



POST CARD

1919  
CROTON  
MAR 24  
N.Y.

Miss Edith Chauncey  
85 Jefferson Ave.,  
Columbus,  
Ohio.

Dear Edith:  
This postal cost  
me two and one cent, and  
I think of it, and just to  
send to you.

We had a scout  
meeting this afternoon and also  
a basketball game with the  
first team we won 24-8  
I shot about 14 points  
I hope you like it.

THE PRICE FOR ADDRESS.

Special Delivery

THE  ENDURING  VISION

*of*

*Henry Chauncey*



Norbert Elliot

with illustrations by  
R.H. Matlack



*Henry in Nova Scotia, 1932*

*It is the 'you' behind what you do that counts.*

—Henry Chauncey,

written for Harvard composition class, March 12, 1925



Pinchot Estate, "Grey Towers"

Dear mother,  
Well of last you seem  
Jan. 23, 1919.

Aug. 8, 1926

What I need to find is a life work  
which suits me, for which I feel  
there is a need and into which I  
can enter with my whole heart.

—Henry



Copyright © 2007 by Educational Testing Service. All rights reserved.  
ETS and the ETS logo are registered trademarks  
of Educational Testing Service (ETS). 5962  
No reproduction in whole or in part is permitted  
without the express written permission of the copyright owner.

Author: Norbert Elliot  
Designer and Illustrator: Robin H. Matlack

Printed in the United States  
by Innovation Printing & Communications

[www.ets.org](http://www.ets.org)



When I first met Henry Chauncey I didn't know what to expect. Here was a pioneer from assessment's formative period. His negotiation skills in merging the testing programs that resulted in ETS were legendary. I had read about his vision of what our organization should and could be. I respected his painstaking dedication to make that vision a reality.

After just a few minutes of lively conversation during our first chat, I was in awe of Henry. Who wouldn't have been? Here was a man whose thoughtful views were shaped by core values developed early in life and maintained across time. The more he spoke, the more my respect deepened for this warm, gracious man.

As we continue to follow Henry's values, we continue to recognize just why those values have meaningfully endured—even when so much around us has changed. Henry's values have anchored ETS because they remain the right values for us. With Henry, we believe in the full development of the talents of all individuals throughout their lives; the importance of balancing equity, access, and merit; the critical role of research as the foundation for assessment and decision-making; and integrity and quality in all that we do.

In the service of society, Henry was willing to take risks. His was an entrepreneurial spirit, ever demanding financial sustainability even as he embraced innovation. Daily, he worked to create an environment in which employees could thrive in the community he created. The values that guided Henry throughout his life have been, are, and—I believe—will continue to be the right values for ETS.

Kurt M. Lanagraf  
September, 2007

Description of leaves

Height 6 feet 2 inches

Hair blonde

Eyes brown

Distinguishing marks or features:

scar on chin

Place of birth Brooklyn, NY

Date of birth Feb. 9, 1905

Occupation student  
and teacher

Henry Chauncey  
*(Signature of leaves)*



# Family

*It might be asked, what is the value of all this research, this analysis and criticism? What contribution does it make to modern life?*

—Egisto F. Chauncey, 1922

In 1981 Henry Chauncey had begun to gather materials for a book about his father. A decade later the book was complete. “Service to one’s fellow man is rarely remembered for more than a generation or two because it is a personal thing that seems to die with the beneficiaries,” he wrote. “But in fact, the influence may extend for many generations, passed on from one to the next.” Henry Chauncey was eighty-six years old.

