

MY BERKSHIRE

by

Eleanor F. Grose

To Charlie
with love
from
Aunt Eleanor
Christmas, 1957

MY BERKSHIRE

*Childhood Recollections
written for my children
and grandchildren*

by

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POSTSCRIPT AND PREFACE

Instead of a preface to my story, I am writing a postscript to put at the beginning! In that way I fulfill a feeling that I have, that now that I have finished looking back on my life, I am beginning again with you!

I want to tell you all what a good and satisfying time I have had writing this long letter to you about my childhood. If it hadn't been for you, I wouldn't have had the fun of thinking about and remembering and trying to make clear the personalities of my father and mother and making them integrated persons in some kind of perspective for myself as well as for you—and I have enjoyed it all very much. I know that I will have had the most fun out of it, but I don't begrudge you the little you will get! It has given me a very warm and happy feeling to hear from old friends and relatives who love Berkshire, and to add their pleasant memories to mine.

But the really deep pleasure I have had is in linking my long-ago childhood, in a kind of a mystic way, in my mind, with you and your future. I feel as if I were going on with you. . . In spite of looking back so happily to old days, I find, as I think about it, that ever since I met Baba and then came to know, as grown-ups, my three dear splendid children and their children, I have been looking into the future just as happily, if not more so, as, this winter, I have been looking into the past. I have been with young people a great deal through all of my grown-up life, and I love them and all their new and progressive ideas better than I do most of the ideas of most of my contemporaries! I love my past of "plain living and high thinking," but I love also your future, which I think will be glorious!

As my father used to say, "Allons, allons, mes amis, en avant toujours!"

Your loving Mother and Grandmother

Amherst, Mass., 1956

Dear Children and Grandchildren:

One night in November sixty-seven years ago, on a farm in Lanesboro in the Berkshire hills of Massachusetts, a little girl was born. Her name was Eleanor Fisher, and I was that little girl. I shall try to tell you what it was like to grow up on that farm nearly seventy years ago.

I think of my childhood as being a very good one, with everything in it that a child needs to be healthy and happy and normal. But, you'll say, all old people think their childhood days were better than the present! I don't think I think that. I love my life now with all the new things and new ways of living, and best of all my husband, my children, and my growing and promising grandchildren. Each year I have been more and more satisfied and happy since I met Baba in 1915. So you see my life in Berkshire was not **better** than the rest of it has been, but a very happy beginning of it.

Some of you, and I hope all of you will know it some day, know Berkshire as it is now. When I lived there, the countryside, hills and fields and views, were just about as they are now, but certain things were very different. The house I lived in isn't there any more, and other buildings and people are gone. Many trees have grown big and many have died or been cut down. Let us think for a minute of what kind of home it was.

First place, can you imagine living in a world with no airplanes, no television, no radio, no movies, no atom-bombs, no telephone, no automobiles, no toilet in the house itself, no water to wash in except what you pumped with a hand pump and heated in a tank at the back of the kitchen stove? I don't think you can imagine it, but my world in Berkshire was without all these things. We did have running water piped in from a spring to the kitchen sink for drinking.

Our house, I think, didn't look like anything you have ever seen, inside at least, in the way of a house. It was wooden, painted and stained brown, and shingled, looking something like a Swiss chalet, with a piazza running almost all the way around it. That piazza really had a life of its own—it was used for so many things. Clematis grew up the piazza posts and along the roof on the west side and all along the south side grew a luxuriant woodbine which really shaded all that side of the piazza. Sometimes robins built their nests in it. In the summer Mother had her painting table on

the south piazza and there was an old cot bed covered and used as a couch and comfortable chairs to sit in. Sometimes I slept on the cot on hot summer nights. Hammocks hung at various times, at the north-west and south-west corners. All through the year Mother used the piazza for "constitutional" walks when she needed a breath of fresh air after painting a long time. On the north side of the house on the piazza was a weight pulling machine put up for the boys in my father's school to toughen up their muscles. I used to enjoy pulling that up and down. Along the extreme end of the north part of the piazza against the wall of the woodshed was a tall glassed-in cabinet with shelves on which were many rocks and crystals and other geologic specimens. That extreme north and east end of the piazza was boarded up in the winter, with a door opening on to the rest of the piazza, making a rather large vestibule for the north door of the house. In that vestibule were kept, in the winter, the overshoes, skates, snowshoes, maybe sometimes a sled and the fur robes for winter driving. The cold, still, rather dank air in there had a peculiar musty, leathery, rubbery wet-fur-robe smell that was like nothing else.

The south door had no storm door on it. The biggest fun that I had on the piazza, when I was fairly young, was riding round and round and round on it on my tricycle. That tricycle wasn't like anything you have ever seen. It was a rather high seat something like a chair with low back and arms, the seat covered in red plush; there were pedals which you pushed back and forth with your feet, two rather big wheels holding up the seat and one small wheel in front from which came up a long pipe-like bar with cross-piece handle by which you steered. That machine could not be used on the rough ground (and there were no sidewalks!) but the piazza made a wonderfully smooth road on which to speed, and I certainly used it. The speed and the rumble of the wheels gave you a delightful sense of power.

Beside the clematis on the west and the woodbine on the south side of the piazza, there was a hop vine which grew up on a pole beside the south piazza steps. That hop vine grew very fast and always reached the piazza roof by the first of June. We used to put a pin into the pole to mark its growth and found, on its best growing day, it accomplished six inches in twenty-four hours! I have that hop vine, or a piece of it, growing up beside our back porch here in Amherst and it still reaches the porch roof by the

first of June. After I outgrew the tricycle I had a bicycle on which I took some long trips, but I used it mostly just riding round the houses, up the Lanesboro road and then coasting down into the driveway from the road round our house. But that has nothing to do with the piazza.

The house was built originally for a summer house; the walls inside, too, were all wood, and by the time I knew it, quite darkened by time and lampblack. The floors were made of soft wood. Downstairs they were all covered; in the parlor with a carpet from wall to wall, big rugs in the dining-room and studio and small rugs in Papa's study and the hall. The kitchen and passage-way from dining-room to kitchen were bare so they had to be painted very often, about once a year. That was fun, for after the painting was done, boards were laid down through the passage-way and from sink to stove to pantry to wood-shed, and you had to walk on these boards for a day or so till the paint was dry. That made getting around from one place to another rather a game—for me at any rate! Downstairs, except my father's study and the kitchen, the four other rooms, parlor, hall, dining-room, studio, all opened into each other with no doors, only big square, wide openings. Curtains hung in those openings and could be pulled across when needed. From the dining-room to the studio you went up one step. (Incidentally, with the curtain to be pulled this made the studio a fine place for a stage on which to give plays).

In the dining-room was a small fire-place with a black iron grate in which we burned coal in the winter for extra heat. We had a hot air furnace in the cellar which heated the rooms downstairs, except the kitchen which got the heat from the kitchen stove. No bedrooms were heated except the nursery. In the studio in the winter, stood a big round black air-tight stove with little ising-glass windows, and decorated with small yellow china medallions. The cover on top you took off to put the coal in, and the handle of the cover was a statue of Christopher Columbus! Above the stove was a little register, which, when open, let a little heat upstairs just outside a bedroom door and I used often to stand on that to dress in the winter mornings when I had outgrown sleeping in the nursery. All the rooms of the house were rather small, but there was an air of spaciousness downstairs because the rooms opened into each other with such wide doorways.

On the north wall of the studio partly behind the big stove

was a long narrow shelf, two shelves in fact, with a silk curtain covering the bottom one. On this bottom shelf tucked away safely were three things that I enjoyed looking at when I was in the house on rainy afternoons or some such solitary occasion. One was a box, ingeniously made of several little trays of some fine thin wood fitting into each other with a cover on top. Each tray was filled with little bas-relief plaster medallions of figures and scenes (I can't remember exactly what) each in a small compartment of its own. There were four or five trays of these. Another thing was a box, also divided into compartments, of all kinds of beautiful semi-precious stones. Those I loved. Beside these there was a square thin box like a handkerchief box filled with lovely little squares of fine white silk some of them with Japanese prints on them and others embroidered in patterns with gold and silver and colored threads. These little silk doilies, I think I still have somewhere.

At the opposite end of the studio was a bureau, a very handsome mahogany bureau, with brass handles, that rattled in a delightful way when you pulled out the drawers. I still remember the contents of that bureau. The top drawer held knitting needles, crochet hooks, embroidery frames and similar things, among them a "sewing bird," as they called it, a metal gadget which clamped onto a table. The top of it was the figure of a bird with a beak which opened when you squeezed the handle, and into which you put your sewing to hold it firmly while you sewed your seam. The next two drawers held the reproductions of Mother's Prang flower pictures and books with the reproductions of her Christmas and Easter cards. In the lower drawer were our school books and slates (for we did our arithmetic on slates in our early years), Ruth's and mine and Kathleen's. Ruth and Kathleen were two of my cousins who lived next door and went to school to my father. When I think of that lowest drawer I can hear the kind of a jingling rattle of the brass handles, for we opened and shut that drawer so many, many times.

As I said, the house was not large, the rooms upstairs were small, but surprising as it may seem, originally there were eight bedrooms. Later part of one was made into a bathroom and the rest of that room, thrown into another with some new windows, made the room which I had for the last years we were in Berkshire.

Mother and Papa's room looked to the west with three win-

dows. By one window stood Mother's bureau. On that bureau were always four things that I remember: a bottle of "4711 Eau de Cologne," a little blue and white striped china powder dish with a cover (now on my bureau) with powder and a fluffy powder puff in it, a jar of attar of roses with a cover and a dark though bright green bottle of smelling salts with a glass stopper in the shape of a crown.

Downstairs the hall ran right through the house from north to south. Behind the south door which was considered the front door (and had the brass eagle knocker on it which we still have) were some hooks for our coats and opposite on the other side of the door a wooden upholstered box with a cover in which mittens, gloves and caps were kept in the winter. There was another quite sizable piece of furniture in the hall called a "what-not," really a tall series of shelves on four legs on which all manner of things were kept—hence its name I suppose. There were large picture books of the world—the Burton travel pictures which I loved to look at.

On the way to the kitchen was a narrow dark little room, called the passage-way which was where all the dining-room dishes and silver were kept. In a little low cupboard, on a shelf under the dish shelves, for some reason, were the eggs, and in a space under that shelf, brown wrapping paper. On the opposite wall of that little passage-way were hung some brooms, and later, when we got one, the telephone. Four doors led out of this passage-way—to the kitchen, the dining-room, the hall, and down cellar. A door from the kitchen led into the little woodshed which had a tiny room, an earth-closet privy, which was all we had for a toilet for a good many years. After a while, when a real bathroom with tub, wash bowl and flush toilet was in contemplation, for a time we got rid of the indoor privy and had a separate outdoor little house in the spruce trees toward the Whitings. That was a cold place to go of a winter evening!

The woodshed was small. You went into it from the kitchen, but also by an outside door on the ground level. Our tools, hammers, saws, etc., hung on the woodshed wall. Through the outer ground level door the wood was brought and the ice for the ice-box which was in the woodshed, three or four steps down from the kitchen level. So whenever you wanted anything from the ice-box, you went from the kitchen down the steps and back again.

Not the easy compact convenience of today!

The frame of the wide doorway from the hall to the dining-room on the left side was the place where we measured the heights of the family and friends. You stood up with your back against the frame, (which was about eight inches wide) a book on your head close up against the frame, and a pencil line was drawn at the height indicated and the name and date written on it. All the names and dates and heights were never washed off and were still there when we left the house. I was measured that way year after year from the time I could walk, I think, and so were the school boys and the Whitings and Fenns and others. I don't remember how many of them all. At the top of the frame as far up as you could reach above the height marks hung a string bag into which we put the pieces of string from all packages. As all sorts of twine and string was always just poked into that bag, periodically it became a tangled mess, and you had to spend a long time untangling it to get a piece to use! After a time, and I don't wonder, that tangled mass of string so exasperated my brother Dick that he said he'd keep us supplied with balls of twine if we would throw that bag away! I really don't remember whether we did it or not. Saving things was a pretty ingrained habit.

Across the ceiling in the hall on a cased-in beam over the "What-not" hung Papa's Civil War sword and cap and knapsack. The knapsack had a bullet hole in it from a spent grapeshot. He found the grapeshot in the knapsack after the Battle of Bull Run. He would say that was the nearest he came to being shot, with the knapsack on his back and his back to the enemy! It was the retreat from the Battle of Bull Run.

Just beyond that opening from the hall, in the dining-room was a black walnut bureau used as a side-board. The table linen was kept in it, and above it there was a small china closet with the "best" cups and saucers and special pitchers and such like in it. One pitcher was a brown Wedgewood inscribed around the top with "Content is Rich," a play on words very appropriate for a cream pitcher. I still have it. On top of the chest was a silver cake-basket and always the white "cracker jar" that I have had here in Amherst for several years under our china closet, with cookies in it. I have just put it away this winter. In its place is a handsome decorated box that Nancy Locke gave me for Christmas.

The kitchen was rather dark. Only one window by the sink,

and the top of the outside door which had glass in it, gave outside sunlight. In the winter it was even darker, for there was a vestibule storm door put on to make the kitchen warmer and keep out the snow.

There were set tubs in the kitchen but no hot water ran into them. They had to be filled with hot water carried in dippers from the stove hot water "reservoir," as it was called. They were seldom used as we sent out our washing. I used to have baths in one of those tubs after I outgrew baby baths in the nursery upstairs. Sometimes I had baths in the "hat tub," which was brought out on Saturday nights. It was literally like a hat—a round tin basin about two feet in diameter which sat on the floor and had a wide brim around it, and a seat at one side on which you sat and washed yourself from the water in the basin. You had to be pretty careful not to tip it over!

The lights we had were kerosene lamps. In the kitchen, beside the stairs and in the studio and study and by the piano were lamps screwed into the wall; over the dining-room table a bigger one hung from the ceiling, which pulled up and down by a chain. In the parlor was a so-called Rochester burner which stood on the center table. The lamps in the bedrooms were small and stood in a rack screwed onto the wall. You always took a candle upstairs at night to see your way to light the lamp, and sometimes the candle was all I used to undress by.

All the lamps which had been used, had to be taken to the kitchen each morning to be filled with kerosene, and this was often my job when I was older. The wicks of the lamps had to be trimmed so they would burn evenly, the chimneys wiped if they had got smoky, the lamps filled and then all the lamps were carried back to their proper places.

At night when it began to grow dark some one went around the house and lighted all the lamps one by one in each room, except upstairs, which was not lighted up until you went to bed. In the evening if you had to go upstairs for something, you took a candle. Later on, when we had a bathroom, the lamp there was lighted when the others were. Lighting a house, in those days, in the country was not as simple and easy as pushing a button! Gas light made it a good deal easier for city people.

Remember that all the rooms opened into each other with large doorways (except the study and kitchen) so downstairs

seemed to be all one big room unless the curtains were drawn. All the rooms had book shelves in them except perhaps the dining-room. My father's study was lined with books from floor to ceiling, like our Bookroom here in Amherst. The walls all over the house had many pictures on them and there was much furniture—and, as many people in those days had, we had a "Rogers group," a plaster cast of Lincoln's cabinet.

Every window that got any sun at all (and there was a lot of sun because our living rooms were on the south side) in the studio, dining-room and parlor, was filled with plants on big plant stands and special shelves, so filled that you could hardly get near the windows. There were geraniums, begonias, calla lilies, heliotropes and ferns of all kinds, and, in the spring, hyacinths and narcissus. It almost gave the impression of a greenhouse and under Mother's "green thumb" everything that could blossom did so. Watering the plants, which was one of my jobs, took a long time every day! For a time the three windows on the west side of the parlor were filled by an orange tree, planted from a seed, standing in a big wooden tub two or more feet square. One year we had blossoms and a little orange from it. The orange seed was planted the day Faith was married. Later that window space was filled by a big Boston fern. An English ivy in a big pot stood at one side of the big doorway from parlor to hall and grew up over the whole wide space and along the wall over the piano. One of my jobs sometimes, when it needed it, after the winter dust and lamp black which came from the lamps smoking once in a while, had coated the leaves a little, was to give the ivy a bath! Mother told me the ivy had to be washed in order to breathe. Every leaf had to be wiped off with a wet cloth, and when it came to washing the part over the big doorway, I had to stand on a step-ladder to do it! The ivy was taken down and put outdoors in the summer where it grew up the north wall of the house, then it was brought back into the house for the winter.

In the studio, Mother's painting-table stood by the only window which didn't have plants in it. When I think of my Mother now, where I see her in my mind's eye most often, is at her painting-table. I have a picture of her on my bureau sitting at her table painting. She painted in water colors, at first mostly flowers—afterwards landscapes. She painted every day, almost, from one to two or three hours, to help support the family. She painted



ELEANOR AND REX — 1894



FISHER HOUSE — PAPA AND THORNTON WIERUM
WITH DAN THE HORSE

flower pictures for the lithographer, L. Prang & Co., a very well-known firm, so that it was a distinction to have paintings taken by Prang to be lithographed.

For a good many years she painted for them almost as fast as she could put brush to paper. I am sorry to say that I don't know when she began to do it and just when she stopped. But by the time I was old enough to know much about it, I think the contract was ended. But her flower paintings in lithographic reproductions went all over the country. (Baba found some 30 Prang lithographs of her flower paintings for sale in a store in Boston sometime after I knew him.) Beside the rather large flower paintings, she made Christmas and Easter cards and bookmarks for Prang. She sometimes came across reproductions of her paintings in strange dentist or doctors' offices, and once, in the form of embroidery on a table cover!

Although she did occasional water color sea pictures early in her painting career, the real painting of landscapes developed in the last years of her life.

In those last years, as well as regular landscapes, she painted, by a method of her own, very lovely woods scenes in a snow-storm, entirely in white and sepia. I had a very fine one when I was married but I lost it when our house burned down in Lewiston. She also painted sea-scapes on the shelf-like fungi that grow out of trees and rotten stumps. These she did at first, as a kind of joke, but they were attractive and made nice little gifts—though I'm afraid they didn't last long. For quite a while she made a series of exquisite, what you might call, portraits of mushrooms. I have a book of them. Friends and relatives would collect specimens on their walks and bring them home to her, specially Annie Whiting, and she would sit right down and make the portrait before the subject lost its freshness.

A clever little Easter card she invented—a pussywillow pasted onto a little card to represent a cat with its back to you—she painted on ears and a tail and something for it to be sitting on, a fence maybe, and a little landscape around it.

My earliest recollection must have been when I was about three years old. I was sitting on the step between the dining-room and the studio eating something in a little saucer which was on the step beside me, and our big black and tan English collie Rex came and ate it up.

Although Mother and my sister Faith must have taken the physical care of me in my very earliest years, most of my earliest remembrances, though vague, are associated with Papa. I remember exciting plays of "ride-a-cock-horse" and being jumped from his foot clear up into his lap. The earliest stories were told by him, though Mother told me two of her own that I loved. I have told them ever since to children and then grandchildren—"The three little kittens and the hen's nest" and "The Bed that ran away." I sat in Papa's lap while he read or told me the old favorites. Also he used to sing to me, specially a "Frog he would a Wooing Go" and later a gruesome parody of the "Mistletoe Bough" called the "Work 'Us Boy."

It was Mother, though, who came to me when I had bad dreams and cried out. Once she came and told me to think of something pleasant like the Fenns coming to us from Chicago, but I said "No, then I'd think the train would be smashed and they'd all be killed!" So she told me to think of buttercups and daisies for there was nothing bad I could imagine about them. So always, after that, my panacea for bad dreams was thinking of buttercups and daisies and I passed it on to my children, at any rate to my Eleanor, and maybe she's passed it on to her children!

Papa also read me stories from a little French book which was given to him by his Mother in Tours, France, as a New Year's present in 1842. He would translate it as he went along—I still have that little book. He had it rebound in 1916. When he didn't want to read or tell stories any more, when I came begging, or asked for more, he would say, as Aunt Nina's sister used to say to her in the same situation:

"I'll tell you a story about Jack O'Nory
And now my story's begun
I'll tell you another about his brother
And now my story is done."

Our dog Rex was a little bigger than Tigger was and colored something like the Locke's dog Wolf. He was a great friend and as loving and intelligent and reliable as Tigger. He and I, when I was very little, used to hide behind chairs together when we were scared by the noise of thunderstorms or fire-crackers on the Fourth of July.

I was rather a scary and timid little girl in spite of being a

tom-boy later on. I was the youngest, much the youngest, of a family of seven children, but I was really an only child at the time I can remember my home, because four of my brothers and sisters died when they were babies and my sister Faith, eighteen years older than I, was married when I was less than three, and my brother Dick, twelve years older than I, went away to school at about the same time. My mother was forty-two when I was born and my father fifty-two. I called them Mama and Papa. Later I called Mama, Mother. I was called Enna all my childhood by almost everybody. That was the way I said Eleanor when I first began to talk.

I had two special dolls when I was rather a small girl, about seven or eight, I think. One was a baby doll, almost life size with a very pretty wax face, open and shut eyes, and a wig of short straight hair and a jointed body. I think Faith's friend Bessie Colson gave it to me one Christmas or birthday. It had all the baby clothes of that time—a band and shirt and long flannel and white petticoats and a long dress. Her name was Bessie. I loved her dearly and took care of her, feeding her and dressing her, putting her to bed and taking her out regularly for long periods and by the time I outgrew her, her beautiful waxen nose was almost completely flattened by love and kisses.

The other special doll was more elegant and not a baby doll. She had belonged to the little daughter of a Brooklyn friend of Mother's, a Mrs. Bierwith. This little girl had died when quite young. Mrs. Bierwith kept the doll and all her clothes and possessions in a cabinet in her house in Brooklyn and, sometimes, when I went with Mother to visit in Brooklyn and we went to see Mrs. Bierwith, I was allowed to take this beautiful doll out of the cabinet and play with her. Her name was Rosa. Much to my joy one day she was given to me. She, too, had a wax face with lovely curling hair, and deep blue open and shut eyes. She was bigger than Bessie. But the enchanting thing about her was her clothes and belongings. She had all sorts of dresses—one a pink satin, low-necked party dress, several pairs of shoes, a handkerchief and a pair of rubbers, as well as coats, capes and hats. She also had jewelry, a necklace, ear-rings and a small lorgnette, and opera glasses. I still have the little round wooden box with that jewelry in it. With all these clothes went a little black walnut bureau to keep them in, and that bureau I gave to Nancy Locke some years ago.

In spite of all these special fancy clothes, I never loved Rosa as I did Bessie.

Next door to us and in the house in which Anne and Rose Whiting now live, was my mother's married sister, Aunt Sue Whiting and husband and eventually eight children. My childhood in Berkshire would have been lonely indeed if it hadn't been for that wonderful family of cousins next door. So you see I had plenty of playmates. The fourth one, Ruth, was born just a month before I was. Some of those cousins, some of you already know as "Aunt" Anne and Rose and Harry. Those cousins' names were: Edward, Dorothy, Margery, Ruth, Kathleen, Annie, Henry, Rose, called as children—Ted, Dot, Mid, Ruth, Kad, Annie, Harry, Rose. Ruth and Kad were my usual playmates—Ruth just a month older than I and Kad a year or two younger.

Uncle Edward Whiting owned the farm, though he had a farmer to run it. I think I will tell you here a bit about the Whitings.

Uncle Edward was not very tall but was slight, so seemed tall. He was very quiet and spoke very softly, so softly that sometimes you couldn't hear him. I was rather shy with him for that reason. He, in contrast to my father, was very skillful with his hands—a fine cabinet-maker. As our landlord he always fixed up the roof-leaks and things that needed repairing about our house. Though for years he couldn't find, I remember, a leak between the upstairs balcony, and the studio downstairs, so that every time there was a hard rain, specially from the east or southeast, we would always have to run with pails and pans to set them down where it was dripping through the ceiling in the studio!

Aunt Sue was pretty tall for a woman and very handsome with beautiful blue eyes. She was energetic and lively, and having very little money and a large family had much work to do all the time. She had a bit of the Handerson "Sharp Tongue" (Grandma Thayer was a Handerson and they were noted for their rather sharp and witty tongues) and she used to hurt my childish feelings sometimes. She also, in her busy life, with so much to do, often when I appeared would have some job or errand for me to do, and I, who always got out of doing jobs if I could, didn't like it. This habit of getting people to do jobs and errands made Papa, in joking mood, nickname Aunt Sue "The Major."

Another thing about Aunt Sue that bothered me then, was

that she made a little fun of my love for Cooney, Mrs. Wierum, a near summer neighbor and old friend of Aunt Sue's and my family's and much older than I. She told me I only "had a crush on her." But in later years, after I was married and went back to Berkshire, I loved Aunt Sue very much and enjoyed her lively tongue and her wonderful youthful vitality and enjoyment of life.

Dorothy was very quiet, like her father. She had lovely curling chestnut brown hair. Margery was more lively and loved doing adventurous things. Ruth had blue eyes and curly hair and dimples (in fact, dimples ran in the family). Kathleen was quiet, too, with soft, fine brown hair not so curly, with greeny-brown eyes with long dark lashes. She was very attractive and boys and men gravitated to her. Anne, Harry, and Rose are not so clear to me, from those old days, perhaps because I have seen so much more of them since and right down to the present, so I think of them as they are now and the old impression has been partially obliterated. Anyway, if I can't remember just what they looked like long ago, I loved them then and I love them now.

I haven't said anything about Ted Whiting because I knew him so little in those days in Berkshire. He went away to school almost when Dick did and I saw him very little in vacations so that I just can't remember much about him to describe. He was quiet, as all the Whitings were, and had dimples!

The Whiting family seemed to me, as a whole, very quiet and peaceful and self-contained. In spite of there being eight children, I never think of them as talking loud or having fights. Whereas in my family, though there was much love, even with only one child in the household, there was noise and commotion! My father got angry easily and then often talked very loud. I was constantly contradicting and answering back. If I wasn't being unpleasant I was noisy because when I got big enough I was always singing. We had dear friends who loved to come to visit us, so they said, "to hear the Fishers argue!"

Both families loved books and music, and ideas, etc., but my family talked about them all, and the things going on in the world—and the Whitings, you might say, kept still about the same things!

Uncle Edward was a Republican and my father was a "Mugwump" but we always lived peacefully side by side.

My father had opened a small school for boys, which he

called the "Crestalbon Home School for Boys." He named it Crestalbon, and the farm, too, from the fact that the farm was on a watershed or crest, from which on one side the water flowed north and on the other side south, eventually into the Housatonic river, and on into the Connecticut, hence Crest, the albon part for Whiting from the Latin word for White. He never had many boys at a time. I don't remember the first ones he had very much for I was too young, though I knew two of them in later years when they came back to visit Mama and Papa. These two were Dell Barney and Percy Brown who both became well-known Boston doctors.

The ones I do remember from my childhood, were Freddy Hodges and Amos Little. Freddy came there because he had lost his mother and his father couldn't take care of him properly. He was not very bright and I think of him as rather a thorn in the flesh. He stayed several years and called my parents "Mama and Papa."

Amos Little came more for his health. His family was a very well-to-do Boston family. The Little Building in Boston was built by and named after Amos' father, J. M. Little. We saw a good deal of all his family and they were good friends for years. Amos died only a few years ago. My only real recollection of him in Berkshire at the time is that he was constantly teasing me, tying my braids together and such-like things. I'm sure it was very good for me!

Most of the Whitings went to my father's school. Ruth and I were what you might call in the same class. We neither of us went to any other school till we were college age except that I went one year to a small boarding school in Boston just to get a little experience away from home. Oh my, wasn't I homesick there for weeks! But I got over it and got some good friends, good theatre and music and some astronomy out of my experience! I also went for the spring term, just before I entered College, to the "Capen School" in Northampton, in order to study German to pass a College entrance examination in elementary German. German was the **only** subject that Papa wasn't able to prepare me on for College.

Our school day in Berkshire never lasted more than from quarter of nine till twelve o'clock and the afternoons were free for playing outdoors. I think we were outdoors nearly every day,

rain or shine; because if we wanted to, there was always the Big Barn to play in.

Every morning Papa drove, after breakfast, a mile to the P. O. in Berkshire to get the mail and while he was gone Ruth and I would get out our books and study and write in our copy books maybe. When he got back we recited and did more studying, usually not bothering about recess, for we wanted to get all the work we could done, so we wouldn't have so much to do in the afternoon or evening to prepare for the next day. What was left to do, we did at our own time. Our school work differed in many ways from what you have nowadays. Every morning, the first thing, we wrote in our "copy-books" to learn to make the letters right and legible. Each page in the copy-book had a different line to copy—the first based on the letter A and so on through the alphabet. I remember one for G:

"G, glitter, gold will not rust."

After writing in our copy-books we had what was called "dictation." My father would read from some book, a well-written one, and we would have to write down what he read a sentence or two at a time. This was to teach us to spell and punctuate correctly. He would go over it afterwards to show us our mistakes. Every Friday we drew a map of some part of the world and colored it and put in the mountains and rivers and capitals. So at that time I knew the world very well—on paper! We had drawing and painting with Mother on Fridays also. We learned a poem every Friday and if I had had a good memory I should be able to repeat a hundred or so poems, if not more—going from Shakespeare to the latest poet of that day who might have been Kipling.

We began to study history before we were ten, I think—a child's history of the U. S.—the same of France and England. We also studied Greek and Roman history before I went to college. We studied French, too, when we were quite small. Papa was a good French teacher with a fine accent. That was partly because his father in 1839, when Papa was three years old, took all his family—his wife and six children—to France for three years. They went in a sailing vessel and stayed in Tours where the best French was spoken at that time. When they came home, Papa couldn't speak any English. He looked around the table at his first meal in America and said, "Ou est le vin?"

