Rosalie Edge: A Most Determined Lady (1877-1962)

by Peter Edge

Editor's note: Peter Edge worked alongside his mother on many conservation issues and served the Sanctuary's board of directors for 49 years. Peter first wrote this short biography for presentation to the Chicago Literary Club in the 1980s, and later at the Founder's Day Lecture at Hawk Mountain on July 1998. One of his last wishes before his death in 2002 was that the story be shared with others.

I assume that most of you know that my mother, Rosalie Edge, was the prime mover in the acquisition of Hawk Mountain Sanctuary – more than sixty years ago. And that for more than 25 years thereafter, until her death in 1962, she was President of this Association, working with the Board of Directors and our now-famous Curator, Maurice Broun, to establish this great institution in its eminent position in the world of conservation. Hawk Mountain was the crowning achievement of my mother's career in conservation, which began only in 1929.

I had the privilege of participating in much of her activity, mostly as an observer. During the early days of my mother's conservation work, I was away at college and law school, later working for the U.S. government in Harrisburg and Washington, or at sea during the war. But, nonetheless, I was able to furnish support to my mother, and even some occasional advice. She appreciated my help and put me on the first Board of Directors of Hawk Mountain Sanctuary Association. I served as a director and secretary for forty-nine years after my mother's death. As a result, I did have the opportunity to observe my mother's activities and even sometimes to participate in them. I trust that I can share some of this with you.

It is now more than 35 years since my mother, Rosalie Edge, died at the age of 85. She was born in 1877. However, her true career began in 1929, when she was already 52 years old. In this career, she became an effective pioneer in the world of conservation, particularly in respect to our National Parks. Her crowning achievement was the founding of Hawk Mountain Sanctuary. Today, I still meet strangers who are much impressed to learn that I am related to the famous Rosalie Edge, who achieved so much.

Living in New York City, in the mid-1920s, newly separated from her husband of 15 years; my mother devoted considerable time to bird-watching, then called "birding". Every morning, particularly in the spring, she would take her binoculars to the Ramble in Central Park, and do her best to identify the unusual numbers of migrating songbirds that took refuge in this oasis in the middle of the large city on the Atlantic flyway. Here she met the several dozen regular enthusiasts, not all idle women, and including some of the professional biologists from the American Museum of Natural History across the Park. As a teenager, I joined in her interests, and on weekends I met some of the group, and shared in the collegial atmosphere. She encouraged me, even to the extent that I once received a telegram at school, instructing me to stop on my way home, to see the loon on the Central Park Reservoir. But her Central Park

birding, even when extended to Europe during several summer vacations, never became more than an agreeable pastime.

In late August of 1929, my mother's new career, her new life and her new faith came suddenly, almost as it happened to Paul on the road to Damascus. We, my mother, my sister and I, were at a small hotel in Paris. The mail from home included a 16-page pamphlet: A Crisis in Conservation, published only several months earlier. The pamphlet set forth the danger to many North American birds, particularly birds other than the small song and insectivorous birds for which there was already some degree of protection. The pamphlet listed some species as “beyond saving,” of which four are today extinct, at least in the United States. The others ranged from very hard to find, to in the case of the Whooping Crane, a single surviving flock. Sixteen species were listed as “possibly within the realm of saving” and ten more as “more or less in danger.” Today, many of these species still exist, some few in greater number than in 1929. This modest good fortune is probably due to the conservation movement, engendered in large part by this pamphlet.

However, the principal thrust of A Crisis in Conservation, lay not in its recitals of the perils impending for so many species. To a considerable degree, these were known, if not by the general public, at least by interested individuals, both professional and amateur. The greater shock conveyed by the pamphlet lay in its descriptions of the slaughter practiced and condoned by groups of sportsmen – later referred to by my mother as “so-called sportsmen." The most serious charge of all was that the National Association of Audubon Societies, not named but unmistakably identified, was not only inactive in the protection of birds (other than the songbirds), but was in league with the gunners to protect their sport. It was this last charge that most aroused my mother as she read the pamphlet that afternoon in Paris, and again as she reread it, many times over, seated in her deck chair aboard the liner taking us back to New York.

The principal author of A Crisis in Conservation, was Willard Gibbs Van Name, a devoted conservationist until the day he died. He was my mother's mentor and totally supported her work for many years. Willard Van Name (to my mother, he, in due course became “Will," but it was many years before I could bring myself to call him anything other than “Dr. Van Name”) was a crusty bachelor, some years older than my mother. He was a nephew of Josaiah Willard Van Gibbs, the once famous mathematical physicist at Yale. Throughout his professional life, Dr. Van Name worked at the American Museum of Natural History in New York, as curator of marine invertebrates, a field that to the average layman has little romance. He lived simply. He was an accomplished field ornithologist, but his only apparent recreations were spartan vacations in the wildernesses of the Pacific Coast, which he loved greatly and came to know intimately. He had some moderate private income, and devoted it all to his endeavors in the field of conservation--in 1929 to publishing and distributing A Crisis in Conservation.

