

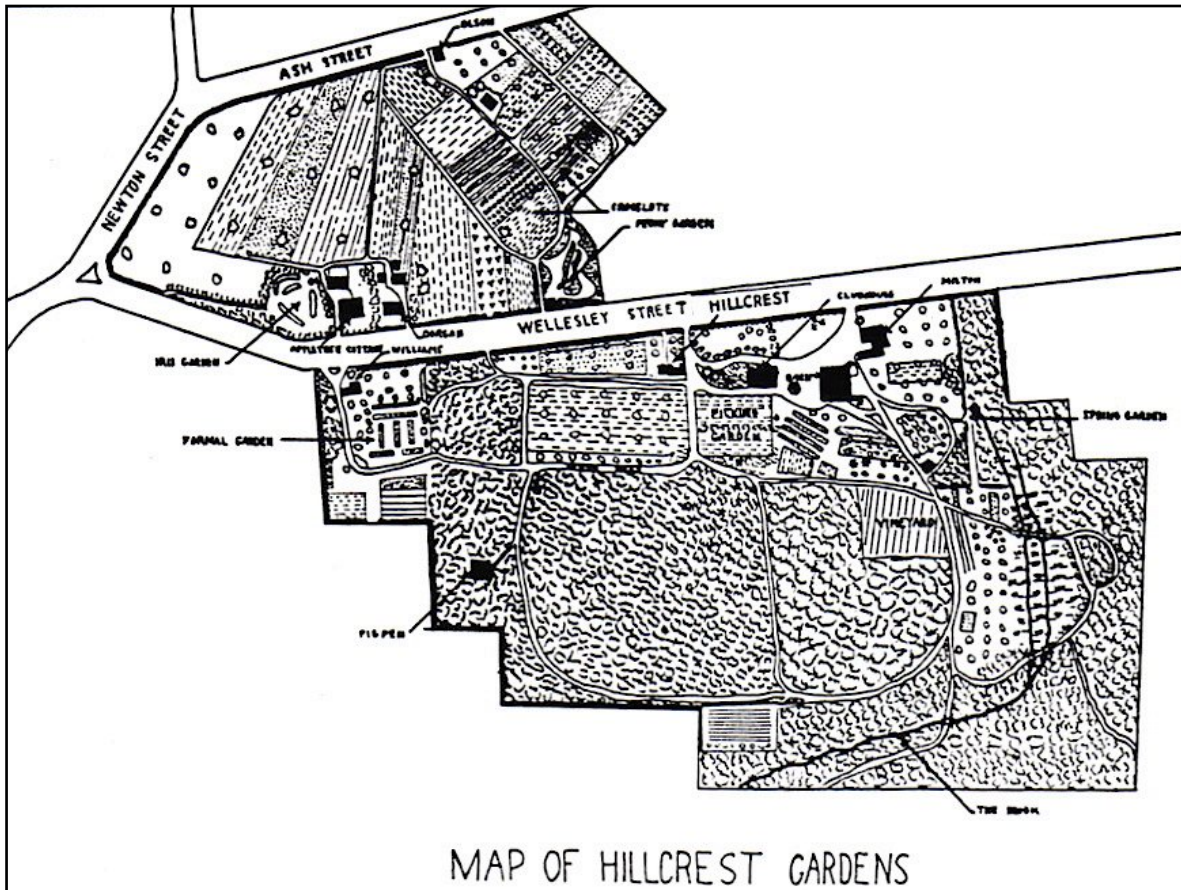
# THE WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN



Vol. No. XXXVII

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## Special Case Estates Issue



*This map from Marian Case's 1938 Green Book shows land use at the peak of her Hillcrest operations. The following features between Wellesley and Ash Streets are labeled: Olson (house), Cross-lots, peony garden, iris garden, Appletree Cottage, Dorgan (house). Across the street: Williams (house), clubhouse, barn, Milton (house), pickling garden, formal garden, spring garden, vineyard, pig pen, Wood Road, and brook. The Dorgan house was later demolished.*

Editor's Note: The May and October, 1982, issues of *The Weston Historical Society Bulletin* were devoted to the Case Family in Weston and Marian Roby Case's Hillcrest Farm (later renamed Hillcrest Gardens). This issue includes a Case time line and excerpts from the "Green Books" that Miss Case compiled and printed each year from 1911 to 1943. Named for their green covers, these 5.5" X 7" volumes chronicle the history of Hillcrest, which Marian Case established as model farm, regional horticultural center, and summer agricultural work-study program for boys. The first Green Book was just 10 pages long. The most extensive, in 1919, numbered 90 pages. Some of the later volumes include a group photograph or cover design by one of the boys.

To demonstrate the quality of the academic work done by the boys during the daily study hour, Miss Case edited and printed many of their required Labor Day reports. Popular topics included farming methods, vegetables, fruits, flowers, insects, birds, weather, and Hillcrest history and traditions. The Green Books also provided a forum for Marian Case to communicate her idealistic goals for the farm and to recognize the effort and accomplishments of the boys. In a strikingly candid and forthright manner, she expressed her frustrations, lamented her failures, and pointed with pride as Hillcrest achieved wider recognition and her boys developed into "true and trusted citizens" with a deep love of Nature.



## Marion Roby Case (1864-1944)

Marian Roby Case was the youngest of four daughters of James Brown Case, one of the first Boston businessmen to summer in Weston. Her mother, Laura Williams, was the daughter of a wealthy and prominent Boston family. In the winter, the family returned to their townhouse at 468 Beacon Street or traveled.

The four Case sisters spent childhood summers in Weston. In 1883, 25-year-old Mabel was killed in a carriage accident. Only the oldest, Caroline, ever married. The death of James Case in 1907 brought major changes.

The family sold the house in Boston and Louisa lived with her mother in Weston. In 1912 Louisa purchased a cottage across the street at 80 Wellesley Street. After the death of her mother in 1918, Louisa inherited the Case family mansion and continued to live in the style of her parents. She was remembered as a "perfect lady in all respects." Marian, on the other hand, was neither ladylike nor conventional. She has been described as "sort of the odd stick in the family" but also "exceedingly kind and helpful to others." She had a pronounced lisp. After her father's death, Marian, then age 45, embarked on a career combining farming and education, calling herself a "farmerette."



*Above and left: Portraits of Marian Roby Case. (undated)*

# The Case Family: A Time Line



*Rocklawn, summer home of James B. Case, now Case House, 89 Wellesley Street*

**1863** Dry goods merchant and banker James Brown Case and his wife Laura Williams Case buy land in Weston from Charles White, whose wife was the aunt of Laura Case.

**1889** The family's new Shingle-style mansion is constructed from designs by architect Ernest Boyden.

**1907** Death of James Brown Case.

**1909** Marian Roby Case purchases a farm adjacent to her family summer estate. On the property is a Greek Revival farmhouse built about 1843 by Nathan Barker (101 Wellesley Street). She calls the house The Sentinels. She also purchases a farm from the Hastings family with a vernacular farmhouse built about 1790 by Thomas Rand Jr. (131 Wellesley Street). She establishes Hillcrest Farm. The Green Books give the total acreage as 23+ acres at this point. Her two farm hands, Alfonso Gallini and Thomas Park, begin work plowing and breaking up the ground. In an existing orchard, a contractor is hired to drag rocks away on a stone drag. Aging apple trees are pruned of dead wood and rotted cavities dug out and filled with cement.

**1910** Marian Case purchases the Queen Anne house at 102 Wellesley Street, built in 1897 by Howard L. Cooper. She nicknames it Appletree Cottage and uses it as her own residence. She buys the partially-constructed Mulock house, moves it across the street, and outfits it as a clubhouse. The original cellar between Wellesley and Ash Streets is later used for storage of apples and roots.

This was the first summer of cultivation, sometimes considered the first "official" summer at Hillcrest. New farm tools, cultivators, and plows arrive. The first six "Hillcrest Boys" work through Labor Day. The chief product of the season is wild blueberries. Miss Case buys two Percherion draught horses, each weighing about 1200 pounds. They are named Pluck and Win, suggesting a motto for success. The first means for delivering vegetables is the "bicycle express," consisting of a box strapped on the handle bars of a bicycle. The farm receives an order and it is picked and delivered by one of the boys.

**1911** The first "Green Book" is printed, entitled *The Second Summer at Hillcrest Farm, Weston*. Ten Hillcrest boys work through Labor Day. The basic elements of the Hillcrest program are in place, including the khaki uniform and pin, lecture series by specialists,

inspirational poetry readings, special outings, and the Labor Day picnic and presentation of papers by the boys. A wagon replaces the bicycle express. Some land in the lower “cross lots” between Wellesley and Ash Streets is opened and planted, mostly with cabbage and tomatoes.