The first thing I learned in French, I remember, and for a wonder I still do remember it, was a little French lullaby which I learned by rote. I'll write it out for you:

Dors, bébé, dors
Car j'entends au dehors,
Un mouton blanc, un mouton noir,
Qui disent, "Enfant, enfant, bonsoir,"
Et si l'enfant ne veut dormir,
On verra, bientôt, accourir,
Un noir ou blanc petit mouton,
Pour picoter le pied mignon
De mon joli petit poupon!

Can you read it?

Perhaps as part of Papa's system of education, Dell Barney and another boy, Alden Thurston, built a little house something the size of the little house we have here, but not so good-looking and well-proportioned. It was almost square, with head space for a grown-up. The other boys later used it as a shop; they made things out of wood—paper knives, brackets made with the jig-saw, etc. They put up a sign over the door—"Whiting, Little and Hodges—Cabinet Makers." For several years it was used for that purpose, then after Ted went away to school and Freddy and Amos left us, we children had it for a playhouse, and we used it for a good many years with joy. Later some older students of Papa's whom he was tutoring for College make-up work fitted it up as a lounging and smoking room. I don't know when it was torn down—but I know where it stood!

Papa, with his boys, made trips also to nearby factories of interest. In the early days there was a Glass Factory in Berkshire village and almost all the men in Berkshire worked in it. In spite of having wonderful spring water and the best of quartz sand, which are needed in fine glass making, the factory was closed down before I left Berkshire, because of the proximity of coal to the water and sand in Pennsylvania and the Berkshire factory could not compete with that. Papa used to take his pupils to see the glass-making and I went, too. I remember seeing a workman get a great round blob of molten glass on the end of a long blow-pipe which he then hung down into a deep, narrow trench-like place, very deep, I don't know how many feet. He would then put his

mouth to the upper end of the pipe and blow, and as he blew, he would swing the long pipe back and forth. When it was blown out into a very long thin bubble of glass he would swing it up and out onto an absolutely smooth very large metal platform. It would then be cut down its whole length, when it would flatten swiftly out on the smooth surface, and when cool it would be glass which could be cut up for window glass. A glass-blower was a very skillful workman. In a later part there is a more accurate description of glass-blowing by Dell Barney.

The slag from the glass-works used to be put on the roads, specially between the Berkshire spring and Uncle Edward's woods. It made a black and relatively hard, dustless and also un-muddy road where there were always to be found pieces of blue and green, rather opaque glass that was very pretty, which we collected at various times; as I remember, we used them, besides just collecting them as beautiful objects, to "sell" when we played "store."

Once one of the men made Papa a glass cane. It looked very much like the Christmas sticks of candy you have in your stockings, but with more colors in it. For years Papa also had on his desk a large "drop" of clear dark green glass about six inches in diameter which he used as a paper-weight.

Except in the summer months, when I was usually outdoors till bedtime, or when I went to the Whitings to supper, or one of them came to our house, Papa read aloud to me almost every evening. He read Scott's novels and long poem stories like "The Lady of the Lake," Dickens, Thackeray, Cooper, etc., all the classics of those days. I loved it. I also played cribbage in the evenings. We sat around the table with the Rochester burner in the parlor, mother knitting and I, when I was old enough, either knitting, crocheting, or embroidering something to be put away in the "Christmas drawer" for someone. Papa always sat in his special chair with his feet up on another chair; and the cat (whatever one we had at the time and we always had a cat as well as Rex) always got into his lap and lay out at full length along his legs. When I went to the Whitings to supper we usually played games, card games and others. You will see now and even more as I go on, that almost all our fun and recreations were homemade, done by ourselves. Partly this was because we were in the country and partly because we were poor. But rich or poor, city or country, children in those days did not have so many outside amusements

and organizations, like movies, television, radio, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, etc., to entertain them and keep them busy. You had to do much more for yourself. I wouldn't attempt to say which way is better—perhaps one way isn't better than another—anyway they are different.

On rainy days and other times when I didn't go out, I spent a lot of time painting—in painting books and in books where Mother would let me paint or crayon the illustrations. Mother made me paper dolls, too, and I spent many hours making dresses and various clothes and costumes for them. Also trimming dolls' hats.

Among the amusements and entertainments that whiled away some of my indoor hours were three things that might be considered the forerunners or at least substitutes, in a small way, for your movies. One was the Zoëtrope. You held it in your hand by a handle underneath, inserted a strip of pictures, on cardboard or heavy paper, on the inside of the outer circular side of the platform above the handle, which platform you made to revolve. You looked through small slots at the revolving pictures and as they went around the persons in the picture seemed to be moving and performing some action. The ones I remember were of a little girl putting her hand into her apron and scattering grain for a flock of hens; and a man, in another one, pounding down cobblestones with a tamper. It was a wonder to me and lots of fun.

The second entertainer was a magic lantern—a lantern with a kerosene light which got hot and smelt, in a kind of box, with a place for slides. The proper mechanism threw the pictures on the slide onto a sheet hung up for the purpose. The magic lantern we had was given to one of Papa's pupils by the boy's father, but we all enjoyed it while he was with us.

The third source of much pleasure was a very fine kaleidoscope. It stood on a standard, slanting like a telescope with little handles like those on a tiller to turn it. It was three or four inches in diameter and the pieces of glass inside were of very beautiful colors and unusual shapes so the resulting patterns were exquisite and almost endless in variety. I spent many hours looking into that kaleidoscope. We left it behind when Papa and I left Berkshire. For a long time Aunt Marge Whiting had it in her school, and then it fell to pieces. I wish I still had it.

After I was able to read easily I pored for hours over the

bound volumes of two of the children's magazines of that day—"Harpers Young People" and "St. Nicholas," reading the stories and specially those by Howard Pyle which came out in "Harpers Young People," and which you know now in a book called "The Wonder Clock."

Another book that I loved (Papa read me the stories, and I read them to myself, often) was Maria Edgeworth's "Parents' Assistant" as it was called. It was a set of very moral tales; the titles of two of them, I remember, were "Simple Susan" and "Waste not, Want not, or Two Strings to Your Bow." I think children often really like pretty "thick" morals to their stories—at any rate they don't mind them.

Fairy Stories also were my favorite reading for years. The "Pink" and the "Yellow Fairy Books" collected by Andrew Lang I read and reread.

Another set of fairy stories I liked very much was a French one by Jean Macé—I had it in an English translation. I specially enjoyed those stories. I don't think I ever "believed in fairies" but I certainly loved the stories about them.

Because we were poor we never travelled except to visit friends and relatives who lived not too far away. We visited cousins and friends in and around Boston and New York and great aunts and cousins in Keene and Walpole, New Hampshire. We spent very little money for anything that was not necessary, had plain food, and very few clothes. Papa did have many books, but most of them had been acquired before I knew him when he was teaching in Brooklyn and earning more money. Many more were given him and to us all three, each Christmas, and birthdays by friends and relatives who knew how much we, especially Papa, depended on them.

As I see my Mother at her painting-table, so I see my Father oftenest in his study reading. I think of him always with books, morning, noon and night. When he wasn't reading to himself or teaching someone, he was reading to Mother or me. He used to read Homer in Greek aloud to himself, and I can still hear the beautiful sound of it. I suppose that was why he read it aloud. He didn't read merely classic literature either, for I can remember his eagerness to own the "Origin of Species" and all of Darwin. One Christmas his sister, Aunt Kate Baker, gave him the whole set of Darwin's works. Reading Darwin and Huxley, in those days, of

course, was still an exciting adventure.

In spite of always having to think about not spending money, we never really suffered a bit for lack of it.

I am vague about our financial situation at that time. I know my parents were poorer, after they came to Berkshire, than they had been in Brooklyn when Papa was at the Adelphi Academy and the Polytechnic and had a school of his own. You will wonder why I shouldn't know about it. But in those days, specially in my family's "culture" and class, people did not talk about money and how much things cost and whether you had money or not. It was just not thought to be good manners and well-bred to do so. In my case perhaps they thought also that they shouldn't worry a worrying child about it. I still am not really interested in money, and I can never remember the price of anything even if I want to!

That isn't a good way to be, I know, but one's early training is strong and I still would rather be too little interested in money than too much! Because my family put other things above money-making didn't mean that they didn't work very hard to try to earn all they needed, but when I knew them, after their young days were over, they couldn't always quite do it. Mother painted all the time, and sold her things; my father tutored boys and had his little school and gave public readings in Pittsfield, but quite often Papa's well-to-do sister, Aunt Kate Baker, would help out with a check. Also she lent Dick money for his College education, I think. Dick helped us later when he was out of College and earning himself. In my parents' eyes, I think, making money, just in and for itself, was a rather low aim in life, and as for speculation in money, that was a form of gambling and not to be done! I guess I have never really changed much from those opinions either. But I have always thought that Papa could have been rich and not been spoiled by it. He was always a scholar, a dreamer and a poet, (he was the class poet when he graduated from Harvard), and if his daily living had come easier to him his scholarship and reading might have had more tangible results. He did some translations from the French and wrote a long syllabus for a new system of education, from kindergarten to college, which is very interesting in its new ideas. I have it still if you ever want to read it.

Poor man, in Berkshire, at least when I knew him as an older man, his reading, teaching and study time was always interrupted by all the chores: the horse, the hens, the garden, the furnace and

all the other fires to bring in fuel for. Also he had to repair broken things with no aptitude for such work. He was awkward and unskillful with his hands and not patient enough, and the job usually was not very well done.

In spite of being poor, and, perhaps this will seem strange to you in the light of what I have just been saying, we almost always had a "girl" as she was called, in the kitchen to cook and help with the housework.

When I was born we had a remarkable Irish woman, Nellie Conroy, who had been with the family for some time and was with us on and off for some years afterwards. At the time I knew her she was fairly old and seemed more so because she was very crippled with rheumatism, hobbled about with a cane and had to crawl up and down stairs to get to her room. She used the handle of that cane very dextrously to pull things about and take things off shelves.

She was a wonderful person and a wonderful cook. I still make "Nellie Conroy's corn bread" for you sometimes when you are here visiting. She couldn't read or write, but when she dictated to Mother a letter she wanted to write to someone, the language was quite beautiful and often like poetry. She was very fond of me and called me her "Star." She told me that the night I was born she saw a star sailing through the sky—she called "Miss Faith" and she ran out and caught it in her apron and brought it in, and it turned out to be me!

When I was nine years old she gave me a little gift on my birthday with this message which she dictated to Mother: "Oh my pretty star! will be nine years old at ten o'clock tonight. Please accept this little gift with all the good wishes my heart can bestow upon you, and that you may have many happy birthdays—happy and bright as the night when I first saw you nine years ago.

Your old friend

Ellen Conroy"

Nellie must have been very lovely as a young girl—curly dark brown hair, hazel eyes with brown specks in them and beautifully cut features. She used to tell us stories of her life in Ireland "running wild over the bogs."

My parents first came to Berkshire in the early 1880's and spent a summer in the house where Anne and Rose Whiting now

live. Uncle Edward Whiting, then very well-to-do, saw the place, loved it, and bought the farm in 1884. Then he built our house for my family to live in. After that was built for a summer home, my parents decided to live there all the year round on account of my brother Dick's health. He needed to be in the country, they thought. I guess Uncle Edward would have built a new house but he suddenly lost a lot of his money. So there were the two families who had both been living in Brooklyn, New York, now side by side on the farm in Berkshire. A few years after that in 1888 I was born.

I don't remember ever being taken care of in the sense of having someone special with me when I went out and never a nurse that I know of. I suppose that as soon as I was able to run about there was always some older child like Dot or Mid to be with Ruth and me and Kathleen, and then we did the same by Annie, Harry and Rose. Of course there was my sister Faith at home until I was nearly three. Besides, there was nothing to hurt us outdoors, no cars on the roads and very seldom even a horse and carriage.

As we got to be seven or eight years old, or so, we went everywhere we could walk with no strings attached—up the near hills, to the woods, and to the Big Barn. I have the remembrance, whether right or wrong, that we were always free to go wherever we wanted by foot and no questions asked. We children practically always walked wherever we went anyway.

The Big Barn, which some of you know in Berkshire now, was there when I was living there, but Uncle Edward's horse barn has been torn down.

Whenever we children started out in the afternoon to play, we would talk over what we should do, and where we should go, and usually it was to the Big Barn. There was almost always something going on there amongst the animals or something the farmer and his hired man were doing—haying in the summer, getting ice and wood in the winter, sawing wood, killing pigs, new calves or pigs, milking and so on; in fact, it was the center of our lives. We called the road from the Whiting's to the barn, "the natural path," for if we didn't think much about it, and wandered off when we went out, we always landed at the barn.

We, or at least I—I shouldn't speak on such a subject for Ruth and Kathleen—had a blood-thirsty but fascinated interest in watch-

ing the killing of the pigs! I don't suppose I always went to the barn at that time but I do distinctly and very clearly remember it. I guess we must have felt that pigs were our legitimate pray for I also remember the milder sport of chasing the pigs from under the horse barn through their outdoor pen into their house and back again. Not by running after them inside the pen but just scaring them from outside by shouts and gesticulations. Horrid little brats we must have been!

The corn house was a source of amusement, too—filled with husked ears of corn ready to have the kernels ground off in the corn-grinder for the hens. The ear was put into a hopper at the top of the machine, you turned the handle, the cob popped out and the corn ran down through a chute into a receptacle. It was very satisfying fun.

The cows were all named by us, after ourselves and the other members of our families, of course, but other names I remember were, "Asker," Evangeline, Annie—an—Louise, Hendrina, Ellen Amalia Channing Ireman (all one name) after a Danish friend of Grandma Thayer's.

We played in the hay, jumped from the beams, climbed into the cupola, played hide-and-go-seek in the Big Barn. Sometimes, also, we would cover the window of the little room where the oat bin was with a red cloth and sit in the oats and tell ghost stories.

Another occupation in those old days, and a pleasanter one than those concerned with the pigs, was going to the blacksmith's shop in Lanesboro to see the horses shod. All the horses had to have shoes, but it was special fun to go with the farm team when they were shod. It took a long time sometimes, but I seem to remember enjoying watching it all. I can hear now, in retrospect, the roar of the fire in the forge, and the clang of the hammer on the anvil, as the blacksmith blew the bellows by a handle which he pushed up and down and then pounded the red-hot shoe into shape on the anvil. When he had heated the shoe metal red hot in the forge, he pulled it out with a great pair of tongs, put it on the anvil and with a big hammer and sparks flying, pounded it into the shape to fit the horse's foot. It was so hot it sizzled on the hoof. He kept putting it into the forge and fitting it again till it was just right, then plunged it into a great tub of cold water. He cleaned the horse's hoof, pared the edges, then nailed on the shoe. He stood, as he fitted it and nailed it on with his back to the horse's

head, holding the hoof up between his knees. In the winter the horses had to have special spikes on their shoes called calks to keep them from slipping on icy roads.

We children used to follow the farmer (Mr. Hathaway is the one I remember best) and his hired man about, all the time, watching everything they did and asking questions. Mr. Hathaway was patient and long-suffering certainly, for I never remember his being cross with us. One of his favorite answers to our incessant questions of "Why are you doing so and so?" was, "Fun of it, same as cats go to 'lection." Also when we asked him, "Where are you going?" he would invariably say, "Going crazy," which we thought very witty and amusing and therefore always called him "Crazy."

Kathleen remembers that on April Fool's Day we used to follow him about pinning on his back various April fool jokes. He never let on that he knew it, but he went to the house off and on, and always appeared again without the labels.

Henry Gaffney was the hired man that I remember, though there were others. I don't remember exactly when he was there. He was an unusual hired man. He had read a great deal and was interesting to talk to. The drawback about him, at least for the farmer and Uncle Edward, was that he drank and periodically went off on sprees. He was never drunk on the farm that I can remember. He was a kind of romantic figure to us children. I imagined that he had "come down in the world," as they say, and was worthy of better things than being a hired man on a farm, so I got Papa and Mother to let me lend him books and quite thought that I was doing him "good." I know he had some Shakespeare from us. I don't know what he thought of the missionary work, but Kathleen reminds me that, when he left in the end, he just disappeared leaving his things behind him, but he wrote to Uncle Edward saying that he'd started drinking again and wasn't coming back, leaving everything, but he'd like to have sent to him some "underwear and the presents the children gave me."

In the earliest days, Uncle Edward had a bull in the barn (I've forgotten his name, though he must have had one for we named almost every animal) who was big and very tame and gentle so we sometimes rode on his back when he was being led around by the ring in his nose. We didn't do it very often and I think after a while they thought it might not be entirely safe.



WALLACE FENN AND PAT



CHRISTMAS PARTY — 1904
WHITINGS, FISHERS AND ALICE & WILLIAM STONE

Uncle Edward had three horses besides the farm horses, Jack and Jerry. They were named Maud, Gypsy and Easter. Easter was born on Easter Day. For a while he had her mother, Fanny, but I don't remember so much about her. Maud was a big raw-boned, long-nosed horse that was used in the double carriage. She was quiet and reliable. She had long legs and though she didn't seem to be going fast, got over a great deal of ground. Gypsy was a small black horse who had been Grandpa Thayer's horse in Brooklyn. She wasn't used in the double carriage but in the buggy. She could be ridden, too, but nobody got much chance to, because she was driven so much. Easter was a beautiful fast, brown horse with a lighter mane and tail, who could never be quite properly trained, so she either wouldn't stand still and wait for you to get in, or wouldn't go, after she was stopped! But it was great fun to go with Uncle Edward when he drove her. Sometimes I would see him harnessing her and would run to see if I could come. If I got there first, before Ruth or Kad, I would get in the buckboard, then Uncle Edward would grab the reins and jump in quickly for Easter started like a shot as soon as she was harnessed, and off we'd go like the wind and never stop till we got home again.

I remember my family had three horses at different times (only one at a time). First Ned, named after all the Edwards, I suppose—my father who was called Uncle Ned by the Whitings (and many other people by the way), Uncle Edward and Ted. He was a big black horse, not very agreeable. He used to kick sometimes. After him came Prince, a smaller brown horse, rather unreliable. He shied easily and sometimes ran away. And last came Dan, named for Dan Fenn. He was a good horse and we had him as long as we were in Berkshire.

Besides our horse we had other livestock and pets. Always we had about a dozen hens for eating and for the eggs. One hen became a special pet, because, when a chicken her leg got broken somehow and Papa bound it up on a splint. It healed and became perfectly usable again and she got very tame and always ran to Papa when he went to feed the hens, stood on his feet and flew onto his shoulder. Needless to say we couldn't bring ourselves to eat her!

Our special pet and the one that was loved the most was Dick's dog Rex. Although Dick was away from home most of the time at school and college, Rex never forgot him and was almost

beside himself with joy when Dick came home, and followed him everywhere. Rex knew several tricks. He played "Dead dog," which meant he lay on the floor very still when told to be a "dead dog," then jumped up when you said, "Big dog coming." "On trust" meant you put some food on his nose and he held it there until you said "paid for" when he threw it up in the air and caught it in his mouth. He shook hands when asked to, and shut doors when asked—of course, if they were left conveniently ajar. A couple of doors had long deep scatches on them because Rex had shut them so often.

When Rex got to be sixteen years old, and was quite lame and blind and deaf, he disappeared one day and we never saw him again. They say old dogs sometimes go off like that to die. Papa walked miles around the fields and woods to try to find him but he never did. Although Rex was just as gentle a dog as Tigger was, never growled at or bit people, he had one dog enemy. The Desmonds had a farm on the Milton road not too far from us. All you children, not the grandchildren maybe, know about the Desmonds, for some of the Desmond family has lived there since my day till about a year or so ago, and David Grose worked one summer for the two old Desmond brothers who were young men or boys when I lived in Berkshire. Well, the Desmonds long ago had a collie dog who was apt to follow their team of horses and if ever he came by our house and Rex saw him, he would make a bee line for that dog and there would ensue a terrific fight. It was a job to get them separated and they were always torn and bleeding. I don't know why Rex hated him so—he may have just thought he was protecting his family.

From the Desmond farm looking north is one of the most beautiful views in Berkshire County, according to Senator Dawes, then a senator who lived in Pittsfield. He used to bring his friends from Washington on drives to see that view. But the Desmonds never seemed to think much of the view, for they built their great big barn exactly between their small plain house and the view. One characteristic of the Desmonds which David Grose can appreciate was an apparent lack of interest in the upkeep of their fences. For way back in my day, you would suddenly by day or by night hear a rustling and a chewing in the cornfield near the house or our garden and the cry would go up: "Desmond's cows are out again!"

I think David spent a good deal of time the summer he worked for them in rounding up stray cows and mending fences.

In the very early days, I guess before I was born, the Whitings had a big dog, a mastiff named Don. He and Rex used to follow Dick and Ted and Dot and Mid when they went to walk. One day they were walking on the railroad track near the Berkshire station, or perhaps just going over a grade crossing, when a train came along. Don and Rex evidently thought the train was menacing their families and refused at first to come off the track. Don's back was broken and he lived only a short time. Rex was shoved out into the ditch by the cow-catcher of the engine and much frightened. Ever after that, and when I knew him as well, and all his life, he used to follow us walking or the horse in driving down to Berkshire as far as the spring and then he would turn around and refuse to go a step further. He never would go to the railroad again. He certainly learned his lesson. Later on the Whitings had a collie dog named after Rudyard Kipling, called "Ruddy."

Faith had had a goat, Billy, in Brooklyn, and for some years after she came to Berkshire—in fact until she was married; so she decided she would have a goat for her children when they were in Berkshire for the summer. So that's the way Pat the goat came to live with us. He lived in our barn near the horse with whom he was great friends. He was trained to draw a cart and a little sleigh in winter and the Fenns had him to play with in the summer and I in the winter. As I took care of him so much of the year he grew very fond of me and would follow me like a dog when we went off for walks. Sometimes there were children among our summer boarders who were afraid of him, and he seemed to realize that and enjoyed teasing them by coming up behind them when we were off for a walk and butting them behind the knees! I enjoyed it, too, for I liked to tease as much as he and he never did it to me! Pat had to be staked out every day for grazing—and the place had to be changed every day or two. He had a long chain which fastened on to his collar at one end with a ring at the other which slipped over the stake. If the stake was not driven solidly into the ground, Pat would sometimes pull on it hard enough to pull the stake over and let the ring slip off and then off he would go, probably to eat up Uncle Edward's best rosebush or at any rate something choice somewhere! He was hard to catch again, too. I usually was the one to put him out on the stake, and as you

know, goats are almost impossible to lead—you have to get behind them and push instead!

When we took Pat to walk with us through the fields and pastures it was fun to watch him go under a barbed wire fence. He could get under even one where the wire was fairly near the ground; he just put his head sideways so his horn would be through the fence and then his forefeet, then he lowered his back way down and what you might call just “sloped” under. I can’t think of a legitimate word that describes his motion. The barbs always scratched hair off his back in the process. Pat was devoted to the horse and loved to get into his stall, stand up on his hind legs and eat the oats out of the manger.

We always had a cat and the ones I remember were Malty, Billy Parts and Tommy Bangs. Malty was a large, very independent maltese cat, who used often to go off in the woods for days at a time and in the end he went off and never came back. Billy Parts and Tommy Bangs were brothers, white and tiger striped, named so because Billy’s dark hair seemed to be parted over his forehead and Tommy had bangs.

The most unusual pet was a crow. One day when Papa and Mother and I were driving to church, in the Miltons’ woods we saw a crow with an injured wing. When we came back he was still there by the roadside so we picked him up and brought him home. He couldn’t fly, so we kept him and fed him, and he soon became very tame. We clipped his wings so he couldn’t fly far after his wing healed. He hopped about and followed Papa about in the garden. One day Papa gave him a currant; he dug a little hole with his bill and dropped the currant into it and then came back for another and another which he put into it also, and then found a little flat stone and put it on top. Perhaps he was storing up food for the winter. We called him Sunny Jim. The name came from a little advertising verse on a package of cereal called “Force” which was popular then. On the package was a picture of a tall strong man marching along and the little verse was:

Vigor, vim, perfect trim,
“Force” made him “Sunny Jim”

Sunny Jim was fond of taking a bath in a pan we had for him and our guests would enjoy watching him flapping his wings and splashing in the water. He learned to talk a little—said “hullo”

and tried to imitate the hens and roosters cackling and crowing. In the end he became too mischievous to keep. His new wing feathers had grown out and he could fly anywhere he wanted. If Mother had her work basket on the piazza he would hop up and snatch out the thimble and fly away and hide it. One day, he got in through an open window into the Whiting's house and stole a pack of cards and tore them all up. He made holes in the shingles on the roof. Altogether he became a nuisance, so in spite of his amusing and winning ways we decided we would have to send him away to Uncle Abbott who liked all sorts of animals. He seemed to be listening, peeking over the edge of the roof, as Mother and I were talking of sending him away and the next morning he had disappeared and we never saw him again! That makes a nice story, doesn't it? But it was the season for other crows to be around and I suppose he just went off with them.

In 1892 my grandfather and grandmother Thayer came to live in Berkshire. Grandpa had been a doctor in Brooklyn, New York. He was now retired and he and Grandma came to live near their two daughters. Uncle Abbott, their son, built a house for them and they lived there until their deaths in 1897. We children used to go across the garden to see them very often, and I can remember the colored, very small beads that Grandma had for us to string into rings and necklaces, and a wonderful big picture puzzle of a row of cats on a see-saw.

Grandma had a stroke the year before she died, and during that year she used to have electrical treatments from some kind of a machine with long cords and handles to hold by. She held the handles and when the electricity was turned on mild electrical shocks were given to help her recover the use of her hands. She used to let us children share in this treatment. She would hold the handle in one hand, one of us would hold her other hand and then each other's hands and the little tingling shock would go through us all, much to our joy and excitement. We were too young to get any implications more than the fun of the occasion. She died in 1897 and Grandpa the end of that year in December.

During that year, when he was alone, we children used to go over to see him very often. I can remember that Kathleen and I used to have dinner with him and sometimes as children do at that age, seven and nine years old, we would "get the giggles" and giggle all through the meal much to the distress of poor Grand-

pa, because he was quite deaf and had, of course, no idea what we were laughing at. Neither had we, I guess. One of our favorite games with him gave us a great deal of pleasure, goodness knows why, and he enjoyed it, too. He would sit down in a large rocking-chair, and, I think, pretend to sleep, and we would tie him up and wrap him and the chair around with yards and yards of white cotton string, from which binding he would burst out in the end much to our joy. I wonder if we were a little lacking, mentally?

In 1900 the Rev. Earl C. Davis came to be minister of the Unitarian Church in Pittsfield, which church my father and mother had helped start, and of which "Brother Will" Fenn was the first minister. Mr. Davis was married at the end of that year, and their four children, John, Foster, Mary, and Byron, were born in Pittsfield. We grew to love them very much and they have been life-long friends of all of us. Foster married Dorothy Whiting's oldest daughter, Alice Merritt, and Byron Davis married another of her daughters, Anne Merritt, so the families grew very close together. They left the church in Pittsfield later, but they have always been close and dearly-loved friends.

I have never known any other minister in my whole life who was so honest, straightforward, and sincere as he. In words and deeds he was one person. Earl Davis helped me to get to college by giving me some extra tutoring in mathematics. He died only a few years ago and was in Petersham during his last years.

I haven't said much of any word yet about the Fenns. In 1890, when I was not quite three, my sister Faith married William Wallace Fenn, who, as I said, was then minister of our little Unitarian Church in Pittsfield.

After they were married they went to live in Chicago, where "Brother Will," as I called him, was to be minister of a Unitarian church there. "Brother Will's" mother, "Grandma Fenn," as she was called by me as well as her own grandchildren, was a quiet, self-effacing, gentle person who lived with the Fenns always till she died in 1911. She was strong and heroic, too, as well as gentle, for, left a widow with her one boy and very little money, in the country in Vermont, she worked and contrived so that he got a schooling in the Boston Latin School, and went to Harvard. He was a fine son to her and never forgot her courageous sacrifices.

"Sister Faith" and "Brother Will" lived in Chicago for ten years, but came to Berkshire every summer, at first spending them with us, but later, after Grandpa and Grandma Thayer had died, renting the house that had been theirs. It was a great event in my year, the coming of the Fenns. Faith's oldest child, Dorothy, whom you know as Dorothy Duncan, was only three years and a little more younger than I. In course of time she had four brothers, Wallace, Roger and Donald, twins, and Dan. Almost all of you know Roger and Donald as well as Dorothy. The boys were enough younger than I so that they played their own separate games a good deal. I was much thrilled over the birth of the twins and the first summer after they were born when only about three months old, I was allowed by their nurse to hold Donald and by some horrible mischance I dropped him on the floor, much to my consternation—but I'm sure he wasn't permanently injured.

The Fenn grandchildren followed around after "Grandpa Fisher" in many of his outdoor activities, getting the ice and working in the garden. One summer when Wallace was about four years old, Papa was in the garden hoeing and Wallace was watching him. Papa said, "Well, Wallace, we must work to live." For the next three or four days Wallace was continually after his mother for jobs to do to keep him working steadily, much to her mystification, until she discovered that he thought if he didn't work he wouldn't live!

