

Three weeks later the situation had not improved. The financial failure of the Lawn had led to brutal self-assessment and in total despair Mary wrote to her father:

If I go on much longer I shall get "Melancholia" myself. I never cease to admire your amazing zest for life, and your ability to enjoy things. I shouldn't so much mind if I had occasional manic phases with some energy and zest, and even a transient feeling that I was some good at anything, or to anybody.

I find it almost impossible to imagine how anyone can really enjoy life, or feel reluctant to be released from it. . . . It's an uphill fight always struggling against one's inertia, and a blank sense of futility and uselessness.

I've always been on the edge of dementia praecox I think; always lacking energy and interest; I could easily become like the patients that "just sit" and vegetate. . . . One often sees patients who break down when they reach a level of educational or social success which is too much for them, but may keep going on a lower level. I rather feel just now that I've reached this stage and want to sit down to some simple routine job under orders and without worry and responsibility.<sup>23</sup>



*Lincoln Medical Society, December 1930. Mary Rushton Barkas centre front. (Vol. 26)*

Mary's career had reached a climax. She wanted and needed to escape—to Europe and Rank or to New Zealand and a quiet place by the sea. She began to question the value of psychotherapy and therefore all that she had worked for. The prospect of returning to the filth of London was totally unattractive. Staying at the Lawn was impossible, but so was leaving when it was in such a precarious