**Winter of 1911-1912** Pluck dies and is replaced by Nancy Try, “so now the horse motto is Try and Win. Though we have lost Pluck we must Try and Win.” (1913 Green Book, p. 19)



*Appletree Cottage, 102 Wellesley Street, home of Marian Case from the early 1910s until her death in 1944.*

**1912** Marian Case purchases a 45.5-acre property with a Greek Revival house built about 1847 by farmer Otis Train (137 Wellesley Street). The owner, Boston merchant George B. Milton, retains life tenancy. The number of Hillcrest boys reaches 18.

**Winter of 1912-13** The “hens tooth” wall is built from the clubhouse to The Sentinels at 101 Wellesley Street. The 10-foot wall later referred to as “Louisa’s Wall” is built behind The Sentinels. With the Milton land, Hillcrest now encompasses 70 acres. Part of the Milton land as well as land in the cross lots formerly used by the boys for baseball games, is plowed, to be planted with potatoes.

**1913** The Skinner System of irrigation is installed. The Hillcrest fife and drum corps marches in the town’s Bicentennial celebration. A new Ford delivery truck is purchased, and also a power sprayer.

**1913-14** The classroom period develops, better known as the “study hour.” Labor Day exercises take on the form that continued throughout the Hillcrest years, consisting of a procession with the boys singing “America,” the oath of allegiance to the flag, reading of the boys’ reports, and singing of the Hillcrest Song, written by Philip Coburn.

**1916** A vineyard is laid out on the Milton grounds. Hillcrest enters the town’s Fourth of July parade, winning many prizes. Their float represents Peace and Agriculture. The boys receive lessons in “vocal calisthenics” every Friday afternoon.

**1917** Marian Case participates in wartime efforts to deal with food shortages. She purchases five acres between Wellesley and Ash Streets called Crosslots from the Hastings family. Hillcrest has 25 acres under cultivation, twice as much as in 1915. Miss Case

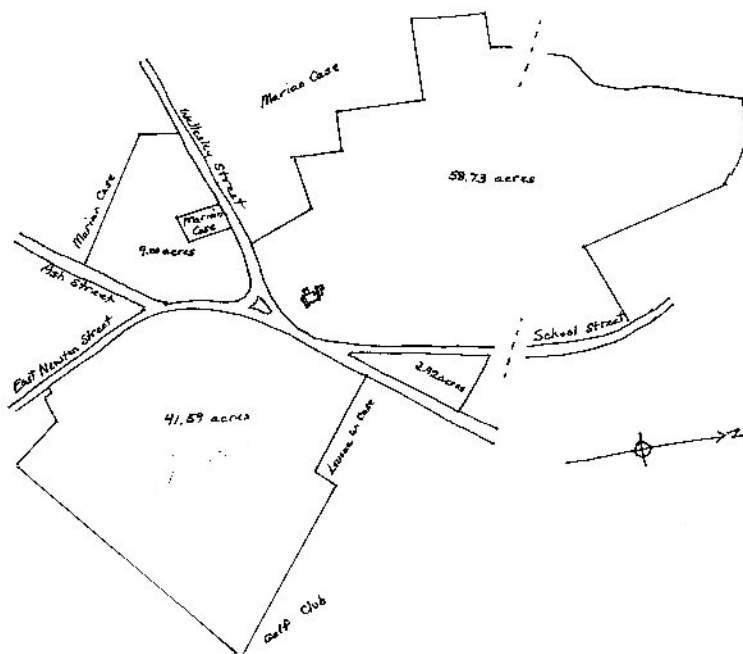


buys a carload of canning jars, which are sold at cost to townspeople. The boys learn to can fruits and vegetables in the kitchen at The Sentinels. Hillcrest sponsors a Red Cross Sale netting \$454.63. The boys canvas the town for donations to fund a tablet placed on the lawn of the town library, with names of men in the armed services. A new rose garden is started, in addition to the existing rose and flower garden.

**1918** Laura Williams Case dies, leaving the 113-acre Rocklawn estate to her three surviving daughters. When Caroline dies in 1919, her share is divided between Louisa and Marian. Marian deeds some of her share to Louisa but keeps two parcels, approximately two acres with the stucco cow barn on the south side of Alphabet Lane and nine acres at ["the nose"] between Wellesley and Ash Streets. A new orchard of quinces, peaches, plums and pears is planted on the Milton land. A donkey, formerly the mascot of a regiment, is adopted by Hillcrest after the regiment leaves for war.

**1920** Hillcrest Farm is renamed Hillcrest Gardens, reflecting a wider interest in horticulture and gardening. A Fordson tractor is purchased.

**1921** A stone incinerator is constructed to burn brush, producing potash used in making fertilizer. Hillcrest Market is established in Weston Center to sell produce from the farm. Marian Case is made a trustee of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, only the second woman elected to the board.



*Plan of Estate of James B. Case, August 1919. This redrawn map shows the land inherited by Louisa and Marian Case after the death of their mother in 1918 and sister Caroline in 1919.*

**1923** Eight boys board at Hillcrest, reflecting Miss Case's efforts to bring in promising boys from outside the area. Test gardens are started for iris, peonies, and larkspurs.

**1924** A new custom begins, that of inviting a former Hillcrest boy to give a talk on his experiences since leaving.

**1925** John C. Wister plants the peony garden in the former potato patch. Marian Case is awarded the large Gold Medal of the Massachusetts Horti-

cultural Society in recognition of her educational work at Hillcrest Gardens.

**1927** Construction on the yellow brick barn begins in April and is completed by Labor Day. The architect is Samuel Mead and the builder is William Kellar. The iris garden opposite Appletree Cottage is laid out by John C. Wister, a noted horticulturist from Philadelphia. Marian Case serves a short term as president of the Woman's National Farm and Garden Association and hosts a luncheon for 200 members in the new barn that fall.

**1928** Marian Case makes her last land purchase, of pine woods and swampland south of the Milton land needed to screen Hillcrest from Chestnut Street. A rock garden is started next to the clubhouse.

**About 1937** Hillcrest Market closes. Produce from the farm is sold at the Weston Quality Market in the town center.

**1938** The hurricane on September 21 causes extensive damage. The Green Book lists the following numbers of trees lost: approximately 3000 pines, 500 oaks, 250 maples, 74 apple trees, 15 peach trees, 8 quinces, 6 plum trees, and ornamental trees and shrubs including three Chinese Elms said to be among the oldest in the country,

*1937 photograph of the Hillcrest boys, with Marian Case (center) and Tom Park on her right. By that time the Norfolk jacket originally part of the uniform had been changed to a green sweater.*



**1939** Many former Hillcrest boys attend the 30th anniversary celebration.

**Late 1930s** Louisa Case donates one acre of land to the Weston Scouts for a meeting house and the adjacent two acres to the town as a permanent park.

**1942** Louisa Case gives the family mansion and 58.73 acres to Harvard University for the use of the Arnold Arboretum.

**1943** The 34th and last summer at Hillcrest Gardens.

**1944** Death of Marian Case. In her will, she leaves Hillcrest Gardens, a total of 102 acres, to the Arnold Arboretum. The Arboretum gradually develops the former Hillcrest land and the former James Case land given by Louisa into a regional center for plant propagation and experimentation called the Case Estates.

**1946** Death of Louisa Case. Just prior to her death, she prevails upon Harvard to sell 43 acres of the original James Case land to the town for school use. The sale includes the Case mansion, a large barn and greenhouses, and land that is now the site of Field School and Country School. The sale price is \$10,000.

**1947** The James Case barn behind the mansion burns to the ground. Insurance proceeds of \$15,000 more than pays for the 1946 land acquisition.

**1957** The Town of Weston takes 31.5 additional acres by eminent domain for construction of Woodland School.

**1985** The 35.65 acre field (often referred to as the 40-acre field) is purchased by the Town of Weston. This land is now leased by Land's Sake, which operates a community farm and educational program with goals similar to those of Marian Roby Case.

**1991** Arboretum Director Robert Cook determines that the Case Estates is no longer central to the mission of the Arboretum. Over the next 15 years, most of the houses are subdivided off and sold to private owners. Plant material is transferred to the Jamaica Plain facility or removed to make the property easier to maintain. Classes and other programs are gradually discontinued.

**2006** Town of Weston votes on whether to purchase the remaining 62.5 acres of the Case Estates from the Arboretum for \$22.5 million.

# Excerpts from the Green Books

## *The Second Summer at Hillcrest Farm, Weston, Mass.* by Marian Roby Case, September 1911.

“The land was bought in the spring of 1909, but the first summer was spent in taking stones out of the ground, a crop with which the town of Weston is rich and the stones are proving of value in various ways, but I did not want them in my orchard. The summer of 1910 I had incompetent foremen and little was accomplished. The third summer, or second summer of cultivating the ground at Hillcrest I was fortunate in having an excellent Scotch gardener who had had ample experience in the old country. . . . Next summer when we have more fruit and berries and our grapes are in better condition we feel confident that the farm will become self-supporting. This year we have depended on the sale of vegetables for which we have a good local market. There is also an old apple orchard the renovation of which would be another story, but the sale of Williams apples helped us out through August. Peach trees which had been planted on the otherwise neglected place are now yielding delicious fruit.