I am not sure how my mother met Dr. Van Name. A story that they met in Central Park, while inspecting the nest of a Wood Thrush, is an agreeable myth, probably invented by the author of the New Yorker “profile” of my mother, published in 1948, though it is not entirely impossible that she concocted it to beguile the unwitting New Yorker reporter. I never did discover why Dr. Van Name sent Crisis to my mother; he probably got her name from one of

the other Central Park birders. In any event, my mother had no difficulty getting in touch with him on her return to New York in September 1929.

The meeting between Van Name and my mother would, in today's corporate jargon, be called synergistic. Each contributed enormously to their partnership, and together they could do what neither could do separately. Van Name had great love for the wilderness and for all wildlife, backed up by a great fund of knowledge and personal observation. My mother had the time, together with an ability to organize and the experience of working for Women's Suffrage. Above all, she was emotionally convinced of the justice of Van Name's cause.

The immediate result was that my mother became the distributor of A Crisis in Conservation. The management of the American Museum was intertwined with the directors of the Audubon Society, and Van Name had been forbidden to continue his public attack, or indeed to publish anything other than technical papers on marine invertebrates. It was some years before Dr. Van Name again signed another pamphlet, though in the meantime, he wrote a number that were published by my mother. As he said: “They can't stop me from writing!” An effective method of distribution had to be found. The natural solutions lay in my mother's brownstone house on East 72nd Street. The servants' sitting-room was soon filled with boxes of pamphlets, and my mother and her sister (and sometimes I) would address and fill envelopes in what appeared to be unending numbers.

Within a year, the Emergency Conservation Committee had been formed, to remain in existence until my mother's death 22 years later. At first, Davis Quinn (one of the authors of Crisis) was named as secretary, to be supplanted in 1930 by my mother, who continued to call herself secretary until 1933, when she gave herself the title of Chairman. Irving Brant, editor of a St. Louis newspaper, the Star Times, became Treasurer, a post he retained as long as the E.C.C. remained in existence. Brant's function as Treasurer remained nominal, but he had much detailed knowledge of the conservation field and the people involved. Particularly during the New Deal, he had direct communications to many important people, including President Roosevelt and Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes. His help and advice to my mother were invaluable. He wrote several pamphlets published by the Committee. Later, he became the distinguished author of the authoritative biography of James Madison.

This was the Emergency Conservation Committee. Although there were occasionally one or two other members (never including Van Name), the Committee was in fact the alter ego of my mother. No wonder its opponents sometimes referred to the "so-called" Emergency Conservation Committee, or was this revenge for my mother's frequent references to "so-called" sportsmen? No matter! The Emergency Conservation Committee thrived, with my mother's direction and the help, from time to time, of her advisors, particularly Van Name and Brant.

The Emergency Conservation Committee had no public members, only contributors and supporters – basically one in the same. Almost all of the funds contributed to the Committee were small amounts from many individuals. There was never a contribution of as much as $500 (except occasionally from Dr. Van Name); a contribution of $100 was a rare event. The annual income never reached $10,000, and the money was spent most cautiously. The E.C.C. never issued a general appeal for funds, to the public or even to former contributors. But every mailing, every pamphlet, contained an appeal slip to make contributions easy.

Incidentally, I know nothing to indicate that my mother ever gave a penny to the Emergency Conservation Committee. Nor did she ever take anything out, even for expenses, except perhaps for an occasional rail ticket to Washington, and of course the rent on the Committee's tiny Lexington Avenue office ($25 a month) and (I quote) “part-time secretarial services, including addressing and multigraphing,” which in 1934 cost only $1,068. My mother did devote her own time and emotional effort unsparingly, including the writing of a personal handwritten acknowledgement for every gift, however small.

The principal activity of the Emergency Conservation Committee was the publication of pamphlets, news releases, letters and other papers that the librarians called “ephemera”. In all, more than a hundred titles were published and more than a million copies were distributed. This is not the occasion to list them. It is enough now to note that they covered many subjects, not only the major campaigns about some of which I will soon tell you, but also many narrower topics such as the protection of the White Pelican or the antelope.

The power of the Emergency Conservation Committee became enormous in proportion to its small income and financial resources. Each mailing would produce appropriate editorials from its supporters on the staffs of the prominent newspapers, particularly the New York Times. If requested, the contributors would enthusiastically write their congressmen and other officials. The good word spread fast! It may well be that this resulted from the virtue of its causes and its appeals to the people addressed. But I believe that it was equally the result of the Committee's vigorous and effective personal approach to its supporters. But the ultimate success arose because these appeals and the resulting public support were supplemented by my mother's forthright and extraordinary attitude to people in power, both friends and enemies. An intelligent woman, active and belligerent in the field of conservation–this was a phenomenon with which the men in power, at least fifty years ago, did not know how to cope.

