

# The Annex

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The Commencement of 1939 at Governor Dummer Academy in Byfield, Massachusetts, was in many ways no different from the 176 graduations that had preceded it. Ranks of young men strolled proudly up to the podium to receive their diplomas, having just completed a rigorous four-year education at the Academy. Then, an older person approached the podium, exceptionally gray haired and wrinkled, amidst the strapping teenage boys. Even more unusual, however, was her gender, for Governor Dummer Academy was then the oldest nonsectarian boy's boarding school in America. Or so people thought. That fine spring day, the Academy Board of Trustees awarded Carrie Dummer a certificate of graduation, recognizing her completion of the Academy's course of study sixty years earlier, in 1879 (Ragle 142).

Dummer and her company of young women had attended classes at Dummer Academy during a 10-year period of coeducation administered by Headmaster Ebenezer Greenleaf Parsons, 1872-1882, an experiment which would be repeated a second time during the headmastership of Perley Leonard Horne, 1896-1904 (Ragle 76, 85, 174). Those excursions from a strictly all-male institution, a haven for legacies of dynastic New England families that sent generations of sons to the Academy, are barely acknowledged in histories of the Governor's Academy, and records concerning those periods of coeducation are scarce or else in disarray. The presence of females within the stone walls of the Academy, a century prior to its permanent transition to coeducation in 1971, apparently caused too much of an embarrassment to merit much attention in the school's proud history.

What, then, could have prompted such an undesirable measure? The traditional view, in John W. Ragle's bicentennial history of the Academy and in popular lore, is that

the coeducational experiments at the Academy were temporary expedients to raise enrollments and revenues at a time when the school teetered on the edge of bankruptcy. Coeducation could not have endured at the Academy for as long as it did, or even occur at all, however, without the active moral support of Ebenezer Parsons and Perley Horne, whose headmasterships are more than coincidentally associated with the Academy's first ambivalent enrollments of girls.



On May 8, 1872 the Board of Trustees gathered to determine the headmaster of Dummer Academy for the upcoming school year. "The Committee on filling the vacancy occasioned by the resignation of Prof. Stanton as Principal," Secretary Spalding Lee recorded, "reported the name of Rev. Eben G. Parsons, now principal of Derry Academy. Mr. Parsons unanimously elected Principal of Dummer Academy" (Lee).

The trustees, however, voted for more than the election of a new headmaster that day. In a vote that sought to clarify admission qualifications and a course schedule for new pupils, Lee recorded the following: "Voted: female pupils suitably qualified may be by the Principal admitted to the exercises of the school" (Lee). The pronouncement seems curiously understated in Lee's careful notes, almost as an afterthought to the more eventful business of electing the Academy's next headmaster.

According to the commonly held traditional view of 19<sup>th</sup>-century coeducation at Dummer, the decision for coeducation was merely an undesirable means to which the school was forced to stoop to scrape together some much-needed tuition fees. However, according to Ragle, when Levi Stanton, headmaster from 1866 to 1872, resigned from his post, he left a school not only in a state of financial *stability* but also financial *prosperity*. Ragle credits Edward S. Mosley, Treasurer of the Academy's Board of Trustees, with this

success; he cites an issue of *The Newburyport Herald* commending his “judicious, efficient management” and noting that “the school seems to be in a prosperous condition.” Ragle also notes “trustees’ records confirm the relatively healthy financial condition of the Academy during this period” (Ragle 75).

The traditional explanation, then, seems false in the case of the Academy’s first experiment with coeducation. It seems as though the trustees had little, if any, economic motivation to enroll girls in 1872. However, Academy archives have yielded evidence suggesting that the schools finances plunged between the departure of Stanton and the arrival of Parsons, a timespan of less than a year. Indeed, Parsons’s letter of acceptance to the trustees expressed uncertainty due to the schools dwindling finances. “I accept the position which you have proffered me...I have come to this conclusion, with some degree of hesitation, on account of the depressions to which I understand your Academy has fallen” (Parsons-Board of Trustees Correspondence).

Parsons was faced with imminent difficulties upon his arrival at Dummer, and it was likely those same financial difficulties that drove the trustees’ acceptance of coeducation. Though economy may have *helped* convince the Board, however, their decision was heavily influenced in large part by their hiring of Parsons.