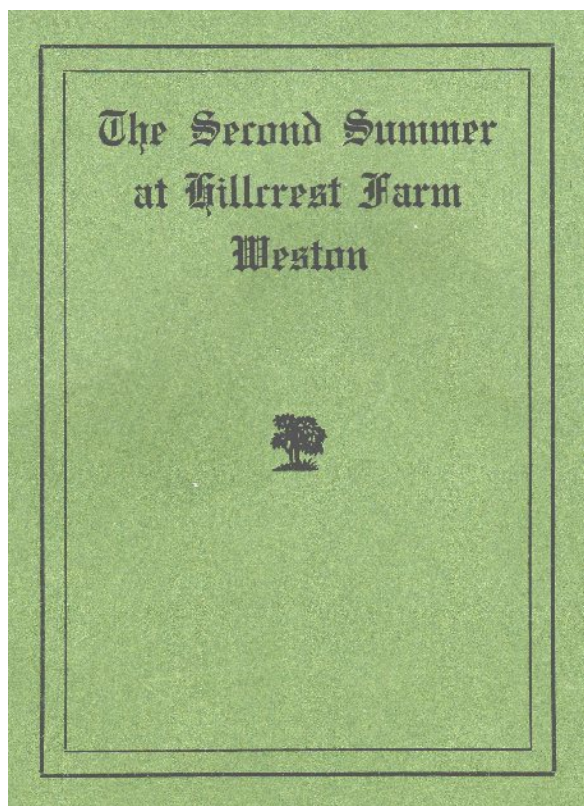
“Hillcrest is an experimental farm where we wish to work up the scientific side of agriculture as well as to employ the boys of the town through their long summer vacation. In order that we may keep in touch with the best work that is being done in agriculture, and also interest the boys in nature, we have had lectures through the summer by specialists; on butterflies, on bees . . . on apples. . . on grapes . . . and on birds. . . . These lectures were given in a little club house on the farm which has two large rooms, the upper one being furnished with folding chairs, a stereopticon curtain—the reflectoscope we have not yet bought but have hired a lantern as we needed it through the summer. We have also in this room or hall a platform, a blackboard and the bird charts.

“During the summer I asked the different boys to my studio and there took their photographs with my six and a half-inch Century camera, so that each boy has his portrait hanging in the hall, and a good looking set of boys they are. The taking of these photographs also shows how the boys develop. One boy in coming to my studio this year to have his picture taken asked me if I thought he had grown since last summer. I was able to tell him that I thought he had grown in everything that makes a boy worth while. The photographs taken of him this year and last show this improvement and I proudly claim that they indicate what the work at Hillcrest Farm can do for a boy.

“We ask to our lectures not only the boys and their parents but many friends from our own and neighboring towns. We have had many hot and some rainy Monday afternoons, yet the lectures have been well attended.

“When the boys first came to the farm this summer the military spirit was rife among them. In July the trees of our town were so badly infested with browntail moths and gypsy caterpillars that I felt that some extra measure must be taken to save them. I first applied to our tree warden who felt that all that was possible was already being done





*Cover of the 1911 Green Book, first in a series of 33 such publications compiled and printed by Marian Case, describing the work at Hillcrest.*

in the town. I then went to one of our selectmen who felt it doubtful if further work could be done, but advised my writing to our state forester, Mr. F.W. Rane. Mr. Rane came out one of the hottest of our July days and found the boys picking blueberries. He showed them the soldier bug, an enemy of the gypsy caterpillar, a parasite that had lain an egg in a worm, and others ill with the Wiltz disease. The boys told him of how they had been picking the caterpillars off the trees into cans half full of kerosene and of how on the ploughed land they had lighted the oil in the open cans and burned up the worms. For the boys are being taught that true patriotism is in civil rather than in military service. Or as one of the youngest of our boys wrote:

‘We must fight the battle  
Vegetation  
Fight the battle  
For our nation.’

“A description of this summer would be inadequate without mention of a young Chinaman, Mr. Woon Young Chun, who came to take charge of the boys in July. He is studying at the Agricultural College in Amherst that he may take the knowledge of our methods of agriculture back to his own land.

“The eight boys who worked on the farm last year returned in the spring. Two of them later dropped out; one through lack of interest in the work, the other went to another farm where he could get higher wages. His brother remained with us, saying, ‘I could earn more by working on my uncle’s farm, but I would rather be at Hillcrest, I just love it.’ I pay the boys a dollar a week for the first two years of training when they work from eight to twelve in the morning. The third year they have the privilege of working all day for twenty dollars a month. They are given two khaki uniforms, shirts, a tie, and the Hillcrest hat. Their Norfolk jackets have the monogram H-C for Hillcrest embroidered in black on their left sleeves. The afternoon they had their suits given to them Wordsworth’s “Happy Warrior” was read that the boys might realize that they were getting into uniforms for better fights with life.

“Twelve is the age at which the boys are meant to be admitted, but some younger ones came this year. Other small brothers are eagerly waiting. Boys need amusement as well as work, so they went with me to see Buffalo Bill on his final appearance in Boston, have had a picnic at Lake Walden, and field sports of running and jumping the Saturday afternoon before Labor Day.

Labor Day is the wind up of the boys' work on the farm as they have to return to school. In the lower room of the club house they had a picnic to which each boy asked a girl. In the afternoon the parents and friends came to hear the papers which the boys had written on some matter relating to their work on the farm." (Marian Case, p 3-7)

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"In our selection of a subject for an essay this year we were allowed a great deal of latitude. As I understand it we were permitted to reach into the vast store-house of nature that we have been living in all summer and select a subject from any of the great branches of nature or departments of living and growing things.

"The first thought that came to me as I cast about me for a subject was the realization of how small a space even a human being occupies in this wonderfully complete moving picture of growing and living things that the Creator has placed each of us in. The first feeling was one of deep responsibility and humility that I should be allowed to act even in a small way as a steward to help care for my part of God's creation, all of which is so fearfully and wonderfully made." (PEARS, E. Stanley Hobbs, Jr., age 13, p. 8)

### ***The Third Summer at Hillcrest Farm by THE BOYS for The Boys, June 18-September 2, 1912.***

"My subject is "The Reason Why." I chose this subject because I thought it suitable for the occasion. The younger boys perhaps wonder why Miss Case is going to expense and trouble to have us work up here. Is it because she needs our labor? No, it is because she wants us to make something of ourselves and to benefit us; therefore we should be interested in our work and try to do all that is expected of us. It will be a pleasant memory for us to look back upon our Hillcrest days as a starting point. Why not grasp eagerly the opportunity which is now before us, as other boys have done. Many boys in the South would willingly jump at such a chance but it is not afforded them. Boys much nearer to us than those in the South have been



*Harold R. Weaver was the son of Marian Case's butler. In the winter he attended the State Normal School in Elizabeth City, North Carolina "in order that he may partly grow up among his own people, and so know better how to help them." (quote from Marian Case, The Third Summer, p. 4)*

asking for a chance to earn some money in this way. I refer to those boys who came from Waltham asking for work up here. I saw how eager they were to obtain work of any kind and when they were told that only Weston boys were hired, they went off disappointed. [Editor's note: In subsequent years, many of the boys came from Waltham. Miss Case also began taking boys from other parts of the country, as boarders]. This happened only a few days ago. This should make us appreciate what is being done for us, and we should show Miss Case our feeling by cheerfully doing our duty. Who else is doing for boys in Weston what Miss Case is doing? I answer no one, then why should not we help her, by not causing her to worry, by doing our duty to the best of our ability and by not asking for unjust things. Let us honor and appreciate our Hillcrest Farm. We have a fine clubhouse here with literature, etc.

Another question is, why does Miss Case have men to lecture to us,—to show us different things? It is because she wants us to have a through knowledge of insects, plants, trees and the like, so that we may know them on sight, and be able to tell about them. We learn to work at Hillcrest. You may say that is easy enough, but at Hillcrest we learn to work scientifically. Thus I have tried to explain why we are up here at Hillcrest.

“Without halting, without rest,  
Lifting better up to best.”

“Remember comrades,—’Semper Paratus,’ and that is the reason why Miss Case has us up here.” (THE REASON WHY, Harold R. Weaver, age 14, p. 4-6).

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“The motto of the farm ‘Semper Paratus’ came from my writing to Harold before he returned from North Carolina that the boys watchword on the farm was to be ‘Ready.’ That they were to be ready for anything they were called upon to do. At one of their first meetings in the spring Harold asked that this motto be put into Latin. Mr. Pettey, who had charge of the boys, said that the best translation for it would be ‘Semper Paratus,’ always prepared. As an illustration of what was meant by this motto the boys had given them a plaster cast of the Minute Man at Concord. Who, out in the field with his plough, is yet ready with his coat and musket to go into service at a moment’s call from his country. Yet the boys are taught that better help can be given to a nation with a plough than with a musket. . . .