My mother's original reputation in the field of conservation was founded on her campaign against the management of the Audubon Society, carried on personally and in her own name. It started out in a comparatively small way. The Audubon Society, pursuant to its by-laws, held an annual meeting at the end of October, at which the members elected the directors for the coming year. Traditionally, the formalities were few, the officers made self-congratulatory speeches, a movie was shown, and the members adjourned for lunch. The meeting, always held at the American Museum in New York, was generally attended almost solely by the Society's staff. An ordinary member was rare.

On the last Tuesday in October 1929, less than two months after my mother first received Crisis in Conservation in Paris, and coincidentally only a few days after Black Friday on the New York Stock Exchange, my mother walked across Central Park. The meeting was in progress when she walked in all alone and took a seat in the front row. The speaker extolled the virtues of the Audubon Society and in passing explained that: “The Society has dignifiedly stepped aside from criticism in a pamphlet that is not worth further reference.” At this point, my mother made her entrance into the world of conservation. She arose to ask what answer a loyal member could make to the pamphlet. The result was fierce rebuttal from the officers, particularly T. Gilbert Pearson, the president, and Frank Chapman and Robert Cushman Murphy, eminent professional ornithologists in the American Museum and officers and directors of the Audubon Society. My mother persisted, but as she says in her unpublished autobiography: “It was to no effect. I fear that I stood up very often.”

Eventually, the President said that the lady had spoiled the meeting, that there remained no time to show the movie, and furthermore that the lunch to be served in the Bird Hall was getting cold. My mother rejected the invitation to lunch and, as she wrote, “returned to the birds in Central Park.” Did the assembled directors then have any premonition of the troubles that would come to them through the activity of this forthright woman?

In contemplation of the 1930 annual meeting of the Audubon Society, the Emergency Conservation Committee published a new pamphlet: Comprised Conservation: Can the Audubon Society Explain? written by Irving Brant, the St. Louis editor who served as Treasurer of the E.C.C. My mother went to the meeting, accompanied by the renowned William T. Hornaday, once director of the Bronx Zoo, the grand old man of conservation. At the meeting, they presented a resolution, calling on the Audubon Society actively to promote certain conservation measures, chiefly the abolition of baiting and live decoys, the reduction of bag limits and the protection of the quail. All but the last have now long since become law. The discussion was an uproar, officer after officer rising to inveigh against Compromised Conservation, and to “throw scorn” at Dr. Hornaday and my mother. I have only my mother's words as evidence of this event, but I have no doubt that, as she wrote, the meeting was “at least lively and full of interest.”

My mother did not give up easily. She resolved at once to distribute the E.C.C. pamphlets to all the members of the Audubon Society. She applied for a list of her fellow members, and was refused. Her first recourse for advice was the American Civil Liberties Union. Roger Baldwin, its director, had that morning received a letter from T. Gilbert Pearson, the Audubon Society president, rejecting out-of-hand Baldwin's plea that the Audubon Society support action to restrain vagrant cats. His mood was perfect to receive a fresh complaint against Audubon Society. He became a member of the Emergency Conservation Committee, and was welcomed by my mother as “a crusader who buckled on his sword to slay the dragon of sloth and insincerity, which held the Audubon Society in thrall.” Most importantly at the time, he referred my mother to a young attorney, Charles Dickerman Williams, who later become a distinguished member of the New York corporate Bar. I have never seen any indication that Mr. Williams was paid a fee. Either his fee was paid by the ACLU or else Mr. Williams served pro bono publico. He did a fine job on a difficult matter.

The very real grievances held against the Audubon Society were spelled out in the E.C.C. pamphlets. In addition to the general charges of ineffectiveness and of failure properly to prosecute its stated purposes of protecting wildlife and particularly birds, the Audubon Society was accused of bowing before the demands of some of its larger contributors, particularly the wealthy sportsmen and those who made money from the hunters. In addition, there was no doubt (but at the time no evidence) that Pearson received a commission on all contributions and that the Society received large royalties (shown on its financial statements as “rentals”) from the trapping of muskrats at its large duck sanctuary in Louisiana. These were the matters that my mother and the Emergency Conservation Committee wanted to bring to the attention of all members of the Audubon Society.