Dorothy was near enough in age to play with and we did a lot, but far enough away so that I am afraid that I teased her a great deal and was altogether rather nasty some of the time. My sister was so much older than I, that I was rather in awe of her as a child and called her "Sister Faith." I was scared of her, too, because she was decided and quick-tongued and didn't much approve of me because I was lazy and always getting out of my jobs at home. I would go off without making my bed and wasn't very conscientious about helping poor Mother, who was never very strong and worked so hard with housework as well as hours and hours of painting. I'm sure Faith was justified in her disapproval, but I didn't like it, or her, at the time. When I think how much I came to love her later, when I was grown up, and what a rare and wonderful person she was, I don't like to think of those childhood days. But I guess I was not a very likable child! I was always contradicting and answering back and taking

the opposite side of everything specially with my father, whom I "fought" continually. Mother used to say I was like a trolley car off the tracks running over the cobble stones. Mother was gentle and long-suffering and I am sure she stood too much from me.

Even though I was belligerent and contradictory, I was also timid and apprehensive. Many times in climbing trees and other adventurous things the Whitings would go fearlessly ahead. I was often scared to death but followed suit because I was ashamed not to. I was a very apprehensive child and was often worried about many things. I was worried about my parents getting sick and dying, for they were older than a child my age usually had. I was worried when Papa and Mother drove to Pittsfield and did not come back before it was dark. I thought surely the horse had run away and they had been killed. I can remember coming home from playing at the Big Barn or somewhere with the Whitings and finding the house dark, showing they hadn't yet got back from Pittsfield. I went to feed the hens and then went in to light the lamps but my heart sank and I went out again to see if I could hear the carriage coming, getting more and more worried, and unhappy. I can almost feel now the weight on me, and then the relief I felt when, way up the Milton road or the Lanesboro or Gulf road, depending on which way they were coming home, I would hear the rattling of our old carriage wheels and know that they were safe! I spent much too much time in my childhood doing that kind of futile worrying and I am ashamed to say, have done so ever since.

I wish I could look at myself as a child (or at any time) objectively enough to make a true picture of the person I was. I was shy, and very self-conscious, I know, and it was hard for me to play with new children in new circumstances, when away from home on visits. At parties, even at home, I never liked to play games like "Going to Jerusalem" where you might be "left out" or games where you were in any way laughed at or made conspicuous. I was not very "good," was contradictory, and objected to almost everything proposed to me—at first—(my father did, too) and I was lazy and shirking, if possible, about household chores and did a lot of day-dreaming. Pretty common faults, I imagine. Even though I was a premature baby and started very little, weighing only five pounds, I was hardly ever sick and grew right along, so that by the time I was about ten I was full of energy for the things I wanted to do! In fact, I was never tired and worked and worked

on my own enterprises as healthy children always do. I never walked when I could run, and several times when I was ten, or over, I experienced at unexpected times a sudden exhilaration and sense of physical well-being, that besides exciting me, made me feel that I **couldn't** stay still and when I ran or jumped under the excitement, I felt as if I was lighter than usual, as if gravity had let go of me a little! It was a very thrilling feeling and I have never forgotten it!

On the other side of the scales from the contrariness in my character, I know I was very forgiving and never stayed "mad" at any one very long. I never laid up grudges against people. Grown-up people, especially relatives, were likely to disapprove of me a good deal, because I certainly was not a dutiful little girl—but I couldn't have been wholly horrid! Later, in my teens, from sixteen on, I was liked by older people, partly because I liked them and enjoyed listening to their ideas and talk. At that age I liked older people better than those my own age (of whom I was scared) and later when I was fully adult, I reversed the process.

I have a few more stray thoughts about myself as a child, and maybe they fit me as a grown-up, too. Although I lived twenty years in Berkshire in surroundings ideal for studying some aspect of Nature—geology, botany, ornithology, etc.—I never did. I never was, or am I now, a studier, I guess. But I loved it all—the rocks, the hills, the flowers, the trees. I did know the common trees and flowers, and the names of birds — more than children who didn't have the advantage of living in the country. I knew many of the trees, the common ones, and the difference between pine, hemlock and spruce—they weren't all "pine trees" to me, at least! I loved the beauty of the countryside with an unconscious love. But I seemed to feel that you ought to get your knowledge of the natural world from living with it and not from studying about it. With the almost passionate hatred that, I remember, I had of anything artificial and unnatural, learning about my lovely country seemed both artificial and unnatural!

There doesn't seem to be any sense or logic in those ideas of mine! My love of the country, hills, trees, fields, showed itself in another way. Maybe both were a queer kind of jealousy. I was completely upset and resentful in my mind when the trolley line was built over the hill from Lanesboro, across the fields and on to Cheshire. It was spoiling the beautiful landscape with tracks and

wires. I felt the same way about the "Pleasure Park" which was built on Berkshire Mountain to the east of us. That, in my mind, would bring crowds of people who didn't care about the country but just wanted to do the things that go on in a Park. I hated to see the lights of the Park at night. It was "common," and spoiled the looks, if no more, of my country. The trolley and the Pleasure Park have long since gone from Berkshire, but now it is the houses being built up that are "spoiling my Berkshire" and make me jealous even though I don't live there. To me as a child Nature in the country should be as she grew, and was, and not fixed up or made over for man's purposes. I never thought, then, in my love for my beautiful surroundings, that the fields and meadows and ploughed lands and bare hills were all man-made in their openness.

I took it all as I found it, and didn't want any of it changed. Even then, if I had thought of it, I wouldn't have said that people shouldn't plow or plant and make hay and cut trees, make roads and dams; but my particular, loved spot I didn't want made less beautiful and thus spoiled.

I still love Nature wild and untamed or trained but I don't hold such a passionate brief for that idea as I did long ago. Remember I am only telling you the way I **did** feel and not necessarily the way one **should** feel about it all! Being sincerely yourself with nothing put on was what I believed in very strongly and I guess I took it right into the natural world, too.

One summer a little girl, ten-twelve years old maybe, boarded with us. She had a greeny-brown denim dress and hat to match and bird glasses and used to go into the woods to "watch" for birds. She filled me with so much disgust I could hardly stand it. I didn't like her, was horrid to her and despised her for this "citized" thing of going into the woods in that way. That girl, whose name I have completely forgotten, was to me a little sham, dressed up in her greeny-brown dress to conceal her from the birds and her field glasses to stare at them. She was looking on at and down on Nature and not being a part of it. She was playing a part and I thought she was insincere and a hypocrite. I have always disliked people who pretend to be something they are not. Looking at birds with glasses seemed like a kind of condescension toward them, which I couldn't bear.

Dick and Uncle Abbott and his son, Gerald Thayer, all had

a great deal of knowledge about birds and Dick later of trees, but essentially they looked at Nature through an artist's eye of appreciation and love and as a part of and on a par with the world they were looking at.

I was brought up by artists with artists' eyes, I guess. I seemed to look at my world in Berkshire as a beautiful picture and, I am sorry to say, in a selfish way as a private possession that I couldn't let outsiders share in *their* own way! This process of getting to know the natural world by osmosis, sounds as if I thought there should be no ornithologists, no geologists, zoologists, etc. That certainly isn't true, but I think there is room also for artist-appreciators of Nature, even as children, who look on it, feel it, love it—and **do nothing** about it.

All this seems to leave, in my philosophy, no place for man-made changes in Nature and human nature! But I believe strongly in change. I'd better, I guess, seeing you can't prevent it. As far as Nature goes, I believe wholeheartedly in flood-control! You must be what you are with no pretense—but human nature can change if you really want to change it. I was rebellious and contrary and never took anybody's "say so" and questioned the ordinary ideas and morals of the Victorian world as well as believing in unchanging sincerity, so these two opposites of wanting Nature and people "natural" and as they are, and also wanting and welcoming change, have become reconciled in me now so that you might say for me, change is natural.

I suppose in most accounts of a person's early childhood, something would be said about religious teaching. I forgot all about it, for I don't think I really ever had any! The only religious thing I was ever taught by my parents was the Lord's Prayer when I was old enough to say it. I don't remember any emphasis put on my saying it every night, though I did say it to myself for a number of years. I didn't go to church in my childhood unless I wanted to and never went to Sunday School until my teens when Earl Davis was our minister and I loved him and his wife, Annie Davis; then I went to a class that he taught and joined the church in a little service of welcome from him, and that was not a conversion but grew out of my love for him and his religious ideas which were not orthodox. I knew very little about the Bible. I don't think the Bible stories were ever read to me from either the Old or New Testament—anyway not in any religious way.

We sang hymns at the Whitings' on Sunday evenings for a good many years. Uncle Edward was very musical and played the piano for us; later Margery played, but I don't remember that we ever chose the hymns for the words, but for the music. I guess as far as conventional Christian religion went, I was brought up practically a heathen—thank the Lord! This meant that I never had any religious crisis in my life, of having to give up old beliefs for new ones, and have worked out my own religion to suit myself. This is strange in a way, for my father was really a very religious man. He wrote sermons which he preached from time to time in our church. He believed in some kind of a mythical God, with no intermediaries or authorities between yourself and Him. He called it "Natural Religion." I haven't the least idea what my Mother believed, but I know the way she lived.

Well, as Papa used to say, "'Here we are again,' said the clown as he jumped into the ring!" Back again to a more straight ahead narrative.

My teens were almost devoid of boys in any regular, natural and everyday sense. That was a great lack in my Berkshire life from sixteen onward. Besides not having any boys in my daily life at that time—no boys or man that I met anywhere, as far as I knew about it, ever looked twice at me before Baba came along. That fact cost me a good many pangs and heartaches during my late teens and early twenties, but there didn't seem to be anything I knew to do about it.

Now I want to recapitulate a little and fill in what I have already told you, with perhaps different memories, and thoughts about the people I knew and lived with and loved. I would also like to give you a picture of what we children did in each season as the year rolled round.

My early life in Berkshire (I lived there from the time I was born until I was twenty-two years old), as I look back on it, and think of telling you about it in detail seems very uneventful, and I wonder why I ever thought that any of you children and grandchildren would be the least bit interested in hearing about such a quiet and humdrum existence, but I think of it as being so full of things that I enjoyed doing, and that I have never forgotten, and I love Berkshire so much now, that I am bold enough to tell you about it. If I had had young parents, I think my childhood would have been ideal. Also if I was a real writer and could make the life I lived as vivid and real as it was to me, I almost think you would think so, too! First, it was a beautiful place, a farm in the mountains with animals, and all the activities that go on on a farm. At the same time I had playmates, eight cousins, and two farmers' boys who lived near. Besides that a good education, good books and many of them, music from visiting musicians and many interesting people to know, either friends or relatives. Above all, unusual and very fine parents. They both came from a rather long line of independent people—all apt to be for minority or unpopular causes. But for whatever reason, they, my parents, were both independent, and broad-minded. They were both Unitarians and were like-minded on social questions and politics. But, there, I think, their likeness ended for they were very different in character. It's hard to talk about the characters of your own parents, because you never see them quite as whole people for you are too near them and usually there are too many little daily irritations between you to give you the right perspective. It is only after you are grown up and have children of your own, or your parents are gone, that you see them more nearly whole as rounded personalities and not just something or someone that you cling to or that provokes you!

My father was a man of moods—either gay and sometimes very amusing and lively, or sunk quite deeply into depression, when he would hardly speak. He was sensitive and easily moved by fine or beautiful things—specially in literature. He was an

actor and I think would have been one of great ability if he had gone into that profession. This combination of sensitivity and acting ability made him a very remarkable reader and interpreter of literature. I have never heard anyone read as he did. Anne Whiting says: "How I loved to hear your father read aloud—even 'Mr. Dooley' which I did not understand very well, was delightful under his interpretation."

The other side of his sensitivity was a great irritability—he could be very loving and gentle and then suddenly roar at you with tremendous vehemence. That is the reason that, as a child, I never understood what he was really like, but was made very angry at him. I wish I could tell what it was exactly that made people love Papa in spite of his blustering ways. He was so often bawling people out and raising some sort of hullabaloo. Mr. Doherty from Berkshire used to come up often to work for him in the garden; Mr. Doherty either didn't know much about it or was stupid and Papa would roar at him and call him an "ass," but Mr. Doherty always came back and I got the impression that he liked Papa in spite of it! Perhaps my father was transparent, and through his blustering, prickly exterior people could see the very warm, emotional and loving person inside. I don't know.

My Mother had just the opposite kind of a temperament—luckily for me and for Papa. She also was very warm and loving but quiet, gentle and equable. Almost always cheerful, and always kind and considerate of others. She was also independent in spirit. Because she had decided that she never wanted her children to think they had to have her live with any of them when she became old and helpless, she had already, some years before she died, put in her name at the "Old Ladies Home" in Pittsfield. No one of us had a chance to test her resolution, for she died too soon.

She was loved by more people than anyone I have ever known. She naturally loved people of all kinds and liked to be with them. Many people have talents of one kind or another—in music, art, literature, business, etc., but besides her talent in painting, Mother had a marvelous talent for living with human beings. A list of the people she loved and who loved her would not read like a Who's Who, but like a cross-section of humanity old and young; the young, homesick boys in Papa's little school, the grandchildren, Mrs. President Eliot of Harvard, young men friends of Dick's, my school and college friends, Miss Sarah Lloyd, our Negro dress-

maker from Lanesboro, Nellie Conroy who cooked for us, Mrs. Jones who did our washing, Mrs. Edward Hallowell of West Medford, Dr. Vincent Bowditch of Boston, to name just a few. All kinds of people. She had another talent, too. That talent was enjoying and making the most of small beauties and pleasurable happenings around her. In spite of any hardships and sorrows she had, to me she always seemed cheerful and not worried and apprehensive as Papa and I were. It seemed as if she filled her daily life with so many little appreciations and enjoyments of people, small pleasures and beauties, that there wasn't exactly room for futile worries and unfulfilled longings.

Her life in Berkshire must have been hard in more ways than just the hard work and lack of money—for, though I never realized it at the time, she certainly was in many ways, at any rate, very lonely. She missed very much her many many friends and relatives whom she had known and lived near before she came to Berkshire. She wrote many letters and at almost every mail received four or five from others. At the same time that she was gentle, kind and loving, she was humorous and not at all lacking in spirit. Her great sorrow of having lost four little children, made her just more and more sympathetic with others' sorrows and many people found her very comforting for that reason and turned to her in their troubles.

She was always a friend of the people who worked for her and it was the same with the neighboring farmers' wives. In those days people made calls more than they do now. Mother always called on Mrs. Briggs, the wife of the farmer who owned the farm next to Uncle Edward's, where the Bibiluses now live, and Mrs. Briggs came to see her. Nellie Connolly, whom some of you grandchildren have seen in Berkshire, worked for Grandpa and Grandma while they lived and then for us for years off and on and she was always a friend and not a servant, even in those days of servants and she still is my friend. Mother always went to see Mrs. Connolly, Nellie's mother. Mrs. Jones, a Negro woman, who did our washing for almost all the years that we lived in Berkshire, was another friend. She only died a comparatively few years ago and when I went back to Berkshire, long years after I lived there, I went to see her and she talked in such a loving way of my mother. Both my parents, in spite of being related to and friends with many distinguished and cultivated and unusual people, were simple and

direct and natural in their manners and relations with other people, all kinds of people. They were never snobbish. They never felt, or at least never acted, as if they felt superior to anyone because he was uneducated or uncultivated or uninteresting. They were in their actions, as well as their beliefs, completely democratic.

Mother was as friendly with Mrs. Jones, who washed our clothes, as with Mrs. Milton, who lived in a big house on the Milton Road (named after them) nearly in to Pittsfield. Mrs. Milton was a rich and pleasant lady who came from Philadelphia every summer to live in their beautiful summer house. Uncle Abbott had painted her portrait and perhaps that is how we came to know her. Anyway, every summer Mrs. Milton came to call on Mother in her victoria with two horses and a coachman sitting up in front and Mother returned her call.

One time Papa drove Mother and Dorothy and Dan Fenn to call on Mrs. Milton in our old carriage with seats that screwed on and could be removed. Just as they drove into the driveway, Papa appreciating with humor the incongruity of the old rattling carriage ("with the fringe on top") and the elegant house they were going to said to Dorothy: "Well, Dorothy, let's go in in style as befits an old veteran" and whipped up the horse. The seat came loose and Dorothy and Mother went out into the driveway! Luckily they weren't hurt much and went on and made their call. When Mother got home she found she had left a lace scarf at Mrs. Milton's. It was "real lace" and in those days there was much difference between "real lace" handmade, and machine-made lace, which was considered rather "cheap." When Mrs. Milton was asked if the scarf was there she said, "Yes, there is a scarf here—but this is real lace!" "Yes," said Papa, "that's how I know it belongs to Mrs. Fisher!" But in spite of having a "real lace" scarf, clothes were not an important part of Mother's life.

In different ways, when I knew them, neither of my parents were much concerned with clothes—Mother liked nice things and enjoyed them, but as money was rather scarce she didn't have many new clothes. Perhaps that is why, though I never knew, she always dressed in practically the same style through all the years I knew her. Her dresses were made about the same year after year, and she always wore capes instead of coats and a bonnet tied with strings. She and I both, for several years at least, had to make-do with having a dressmaker make over the expensive and

gaudy clothes that Mrs. Little (Amos Little's mother) in the kindness of her heart sent to us. How I hated them and at the same time was excited over the box of clothes when it came. They were so fancy they were fun to dress up in, anyway. Papa seemed almost oblivious to what he wore—he had the same kind of clothes right along and didn't get new things often. If it was a rainy day and he had on rubber boots, and thought he needed them, he would wear them to church and walk right up the aisle in them. He used to enjoy saying that he was a simple Saxon but Mother was a Norman; "proud, revengeful and fond of finery" just the opposite of what he knew she really was.

He had other little sayings that came out often on the appropriate occasions. When he wanted to encourage himself or you to further effort, either physical or mental, he would say, "Allons, allons, mon ami; en avant toujours!" Or "Courage mon ami, le diable est mort"—the latter a quote from "The Cloister and the Hearth," I think.

Mother went to Boston or New York almost every winter for two or three weeks to see her friends and relatives and have a change. She had loads of friends and was always on quite a mad rush to see all of them she could while she was away, and Papa would say: "Your Mother is on her social whirl, teeter teeter."

She was always young in spirit and enjoyed people. In the very end of her life in the spring before I graduated from College, Mr. George Brush, the painter, arranged to have some of her paintings shown at Knoedler's Gallery in New York and in London. He also sold one to a musician friend who said, as he looked at it, "What a young and fresh spirit painted that!"

He was right. She was excited and eager, that last spring of her life, over the success of her exhibition in New York. This landscape painting was new. She had mostly painted flowers all her life before and Mr. Brush, Barry Faulkner and Uncle Abbott were all encouraging her in a new enterprise. She was looking forward eagerly to a kind of new world!

My father had six brothers and sisters—an older sister, Aunt Lizzie Sessions whom I saw little but loved; an older brother, Uncle George; older twin brothers, Uncle Fred and Uncle Frank; and a sister just older than himself, Aunt Kate. I don't remember Uncle Fred at all and Aunt Lizzie and Uncle George I saw very little of. Aunt Kate Baker I remember quite clearly for she lived till after I

graduated from college, but she had a sharp tongue and had no children so didn't understand them very well, I guess. I never liked her much. Probably I never really knew her, for Faith, who had seen much more of her, was very fond of her. But Faith was a much stronger character than I and could stand up to sharp tongues and like them in a way that I never could.

Uncle Frank used to come to see us off and on, and I always dreaded the visit because he and Papa were diametrically opposed in politics—and the minute Uncle Frank arrived the subject of politics always came up; at first discussed amicably, then with more and more vehemence, then heat and raised voices and at last shouts and anger just short of blows!

Papa's Mother was named Huntington before she was married, and lived in the old Huntington house in Hadley and was married from that house. Bishop Huntington, Uncle Frederick, who lived there while I was young and before that, was her youngest brother. That grandmother of mine was an independent kind of a person and was dropped from the Congregational church in Hadley on account of her un-orthodox views. But there was another relative, Aunt Bethia, who kept to her orthodox beliefs. One summer Papa was working or visiting in Hadley and one day while driving with her, she doing the driving of the horse, they must have had some religious discussion, Papa being a Unitarian, for Aunt Bethia, with a cluck to the horse, clinched the argument by saying, "Well, I believe in Christ and Him crucified—git up—go 'long."

Papa had a unique attitude toward medicines. One was as good as another, apparently, in his mind! If you had something the matter with you, do something about it, take some medicine, never mind what! (He was never in bed for more than one day, and I don't think the whole of that, in all the years that I knew him until the pneumonia which ended his life just two months before Toni was born). So medicines were really an unknown quantity to him. Our medicines, some of them, were kept in the passageway on a shelf—and one that I remember, as it was one that Grandpa Thayer used for us a lot in case of some kind of indigestion—was, a few drops each, in water, of nitro-muriatic acid and taraxacum ("acid and taraxacum" as we called it). Taraxacum is dandelion. I liked that medicine very much. When Mother was away visiting in the winter, sometimes Margery would come

over to visit me for company and we would mix ourselves at supper delicious concoctions in our cups of cocoa, sugar and thick cream—very yummy, and after eating it would each take a dose of acid and taraxacum as a precaution! Perhaps we wouldn't have if we hadn't liked the medicine so much!

In the early 1900's the Wierums came to Berkshire. They bought the house up the road toward Lanesboro and came there almost every summer till after Cooney died in 1946. By the time they came I was twelve years old. Their coming meant a great lot to me for I got to love Cooney (as Mrs. Wierum was called) more than any other person I knew outside my own family. Cooney was a friend of Aunt Sue's and a former patient of Grandpa Thayer's in Brooklyn. She was a beautiful, charming, lively and altogether delightful person and I loved her right away even though she was nearly twenty years older than I. Cooney for years was the center of my summer life in Berkshire. I went to see her nearly every day. She started a reading club that Ruth, Kathleen, Hilda Wierum (her daughter), sometimes Dorothy Fenn, and I belonged to. We met once a week, always had refreshments—lemonade with angostura bitters, and read many good books. I did most of the reading for I enjoyed doing it so much. One year Cooney stayed through the winter, and I still made my almost daily pilgrimage. I spent many hours in Cooney's house, in the big Morris chair, with my legs hanging over the arm, reading Louisa Alcott.

I certainly loved Cooney and she loved me, too, I know. Cooney and Otto, in those early days, had four children—Hilda, Thornton, Richard and Frederick. Richard and Frederick wandered about very freely by themselves when quite little, between their house and the Whitings' down the road, and no one had much thought of anything happening to them. One day, one of them was found sound asleep on the road between their house and the Whitings'! No one was terribly excited about it—which shows the difference between a road then and the same road now!

When Frederick was about twelve another little girl was born and Cooney named her Eleanor after me. You have heard me speak of her if you haven't seen her, which some of you have. She is Eleanor Wierum Hall. She has lots of her mother's charm and gaiety. I'm glad to think she is my god-daughter.

I don't want to leave the thought of Cooney without a few

more words said about her, both because she was such a wonderful person in herself, and because, as far as this little story of my childhood goes, she was such a deep and lasting influence on my life. She was a person of very high ideals and a lover of music, literature, theatre; gay, though sometimes sad, but always full of a vivid, almost extravagant life. She came into my life like a lovely, warm but invigorating October day full of all the colors of that kind of New England day. I loved her at once and always. She never let me feel that I was so much younger than she. She always seemed glad to see me and let me read to her by the hour and talk. Besides the books that the Reading Club read at her house, I read with her the winter she spent in Berkshire many other books. Cooney's and Otto's life together was my ideal of a happy marriage. They were in the bigger sophisticated world, to me, but not of it and some of the friends they brought to Berkshire were a new and different kind from what I had been used to. They were very different from each other in looks and temperament. Otto, quiet, dignified, and deliberate in speech—blue-eyed and light-haired—Cooney gay, sparkling, laughing—lovely curling dark hair and beautiful brown eyes. They were a big part of my life for many years, though I didn't see them often after I left Berkshire.

They were both people who enjoyed conversation and talking about books and ideas. Otto's manners were courtly—a little what you might call "old-world" perhaps, and right. He treated me and all children in just as polite and courtly a way as any grown-up. Cooney, though gay and lively and unconventional in her everyday manners, was quite conservative and formal in her company manners. They both always called my father and mother Mr. and Mrs. Fisher, though they loved them very much and Uncle Edward was always Mr. Whiting. Cooney represented some kind of a beautiful exotic world to me. But I practically never saw her, all her life, except in Berkshire. For ten or a dozen years after she first came to Berkshire, until I left there in 1912, every summer I saw her constantly. The fact that I was the only person in the three families—mine, the Fenns, and the Whitings—who went to see her so regularly and often made her seem to me my special person; for my parents didn't go out much, Aunt Sue was busy and absorbed in her family, Faith and Cooney were not specially intimate. Ruth and Kathleen went to the Reading Club at her house but not very often otherwise. On my way to Cooney's I often

tried to get by the Whitings without being seen my Aunt Sue for fear she would make fun of me for going to see Cooney so often, so this put Cooney into a slightly forbidden paradise for me!

During the years that she was in Berkshire, she had two very fine and devoted colored women to work for her. The first one that I knew best was Laura. She had a daughter and family in the South and came North to earn money for them. Frederick and Richard Wierum loved her dearly and I remember that one day, Frederick, about three years old, climbed into her lap, threw his arms around her neck, and kissed her, saying, "Laura, I love you so much, you are so beautiful!"

In the last years that Cooney was in Berkshire, and that was after I left there and was married, another fine Negro woman named Julia was with her. I am ashamed to say I don't know the last names of either Laura or Julia.

When Otto was in Berkshire on his vacation (he was a lawyer in New York) he used to come down of an evening to talk to Papa. They were alike in politics, and they both enjoyed these talks. Cooney had a big white rosebush by the back door which was always covered with roses the end of June when my father's and mother's wedding day came; she always picked a big bunch and sent them down to them tied with one of Hilda's white hair-ribbons, with a note to please return the hair-ribbon. I have one of the shoots of that rosebush in the back yard here in Amherst and last year it blossomed. I hope it will be alive this spring.

They were two splendid people with high principles, good manners, full of character and Cooney almost a kaleidoscope of brilliant color and pattern in her vivid life. For me, the association with them in those years was as if I were both reading and living a truly romantic but very real novel. Cooney, I loved you long ago, I loved you all your life, and I love you now.

As I think of the events and incidents of my childhood, I find that they almost all center in and revolve around the four seasons and the results the changes of the seasons brought to the farm and country-side. I never lived in a city for long at a time, and never in my childhood, so I do not know what kind of bonds a person makes with a long-lived-in city, but I do know that living "close to nature," as the hackneyed phrase goes, can make a very tight and lasting bond, with animals, plants, earth, sky, weather, and all that is called Nature, that is a constant source of joy and

richness. And specially when "Nature" is concentrated in one particular place that you love.

By March in Berkshire, the snow began to melt. In April came the first spring flowers, arbutus, hepatica, and spring beauties. When that time came there were warm sunny days when you could go out, maybe, without a coat; at least the Whitings could, but my mother was more worried about my taking cold, on account of having lost four little children, I guess, so I had to wear the "little red shawl." It was a little kind of a cape-like shawl curved around the back with long tapering ends which came over my shoulders, crossed in the front, went back under my arms and were tied behind. I was much humiliated and disgusted to have to wear it.

Perhaps on a day like that in the spring, with song sparrows singing — we — Ruth, Kathleen, Annie, and I would take a picnic and go down to the woods towards Berkshire Village and go out on the point looking north, up the Berkshire reservoir and see if there were arbutus out — the only place near home where they grew, as I remember.

Another day we would go to the hepatica woods on Shepherdson's hill or the Square Piece — always walks of a mile or two. Nobody had to be asked whether we could go or not and no grown-up came with us, though sometimes, of course, the older girls — Dot and Mid — were with us.

The procession of flowers as the year went on was very important — the first flower to be found of a certain kind, in each passing month, was an exciting event. After the hepatica, which was all-important in the year because the first to be found, would come dog-tooth violets, then cowslips in the swamps down the Gulf Road, and lady's-slipper; and we had to wear rubber boots to get them, another pleasure. Then blue violets all over the field across the Milton road from the Whitings' and columbine on Cobble Hill.

On May Day we often had a celebration, choosing a Queen of the May and decorating her, very early in the morning, with a wreath of flowers. By the end of May the bob-o-links had come. The hearing of the first bob-o-link meant more than just the happy sound to me — it meant sunny days, daisies and buttercups, wild strawberries, summer is coming, and the Fenns will be here!

On May 30th came one of the special days of the year for us, Memorial Day, founded as you know in honor and in memory

of the Veterans of the Civil War. It was special for me because my father had fought in the Civil War on the Northern side and I always sat during the celebration and speeches in Lanesboro, in the seats reserved for children and grandchildren of the veterans, which made me feel very special and distinguished. Sometimes the lilacs would not be past and we would take bunches of lilacs, tartarian honey-suckle, and snow-balls to put on the soldiers' graves. The Lanesboro band played for the marching to the cemeteries. One year, I remember, there was an especially attractive young drum major of the Band, Arthur Sturgess, whom Kathleen and I both fell in love with so that we followed the band two or three miles to the northern cemetery and were late getting home to dinner, just to watch him!

Next in the procession of the flowers and fruits of the seasons, came the white daisy, clover, and buttercup — and, in June, long sessions in the fields near where the Lords now live (called in my time the "Daisy Field"), picking wild strawberries which are more delicious than any garden berry. Summer was here!

After June, or in June, came the summer people — first and foremost the Fenns and then summer boarders to us to help eke out the family income. Some of the boarders were families with children; many times, cousins. One summer, counting all the Whitings, the Fenns and Wierums, farmers' children and visitors, we had on the farm twenty children under fifteen years of age. Amongst the family photographs that we look over once in a while is a picture of a long string of carts full of children that was taken that summer.