An unassuming New England reverend and a revered headmaster of boarding schools, Parsons was an unusual choice for headmaster in that he was going on sixty years old when the Board elected him; an uncharacteristically old age for such work (Ragle 76; Andover Theological Seminary). Before arriving at Dummer Academy in the fall of 1872, he was principal of a less well-known school in Derry, New Hampshire. It was so unknown that Lee even misnames it in his notes; it was not “the Derry School”

but Pinkerton Academy, founded in 1814 by Major James Pinkerton and Elder Pinkerton (Pinkerton Academy).

Most remarkably, Pinkerton Academy was coeducational. Perhaps because of its lesser reputation, Pinkerton had been able to adopt coeducation earlier than other boarding schools. After a trial period of coeducation ending in 1821, Pinkerton reenrolled girls permanently in 1853 (Stearns). In any case, Parsons took office as principal in 1868 (Andover Theological Seminary). Thus, Parsons arrived at Dummer Academy fresh from a four-year rendezvous with coeducation at Pinkerton.

So, too, did his wife, Sarah, who would take charge as superintendent of the girls at Dummer Academy. Two Academy historians, John Ragle and Gladys Fish, take special note of her leadership role, Fish going as far as to dub her “a headmaster in her own right” (Fish 12). Her apparent success as “headmistress” points to the fact that Sarah Parsons was far from a servile housewife. Even Ragle, who says little about girls as Academy students, noted that she had some teaching experience, making her an unusually independent woman for that era. That Parsons apparently gave his wife such a long leash, at a time when men were traditionally the providers and heads of the household, suggests his relatively progressive views about women.

Unusual for a choice as headmaster and yet unanimously elected, Parsons demonstrates the level of desperation faced by the Academy during this time. The economic struggles faced by Dummer made Parsons, a deviation from the norm, so appealing that the trustees were willing to flirt with his progressive ideas.



Sarah Parsons was far from the only independent Massachusetts woman of her day. March 8, 1870 dawned with a violent New England snowstorm that drove off many potential voters for the elections scheduled to take place that day. At the time, the only people who were allowed to vote were male; no women need worry about casting their ballots in the storm. Nevertheless, a herd of 42 “suffragettes” and male associates made their way to voting stations. The Grimke sisters, 65-year-old Angelina and 78-year-old Sarah, led the crusade, relics of a century of campaigns for women’s rights in the United States (Lerner 262).

The Grimke sisters represented a split in the ranks of 19<sup>th</sup>-century American feminism in 1869. Sarah and Angelina joined radical feminists Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, who had helped to organize the Seneca Falls Convention in 1848, sparking the campaign for female suffrage with the “Declaration of Sentiments.” These women held the view that equal rights between the sexes should be a top priority of the federal government. They sought to obtain complete national recognition of women’s rights, most immediately the right to vote. Moderate feminists agreed that women’s rights were an important issue, but one that should be subordinated first to the campaign to ratify the 15<sup>th</sup> Amendment, securing the right of black men to vote. Those different opinions evolved into two separate suffrage campaigns. While Stanton’s and Anthony’s National Women Suffrage Association (NWSA) campaigned for an amendment to the Constitution of the United States which would extend the vote to women, the more moderate American Women Suffrage Association (AWSA), founded in 1870 by Lucy Stone, campaigned instead for more recognition of women’s rights state by state (Lunardini 89-90).

By the time Dummer Academy first enrolled girls in 1872, more than half of the nation's 200,000 primary and secondary school teachers were females (Collins 106-107). Sarah Parsons could count herself among that new generation of teachers, representative of a great stride in female education.

The NWSA and AWSA both campaigned successfully to increase educational opportunities for women. During the 17<sup>th</sup> century, women's education was seen as foolish; women were regarded as empty-headed and incapable of applying knowledge. The women of the American Revolution helped to change this view as, by the early 1800s, a basic education for girls had come to be regarded as necessary. Per what historians have described as the "Cult of Republican Motherhood," Americans came to understand the need for women to be schooled to be able to foster certain habits of mind in their sons, upon whom the vitality of the American republic would depend. Abigail Adams, along with a number of other important female patriots, stood as testament to the fact that women could utilize their education as well as any man could (Goldberg 56). By the 19<sup>th</sup> century, education had become a priority for girls as well as boys. Between 1810 and 1820, public schools throughout the nation came to allow women to enter their halls. Real acceptance of female education arrived in 1833, when a shortage of teachers drove even the greatest patriarchs to accept women as educators.