“On Labor Day the boys were given a flag of dark green and yellow silk, the Hillcrest colors. It was designed by one of them and bears their motto in gold letters. On Friday afternoons through the winter they have met in the clubhouse to practice in a drum corps with the hope of being able to play well enough to lead the school procession on Memorial Day. “ (Marian Case, p. 6)

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“They say that every form of plant was made for a purpose and has a value in itself if we could only know how to apply it, but we found it necessary to wage a continuous warfare on the large array of vegetation known as weeds.” (A DIARY OF THE THIRD YEAR AT HILLCREST, E. Stanley Hobbs, Jr., p. 15)

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“The chief reason why most every farmer has currants and gooseberries is because they are most reliable. They are not so important as other fruits but we would miss our jellies, jams and sauces if we cast them aside. They have the good habit of giving us a crop every year. The peaches may be winter killed, the apples may be wormy, the pears may be blighted, the birds may get the cherries. but we are always sure of the currant and gooseberry crop. They are the hardiest of our common fruits. These two small fruits take up less space in proportion to the amount of fruit produced than most others. They are very easily grown. These three points show you why we have in number one hundred and twenty currant bushes and sixty-four gooseberries at Hillcrest. . . .” (CURRANTS AND GOOSEBERRIES, John Cain, p.17-18)

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## ***The Fourth Summer at Hillcrest Farm Weston, by The Boys for The Boys, 1913***

“John’s paper [on work done in the winter of 1912-13] has reported much of interest. The large stones or boulders (sic) he mentions as making the wall were dug from Hillcrest Farm and neighboring land which was being cleared from rocks. As John says the single stones stand three or four feet high and show many beautiful colors.

“The high wall back of The Sentinels was built for the protection of fruit trees, especially peaches. These are to be the fan-shaped trees trained on three rows of copper wire which is run through lead pipes. We are importing these



*The “hens’ tooth” or “balancing wall” was constructed in the winter of 1912-13.*





*According to Marian Case's account in The Fourth Summer, the wall behind 101 Wellesley Street was built for the protection of fruit trees. The wall is ten feet high, six feet thick and 200 feet long and has been called "the largest free-standing dry wall in New England," although this statement would be hard to prove definitively. An account in the 1998 Harvard Magazine says that the wall was a present from Louisa to Marian and refers to it as "Louisa's wall. "*

trees from Thomas Rivers & Son, Sawbridgeworth Herts, England, as we can import the trained trees at less expense than to buy them from the American nurseries. The firm assures us that they can supply us with trees which will prove hardy in our climate.

“ . . . We use the town water on the farm through the Skinner system of irrigation. It carries the water in adjustable pipes eight or ten feet above the ground so that it descends like rain. It was good for the vegetables, but a doubtful benefit to the fruit trees between the rows of which the vegetables were planted, as it tended to keep the roots of the young trees too near the surface. But it is an adjustable system of pipes which with slight expense can be moved to another lot of land. In the autumn the pipes crossing the land were all taken down and housed for the winter.” (Marian Case, p. 4-5)

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“After Labor Day the drums were dropped for awhile. We all thought that if we could have a few fifes the band would sound better. In November Mr. Weaver told us that Miss Case had bought six snare drums, one bass drum, and eight fifes and a pair of cymbals. Practise (sic) was carried on every Friday afternoon. By Memorial Day we had learned about six tunes. We did not parade Memorial Day because of illness in Miss Case's family. Our next appearance was in the pageant when Weston celebrated the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of her incorporation as a town. We had to learn Yankee Doodle for the pageant. The day after the pageant we marched in the big parade and that was our last appearance as we went to work next day.” (THE DRUM CORPS, Edward A. Tulis, p. 6)

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*The Hillcrest fife and drum corps marched in the town's 250th anniversary parade in 1913.*

“Tennyson says in his poem of Locksley Hall: ‘In the Spring a livelier iris changes on the burnish’d dove; In the Spring a young man’s fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love.’

“But with us farmers our spring thoughts at present turn to our planting. Hardly has the holiday season passed when with each mail comes the alluring high colored spring seed catalogues. Then we turn their wonderful pages to see what new things Mr. Breck, Mr. Farquhar and other equally good seedsmen have found to catch our eyes. This being my fourth year on the farm and my third year as commercial traveler for Hillcrest, I was asked to go through the catalogues with Mr. Hawkins. . . we looked over and discussed the different vegetables and finally decided on certain ones which would probably be the most desirable for commercial purposes. I had grown to know through my dealings with the customers what kinds suited them best. For instance one customer would want golden bantam, another Stowell’s evergreen corn. For another customer we planted a pea called the Champion of England, as her preference was for that especial kind. In fact we have tried in every way to cater to our customers.

“In the meantime lettuce, cabbages, radishes, tomatoes, etc., had all been started in hot beds in anticipation of our summer opening. I received my summons to appear on the team the third of May for the first time. Much to my surprise I was allowed to drive Win, our old dapple gray standby of the year before without the aid of Mr. Cain or our friend Tom.

“Ted and I got up on the boy (sic). Our load consisted of wallflowers (sic) and lupins which were readily disposed of and we got orders for more. We were a little longer on the trip as we found most of our customers socially inclined. On the whole we were satisfied with our first appearance. Besides the plants we had apples, lettuce and rhubarb. For two or three more times we went around in May but found that we could not supply the demand.

“We had to give up the route for awhile owing to scarcity of vegetables, but it was only for a short time as on the eighteenth of June business began in good earnest. Tom [Park] and I started out in bright array very proud to deliver our goods in an auto truck for during the winter our friend Tom had been receiving training on the mechanism and driving of an automobile and came out with a full-fledged chauffeur’s license. Even pride has a fall and while we started out our first day with flying colors we met with an accident to the truck and had to fall back on our old standby Win. Never to be defeated, we kept on. It was not long before we had the truck again and have never stopped since even for a day.

“We did not confine our sales to Auburndale and Weston but when we had too plentiful a supply of vegetables a load was sent into Hall and Cole’s at Faneuil Hall Market. So if by chance you are in there and see some especially fresh vegetables you will know they came from Hillcrest. The truck started on these occasions at half past five and was home at half past seven. This was done in much less time than a horse could have done it.

“As soon as the peaches, tomatoes, potatoes and corn were ripe the daily sales increased thirty per cent. The peaches were beautiful to look at and luscious to eat. The tomatoes were some of the best I have seen and were almost perfect in shape. The potatoes were not hard to sell because everybody needs them, and the corn spoke for itself. . .

“In closing I think we should thank Miss Case for the patience and kindly interest she has shown in each boy. I have often thought when I have seen men and boys coming from shops how thankful we are to be in the open, enjoying the sunlight and fresh air of the country.” (A LETTER FROM OUR SALESMAN, Philip Coburn, age 14, p. 7)

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“In five years this farm has improved wonderfully, almost too rapidly some think. But even with these marked signs of advancement there is still room for more. Miss Case has said that we want to make this the most perfect farm in New England, to grow the best quality of fruit, to inspire New Englanders to return to the soil, and not let the people of Oregon beat New England in growing fruit. . . . I believe that this is one of the best farms in Massachusetts for its size and time of existence. Today there are sixteen boys and nine men on the farm. . . . I must say that if in five more years the farm increases in strength as it has the past five years, no doubt it will be as Miss Case wishes it to be, a model farm.” (HILLCREST, PAST AND PRESENT, Harold R. Weaver, p. 17-20)

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*In The Second Summer, Miss Case describes a boy who loved being at Hillcrest, That boy was Philip Coburn (1899-1983), at left, one of the six original Hillcrest boys. Miss Case was a friend of his parents and invited him and his brother to work there in the summer of 1910. In his delightful memoir Growing Up in Weston, he writes that, when his brother, who was two years older, heard that the pay would be a dollar a week for four hours a day, six days a week, he got back on his bicycle and went home. This worked out to four cents an hour, and he knew he could earn ten cents working for his uncle's farm hand. Coburn writes that "While the pay was small, there were other compensating factors to take into account. Each boy was provided with two khaki shirts, two pairs of long trousers, a Norfolk jacket with the emblem HC monogrammed on a patch on the sleeve, a green silk necktie and a Stetson hat, all of which came from McCullar Parker, one of Boston's best clothing stores for young men. We saved a clean pair of trousers and shirt for the Monday afternoon lectures."*

"Harold is delightfully optimistic in his outlook for the future of the farm and we echo his good wishes. But these last five years have been so difficult that we sometimes wonder if our patience will hold out. The chief trouble has been to find a man to take charge, who liking boys, knew anything about agriculture, or a man wise in farm knowledge who would have patience with the boys. The remedy for this trouble lies largely with the older boys and will be overcome when they show their appreciation of the opportunities given them not only in their papers for Labor Day, but by each year doing better work on the farm. For if the older boys will give a good lead the younger ones will follow them and the happy future of Hillcrest Farm will be assured." (Marian Case, p.21)

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## ***The Fifth Summer at Hillcrest Farm, by The Boys for The Boys, 1914***

"... I have read that in our youth is the time that we are trying to do things. It is the time that is allotted to us in our life to experiment to find out what we can do and what we cannot. . . . A great many of these things we can learn only for ourselves by trying and fortunate indeed are the boys who are surrounded by the right conditions and whose failures are not scored too hard against them.