The Fourth of July was the next great event and that was a big one in those days. All the children had firecrackers and torpedoes and in the evening fireworks. We got up very early in the morning and began setting off the firecrackers. When I was very young and for some years I was rather scared of the noise and Rex and I both kept away from it. He usually went off somewhere for the day and never came back till the fireworks were all over late in the evening. This was strange, for he always went hunting with Dick.

After the early morning doings were over and breakfast finished, would come the beginning of the great event of the day — the all-day picnic and drive to Williamstown and back, fifteen or twenty miles away! Uncle Edward had already ordered a three-

seated carriage and team of horses from the livery stable in Pittsfield and with the home carriages and horses, everyone could go. A picnic was put up and we were off. I always liked to ride in the three-seated carriage with the two horses. We picnicked by the Williamstown brook and got home late in the afternoon.

The climax of the day came with the fireworks after dark in an open grass place in front of our house where the flag pole stood. The flag pole was used to fasten the pinwheels to. My father was master of ceremonies and set off most of the fireworks — pinwheels, red fire, snake-in-the-grass, Roman candles, and rockets. The grown-ups sat on our piazza — the children on the ground, as near as they were allowed to get. The rockets were usually saved till the last but before that each child was allowed to hold a Roman candle as it was going off and this was exciting because it "kicked" a little as each little explosion came.

The flag pole on which the pinwheels were nailed had been put up when Papa had young boys in his school, and every day in good weather the flag was run up by Papa or some of the boys or me and taken down regularly at sunset. I still have that flag, with a few moth holes in it, to be sure, but still good. It has only 38 stars on it! That means that it was gotten when there were only thirty-eight states in the Union. When was that? Do you know? I don't — and I haven't looked it up.

All through the summer we had expeditions and picnics at various times as the spirit moved us and a specially beautiful day came along. We used to go swimming fairly often in Pontoosuc Lake at a place called at that time Gunn's Grove, now Lanesboro Beach. Of course, we had to harness the horse and drive there, not a quick trip in a car as it is now. Then there were no houses there and woods and bushes came right down to the shore. We undressed in the bushes and put on our bathing suits. In those days also there was a paddle-wheel steamer, which seemed very large to me, called the "Lafayette," which made trips around the lake for so much a trip. It was great fun to take that voyage, for a voyage it seemed to me. We also used to hire row boats sometimes from an old one-legged Civil War veteran, I think he was, called Jerry Swan.

Sometimes we went with horses and carriages to the more distant places, like Onota Lake, Balance Rock, Silver Street, and Susan

Baker's Cave (where all the Lockes have been, by the way), and more rarely an all-day drive over Potter Mountain, west of Pittsfield, to Lebanon, New York, where then there was a Shaker Settlement.

But again and again, sometimes a few and sometimes all of us children in the different households — Whittings, Fenns, Fishers, Wierums — sometimes children and grown-ups would have picnics at nearby places — Cobble Hill, Helms's Hill, Shepherdson's, Farnum's Hill, Bridges' Hill, and always Reid's pasture and Reid's rock. There was an apple tree just west of the Farmhouse (now Harry's house). I've forgotten whether it is still there or not. It was easy to climb and had good branches for sitting on and we often climbed up and had picnics there. On these picnics my parents didn't usually go, for they weren't so young, my mother not very strong and my father much preferring to stay at home and read anyway. The Whittings sometimes went off on trips and picnics by themselves, but usually I went along, too.

Bridges' Hill beyond Reid's pasture to the north was a place for picnics and fun, too, — a bare cow-pasture hill covered with that fine wiry grass that dries easily and becomes slippery. We used it for a summer coasting place. I think our "sled" was a pure accident — just a worn weather-beaten board that we found on the hill one day. But the experiment of sitting on it and finding that it slid quite rapidly down the rather steep hill on the slippery grass proved a great success and we used it often.

There were cows in the pasture and sometimes a bull, but although I remember, once at least, walking in some trepidation on my part, through the herd with the bull present, he paid no attention to us.

Besides the coasting possibilities, Bridges' Hill was a favorite place to take visitors for a walk because of the very beautiful view to the north, of Greylock with its surrounding hills, with the Cheshire reservoir in the foreground.

The brook that runs into and out of Harry's swimming-pool was a little bigger in those days because there wasn't any swimming-pool. That brook was a constant source of joy. I couldn't tell you the number of dams we made at different times in that brook, thereby making temporary little swimming and wading pools.

Peppermint, spearmint, watercress, and sweet flag grew be-

side it. We took off our shoes and stockings and waded in it even when we weren't building a dam, and that — the taking off of shoes and stockings — was more of a process than it is now, I can tell you! Maybe you won't believe it, but we wore long, black stockings fastened up with garters hitched to our under-waists, and in young days buttoned shoes.

One summer the Doctor had said it would be good for me to go barefoot, so I never wore shoes and stockings the whole summer, rain or shine, warm or cool, and I had a fine time. Even when I didn't go barefooted all the time in the summer, I was barefooted very often and remember how nice it was on the first hot days when I was allowed to take off my shoes and stockings. The putting on and taking off of clothes according to the seasons was much more of a ritual than it is now, for everybody and specially maybe the children, because we wore many more clothes. In the winter I wore a long-sleeved wool or heavy cotton undershirt and long-legged drawers down to my ankles, buttoned on to a waist so-called which was worn over the undershirt, then a flannel petticoat buttoned onto the waist and then probably a woolen dress! And long stockings.

Taking these clothes off by degrees in the spring was exciting. I looked forward to when the days would be warm enough for Mother to allow me to take off the long drawers and wear short white cotton ones and short-sleeved or sleeveless undershirts. We never went without our undershirts. Getting out the summer dresses was a special occasion to look forward to each spring.

One little enterprise we had one summer — I don't think it lasted any longer than that — was the organization of a Club called the "Nettle Club." We made a small flag of silk with some kind of an emblem sewed onto it. You'll never guess what the grand object, and as far as I can remember the only activity, of the club was? It was to get nettles, which grew down the Berkshire road and specially along the roadside in the woods and rub them on our legs! Have you ever done it? Well, when you are quite young you have to be brave and able to suffer to do it! No one could become a member who could not stand the pain and pricks of the nettle! That club didn't last long.

I haven't said half enough about Reid's pasture (where Harry's camp used to be) which was our constant play place. The brook ran through it with pools and stopping-places; the banks up

from the brook were in some places steep and hemlock-covered and in others more sloping and open. We played all sorts of games in Reid's pasture — on the big Rock, up a tree with a ladder against it — and always had our May Day celebration there. And "Strawberry Hill" was in Reid's pasture (some of the cabins of Harry's camp were on or at the foot of Strawberry Hill). It was a little steep, bare and round and always covered with strawberries and mullens in June. In the winter sometimes we were Brownies in Reid's pasture, shaking snow from the hemlocks down onto each other, pretending to be the different characters from the Palmer Cox "Brownie Books."

I loved Reid's pasture so much that years after I left Berkshire I almost hated to have Harry have his camp there for it would change it so much! I never told Harry. Of course, time would have changed it anyway, but sentiment doesn't have much patience with time and change! Perhaps you'd rather say time and change don't have much patience with sentiment!

One summer we got up a play. I can't remember much about it, except it was elaborate, with a good many costumes to be made, and it was long, and involved kings and queens and their retinues, and we were all in it — the Whitings, the Fenns and summer children and I. We gave it outdoors in Reid's pasture. We had plays at various times during the year when the spirit moved us; some were farces that my father had used for private theatricals in the former Brooklyn days. Sometimes stories we or my father dramatized. We gave a version of the Mad Tea Party from Alice in Wonderland — Kathleen was Alice, Ruth, the Hatter, I the March Hare, and Annie the dormouse. We repeated the performance more than once.

On my grandparents' Golden Wedding celebration we gave "The Golden Wedding," a story by Ruth McEnery Stuart, dramatized by Papa. I only had a part as a member of the congregation with no words to say, but was so stage-struck that I had to be bribed, (I've forgotten the bribe) to go on!

And that makes me think of the wonderful, wonderful Forster's Cape. Dick brought it home from Germany one summer. On the surface and to the ordinary eye, it was just a cape — a long, dark, grey, hooded, close-woven, waterproof, woolen cape. But to the initiated what didn't it do and be! It was wonderful for going to the little house in the spruces on a cold evening, to throw on

for an errand to the Whitings, to put over your feet if you lay down on the sofa, excellent for a raincoat. But for me, it has a halo of other associations around it — for in all the plays and charades it had an active part. It was a prince's robe, a cavalier's cloak, a witch's garment when the hood was up, etc. I can't think of all the parts it played. We hardly could have lived without it. I am almost ashamed to say that I don't remember when or where it vanished — but alas, I haven't got it now. It could not have worn out.

Any time during the summer when a perfect clear, cool day came we would say: "Here's a Greylock day!" Then we'd put up "a picnic lunch" — anyone who wanted to go, take the trolley which then ran over the top of Lanesboro Hill and up to Cheshire and North Adams — get off at Cheshire or Cheshire Harbor and climb the trail to the top of Greylock and probably walk all the way home. In the early days no road went clear to the top.

Dick and his friends had made a camp up near the top on Saddle Ball and later the Whitings and their friends camped there often for a week or so at a time. As there were no cars in those days it was a long haul with horses to get the camping equipment up there. The mountain was remote, and wilder-seeming than now, and there were more animals in the woods. Sometimes a bear was seen. I went camping there only once, as I remember. I can see in my mind now the little lean-to which we built for shelter, the bough beds, and feel the excited but slightly scared feeling I had the first night in the silent woods, with a chance of having a bear appear! No bear ever did come. The white-throated sparrow, or peabody bird as it is called from the sound of its song, would always be singing on the mountain at that time of year — and even now when I hear that song I am transported right back to that camp on Greylock.

By the middle of September all the summer people, like our boarders, and the dear Fenns, went away, back to their winter homes and we were all left by ourselves again, Ruth, Kathleen, and I, in the middle, Margery and Dorothy on the older edge, and Anne, Harry, and Rose on the younger. Harry was born in 1898 when I was about nine or ten. I loved taking care of him. Aunt Sue used to let me help at his bath time, feed him his bottle, and rock him to sleep. Sometimes when she and the family were all going to be away I would take care of him all day and that was

very thrilling for me for I loved babies.

How we loved the autumn! Nuts to get, chestnuts, beech nuts, butternuts. Leaves to rake into piles to play in and burn, or — one of our favorite fall games — raked out into “houses” like a ground plan of a house, in which we kept house and played for days at a time. In all the open seasons of the year and even in winter we constantly went to and played on and around Reid’s Rock. It was a huge boulder near where Harry’s camp used to be in Reid’s pasture. For little children it seemed a very large and high rock. Near it were two trees — a big birch and hemlock grown together — with steps leading up to the lower branches. It was surrounded by a ring of little hemlocks. We used this tree and its surrounding hemlocks for a house; amongst the hemlocks was “downstairs” and in the tree was “upstairs.” Reid’s pasture, with its rock, tree, hemlocks, and brook, was a constant play place for us in all seasons.

Another fall event was Hallowe’en. We always had great fun on that night. Of course there weren’t many houses to go to — just Grandpa’s and Grandma’s, the Whitings’, our house, the farmhouse, and maybe the Briggs’s. We always made jack-o’-lanterns with elaborate faces and marvelous mouths with many teeth. There was no such thing as “trick or treat” in those days — with us at any rate. We merely tried to “scare” or surprise with our jack-o’-lanterns, but we certainly enjoyed it.

One of the plays that occupied us all the year round when we were about ten years old was our “pretend people.” We each, Ruth specially, Kathleen, Annie, and I had “pretend people,” imaginary families all named and usually related either to us or each other by blood or marriage. They lived in different places all over the house surroundings. I still have a little packet of letters written mostly by Ruth, to and from our “pretend people.” Our own names were changed and we were grown-up and married to our pretend husbands. My husband, I think, was named Jackson and Ruth’s was Robert Beach. I was Caroline Jackson and Ruth was Marion Beach. One of my people was named Hyacinth and lived in an apple tree near the Big Barn. The Beaches lived in the old duck house (not used by ducks any more) near the brook. That house we really worked on to make it habitable — with chairs made from the wooden spools that barbed wire came on and pictures on the walls and, I think, curtains in the window.

We corresponded with these people and mailed our letters in a crack in the clapboards of Uncle Edward's stable. Often these people came to meals with me and Mother never knew when I would say, "so and so was having supper with us."

Annie, as Aunt Anne was called in those days, had pretend people, though she didn't always join into our group of pretend people. She was rather a solitary child. She used to love to go off for long walks by herself or sometimes with the younger Wierum boys or Wallace Fenn. On her solitary walks she talked to herself and with her imaginary friends and made up stories about herself and them. She loved to climb tall and difficult trees and swing from one tree to another, and also walk on stone walls.

She made up a story about herself finding on a stone wall purses full of money. My mother found out about this, made some little bags, put money in them, and distributed them on Annie's favorite walking wall which ran down on the side of the road from the Whitings' to the Briggs' — or part way. I can remember her pleasure when she found them. There is an amusing story about Anne which my mother enjoyed. She came to dinner with us once and we had kale, a vegetable something like spinach, which was served with slices of hard-boiled egg on top. Annie didn't seem to like it very much and Mother said, "Don't you like kale?" And Annie said as politely as she could: "Well, I like the egg of kale."

On the northwest gable-end of our barn was a square window looking out over the gardens. This window had small panes of different colored glass, red, blue, green, yellow, purple, and plain. When the hay was first put into the barn in the summer or early fall and was piled high in the upper story of the barn, we could climb up on the mow of hay and look out through the different colored panes. Looking through that colored glass was a very great pleasure to me and almost a regular ritual through the years. Each picture seen through a colored pane was a new world full of mystery and strangeness; then the plain one brought you suddenly out into the open and back to the real world with a bump.

One other fall happening that I look back on with much pleasure and which is still vivid to me, for some reason, was drives with Papa and Mother on lovely October days with the roadsides full of purple asters and the last goldenrod and brown ferns, off to distant farms in Lanesboro to collect money or vegetables from the

farmers for the Hospital in Pittsfield. Mother was on the Board of the "House of Mercy," as it was called and she had the Lanesboro territory from which to collect money, or vegetables if that was all the farmers could afford. I loved those drives and can still see many of the places we went to. Perhaps that is what makes me love so much to drive around the countryside now in October.

November was memorable in my eyes for having my birthday and Thanksgiving in it. But November also always means beautiful lavender and pink and orange sunset light on the bare hills. You never see those beautiful colors except on bare hills in November.

Thanksgiving was always a wonderful day with everyone who was away, and still unmarried, coming home — Ted Whiting and Dick and nearly always some friends and outsiders, too, so that the party was large. We all ate together on Thanksgiving at the Whitings' with a long table stretching from the hall to the kitchen door. Nellie Connolly, and Maggie Mullen, who worked for the Whitings, came up from Berkshire to help us.

Our family cooked one turkey and some of the pies and things and the Whitings the other turkey, etc. It was a tremendous feast with two turkeys, a ham, oysters, I think, sweet and white potatoes, onions, squash, celery, cranberry sauce, cider, and for dessert, apple, squash, and mince pies, nuts and raisins, and fruit, ice cream and coffee. The youngest child always walked down the center of the table between courses.

After Thanksgiving was over all thoughts were directed toward Christmas. We didn't send Christmas cards in those days much, but gave a good many presents, practically all of which we made! But the making of Christmas presents did not begin just in December. Mother and I had been making things all through the year, in the evenings while Papa read to us. Mother knitted all kinds of things, mittens, toboggan caps, sweaters, long scarves and shawls, slipper-tops. She also painted for Christmas, calendars, bookmarks, picture frames, and pictures to give away. I made such things as pen-wipers, shaving papers and wooden paper cutters for men, hemstitched handkerchiefs and "hair receivers" for women and much embroidery of table covers, bureau covers, doilies, etc.

What we didn't make, Mother bought, not spending very much, at different times during the year, and each thing that was bought was laid away in the "Christmas drawer."

Dick and Ted came home for Christmas and always our dear cousins, Alice and William Stone. Often other friends from Pittsfield or elsewhere were invited for our Christmas eve party.

A specially delightful part of getting ready for Christmas, and also of Christmas Day itself, was the sending and getting of the "Fenns' box." About two weeks before Christmas we got a wooden box of the right size, collected all our presents, and those from the Whitings, to go to the Fenns in Chicago. Then came the packing of each thing in the box, with hemlock in the top — nailing it up, then harnessing up the horse and driving to Berkshire to send it off by freight to the Fenns. Soon we would be looking for notice of the "Fenns' box" coming the other way, from them to us and it was very exciting when it arrived a few days before Christmas. Sometimes it was late and hadn't come by the day before Christmas, so Papa would drive down to Berkshire on Christmas morning, rout out Mr. Williams, the station master, to see if it hadn't arrived the night before.

I can almost hear you all say, "What silly things to get excited about. But all I can say is it was exciting to me then.

Alice and William Stone came to us at Christmas time for years. They began coming before Grandpa and Grandma died and kept on for many more years. I cannot think of Christmas in Berkshire without thinking of Alice and William Stone. They were both full of enthusiasm, specially Alice, and loved all of the Christmas days and doings.

I can never think of a Christmas when there wasn't snow though there may have been such a one! In fact, there was one, for I have found a photograph of a Christmas house party group, taken on the absolutely snowless slopes of Berkshire Mountain!

Alice and William always arrived in time to go with us to get the Christmas tree on the morning of the day before Christmas. Jack and Jerry, the farm horses, were hitched into the big farm sled — the latter a long wooden box with sides of boards as high as the width of two or three boards and posts at intervals on the sides and at each side of the back end to hold the side boards in place. There were two big sleds under this long box. (It suddenly strikes me as very strange to have to be trying to describe a farm sled, — but you, poor things, have probably never seen one or even a picture of one!) Well, the floor of this long box was filled with straw and all the children and Alice and William with

Ted or some older man to drive would pile in with robes and blankets to keep warm, and bells jingling, go off, either up Berkshire mountain, or up north of Lanesboro on the hills towards Greylock, where there were spruce or fir trees. It was a long morning's trip. When we got to our destination we would all wander about till we found the tree that suited us all, cut it down, and drive home again, getting back in time for dinner. One year, I remember, the snow was so deep and drifted on the road up north of Lanesboro that we had to go on the bank and we tipped over with everyone and the tree in a big pile in the drift!

We always had our tree at the Whitings'. After dinner we all gathered there and trimmed the tree. Some of the ornaments were old and familiar ones which had been used on Christmas trees in my family in Brooklyn when Faith was little. The tree was lighted by candles in those days, for there were no electric lights, and it was very gay and lovely because the lights twinkled. After the tree was all trimmed, we hung little baskets and homemade cornucopias of candy on the branches, one for each person, man, woman and child, who was to be there in the evening. When the tree was all trimmed and ready for the evening, Alice and William and I would go home to our house (Alice and William always visited at our house at Christmas for we had the room) for supper. After supper we would put on our best clothes and all, including Mother and Papa, go over to the Whitings' for the Christmas eve party. We sometimes had a play we had prepared — but we always had games such as "stage coach," "ring on string," "button button," dumb crambo or charades. The tree was lighted with a good deal of excitement and ceremony while we all sat and watched and admired it and Alice would surely say, "Oh, isn't that lovely! I think it is the most beautiful one we have ever had!"

Then while the candles were burning we played our games and the little baskets and cornucopias of candy were passed to each person and then we sang carols with Uncle Edward playing the piano. On those occasions we always kept a long stick with a wet rag or sponge on the end, handy in case a candle began to burn a twig of the tree. Many very incipient fires were put out but none ever really got started. The Whiting children hung their stockings in their house and I in mine after the Christmas eve party was over. But before I went to bed we collected our presents and Alice and William's presents for every one and took them over in

our clothes basket to put them under the tree at the Whitings'.

On the next morning, Christmas day, we would put on our best clothes again, and all of us congregate at the Whitings', the children all rushing about in great excitement. Uncle Edward read out the names on the presents and some child or other would pass them around. There were so many of us the present opening took a long time.

Christmas dinner was never so much of an occasion in my mind as Thanksgiving. At first we had it at our house with Nellie and Maggie to help, just as we had Thanksgiving at the Whitings', but later we made it simpler and had an easy-to-get dinner each family at home.

As I said before, I think there was almost always snow at Christmas, sometimes more, sometimes less. We always went out on Christmas afternoon if there was snow — the young people and Alice and William — to coast or toboggan on the knoll. Sometimes it was good coasting on the road down toward Berkshire, and sometimes we had the rare combination of good crust of the right kind for tobogganing and a moon! Then we would go out in the evening as well as the afternoon. That was wonderful!

Also during the Christmas season, specially if there was good sleighing and a moon, we would have a "straw-ride" in the farm sled with the farm horses. Straw on the floor, and fur robes and blankets and we'd all pile in and go for a moonlight sleigh ride. By the time I remember the straw rides, Dot and Mid and Ted were old enough, Ted in college, to have visiting friends on house parties at Christmas time. But Alice and Annie and William and Ruth and Kathleen and I went, too.

Christmas has always, in my life, meant a great deal to me. That, I think, is because of the kind of celebration that we had. There was never anything religious about it. We never went to church or even had anything as Christian as a crèche, except when Alice Stone brought one once with little figures she got in Italy. We sang carols, but that was mostly for the music and not the words. Christmas to me was a kind of focus of the whole year. We prepared for it for months, making presents, with special thought of the person we were giving to. There was no commercial air about our celebration. Dick and Ted came home for Christmas time and friends of theirs often came for the vacation days after Christmas. Alice and William Stone were always there

(unless they were in Europe) and their enthusiasm and love for every single thing we did at Christmas made up a large part of the joy of it. The whole atmosphere was one of gaiety and fun. Coasting and tobogganing parties if the snow was good — outside people from the bigger world often there. Besides the Christmas eve party there would be other evenings, of games and charades, and almost always a "straw ride" with the farm sled and horses. It was just what you might call simply "lots of fun" for a week or more and then came New Year's Eve which was very exciting to me when I got to be allowed to sit up for the New Year. To be up till twelve o'clock was a momentous thing! We had no drinking that I remember, but we had a very jolly time and always sang "Auld Lang Syne" with a good deal of feeling as the clock struck twelve. Very simple joys?

After Christmas was over and Alice and William and other guests gone, then for the next two months came the winter farm events. Always coasting of one kind or another. Usually very good coasting on the road to Berkshire, but if it wasn't quite icy and fast enough for us, we sometimes spent hours in the afternoon bringing water from the house to sprinkle on the crucial spots to make us go faster. We had Flexible Flyer sleds and a "double-ripper" as we called it — two low sleds hitched together with a long plank fastened on top. You have them now, but this was a homemade one. A good many children could sit or lie on it with the back one steering with his foot. It was a fast and exciting coaster. I liked best to go with two Flexible Flyers together with me lying on the front sled with my feet hitched into the front of the sled behind, then perhaps Harry or Rose, whoever was the baby at that time, lying on my back, another child kneeling up behind, and perhaps one or two on the back sled. The steering was done by the person lying on the front sled by moving his body whatever direction he wanted to go in, because the back sled, that his feet were in, acted as a kind of rudder. I loved to do the steering. We'd always have to pull the littlest one up the hill again.

Sometimes on rarer occasions the crust was strong enough all over the fields and hills so that we could almost coast anywhere. It was really exciting when the crust was hard-packed and firm like that, without a brittle surface. It didn't happen very often, but when it did, what a joy!

You could start with your sled at the top of Lanesboro hill near where the school house now is, and go flying down over the fields, through the apple trees near the Wierums' house, on down across the Milton Road (now Partridge Road) and down a little gully in which a little brook ran, called by my father Bull Run, and so on into the meadow at the right side of the Gulf Road. A glorious coast of about a mile, I guess.

Sometimes the crust was thin, though hard and brittle, so woe betide you if you broke through, specially with the toboggan, and slid off breaking through the crust. I can remember Freddy Hodges coming crying home to the house one night when he had been tobogganing with the others on the knoll, with his face covered with blood. He had gone through the crust sliding face down and was pretty well scraped raw. We rarely had skating for there was too much snow often and no regularly cleared place except Berkshire pond. We did go there to skate. And sometimes on the meadow below the knoll south of our house.

If there came a deep snow and drifts, then we spent hours and days of labor and fun with shovels, digging big caves and tunnels under huge drifts and crawling into them and wriggling through them. On the calf pasture hill near the Lords' house there often was a very deep drift into which we jumped, and as it was on a side hill, we could slide through it in a kind of tunnel. We called it McGinty land because of the song "Down Went McGinty to the Bottom of the Sea," which is all I can remember of it.

In my diary which I have inserted in this tale a few pages on, when I speak of "playing in the snow" I think it meant that kind of tunnelling and sliding down the drift on the calf-pasture hill. We would sometimes coast down another part of the calf-pasture hill on a homemade contraption — I've forgotten what we called it — made out of a barrel stave with a small stick of stove wood nailed on it in an upright position and on top of that a half barrel top for a seat. That was fun.

The farm events of the winter season were the cutting and carting home of wood and ice. We had to have wood to burn in fireplaces and in the kitchen stoves to cook with, and ice to keep our food cool in the ice-boxes in the summer.

Uncle Edward's farmer and hired man would cut the wood and stack it in cords in the woods, then, while the snow was still on the ground, bring it home and pile it in long rows near the Big

Barn to be sawed up later.

Whenever we went out in the winter we always had our sleds with us. So when we saw the team starting for the woods we would hitch on behind or sit at the end of the farm sled hanging our legs over and go to the woods while they loaded up and come back on the wood or on our sleds fastened behind.

The other event of the winter was the cutting and storing the ice in our ice-houses. There were no electric or gas refrigerators in those days and we had to have ice in our ice-boxes in the summer. The ice was stored in ice-houses and covered with sawdust to keep it from melting in the warm weather. Again the farmer and man would go with farm horses and sled, after enough cold weather had made the ice a foot and a half or two feet thick, down to Berkshire pond where ice-cutters sawed out the big chunks of ice about two feet square or more, and bring them up to fill our ice-houses. We children rode back and forth or hitched behind on these trips for ice. In spite of the fact that summer brought more people, and perhaps more varied things to do, I think I always enjoyed the winter best of all. I loved going out in the big snowstorms and the drifts — the coasting and tobogganing, digging of tunnels, and sleighing. No fast-going in an automobile, I think, is as much fun as driving behind a fast horse in a cutter with bells ringing and the snow flying in your face while you sit wrapped up in fur robes!

Driving to Pittsfield in the winter was quite an enterprise and now would be considered almost an arctic adventure. Imagine a cold day, thermometer in the twenties — good sleighing but probably icy on the hills. Errands to be done for both households. All three of us were going — Mother, Papa, and I. Right after dinner one or possibly two soapstones must be put on the kitchen stove to get hot. They were put on the floor of the open sleigh to keep our feet warm enough (at least on the hour's trip in to town), so that they wouldn't be too aching with cold by the time we got home. As soon as the stones were really hot they were wrapped in newspaper. When the horse was harnessed into the double sleigh, fur robes were put over the two seats, front and back, and fur robes over your lap when you were in. Overshoes and your thickest coat were put on. Papa always wore a fur hat. Mother and I always wore shawls or a heavy cape wrapped around us over our coats and pinned, and head warmly wrapped, with rather heavy veils to put over our faces in case of snow flurries. We are off now

for our hour's drive, our feet on the hot soapstones. The soapstones would be still warm by the time we got to Pittsfield but by the time we were through our errands at about four or half-past, ready for the drive home, which would be in the dark part of the way, they wouldn't be so hot. If the roads were icy and the calks on the horse's shoes a little blunted by wear, maybe on a hill the horse would slip and fall down and sometimes couldn't get up without a good deal of struggling, in which case some part of the harness would break and Papa would have to patch it up somehow before we could go on. By that time it had come on to snow so you couldn't see so well and veils were needed to keep your face from aching with the cold. By the time we got home in the dark we were pretty chilled and our feet were aching with cold. Mother often gave us hot water with ginger in it to warm us up. That wasn't just the story of one occasion, but through the years that kind of drive was repeated often and often. Not so often with the harness breaking, but neither was that an isolated event.

Driving in the cutter was more fun than in the double-seated sleigh, for it was so light the horse could go much faster. It was more exciting, too, for when the snow on the road was rather deep and drifted, a cutter could tip over very easily. One day I remember, on two trips to Berkshire, one for the mail and one to meet someone at the train, Papa tipped over in the cutter three times! No damage done, however, except a snowy bath.

It's also fun (or rather was) to ride standing on the runners of a sleigh, holding on to the sides.

In spite of all the cold vicissitudes of sleighing, I would like now to be able to go once more on a ride in an open sleigh with a horse!

I used to watch the thermometer every day and hated to see it go up above 32° for fear the snow would melt and the sleighing and coasting go. Nowadays, who wants the snow, except for skiing (and that's a big except, I know), and even that is far off usually from where many of us live and drive cars.

I have found a little diary of mine given to me one Christmas vacation by Alice Stone as a prize in some game. I wrote in it from Dec. 29/98 - May 19/99 when I was ten years old. It is very monotonous and factual, not a journal of thoughts and ideas, but it does give a little picture of some of the things I did for those months and it is not so long as to bore you too much. I put it in

just as written. So here goes!

Dec. 29, 1898. I went on a straw-ride to Dalton and started at half-past seven and got back at ten.

Dec. 30. I went to Pettibone Falls with Alice and William and walked all the way back.

Dec. 31, 1898. Alice and William went away this morning after their Christmas vacation. The rain of this morning changed to snow and tonight it is five inches deep. In the morning I went with Dick to see where a rabbit lived. In the afternoon I went up to the barn to see the cow's and one cow was lose.