Higher education for women also emerged in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. Female seminaries sprung up around the nation, with the encouragement of people like Emma Willard and Mary Lyon (Collins 107). Willard began a battle for women's education in her *An Address to the Public; Particularly to the Members of the Legislature of New York, Proposing a Plan for Improving Female Education*. She argued for the state's

support of seminaries, but legislators lacked the necessary funds to implement her plans. Eventually, however, Willard opened the doors of Troy Female Seminary in Troy, NY, although she could only extend the opportunities it offered to upper class women (Goldberg 104).

In 1806, the first female seminary in Massachusetts opened in Byfield, just a mile or two from Dummer Academy. From 1818 until its closure in 1821, Mary Lyon attended school there. She later spoke of the place with reverence, praising in particular the principal, Rev. Joseph Emerson (Ewell 183). In her career, Lyon sought to make education available to girls in social classes other than the elite. She founded Mt. Holyoke Seminary in 1837. The efforts of the female seminary movement paid off. From 1776 to 1840, female literacy leapt from 50 percent to nearly 100 percent (Goldberg 105).

Regionally, the popularity of coeducation varied. The South was typically slow in accepting the idea. Southern society was traditionally conservative, so coeducation -- although championed by moderate feminists in the AWSA -- failed to be popularly accepted for a long time. Coeducation was more common throughout the Midwest and West, in public and private schools, not because of progressive social norms but because communities there lacked funds to build separate schools for girls. Unlike the Midwest, schools in the Northeast, particularly in the old-boys stomping grounds of New England, had wealthy benefactors to pay for the costs associated with separate schools for girls, thereby preserving sacred tradition (Rosenburg).

During the antebellum era, Oberlin College became coeducational, but most American colleges and universities balked at the idea of allowing women to pass through their hallowed grounds. They saw compromise in creating “female colleges”, separate

institutions reserved for girls (Rosenburg). Harvard University was one such college; in 1879, it founded the “Harvard Annex” which later became Radcliffe College. Lucy Stone, of the AWSA, saw the female college movement as a failure:

Our demand that Harvard and Yale colleges should admit women, though not yet yielded, only waits for a little more time. And while they wait, numerous petty ‘female colleges’ have sprung into being, indicative of the justice of our claim that a college education should be granted to women. Not one of these female colleges.... meets the demands of the age and so will eventually perish (Rosenburg).

Feminists from both the NWSA and AWSA agreed; colleges needed to be coeducational in order for women to achieve truly equal education. Stanton, founder of the NWSA, argued that isolating the sexes actually hindered the development of new ideas:

If the sexes were educated together...We should have the healthy, moral and intellectual stimulus of sex ever quickening and refining all the faculties, without the undue excitement of the senses that results from novelty in the present system of isolation (Rosenburg).

However, throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the idea of “separate but equal” education for women prevailed over coeducation.

Even in the North, views on coeducation began to change, however slowly, when economic depression ushered in by the Civil War and its aftermath forced many women to find means to support themselves. They returned to school in an attempt to find careers and found that schools were fighting their own financial battles. In 1872, the year that Dummer Academy first accepted girls, 97 colleges admitted girls to their ranks. The Universities of Wisconsin and Michigan went coeducational because of plummeting male enrollment and a lack of funds to build female colleges. Despite the grim finances of the era, Boston University chose to adopt coeducation for progressive reasons. President William Warren firmly believed that male-only education should be “retired to the

museum of pedagogical paleontology.” Cornell University also adopted coeducation for more moral reasons; the upstate New York institution succumbed to the demands of local reformers and feminists (Rosenburg).



The adoption of coeducation by schools like Cornell University, Boston University, and Harvard University, with which Dummer Academy had been affiliated at birth and to which it still sent a number of its graduates, could not have gone unnoticed by the people in and around Dummer Academy.

In January 1872, corresponding with their vote to hire Parsons as headmaster, the Academy’s trustees voted that the “Academy will hereafter be open to females, and the price of their tuition shall be seven dollars per term unless abatement is made in special cases by the principal” (Lee). Thus, in the fall of 1872, six “females” paid the seven-dollar tuition fee and entered Dummer Academy as day students (Girl Student List 1872-1882).

During that first period of coeducation, boys and girls seemed to coexist reasonably well, but clashed on occasion. One male student on his way to school found “two or three quarts” of snakes. Naturally, he chose to bring them to school and hide them under the schoolhouse stove, causing frenzy among the girls in the class (Ragle 76-77).