A lawsuit, to gain access to the membership list, was commenced by my mother in June 1931. The suit presented an interesting and theretofore undecided legal question: whether the members of a voluntary charitable organization (such as the Audubon Society) had the same rights to the names and addresses of their fellow members as shareholders of a business

corporation have with respect to the other shareholders. But it was not the legal question that created the publicity. Stories about the case appeared several times on the front page of the New York Times. My mother's attack was no longer a secret from the public and the Audubon members. The merits of the charges against the Audubon Society were not really relevant to the case in court, but the management, perhaps mistakenly, chose to defend on the basis the charges were groundless. Naturally, Mr. Williams took the opportunity to expound on the Society's sins. Despite the statement of the Society's attorney that my mother was a "common scold", and the accusation that she and her colleagues were "zoophiles", accusations that my mother greatly enjoyed and frequently repeated, the Court upheld my mother's rights to the membership list, and enjoined the annual meeting pending determination of any appeal. Rather than postpone the meeting, the Audubon Society gave in and my mother got the membership list.

With the list in hand, my mother commenced a proxy campaign, specifically nominating Roger Baldwin and a Mrs. George Seligman as directors. Dr. Van Name paid the campaign expenses of $1,177. The insurgents lost: 1,648 to 2,808, including 400 names not in the list furnished. "Still," as my mother noted, "they can't call 1,648 people a small insurgent group." My mother tried again in 1932, and lost again. On the surface, my mother had been beaten. Three years, as far as she knew, had gotten her nowhere.

But, despite the lost battles, the war had been won. As a result of my mother's campaign, the Audubon Society lost 60% of its membership. The management was reorganized. By September 1934, Pearson had been forced to resign, and John Baker, a blunt and forceful Wall Street broker, had become executive director and chairman of the board. One of his first acts was to stop the trapping at the sanctuary in Louisiana. As Irving Brant declared: "At last a miracle, physiologically impossible, was achieved in the field of morality–The National Audubon Society recovered its virginity." Today, the Audubon Society is a fine organization, doing excellent work. The result is a classic example of the power of voting members to reform a derelict organization.

Ten days before she died in 1962, my mother attended another annual meeting of the Audubon Society in Corpus Christi, Texas. At dinner, she sat at the speakers' table and was introduced by the president. She telephoned me that night to tell me with pride of the standing ovation she had received. It was the last time I ever spoke to her.

As a result of the publicity surrounding the Audubon lawsuit and the proxy fights, the Emergency Conservation Committee and my mother established their credibility. My mother's confidence (never inconspicuous) increased. Contributions came more easily. The Committee (my mother) was in a position to take an active part in a number of projects with results of lasting importance–that is, we hope they are lasting; in conservation, as elsewhere, eternal vigilance is the price of liberty.

The authors of Crisis in Conservation emphasized the perils to our migratory wild fowl, particularly excessive hunting and improper shooting practices. Bag limits in many states were as high as 25 ducks per day. Ducks and geese were lured to slaughter over baited fields and by use of live decoys. A wealthy lobby of gunners supported this conduct. The Emergency Conservation Committee pursued this fight for a number of years. There was no single battle, rather a continuing struggle, fought on a broad front: in the newspapers, in Congress, and particularly at and against the U.S. Biological Survey (now the Fish and

Wildlife Service), which set bag limits and regulated hunting practices. In time, the worst shooting abuses were curtailed. Quite early, baiting and the use of live decoys were prohibited. Little by little, the hunting seasons were shortened and the bag limits were reduced, to the extent that today duck shooting is not the fun it once was, Thank God!

In all her work for the waterfowl, in her pamphlets, her meetings with the Biological Survey and her testimony before legislative committees, my mother pragmatically distinguished between "good" and "bad" sportsmen. She seldom went beyond her frequent publication of “Ding” Darling's cartoon (the idea for which she gave to him), showing a bandaged duck on crutches, reading from a dictionary: “Sportsman: one who in sport is fair and generous”, The original of this cartoon hangs here at Hawk Mountain. In private, my mother was more outspoken. One morning at breakfast, reading in the Times of a fatal hunting accident, she remarked to me that such incidents always pleased her, that there was “one less gunner out there killing”.

Equally important, and with more specific results, were the campaigns of the Emergency Conservation Committee for our National Parks, principally to create new parks or to add important resources to existing ones. In all of these campaigns, the basic issue was the desirability of enlarging the National Parks with commercially valuable virgin forest instead of limiting them to purely scenic mountain peaks of little commercial importance. Any proposal so to enlarge the national park system met with great resistance from the lumbermen and the communities supported by their operations, at least as long as the forests lasted. The lumbermen had the complete support of the U.S. Forest Service, which enthusiastically practiced its creed–that a forest exists only for its economic use, that an unharvested forest is wasted. The National Park Service, which should have had a contrary view, ranged from lukewarm to hostile to any proposal that might offend the lumbermen. The Congress had little interest in the matter, except for the members from the Pacific and mountain states, who vigorously opposed any suggestion that would interfere with the financial welfare of their constituents, their supporters or their contributors.

