

# LENOX SCHOOL

*Past, Present, Future*



LENOX, MASSACHUSETTS

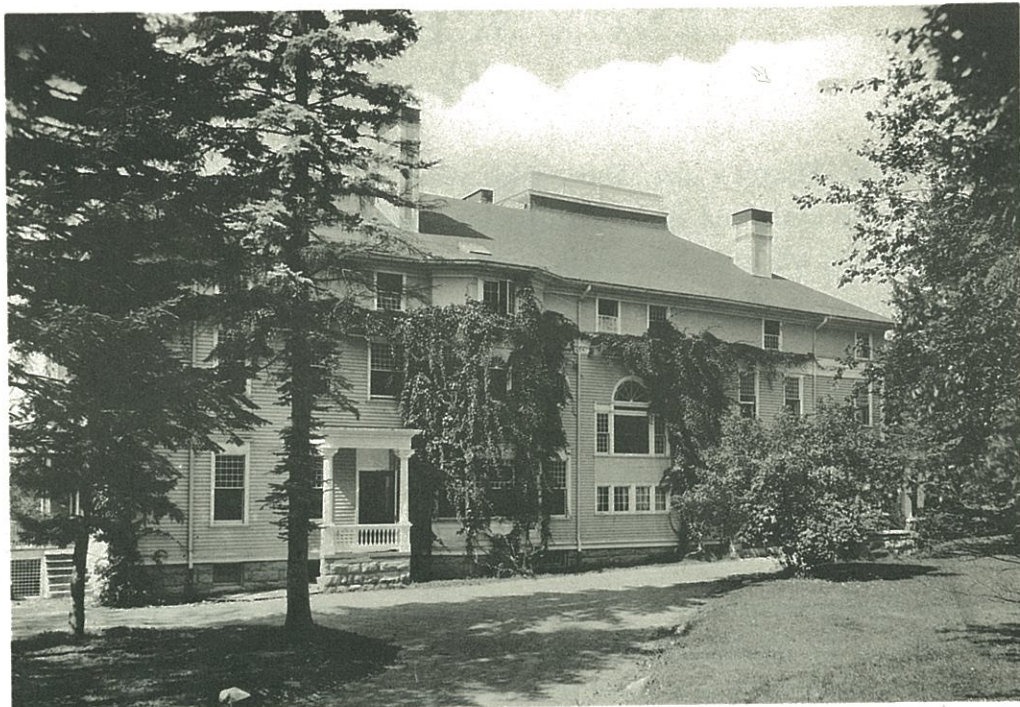
## LENOX SCHOOL *The Past.*

It was Dr. Thayer's idea. During his years as Headmaster of St. Mark's school, he was again and again brought into touch with boys, intelligent and full of promise, whose fathers, often professional men with moderate incomes, could not possibly afford to send their sons to St. Mark's. Of course, arrangements could be made for some of them by reductions in fees, or by scholarship grants, but this was artificial at best and not a sound economic solution of the problem.

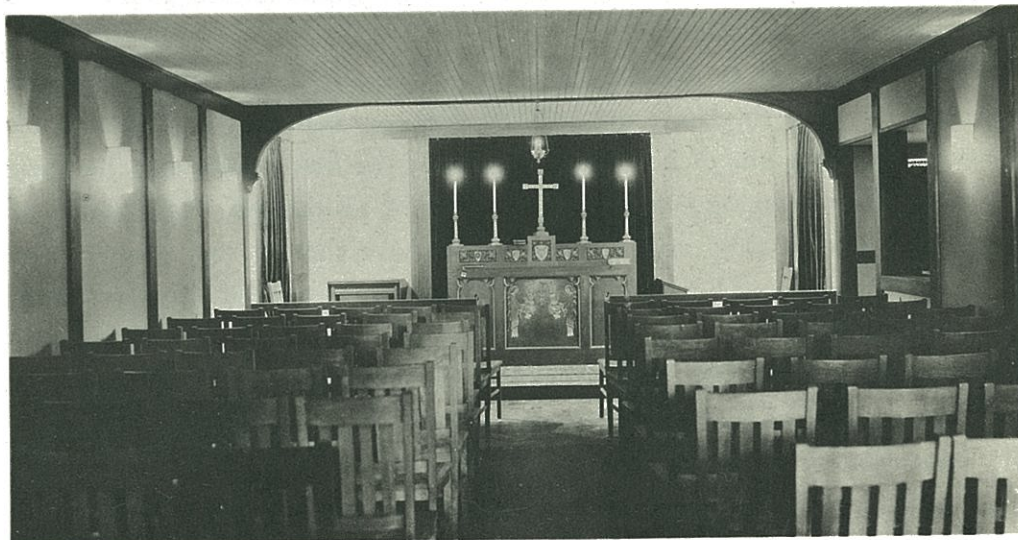
Immediately after the war, Dr. Thayer made, for the Episcopal Church, a careful survey of all its educational institutions throughout the country. He found that the Church was not adequately meeting the need he felt so strongly. So the idea grew in his mind of a self-supporting school, entirely independent of St. Mark's, established on such a basis that boys could be prepared for college at a cost approximately half of the fees charged by the leading preparatory schools of New England. The challenge of starting such a school himself appealed to him strongly, but his responsibilities to St. Mark's made that out of the question.

