

Again the School Bell Rings Out For 26,000,000 Young Americans

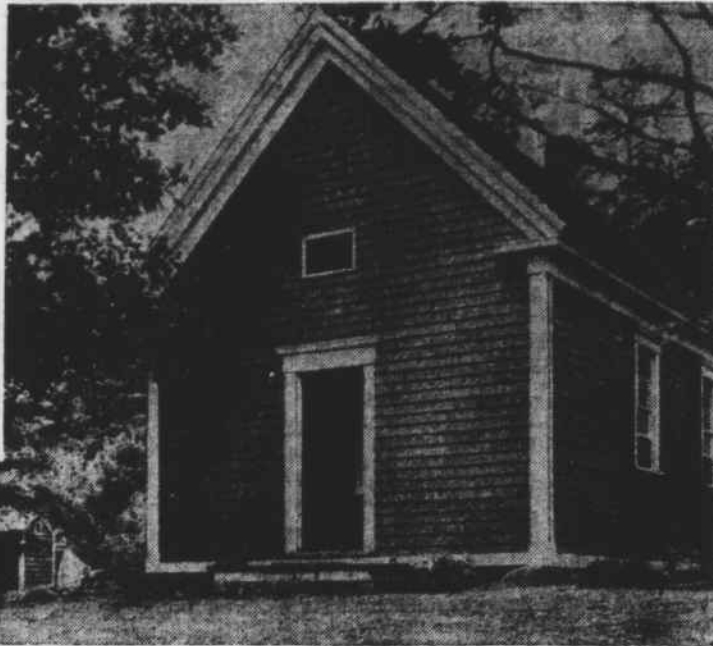
They're Going to a Building That's Vastly Different from the "Little Old Red School House" Which Their Parents Knew; Equipment, Books and Teaching Methods Have Changed But the Spirit of "School Days" Is the Same Throughout the Years.

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Oh, the little old red schoolhouse on the hill,
Oh, the little old red schoolhouse on the hill,
And my heart with joy o'erflows,
Like the dew drop in the rose,
Thinking of the little old red schoolhouse on the hill!
(From "The Male Quartet's Compendium.")

By ELMO SCOTT WATSON

SOME Monday morning during the next two or three weeks, more than 26,000,000 young Americans will be streaming along our country roads or through the streets of our villages,



THE MOST FAMOUS "LITTLE OLD RED SCHOOLHOUSE" IN AMERICA—it is the Redstone school at Sudbury, Mass., immortalized in the poem "Mary Had a Little Lamb." The building is now owned by Henry Ford.

towns and cities and all of them will have a common objective—the school house. For it is the "first day of school" and across the broad expanse of these United States thousands of schools will be swinging wide their doors to receive the members of this youthful army who are coming to take their places in renovated and refurbished classrooms to begin another year of learning.

As Mother away Bud and Sis bustling away between eight and nine o'clock on that Monday morning, perhaps she will find herself humming the tune of that old song quoted above. Of course, she realizes that it isn't a "little old red school house on the hill" any longer. It's been replaced by a more modern structure that is painted white and has, perhaps, over the door a little name-plate which tells the passer-by that this is a "Standard School." Or it may be a big brick or stone edifice—a modern "consolidated school" for the children of a number of districts.

And there have been other changes, too—in equipment, in the books the children study, in the teaching methods. For we have "gone modern" in our schools as in every other phase of contemporary life. And yet, for all these transformations, there's something unchanging, timeless, eternal, about "school days."

That's why Mother smiles to herself as she softly hums that old tune. In Bud and Sis, as they trudge away to school, she sees herself as she was in those halcyon days which now seem so very, very far away—the days of her own childhood. And for a little moment she drinks deep once more at the Fountain of Youth!

But quite aside from our sentimental attachment to the "Little Old Red Schoolhouse on the Hill" as the symbol of an era in American life that is gone forever, there is another reason for our regarding it with something akin to reverence. In his "Back Home" sketches (first published in the old McClure's Magazine and later collected in book form) Eugene Wood wrote this interpretation of the social significance of the "Little Old Red Schoolhouse":

"Perhaps it wasn't little, or old, or red, or on a hill. It might have been big and new, and built of yellow brick, right next to the Second Presbyterian, and hence close to the 'branch,' so that the spring freshets flooded the playground, and the water lapped the base of the big rock on which we played 'King on the Castle'—the big rock so pitifully shrunken of late years. But no matter what the facts are, sing of the Old Red Schoolhouse on the Hill and in everybody's heart a chord trembles in unison—we are brethren knitted together into one living solidarity. And this, if we but sensed it, is the Union of which the federal compact is but the outward seeming. It is a union in which they have neither art nor part whose parents sent them to private schools, so as not to have them 'associate with that class of people.' It is the really truly Union.