The New Deal came to Washington in March of 1932, bringing a new wind of good fortune to the burgeoning conservation movement. Harold Ickes, the new Secretary of the Interior, was a man of great independence who owed nothing to anybody and particularly not to the lumber interests in the West. I had my own personal experience with his independence and ethics. I was working far down the line in the Public Works Administration, also under Harold Ickes. I greatly offended an important Pennsylvania politician, Chairman of the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission, with a legal opinion that he was not entitled to reimbursement for his expenses of travel between Harrisburg and his home near Pittsburgh. He complained directly to President Roosevelt, who passed the complaint on down to Ickes. I have been told that Ickes wrote on the complaint his endorsement: “If that is the young man's opinion, I surely will not reverse it.”

Fortunately, Ickes was a good friend of Irving Brant. When my mother wanted legislation, it took only a few hours to get an appointment with Nathan Margold, solicitor of the Department of the Interior, and only a few days more before the Secretary sent to the appropriate congressman a draft of any desired bill. The bill may not have been perfect, and this action alone did not get it enacted. But the help of the administration surely removed many obstacles. Most importantly, Brant had direct access to President Roosevelt. My mother

became a good friend with Nathan Margold, and even with Harold Ickes. Unfortunately, she once publicly quoted Ickes, probably almost correctly, but surely unwisely, and he never forgave her. She sensibly stayed at this level, and left to Irving Brant any direct dealings with the President.

The present occasion does not allow scope for detailed description of any campaign. I can only list some of the more important achievements: The addition of the sugar pine grove to Yosemite Park, the creation of Kings Canyon National Park in California, and most importantly the establishment of Olympic National Park on the peninsula west of Seattle. This last was the greatest victory. The new park includes not only the scenic mountains and alpine meadows, but also important stands of virgin timber–not enough, of course-even today the lumbermen are again succeeding in their efforts to gain access to the timber within the Park.

In the summer of 1935, after my first year at law school, I drove my mother on a 13,000-mile tour that included most of the National Parks, and all of the areas for which she was working. The good offices of Secretary Ickes, and the good political sense of the National Park Service, ensured that my mother received special treatment–in Yellowstone, for example, the chief naturalist took us to the forbidden area containing the nests of the few surviving Whooping Cranes. At Yosemite, the park superintendent welcomed us. It was probably not in the Park Service's plan that my mother should be successful with her charm to beguile him into personal support of the sugar pine grove. It was at the Olympic National Monument that we were the most favored. Preston Macy, Superintendent of the then Olympic National Monument, met us at the ferry from Victoria and for three days was host as he took us around the areas proposed for the new Park. He introduced my mother at a Chamber of Commerce luncheon–her speech was on the front page of the local newspaper. He took us into the virgin forest, and explained why removal of dead trees (favored by the lumbermen) was detrimental to the forest. My mother thought he was her friend, and even today I believe that in his heart he supported her.

However, only recently, I read a scholarly and well-documented suggestion that Preston Macy had accompanied my mother under specific instructions from the Park Service to keep her under constant supervision, and to report all her activity to Washington. I can believe this, too. After all, it was only a year later, when President Roosevelt toured this area–the coup de grace to the opponents of the Park–that the Park Service moved the boundary signs with the sole purpose of deceiving the President into believing that the “clear-cut” areas were outside the National Monument, and had not been cut in violation of law.

Personal knowledge of the area, continuous publicity, proper political connections, suitably provided and, indeed, spread on with a trowel, all contributed to the success of the Olympic Park project. My mother and her colleagues furnished all of these. My mother added her own panache. It was perhaps prescient serendipity that had led Juan de Fuca, in the year 1592, on the occasion of his exploration of the strait that now honors his name, to give to the mountain we now call Mount Olympus–the most appropriate name of Monte Rosalia.

My mother is perhaps now best known for our Hawk Mountain Sanctuary, established to protect migratory hawks on their flyway in eastern Pennsylvania. Here, as you are well aware, the prevailing winds create air currents ideally suited to the soaring of the thousands of raptors that migrate every fall on their route from Canada and New England to Georgia and tropical America. The ancient road, once traveled by troops during the American Revolution,

made it possible for local gunners to get within easy shooting distance of the hawks. Thousands of hawks were killed each year, and thousands more, wounded, were left to die on the mountain slopes. A local junk dealer made regular trips to the mountain to salvage the shell casings for their brass. Indeed, twenty years after all the shooting had stopped, I would find an occasional shell casing in the crevices of the rocks on the Lookout.