In remembering the life of his father, Egisto Fabbri Chauncey, Henry Chauncey recollected his own. When he had visited his family in New York as a child, his grandmother, uncles, and aunt outfitted him for school, from shoes to suit, from overcoat to hat. His father taught him to play baseball on a field bordering railroad tracks in the center of town. A hit over the tracks was a home run. As captain of the town team, his father chose the uniforms, green with pinstripes. A small one had been especially made for young Henry. At dinner his father would make the children laugh, spinning the lazy Susan faster and faster until the cream fell off. In a time when women’s actions were equally constrained by patent-leather pumps with French heels and societal norms





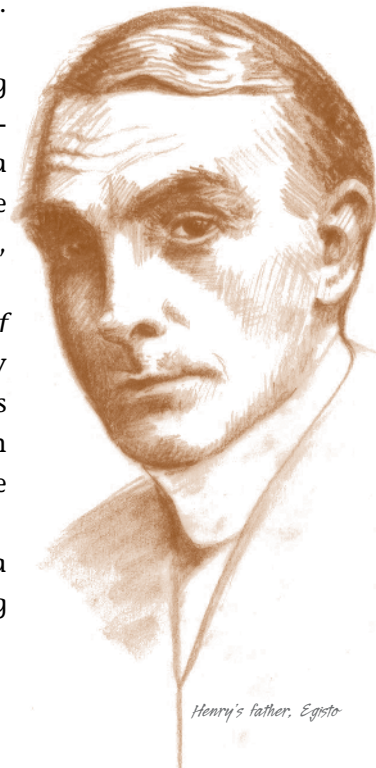
with restricted roles, it was his mother who first hit tennis balls with him. The felt love of mother and father was always and everywhere present.

“Finances were a problem that plagued Mother and Father all their lives,” the son recalled. “I can go without clothes & indeed we could eat less,” his father had written his mother in 1914. “We probably over-eat anyway.” Returning from a ministry in Italy in 1940 as the world became dark, his father, now sixty-six years old, was without a job. Because he had no intention of retiring, the father readily agreed to help when a rector in Massachusetts was called to the National Guard. When he finally did retire in 1957, Egisto found it hard to find the time to visit the son’s Princeton home. There were so many calls to parishioners, so many services to perform. There was always so much yet to do.

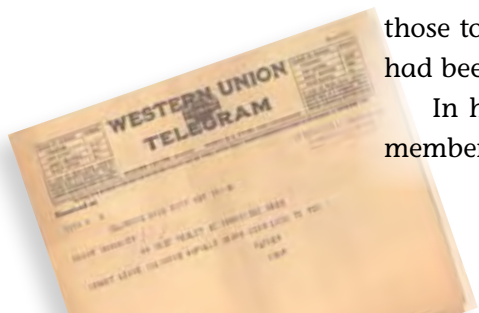
In 1960, the son had written to his father, commenting about an extraordinary life of service so evident on his eighty-sixth birthday. “I met people of always human needs & had a chance to work for the individuals & for the community,” the father had replied. On April 1, 1963, the day before he died, Reverend Chauncey made five calls to homes in his parish.

With the publication of his father’s biography, *A Life of Faith in God and Service to His Fellow Man*, Henry Chauncey was two years younger than his father had been when his minister’s heart had failed. Because much was expected from those to whom much had been given, Henry Chauncey’s life had been spent in service.

In his later years he was sometimes cast in the role of a member of the old elite, a relic of a privileged class practicing



Henry's father, Egisto





altruism. He was, after all, a former Groton School and Harvard University student, an Ivy League administrator, the founding president of the Educational Testing Service and, then, president of EDUCOM. Yet he knew better than to accept such characterization. “I am looking around very carefully to see if you really recognize me,” he told the audience at his retirement dinner from ETS.

What was important, here at the end of the day, were not titles held but values lived. There was always the community. There were always people of individual, human needs.