"If you would learn in fact the

secret of our nation's greatness, take your stand some winter's morning just before nine o'clock when you can overlook a circle of some two or three miles' radius, the center being the Old Red Schoolhouse. You will see little figures picking their way along the miry roads, plowing through the deep drifts, cutting across the fields, all drawing to the schoolhouse, Bub in his wam-mus and his cowhide boots, his cap with earlaps, a knitted comforter about his neck; and little Sis, in a thick shawl, trudging along behind him, stepping in his tracks. They chirrup 'Good morning, sir!' As far as you can see them you have to watch them and something rises in your throat. Lord love 'em! Lord love the children!

"And then it comes to you, and it makes you catch your breath to think of it, that every two or three miles all over this land, wherever there are children at all, there is the Old Red Schoolhouse. At this very hour a living tide, upbearing the hopes and prayers of God alone knows how many loving hearts, the tide on which all of our longed-for ships

he did an amazing thing. He gave up his law practice and his position in the state senate to become secretary of the newly created Massachusetts board of education. "Foolish and visionary," even his best friends called him, "to barter his prospects for political life for a post where returns are so small and where his efforts are spent in riding from county to county looking after the welfare of children who will never know whence the benefit came."

But Mann, the visionary, thought differently about that. At that time the Massachusetts public schools, although they had been in existence nearly two centuries, were in a pitiful condition. One third of the commonwealth's children had no educational opportunities whatever. The new secretary began his work with little encouragement from the authorities of his state. But he was undaunted by this fact. For the next 10 years he worked unceasingly to carry the gospel of free schools throughout Massachusetts. Better buildings, qualified teachers, longer terms, efficient teaching methods, libra-

ries, all were emphasized in his lectures and in his writings. Mann was influential in getting his state to establish the first normal school in the United States at Lexington which opened its doors July 3, 1839, to three young women.

Within the next decade Massachusetts spent more than \$2,000,000 on school buildings and equipment and had established 50 new public high schools. Gradually Mann's influence spread through other states and by 1848, when he was ready to retire from this work and return to a political career (he was elected to congress to succeed John Quincy Adams), the public school movement was gaining impetus all over the United States and Mann was a national figure.

Today the first object one sees when he approaches the Massachusetts statehouse in Boston is a statue of this pioneer educator. And not without good reason there is a bust of him in the Hall of Fame at New York university, among those of statesmen, authors, artists, inventors, explorers and military heroes. None of them bears a prouder inscription than that which is written below his name. It is: "The common school is the greatest discovery ever made by man." For that was the credo of Horace Mann.



It was an important day on the calendar of the "Little Old Red Schoolhouse" when the board of directors visited it to test the progress of the pupils with a "spell-down." (From a drawing by C. S. Reinhart in Harper's Weekly, 1873, reproduced in the Yale University Press' "Pageant of America.")

are to come in, is setting to the schoolhouse. Oh, what is martial glory, what is conquest of an empire, what is statecraft alongside of this? Happy is the people that is in such a case!"

If indeed within the walls of the "Little Old Red Schoolhouse" there lies, as Wood says, "the secret of our nation's greatness," then one of our greatest national heroes should be the man who, a hundred years ago, had just started to carry the gospel of free schools throughout one state. For after winning his campaign in that state, his ideal spread eventually to all the others.

Horace Mann was his name. Born near Franklin, Mass., on May 4, 1796, Mann's youth was a bitter struggle to get the rudiments of an education. He never attended school for more than 10 weeks in any single year up to the age of fifteen and he had to braid straw in his father's farmhouse to get enough money to buy his books.

Mann worked his way through Brown university, also through a law school at Litchfield, Conn., graduated, hung out his shingle and soon built up a prosperous law practice. He went into politics, was elected to the state senate and chosen president of that body. And then on June 1, 1837,

IN SCHOOL DAYS

Still sits the schoolhouse by the road,
A ragged beggar sunning;
Around it still the sumachs grow,
And blackberry vines are running.