Locally, the shooting was well known, but it was only in 1932 that the Hawk and Owl Society published a descriptive article that exposed these horrors to the general public. My mother resolved that the shooting should stop. On June 3, 1934, I drove her to Berks County to meet with Dick Pough, a crusading member of the Hawk and Owl Society, and with a local real estate agent. We explored the Mountain and climbed to the Lookout, through a forest of comparatively young trees, much less impressive than it is today. Of course, in June, there were no hawks, but the laurel was in bloom and the view was overwhelming. Soon thereafter, my mother arranged to lease the two-square-mile area for a year at a cost of $500, with an option to purchase the whole for $3,500, about $2.50 an acre. Dr. Van Name loaned her the rent for the first year.

Two years earlier, a young man had walked into my mother's office on Lexington Avenue, to meet this woman who published the pamphlets he had read, and to contribute his five dollars to the Emergency Conservation Committee. This was the first contact between Rosalie Edge and Maurice Broun, the two people who in equal shares were responsible for the foundation and perpetuation of Hawk Mountain Sanctuary and making it into the effective and prosperous organization it remains today.

But in 1934, the prosperity was yet to come. At Hawk Mountain it was clearly vital, from the very start of operations in the fall of 1934, that there must be a warden on the property, to protect the sanctuary and the hawks. To this end, my mother wrote Maurice, proposing that he serve as warden for a couple of months, and asking him to suggest a salary at “a sum as low as possible in fairness to yourself.” Maurice's conscience would not permit him to accept a salary, he wrote, only living and travel expenses. On these terms he came to work in early September 1934, with Irma, his young and valiant wife. At first only several months a year, soon full time, they remained at the Sanctuary, Maurice in full charge on the ground, until he retired not long after my mother's death in 1962. I wish that I had here the time to describe the physical courage required of Maurice and Irma to face down the angry gunners, particularly during the first season, and the effectiveness of Maurice's planning, scientific observation and hospitality, instrumental in developing the new sanctuary to its high standards and effectiveness. Since the day Maurice and Irma arrived at Hawk Mountain 60 years ago, not a single hawk has been shot.

Throughout their collaboration, Maurice was responsible on the site, and my mother, operating from her office in New York, raised the money. In the first year, there was no serious problem in raising operation expenses. Even the National Audubon Society agreed to pay half of the 1934 expenses, estimated not to exceed $1,200–and in fact, being only $711. However, the Audubon Society had assumed that it would operate the Sanctuary, and indeed it had obtained pledges for part of the purchase price. This was not acceptable to my mother. She could not bring herself to turn over the new project to her old enemy, one that had not yet reformed the operations on its own refuge in Louisiana. And she did indeed control the situation. The option to purchase ran to her personally, though the entire project was carried

on the E.C.C. books and in its published financial reports. She set out to raise the money. Willard Van Name contributed the $500 he had loaned. Some of those who had pledged to the Audubon Society gave to my mother; some did not. But the E.C.C. mailing list came through. During 1935, out of the $7,166 contributed to the E.C.C., $3,139 was earmarked for the acquisition of Hawk Mountain. The purchase was consummated. The deed ran directly to my mother.

The legal formalities took some time. With the help of the lawyer who had served so well in the Audubon proxy contest, Hawk Mountain Sanctuary Association was incorporated in Pennsylvania, with a complicated charter to prevent any possible intrusion by the Audubon Society. My mother conveyed the real property to the new association. At the first directors' meeting, the initial seven directors included my mother and Maurice Broun, and incidentally myself – I had the privilege of forty-nine years continuous service. My mother was, of course, chosen President: she died holding that office. I became Secretary. During the next 24 years, my mother never missed a meeting, every matter to come before the board was discussed and, during my mother's lifetime, no director ever cast a negative vote, although very rarely, on some minor matter, there was an abstention. My mother ruled the board, not only because she raised the money, but also principally because of her firm personality and the respect she had earned.

The directors over the years included a number of distinguished people. I mention only a few, all from the early years. Earl Poole, director of the Reading Public Museum served from the beginning; the initial directors' meeting was held at that museum. His knowledge of the area, its birds and its people contributed immensely to the valuable advice he gave to the Board. Fran Trembley, of Lehigh University, was most important on the site. He made almost weekly visits, and during the War, when Maurice was with the Seabees in the South Pacific, Fran regularly used his precious rationed gasoline to make sure that all was well on the Mountain. Roger Peterson attended the directors' meetings with regularity; his prestige was an important asset to the Sanctuary. It was while he was watching hawks from the Lookout that he first met Guy Montfort, who would become a co-author of Roger's Field Guide to the Birds of Britain and Europe. And we must not pass over Marion Ingersoll, who gave us the funds to purchase Shaumboch's, our first headquarters on the Mountain.