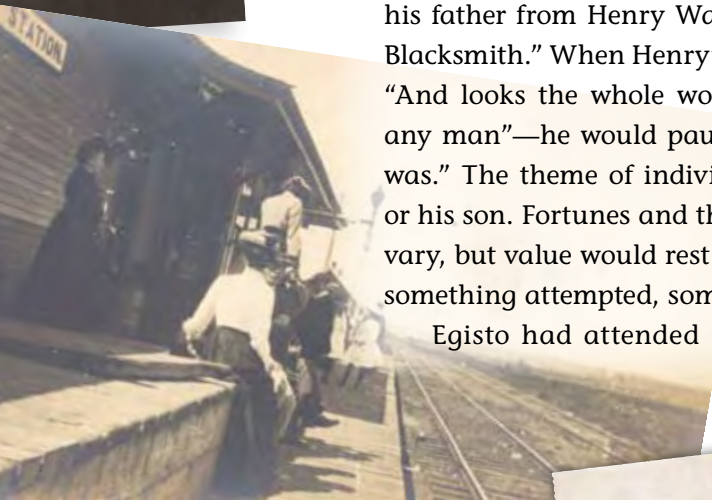
The Chauncey family could trace its lineage to Charles Chauncey (as the family name was first spelled), the second president of Harvard, who had served from 1654 to 1672. Henry’s great grandfather had been partner in a venture to build the first railroad across the Isthmus of Panama in the mid-nineteenth century, but his grandfather’s own venture as a merchant had failed. There the family fortune ended.

“My father,” Chauncey recalled, “who was born with a silver spoon in his mouth, in a few years had it snatched away.” Chauncey noted that his grandfather often read to his father from Henry Wadsworth Longfellow’s “The Village Blacksmith.” When Henry’s grandfather came to these lines—“And looks the whole world in the face, / For he owes not any man”—he would pause and note that “a lucky man he was.” The theme of individualism did not escape the father or his son. Fortunes and the contexts that produce them may vary, but value would rest in each day’s authentic actions, in something attempted, something done.

Egisto had attended Groton School, entering in 1886.



*Charles Chauncey*



He had been preceded there by his older brothers, among the original 27 students enrolled when the school opened in 1884. In a curriculum emphasizing classical and Romance languages, Egisto petitioned to take geometry and trigonometry instead of Greek. He did well enough on the entrance examinations to be accepted for the study of engineering at Columbia University, but the family had no funds to send him to college. He returned to live with his mother and to work in New York as a clerk at the Edison Electric Illuminating Company. After three years, it became apparent that Egisto's interest did not rest in business. He contacted Endicott Peabody, Groton's founder and headmaster, and expressed his desire to study for the ministry. Peabody found an anonymous donor, and Egisto entered Harvard, graduating with a Bachelor of Divinity degree in 1900 from the Episcopal Theological School. Upon graduation, he served as an assistant at St. George's Church in New York City.

There he met a young deaconess, Edith Lockwood Taft. They were engaged by March of 1903 and married by April of the following year. A post opened for an assistant rector at Holy Trinity Church, and the couple moved to Brooklyn Heights. The parish was in decline, but the young rector and his wife were determined to reinvigorate the life of the community. In a struggling Brooklyn community that had seen better days, Henry Chauncey was born on February 9, 1905.

After two years of hard work that yielded success—the parish's Sunday school grew fourfold—the family moved to Mount Kisco in Westchester County, New York, in 1906.





Egisto Chauncey was to be the rector of the new St. Mark's Church, which was to replace the one that had grown too small. The original structure, located a half mile out of the center of town, had the capacity to serve the 150 parishioners, many from well-to-do families who lived to the south of the town. The town itself, however, had grown with shopkeepers and bank tellers, with construction workers and stonecutters. The rector wanted the new church to be built in the center of town, where it could "become a strong factor in the good of the neighborhood," as he had emphasized in accepting the position. From 1906 to 1909, the controversy continued, with the rector holding firm on the relocation of the new church in the town center and key members of the congregation holding fast to its present location. In 1910, a cornerstone for the new church was laid on 85 East Main Street, in the heart of Mount Kisco. The motto, taken from the Vulgate, signaled the significance of the move: "Where there is no vision the people perish."

In 1913 another meaningful challenge arose, this time from Trinity Church in Columbus, Ohio. Egisto had never been west of the Appalachian Mountains, and acceptance of the position of rector would mean cutting all East Coast ties. There was now a second child, named after her mother, in tow. Yet it was another call to service, and the Chauncey family answered.