"While we as boys have been experimenting with Nature we have learned right here at Hillcrest that Nature itself is not an experiment. The laws that control the growth and ripening of the vegetables and beautiful flowers here at Hillcrest are older than any-



thing else in the world and more accurate and unchangeable than the finest machine that man has ever created.

“. . . What progress do you think we boys would have made on this farm in the years that we have been here if it had not been for the foresight and planning of Miss Case, the founder of Hillcrest? . . . I believe that any boy that will spend just one summer in the work and recreation here can never forget it. It will make such an impression on his life that the memory of it will recur to him in after years many times and always be a force for good.

“. . . I wish to say that the influence of Hillcrest on its workers extends right through the whole year. It seems to be a settled policy with Miss Case that when a boy has entered the work here and as long as he continues here that he is never out of her reach. The impression that the work up here makes on a boy is almost as constant as the law of gravitation. It seems to me that if you should want to weigh a boy put him on the Hillcrest scales for a year and you would get pretty close to his correct value.” (WHY I AM AT HILLCREST, E. Stanley Hobbs, Jr, p. 4-5)

\* \* \*

“. . . The former Milton estate is . . . the most beautiful of our land, with a grove of tall pine trees and cedars and a brook running through it, by which a wild garden has been started. On a sunny southern slope eight hundred grapevines have been planted.” (Marian Case, p. 18)

\* \* \*

“The clubhouse was built by Mr. Mulock as a dwelling house for himself. It was then located on what is now known as Crosslots. So the house was on the land which Miss Case bought and she had it moved to its present site. Repairs were made and it was fitted to our use as a clubhouse, by installing electric lights and a fan for cooling the air, a heating apparatus and the reflectoscope. The walls were soon decorated with pictures of the boys, and other interesting pictures can also be seen on the walls.” (THE CLUBHOUSE, Everett Turck, p. 19)

\* \* \*

## ***The Sixth Summer at Hillcrest Farm, by The Boys for The Boys, 1915***

“. . . Another who came to us as a boy but who has now attained his majority, is Tom Park. He has seen the farm grow and has grown with it, so that he is now our chauffeur, bookkeeper and assistant manager. Stanley [Hobbs] has recorded the changes in our soil, as great if more subtle changes have come in the boys. I think of these when I grow faint-hearted and wonder how much longer I can carry the burden. But the old command is there: Let him who puts his hand to the plough not turn back. Our ploughs at Hillcrest are hitched to the stars.” (Marian Case, p. 10)

\* \* \*

“I am one of the boys at Hillcrest Farm and I like it very much. I think everybody does. Mr. Sweet is foreman of the place and he has it very well planted in vegetables. The things we grow at Hillcrest Farm are potatoes, corn, tomatoes, peas, onions, beets, beans, peppers, celery, carrots, cabbage, lettuce, parsley, asparagus, squash, cucumbers, oyster plants, parsnips and eggplants. The potatoes are planted on the crosslots, and down at the foot of the hill in the Milton lot. The sweet corn and most of the tomatoes are on the crosslots. The celery is under the Skinner system of pipes and where there were peas for the first crop. The squashes are back of Mr. Miltons. The peas, cabbage and lettuce are planted at different times and places, so that we can have two crops in one summer. The egg-plants are near the plums and have some purple eggs on them. Some of the boys are potting strawberries for next year’s crop. (WHAT WE GROW AT HILLCREST FARM, Charles W. Green, one of the younger boys, p. 52)

## ***The Seventh Summer at Hillcrest Farm, by The Boys for The Boys, 1916***

“This Labor Day the title of my paper is The Classroom. This is a rather unusual subject because I propose to write upon it from the point of view of both teacher and pupil.

“In order to be logical and also in order that I may be better understood, I shall give a very brief history of the classroom at Hillcrest. In 1912, when Mr. Pettee had charge of the boys, it was customary to have a half hour’s recess in the morning and in the afternoon. During this period Mr. Pettee would read some plays or amusing stories, or else we were permitted to spend our time as we liked best. The following year Miss Case thought it would be much better if the boys, instead of having a recess, devoted an hour to scientific research work. This plan was adopted, and every year since nineteen hundred and thirteen we boys have enjoyed the study hour or, in other words, the classroom work. The study hour not only served in place of a recess, but as a very practical period for the actual studying of agriculture.

“This year Miss Case asked me to be the teacher of the youngest class of boys. . . .

“The first thing I realized was that Hillcrest was neither a Grammar School nor a High School. That classroom methods, which are satisfactory at school, do not apply here. Profiting by the experiences of former instructors at Hillcrest I endeavored to evolve a new system which would meet the needs of the boys, a method that was systematic, efficient and interesting. . . .

“Each boy in my class was supplied with a beginner’s textbook on agriculture. I had them read each chapter by turns out loud. . . .

“As I have previously intimated, the classroom work at Hillcrest is carried on in order that the boys may have a perfect understanding of the scientific management of a

farm. Perhaps the most valuable part of the classroom work is the writing of observation papers each day. This is an idea that Miss Case inaugurated this year. It trains the boys to use their eyes more accurately, for each boy writes a few lines on what he has observed



*Rear of the clubhouse, later known as the Red Schoolhouse (2006)*

that is interesting in nature or some improvement which he thinks is necessary at Hillcrest.

“I think that my teaching has made me as a pupil more sympathetic towards my instructor. . .

. . . This year we oldest boys have enjoyed an exceedingly practical and interesting study of our native trees conducted by Mr. Chun. Recently we made a trip to the Arnold Arboretum that we might better understand the work which we were in. . . .

Perhaps it would be well to close this rather lengthy dissertation on the classroom by mentioning that President Emeritus Eliot of Harvard says that the classroom is by all means the most valuable work that Miss Case is doing at Hillcrest.” (THE CLASSROOM, E. Stanley Hobbs, Jr., p. 6-8)

\* \* \*

“ . . . This study hour is indeed the very kernel of the boys’ life at Hillcrest. For it is the time when the teachers and boys come closest together. When they study not only the lessons of the day, but are able to talk over together the larger interests of the farm. It has never been all that it might be. It is always the problem for consideration through the winter. Yet last summer when I asked Dr. George Stone of Amherst what improvement he thought I could make in the methods at Hillcrest, he advised no radical change, . . . He felt that our strength was in taking the boy instead of the college youth and in making him do the work about which he was studying. But the boys have learned more than agriculture in this study hour. Wordsworth’s ‘Happy Warrior’ is read to them every summer and they have quickened to the courage of Sill’s ‘Opportunity.’ This winter Mr. Joseph Gifford of the Emerson College of Oratory is training their voices with vocal calisthenics. and it is delightful to hear their ‘Ah noes’ and ‘rings’ sound out. The classroom is my best time for being with the boys, and I was glad to hear that they wanted me with them for some regular morning next summer. For from the time I was just a curly head in my nursery, I have wanted a little brother. I remember so well the day when a big paper

parcel came into the house and my sisters teased me by saying it was my little brother. Great was my disappointment when it was opened to disclose only a silver water kettle. I wanted a troublesome little brother. I have found him many times repeated at the farm.” (Marian Case, p. 8-9)

\* \* \*

“This year we have received several prizes for our fruits and I am sure we would have received another first prize and a second, too, had we exhibited our gypsy caterpillars.

“Here at Hillcrest we have remarkable opportunities for studying various insects. Since we raise such a wide range of produce, there is a fine chance to study a great number of pests which attack vegetation. Undoubtedly the most harmful and the most abundant insect here at the farm is the gypsy caterpillar. . . .

“There are many remedies suggested, such as painting the eggs with creosote, burlapping, spraying, cutting and burning. However, in my opinion, the most effective way is spraying. Arsenate of lead is generally used, although paris green is sometimes used. One advantage of arsenate is that it stays on the foliage, while paris green is washed off very readily.