Jan. 1st, 1899. In the morning I took care of Harry outdoors, and right after dinner I wrote a letter to Bessie Wheeler. Then about half-past four in the afternoon I played some tricks for Howard. Then I read a story to Mother about five o'clock.

Jan. 2nd/99. It is very cold and last night it was 30° below zero. This morning I played I was a very funny little girl. This afternoon I didn't do much of anything till five o'clock and then I walked down to Berkshire with Dick and Mid. Tonight the thermometer is 20° above.

Jan. 3rd/99. Last night Dick was sick, he fainted on the table. This morning the thermometer was ten above and during the day it was up to 30. Tonight it is 18 above. This morning I went down to Berkshire with some of my cousins and the farmer. This afternoon I went up to play in the snow. Then I came down to the ice-house to watch the men put in ice.

Jan. 4th/99. Dick went away this morning on the eight o'clock, he tried to go on the seven but he missed it. The rest of the morning I was in school. In the afternoon I went down to Berkshire with Crazy to draw ice. The thermometer was up to fifty during the day. About as soon as I got back from Berkshire I went over with Howard to read stories together and in the evening I played cribage with Mother.

Jan. 5th/99. Went to school as usual this morning. Played a game of cribage right after school.

When we got up in the morning the ther. was 40 and up to 50 in the day. In the afternoon I talked to the girls. In the evening played cribage and read stories.

Jan. 6th, 1899. I went to school as usual in the morning. In the afternoon I painted till nearly five then I walked down to Berkshire and back. Then played cribage and read. Went to bed

at nearly half-past eight.

Jan. 7th, 1899. Went down to Briggs's to get some eggs in the morning. In the afternoon fooled and went to walk with Mother, then played cribage. In the evening I played cribage and heard stories.

Jan. 8, 1899. Mother and father went to church this morning while I went over to Howard's.

Miss Keene came out from Pittsfield to spend the day. Tooth came out at the table at dinner.

Jan. 9th, 1899. Went to school in the morning. In the afternoon I took care of Harry and put him to sleep, then went down to the five o'clock mail with father. In the evening I played cribage.

Jan. 10th, 1899. We had to get our own meals. Went to school in the morning. In the afternoon I went down to Berkshire to get some ice with Crazy and the girls. Played cribage in the evening and Papa read some stories.

Jan. 11th, 1899. Still very cold. Got up very late in the morning. School later in the morning. In the afternoon I went down to Berkshire with Crazy to get ice for our ice-house, then played cribage with Mother. Papa read stories to me in the evening.

Jan. 12, 1899. Very cold in the morning and warm in the afternoon. Ruth and Kathleen went away to Boston. Early in the afternoon I went down to Berkshire with Crazy to get ice then went down to Briggs's to make a call with Mother. In the evening Papa read me a story. He went to Pittsfield right after dinner and got back at about half-past five.

Jan. 13th, 1899. Went to school this morning. In the afternoon I went to Pittsfield to Papa's reading. Ther. this morning was 24 then 30 & 32. Sleigh broke down just as we started to come out from the reading, went to the blacksmith's to have it mended.

Went to bed right after supper most.

Jan. 14th, 1899. In the morning I coasted in Brigg's field. In the afternoon I trimmed my doll's hat. Later I went down to Berkshire. Went over to the Whiting's house for supper and stayed till nine o'clock.

Jan. 16th, 1899. No school in the morning so Mother and Papa and I went to Pittsfield — got back at about two o'clock.

Then after dinner I went over to the Whiting's to play with them. At about four o'clock Howard and Dot and I went down to Berkshire to get the mail; as soon as I got back I played with Howard until half-past five and then came home to supper. Papa read me some stories.

Jan. 17th, 1899. School this morning. Right after school I went down to Berkshire with Papa to send a telle. In the afternoon I played with Howard and the girls. Uncle Edward came over to supper and papa read some stories.

Jan. 18th, 1899. Went skating in the morning. Papa went to New York early in the morning to get a boy and got back at half-past eight. In the afternoon I went skating. In the evening I read stories and looked at pictures.

Jan. 19th, 1899. Early in the morning I went down to the meadow to see how the skating was, and found it bad; then I came back to school. After dinner I went to Pittsfield with Papa and Mama, got back at five.

Then I read stories. After supper I sang. I played cribage with Herbert, then went to bed.

Jan. 20th, 1899. In the morning I went to school. After dinner I went skating and when I got back I went and played with Howard. In the evening I played cribage with Herbert.

Jan. 21st, 1899. In the morning I went skating. In the afternoon I went over to Lanesboro with papa and mama. In the evening I popped corn and played three handed cribage.

Jan. 22nd, 1899. Went to church in the morning. In the afternoon I read and later in the afternoon I coasted and played games.

Jan. 23rd, 1899. Went to school in the morning. In the afternoon I went down to the woods with Herbert to chop. In the evening I played cribage.

Jan. 24th, 1899. Went to school in the morning. Rained all day. Mother went to Pittsfield to spend the day. After dinner I read and played cribage with Herbert; later in the afternoon I went down to meet Mother. After supper played cribage.

Jan. 25th, 1899. Clear cold day. School in the morning. In the afternoon chopped and played with Howard. Went to supper at the Whiting's. In the evening played games.

Jan. 26/1899. Went to school in the morning. In the afternoon coasted till half-past four then chopped wood with Howard

till supper time. Annie came to supper. After supper played games with Annie. Then later after she had gone home played cribbage with Mother and Herbert.

Jan. 27th, 1899. In the morning I went to school. In the afternoon I went to Pittsfield to hear papa read. After supper Dot came over and we all played cribbage. Ther. 16 - 12 - 6.

Jan. 28th, 1899. Ther. 6 - 14 - 19. In the morning I skated and in the afternoon I coasted. In the evening I played cribbage.

Jan. 29th, 1899. Ther. 14 - 12 - 9. Coasted all the morning. In the afternoon I coasted. In the evening papa read to me.

Jan. 30th, 1899. School in the morning. Papa went down to meet Miss Berks before breakfast.

After dinner I coasted and then went down to Berkshire.

Jan. 31st, 1899. School in the morning. In the afternoon I went to Pittsfield with Mother.

Feb. 1st, 1899. School in the morning. Coasting in the afternoon till about four o'clock; then I went down to Berkshire to get some glass and the mail.

Feb. 2nd, 1899. Miss Berks came this morning. Went to school in the morning. In the afternoon I played around till about five, then I went down to the Briggses. I played Whist in the evening.

Feb. 3rd, 1899. School in the morning. Made paths and tried on dresses in the afternoon. In the evening played whist.

Feb. 4th, 1899. This morning played with Howard and coasted. In the afternoon painted and coasted and played with Howard. In the evening played cribbage. Miss Berks finished my dresses today and went home.

Feb. 5th, 1899. In the morning I coasted and played horse. In the afternoon I coasted. Annie came over to supper. In the evening Papa read to me.

Feb. 6th, 1899. School in the morning. In the afternoon took a long walk with Herbert. Papa read to me in the evening.

Feb. 7th, 1899. School in the morning. Played in the snow in the afternoon. Went over to the Whiting's to supper. Papa read to me in the evening.

Feb. 8th, 1899. North-east storm all day. Lessons as usual. Aunt Sue came home today.

Feb. 9th, 1899. 6 - 0 - 4. Foot of snow but no drifts. Mr. Burington took dinner with us.

Feb. 10th, 1899. 7 - 2 - 10. Lessons in the morning. Papa and Mama went to Pittsfield in the afternoon.

Feb. 11th, 1899. 6 - 0 - 2. Played in the snow all day with Herbert and Howard. Papa read to me in the evening.

Feb. 12th, 1899. Snowed all day. In the morning I went down to Berkshire in the morning with Papa. Coasted in the afternoon. Papa read to us all in the evening.

Feb. 13th, 1899. 4 - 6 - 4. Snowing hard all day. Miss Berks came in the morning to sew. School as usual in the morning. Played whist in the evening.

Feb. 14th, 1899. Two feet of snow badly drifted. A little school in the morning, because we went out shovelling snow. Valentine Party in the evening at the Whiting's.

Feb. 15th, 1899. Ther. 0 - 32 - 26. School in the morning. In the afternoon played in the snow. In the evening played whist.

Feb. 16th, 1899. School in the morning. In the afternoon I played in the snow. I went over to the Whiting's to supper. After supper Papa read to me.

Feb. 17th, 1899. School in the morning. Had a party in the afternoon at the Whiting's. In the evening Papa read to me.

Feb. 18th, 1899. In the morning I played games with Kad and Herbert. In the afternoon I played outdoors till about five o'clock, then I played games with Herbert. In the evening Papa read to me.

Feb. 18th, 1899. Stayed in the house most all the morning, then went out and played a little while. Stayed in the house all the afternoon. Paper read to me in the evening.

Feb. 20th, 1899. School in the morning. In the afternoon I played out. In the evening I played cribbage and letters.

Feb. 21st, 1899. School in the morning. In the afternoon I played games on the Whiting's piazza. Played games in the evening at the Whiting's.

Feb. 22nd, 1899. Painted in the morning. In the afternoon I played up in the barn. Made molasses candy in the evening.

Feb. 23rd, 1899. School in the morning. In the afternoon I went down to the woods to get wood with Crazy.

Feb. 24th, 1899. School in the morning. Coasted in the afternoon and a little later went down to Berkshire with Crazy. Coasted in the evening.

Feb. 25th, 1899. Coasted all the morning. In the afternoon

took care of some children. Played cards in the evening.

Feb. 26th, 1899. Coasted and took care of Harry in the morning. In the afternoon I coasted. In the evening papa read to me.

Feb. 27th, 1899. School in the morning. Fooled all the afternoon. Papa read to me in the evening.

Feb. 28th, 1899. School in the morning. Kad came over to dinner. Played in the afternoon. Papa went to Pittsfield in the afternoon and came back in the evening.

March 1st, 1899. School in the morning. Played around in the afternoon. Mid came over to supper and Ruth came over after supper and played games.

March 2nd, 1899. School in the morning. Played in the snow in the afternoon. Papa read to me in the evening.

March 3rd, 1899. School in the morning. Played with Willis in the afternoon. Ruth came over to supper. After supper Mid and Kad came and we played games.

March 4th, 1899. Played with Willis in the morning. Went over to Lanesborough in the afternoon to get a kitten.

March 5th, 1899. Didn't do much of anything in the morning. Played outdoors in the afternoon. Sang in the evening.

March 6th, 1899. School in the morning. Played outdoors in the afternoon. Kad came over to supper. I am going away in the morning. In the evening I read a book.

March 7th, 1899. Got up at five o'clock in the morning to go to Scarborough to visit the Thayers. In the afternoon I earned money. Went to bed very early.

March 8th, 1899. Worked in the morning. In the afternoon played shuffleboard and tried Galla's skii. Later went over to the studio. Mr. Hazen came to play on the piano. Just as I got into bed I stepped on a wasp.

March 9th/99. Went to the Green house in the morning with Galla. In the afternoon I played shuffle-board on the piazza.

March 10th, 1899. Went up to Julia Cane's house in the morning to get her two little boys. In the afternoon I played a kicking game until five o'clock, then I went to Yonkers.

March 11th, 1899. Went to walk in the morning. Played with a little girl in the afternoon. In the evening I looked at pictures.

March 12th, 1899. Went to church in the morning. Went

to walk in the afternoon with two girls. Read in the evening.

March 13th, 1899. Played with a little girl in the morning. Went to walk in the afternoon and sewed in the evening.

March 14th, 1899. Played with Mary Bellows in the morning. In the afternoon lady's came to call.

March 15th, 1899. Played with Mary Bellows in the morning. Went out to dinner. Stayed in the house in the afternoon.

March 16th, 1899. Sick all day.

March 17th, 1899. Went to Brooklyn in the morning and walked across the bridge. Played outdoors in the afternoon.

March 18th, 1899. Rained all day so I stayed in the house with Mother. Went to Cousin Ruth's house.

March 19th, 1899. Stayed in the house in the morning. Went to walk in the afternoon.

March 20th, 1899. Went to the doctor's early in the morning. Later in the morning went shopping. Went to Cousin Ruth's to dinner. Played outdoors in the afternoon.

March 21st, 1899. Went to Dr. Hall's early in the morning, then later I went to the oculist with Mother. Then about noon I went to the Mathews'. Stayed in the house the rest of the afternoon.

March 22nd, 1899. Went to New York in the afternoon and went to the theater. Went to the Powers to stay a day.

March 23rd, 1899. Went to the Zoo in the morning. Went to Montclair in the afternoon, then played with Catharine when I got there.

March 24th, 1899. Went back to Brooklyn in the afternoon. Went to a fair in Brooklyn in the evening. Went to bed very late.

March 25th, 1899. Went to see some pictures in the morning. Went home in the afternoon.

March 26th, 1899. Played in the Whiting's in the morning, and stayed there to dinner. Played there in the afternoon, too.

March 27th, 1899. School in the morning. In the afternoon I worked. Played cribbage in the evening. Outdoors in the afternoon. Played whist in the evening.

March 29th, 1899. School in the morning. Coasted in the afternoon. In the evening played games.

March 30th, 1899. School in the morning. Played outdoors in the afternoon. Dot and Mid came over in the evening.

March 31st, 1899. School in the morning. Played outdoors

in the afternoon and went over to the Whiting's to supper. Played cards after supper.

April 1st, 1899. Played outdoors in the morning. Played in the Whiting's house in the afternoon. Played games in the evening.

April 2nd, 1899. Played in the Whiting's in the afternoon. Papa read to me in the evening.

April 3rd, 1899. Coasted in the morning. In the afternoon I played outdoors with the Whitings. Read in the evening.

April 4th, 1899. Played outdoors in the morning. Played in the Whiting's house. Read in the evening.

April 5th, 1899. Went down to the mail with Uncle Edward early in the morning, then later watched the Whitings play golf. Played with Howard in the afternoon. Papa read to me in the evening.

April 6th, 1899. Played in the house in the morning. Played house in the afternoon. Read in the evening.

April 7th, 1899. Played outdoors in the morning. Played in the Whiting's house in the afternoon. Arthur and Herbert went over to the Whiting's house to supper. In the evening I played over at the Whiting's house.

April 8th, 1899. Played in the brook in the morning. In the afternoon played with Howard.

April 9th, 1899. Played with Howard in the morning. In the afternoon played in the Whiting's house. In the evening Papa read to us.

April 10th, 1899. School in the morning. Played games outdoors in the afternoon. Went over to the Whiting's house to supper. Played games in the evening.

April 11th, 1899. School in the morning. Played games in the afternoon. Cut out pictures in the evening.

April 12th, 1899. School in the morning. Went to walk in the afternoon. Dick and Arthur played to us in the evening.

April 13th, 1899. School in the morning. Went to walk in the afternoon. Went to the Whiting's house to supper. Played games in the evening.

April 14th, 1899. School in the morning. Played outdoors in the afternoon. Played games in the evening.

April 15th, 1899. Played outdoors in the morning. In the afternoon I went to walk. Frank Vaughan came on the five o'clock

train. Papa read to me in the evening.

April 16th, 1899. Went to walk in the morning. Went to the Whiting's to dinner. Played in the house all the afternoon. Papa read to us all in the evening.

April 17th, 1899. School in the morning. Went to walk in the afternoon. Went over to the Whiting's house in the evening.

April 18th, 1899. School in the morning. Played outdoors in the afternoon. Had a picnic supper.

April 19th, 1899. Went to walk in the morning. Fooled in the afternoon. Went out doors in the evening.

April 20th, 1899. School in the morning. Played outdoors in the afternoon. Read in the evening.

April 21st, 1899. School in the morning. In the afternoon played outdoors. Had a party in the evening.

April 22nd, 1899. Went to walk in the morning. Went to walk in the afternoon. Went on a picnic supper. Played outdoors in the evening.

April 23rd, 1899. Played church in the morning. Went to walk in the afternoon. Papa read me a story in the evening.

April 24th, 1899. School in the morning. Played outdoors in the afternoon. Studied in the evening.

April 25th, 1899. School in the morning. Went to get some flowers in the afternoon. Looked at pictures in the evening.

April 26th, 1899. School in the morning. Painted in the afternoon. Looked at pictures in the evening.

April 27th, 1899. School in the morning. Played outdoors in the afternoon. Looked at pictures in the evening.

April 28th, 1899. School in the morning. Played outdoors in the afternoon. Played whist in the evening.

April 29th, 1899. Went down to the woods to get some flowers in the morning. Took care of Harry in the afternoon. Looked at pictures in the evening.

April 30th, 1899. Went to church in the morning. Took care of Harry in the afternoon. Studied in the evening.

May 1st, 1899. School in the morning. Galla and Mary and Bessie came at two o'clock. Went to walk in the afternoon. Looked at pictures in the evening.

May 2nd, 1899. School in the morning. Went to walk in the afternoon. Went on a picnic supper. Went to walk after supper.

May 3rd, 1899. School in the morning. Played outdoors in the afternoon. Read in the evening.

May 4th, 1899. School in the morning. Played outdoors in the afternoon. Looked at pictures in the evening.

May 5th, 1899. School in the morning. Played outdoors in the afternoon. Went to bed about half-past seven.

May 6th, 1899. Brother Will went away early in the morning. Played outdoors in the afternoon. Looked at pictures in the evening.

May 7th, 1899. Played outdoors. Played outdoors in the afternoon, too. Papa read to me in the evening.

May 8th, 1899. School in the morning. Chopped wood in the afternoon. Played in the little house in the evening.

May 9th, 1899. School in the morning. Took care of Harry in the afternoon. Made a present for Annie in the evening.

May 10th, 1899. School in the evening. Went to walk in the afternoon. Pasted pictures in the evening.

May 11th, 1899. Annie's birthday. School in the morning. Got apple-blossoms for Annie's party. Played games in the evening.

May 12th, 1899. School in the morning. Made a dam in the afternoon.

May 13th, 1899. Played house in the morning. Fooled in the afternoon. Went down to meet Uncle Abbott in the evening.

May 14th, 1899. Went to walk in the morning. Played house in the afternoon.

May 15th, 1899. School in the morning. Went to walk in the afternoon. Mary read to me in the evening.

May 16th, 1899. School in the morning. Played games outdoors in the afternoon. Went over to the Whiting's in the evening.

May 17th, 1899. School in the morning. Played house in the afternoon. Read poetry in the evening.

May 18th, 1899. School in the morning. John Powers and family came in the afternoon. Read in the evening.

May 19th, 1899. School in the morning. Went to walk in the afternoon. Went over to the Powers's in the evening.

This is the end of this notebook.

I think it was in the spring and before the planting began that they sawed up the wood which had been cut in the winter. We

had fun then, besides just watching them saw the wood, which I will tell you about. The saw which cut the wood into chunks for the stoves and fire-places was worked by horse-power. There was a big wagon-like cart on wheels with a sloping ramp-like floor made of wide cleats on a moving platform, with a bar that could be put across the lower end of it. There was a big wheel at the side, over the rim of which ran a belt which went to the corresponding wheel of the saw. After the belt was put on and connected with the saw, the two big farm horses, Jack and Jerry, were driven up onto the platform side by side and the bar closed behind them. The movable platform was started and as it moved down under their feet the horses had to walk to keep from sliding backwards and their walking kept the platform moving and turned the wheel with the belt which turned the wheel connected with the saw. If the horses got tired and stopped walking, they would slip back and bump the bar behind them and that started them up again. The horses had to keep walking and that kept the circular saw going. Cords and cords of wood were sawed that way.

At noon time, when the men and horses were resting and the "horse power", as we called it, was empty, we children used often to unfasten the belt, get onto the platform and make it go ourselves. It didn't do any harm, and was easy to work because the saw didn't go with the belt unattached.

I notice I haven't said anything about Willis Briggs, the son of the farmer next to us. I guess it is because I can't remember much that we did with Willis, though he was a mighty nice boy and I'm sure we played with him. I think maybe he had more work to do than we did. Perhaps he didn't want to play with girls too much. He had to help his father with the farm work. We, of course, were carefree as far as farm work went — which was both good and bad, I think. If Uncle Edward had had to work his farm himself instead of having a farmer, we would all have worked that way more. I used to go to the Briggs's house, I know, and crack and eat butternuts with Willis in the attic. They also had a huge chestnut tree in front of their house from which we got chestnuts, too.

Another memory of the Briggs's home is the smell of the warm stove-wood when Mrs. Briggs opened the door of the wood drying oven at the bottom of her kitchen stove to put a stick on the fire. I can smell it now, as I think of it, and, as smells so often do, it

takes me right back to the Briggs's kitchen. And always I had to go to the Briggs's to get the big "pound sweets", as the big sweet apples we used for baking were called.

Talking about apples. There was an apple tree right near our house by the Gulf Road; an astrakan, I think, which Papa had grafted for five different kinds of apples! I think it is still alive and Aunt Anne still gets apples from it — or did a year or two ago! And our old Bartlett pear tree is still bearing pears.

Sometimes when I had to go to the farmhouse to get butter, Kathleen would come with me and we would pretend to be the "Queen's horses." We would gallop side by side from our house to the farmhouse and back, holding the dish or basket or whatever receptacle was to hold the butter, between us. We were very prancing steeds and brought the "Queen's" butter safely home.

Howard Hathaway, the farmer's son, I used to play with a good deal, but strange to say, I can't remember what he looked like or was like, though my diary for those few months in 1899 mentions playing with him quite often.

We made a good deal of Valentine's Day. We bought some of our Valentines, but made most of them with colored papers and the paper lace from old candy boxes which we always saved for that purpose. We were very careful to disguise our handwriting in addressing the Valentines for no one must ever know from whom they came. Sometimes we were very successful in that way.

April Fool's day was another special day that we had much fun celebrating. We always tried to fool each and everybody all day long, but if anyone tried to do any fooling after the day was over he always received the scornful chant, "April Fool's day's gone and past, And you're the biggest fool at last!" Sometimes the fooling took the form of salt in the sugar and other gaieties like that — sometimes labels like what we pinned on the farmer's back, or verbal fooling, but we tried to think up and perform harmless tricks on each other and any grown-up we could manage, all day on April Fool's day.

We always painted Easter eggs. We may have painted them together at one house or the other, the Whitings and I, but we found them hidden each in our own house on Easter morning.

Perhaps you will think as you read this that compared with **your** lives, with television, radio, movies, and all the things

and gadgets and doings that you all have, my life as a child was very dull and narrow, but I don't think it was. Isn't that lucky for me? For I think I had many unusual advantages. First place I was on a farm, and a farm is a wonderful place for a child to grow up on, but I also, as well as you, even though on a farm, lived with people of education and cultivation. My father was a scholar and a fine teacher; my mother an artist and a great lover of human beings of all kinds — with hosts of friends. They both were "come-outers" and believed in all sorts of progressive ideas and ways of life. They were Unitarians, which means liberal in religion, but they never forced any religion on me. They were against any discrimination against people on account of color or religion or politics. They were for the underdog everywhere, and were friends of all kinds of people whether educated and cultivated or not. My father was an anti-imperialist in the time of the 1898 war with Spain. Mother was for woman's suffrage, in those days when women couldn't vote. That all made a good atmosphere for a child to grow in. Many of our friends and relatives and even the boarders who came to us were of the same kind.

Mrs. Edward Hallowell from West Medford and her two daughters, Charlotte and Emily, boarded with us one summer. They were Quakers, their parents strongly anti-slavery and friends of the Negro people. Miss Emily Hallowell used to sing without accompaniment, Negro songs she had collected directly from the Negro people. Miss Cornelia Frothingham, a fine person and reformer in Philadelphia, and her friend, Agnes Repplier, the essayist, were also with us one summer. They all left a strong impression on me as to what fine people were like.

One summer Edward Everett Hale, the very well-known and, at that time, revered Unitarian minister — "dean" of Unitarians, came to see "Brother Will" Fenn in Berkshire. I was quite little at the time. Mother took me up to him, and as a good Unitarian should, said, "I want you to bless my little girl." I was petrified with fear. I didn't know what dreadful thing he was going to do to me. I came out of the ordeal safely, and, I suppose, "blessed."

There were other people who brought beautiful music into my consciousness. Among them were our friends, John and Ethel and Anna Powers, and John's wife "Cousin Ada", as I called her. Cousin Ada was a fine musician and pianist. She was a great lover of Beethoven and played a great deal of him. She also played a

good deal of Chopin. Her playing was my first experience of hearing beautiful music played by a first-class professional pianist and musician. She would play very often either at our house or the 'Whitings' for a whole evening.

Cooney also had musical friends — Mrs. Flint (wife of an old friend, Bert Flint) was a charming and talented professional singer, with a lovely voice; she visited Cooney and spent one or two whole summers in Berkshire boarding nearby. She gave us many, many rewarding concerts. Bert Flint's sister Patty was a fine violinist and played often to us. Mrs. Flint and Otto Wierum's sister, Grace Toennies — also a beautiful singer, made me love the songs of Schubert and Schumann and Brahms and others.

Besides what I learned from my parents and the deep and lasting influence that Cooney and Otto had on me, and the contacts of musicians, etc., by far the deepest and most inspiring, rewarding and lasting influence on me came from Uncle Abbott Thayer and his second wife, Aunt Emma. I visited them quite often all through my teens. I loved them dearly and they loved me. I was flattered by Uncle Abbott wanting to paint me and blossomed and expanded in the atmosphere of approval, for often at home I was disapproved of by one relative or another!

Aunt Emma was a very remarkable woman. She was small and slight with soft golden-brown hair — not at all strong — she never could stand up very long or walk very much — but she quietly managed Uncle Abbott and his three children and did the housekeeping. She was a very fine painter but gave it up when she married Uncle Abbott in order to take care of his children and see that everything was right for his painting. He had three children — Mary, Gerald and Gladys — or Jeje, Gra and Galla, as they were called. Their mother died when Gladys, the youngest, was very little, and Aunt Emma, who had been a dear friend of their mother's, married Uncle Abbott. Aunt Emma had very little physical strength, but she took care of that household — taught Gerald and Gladys, for they didn't go to school; watched over Uncle Abbott; managed the servants, for at one time and for several years they had three girls in the kitchen, three sisters, two to do the work, and one to pose for Uncle Abbott, and a man who lived years and years with them and did outside work like caring for the garden and the place in general. Aunt Emma ran that household and managed all the finances. She was very much her-

self and like no one else, in manners, clothes and ways of living. She was the most completely unself-conscious person I ever knew. If she was in a city, and was very tired and felt she couldn't stand any more, if she was waiting for a trolley or train, she would sit down on the curbstone with perfect equanimity. She gave up her painting and seemed to live entirely for the sake of Uncle Abbott and the children and yet one day when I was visiting in Dublin, Galla was undecided about doing some social thing that she thought she ought to do but didn't want to, I can remember Aunt Emma, scolding her mildly, telling her that she (Aunt Emma) had never done anything that she didn't want to in all her life!

Being with Uncle Abbott was like suddenly coming out into a new physical world of light and color because he made you see so much in everything around you. But the mental and moral world was even more thrilling and exciting. I always felt as if the dimensions of my life grew in every way while I was with him. With them, the Thayers, everything and everybody was treated on their own merits, nothing was done for show or because other people did it. They had no institutional religion and never went to church but had an exceptional love of things and people of beauty and value in the world. You can see from what I have said before about myself how greatly I was influenced by them. I was always glad that they lived long enough (Uncle Abbott died in 1922 and Aunt Emma a few years afterwards) so that I was able to take Baba to see them. Among the normal run of people they were a "queer" family. Uncle Abbott was, in his time, one of the well-known and distinguished painters of the country. They had lots of unusual and different ways of living. His first wife died of tuberculosis so he was very apprehensive that his children might have it; therefore he thought that if they lived outdoors all the time they wouldn't get it. So their house in Dublin, which was only built for a summer home, was not heated in the winter except by open fires and the kitchen stove and small stove in the bathroom to keep the pipes from freezing. Each member of the family had a little hut in the woods, open on one side, and there they slept winter and summer, in sleeping-bags in the winter with hot water bottles and all sorts of warm clothes. When I visited them, in the winter, I think when I was in college, I slept on a balcony and I can remember now how cold it was to get undressed and into that cold bed even with a hot water bottle.

Uncle Abbott was a great talker because he was just bubbling over with ideas all the time, and his talk stimulated ideas in other people. He was the center of attraction for many interesting and unusual people. George De Forest Brush, another well-known painter of that time, was a friend of Uncle Abbott. They had studied in Paris together. The Brushes lived near Dublin, too, at the time I used to go there. Mr. Brush had six children. Galla and Gra and I used to go to see them quite often when I visited in Dublin, and I knew them quite well for many years. Other interesting or famous people I met there were Alan Seeger, a poet; Percy McKaye, writer and playwright; Randolph Bourne, another writer; and Rockwell Kent, painter, writer, architect, carpenter, and fighter for human rights. He married Kathleen Whiting in 1908.

For several summers, Mark Twain was in Dublin and his daughter, Jean Clemens, was a good friend of Galla's. I always felt very thrilled that I had met and shaken hands with Mark Twain. When Mr. James Bryce, the English historian and scholar, was Ambassador to the U. S., the summer Embassy was in Dublin, and Mr. Bryce was a frequent visitor of Uncle Abbott. By that time automobiles were in use and Mr. Bryce rather upset the "high society" of Dublin by walking everywhere in true English style. There were a couple of young Lords in Mr. Bryce's entourage who rather thrilled me at the time, — Lord Eustace Percy, son of the Duke of Northumberland and somebody Kay-Shuttleworth!

Dr. Edward Emerson, son of Ralph Waldo Emerson, had a summer place in Peterboro and used often to ride over on his horse to see Uncle Abbott. He was a friend of long-standing. Louis Fuertes, the painter and naturalist, was a good friend of Uncle Abbott's and Gra's and my brother Dick. He also visited in Berkshire.