As had been the case in Brooklyn Heights, the city of Columbus had changed as the wealthy moved out of the city's center. Dedicating himself to community welfare and relief efforts, Egisto raised money for the church—a single gift was

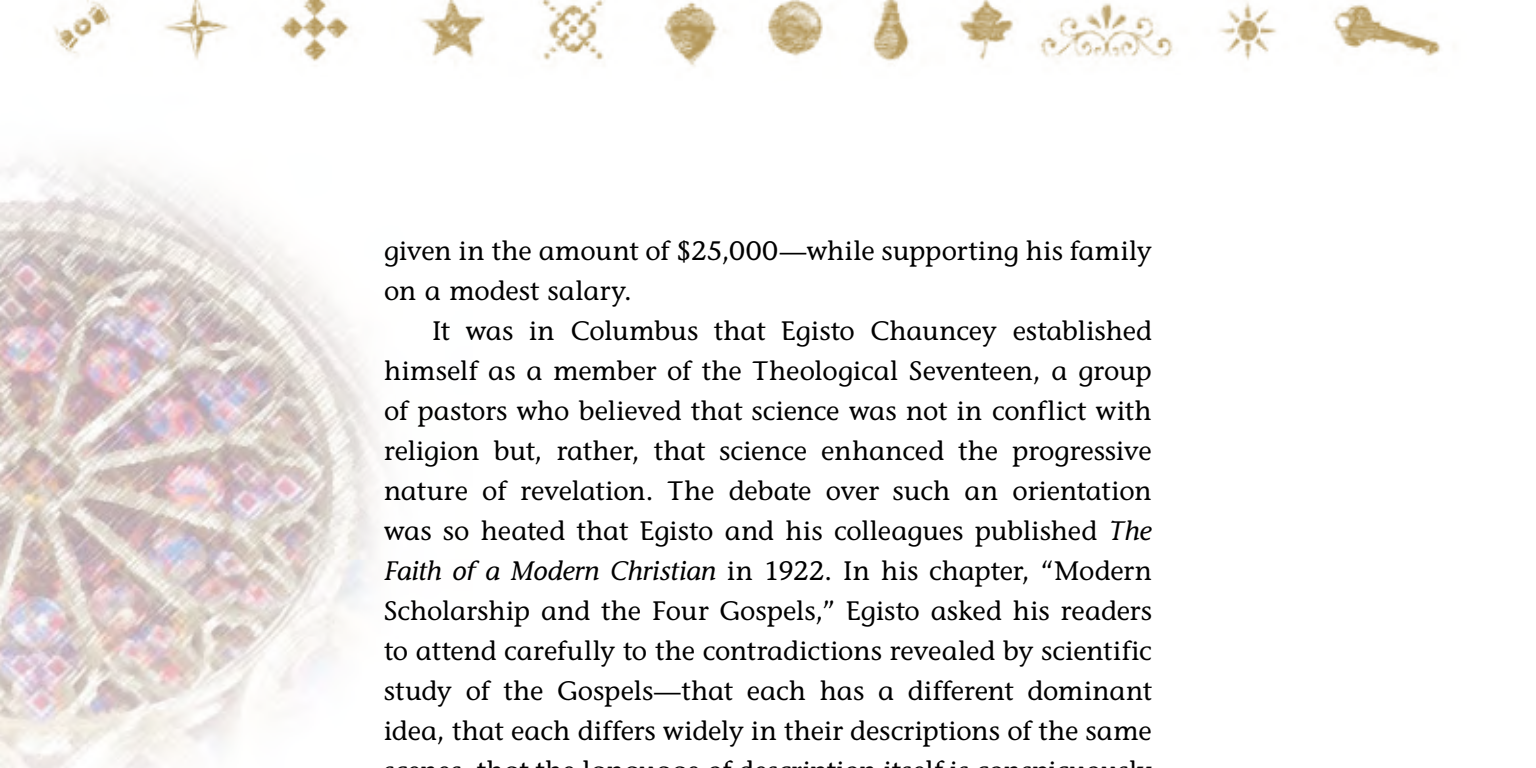


*For Henry Chauncey, so much depended on a sense of home.*

At the center of our family, he recalled, was the "loving, considerate and kindly" relationship between Mother and Father. Egisto Fabbri Chauncey was a very sentimental person, yet that sentimentality was reserved for Edith, his wife. While unpacking a trunk when away from her, the scent of her on his coat brought back their intimacy. "My throat," he wrote to her, "feels lumpy." Father carried home little things for Mother. Even in the busy moments a day brings, she was never away from his thoughts.

As a child, Henry would jump into bed with his parents in the morning. Father would tell him stories. When it was time to get Henry out of bed, the predictable tussle began in a room filled with laughter in the soft morning light.

Evenings were sometimes spent at the movies on the minister's complimentary pass. There were picnics, a drive to a nearby town. At the center of the family was Edith, "the person I went to when I was at loose ends and couldn't think of what to do," Henry recalled. Her playful, companionable qualities were there with them, always.



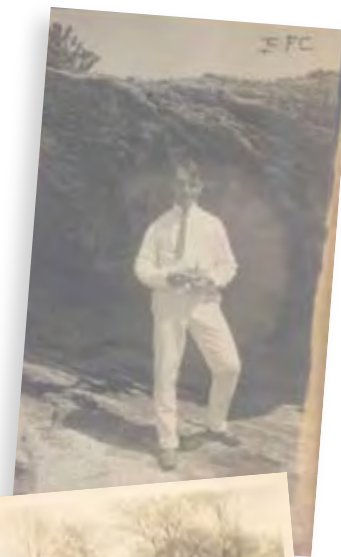
given in the amount of \$25,000—while supporting his family on a modest salary.

It was in Columbus that Egisto Chauncey established himself as a member of the Theological Seventeen, a group of pastors who believed that science was not in conflict with religion but, rather, that science enhanced the progressive nature of revelation. The debate over such an orientation was so heated that Egisto and his colleagues published *The Faith of a Modern Christian* in 1922. In his chapter, “Modern Scholarship and the Four Gospels,” Egisto asked his readers to attend carefully to the contradictions revealed by scientific study of the Gospels—that each has a different dominant idea, that