Among the first six girls to enroll at Dummer, Carrie G. Knight, later Carrie Knight Ambrose, became a longtime affiliate of the school following her 1876 “graduation,” as girls then were not awarded diplomas, despite having completed the Academy’s course of studies. In her later life, Ambrose often told stories of her days at Dummer, both good and bad. Once, when asked to solve a mathematics problem in front

of the class, Ambrose needed to stand on tiptoe in order to write on the blackboard, and her teacher laughed. Ambrose said, “I didn’t want to cry, but I was mad clear through and the tears just rolled down my cheeks and wouldn’t stop.” Rather than join in, the boys went to Parsons and, in an act of nobility, demanded that the teacher “apologize for laughing at that little girl” or else they would refuse to go to class (Degen 3).

Examples of nobility aside, student catalogues of the era indicate that sexist attitudes prevailed. The 1873-1874 catalogue acknowledged that “the school was open to young ladies,” and that about one third of the students in the catalogue were female; however, all of the girls were listed separately, behind the male population. In 1876-1877 the school at last put “ladies first” in its catalogue and declared, “the school is now open to girls,” but still the girls were forbidden from boarding (Fish 11). Neither were they then eligible to receive a diploma of graduation but instead a certificate acknowledging their attendance at the Academy. The ladies of the Academy were to the young gentlemen, a separate entity, akin to a prosthetic limb on a leviathan, simultaneously a part of them and yet something foreign. That said, the progression in the catalogues demonstrates that although the female population was in many ways separated from the male population, the isolated community of males increasingly accepted them and gradually grew used to its new appendage.

By the 1881-1882 school year, however, the school would reconsider its decision. Even with the addition of female students to the population, Dummer Academy remained in financial straits. A period of economic recession resounded throughout Byfield and the surrounding area; Treasurer Edward Mosley resigned his position in order to pay greater attention to his own business. Parsons’s salary was lowered by \$200, the modern

equivalent of about \$4,000. The school population dropped with the difficult times (Ragle 77). It came as no surprise when Parsons, then approaching 70 years of age, handed in his letter of resignation in 1880. “We recognize that faithfulness and ability of Mr. Parsons in discharging the duties which have devolved upon him as Preceptor of Dummer Academy,” the trustees wrote, indicating that a great deal of responsibility had been shouldered by Parsons and that the weight had become, at last, too much for such an old man to bear (Childs).

On June 22, 1880, the trustees voted that “a committee of three be chosen to consider what may be done to further the interests of the school” and “to call a meeting of the ‘Sons of Dummer’ to provide for...other needs of the school”. Discussions continued into 1881. On June 21 and again on September 6, the trustees met to discuss a report by the “committee appointed to consider the present condition and welfare of the school” (Childs). The Academy’s future was clearly endangered and doubtful.

Finally, on January 19, 1882, the committee engaged in the search for a headmaster found someone its members proposed as the Academy’s savior:

They were unanimously of the opinion that we should endeavor to secure the services of Mr. John W. Perkins...Of Mr. Perkins’ qualifications the Committee does not deem necessary to report at length, as they are known to the Board. ...Your committee know of no better person better qualified than Mr. Perkins for the charge of the Academy and they have every reason to believe that under his care the school can be brought to the position it for so long a time enjoyed among the Academies of our state (Childs).

Perkins was extolled by the committee because of grandiose plans he had discussed during their interviews with him. He planned to utilize the school’s farmland to increase its revenues, and he had devised a sheaf of new classes as well as a new tuition and admission process. Perkins’s proffered solution appeared so perfect to the headmaster

search committee that they did not “deem [it] necessary to report at length” (Childs). The trustees quickly negotiated terms with Perkins and by 1883 he was the new Principal of Dummer Academy.

Perkins’s plan, however, did not include coeducation. In his speech at the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Dummer Academy he said:

When the school was reorganized six years ago, it entered upon what many were pleased to call ‘a new departure.’ This, however, is a form of words which is often inappropriately applied and misleading; as, in the present case, the change was an attempt to return to first principles. This school was founded as a boy’s classical school (Ragle 79).

Under Perkins’s leadership, the school had indeed returned to its “first principles”: a boy’s boarding school. Girls represented the opposite of everything for which Perkins and his “New Departure” were hailed, not only because of their restricted status as day students but purely because of their gender. Thus, with the departure of Parsons, their apparent champion, and his wife and co-headmistress Sarah Parsons, girls were ousted from the Academy (Ragle 80).