“On the farm the trees are sprayed in June with a power sprayer. One spraying does not destroy all the caterpillars, though it helps to keep down the damage considerably. We supplement the spraying with the painting of the egg clusters with creosote. This is done in winter when work is slight.” (THE INSECT PROBLEMS OF HILLCREST FARM, Harold A. Mosher, p. 11-12)

\* \* \*

“We had a prize for the best decorated car in the parade of automobiles on the Fourth of July. The Ford truck car was decorated with garlands of oak leaves and peonies. On its sides in large letters were the lines from Locksley Hall:—

‘Till the war drum throb’d no longer and the battle flags were furled  
In the Parliament of Man the Federation of the World.’

Four boys rode in the car, Harold Mosher in the center as the angel of peace in white with large wings. Grouped around him were William White in a white sailor suit carrying the furled American flag and Wilbur Hallett with the quiet drum, while behind them were Charles Green and William Skillens with the flying Hillcrest flag for peace

# HILLCREST FARM



Asparagus, Dandelions and Rhubarb  
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and agriculture and a large sheaf of flowers.” (Marian Case, p. 36-37)

\* \* \*

“For in the winter of 1916 I was ill and seemed to lose my vision for the farm. I consulted friends who had previously helped me to know what they felt would be its best future development. One of them knowing how many difficulties I had already had to overcome said, “Why not give it up?” I was ill and tired but not ill enough for that. Then Dr. Councilman came with his interest, and enthusiasm and like a good physician inspired me with courage to go on. Yet the overcoming of its many difficulties has helped me as well as the boys. It has also given me good physical health and the joy of a big, strong purpose in life.” (Marian Case, p. 55-56)

### ***The Eighth Summer at Hillcrest Farm, by The Boys for The Boys, 1917***

“Why not give up having the boys at the farm?” asked a friend in our hour of discouragement. We had appealed to him for advice in so many difficulties. But he had previously predicted that our troubles would be over when our boys were old enough to help us. His prophecy proved true. This summer we have had the same force as last year. Mr. Mezit (sic) as foreman, with four of our boys in positions of responsibility on the farm. Tom Park, our business manager, was only fifteen when he first came to Hillcrest. Mr. Chun was nineteen. Stanley Hobbs and Harold Mosher were among the first of the Hillcrest boys. These three now superintend and teach the boys. . . . At Hillcrest we have run our plough through rough, uncultivated land. It has caught in many a stubble, but it has been hitched to the stars.” (Marian Case, p. 5-6)

\* \* \*

“This year, because of the World War, agriculture has been called upon to do its part. The result is an enormous increase in tilled land, together with the conservation of food. What has Hillcrest Farm done to answer its country’s call? Miss Case, realizing that every particle of food that could be raised for home use would release just that much more for the maintenance of our allies and our own armies, has adopted some new policies.

“A carload of fruit jars was bought in May and sold at cost during the summer. The employees have been increased in number. The first three lectures all dealt with the conservation of food and have exerted their influence in the community. Five acres of land were bought and planted with potatoes, cabbages and squash. Approximately twenty-five acres of land—twice as much as in 1915—are cultivated. Intensive farming has been pursued. As an illustration bush beans and melons were planted in alternate

rows on the same land. The bean vines bore and were removed, now the melons are harvested.” (THE NATION’S CALL AND HOW WE ANSWERED IT, E. Stanley Hobbs, Jr., p. 9-10)

\* \* \*

“It may be surprising to some people to think that the Hillcrest Boys did canning, but such is the case. Canning has been a new departure from our former work. . . .

“The canning was done at The Sentinels where the kitchen was equipped with an oil stove and other necessary articles. Miss Case secured Miss Randolph of Wayland, to teach the boys and to do the canning. Among the vegetables and fruits we put up were beets, corn, celery, tomatoes, Swiss chard, beans, peas, plums, strawberries, raspberries, blueberries, blackberries, wineberries and cherries. In all we have canned over nine hundred jars.” (CANNING, Edward J. Cain, p. 35)

\* \* \*

“Although Hillcrest Farm is a commercial farm for growing fruits and vegetables, one of the most important features of the place is the flower garden. It has always been Miss Case’s idea to have the boys learn not only how to grow things of use, but also to acquire a love for the beautiful. For this reason she makes a great deal of the flower garden by The Sentinels. One of the most interesting parts of the flower garden is the rose garden.” (ROSES, Daniel Nason, Jr. p. 40)

\* \* \*

“Sometimes I wonder if the good people of Weston who buy these vegetables at low market prices delivered at their doors, ever stop to wonder who pays for raising them and the berries, plums, apples and peaches which three times a week are sent around the town.

“Once there was a little child who offered her precious box of birthday candy to a gentleman who was busy talking politics with her father. The man took a piece and went on talking. The child waited. Her mother spoke to her. The child looked up and said, ‘Why, he didn’t say thank you.’ Perhaps a more generous child would have had joy just in the giving, but her sense of balance was disturbed. She was troubled and perplexed. The girl grew up, she owned lands, she could make beautiful gardens for herself such as she had seen in foreign lands. She could build a house for herself from the windows of which she could see the fall of snow on her pine trees in winter. But the woman had a vision. She saw men and women whose lives had been narrowed because their childhoods had been cramped. She saw men fighting losing battles with themselves because they needed not only gentleness but strength. She saw men enjoying high public favor while forgetting the beautiful consecration of their lives. Could they as boys at Hillcrest gain the physical strength to make their whole lives so full and happy that they would be ready when the hours of trial come? Could she at Hillcrest start the boys to lead such lives as would fill her woman’s dream of what the lives of men might be? Each summer the boys hear of these dreams in the inspiration of the poets.” (Marian Case, p. 45)

## ***The Ninth Summer at Hillcrest Farm, Weston, by the Farmers, 1918***

“In November we had received from the Bureau of Plant Industry an interesting list of New Plant Introductions of which we checked between sixty and seventy as those which we would like to try.

“. . . We watch each plant with the greatest interest. . . . For we feel that we hold these plants in trust, that they are the little links connecting our work at Hillcrest with the greater work of the nation. The Arnold Arboretum is doing important work with the shrubs and trees, but as Mr. Ernest H. Wilson told us on his visit to Hillcrest there is still much to be done along herbaceous lines, which might well include our native flora.

“All these experiments are very interesting, but we feel now while the war lasts that we must do our part in raising food, especially—as in May—we received the following note from Mrs. Alfred R. Pratt and a petition signed by sixty-four of our neighbors: ‘The accompanying petition will, I hope, assure you how greatly Weston people appreciate Hillcrest Farm. If more names are needed to make that assurance doubly sure, I am certain they will be forthcoming.’ The petition read: ‘We, the undersigned, desire to

express our appreciation of the service rendered to the townspeople during the past by Hillcrest Farm, and to request that its products will continue to be distributed in Weston.’” (Marian Case, p. 17)

\* \* \*

“As the marketing of the great variety of berries, fruits, and vegetables is of as much importance as the growing of them at Hillcrest, I have taken that subject for my essay this year.

“To begin with, I will divide it into three distinct branches as follows: the selling directly to customers who come to the farm; the trips which the team makes twice a week to Waltham, and the route which is covered three times each week through Weston by the truck.



*The Hillcrest pin displaying the H-C logo was awarded at the end of the first summer. The pin was one of many similarities between Hillcrest and the Boy Scouts, which was established in the United States in 1910 and also encouraged fitness, self-reliance, patriotism, and community service.*

“Compared with other years the sales have been greater at the farm this year than any other season. Probably the most prominent reason for this is the increase in the number of customers who own automobiles and come to the farm in their cars getting the berries and vegetables fresh picked. . . .

“ . . . Each Monday, which is lecture afternoon throughout the whole season, all the berries and vegetables then ripe are place on exhibition in the clubhouse and after the lecture are ready for sale. . .

“In former years, the team was sent on regular trips through Auburndale, but as this was found to be a non-paying venture it was discontinued and the whole attention was given to Waltham on the Wednesday and Saturday trips in charge of Ademar Campana with the help of two boys.

“These trips to Waltham are handled in a systematic and thorough manner. The team is carefully loaded very early with a good quantity of each fruit and vegetable that is ripe and is drawn down into the most thickly populated districts. One boy takes each side of the street and a thorough canvas is made so that everybody may be supplied with the fresh produce at very moderate prices. I think there is no one feature connected with Hillcrest during the entire season which gives a more satisfying and business-like appearance than the team when it leaves the farm on one of these trips. The large market wagon is piled high with boxes neatly arranged and drawn by Win, the older and more trustworthy of the pair of grays. It certainly looks as though Hillcrest raised something more than just seed for next year’s planting.



*The Hillcrest work horses (1935 photo)*

“Miss Case started the auto truck during the fourth season of the farm and I might say right here that this represents speed and quick delivery. The truck is in charge of Mr. Thomas Park assisted by one of the older boys and covers the town of Weston pretty thoroughly every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday morning. Everything that is in season is handled by the truck and they are carried so promptly to the homes of the customers



that it does not seem as though the dew on the leaves had a chance to evaporate before the produce is delivered to each patron at his door.