He determined to establish his new school under the auspices of the Province of New England, and secured the approval of the Synod in his nature. Choosing one of his own graduates as the first headmaster, he flung energy into bringing into being the school of his dreams. The location of the school was quickly, and as later events have shown, very fortunately, settled. The Reverend Latta Griswold of Lenox heard of Dr. Thayer's plan, laid before him the opportunities Lenox offered, secured pledges of financial support, and arranged for the purchase of the property.

The answer is Lenox School, founded in 1926 "to provide a good secondary education at moderate cost, under the guidance and influence of the Episcopal Church." An elaborate plant was obviously out of the question, as well as being theoretically undesirable. The private estate that had been secured was made suitable for school purposes with a minimum of alterations.



GRISWOLD HALL



THE CHAPEL



THE BOYS . . . HAVE A LARGE SHARE IN THE ACTUAL MANAGEMENT AND OPERATION OF THE SCHOOL."

The discipline of going without luxuries thoughtlessly accepted elsewhere has been from the beginning inevitable and fruitful. An intimacy of contact between boys and masters makes possible a close personal attention, and has created an essentially homelike as opposed to institutional atmosphere. The boys take complete care of both their own and the public rooms: they do all the waiting on table and washing of dishes, and have a large share in the actual management and operation of the School. Straightforward thinking and hard intellectual work were early established as the tone of the class-rooms, under the guidance of a group of teachers whose devotion to their calling was so great that they accepted eagerly the opportunities which Lenox gave them without thought of high salaries. Knitting the whole School together is a high religious idealism, molding in a simple but effective fashion the lives of both boys and masters.

The School has been a success. Most of the boys naturally have come from New England and New York, but eighteen states and four foreign countries have been represented. Growing slowly and steadily to its present enrollment of eighty-three, it has graduated in all one hundred and thirty boys, most of whom have gone to college and done well. Harvard, Trinity, Yale, Williams, and Princeton have been the choice of the largest groups, the remainder scattering among some nineteen other colleges. The testimony of colleges as to the intellectual accomplishments of Lenox alumni indicates that the School has won a position of honor in the educational field.

What means much to the Trustees of the School is the happy discovery that it has been possible to make both ends meet at an average annual cost for each boy of just over \$700. Since the founding of the School, receipts from tuitions plus a small scholarship fund have exceeded the operating expense by some \$500, a balance of sixty-five cents a boy a year! In other words, the Headmaster and his staff have clearly demonstrated that Dr. Thayer's idea was both educationally and economically sound.

## *The Present.*

It is not to be expected that the operation of such a school could or should have a balance to provide for capital changes. To have been able to take care of the maintenance of the plant is achievement enough. A few generous donors in the early years made possible the acquisition of the property and the buying of such equipment as was essential. While a small mortgage has always been necessary, the amount is today only about half what it was when the school first opened.

The situation now is that Griswold Hall, the residence bought in 1926 as the first school building, has been outgrown. It did good service in the early years of the School, but it is becoming increasingly difficult to keep it in adequate repair. No country house, no matter how comfortable for a family, is properly adaptable for school use.

In addition the actual needs of the School cannot any longer be adequately met by the present plant. Boys must be provided with physical surroundings where they can prepare their academic work under favorable conditions. Methods of teaching are changing, and the class-room of today must be so constructed and so furnished as to give the students every advantage in coping with the difficulties of the learning process.

Again, the dormitory facilities of Lenox School today are not satisfactory. It is important to train boys to keep their rooms tidy, but this is most difficult where the rooms themselves are shabby and ill-arranged. Sleeping accommodations at a good school need not be elaborate, but must be well ventilated, adequately heated, easy to clean, and above all, fire-proof. The boys at Lenox School have demonstrated that they deserve the best.

A word must be said also for the members of the faculty. In a school like Lenox, they should be well housed—not in whatever quarters may somehow be available—but in such way that while being in close touch with the boys, they may still have the necessary amount of privacy. Particularly is this true of the married teachers, for the women of the faculty can make an enormous contribution to the life of the School.

Three years ago, it was possible to purchase for the School some twenty-five additional acres of an adjacent property, well suited for development. It was a wise purchase, for now when we need to use it, we have at hand an outstanding site and adequate land for both present and future.

## *The Future.*

LET us take you into our confidence and tell you what we want to do. Take a look at the plan of the School property tucked away in the pocket in the back cover of this pamphlet. It shows in the lower right-hand corner, the chief original buildings of the School, and then to the left the portion of land, more flat, and further removed from the highway, on which we now intend to build. The plan is not easy to visualize but you can get something of the idea by looking at the wide sweep of land in the opposite picture. Naturally it is impossible to give any indication of the range of the Berkshire hills to the west; but it is not without cause that Lenox has long been reputed one of the most beautiful towns of New England. From almost every part of the School land, the boys can lift up their eyes to the eternal hills.

Now take out of the pocket the front elevation of the buildings we want to put up. They were designed by McKim, Mead, and White, a firm of architects in New York, chosen by the Trustees of Lenox School because of their wide experience in planning for schools and colleges. You gather at once our idea of a central administration building with two dormitory wings on either side. Turn back to the plan of the property, laid out with all future requirements in mind, as well as present needs, and you can find where this building is to be placed, facing the main road. Of course, this profile of the buildings from the front does not show how the central part for the class-rooms is set back from the two dormitory units, but you can see that clearly from the first floor plan, which you can now take out of the little pocket.

It is always fun to pore over a floor plan. Note how clever the architects have been in giving us so much light all round. The two dormitory wings will have plenty of light and air, and the sloping ground makes possible full length



“ . . . THEIR EYES TO THE ETERNAL HILLS”



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