Before I entirely dismiss the Thayers from my story I must tell you a funny tale, connected only slightly with them, of an escapade of mine that dogged my footsteps like a ghost for years till after I graduated from college. One time when I was about 13, I think, Gra was visiting us in Berkshire and told us that he had once caught grasshoppers, fried them and eaten them and found them very good! Well, he was persuasive, the enterprise seemed exciting, so we, Gra, the Whitings, and I, got a sheet, went into a big field and ran along holding one edge of the sheet near the

ground. As we ran the grasshoppers jumped and landed on the sheet. The captured grasshoppers we fried (horrible thought) and then chopped up and put into sandwiches as a filling. These sandwiches we then brought home and offered to our two families as delicacies. The joke was, from one aspect, that without knowing what was in the sandwich both families liked them! But, alas for me — in my household at that time was a middle-aged spinster cousin of Papa's, Cousin Ellen Bulfinch (of the Boston Bulfinches) who also ate a sandwich. When the secret was out and she knew what she had eaten, she was horrified at the thought, but she was more horrified at me and considered me some kind of a monster. It was very humiliating and unpleasant for Mother, and I was in disgrace and pretty ashamed — though I did think they shouldn't have made such a fuss about it! Cousin Ellen never forgave me, and never forgot it. When I went to college she warned Aunt Ruth Sessions about me for fear I might do some awful thing when I got to her house where I was living at college. That crime dogged me for years. In the most unexpected places people would pop up saying, "Oh, I heard a story about you — about grasshoppers!" A young man, I've forgotten his name, in my college days, suddenly confronted me with the story — I don't know how he heard it — and then years afterwards he had a boy in the Fenn School when I was teaching there — and on seeing me again — up popped the story!

Vilhjalmur Stefansson, the Arctic explorer and authority on the Esquimaux, came to Berkshire. He was a friend of the Fenns. I think he had taken courses in the Harvard Divinity School where "Brother Will" was a Professor. I don't remember him very clearly.

I would like to tell you just what my brother was like, to me, because my own children knew him very little and my grandchildren not at all. I never knew him as a brother one grows up with, plays with, fights with, talks with; but from the time I was ten or so, and all through my teens, though I didn't talk to him easily, he meant romance and poetry to me. He sang and played the piano a lot when he was at home. He was sociable and lovable and had many friends. He always seemed himself and at ease with all kinds of people from the uneducated to the highly educated and cultivated person. He was the artist kind of person and very sensitive to beautiful things in people, in the arts, and in

nature. It was always a kind of revelation to me to go to walk with Dick in the woods, for he saw so much more than other people, and so I saw a little with his eyes. He wrote unusual and vivid letters home, specially during the summers when he was in the far West and in Germany. It was a red letter day when there was a "letter from Dick." They were always read aloud. In fact he was a very bright part of my late childhood and teens, even though he was somehow like a comet that came intermittently into my life and out again.

Dick brought home most interesting people and some that we came to love very much, as his roommate, Frank Vaughan, Genevieve Frothingham, her husband and her sisters, Harry and Billy James, also college friends, sons of Professor William James, and nephews of Henry James, the novelist. We knew the Jameses for some years and Peggy, the sister, was a good friend of mine. The nearest I came to Mr. Henry James was to have him walk into the room where I was waiting for Peggy, shake hands and say: "So you're Dick Fisher's sister!" So you see, Dick stood to me as a connection with the outside world of romance, cultivation, and distinction.

His roommate, Frank Vaughan, was an exceedingly quiet, gentle person with a very soft voice. I think Dick roomed with him all through college. He was very musical, and played the violin and the piano, the latter by ear, and both with a soft, gentle touch. He was slight and very active, though he walked with a limp from some infant illness or injury. Everybody loved "Fritter," as he was called. He came back to Berkshire many times and became a close friend of the whole family.

Chauncey Stillman was another of Dick's friends and classmates whom he brought home to Berkshire to visit. I was about eleven or twelve when I remember him. He was a very glamorous and romantic figure in my mind for several years. He was the son of the rich and in-the-public-eye President of the First National Bank in New York and I think in my simple mind I thought that the son of such a person would not be simple and natural and enjoy the things that we did! But he was not like my idea of a millionaire's son at all. He became very fond of Mother and she of him. I centered many romantic dreams about him. He was very good and kind to Dick's little sister in many ways and I thought he was wonderful. I wrote letters to him and he wrote

to me. After he and Dick graduated from college he went to work in St. Paul, Minnesota, where our friends, the Ames family lived. There were six children in the Ames family, two of them, Catharine and Alice, being good friends of mine from the Boston school days. Mother introduced Chauncey to the Ames family and Catharine and Alice fell a prey to his charms, too. We exchanged our thoughts and feelings about him in letters to each other. On special occasions, like Valentine's day or his birthday, I used often to make cookies and send them to him. When he married, some years later, I was just as enchanted and romantic about his wife and then later about his first baby!

Besides all these friends, many of the special events, away from home also, such as theatre, concerts, and interesting social occasions, in my early life, are associated with Dick. The greatest event of my life, by the way, came through Dick and his wife, Nina (the Tatlock's grandmother). I met Baba! But that comes later.

Dick took me one evening to see Major Higginson, founder and patron of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, and his wife, a daughter of Louis Agassiz. There I had my first taste of champagne and liked it! Nothing like having a quiet and uneventful life to have a trifle like your first drink of champagne stand out as a memorable event! My second drink of it was for seasickness on the way to England with Aunt Nina — the summer of 1934.

I went with Dick to call on a friend of his, a Miss Ellen Hooper of Boston, who lived in one of the old houses on Beacon Street. She made such an impression on me by her beauty, her deep voice and beautiful red velvet dress and general air of elegance that for years she was my ideal of what a great lady should be and I have always loved red velvet dresses! I think she inspired me to day-dream myself for years into being some day a "queen of society with a salon!"

In those years when I was in my early teens, either through Dick or other friends and relatives and parents, I realize now as I think back on it, that in spite of being a poor country mouse I was not shut out of city things. I heard concerts and opera in Boston and New York, and saw many of the best actors and actresses of the day in fine plays. Among them I saw, put down not in any special order, Joe Jefferson, John Drew, Forbes Robertson, Otis Skinner, Julia Marlowe, Maude Adams, Walter Hampden; even Sara Bernhardt while in college. All those people were the best

actors in that day — there were no movie actors, at least where I could see them. The winter that I was at school in Boston I saw Ada Rehan (who in that day was famous) in "The Taming of the Shrew."

That winter, besides seeing a famous actress, I met a famous woman of another kind. I used to go with Catherine Ames to her grandfather's church. He was Charles G. Ames, much loved Unitarian minister of Boston. One of his parishioners and an old, old lady at that time, about ninety years old, was Mrs. Julia Ward Howe, the author of the "Battle Hymn of the Republic," which you all probably know. One Sunday I was introduced to her.

The early 1900's was a time when Harvard had a good many distinguished professors and through Faith, Dick, and "Brother Will," who was Dean of the Harvard Divinity School, and a distinguished person in his own right, I was able to get close enough to some of them to feel influenced by their ideas and lives.

My mother's Grandfather, Gideon Thayer, founded the "Chauncey Hall School" in Boston, which is still there under that name. Her middle name was Bowditch because of Grandpa Thayer's close association with the Bowditch family of Boston. She was a friend of Mrs. Eliot, wife of President Eliot of Harvard. My father was a classmate and friend of Charles Francis Adams. All these people I have been telling you about — my parents, their friends and relatives, Dick's friends and Faith's — Uncle Abbott — all of them belonged to the one group of intellectual, middle-class, professional, Victorian people. They had rather firm standards of living that they believed in and acted on pretty well. When I think of it now, it seems rather dreadful to have your friends and relatives all of the cultivated, mostly liberal middle class! Nowadays, the same class of people, a good many of them, seem pretty lacking in hope and courage! Were they stouter hearted in the old days, or has the same kind of person today got more to contend with? At any rate, after those earlier days of the last half of the 19th century and before World War I, for the children and later the grandchildren of my parents' generation, along came a revolution in all branches of science, two devastating World Wars, economic upheavals and social revolutions in several countries — all this almost completely upsetting old standards. Those children and grandchildren were submerged in a stormy sea of change and doubt and confusion. Most of them in our part of the world see no good

way of reaching the solid shore again and some think there is no shore. But you children, and I hope you grandchildren, know there is such a shore, how to find it, and by dint of stout-hearted swimming how to get there. Good luck to you! You won't ever give up swimming, will you?

Everyone likes to tell others of the fine and eminent people he knows. And to make this a true story I have told you the kind of people I lived among, was related to, and that influenced me! Perhaps from that you will know what kind of person I was and am, and partly you will know why — but only partly. Maybe what you'll "know", or think you know, will be that I seem to be proud of what has nothing to do with the real me, and maybe snobbish. But I want you to know what my background really was — what I am you'll have to judge for yourselves!

Other things were different in those days. Table manners and customs, for instance. I don't remember being nagged specially or made unhappy by the teaching of manners, but certain things were supposed to be done then that I don't see happening much today. It's partly change of circumstances, — at that time everyone, almost, even fairly poor people of the middle class like us, had servants and ate their meals in a dining-room. That made for a different kind of manners. Now, many fewer servants and more dinettes! And manners are different. In my family, at any rate, we had breakfast every weekday at 7:30 and you were supposed to be there then. You were not supposed to be late for breakfast or any other meal. On Sundays, breakfast was at eight. Someone was in the kitchen waiting to clear the table and wash the dishes. The table, with a cloth on it, was set with all the utensils needed and a napkin in a ring for each person. No paper napkins. There was a tray cloth over the table cloth at Mother's place and on tiles around the edge of it were the coffee pot, cream and sugar, hot water and pitcher of hot milk. A dish of hot cereal in front of Papa and almost always hot muffins. Usually some kind of eggs and bacon or sausages and creamed potatoes. Sometimes griddle cakes. As I said, everyone was supposed to be there on time. You sat down after saying "Good morning," and cereal was served and the cream and sugar passed to you. At no meal was anyone supposed to begin to eat until the person who was the hostess, in this case Mother, was served. If you wanted to leave the table before everyone was through, you asked if you could be

excused. In our house, after breakfast, the table had to be completely cleared and the cloth taken off for we used our dining-room table for a school.

After school was over at 12 o'clock I used to help set the table again for dinner, which we had at 12:30. First I put on a soft "silence cloth", then the white tablecloth, and all the silver and napkins. The butter in a special dish with a knife was put on and little butter plates — a carafe of water and a large pitcher of milk — a plate of bread, white and brown, all cut. The meat and vegetables were put on in platters and dishes and then the dinner bell was rung for everyone to come. My father usually started for the barn to feed the horse when the bell rang, much to the annoyance of the womenfolk. (And my husband does the same thing in a different way.) We all sat down together — either when the boarders were there or when we were alone. The meat was carved by my father, the plates passed to be served with vegetables, after asking each person if he would have such and such. You didn't begin to eat till all were served. In our case we never asked Nellie Connolly, who cooked for us for many years, to wait on table, but when the first course was finished Mother rang the bell and Nellie came in and cleared the table. I helped when we had boarders. After the food and used dishes were removed the table was "crumbed", that is, the crumbs swept off with a little brush or scraped off with a silver scraper into a kind of dustpan of silver made for the purpose. Then the dessert was brought in; you were served in the same way and asked to be excused in the same way. If you wanted second helpings you asked with a please and in the same way you got your bread and butter and water during the meal.

At supper the table was set again, this time with a red cloth in my family, and all the silver and napkins, with tea things at Mother's place. I wish I had that red cloth now. It was a beautiful bright red — all red with a woven-in pattern like the regular white linen damask tablecloth, only this was made of cotton. For years and years I have looked for a red tablecloth like that — but never found one.

In the morning when you came down you said: "Good morning" to everybody and "Good night" when you went to bed. I always kissed my father and mother goodnight, and anyone else who was there who was supposed to be kissed!

Another thing that was different in my childhood was that there were no super-markets and self-service and chain stores (or very few) so that you usually bought your groceries, dry goods, hardware, and drugs from stores where you always traded and knew the people who ran them and they knew you. We got many of our groceries from the Lanesboro store. In the later years, when we had a telephone, we ordered and they delivered once or twice a week. Our meat, in the early years, we got from a butcher, Ben Cummings by name, from Cheshire, who drove around once a week with his horse and cart with the meat hanging up on the walls of the cart inside with a kind of a chopping board at the back on which to cut up the meat. When Ben Cummings came Nellie or Mother would go out (Rex, too, for he usually got a bone), look over the meat and buy what she needed.

I wonder if there are gypsies, in these days, who travel about the country with no settled home? If there are, they must travel in autos. The gypsies in my day weren't migrant workers for any industry; they just lived that way. Maybe they were horse-traders. They came around every year and camped in a certain place on the Gulf Road.

There were three roads by which we drove to Pittsfield. One was up over the hill to Lanesboro and by Pontoosuc Lake; another was the Milton Road — the most hilly but the loveliest; the third was the Gulf Road which went right by our house. This was the least attractive, but the shortest. I never liked the Gulf Road so much, and rather disliked coming home by it in the dusk specially, because at certain times of the year, in the fall, I think, on the flat near Coltsville where it was rather lonely with scrubby woods (now completely built up with small houses) there were apt to be encampments of gypsies, and for some reason or other I was scared and always thought something might happen to us as we drove by. There was never any reason for the fear that I know of.

Another memory of the Gulf Road. A short way down it, just beyond the meadow and the woods, you come to a sandy stretch of road partly between rather high banks with holes dug out to get sand. There's a house on that bank now, I think. Into these holes we used to dump our tin cans so Papa with his infallible power of naming things and places and people aptly called it "Tin Can Canyon." By the side of the road in "Tin Can Canyon" was the only place, in my day, where poison ivy grew.

Another different institution then was the tin-peddler, maybe a country institution, who came around with his horse and covered cart. I think we exchanged rags or something for tin-dippers and cups and other tin utensils. Our tin peddler was stone deaf and you had to shout at him at the top of your lungs. Even though we lived away from the cities, once in a while a scissor-grinder came around asking to sharpen our scissors, and once in a greater while, much to our joy, an "organ-grinder" with a monkey.

Once a week or so we drove to Pittsfield to shop. There we stocked up with many kinds of commodities, dry goods, drugs, and groceries, and anyone who went from one household always had errands to do for the other household. The grocery store in Pittsfield where we traded was "Reid & Barnfather," called by my father in facetious mood "Cattail and Papashed".

With room to store things and no chance to get things in a hurry, our supplies were in large quantities. We always had a barrel of flour and a barrel of sugar in the pantry. The "cellar-way" — the landing at the top of the cellar stairs with deep shelves above, was always stocked with canned goods and many glasses of homemade jellies, jams, and pickles, — either jelly or pickles used at every dinner meal. In the cellar, vegetables were stored — celery and others in earth in the cold room, and barrels of potatoes and apples.

I can't remember just when I began having piano lessons, but I had them for some years from a teacher in Pittsfield. I walked and took the trolley either in Berkshire or Lanesboro once a week. I never got to be a real pianist, though I enjoyed playing, specially playing accompaniments to songs. Ruth and Kathleen and I also went to dancing-school in Pittsfield, but I didn't go long enough to ever dance well and as the boys didn't want to dance with me much, at least as first choice, dancing-school was never very enjoyable!

I always loved to sing and still wish I ever could have really learned how. I had a few lessons just before I was married — but not enough.

I used to be told by people who knew my mother when she was young that she had a lovely voice and used to make people cry when she sang the sad Scotch ballads. Once in a while she sang a couple of those songs to me. But lots of singing went on around me — Cooney's friends and later Hilda, who planned to be

an opera singer — Uncle Edward and Margery and Kathleen were musical and all sang on occasions. We usually sang hymns at the Whitings' on Sunday evenings. So my ambition was to sing and I day-dreamed myself into being a great singer who would be another Jenny Lind! I sang all the time in the house and outdoors, songs I made up to sound operatic, and real songs. I sang outdoors specially when I was walking home from the Wierums' at night or from the trolley at the top of Lanesboro hill. That was partly for fun because no one could hear me, and partly it was company on a dark road at night.

One dark night I was coming down that road toward home and presumably singing. I never met anyone walking and practically never passed a carriage — but this night I saw a light way down the road which seemed to be wobbling about the road from side to side in a crazy fashion. So I was a little scared and decided I didn't care to meet a drunken man as I thought it must be. I turned way out into the fields and walked home far from the road in silence only to find when I got home that it was my father who had come to meet me as it was so dark and late. He had kept stopping to listen for me and hence the seeming drunken wobbles.

Thinking about dark roads — there were no street lights then and the road to Berkshire Village through the woods on a moonless night, and more especially on a rainy night, was very dark. All our guests came by train to the Berkshire station and had to be met there with the carriage. On dark, rainy nights when an evening train had to be met I almost always went with my father to hold the lantern. I would sit on the outside of the seat and lean down holding the lantern in my hand so that it hung below the carriage between the steps and between the front and back wheels and so shine on the road ahead of the horse. A lantern didn't cast very much light though!

About 1907 my brother became Director of the Harvard Forest and Professor in the Harvard Forest School. The Harvard Forest is in Petersham, Massachusetts. Faith and her family spent some summers there and I visited her and afterwards was married there in 1916 in her house.

In 1907 I went to Smith College. I don't know how my parents ever managed to send me. Aunt Kate Baker helped a little; Dick, too. I got a scholarship and my cousin, whom I always called Aunt Ruth Sessions, let me live in her college boarding house very

cheaply, if not free of charge. Those were four very rewarding years for me. I learned a lot and broadened a lot and made some very good and life-long friends.

When I graduated from college my mother was ~~sixty-five~~ sixty-five years old, just about the age, a little younger, that I am now as I write this, and my father was seventy-five. They had been very lonely in Berkshire while I was away and I tried to write to them often. My senior year I wrote a letter or note or postal to them almost every day. I have a bundle of their letters to me, written mostly that last college year. Sometime you can read them, if you want.

When I came back to Berkshire the summer of 1911, after graduating, I got a job as reference librarian in the Pittsfield library. This would enable me to earn my living and still live at home with them. I had just started on that job and had been there a short time going back and forth to Pittsfield on the trolley every day when in October my mother died very suddenly of a heart attack. That was the first real sorrow of any kind that I had ever had. I never have ceased to miss her after all these years. I mean I keep thinking when I see beautiful things or enjoy something that she used to enjoy, how I should like to share it with her. Baba is somebody whom I have always known she would have liked. They are very much alike in many ways — being cheerful and equable and sweet-tempered and kind and enjoying all sorts of little things in life.

That was a very sad and lonely winter for Papa and me. I had a girl from Berkshire, Denise La Chine, to help me, but I had suddenly to live without my mother, and I had depended on her a great deal as well as loved her, and I had to take over the house-keeping, some of the cooking, and also work in the Library at a brand new job. The old Fannie Farmer Cookbook that I have was given me that Christmas by Alice Stone, or Faith, I think, to help me with my cooking problems. My father had always been a man who went from high spirits to great depression, and that winter he had many times when he was so low in his mind that he would sit for long periods not speaking at all, not answering anything said to him, almost seeming to me as if he wasn't alive. The wind blew a great deal. Our cat, Billy Parts, didn't like the wind; he never had; and when it blew hard he would always ask to go down cellar where he would wander about yowling and meowing with a most mournful cry. It was especially hard to bear that winter, and I

have disliked high winds ever since.

The next year Papa and I left Berkshire, as a home, forever. We never went back there to live and, in fact, for a long time I didn't want to go back in spite of the Whitings and Cooney being there, because the going away had been such a tearing up of roots, I had to live in my new life **entirely**.

The first winter after leaving we lived with the Fenns in Cambridge and I worked in the Brookline Public Library as reference librarian.

The next year we got an apartment in Brookline and a friend of mine, Katharine Fuller from Deerfield, who was working in Boston, came in with us to share the rent.

In that winter of 1914-15 I met, through my brother and his wife, a very nice forestry student by the name of Laurence Rich Grose. I fell in love with him on first sight and he tells me he did the same with me. From then on began my **really** new life, which has been so far, if uneventful, one of the happiest lives anyone ever lived.

CPF: A-1985 - says —

* EFC graduate 1911;

m. in 65

f. in 95

∴ f. born in 1836

As an addition to my story, here are some heartwarming letters I have had from Dorothy Fenn Duncan and her four brothers, my sister's five children. Also from Dell Barney, my father's old pupil, and from Richard Wierum. All of them have recollections of old days in Berkshire, some of the memories like mine, some different; but if the same memories, they are from different points of view and through other personalities and I think they will be interesting to you.

I wrote to Dell Barney asking him if he had any remembrances of his boyhood days in Berkshire which he would be willing to have me add to my recollections, and the following is what he wrote to me:

Dear Eleanor:

Being a bad scholar in about all my school work, I was taken out and fortunately my father somehow heard of your father who, as you know, took two or three or four boys into his house for tutoring, etc. In my time (1892 till 1893 or 4) there were three besides me (a boy named Leighton Coleman, a younger boy named Freddy Hodges, and another boy by the name of Alden Thurston.) All of us were failures in school. But Mr. Fisher did wonders with me and after a few months I got so I enjoyed studying and did very well in all my work. It was remarkable what a change your father wrought in me. Of course your brother, although about two years older than I, became a very close friend and I went everywhere with him, shooting, fishing, trapping (skunks, muskrats, mink, etc.). Do you remember the ferret named "Dick" whose teeth had been filed off or pulled out? He became quite tame. We used to take him with us and send him down a rabbit hole. One of us watched the other end of the hole until Dick had waked him up and drove him out. One of us standing over this hole would catch the rabbit and holding it by the ears would break its neck by a sharp blow across his neck with our fist. Some days we didn't get a rabbit but usually we got 2, 3 or 4. And what a wonderful stew your dear mother would make! We had this as often as we could and there was never enough. Of course it was unlawful to get rabbits in this way but no warden ever caught us! (The ferret was always carried in a fish creel.)

Do you remember a collie dog named Rex who lived at your house? He was a very sweet, gentle dog and went with us everywhere. He was very expert in catching woodchucks (which we

also found made a very good stew.) We trapped a few skunks and sold the skins for 50¢ or so (we could do this without getting squirted!)

One winter a beautiful white mare, owned by your uncle, Mr. Whiting, died of pneumonia. Her body was dragged up onto the pasture hill. Dozens and dozens of crows came to feast on her (owing to the cold weather the flesh did not spoil.) Dick and Ted and I used to sit behind a neighboring stone wall and shoot crows by the dozen. These, too, we did not hesitate to eat and found them very good!

We used to go half way up the reservoir (you remember it of course) to shoot ducks or geese in season or to fish for pickerel which was good fun. Dick had a single shot 44 caliber rifle which he sometimes took with him. I remember well of doing a very foolish and reckless thing which was to sit or crouch behind a big rock in the middle of the pasture hill. Dick told us to keep crouching with our heads below the top of the rock and when all was safe he'd tell us that he was going to shoot — which he did, the bullet hitting the top of the rock, making a sharp screeching noise and going beyond for a long distance. Of course it was all right if we didn't raise our heads but one of us might easily have done so (which would have killed whoever it hit.) What a crazy thing to do!

Dick was very close to your uncle Abbott Thayer, the artist and ornithologist who lived in Dublin, New Hampshire. He was always after the skin of some of the many warblers who came through Berkshire in the migrating season. Your uncle had taught Dick just what shot and how much powder to use as too much would tear those delicate little birds all to pieces. But this never happened. I used to watch Dick skin these little birds (a very difficult and delicate job) which however Dick could do most skillfully. Dick knew all of these little warblers very well by their song or plumage and eventually showed me how to identify them myself so after a while I was very good at it. However, now I have forgotten all that I used to know and I am very sorry. Berkshire in those days in the migration season was a wonderful place for birds, some of them very rare even then.

Of course only the smallest size shot ("dust shot" I think they called it) and but a very small charge of powder was used. Dick loaded the shells himself. He conceived the idea that if he used

this small charge of powder and the "dust shot" he could fire at us if we stood off at a proper distance (which he previously determined.) So one or the other of us, after Dick had carefully paced off the distance, would walk off this distance, let down our pants and lean over so that our "fanny" presented a good target for Dick. I shall not soon forget how nervous I was before getting the first shot. But it really didn't hurt at all or penetrate the skin. It felt like several pricks with a pin or needle. After going through with this several times we all went around boasting to one another and to our friends how brave we were.

Referring again to the "reservoir", we all used to go to Ingall's bridge, which I think was there in your time and which you may recall. The water which passed under it was clear and deep enough for a shallow dive. I never could swim before but I soon learned to do so very well and enjoyed it very much.

I was 14 at the time I first went to Berkshire in 1892 on a cold snowy day and your father met me at the train which brought me from Pittsfield going through Coltsville. Before driving to his house on the farm he stopped at Martin's general store where among other things I bought a fine pair of thick, red, woolen mittens which I wore for many years. This store was the regular old-fashioned country store with an iron pot-bellied stove in which a wood fire was always burning so that the store was a very comfortable place to gather and talk with the village people who were always loafing around in it.

When I first came to Berkshire the old Berkshire glass factory was going at full blast. But it was gradually done away with as it could not compete with the large glass factories in Pittsburgh and elsewhere. The furnaces in Berkshire were all fired with wood which was getting scarcer and scarcer and costing more so that they had to depend on coal which came in by railroad. Most of the men who worked in the factory were Belgians who had come direct from Belgium, some in their native costumes and many of them very picturesque. Some were young men, natives of Berkshire, with whom I got well acquainted and quite friendly. To see these men walk out on a plank to the door of the furnace was quite a sight. The opening in the furnace gave out great heat so that the man wore a wooden mask, made from the cover of a butter firkin, with two holes bored through it to see through and with a piece of wood about the size of half a cigar which they held in

their teeth to hold the mask in front of their faces. Each took with him an iron pipe, about the size of a rake handle and about as long. When near enough he would put the end of this into the pot of molten glass and gather a lump about the size of a small grapefruit. He then would back away from the door of the furnace and drop the end of the pipe with the ball of molten glass on it down into the pit over which he stood on the plank and on which he walked to the door of the furnace. Then he began to blow with his mouth and at the same time swing the lower end of the pipe back and forth slowly. By blowing air into the ball of glass and swinging it back and forth as he blew, the ball of glass would lengthen out, its walls getting thinner all the time, until it was about 18 inches in diameter and about 3 feet long. Of course during all this the glass was getting cool and after a while was too cool to stretch any more in either direction. When this moment arrived the man would walk on the plank back to the end of the pit over which he had been standing, and place the cylinder which he had formed by blowing and swinging on a sort of frame built for the purpose. Another man would come along with a small lump of molten glass which he would draw around the cylinder close to the tube by which it had been blown, thus surrounding the cylinder with a band of molten glass about the size of a fountain pen. As this cooled (which it did quite quickly) it cracked the cylinder off the tube in a straight line all around its circumference. The tube used for blowing this cylinder was then taken back to the furnace and its end with the remains of the ball on it from which the cylinder had been blown was plunged into the vat of molten glass and the ball gradually melted off in anticipation of blowing another cylinder. From here on the cylinder was flattened out on a hot revolving table so as to form a sheet of glass of about the usual thickness. It was a rather complicated process which I will not attempt to describe even though I saw it done many times.

The sand which was used came from a pit up the road toward Cheshire. It was of fine quality suited for making glass and was much sought after by those who made the so-called "Sandwich" glass in the town of Sandwich on Cape Cod and some was exported to England. There were a few more sandpits in the Berkshire Hills from which sand of the desired quality was extracted but not in great quantity.

With the competition from large glassworks in Pittsburgh

and elsewhere, the increasing cost and scarcity of wood for the melting pots and labor troubles, the Berkshire Glass Company gradually folded and was closed entirely in the early part of the century.

In the winter in my day the snow lay deep and the cold was intense, sometimes 20 or more below zero, but being a dry cold and in a high altitude one did not feel it as one feels the cold at sea level. There was wonderful tobogganing and coasting which we did with much enjoyment on what we called the "knoll" which was a smooth, fairly steep hill running down to the level meadow from the point where the house now stands which was built by or for your grandfather Thayer in about 1892, where your cousins Margery and Anne and another sister lived in later years and maintained (in a small way) a girls' boarding school. I helped the carpenters who built this house.

At about this time Dick or I got a young crow from its nest. I took care of this crow (which I named Orgettarix) and tried in vain to teach it to talk. Which reminds me that there was another boy at your father's house named Alden Thurston, younger than Dick or I. Together we thought it would be fun to build a little house of our own and this we did. It had no cellar but was set on some large stones just above the ground. It had one door and one or maybe two windows. Just what we intended to use it for I can't say. But I'll never forget the day when I was nailing the siding onto the studding. While I was doing this Alden stood on the other side of this studding just opposite me and only about a foot away. Through inexperience or carelessness my hammer slipped off the nail I was driving and the head of it hit Alden square in the mouth, cutting his lip rather badly and knocking out two or three teeth. Of course it was painful and bled profusely. Eventually the cut lips were sewn up and I suppose some false teeth installed. It gave me quite a scare as it did Alden.

You probably remember that there was a rather large wide piazza on the south side of your house. Your dear mother, who had a good deal of her brother Abbott's artistic gift, used to sit on this piazza for hours at a time on pleasant days painting delightful and really quite lovely landscapes on cards about 6 x 8 inches or 8 x 10 inches in size. I think she took many of these into Pittsfield where she sold them for Christmas, others she perhaps gave away. I have always regretted that I did not buy one or two of

these, not only because your mother did them but also because they were very well done. I recall well that while your mother painted I would often sit near her on the piazza and talk. She was so friendly and motherly; I shall never forget those hours. In fact for years, even today, I look back on your mother as a sort of second mother.