each differs widely in their descriptions of the same scenes, that the language of description itself is conspicuously different. Such contradictions, Egisto wrote, “strike deep at the roots of the mechanical theory of inspiration.” The conclusion to be drawn, however, was not that scrupulous, scientific examination produced doubt but, rather, that rational analysis provided insightful inspiration. “God uses man as an instrument of revelation,” he wrote, and so inspiration is never artificial, “never destroys the personal equation.” Scientific investigation of the New Testament texts thus added to the “dignity and glory of man,” allowing a total view that was greater than the “partial and fractional aspects” of an isolated view of the Gospels. Scientific study had thus allowed us to “put His life into touch with the world-life of which He was a part.” In nuanced thought was the accomplishment of common good.



Egisto Chauncey provided dual lessons of a lifetime for his son. The first demonstrated that context was critical. Chauncey's father had taken ministries in cities that were in decline, where the Great Depression had hit hardest those who did most of the living and dying on the town streets. The lesson was explicit: that which was difficult to undertake brought the greatest rewards. The second lesson was equally explicit: that which was difficult to understand yielded the greatest insights. The two lessons, taken together, were compelling. Within such a contextually deep horizon of understanding, Henry found the ruling passion of his life: the pursuit of individual talent—wherever it was found, however difficult the journey—was noble.

When Egisto Chauncey resigned his position in Ohio in 1936—a resignation that was to lead him in the pursuit of service to Florence, Italy, and back again to Massachusetts—Henry was in the thick of applying his father's lessons. Now an assistant dean at his alma mater, Henry had been given a historic challenge by the university president, James B. Conant, to restructure the first-year admissions process on the basis of developed academic ability.



*Egisto*