Within, the master's desk is seen,
Deep scarred by raps official;
The warping floor, the battered seats,
The jack-knife's carved initial.

The charcoal frescoes on its wall;
Its door's worn sill, betraying
The feet that, creeping slow to school,
Went storming out to playing.

Long years ago a winter sun
Shone over it at setting;
Lit up its western window-panes,
And low eaves' icy fretting.

It touched the tangled golden curls,
And brown eyes full of grieving,
Of one who still her steps delayed,
When all the school were leaving.

For near her stood the little boy
Her childish favour singled;
His cap pulled low upon a face
Where pride and shame were mingled.

Pushing with restless feet the snow
To right and left, he lingered—
As restlessly her tiny hands
The blue-checked apron fingered.

He saw her lift her eyes; he felt
The soft hand's light caressing,
And heard the tremble of her voice
As if a fault confessing.

"I'm sorry that I spelt the word,
I hate to go above you,
Because"—the brown eyes lower fell—
"Because, you see, I love you."

Still memory to a gray-haired man
That sweet child-face is showing,
Dear girl, the grasses on her grave
Have forty years been growing.

He lives to learn, in life's hard school,
How few who pass above him,
Lament their triumph and his loss,
Like her—because they love him.
—John Greenleaf Whittier.

Back of that poem, one of the most famous in the English language, is this story:

It was written by Whittier for the magazine, Our Young Folks, when Lucy Larcom was editing it. She had sent Whittier several pictures with the request that he write verses to accompany them. Thereupon he replied:

"Dear Friend Lucy: I could not make verses for the pictures but I send thee herewith a bit, which I am sure is childish, if not child-like. Be honest with it, and if it seems too spoony for a grave Quaker like myself don't compromise by printing it. When I get a proof I may see something to mend or mar.

"Thine truly, J. G. W."

However, Miss Larcom did not think it "too spoony" and evidently when Whittier received a proof of it he did not find in it anything to "mend or mar." So it was printed in Our Young Folks and immediately became popular. Later Whittier confessed that he was the little boy in the poem and that the little girl, who had so naively confessed the reason why she was sorry that she had spelled correctly the word that had sent her above him to the head of the class, was Lydia Ayer.

Whittier died in 1892. Ten years after his death the manuscript of his poem, together with the letter which he wrote Lucy Larcom about it, was sold for \$540. Other manuscripts of his poems were sold at the same time and brought more than \$10,000. This money was used to keep up the old Whittier homestead near Haverhill, Mass., his birthplace and the scene of his immortal "Snow-bound."

This homestead has been made into a Whittier museum with all of its furnishings remaining as he described them. Visitors there today may see, among the other relics of the Quaker poet, a sampler made by Lydia Ayer, the loyal little friend who had said to him "I hate to go above you." On this faded square of cloth are embroidered the words:

"And must the body die?
This mortal frame decay?
And must these active limbs of mine
Lie mouldering in the clay?"

There was something singularly prophetic about that poem which little Lydia's patient hands had embroidered upon her sampler. For she died soon afterwards at the age of eleven. But in the hearts of thousands of Americans, who may not know her name but who do know the poem written by the friend of her childhood, she lives forever.

Speaking of Sports

Marathons in Golf Old Stuff, History Shows

By GEORGE A. BARCLAY

TALL tales of endurance on golf courses have been going the rounds since J. Smith Ferebee, young Chicago broker, negotiated 144 holes at Olympia Fields in a single day with a score of 91 and thereby won his business partner's half of a \$30,000 Virginia plantation as well as numerous cash bets.

Ferebee became a seven-day wonder and an epidemic of golf marathons broke out reminiscent of the pole-sitting fever of a decade ago. No one should be brash enough to disparage Ferebee's remarkable feat. He accomplished it under handicaps enough to stop an ordinary player. But when old-timers began digging through the records here and abroad they came on some interesting instances of golf endurance that not only equalled Ferebee's but gave other aspiring marathons an even tougher mark to shoot at.

For instance, there was the record of Slason Thompson, Chicago newspaper man who played eight rounds one day back in 1906 at Onwentsia, clicking off 144 holes without losing his breath. And Thompson was 55 years old at the time. Then there was Eddie Wild, who went 162 holes back in 1921 at the Seaview course at Atlantic City, winning a \$1,000 bet that he could do the job carrying his own clubs and break 80 every round.