Perkins and his “New Departure”, though, failed to deliver as promised. Hard times persisted throughout the 1880s, even as the regional and national economy grew. The Building Committee took note of the difficulties:

By begging some, borrowing some, and with the help of Master Perkins who has expended from his own means for the purpose, they [the trustees] have hitherto been able to accommodate the steadily increasing numbers who have applied for admission (Ragle 82).

The “New Departure” apparently succeeded in increasing enrollment, but still, the school could not support itself. Perkins was forced to take from his own wallet in order to keep the school running. His plan with the Dummer farm would fail; years later, he would still appear in Board meeting notes for owing money on his share of the farm, which he

continued to keep (Childs). Realizing his failure, Perkins would resign and leave the Academy in 1894 (Ragle 83).

For two years following the departure of the “New Departure”, the Board installed the Reverend George B. Rogers as headmaster. Ragle notes, however, that very little can be said about that period of Academy history. The Board acknowledged Rogers to have been an experienced teacher, but otherwise unremarkable (Ragle 83). He was not, apparently, a proponent of girl’s education. However, when the Board refused to renew Rogers’s contract in 1895, a new champion of ladies at Dummer emerged.

The trustees elected Perley Leonard Horne in a decision very unlike Perkins’s unanimous victory fourteen years prior. The decision was ultimately a toss-up between Horne and a man named Lewis. In an informal ballot cast on July 2, two trustees voted for Lewis and two voted for Horne, but ultimately Horne won out. On July 7, 1896, Horne was “declared master of Dummer Academy, upon terms to be eventually agreed upon” (Morse). After having completed his education at Harvard in 1892, Horne was considered well qualified for the job (Harvard Alumni Directory).

Dummer Academy revisited coeducation under Horne’s headmastership. The 1897 school catalogue noted, “a few young ladies from the village come in to some of the recitations but are otherwise not connected with the school,” and the catalogue did not deign to list the names of the female students. This practice continued with the catalogue of the following year, which noted: “daughters of neighboring families are allowed to attend the Academy as day scholars” (Fish 12). From 1899 until 1904, girls were again listed in the catalogue, although again their names followed those of the boys. Female students were hidden, tucked away in the back. School catalogues during this second

period of coeducation indicate much of the same grudging acceptance that the ladies at the Academy had experienced a generation before.

This time the ladies were even given the collective nickname “the Annex” (Ragle 86). Prejudice toward the Annex was reflected not only in the school catalogues. The school newspaper, *The Dummer News*, regularly published student themes, but themes written by female students were never credited with the author’s class year and date, as the boys’ were; instead, class year was replaced with the glaring word “ANNEX” (*The Dummer News*). Not only did this exemplify prejudice on the part of male students, it served to emphasize a greater injustice.

Although about 30 girls completed classes at Dummer Academy during this era, they never received diplomas (Girl Student Lists). An alumna from the second period of coeducation at Dummer, Ellen F. Riley recalled in a letter, “I spent a year as a day student at Dummer, ‘graduating’ (?) with the class of 1903” (Riley-Fish Correspondence). Riley’s sarcasm – “graduating (?)” – is a perfect articulation of what the Annex faced. Girls then were both part of the school and yet they were not. Girls attended classes as any male day student did and yet they were not acknowledged by the *News* as members of the class with which they studied. A girl like Riley could spend a year with the class of 1903 and never be acknowledged as a member of that class. “I’ve always regretted that year-,” Riley wrote, “sorry that the Academy was so financially embarrassed that it welcomed female students” (Riley-Fish Correspondence). Riley sadly captures the Academy’s attitude toward the Annex: embarrassment that girls had been needed to keep Dummer afloat.

While the Academy as a collective unit frowned upon the Annex, relationships between boys and girls were as friendly as they had been during the prior period of coeducation. Gladys Fish, a Governor Dummer Academy secretary in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, searched for more information regarding coeducation at Dummer and asked Harold L. Bailey, an alumnus from the class of 1904, about his experiences with coeducation. “We all came [to school] by team...or afoot the first year,” Bailey recalled in his letter to Fish. “Then the trolley opened up and that was our means of transportation. ... One exception: the Ambrose girls and two brothers came...in a pony cart” (Bailey-Fish Correspondence). Bailey recalls the transport of the Ambroses fondly, as a friendly jab rather than a stinging remark. Unfortunately, there were times when such jokes made by the boys at school would cross the line and become insults. One student wrote in *The Dummer News*, “We hear that Cora Ambrose has gained ten pounds. If she adds much more weight she won’t be able to walk” (*The Dummer News* Vacation Number 1901).