Maurice and my mother were completely co-dependent in the operations. It was he who ran the physical sanctuary, who pontificated on hawks atop the Mountain, who wrote the scientific papers, and who was loved by the visitors. It was he who received the first $1,000 donation–from one of the DuPonts. On the other hand, the money, the life-blood of the organization, depended on my mother, her membership lists, her persuasive appeals, her loyal contributors. Even as advancing age to some degree curtailed my mother's other activities, she raised the necessary financing for Hawk Mountain as long as she lived.

Each of my mother's activities in conservation produced remarkable achievements: the establishment of Olympic National Park, the reform of the Audubon Society, the protection of the waterfowl, the founding and funding of Hawk Mountain Sanctuary–and more. These accomplishments are the more remarkable in that they were not begun until 1929, when my mother was already 52 years old, above the age when most people can effectively begin a new career. And, indeed, at that time a casual observer would not have concluded that here was a

woman who would so effectively lead the forces that were to bring great changes in American thinking and practices concerning wildlife and our natural resources.

Until that day in Paris, during the summer of 1929, when she first read Crisis in Conservation, my mother had led a comparatively private life. There had been only one serious exception– her venture into the real world of combative politics when she joined the forces of women fighting for the right to vote. Otherwise I can only guess where she found the force and skill that motivated her work in conservation – the Emergency Conservation Committee and Hawk Mountain.

Mabel Rosalie Barrow was born in 1877 in a brownstone house on Gramercy Square in New York. She showed it to me one day, and was a bit peeved that I flippantly observed that she could not have been born there; the sign on the door said: “No deliveries allowed.” Her father was born and raised an Englishman, and in his younger days served at Her Majesty's embassy in Rome. At the time of my mother's birth, and until he died ten years later, he was a prosperous member of the New York business community, first as a linen, china and glassware importer, and later as an accountant. He was also a scholarly linguist, the first president of the Semitic Club of New York. Indeed, my mother once told me that she knew all the eminent rabbis in New York; they had come to the house to study Hebrew under Mr. Barrow's direction.

This comfortable and prosperous life came to an abrupt end at my grandfather's death of an infected hand, which prevented his signing the articles of the accounting partnership that used his name but gave his widow no share of the profits. At about the same time my grandmother's mother died, leaving a bitter and confused family feud to be fought over her estate. As a result my mother's adolescent years were spent in comparative poverty, but not entirely without funds. An exact determination of the finances is beyond my reach. Certainly, twenty years later my grandmother lived quite well, and surely nobody starved. The nearest I have been able to come to pinpointing the situation lies in the story of my mother and her older sister attending the opera and sitting in Mrs. Vanderbilt's box. My mother wore one long white glove and carried a short one; her sister did the same; for they could not afford two pairs of long white gloves.

My mother went to Miss Doremus' school in New York. I am sure it was attended only by girls from the best families. More importantly, Miss Doremus must have been a great teacher. My mother learned much from her, and loved all that she learned about traditional culture–the Italian painters, the romantic musicians, and the English poets. My mother never went to college, and always considered this to be a major deficiency–perhaps, this is why she was so proud of her two honorary college degrees, one of them from Lehigh University.

It is only recently that I have become fully aware of my ignorance of the details of my mother's life between her school days and her marriage in 1909 at the age of 32. From scraps of evidence, from unconnected family stories, I can do little more than guess at what was going on. I do know she held two isolated jobs. My uncle broke his back in a diving accident. While he was recuperating, my mother took over his position with Mrs. Andrew Carnegie, handling all her personal affairs. She spent an entire summer on this job, at Skibo Castle in Scotland. I presume she was appropriately paid. The other job was more unusual. Around the turn of the century, Gladys Vanderbilt, my mother's schoolmate, married Count Szechenyi, a distinguished diplomat and member of the Hungarian nobility. Within a year or two, the New

York scandal sheets began to report a rumor that he was maltreating his wife. At Mrs. Vanderbilt's request, my mother traveled alone, to Budapest and then to the Szechenyi estate in the Tartra-Lumnitz Mountains, now part of Poland. A remarkable journey for a young and comparatively inexperienced woman! After an agreeable visit with her old schoolmate, my mother returned to New York and told the ship reporters how much the Countess Szechenyi was enjoying her new life. Mrs. Vanderbilt must have paid my mother well, for on her way back to New York she could afford to entertain her mother with a vacation in Paris.

In 1895, my mother served as a bridesmaid for an intimate friend who was marrying the son of a Birmingham manufacturer. Years later, my mother visited the couple at their home in England. While on that visit, she met my father, a cousin of the groom. When my father arrived in New York to work as an engineer, on the Queensborough Bridge among other projects, he came to call. In 1908, they became engaged, just as my father was leaving for the Far East, to work for a British Steel Company, under a contract that forbade his marrying for a year.