When the record hunters traveled across the ocean, they found even more startling examples of golf stunts. Back in Aberdeen, Scotland, a golfer named W. G. Bloxom wagered he could play 12 rounds over the Aberdeen course and then walk ten miles afterwards—all within 24 hours. His bet was accepted and one morning in 1875 he started out at 8 a. m., finished between 8 and 9 p. m. and then walked his ten miles. The Aberdeen course was 15 holes, so Bloxom played 180 holes.

Scots Are Tough

More recently, in 1910 to be exact, another Aberdonian, H. B. Lumsden, started at 2:20 a. m. and completed 12 rounds before 9 p. m. He is said to have holed out every putt, played 216 holes and averaged 32½ strokes per round.

Some of the British marathons have taken a bizarre turn. Accoutred in a suit of heavy armor, a gentleman named Harry Dearth played



J. SMITH FEREBEE

a match at Bushey Hall, Scotland in 1912 and was beaten 2 to 1 because he could not see to putt. Another Scotch golfer named J. N. Farrar bet he could play 18 holes at Holyoke in less than 100, wearing full infantry equipment, canteen, full field pack and haversack. His score was 94.

Of all the marathons of the links, Bruce Sutherland of Edinburgh, Scotland, holds the top record. In 1927 he played 252 holes, starting June 21 at 8:15 p. m. and finishing the following day at 7:30 p. m. Caddies carried torches to light the way during the night. He walked more than 49 miles and finished in a rainstorm.

Over in Australia a unique record was made by W. F. R. Boyce, club champion of the Brisbane Golf club, Queensland. He played 108 holes one day over eight different courses covering a 55-mile radius.

Returning to America, the record hunters found several more stand-outs. For instance Dan Kenney of Tyler, Texas, and Bill Lundberg of Houston completed 216 holes from 4:30 a. m. to 8 p. m. back in 1923. Kenney took 957 strokes, or 4.4 per hole and Lundberg took 1,063, or 4.7 per hole. In 1916 Charles Daniels played 228 holes at Sabatth's Park. He accomplished this in 15 hours, had an average score of 94 per 18-hole round and covered 35 miles from 4 a. m. to 7:30 p. m.

So, Mr. Ferebee, it seems, is one of a long line of golf marathons. Few on the list, however, have given a better performance than he did. Moreover, his feat has been profitable even since he won his partner's half interest in the farm, for he has received a number of offers to endorse various commodities for a price and has accepted some of the more attractive ones. The result of all the publicity and acclaim he received is that golfers everywhere are trying to outdo his record.

Price of Success

BASEBALL success is its own worst hazard, particularly a big league manager's. Once a manager wins a pennant for his team he must make a habit of winning or expect to be subjected to a kick down and out. At least that is what the experience of two of the major leagues' most successful managers—Charley Grimm and Mickey Cochrane—might suggest.

Mickey Cochrane was ousted as manager of the Detroit Tigers, following closely on the dismissal of Charley Grimm by the Cubs. Cochrane hadn't won a pennant for Detroit for two years, but he had won pennants in each of the two preced-



MICKEY COCHRANE

ing years. The Tigers finished second in 1936 and 1937. Charley Grimm's six-year record with the Cubs included two pennants, second place twice and third place twice. All of which might indicate that the luckiest manager is the one who never quite reaches the top.

Gabby Street, now manager of the St. Louis Browns, could probably speak with feeling on the subject. He won pennants for the St. Louis Cardinals in 1930 and 1931 and then slipped down to a tie for sixth in 1932. His exit was dramatic.

Probably the lone exception among pennant-winning managers who are able to hold their jobs when the team skids is Connie Mack. In the past 20 years the Philadelphia Athletics under his tutelage have finished first three times and last six times. They've been in seventh place twice, in sixth once, in fifth and third twice each and in second four times. One of the reasons Connie has hung on is that he is a substantial stockholder in the club.

Mickey Cochrane's trouble at Detroit was that success probably came too suddenly. He started the baseball world by winning a pennant in 1934, his first year as manager and then repeated in 1935, taking the world's championship by boot.

