter's rights, yet most daughters liberated themselves while maintaining a close relationship with their mother. How did it happen? All the codes invoked responsibility and loyalty to the family as primary virtues. Imbued with this, when the daughters left home they transferred those virtues to their husbands, their children and their work. Betsey Phelps Huntington had a period of crisis when she didn't know how to do it, but the reciprocal relationship she had with her parents rescued her. The Brewsters became independent by serving their family. Blanche Ames Ames struggled against the opposition of her parents to achieve the independence and the commitments her family had advocated. Nancy Hale renounced responsibility for fourteen years, finally returning to the code of her mother and father. In these particular examples, the independence of daughters grew from a sense of obligation and allegiance to their parental families.

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