My mother married him in Yokohama, in June 1909. I found that published wedding announcement in the Japan Advertiser one day, when I was researching my senior thesis in the stacks of Widener Library at Harvard. They went to live in the Palace Hotel in Shanghai. My mother has told me how she was introduced to my father's houseboy, who was explicitly instructed to obey her orders in all things. But early the next morning, the houseboy shook her awake, saying, “Time for Missy to go home now!” A few years ago, I found this same story in some memoirs of Somerset Maugham. Maybe he first heard the story from my mother–they did meet in China.

Life with my father, away from home and relatives, did a great deal to expand my mother's self-confidence. Not that she did not already have her share–my father once grumbled to me that on their honeymoon she had presumed to teach him about sex. But, traveling around the China Sea, she learned about new kinds of people, who perhaps sold fountain pens while her husband sold railway equipment. She learned never to explain her bidding at bridge. She was taught that she was equal to anyone–which in her heart, she probably always knew. She made new friends, who back in New York would introduce her to the Women's Suffrage movement. And she discarded forever her girlhood name of “Mabel”, and was known to all her new friends, from that time on, only as “Rosalie."

While in the Far East, my father had been very successful as a speculator on the New York Stock Exchange. My parents decided that they should move to New York, so that my father could enter the stock brokerage business there. After crossing Siberia, and a few months' stay in England, they came to New York, aboard the S. S. Mauritania in a winter crossing. My mother claimed that this was necessary so that I could be born in the United States and thus qualify someday to be elected president. She got to New York just in time. But otherwise I failed her–I never ran for the presidency.

I believe that the next ten years were personally good for my mother. My father was successful at his new profession, though there was at least one bad year when it became necessary to rent the house (my grandmother's brownstone on East 72nd Street) and live in an apartment. They bought four acres in Westchester County, on a point in Long Island Sound, and worked hard to develop the property–perhaps my mother's greatest regret in the separation was the loss of her garden. Somehow, they did not have many social friends,

outside of my father's business connections and my mother's Suffrage activities. They belonged to the right clubs in Rye, but when we lunched at the American Yacht Club, I do not remember anyone greeting my parents, or that I knew any of the other boys in the bathhouse.

My mother first became interested in Women's Suffrage while living in England, through her acquaintance with my father's client, Lady Rhonda, the then well-known feminist. On her return to New York, she was introduced into the movement by a Mrs. Gordon Norrie, an intimate from her days in Shanghai, and Mrs. Norrie's unmarried sister, Ruth Morgan. Both these women were independently wealthy. Their family estate was up the Hudson at Hyde Park, next door to the Roosevelt's. They used their time and money for Women's Suffrage, working closely with Carrie Chapman Catt. They brought my mother into the higher echelons of the movement, and soon set her to coordinating suffrage activities in upstate New York. Through her new friends, and perhaps intuitively also, my mother learned the techniques of publicity and organization and getting politicians to give what they wanted to withhold. She was even able to convince my father to march up Fifth Avenue in the Women's Suffrage parade. It was this total experience that she used so effectively in her conservation work.

After Women's Suffrage was achieved, there was less activity for the political party that eventually became the League of Women Voters. But, as with all politics, the machinations did not cease. There was a convention involving a battle over Eleanor Roosevelt's candidate for party office – one Narcissa Vanderlip. My mother rose in opposition, to speak of–she said this with a gracious smile-“Rhododendron Vanderlip”. The laughter marked the end of Mrs. Vanderlip's political aspirations. My mother had learned some of the techniques that she used so well in her conservation years. I can confirm this story: several years ago, I received a copy of a new magazine on French art, designed for the very rich. The address of the publisher was: Villa Narcissa, Vanderlip Drive, somewhere in California.

My mother's friend, Ruth Morgan, became President of the Colony Club in New York. To rejuvenate the Club's membership, a procedure was set up to elect two new members each year, without regard to standing on the long waiting list. Ruth Morgan used her position to take Eleanor Roosevelt and my mother into the Colony Club. They never became friends. Mrs. Roosevelt never forgave the reference to “Rhododendron Vanderlip.” Too bad! Eleanor would have made a very useful ally in conservation.

I had hoped, in preparing this talk, that I would be able to pinpoint the personal sources of my mother's success. Even in my own mind, I have been only partially successful. I can recognize the persistence and emotional drive that led her on her crusades. I was familiar with the personality that made it very difficult to deny her demands. I can observe how her work with Women's Suffrage gave her useful experience and confidence. But I find myself unable to delve further into the pressures and conflicts that led to the success that she achieved. I can only stand in awe of the force that one lady's determination can bring to bear.

Here at Hawk Mountain, we should be forever grateful for the products of that determination – our magnificent sanctuary and the superb work being done here by Hawk Mountain Sanctuary Association and its outstanding staff.