

Excerpt from the book -"History of Springside School 1879-1979 One Hundred Years of Change and Tradition."

Chestnut Hill, Philadelphia Summit St Mrs. Walter D. Comegys and Miss Bell will open their French and English Boarding and Day School for young ladies and little girls, Sept 15 1879

" It was the marriage of Anna Lorraine Bell to Walter Douglas Comegys that first established the association of the Bell sisters with Chestnut Hill. Walter Comegys was the son of the Chief Justice of Delaware who had been a principal supporter of Senator Bell's candidacy for the presidency in 1860. After their marriage the young Comegys moved to 8700 Montgomery Ave in the still relatively small, but never the less, vital community of Chestnut Hill. An attorney, like his father-in-law Senator Bell, Walter Comegys opened his own practice in Phila.

Tragedy struck Walter and Anna Comegys several times during their short life together. In 1865 their only child suddenly died. They had no more children, but, when Walter's aunt died, leaving a daughter, they took their cousin into their home , where, among other things, she was given French and music lessons.

Death struck Anna Comegys again in 1877 when Walter died suddenly at the age of thirty nine. His parents offered to take Anna into their home, but Anna, cherishing her independence, chose to live on her own. The following summer, Walter's sister died, leaving a shattered family. The remaining sister, Harriet Comegys, stayed with Anna in Phila and probably taught at the sisters school.

The Bell sisters school quickly achieved a substantial degree of educational success partially due to the fact that the headmistresses called upon men who belonged to the same social and economic circle occupied by the Bell, Comegys and other prominent families." [The article goes on to list all the well known families of the time upon whose references prospective parents could call.]

This is a long article and I have copied only the Comegys background part. Springside remains a wonderful, highly respected private school in suburban Phila. In about 1960 a new school was built, new expanded curriculum, new goals, and a very much enlarged scholarship program. When I was enrolled in 1936 in kindergarten with eight in our class, and graduated twelve years later in 1948, in a class of twenty-four, little did I think that the Bell-Comegys names that I had seen so often, would represent a personal connection to my husband and I.

From Joan H. Smyth, wife of Thomas Williams Smyth 4-07-2001

Chestnut-Hill 1879 (anglais)

Écrit par G.R.

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