Here and There

CALIFORNIA friends say Pop Warner will make good his intention to retire as an active coach after this season. . . . He will pass along the Temple job to Fred Swan. . . . Bob Seeds, Giant outfielder, punched cattle as a youngster on his father's ranch. . . . Frank Kohlbecker, the Cleveland Indians' traveling secretary, and Cy Slapnicka, the club's general manager, were battery mates for Milwaukee in the American association during the spitball era. . . . Gabby Hartnett promises to be the busiest man in the winter trading markets. . . . He is dissatisfied with some of his players and feels that new faces would be a welcome change in some other spots.

Comes a Cropper?

INABILITY of Bobby Feller to win consistently for the Cleveland Indians this season is regarded as one of the prime reasons for the failure of the Tribe to give the Yankees more competition. Last year and the year before it looked as if all the advance ballyhoo about this sensational youth with the fireball speed would be fulfilled. But the same faults which plagued him at the start of his career seem



BOBBY FELLER

magnified this year—wildness in pitching to batters and carelessness in watching runners once they get on base. Bobby still leads the league in strikeouts this year, but he is also far in the lead in bases on balls and his earned run average is somewhere between five and six runs per game. He is frequently the victim of stolen bases.

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WHO'S NEWS THIS WEEK

By LEMUEL F. PARTON

NEW YORK.—When Sir Walter Runciman was here in 1937, it was reported that he was trying to persuade Washington to lend money to Germany, to soothe Hitler and make him stop frightening England. That may or may not have been his mission, but as a master of the old credit-and-raw-materials squeeze play, he works that way, and now, as Viscount Runciman, he is deep in the Downing Street strategy which swings these two cudgels of empire. Prime Minister Chamberlain appointed him as mediator in the Czechoslovak-Sudeten German negotiations, but the Czechs toned that down to adviser.

Viscount Runciman has been a silent ally of Viscount Halifax in the quiet, glacial-pressure advance of the four-power bloc scheme for a European coalition and the final and complete isolation of Russia.

It was reported from London, unverified so far as this writer knows, that it was he who put over a fast credit double-play with France and Italy, the moment the Daladier government came in, and he has been tagged as the man who deploys the empire's financial resources in the diplomatic chess game.

His father was a ruddy old sea dog who sang chanteys, a cabin boy who became a shipping czar and a baronet. Viscount Runciman is a pallid, tight-lipped little man, a total abstainer, a former Sunday School teacher, and a faithful chapelgoer.

As president of the British board of trade, he made concessions in empire free trade, but he is a protectionist of the Chamberlain tradition. Like many men of small stature, he has the Napoleonic psychosis, writing books about Napoleon and hoarding memorabilia.

THIS writer has heard from several assured but not necessarily authoritative sources that Tullio Serafin would succeed Edward Johnson as manager of the Metropolitan Opera. Signor Serafin has been highly esteemed here for his musicianship, but all was not well between him and the Metropolitan management when he returned to Rome in 1935, after a number of years as Italian conductor here.

"The Metropolitan has not kept pace with the artistic progress of the modern stage," he said, on his arrival in Rome. "The way opera is put on at the Metropolitan is ridiculous. . . . The great fault with the Metropolitan is the little encouragement it is giving to its latent talent."

The Metropolitan reply hinted that Signor Serafin was really thinking about money rather than art. In the season '32-'33, he had a fair subsistence wage of \$53,200 for the season. This had been worked down to \$34,000 the year he left.

He did indicate that he thought that was pretty shabby pay for an ace conductor, but insisted his criticism was directed solely at artistic shortcomings.

Several years ago, the Metropolitan was intent on national self-sufficiency in music. It was going to discover and nurture native talent. That hasn't quite come off, and there have been the usual number of importations. It will be interesting if it brings in not only a European manager, but one who is its sharpest critic.

Among music lovers of this writer's acquaintance, there seems to be great indifference about where the singers come from as long as they are good. They insist that music, above all, must be free from the sharply nationalistic trends of the day.

As a lad, Tullio Serafin laid down a shepherd's crook for a baton. Tending the sheep near Cavazzere on the Venetian mainland, he used to walk several miles to town on Saturday night, at the age of ten, to conduct the village band. He attended the conservatory at Milan and was a full-fledged conductor in his early youth.

At La Scala, in Milan, he was assistant conductor under Gatti-Casazza. He became one of the most widely known and popular conductors in Europe.

A staunch supporter of the Fascist regime from its outset, he has been conductor of the Royal Opera at Rome since his departure from New York. He was replaced here by Ettore Panizza.

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