“The Dummer Forum”, a column in *The Dummer News* reporting on the school’s debate club, became a forum of debate about women’s rights and coeducation. In 1898, three years following the re-adoption of coeducation, the club debated the resolution, “Resolved: That Dummer Academy should be coeducational.” Arguing the affirmative were Roy Johnson and Catherine Crowe; on the opposition were Mary Burns and Warren Small (“The Dummer Forum”).

The negative team argued inherent differences between boys and girls made segregated education the better option. “At the present time,” Small argued, “although the young ladies are allowed to attend, they are not recognized as members of the Academy. They are not boarded, and their names do not appear in the catalogues” (“The Dummer

Forum”). The crux of Small’s argument was that the Annex was barely even a part of the school, due to restrictions imposed by the school that prevented girls from becoming fully involved.

On the contrary, in her argument for the affirmative team, Catherine Crowe contended that “Dummer, situated as it was, offered the only opportunity which was open to the young ladies of Byfield to receive a higher education.” Her colleague, Roy Johnson, rose in defense of Crowe’s point, arguing that the Academy had been generously founded by Governor William Dummer “primarily for the youth of Byfield”, roughly half of whom would be denied that generosity should Dummer return to all-male status (“The Dummer Forum”).

A panel of judges, consisting of three male faculty members, voted in favor of the affirmative: that Dummer Academy should be coeducational. The vote demonstrates perhaps a growing level of support for coeducation. Sadly, though, it seems as though this was a purely moral victory.

Although the panel voted that Dummer was rightfully coeducational, girls remained an “Annex”. All of them, like Riley, would graduate without diplomas, and the trustees would again end coeducation, and dismiss the girls, in 1904.

Harold L. Bailey, class of 1904, would barely recall the Annex, “I think girls were banned before my stay there,” he told Gladys Fish, “and it doesn’t seem as though there were any in the graduating classes” (Bailey-Fish correspondence).

Just as Dummer’s first period of coeducation can be credited to Parsons, coeducation in 1896-1904 had derived from Horne’s support. As headmaster, Horne regularly visited the South Byfield Post Office, which was run by Fred Ambrose and his

wife, Carrie Knight Ambrose, the girl to whose defense some Dummer boys had rallied when she had been belittled by her mathematics teacher. The post office was not merely a place to send mail. It was “the heart of this part of Byfield”, a place where people would go to share stories or to chat with the Ambroses. To Horne, it was also a place to converse with an “alumna” of Dummer Academy, as Carrie Knight was one of the original handful of girls to enter the school. When Fred Ambrose died in 1916, Carrie Knight Ambrose took over as head postmistress. Upon her death in 1938, *The Daily News* ran her obituary, noting that “Perley Horne, from the Academy,” had been one of her frequent visitors and a good friend (H.). Horne’s notable friendship with an alumna suggests his approval for coeducation at the Academy.

Horne’s support of coeducation was evident also in his relationship with Catherine Crowe, the student whose impressive arguments for coeducation had won favor with the judges. Crowe and her brother, Frank, attended the Academy together as day students. In 1901 the Crowe family announced they were moving from the area. For both students, this was troublesome news. Frank was scheduled to continue on to college in the fall and did not wish to abandon his studies midway through his senior year. Catherine, too, wished to complete her courses of study before moving with her family. For Frank, the solution to his predicament was relatively simple and clear: he would have to become a boarding student. “Frank has come to the commons to live and is now ‘one of the crowd’,” *The Dummer News* reported, “He intends to take the Harvard examinations in June” (*The Dummer News*, Vacation Number 1901).

That was impossible in Catherine’s case; because of her gender, she was restricted from boarding at Dummer. But Horne intervened on Catherine’s behalf, and the school

paper also reported that “Catherine is living at the mansion house with Mr. Horne so as to finish her course at the Academy” (*The Dummer News*, Vacation Number 1901).