Another memory is that of a man named Knight who was employed by your uncle Edward to help run the farm. He was a high grade man who showed me and the other boys a lot about the farm work. We used to go down in the woods (quite a heavily wooded piece of land of five or more acres) on either side of the road from the farm to Berkshire village. There were various kinds of trees on it, some quite large (one foot to 18 inches in diameter), consisting of pine, maple, beech, birch, hemlock, etc. We boys were taught by Knight how to handle an ax but in doing this one or the other of us nearly cut off a foot but never quite succeeded. I well remember a big maple which I eventually felled after much labor. To my surprise it was hollow for quite a distance and as I opened the hollow out jumped a lovely white footed wood mouse with big round, almost white ears. Of course it tried to run away but I managed to catch it and put it in my pocket where, fortunately, it stayed till I got home. I made a very good cage for it out of a cigar box and some pieces of umbrella ribs. I kept it in my room where I fed it on buckwheat seeds and it eventually got very tame and seemed to be very fond of me. Somehow it eventually escaped and I never saw it again.

After several long mornings or afternoons or even days in the woods we loaded the logs we had cut onto a big two-horse sled and hauled them up to the big barn where we dumped them just outside the cow yard. Later, we all pitched in and sawed these logs into 4- or 2-foot pieces, after splitting the large ones with wedges and a sledge hammer or in some cases by blasting by boring a hole one or two inches in diameter about one foot deep and filling it with powder. In payment for our labor Knight used to invite Dick and me and Ted down to the cellar where he gave us one (sometimes 2) glasses of hard cider, according to the hours we had worked in the woods. This cider was pretty potent stuff and two glasses of it could definitely be felt. I recall one pleasant trip we made with Knight to Dalton on his big two-horse wood sled with a big load of hay. There was deep snow and in spots it was hard

going but we got there.

Which reminds me that your father used to take Dick and me with one of the boys to church in Pittsfield (the Episcopal church) which I think still stands on East Street, near the corner of North Street. Many times there was deep, newly fallen snow and the roads were not broken out. Frequently the horse went in to his belly and had to stop. Your father would urge him on by a few lashes with the whip. The horse would eventually start with a jerk with the result that the back seat on which we sat would go over backwards with us on it and land us, head first, in the deep snow. This was great fun. Another thing I recall about church is that Freddy Hodges and I would stand with the rest of the congregation while a hymn was being sung, but wholly unconscious of the fact that the hymn was finished, the congregation sat down and there we stood for some time (to the amusement of many.) I remember also that your father took Dick and me and probably one of the other boys up Mt. Greylock, which in those days was unspoiled by lumbering, ski-trails, roads, etc. We slept either under a small tent or under the stars, according to the weather. The exciting part was that almost every night wild cats would prowl around (apparently near us) and make the most unearthly noises with growlings and screeching. We never saw one, however. Some years later my wife and I went to Berkshire, driving from Boston in a Model T, and decided to go up Greylock in it. The road was narrow, very rough and really only a trail. But it was good fun. We made the round trip in one day. Now the wildness of Greylock has largely been spoiled and still more desecration is planned for it.

I clearly recall that in my early days there was very good trout fishing in all the brooks around. Lanesboro brook was an especially good one. While I think of it the fine spring which still gives plenty of fine cold water at the turn of the road as you approach Berkshire village still runs freely, as you know. In times of drought I have seen wagons and cars line up in each direction for a long way waiting to fill big cans or bottles of water for home use. I remember also how we used to skate on the pond which you come to just before going up the hill to Berkshire village. Often we skated across when the ice was very thin and really unsafe but we found that if we kept on skating we never broke in but the ice would bend with our weight all the way across! This was a very

dangerous thing to do.

Of course I could keep on with this letter for some time to come, recording a lot of minor things which we did and which we thought were amusing in one way or another at that time. I refer to the making of maple sugar which had its rewards in various ways. The particular orchard that we made use of was up at the top of the hill, more or less opposite Rinehart's (?). I do not know how good an orchard it was but at any rate there were some maple trees on it which we tapped. After collecting a sufficient amount of sap which really meant a good deal of time, as sap runs quite slowly and as a gallon of sap will make only about an ounce of syrup after it is boiled down, we had to collect a great deal of it. In those days they had no flat pan or series of pans, one connecting with the other, where the sap was started boiling in the first pan and after a while was turned into the second pan and so on until an experienced farmer or a man with a suitable thermometer could tell when the sap had been boiled long enough. It should be boiled until the resulting syrup weighs 11 lbs. to the gallon and an old experienced farmer can tell this with uncanny accuracy by looking at it and tasting it. If there was snow on the ground, which there was to a certain extent, we used to take out a cup or large spoon with some syrup in it and pour this on the snow, this combination being wonderful to eat as the hot syrup would congeal as soon as it struck the snow and become more chewy like molasses candy. Of course we boys all liked this combination and ate all that we could of it. The process of making this is what is commonly known as a sugaring-off party and we are told that the old New Englander who had gone to the west to live always made a point of sending for some maple syrup to pour on the snow out there in his new home. This cured a great many cases of homesickness.

Although I had no regular formal instruction in things botanical and concerning birds, I somehow picked up a good deal of knowledge of both birds and flowers from your brother Dick and your cousins, Anne and Dorothy. A good deal of this knowledge of birds and flowers has stuck with me and when I go to your cousin Harry's I go out in the woods with Evelyn who knows where all the lovely wild things are and she has shown me a lot which I either never knew or forgot.

As always,

Affectionately,

Dell Barney

Richard Wierum, who is one of Cooney's sons, and the only son living, wrote me the following:

Dear Eleanor:

Your father loomed large in my early childhood, from the time I was five or six until I was about twelve. I am pretty sure I knew him before I began to attend school. I have a vivid mental picture of him, — rather short, with a wide forehead, high, which I see again in yours, a florid complexion, white hair and side whiskers and, I think, a somewhat scraggly moustache, and, again I am not quite certain but feel fairly sure, blue eyes. At any rate, his eyes were very bright. They gave an impression of extraordinary keenness of perception.

My earliest recollection of being with your father is of going down to Berkshire with him to get the mail. This was a somewhat perilous adventure, because it involved being alone with him for at least an hour, and I was, if not actually afraid of him, at least so awe-inspired by him that I contemplated and frequently put into execution the plan to go to Berkshire with him with mingled feelings of trepidation and dreadful fascination. I do not recall ever asking his permission to go with him, though I must have done so in some way. I remember appearing at his stable when he was in the act of harnessing Dan, his black horse, and hovering about, watching, and listening to his steadily maintained conversation with Dan. He talked to Dan quite as if Dan were an esteemed human friend. He did not notice me until Dan was hitched to the buggy, when your father would turn his piercing glance on me and say, "Well, get in."

I always called your father "Uncle Ned". I sometimes heard him addressed as "Mr. Fisher", but that meant nothing to me. There was a gentle, white-haired lady living at Uncle Ned's house whom I knew as "Aunt Nellie Fisher", or simple "Aunt Nellie", but I am sure I never addressed her directly. I used occasionally to tiptoe on my bare feet along the porch and stand at a respectful distance watching her paint exquisite water color landscapes, frequently involving snow and evergreens. As I grew older I learned that Aunt Nellie was Uncle Ned's wife. There was also a young lady about the same age as my sister Hilda, known as "Eleanor Fisher", who was, I learned in the course of time, the daughter of Uncle Ned and Aunt Nellie. I seldom saw Eleanor Fisher any-

where except at my own house; in fact, I think I never saw her at Uncle Ned's house. She belonged to the remote world of my sister Hilda, and my mother in her extra-familial life.

Your father had one profound influence upon my whole subsequent life. I do not recall at what age I first began to visit him in his study, but I think it must have been when I was about nine or ten. By that time I was no longer afraid of him, but greatly revered him, loved him, I feel very sure.

He used to show me books, and talk with me about many things. He did not talk down to me, but seemed mildly interested in me. I wish I could remember how it was that he first began to tell me about West Point, but he certainly did start me thinking about the army and West Point. He had a book in his library entitled, "The Spirit of Old West Point". It was written by Captain Morris Schaff, U.S.A. retired, who was the Glass Co. manager in Berkshire Village, I have been told, though I never knew Capt. Schaff. He was a graduate of West Point in the class of 1861 — the class whose members separated, some to go into the Confederate Army, some to the Union Army. I presume your father knew Capt. Schaff. Your father let me read this book. I remember it so vividly! It was bound in dark red, and had the coat of arms of the U.S.M.A. embossed in gold on the cover. The book, and your father's talks with me about West Point and the army, made it my absorbing, ruling, passionate ambition to go to West Point. I know the inspiration came direct from your father. I never lost it. In the course of time I bought a copy of the book myself, and in 1916 when I had been one year as V.M.I. and had won an appointment to West Point, I gave the book to a girl whom I had loved since the time I was nine years old or earlier. I never went to West Point because in my characteristic impetuosity I resigned my appointment in March, 1917, (I was to have entered in June) when we broke diplomatic relations with Germany and war was imminent, and enlisted in the Navy.

I think my life would have been totally different, much less chaotic, if I had gone to West Point. West Point has never ceased to shine with sad and impressive poignancy in my memories and thoughts to this day, and back of it all are your father and many talks with him in the dark narrow little book-lined study, his stern gray-crowned face and keen eyes always looking intently at me, — and the book, that wonderful book, "The Spirit of Old West

Point". I do not remember the last time I saw your father. I don't think I ever saw him after I went to V.M.I. and failed to go to West Point.

★

Your father was a happy influence and is a happy memory to me. He gave me a start in what became a passionate interest in books, and I am sure he taught me much, and I have often thought with wonder and gratitude of his close association with me in the matter of West Point and "Duty, Honor, Country" — the words on the West Point coat of arms. He first read them to me. He exemplified them in my childish thought and still does. I owe him much. I wish I could have seen him later when I was so desperately in need of his keen judgment and wise counsel.

When I was very small, about the age when I used to ride to Berkshire with him, I remember so well his Fourth of July appearances in his uniform at the town celebration in Lanesboro, and his administering of marvelous fireworks that night out between his house and Whitings'.

Affectionately,
Richard F. Wierum

The following letter is from Dan, the youngest of my sister's children, now minister of the Unitarian church in Wayland, Mass.:

Dear Eleanor:—

My Berkshire memories come in a series of pictures: Grandpa in the buggy ready to start off for the mail, or in the "democrat" loaded with the family for a trip to Pettibone, Balanced Rock, the Dalton Paper Mill, Pontoosuc Lake or just to Pittsfield for errands or church.

Grandma sitting in the studio quietly painting. Always she wore an apron for this as I remember. Though she was busy with whatever picture she was doing, she was always ready to paint on a smooth fungus which we brought her from some old rotten stump down in the Berkshire Woods. And when it was time for us to go back for the winter she almost always had ready for us a pile of pictures she had drawn which we used on the train as entertainment. With a pin we used to prick the lines; it was a good time-consuming occupation on the train.

There was one time when I came into the house and in the

parlor with its ivy trailing all around it, Grandma was sitting at the piano playing. That was the first and only time I ever heard her play, in fact I did not know that she did play. I do remember that it seemed to me that she played, as I say now looking back upon it, with a very lovely touch. I do know it appealed to me tremendously at the time. I have no idea what she was playing.

I have no remembrance but one of you in Berkshire, you must have left for college before my recollections begin. The one picture I have was when you brought three college friends home with you for a visit. I do not now know who they were, but I do remember that I entirely fell in love with one of them!

One unhappy picture I have which seemed to me to happen very often and that was to have Grandpa tell me at breakfast to go out and harness the horse, Dan, to go for the mail. My heart always sank at that point. I knew well enough, because he had taught me, how to put on the harness and how to tighten the girth, attach the traces and with a double turn hitch up the "hold backs". That was all easy enough, but the real job was the bridle, and after all that was the first thing to do. I must admit, to me, so much smaller than that horse, he was a bit terrifying and I was not enthusiastic about getting into his stall with him. There was so little room between me and the side walls, and he had a habit of shifting those feet around in a way that always made me fear that he would come down on my foot the next step. When it came to getting the bridle on, the first problem was that I could only just about reach up to his head. Every time I brought the bit up to his mouth, he would just quietly lift his face well out of the reach of the bit and correspondingly out of my reach and there was absolutely nothing I could do. Over and over again for what seemed to me like hours, I struggled with that horse. When Grandpa finally came out and found that I had not harnessed the horse, he seemed exasperated and made me feel like a complete failure. Then he would show me how to do it. With his left hand he took hold of the top of the bridle and the horse's forelock, which of course I could not possibly reach. Then with his right hand spread along the entire length of the bit with his thumb at one end and his little finger at the other and all other fingers well out of the way he would slap the bit against Dan's teeth while he kept him from lifting his head with his other hand and when the horse opened his mouth and took the bit in Grandpa turned to me

and said: "See, that is perfectly simple."

How often, I wonder, did Grandma have to clean broken eggs out of Grandpa's jacket pocket! He would go to the hen house before starting for the mail and put the eggs in his pocket, probably meaning to leave them at the house as he drove by, but forgetting and in the course of the drive to Berkshire they would be broken.

Every now and then we had some express package to pick up down at the station after we had stopped for the mail. Grandpa did not like the station agent, Mr. Williams, and they always seemed to be in a snarl of some kind. I remember coming home after one of those trips when the two men had lost patience with each other and announcing to the family that "Grandpa called Mr. Williams some kind of a fool, I think it was a damn fool."

One other remembrance of the station has to do with a time when Grandma was taking the train to go somewhere, I have no idea now where it was. Grandpa and I drove her down and while we were waiting on the platform the train whistled its approach whereupon Grandpa said: "Spit on your hands, Ellen, and get ready to jump aboard." That is still a "line" in my family.

One summer Grandpa was trying to get some Latin into my head. We had our lesson in his study, he at his big desk with the green glass bubble on it, the glass cane with its colored stripes hanging over it and me in the chair beside it. I imagine I was not too apt a pupil because I remember that he literally "threw the book at me" once.

My main memories, aside from the looks of the house which I can recall vividly and in detail, are associated with driving places with Grandpa. And there is one of those trips which I remember very well and that was the time when Grandpa and Grandma, Dorothy and I were going into Pittsfield, but planning to make a call on Mrs. Milton on the way. I had been driving up to that point and as we came to the driveway Grandpa took the reins from me and said, "Now we will go in here in style." He just touched Dan with the whip, but that was always enough to make him jump forward and break into a good trot. The jump this time, however, jerked the back seat so that it fell out into the road carrying Grandma and Dorothy with it. Naturally Grandpa stopped as soon as he could and we both ran back. Dorothy was already sitting up in the dust because a broad and stiff brimmed straw hat she had on

had protected her fall. Grandma, however, was still lying on her back in the dust, unconscious. She soon came to and covered with dust as she was in her black dress we went on into Mrs. Milton's in a little less style than we had pictured.

Naturally I have other memories of Berkshire but these are the ones which center around "The Fisher House" and are therefore the ones in which I gather you would be especially interested.

When you stop to think of it I was still pretty young when we stopped spending all summer there and went to Rockport instead.

Dan

Roger Fenn wrote me what he called:

RANDOM REMINISCENCES OF THE EARLY DAYS IN BERKSHIRE

While we lived in the Thayer house, and while Aunt Sue and Uncle "Eddo" were always there with a house-ful of Whitings, yet there is no doubt that the biggest attraction was centered at the Fishers' home with the possibility of a ride with the horse and wagon. Uncle Eddo had a buck-board, slatty, open, and dangerous, while Grandpa had a carry-all with black tassels dangling from the top. That was always safe (until he approached the swanky Milton Mansion "in style" and left Grandma Fisher and the whole back seat in the road behind him.) Uncle Eddo had a wild, free-eating horse named Polly who could run like a greyhound but who bit anyone who dared to harness her. Grandpa's Ned and Dan never harmed anyone. We went to Berkshire for the mail every morning stopping at the spring for a drink and maybe calling at the R.R. Station for a belated trunk. We didn't always get it because of Mr. Williams, whom Grandpa called some kind of a fool, I think it was 'infernal ass'. For a special treat we might come home by the Lane, narrower, rougher, wilder and — best of all — longer. We went to church in Pittsfield on Sunday, and reveled in the clop-clop of the horse's hoofs on the hard-surfaced city road. We went to Lanesboro, eating "slip" for desert as we passed the Wierum's house, waving at the trolley at the top of the hill and Dr. Downing's house on the down-grade. We usually stopped at the store and felt specially pleased to go on to

the blacksmith's to get new shoes for the horse. We went down the Gulf Road, through the eery, cool, rocky gulf, full of exotic plants and undoubtedly bears, to Dalton, where Crane's paper mill was the great excitement. Once I went to Constitution Hill and Balanced Rock, but many times to Lake Pontoosuc for a "swim". The horse and wagon were features of the summer.

The great event connected with the horse came when Grandpa went away for a day or two and commissioned Donald and me to clean the stall alone. We went at it with tremendous vigor, he with the shovel and I with the fork. He would scrape a pile together and I would charge into it with the fork to throw it out the window. All went hilariously until I jabbed the fork too wildly, and drove the left-hand tine a full inch into Donald's Achilles tendon. (Of course we were both bare-foot and of course the injection of all that horse manure was far more dangerous than either of us realized.) But Mother cleaned it out, put in boric acid, and our natural health soon healed the wound. But some days later the hole was still there for I distinctly remember sitting on the hayfield with Donald under the maple in front of our house, watching him poke grass stems a full inch into his ankle and laughing about it more than I did.

Probably an earlier recollection was getting out on to some cow-pasture knoll, way back north of the road and looking down on the smoke rising from the glass factory chimney in Berkshire village. That prompted my exultant cry: "Ma bee a Bigawgaw" (I see Chicago, which we left for good when I was $4\frac{3}{4}$.)

I can recall one other use of that childhood language peculiar to Donald and me, and understood only by Mother. I don't remember falling off Grandpa Fisher's piazza, but I recall my reporting it in tears to mother: "Ma tooble a ba Baba Beesh belabel-abbe."

The famous scenes that Cousin Alice Stone immortalized with her camera are very clear in my memory, of Donald and me smashing cucumbers, stark naked, on the stone cistern cover beside the Thayer house. We were joined by Anne, equally naked, for more pictures in the brook just inside Reid's pasture. The pool was near that enormous rounded boulder where we had picnics after we were big enough to climb up on it.

In the living room of our house, tactfully hung behind the door where it would not be a too conspicuous reminder of the one

and only awful tragedy which we believed had clouded our family history in days before our memory functioned, was the grim — yet peaceful looking — picture of six geese parading in single file. The line was led by the biggest, obviously Dorothy, and ended with a lonely-looking, child-like innocent baby-goose, obviously Dan. In front of him were two of a size, obviously the twins, but between them and the bigger swash-buckler that followed Dorothy was a mysterious sixth goose that had no counterpart in our family. Obviously that was another brother that Wallace in one of his belligerent moods had killed with his well-known fists.

In that same room, and the adjacent dining-room with its enormous wooden door-knobs, I learned to read in the spring of 1901, en route from kindergarten in the Dewey School in Chicago to First Grade in Cambridge the next fall.

The house had a very high piazza all along the east side. It was so high that when somebody laid a smooth, 2 x 8 plank from the piazza level down the steps to the ground, it took a bold spirit to slide down it. When we said we were "going down giddy," Eleanor Fisher was apparently shocked. Not knowing what giddy meant we rejoiced in our sport and went gaily on with our shocking.

There were also fascinating underground purlieus in the cold, dark, clammy cellar. Before we were big enough to go down alone and work the long-handled pump that brought water up from the cistern, we were seldom brave enough to crawl around on our hands and knees through the fearful long tunnels, but we did it occasionally, after Wally led the way.

When I write "we" in these notes it almost invariably means Donald and I, for we were certainly so close to one another that we always seemed like one. And when I write "I", it may well be an error, for I have found often in later years that Donald and I had experiences all through our childhood in which our individual identities were actually so merged that they were lost. We have both reported the same episodes in the sure conviction, each one of us, that he was the central figure and the other a supernumerary. Now I cannot honestly swear which one of us did what in some of the anecdotes, but it never seems to matter after all.

At the formal front steps of our house, facing north, were two huge stones, one black and one white, one for Donald and

one for me but which for which we never knew nor argued. They were splendid bases on which to pulverize bricks to make red paint, and on which to throw torpedoes on July 4. Under the dark spruce trees behind the right hand stone was a wonderful hide-out, a bower made to order. Here we showed our appreciation to somebody who once gave us a shiny new hammer and a box of carpet tacks by driving every tack, one after the other into a stray board. Fifty years later we still give each other tack hammers for Christmas presents.

Berkshire Mt. had a special treat! There was a Park on the west slope with an exceedingly long trail leading so far up to the tower on the summit that they provided donkeys to carry us up.

Either we spent a few Christmas vacations in Berkshire or else there was a lot of snow in the late winter of 1900-01. John Porter was there, schooling with Grandpa, and Amos Little was in the news. We coasted on the toboggan down the knoll to the east, where the wood-chucks were often seen standing by their holes in the summer time. One winter, surely years later, we dared to coast down the cow-pasture hill with "Mid" on the toboggan to make it safe, but I got an awful bump on my chest in spite of her presence.

Mother would take us way back of that cow-pasture hill in the summer and talk with bated breath about the "hepatica in Berkshire in the spring-time" but I never saw any.

The Big Barn was always fascinating, with piles and piles of manure on one side and big ramps on the clean other side that led up to the hay mows. There we walked the beams and jumped off into the hay. We were specially courageous when we dared to climb up into the cupola, where Willie Hotaling and Willis Briggs had charted the trail and carved their initials. On one occasion, the last day in Berkshire, we left a sweater in one of the tunnels that we had dug through the hay, and in the evening when mother discovered the loss, Uncle Eddo had to take a kerosene lantern and go up in the mow to find it. I don't think he ever found it, but at least he didn't set the hay afire — an eventuality which has seemed since those innocent days to have been a very real possibility. The cows were the best in the barn, especially at milking time when the cats would get fed but we wouldn't.

Fire-works on July 4 were a treat from Grandpa's piazza. He seemed to specialize in pin-wheels which rarely worked perfectly,

but what did that matter? It was dark, and late at night, and the bright sparks were plenty of excitement.

The Wierums were sometimes fireworks themselves. They had a barn with a back-wall that hid us from view when we tried smoking corn-silk there with Thornton. He knew all the big-boy tricks, he was 46 inches around the waist. But he lost caste the day he didn't come home from Pontoosuc with the rest of the party. Searchers had to go out after dark looking for him while we went awe-struck to bed with mother telling us she was glad her boys were all in anyway.

I can recall Pat, the billy goat, with very sharp-pointed horns. He was much appreciated when somebody older than I was would harness him to a cart and I could have a guided tour of the triangle (Fisher, Whiting, Thayer houses), but he was no real friend most of the time because I was no match for those hooking horns.

Of course Willis Briggs was a match for anything. He had cows that would come in when he sent his dog up Cobble Hill after them. He could get stung by bees and laugh it off. He could shoot "hen-hawks" that flew over the chicken yard, and with a real gun. He could take Wally up toward Adams, probably toward the Reservoir, where they fished through the ice and took a picture of Wallace with a hatchet in his hand.

The only big thrill I got out of that northern country probably came after picnics at Pettibone Falls among the ferns in the cow-pasture had ceased to be really adventurous. We explored Pettibone Cave into the S.W. side of Jenks's Hill. Why Mother ever let us go is a mystery to me because it was a nasty small tunnel in spots, leading from cavern to cavern in the wet limestone rock. We tied one end of a ball of twine to a bush at the entrance to guide us back, which was one sensible safety measure, but we carried lighted candles with us and could easily have lit ourselves afire crawling through these tight spots or peering around each other into openings too small or scary to be penetrated. We measured 150 feet of twine run out — I wonder if it was really as long a cave and as dangerous as it seems in retrospect, and I wonder who it was that told our parents that it was a safe adventure for small boys unaccompanied. Or have my years of responsibility for other parents' children made me over-apprehensive?

There were lovable articles and scenes inside the Fishers' house. A meal at the big dining-room table was best, under the

famous donkey painting of Uncle Abbott's. And when Grandpa would imitate the hee-haw of that donkey, making a deliberate and continuous noise louder than one of his best sneezes, we couldn't ask for more. And yet there was more. The kaleidoscope was in Grandma's Alcove, always in working order, always colorful, always different. In Grandpa's study, seldom penetrated by small children, were all kinds of queer old-fashioned objects half visible in the dark shadows caused by the piazza roof. A feather quill pen, a glass ball from the Berkshire factory for a paper weight, ancient books and well-worn blotters, — all mysterious objects not to be explored by unauthorized minors. The opposite was true of Grandma's painting. If she was not in the alcove she was at her table on the piazza. Everything was light and open and meant to be looked at. There were bits of paper with glimpses of flowers, grass or landscape. There were semi-circular fungi with white front walls rising from the remains of the rotting birch tree where they grew, and these were just made for her to paint her glimpses of Nature on. Sea-scapes were common, with the familiar brown Rockport rocks. There was such an atmosphere of peaceful pleasantness around her that we felt that she and her smile were as immortal as life itself. I don't remember her in any energetic activity at all, but I realized that she was a power behind the throne, a guiding hand that was making a constantly cordial home for grandchildren, when Grandpa would get too free with his conversation at the table. The cat was out of the bag when he would suddenly stop, look across at her placidly beaming face, and blurt out his question, "What are you kicking me for under the table, Ellen?"

I never could understand the Whiting house and never made any up-stairs investigations. But there always seemed to be so many Whitings and so few rooms to sleep in. I understand that they all took their baths in the laundry tub. The enormous lion painting by Uncle Abbott dominated the entire first floor. The tennis court on the lawn seemed to be of normal size until after it was discarded for the new one, but later experience with tennis has made me wonder how anybody ever played on it. The big elm near the kitchen stoop was to be avoided, — the lightning kept striking it. Uncle Eddo said that was because a water-pipe went under it. He ought to know about such things because he got the dead skunk out of the spring in Reid's pasture, and he worked for

hours in the garden without saying a word to anyone and without doing anything noticeable, unless he was pushing the hand cultivator on three wheels. On the other hand Grandpa could go into that big asparagus bed by the pig-nut tree by his barn (where the porcupine skin used to hang) and never get lost in it at all. He would come out of the garden with something to eat, or to feed to his hens, and Uncle Eddo just came out of his garden.

Dot and Mid were always full of vitality, and Dot particularly full of smiles and laughter. Ruth was always smiling and playful, Anne was always walking lonely on the stone walls, bird-watching. Rose was a baby then. The collie dog and Kad completed the picture and guaranteed somebody in every room all the time. The joyous air must have come from Aunt Sue, who certainly liked to have people around, whether she used them or not. I recall her asking Uncle Dick to sharpen her kitchen knives and he only took one look before he said, "I haven't got three days to spare." Someone must have made a comment about a bird or a tree to call forth her next one: "Do you love Nature enough to hoe my cabbages?" Harry was Dan's age and therefore not worthy of association on a par with us twins, who leaned towards Wallace and Willis. When Ted came home there was real holiday in the air. I recall his cutting down a big tree in front of their house on the road, but all the other men (like his quiet industrious father) had to clean up the limbs and tidy the yard. Ted was too glorious for that part of it. Funny how it never hurt his reputation in my eyes either then when I idolized the college cousin or later when I knew the slander belied his true character.

He was on a par with Fritter Vaughan except that Fritter was reputed to be able to stand a ladder on the lawn and walk up to the top rung and back. He never could prove it, often as he tried. Neither could he guess what our flags meant. We displayed them just before leaving for the winter. They were white pennants with blue initials sewed on (again I don't see how Mother found time to make them in the busy days of collecting and packing for the departure.) Fritter thought the letters T.L.D.I.B. stood for Three Little Devils in Blue, but we were more child-like than that. They stood for The Last Day in Berkshire.

I recall the famous play among the evergreens in Reid's Pasture, engineered by Sibyl Stone. There was a queen, Donald and I were heralds with trumpets that didn't blow, and Dan and Harry

were Pages with long blond hair, holding up the queen's train. What it was all about or what the title was I haven't the faintest idea.

On the way to the Pasture was Uncle Edward's Shop, another sacred spot that we didn't feel invited to investigate. He was making dining-tables and real furniture in there, we thought — but I wonder. There certainly was an awful pile of junky old rotting boards outside the Shop and so much clutter and shavings inside that a boy couldn't make any purpose out of it all. Nor could it be investigated much because after all it was back in Willie Hotaling's domain and he was a bad boy that you couldn't play with. We were safely close to our front porch one day, yelling ribald "Willie rhymes" at him, and he was at the horse trough by the Whitings' barn squirting some kind of a water pump toward us. Apparently he was not supposed to have the pump as a plaything, because his father peeked around the corner of the barn, sneaked up to the wagon from which he deftly extracted the whip and bore down with long, wild low-legged strides on junior. We were dumb with amazement as he took 2 or 3 cuts at Willie's bare legs with the whip before Willie could disappear squealing behind the barn. It was quite a shock to see with our own eyes that a parent would actually whip a child, but after all, — with such a child the things we only read about in fairy stories probably did really happen.

It was all such a happy period and recalling it has been so rewarding, that I put in a plea for my turn at the *Magnum Opus* you are producing.