The selling of the produce brings the boys in contact with the customers and is very instructive to them. It is one branch of the farm work which gives the boys a good business training and also helps them to develop patience and tact as they meet so many different kinds of customers.” (MARKETING AT HILLCREST, Joseph Hobbs, p. 30-32)

\* \* \*

“Another more serious consideration for the farm is that of our prices. In these days of the high cost of living we like to put our prices as low as possible for the sake of our customers, but we wish to be fair to the farmers in the town. This matter we took up as carefully as we could last spring. We found that Hillcrest was well liked by the Grange, where we are always cordially thanked for our annual exhibits there. For several years we have received the blue ribbon for the best general display at the Grange. This year our table looked better than ever, but after having spent the whole of the previous afternoon in arranging our crops, at half past eleven the day of the fair it was called off on account of the serious epidemic of influenza which was then running through the State. The schools had been closed in Weston and later the churches were closed. No public gatherings were allowed. All funerals were private. Starting at the Commonwealth Pier in Boston the influenza spread throughout the Nation.

“We were the only ones who had arranged our table at the Grange and much appreciation was given it by those who came to the hall. Last spring we made thorough inquiries as to whether Hillcrest was harming the other farmers of the town and were told decidedly no. One of our well known townsmen said, ‘Hillcrest is doing good work. It is interfering with nobody. Go ahead.’

“Our work at Hillcrest is twofold: to grow fruit and vegetables, to teach the boys so that they will love and enjoy nature.” (Marian Case, p. 33-34)

\* \* \*

## ***The Tenth Summer at Hillcrest Farm by the Farmers, 1919***

“Hillcrest is no longer only a Weston institution, for it is well known in Washington, having received many plants for propagation from the Bureau of Plant Industry. Professor Sargent has sent us a hundred shrubs from the Arnold Arboretum, besides seventeen cherries and twenty-seven lilacs from his greenhouse in Brookline. At the last exhibition in Horticultural Hall Hillcrest received three second prizes, one gratuity and eight first prizes. In two of the second prizes we were our own competitor. Hillcrest is furthermore closely associated with the Women’s National Farm and Garden Association. Hardly a week has passed this summer but what the magazine *Horticulture* has had a letter from Hillcrest. This last year much has been done to propagate wild flowers. . . . Hill-

crest has also become interested in foreign trees and shrubs, sending to Mr. Pettey in South Africa for some. Dr. Grenfell is collecting for us in Labrador, and we are expecting results from Mr. Chun's trip.

"This year there has been a much larger attendance at the lectures than previously, due perhaps to a greater appreciation of Hillcrest.

"Reference was made to the Semper Paratus Boys or the Guards of the Hillcrest Flag, eight in number, who wear the Semper Paratus pins. This organization through these ten years has only eight members, due to demands placed on all who seek its membership. It should be an exclusive group, but let us organize it more soundly, advertise it more among the boys that they may claim admittance, and thus obtain more worthy advocates of Hillcrest. (TEN YEARS AT HILLCREST, E Stanley Hobbs, Jr., p. 11-12)

\* \* \*

"Dr. Hobbs in his paper on the history of our ten years. . . speaks of the Guards of the Flag, an order of boys who are entitled to wear the Semper Paratus pin on account of faithful work on the Farm and loyalty to the Hillcrest flag. . . .When the pins were given to these boys they were told that as Guards of the Hillcrest flag they were expected to be loyal to the spirit of Hillcrest in showing the dignity of manual labor, the worth of honest thought, and the spirit of public service. (Marian Case, p. 13)

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"Besides the fruit, flowers and vegetables which were shown [at the Grange Fair in Weston] we displayed a card giving the crops we had raised through the summer as follows: Apples (200 bushels), Peaches (100 bushels), Pears (10 bushels), Plums (10 bushels), Cherries (8 bushels), Grapes (110 bushels), Gooseberries (250 baskets), Blackberries (500 baskets), Currants (2000 baskets), Raspberries (2500 baskets), Strawberries (1500 baskets), Melons (75 baskets), Asparagus (1200 bunches), Beans (40 bushels), Carrots (50 bushels), Corn (450 bushels), Cucumbers (50 bushels), Egg Plant (25 bushels), Peas (35 bushels), Potatoes (450 bushels), Onions (50 bushels), Tomatoes (500 bushels), Cabbage (1000 bushels), Cauliflower (800 bushels), Celery (2500 heads), Squash (2 tons).

"With all these vegetables and fruits it seems as if Hillcrest should be self-supporting, but it is so far from



*The Hillcrest logo, an interlaced H-C, is seen on this iron gate along Wellesley Street. It was probably made by Weston blacksmith Oliver Patriquin, who made ironwork items for many local estates.*

that that we are often tempted to give up the commercial side of the Farm and devote its land entirely to scientific work and the pleasures of gardening. But the slogan of the war for the production of food is still being cried and we feel that Hillcrest as at present carried on helps the people of Weston.” (Marian Case, p. 16-17)

\* \* \*

“When we started Hillcrest ten years ago we realized that we had thrown a pebble into a pond and did not know how far it might eddy. The work of Hillcrest is manifold. Through the summer we employ twenty boys on the Farm to teach them and to keep them busy through their long vacation from school. We run a vegetable garden for our neighbors. This last summer we have started what will eventually be one of the most valuable pieces of work done on the Farm in making it a preserve for the wild flowers of New England. We are also testing plants of various sorts in our climate for the Bureau of New Plant Introduction in Washington, and we are hoping to do some good work with roses.

“Hillcrest like all new projects had to make its own place in the town. It started before the days of farmerettes, and it was hard for our neighbors to understand what fun Miss Marian Case found in farming. But the doctors understood. They realized that my need and liking for an out-of-door life with the desire that we all have today for service was finding this expression. Dr. William T. Councilman in his address one Labor Day spoke with appreciation, not only of the work which is being done at Hillcrest, but also of its future, when others will carry on the work which we have been able only to start.” (Marian Case, 18-19)

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“Hillcrest has won many friends through the decade of its existence. Yet perhaps the two who have helped us most through their understanding of our difficulties and interest in our work are Professor Sargent of the Arnold Arboretum and Mr. Wilfrid Wheeler, former Commissioner of Agriculture in Massachusetts. So this year when we thought of changing the name from Hillcrest Farm to Hillcrest Gardens we consulted them and were glad to have their joint approval. We felt that Hillcrest Gardens better defined the work we are doing here in horticulture, floriculture and vegetable gardening. It also more correctly states our ambitions for the future.” (Marian Case, p. 88)

\* \* \*

“...if I may be personal I wish to say to you, Miss Case, that you embody the spirit of my theme; you are doing here exactly what I am urging in this paper; for the spirit of this undertaking of yours is the spirit of democracy, the true American spirit, and the purpose of this experimental farm is to the last degree educational. You are applying to life here, not theorizing about it, the ideal of democracy that all the world has been to war for, and right here you are making Hillcrest—our small portion of the world—safe for democracy. (Prof. Dallas Lore Sharp, p. 89)

## ***Hillcrest Gardens, Weston, Massachusetts: The Eleventh Summer by The Gardeners, 1920***

“Hillcrest Gardens are a failure. As farm and garden they have been running for eleven summers and are not yet paying their expenses. A similar stricture could be brought against Harvard University. John Harvard never saw the university which now bears his name, though he must have had his dreams.” (Marian Case, p.5)

\* \* \*

“Every year, Miss Case has let us take her automobile to have rides on Saturday afternoons. This year we had three rides. The first ride was to Concord. There we saw the Minute Man, the statue of Emerson, and where the first Concord grapes were grown. The second ride was to Salem, where we saw The House of Seven Gables, the Salem Museum, and the Essex Institute. The third and last ride, which went to Sharon, was the most interesting of the three. There in the Bird Sanctuary we saw many varieties of birds and their eggs, also butterflies from all over the world.

“This year Miss Case was awarded a great many prizes by the Massachusetts Horticultural Society. [The report contains a detailed list]

“On August thirteenth we had our annual picnic, which the boys look for all the year. We went to Nantasket, which is our favorite place. We had our dinner there and went into the amusement park. Every boy had a very enjoyable time.” (THE HISTORY OF HILLCREST GARDENS, Forest Zoller, Jr. p. 6-8)

\* \* \*



*Hillcrest won many awards for exhibits such as this one at the Massachusetts Horticultural Society in 1921.*

“Last year Hillcrest was the fortunate recipient of the silver medal for the most beautiful display of fruit at the November exhibition of the Horticultural Society. This year we were awarded the W.B.H. Dowse Trophy for the best display of vegetables during the summer, winning by two hundred and twenty-six points over Faulkner Farm with one hundred and thirty points and Mr. Oliver Ames with one hundred and fourteen. We are so proud of this beautiful silver vase that we had its picture put on our cover. . . .” (Marian Case, p. 10)

\* \* \*

“This summer the experiment of having two boys living at Hillcrest proved so successful that we plan to have three more here next summer. . . .