If Horne had been an opponent of coeducation, he would have been perfectly at ease to watch the back of a member of the Annex recede into the distance. If he was even a moderate on the issue, or had no opinion on the subject he would have done the same, taking no action whatsoever and allowing Miss Crowe to muddle through any ensuing complications. Perley Horne was not content to allow this injustice to occur. He did Catherine Crowe a real kindness, and provided her with the sole means to complete her education, in the process showing that he truly valued the presence of females at Dummer.

Hired after the conservative Perkins had failed to bring the school financial relief, Horne and his progressive ideas seem to have been a new attempt by the trustees to reverse the school’s downward economic spiral. Although Horne had succeeded in considerably raising enrollment, the same financial difficulties continued to plague Dummer. After his sixth year of leading the Academy and succeeding only in raising enrollment but not in righting its perilous financial condition, the trustees gave Horne a final chance to present a plan for the welfare of the school and save his job. After hearing his ideas, however, the Board deemed them unfit and expelled Horne and coeducation from Byfield. Deemed a failure, Horne was fired by the Board of Trustees in February 1904 (Ragle 89-90).

“The growth of the Academy has been slow but steady,” Horne wrote in an appeal for funding following his dismissal. “The year 1896-7, my first year, we reached the teens. Two years later we registered [an enrollment of] 32, last year 41, and this year we

have registered an even 50" (Horne-George Correspondence). In this letter, Horne failed to acknowledge the sinkhole that Dummer had fallen into. "The pecuniary situation of the Academy is critical," wrote one trustee, "for it is in debt, and its buildings and equipment do not compare favorably with those of much younger boarding schools. It greatly needs a benefactor" (Eliot-Ropes Correspondence).

Dummer Academy struggled financially during both of its bouts with coeducation, the intermittent years of those two periods, and in the immediate years following the second period. Indeed, that problem would not be resolved until Charles S. Ingham became headmaster, in 1907. The school struggled through seven changes of headmasters before Headmaster Ingham would at last manage to get a handle on Dummer's finances (Ragle 121, 176). Desperate times had caused the school to take equally desperate measures. Girls had been admitted as day students, and they had not been granted the discounted tuition given to boys who lived in the Byfield area. Certainly the school profited from "the Annex", although apparently not enough to justify the embarrassing departure from the Academy's historic "first principles," and so the trustees again abandoned coeducation when they fired Horne in 1904.

But that traditional view only partly accounts for the Academy's 19<sup>th</sup>-century flirtations with coeducation. It ignores the two headmasters whose leadership and progressive-mindedness had been indispensable to the school's adoption of coeducation. Following the resignation of Ebenezer Parsons and his wife Sarah, with whom he had divided his headmastership, and the dismissal of Perley Horne, the school abandoned coeducation until 1971.

Following Horne's dismissal from Dummer, Kamehameha Schools in Hawaii hired him as Principal of its School for Boys, founded in 1887, and as President of Kamehameha Schools altogether, which included its School for Girls as well (Hawaiian Evangelical Association). Like the boys' school, the School for Girls, accepted both boarders and day students (Kamehameha School Archives). As President of both Kamehameha schools, Horne presided over both male and female student populations. If he had been opposed to coeducation, he would not have gone to those schools and stayed for 10 years. Rather than abandon women's education, as Dummer Academy had done, he opted to continue to give it his moral and professional support.

Ellen Riley's feelings of regret about the years she spent as a day student at the Academy, "graduating (?) with the class of 1903", leaves an ugly scar in the school's history. She never received the diploma she had rightfully earned. Both Carrie Knight Ambrose, class of 1876, and Carrie S. Dummer, class of 1879, eventually received diplomas as 70-year-old women. Carrie Knight's diploma, which now hangs in the Academy archives, is dated 1876, but it was awarded at some unrecorded date years later.

Belatedly receiving her diploma at Commencement in 1939, Carrie Dummer remarked that the document was "a bright cloud in the sunset of life" (Ragle 142). Her choice of the word "cloud" is telling. A sunset invokes the image of a brilliant golden sphere sinking below the horizon, setting snowy clouds afire with pink and orange hues. But clouds are also the stuff of gloom and rain, harbingers of storm. Carrie Dummer welcomed her belated diploma inasmuch as it helped to right long-ago wrongs, but it also invoked those wrongs at a time when the Academy, once again, shut out girls. Clouds would lift only when, 33 years later, girls once again entered the Academy, this time

leaving as full-fledged graduates. Their place has since been entrenched within the school, never to be forgotten again.

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