“Close to the farm is an old-fashioned house in good repair in which we mean to have three more boys cared for during the ten weeks that the boys are on the farm. This summer we had eleven boys from Weston, four from Waltham and three from Auburn-dale, which, with the two boys at Mrs. Olson’s, made our full number of twenty.” (Marian Case, p. 16-17)

## ***Hillcrest Gardens, Weston, Massachusetts: The Twelfth Summer, by The Gardeners, 1921***

“The latest addition to Hillcrest Gardens is the incinerator, which will prove its value by conserving ashes, for as you know, ashes contain potash.

“This structure was made of stones collected from stonewalls which at one time bounded Hillcrest Gardens from other property. Its dimensions are seventeen feet high and twenty feet in diameter at the bottom, and six feet at the top. The entrance is on the north side so as to accommodate its approach from the road and also for the draught on that side. It is seven feet high and eight feet wide so that a large dump cart can deposit its contents within. “The ordinary bonfire is sometimes a menace as it spreads in the woods to houses, haystacks, etc., so a screen is placed over the top of the incinerator to prevent the escape of sparks. Rubbish, corn stalks, scraping, etc. can be burned at Hillcrest without fear of the future.” (THE INCINERATOR, Narcisse Geoffrion, p. 27)

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“This year for the first time the produce of Hillcrest Gardens is being sold at the Willowplate Tearoom on Central Avenue, Weston [Ed note: now Boston Post Road). Mrs. Green (who formerly had charge of the Tearoom) has control of this market, and on Saturdays I have had the pleasure of helping her. Week days this market is open from nine to twelve o’clock, but on Saturdays it is kept open until four o’clock.

“Every morning the choicest of fruits and vegetables are sent down to the market.”(HILLCREST MARKET, by Percy Warren, p. 27-28)



“One of the ideas of Hillcrest is to promote horticulture and floriculture by introducing foreign plants and experimenting upon their care and cultivation. Some of these introductions have been very successful with the conditions we have to offer them. For instance, the South African plants, which are the gift of Mr. Franklin W. Pettey, a former instructor here, have flowered while we have had them, but owing to our climatic conditions the plants from Labrador do not blossom for us.

“We have received a great many shrubs and trees from Professor Sargent of the Arnold Arboretum. These have come principally from China and Japan. “ (FOREIGN PLANT INTRODUCTIONS TO HILLCREST, Dennis M. Crowley, p.30)

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“Besides our farm work, such as pruning, weeding, transplanting, and picking berries, we have in our days work an hour for study. During this hour we have different work for each day. Monday we have our observation papers. In these we write about any new thing which we have discovered on the farm, a new insect, a new flower, or perhaps it may be that we have had the pleasure of watching some of the birds build their nests. Whatever it may be, we write about it in our observation papers.

“Tuesday we have our study hour with Mr. Stanton and are taught how fruit and vegetables are grown at Hillcrest Gardens.

“Wednesday, as you have already heard, we have both an interesting and an instructive lecture by prominent men from all parts of the country. We take notes on these and on Thursday we are obligated to make a report of these lectures for Miss Case.

“Friday Miss Case supervises the class. She criticizes our papers and often reads to us some of the famous poems. Saturday we have only a half day, so we have no study hour.” (THE STUDY HOUR, Robert Lassman, p. 47)

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Our sixth lecture was on “Old Farm Life in New England,” by Mr. Fletcher Steele. He told us that the reason people of old did not raise such good crops was because they did not have satisfactory tools, and they had to be very careful not to waste. Mr. Steele told us about the houses of the early settlers. In front of the house was a stockade for protection against wild animals. Inside was a garden with trees in the four corners. At the back was a long path leading to a summer house. On each side of this were fruit trees. The coolest place was the grape-arbor where the women would do their sewing and weaving after their hot days in the kitchen.” (THE LECTURES, by Daniel J. Mulhern, p. 43)

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“I have decided to take as my subject the flower garden. The wood road here at my left leads to the flower garden. We have about an acre of land for our cultivated roses and flowers. We have seventy-two flower beds. There are about seven hundred species of flowers at Hillcrest. We made these beds all over, removing some of the soil and filling in with barnyard manure. We used about a thousand pounds of lime for the soil.

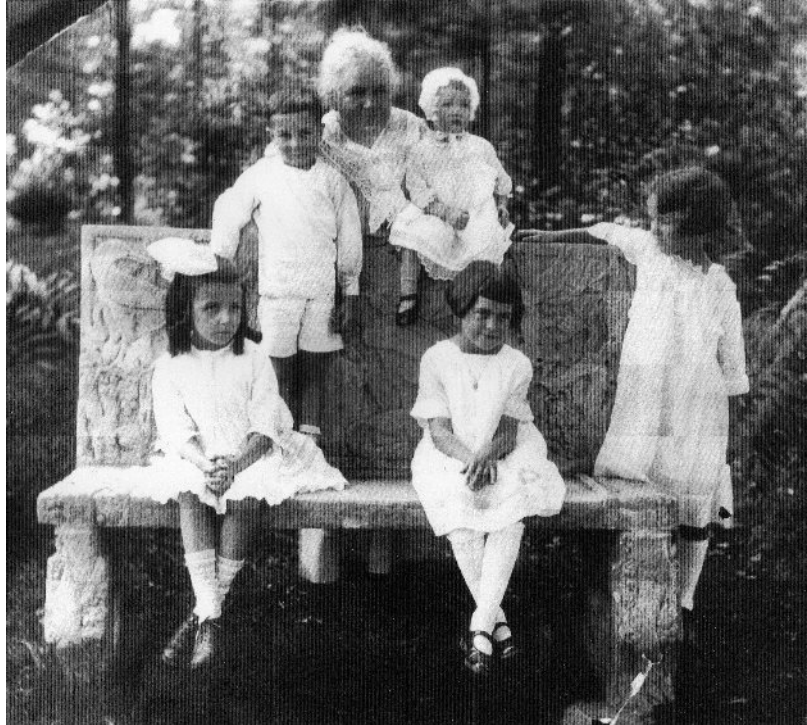
“We have some very beautiful rose beds and an arbor covered with roses. We have one long bed of iris. As we walk farther through the garden we come to a bed of gladiolus, walking by the rose arch we come to a bed of sweet-williams and poppies. Along the side of this bed is another filled with larkspurs.

“Among the flowers in our garden are pansies, California poppies, day lilies, petunias, lupines, speedwells, Shasta daisies, holyhocks, fuchsias, Iceland poppies, peonies, and autumn asters. Several of the boys have worked every day in the garden weeding, transplanting, and pruning.

“We decorate our lecture room with flowers from our garden every Wednesday afternoon. Some of our flowers we send to the exhibitions at Horticultural Hall.

“One of the new objects in our garden is a cement seat built this summer by Mr. Russell G. Crook of Lincoln, Massachusetts. It is certainly beautiful and I would like to have you see it before you go home. Our garden is kept in good order by our head gardener, Mr. Allen. After the exercises I hope you may visit the flower garden, and also you will notice our new flower beds by the wood road which the boys helped to make at Hillcrest this summer.” (THE FLOWER GARDEN, Mitchell Simon, p. 56)

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*The cement bench mentioned in the report above is shown in this photograph, taken about 1922, when Marian Case was about 58 years old. She poses with the children of her employees, who are all carefully outfitted in white. The two youngest, Jack and Irene Williams, are in the top row. Vyvyian Williams and Emily Olson are seated and Laura Mezitt stands at the side of the bench, which was located behind 101 Wellesley Street.*

**(Excerpts from the Green Books of 1922 to 1943 will be included in the next issue of *The Weston Historical Society Bulletin*)**

**From the Editor: It's dues time again. Our fiscal year starts each fall. Your membership entitles you to two issues of the *Bulletin* each year, as well as invitations to programs and events, PLUS you are supporting our efforts to preserve Weston historical materials and educate residents about the history of our town. We try to keep the dues low but welcome additional contributions. The society's annual meeting and fall program will be held on Thursday, November 30, 7:30 pm at the Community Room of the Weston Public Library.**

**The Weston Historical Society would like to thank Fred Campbell for his gift of butter-making tools belonging to the Dean estate. Fred's grandfather was the caretaker of the estate and his grandmother made the butter. Among the items are two butter molds, one with the estate name, Oakridge, and the other Myakka, which was the name of Dean's Florida cabin cruiser. Fred also donated a milk bottle from Ferndale Farm and two unusual post-cards, one of Glen Farms dairy and the other of Ferndale Farm dairy.**

**Thanks also to our newest life members: Jane T.N. Fogg, John and Nathalie Thompson, and Nick and Karin Leschly.**

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