Roger

And after Roger's letter comes Donald's contribution, a quiet idyll of long-ago Berkshire:

Dear Eleanor,

One of the best things you could do in Berkshire was catch minnows in the cow-pasture brook and put them in Grandpa Fisher's horse-trough. The trough had a steady stream of water flowing in, piped from the same brook, so the fish looked very happy swimming around there after the confinement of the carrying pails. We never stopped to wonder if Grandpa or the horse wanted them there, or if they would ever swim out the overflow pipe and die miserably in the puddles on the ground.

We dug worms in the manure pile behind Grandpa's barn, taking only the small ones, because the fish were small. A bent pin was the hook, and I have never since then been able to catch a fish on a bent pin, although we caught dozens, and in fact rarely lost one. We cut switches for poles, — or Wally did, because he always had a better knife, unless he had just lost his, — in which case we had to find the poles we had last time or think up something else to do.

The brook was wonderful. Flowing through the cow pasture, the banks were covered with fine grass — no weeds or bushes. An occasional big elm or maple made a shady, extra cool stretch. There were rocky places where the water ran fast, and pools where it was deep. There was one pool as big as the top of the dining-room table (we had eight in the family), and one of the big boys had a white tin steamboat that wound up with a key and would go half-way across that pool without stopping.

The minnows were under the bridges, of which there were two, with stone abutments and no steel or man-made members that I can recall, but always some quiet water there. Or they were where the brook ran through the clumps of young hemlocks in Reid's pasture and made wonderful pools around the big stones or under the overhanging roots of hemlock.

You waded in the water or ran along the grassy banks. You tried for the big ones — $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches long, some of them, but you caught all that took your bait. They came easily and painlessly off the hook that had no barb, and they quickly filled up the pail you carried half full of water.

If we caught minnows one day, we were in the brook next day to build a dam or to explore it. You could go up it past the hemlocks to an open part of the pasture where the boxed-in spring was. But you had to look around to see where Reid's cows were. He always had some cross ones and usually the bull was with them. The spring was a long way from any fence or tree.

Or you could go down the brook, under the bridge that was on the road to Berkshire, and out in to the big, open flat meadow where the wine-glass elm tree stood. Here the brook simply disappeared. I never knew where. The soil was porous and soaked it up, but when I studied geography I felt betrayed by that brook that did not flow into a larger one and then in to a river and the river to the sea.

Grandpa Fisher's barn was another region of never-failing interest. A brass wind-vane on top with a big capital F. Under that a cupola with slats and barn swallows going in and out. The buggy was on the barn floor. You pushed a heavy door that ran on wheels and you were in the stable with two stalls and one horse, and wonderful smells of old bedding, the horse himself, hay, and grain, sometimes one and sometimes another smell predominating. It was scary at first to think of going in beside the horse, although actually a rocking horse could not have been safer. But Grandpa showed us how much oats to put in the measure for him and told us if we spoke to him first and went in boldly he would not kick. He never did, but once he lifted one foot to shift his weight or to brush away a fly. Wallace was in the stall at the time and he came out flying. Then there was a great buzzing and hub-bub among the 5 to 8 year olds on the farm. One contingent of us trailed after Wallace as he stormed over to the house to tell Mother how the horse had threatened him. He could not find her but he told all and sundry who *were* there, and then strode over toward Grandpa's house. I do not remember the outcome of it all, but I vividly remember the sense of impending doom of the horse when Wallace struck a clenched fist into the palm of his other hand and proclaimed, "I don't know whether he tried to kick me or not, but I'll tell you this: If he ever kicks me, he'll never raise his hoof again. I'll warrant you that much, right for now."

Ned must have been psychic. He never kicked after that.

We got used to him and Grandpa let us feed him oats, bed him down at night, go up in the mow and push hay down the chute with a pitchfork, and in the morning clean out the stall, feed him, water him, and curry him.

Grandma printed a sign that we nailed up on the wall of the barn:

Up the hill, hurry me not;
Down the hill, worry me not;
On the level, spare me not;
In the barn, forget-me-not.

Outside the barn, on the end of it, there was a small shed with windows and a door, for hens. Grandpa had a dozen or 18 Plymouth Rocks and one big rooster. He brought table scraps out for them every day and showed us how to scatter a measure of cracked

corn, clean out and re-fill the water dish, and gather the eggs. At night you had to shut the little sliding drop-door at the floor level where the hens went in and out. Weasels would come in if you left it open.

One night we wanted to put the hens to bed before they were ready to go. We had to chase them from the yard through that little trap door to the roosts. When two went in one would come out. In the midst of all the clatter and fluttering, we turned around to chase one hen that had slipped between us. There was Grandpa coming down the path from the house, the water pail in one hand and mash in the other. He just stood and looked at us. I am ashamed to say we promptly ran away, although we did shut and latch the door of the yard behind us. He never spoke to us about it afterward. He may have spoken to Mother, because there-upon the only prohibition of the summer clouded our sky. We could go anywhere we liked, down to the Big Barn, walk the high beams, jump in the hay, even climb up in the cupola — anywhere we dared, but we could not chase the hens.

Grandpa must have been very glad to have all his grandchildren with him in the summer, or he could never have taken so much mischief in the hen yard with any equanimity at all.

In telling about the barn, I do not want to forget the manure pile, rich and oozy, just around the corner from the hen-yard, or the ice-house beyond that, where every Sunday morning you climbed up and felt around in the moist sawdust with a pick until you found a piece of ice. You shovelled it out, cut off what you needed with the axe, buried the rest again, and with the wheelbarrow carried it off, to be washed with a dipper of water and used for ice-cream. Some days in August there was a watermelon in there that had been cooling since the last trip with the horse-and-carriage to Pittsfield for shopping. And if some other days there were unauthorized trips to the ice-house, no one ever knew, because we never wore shoes and stockings and had no pockets or cuffs on trousers to carry away tell-tale sawdust to the house.

Grandpa's patience in the matter of chasing the hens leads me to tell about the extra-special expedition he offered us in a row-boat on the pond at Berkshire. Practically everything we did in Berkshire, we did by ourselves. The grown-ups were around but always busy at their own affairs. There was no "supervised play" nor "group activities" with "trained and responsible leadership."

There were trips with Grandpa and sometimes Grandma in the horse-and-carriage to Pittsfield shopping, down the Gulf Road with the laundry, to Berkshire for the mail, or to the blacksmith shop in Lanesboro. But these were trips the grown-ups were making anyway and we loved to go along.

On this particular day, jogging back from Berkshire with the mail and the Springfield Republican, Grandpa saw a flat-bottomed boat on the shore of the pond, and knowing the owner, he enthusiastically suggested we come back, after putting the horse up, and have a row. This was fine. We never had done anything like that. Grandpa chirruped the horse into a fast trot and began to sing:

My bo · oat is on the sho · ore;
She's li · ight and free · ee.
To ply · y the feathered o · oar
Is jo · oy to me · ee.

But somehow something went wrong with the plan. He got Mother's permission for us when he gave her our mail but left some details unsettled. Our having to wear shoes and stockings instead of going barefoot for the mile walk on gravel road may have had something to do with it. Anyway he started off alone expecting us to catch up with him, and we never got the green light to go. An hour later he was sitting in our living-room, where I never had seen him before, telling Mother and all of us that he had been down, had his row, and walked back. We all parted friends, but wasn't it funny hearing him call Mother "my girl"?

There were so many good times in Berkshire I did not really mind missing that one, especially as we got the boat song out of it. He had another jingle he gave us once as the carriage went around a certain corner on the Gulf Road and down a short hill where the road was covered with small loose stones that rattled under the wheels. "Rattle his bones over the stones. He's an old pauper whom nobody owns." We learned that one right away and always got it off when the carriage went around that corner.

It was on that hill too that he once saw a large stone in the wheel-track as large as a small pumpkin. Stopping the horse — with no thought of pulling off to a parking-place he observed — he got out and with some difficulty worked that stone to a safe place at the side of the road. Then he told us — somewhat sen-

tentiously, but it made a deep impression on me at the tender age of 5 more or less — that he thought every one should do one thing like that every day; then when he went to bed at night he could feel he had done some good in the world.

Out of the goodness of Grandpa's heart he one day brought from Pittsfield two boxes of carpet tacks and 2 shiny tack hammers — one for Roger and one for me. Perhaps he thought of these as foundation stock and tools for a long and successful career in carpentry. Roger and I thought otherwise. We sat down on the ground at once with a square board between us and we did not move until we had driven every tack from both boxes into the board and then wondered what to do next with the hammers.

If it was true of Grandpa that our relations with him were chiefly the grown-up one of "helping" him, it was also true of Grandma, except that her special activity of painting imposed some limitations on the help that the very young could give. On our walks down the brook, over the cow-pasture hill, through the woods, to Briggs' Cobble, or anywhere else, if we found a hard, white fungus on a dying maple we always brought it home and Grandma would always oblige by drawing a picture of woods or sea on it while we watched. She loved to paint wild flowers, grasses, and mushrooms. But the two pictures she did for me, while I was watching, and that I wish I had had sense enough to keep, were quick pencil sketches on the paper partitions from a shredded wheat box that I brought her for the purpose. One was a big, ripe strawberry with a bite taken out of it. I could draw an apple by that time with a stem on it, but I was astonished to see how life-like the seeds were and how easily she made the bite come out of the strawberry.

The other sketch was the corner of the barn, the fence around the hen-yard, the hens inside, some picking at the ground, some running, some just standing, and the rooster in it too. The tree at the corner of the yard finished the picture, and you could even see the bark on it.

The summer was filled with dozens of pleasant things to do. When Mother began packing boxes for the trip to the city, it seemed that the end of the world had come. It was true this particular year because the summer had been long. We had come from Chicago in the early spring — in time to see hepatica in bloom in the woods. And we were going to Cambridge, where

we had never been before and could not visualize a home. On the day before leaving, we found a little piece of dirty white cloth about 6 inches square and printed on it, or got some one to print for us, T L D I B. We nailed this mournful rag to a stump of broom handle and carried our flag around the farm to show to all the people who did not have to go. They obliged by asking what the letters meant. Kathleen Whiting suggested Three Little Devils In Blue, which seemed to us not very bright because we were not dressed in blue. To us it meant The Last Day In Berkshire.

On the morning of leaving, I wandered off alone upstairs in the house and hid in the empty clothes hamper, thinking to be left behind to continue the summer good times. But I did that too early. Nobody left, and I got tired and climbed out. When we did leave, I still held my flag. I arranged it somehow to fly out the window of the train. I still had it at Springfield. Then it all unravelled out and disappeared.

From Donald F. Fenn

Wallace and Dorothy Fenn, having recollections of a little longer duration in Berkshire, have some memories of what an older child would remember and think. Here are Wallace's memories:

Dear Eleanor:

You have asked me for some of my early memories of Berkshire and particularly of your parents or my Grandmother and Grandfather Fisher. These are among my most treasured memories, I can assure you, and it is with great pleasure that I put them on record for you. I only wish that I could do justice to them by the medium of mere words. All I can really do is give you some of the highlights and a mere suggestion of the atmosphere as I saw it.

You will recall that we spent every summer in Berkshire until I was nearly 12 years old or until about 1905. The overnight trip in the Pullman train is still very vivid to me, especially the porter who seemed always to be named McGinty and seemed to know our large family from one year to the next. We had a state room and one section. Finally we would roll into the Pittsfield station and there would be Grandpa waiting for us. He would get us into the train to Berkshire with a stove at one end and cinders flying. For some reason I remember this trip best at night. Perhaps that was connected with some trip from Boston to Berkshire during the

Christmas holidays. Anyhow I remember one such winter trip very well with a sleigh ride from the station to the house. The joy of coming into that warm dining room with corn bread and apple sauce in blue china saucers has never left me. Grandmother presided over the tea pot and food at one end with her usual sweetness and benevolence and Grandpa seemed to be always chuckling over something in high good humor at the other end. There was the fire in the hearth and the Donkey picture of Uncle Abbott's over it. Grandpa's Civil War cap and sword were also hanging on the wall with something that we called a bullet hole in the knapsack. The window was covered with Grandmother's plants with some most alluring little spray guns for killing insects. I remember going early to bed in the romantic little front room with the lamp light on the snow outside. I went to sleep after a time thinking of the wonderful time I was to have in that snow the next day. Later I woke, heard sounds downstairs, concluded that it must be morning, dressed hurriedly and rushed down for breakfast only to find that it was only about 11 p.m. and the grown-ups were still reading around the big lamp. I went back to bed disillusioned and bewildered.

Some of my Berkshire memories are rather vague, as for example the old bike in the shed with one big wheel and one little one. Then a cage where Uncle Dick kept his pet crow that knew how to talk. Also the day when the shaggy black dog Rex wandered off into the woods to die — and was never found, I believe. I almost think I remember my Great-grandfather Thayer with a big white beard on the porch of his house but this may be merely because I have seen his pictures. The big event of every day was going for the mail at Berkshire with Grandpa. One summer I was big enough to harness old Dan, the horse, myself and hitch him into the carriage. Then we would stop at the watering trough near the village to give him a drink and I would walk out on the shafts to release the check rein. Sometimes there were extra errands to do around Berkshire or we had to go over to Lanesboro to get the horse shod or to get some feed. Any extra trip like that was always a thrill. I used to follow Grandfather around helping him with his chores, cleaning the stable, feeding the horse, collecting the eggs, feeding the chickens, or just fixing up and mending things. I am sure I must have learned from him much of my own "do it yourself" philosophy.

Grandmother Fisher was very dear to me. I can see her now sitting at her studio window painting her lovely little flower cards, landscapes, or seascapes. It seemed to me that she had a delicate touch which I have never seen equalled. She always seemed to be in a good humor, never ruffled or out of patience or angry over anything. I have a few of her paintings and a picture of her and they are all among my most treasured possessions.

One of the remembered scenes which I like best is of Grandpa reading Mr. Dooley in the living room in the evening. He read it very well and loved it and chuckled merrily over it at frequent intervals. I used to take French lessons with him and I still remember the poems he made me learn and his method of pronouncing the French *u*. The atmosphere of the lessons however, was the best of all and that is still very vivid to me. I sat in a very prickly hair-stuffed chair beside his desk in the study. There was a nice smell of tobacco smoke and a lot of irregular verbs, a kind and usually patient instructor, and a general feeling of genuine interest in the language which seemed to rub off on the pupil. Thus I learned to like the language and still use it a great deal.

Many special expeditions stick in my mind — to bury cans in "tin can canyon," to get the laundry at Mrs. Jones' house, to have a picnic at Pettibone Falls or to see Balanced Rock. One special expedition went somewhere toward Williamstown to get a goat. We brought him back in a burlap bag and he was mine. I called him Pat and taught him to drag me around in a little buckboard. Later he was used during the winter to walk on a moving platform to run the cream separator. He formed an important part of my boyhood in Berkshire and many happy memories revolve around him. Another time I remember clearly that Mrs. Jones came to leave the laundry at the Fisher house. While she was inside, the horse took fright and ran away. He ran over to the Whitings and then took off at top speed for Berkshire. Just beyond the brook catastrophe struck him because the right rein which was dragging on the ground got caught in the right wheel where it was quickly wound up tight. This pulled the horse's head to the right sharply so that he wheeled over the bank to the right and landed on his neck with his nose on his saddle. Someone cut the harness loose and managed to get him on his feet again still alive and ready to go again.

One rather memorable event occurred when I was driving up from the mail one August morning. Grandpa was reading the paper and letting the horse take care of himself. The news seemed to be especially exciting that morning and Grandpa was reading parts of it to me. I have since thought that it was the day when Teddy Roosevelt led the charge over San Juan Hill. To add to the excitement and to stamp it all indelibly on my memory I spied a nice thistle off to the left in the field just as we came out of the woods and Grandpa stopped the carriage so that I could run over to get it. I stumbled on something and fell flat hitting my upper jaw on the top of a little stump of grey birch. It knocked out some of my front teeth and was eventually responsible for my eye tooth coming in horizontal so that I had to have it straightened while I was in college — a very traumatic experience for so sophisticated a young man. I also remember very vividly the day Grandpa came back from the mail with a very white face and so excited he could hardly talk straight. The Titanic had just been sunk by an iceberg!

The Fisher house was a paradise in my eyes, full of romance and charm and love and kindness. Every part had its own smell and they were all just right, particularly the pantry, the woodshed, the study, and the little front bedroom where I often slept. And I was very fortunate in my grandparents. I cannot remember either one of them ever being cross with me. Grandpa did sometimes get mad at the baggage master at Berkshire, a Mr. Williams I think, and used to call him some kind of a fool, I think it was a "damned fool" but otherwise he seemed well disposed toward everyone and likewise everyone seemed to like him and Grandmother. I remember hearing Grandfather talking to my mother once in great bitterness over what he considered the failure he had made of his life; but the tremendous love and respect which I had for him was shared by others to an equal degree and I am sure that he accomplished far more than he was willing to believe. It was a great blow to me when he and Grandmother died and an almost equal blow when the old house was torn down. The house with all its occupants, including my Uncle Dick and Aunt Eleanor, stand together as the brightest and richest memory of my childhood. Actually I knew Uncle Dick better elsewhere and seldom saw him in his home surroundings of Berkshire but he taught me a great deal. Aunt Eleanor was one of the big girls around the place but she was not too big to be helpful to little kids like me and I

was always very fond of her — and still am.

I could write forever on this subject without saying anything more, so I will stop here.

Love

Wallace O. Fenn

Dorothy's memories, you will see, spread over a much longer time. After the Fenns stopped coming to Berkshire regularly for the summer, Dorothy still visited quite often, more than the boys, I think, and up until she was in college.

She wrote me:

Dear Enna,

This goes with my love. I do wish it were worthy of the subject.

Such a happy, nostalgic evening last night with Eleanor reading me her Berkshire manuscript. This morning I can scarcely wait to put pencil to paper. To me, who spent only summers and vacations there, the picture was different. She speaks of her house as noisy, but to me it was completely filled to overflowing with love and joy, pleasantly spiced up with merriment and a lot of Grandpa's impatient bluster. This was supposed to be due entirely to the condition of his liver and was an interesting and exciting trait. Anyway, he was seldom impatient with his grandchildren and we must often have been a trial. I remember so well what happened when Grandma told him the ice-box needed refilling. First the wheelbarrow, filled and followed by little Fenns, was pushed to the ice-house. This was a shed back of his carriage house with a high door. Five children must be lifted into the ice-house before he got in to dig around in the damp, cool sawdust under our feet until the spade scraped on a cake of ice. Dig out the ice, being careful of fifty bare toes, and heave it out; get out himself and lift out five children; load the ice, and maybe a child, into the wheelbarrow and lead the procession to the watering trough by the kitchen stoop, where the ice was washed clean of sawdust and feet well splashed; then on around the corner of the house to the woodshed, where the ice was finally deposited in the zinc-lined ice-box and tucked in with a damp newspaper; then all back to the barn with the wheelbarrow, several fortunate bottoms arriving well plastered with damp sawdust. We followed him everywhere, completely fascinated by his stories and ideas, and quite unconsciously absorbing

bits of his high idealism and spiritual point of view. A scholar, a poet, a born teacher who always seemed to have endless time, patience, and love for the grandchildren who dogged his footsteps with unquestioning admiration and devotion.

Grandma was compounded of boundless love and approval, understanding, and wisdom, with so much humor and common sense that she was never cloying but pleasantly bracing. She was more outspoken in her affection than my mother. How I loved to have her call me Precious! I was amused to see that it had the same effect on my Beth-Ellen whom I heard boasting that she was Precious's granddaughter. Grandma used to talk about visiting her aunts in the Old Brown House in Keene where the seven Handerson sisters lived when her father came a-courting. Her aunts who still lived there and all the relatives, past and present, were constantly referred to in funny and loving anecdotes which gave me a life-long interest in family continuity. I can almost believe I saw her great-grandfather, Parson Meade, who graduated from Harvard in about 1793, was minister of a Congregational Church in Alstead, New Hampshire, until he turned Unitarian about 1800. In his old age he wore, winter and summer, the rim of a straw hat, a halo which proved his contention that he was Jesus Christ. Her grandfather, Gideon Thayer, founder of the Chauncey Hall School in Boston, had his children stand at the dining table with their thumbs hooked over the edge when not eating.

I am afraid I have made this house sound like a place where children would be thoroughly spoiled; but there was always the feeling that one must try to live up to all these loving expectations and never fail this confident trust. All my life they have been a bulwark never failing. No one was ever more blessed with grandparents.

It seems to me that Eleanor is a bit hard on herself. She did make me resentful sometimes — reading so fast I could not understand her — but she is the nearest to a sister I have ever had and she and Larry mean more to me every year. No one else shares my Berkshire feeling so fully.

Berkshire! Our winters in Chicago were the time between our Berkshire summers. The day finally came when the Big Box appeared in the front hall and we knew we should soon be on our way east. I was lifted into the box, which I am sure was four or five feet each way. My job was to clean it out, first with a dust-

pan and brush, then with a damp cloth. When the cleaning was done according to instructions, I was lifted out again. Just how Mother managed to pack it with sheets, blankets, the meat grinder, etc., I leave to your imagination, but packed it finally was, the cover screwed on and off it went by freight. Then the big grey trunk was packed, bounced on, locked and strapped and at last we were off. Mother carried a suit box of sandwiches and hard-boiled eggs as dining-car food was considered quite unsuitable — as well as expensive. Three meals for five children and two or three adults was quite a catering job, but Mother was equal to that as to any other task. Bottles of milk were hung in the water-cooler in the state-room john, and there was a bottle of cold coffee. The journey took twenty-four hours in those days but we loved every minute of it — we were on our way to Berkshire! The year we came on the first of March — 1901, I think — the train was late. Grandpa, as always, was waiting on the Pittsfield platform, but this time wearing his seal-skin cap. We had missed the usual Berkshire train, so he had thoughtfully taken a room for us at the Burbank Hotel across from the station and we went over to wait for a few hours. It was not much of a hotel and the room was dreary and dark but Grandpa was there and it was a hotel and had the romance of the unaccustomed. But Mother fussed and worried — she was sure we would take colonies of bed bugs to Berkshire. At last we got on the train and at longer last got off at the little Berkshire station where Grandpa had left his horse and the old "democrat." (Eleanor has described that beloved equipage — a sort of surrey with a fringe on top and a removable back seat.) Uncle Edward Whiting was there too with Maud and the double carriage. Then up the hill, around to the left past the post-office, down the hill by the pond and the old mill, by the spring and the watering trough where we found watercress in the summer, over Muddy Brook bridge and we were in our very own woods. The hemlocks and hardwoods on the right, the nettles on the left, the woods where we found Dutchmen's breeches in the spring and partridge berries to take home in the fall, then out into the sunshine and in no time at all we clattered over Dry Bridge. There the meadow, the knoll with the wine-glass and lyre elms at its foot, and at the top the Thayer house with Grandma waving her white apron as we rounded the curve. On past the cow pasture, the cotton-wood trees, the beech trees on the left, the old hemlock

by the brook and there we were, safe and sound, with Grandma and the long summer ahead of us.

That wonderful Thayer house. It had been built by Uncle Abbott Thayer for his parents, my great grandparents, just across the garden from Grandma's house. The little blue room was always waiting for me with a vase of whatever flowers were in season. Once it was Dutchmen's breeches which is why I have always had such a special feeling for them.

The year we came in March there was still tobogganing on the knoll. Later I picked my first bloodroot there and was quite terrified by the "blood". We went to see the maple sugar making up back of Rinehart's, to the Square Patch for hepaticas, the meadows for cowslips, and Cobble Hill for columbine. Ruth and Eleanor, three or four years older than I, were the leading spirits in all this and I looked on them with great respect. There was much talk of May Day, and to my incredulous delight they told me I was to be crowned Queen of the May. They made a crown of dog-tooth violets and put it to soak over night in the basin in the Medicine Closet. The Day dawned cool but I was attired in my best white dress right after breakfast. I could scarcely wait for the coronation. When the crown was finally put on my head, in spite of being shaken, it was very drippy and I complained about the cold water running down my neck. I was firmly given to understand that I was most ungrateful and unappreciative — queens were honored and decorated — they must not expect to be comfortable as well.

Memorial Day was the next high spot. Grandpa, as a veteran, was to make the speech at the celebration in the little brick town hall in Lanesboro. Children "spoke pieces". I remember one sing-song poem about a soldier boy's return with the refrain "As I was planting hollyhocks I'd started in the house — just thirty years ago on the thirtieth of May." Afterwards Grandpa and several other veterans, wearing at least pants of their old uniforms, decorated their comrades' graves with the lilacs, iris, and other garden flowers everyone had brought.

A day in Berkshire began for me with sweeping the east porch — after which I was free to walk the hard packed garden path towards Grandma's. First there was the acrid smell of fertilizer as I passed the tool house; by the tool house it was damp and shady, sometimes even muddy with that shiny slippery mud so

delicious under bare feet. After you passed the barn and tool house the path became a road with grass growing between the wheel ruts until you came to the little slope where Grandpa spread the coal ashes from the kitchen stove. This was most uncomfortable and I remember stepping gingerly along taking advantage of every clump of grass. But in the morning I seldom got beyond the barn, for Grandpa was generally there ready to harness the horse to go to Berkshire for the mail. The buggy for one or two, the democrat if we all went. The buggy was the most fun especially if it was rainy for then he put on the boot. This was a rubber contraption that fitted over the dashboard and buttoned to the uprights that supported the top at about the level of my chin. The reins came through a slit. It was private and cosy and mysterious with a delicious moist odor of leather, rubber, and horse. The woods were drippy and the hemlocks sweetly pungent. The horse stopped at the watering trough for his morning drink and I was always offered one from the old folding tin cup that rattled around on the carriage floor between the footrest and the dashboard. Feeling important, I held the reins while Grandpa got the mail and did any errands in the store and then drove the walking horse part way home while Grandpa read aloud the weather report, right through "out-going steamers," and skimmed the headlines in the Springfield Republican. I delivered the Whitings' mail bag, carried ours home and was back at the barn to see what Grandpa was going to do next. Generally vegetables were to be picked for both houses, maybe peas to be shelled on the south piazza with Grandma; the horse might need a new shoe which meant a trip to Mr. Williams, the blacksmith, whose shop was at the very top of Lanesboro Street. Maybe even a trip to Pittsfield. In preparation for that, flowers and vegetables must be picked for the House of Mercy. Lists were collected from both houses and we were off for the six-mile drive. All three routes had advantages. Going by Lanesboro there was the chance of seeing the Bakers' yoke of oxen and the sure view of Pontoosuc Lake and the secret joy of checking up on "my" tombstone — a beautiful golden angel with outstretched wings which was for sale at a monument makers just outside of Pittsfield. I found out afterwards that Anne also coveted it! The Milton Road was best for the return trip when the view could be enjoyed without craning your neck. The Gulf Road was all right if you had to stop for the laundry or

had a desire to see the jail. No matter which road we took, Grandpa talked to you as if you were grown up — about his school days at Exeter, his childhood trip to France where he saw Napoleon's funeral procession, his Harvard days, his year in Mexico or tales of the Civil War — some of them on the tall side. When we got to Pittsfield the horse was hitched in front of Reed & Barnfather's and the errands done. The grocery order was left with Mr. Barnfather who stowed it in the carriage. I remember that several times when we were late getting away he filled a paper bag with various kinds of cookies and crackers, added a generous slice of cheese and gave it to us for a snack on the homeward drive. At other times I remember having a striped paper bag of powdery lime drops.

Sundays were special. After a breakfast of the usual fishballs and apple sauce, Grandpa resplendent in his checked "barn door pants" and stiffly starched white shirt with the blue necktie that matched his eyes, harnessed the horse, laid the linen duster on the back seat and leaving the horse at the hitching post by the north door retired to put on his coat and the stiff detachable cuffs. I remember how he licked his thumb to soften up the bottonholes before he could put in the black onyx cufflinks. Grandma deplored the smudgy effect when she came downstairs properly dressed in black or gray with a flowered bonnet, gloves and a black bag. I knew that this held, besides her clean handkerchief and the collection money, a bottle of malted milk tablets and a package of educators to shorten the drive home. One Sunday the young minister, whom we all loved, horrified me by asserting emphatically that it was "time to throw aside the rusty moth-eaten God of our fathers." I was still worrying about it on the way home when Grandma relieved the situation by trying to picture a God who was rusty and moth-eaten. Was he a tin idol, something made of wool and stuffed? By the time we drew up at the back stoop, always hungry, dinner was magically ready, except for thickening the gravy. Dessert was always ice cream which we brought home from the Whitings'. They had a huge freezer which held enough for the three houses. It was made in the cool damp cellar by the bulkhead which was opened for the occasion. Helpers could lick the paddle which unthriftilly scraped was put on a large plate, while the chief operator packed the freezer with salt and ice and finally covered it with the damp burlap bag in which the ice had been

crushed.

Once I went on a driving supper picnic over back of Lanesboro — Silver Street perhaps. Grandma and I in the back seat began to yearn for some — or one — of the comforts of home and she modestly remarked to Grandpa that we wanted to pick a few raspberries. "When you show me a raspberry I'll gladly stop," but there were no raspberries for miles. Grandpa appeared quite oblivious of our plight and eagerly pressed on in search of a good patch. Grandma found it all very funny and I remember the whole affair as hilarious.

Another special joy was the annual collection for the House of Mercy. Grandma was on the hospital board and each year visited many farms asking for contributions in money or produce. This generally happened on a pleasant September afternoon when the color was beginning in the swamp maples and the cool night shut in early. When we came home we might have to cover the tomato plants with old shawls, robes, and miscellaneous cloths in case of an early frost. Fall also brought the joys of harvesting, and at last the "thrashing machine" got to us on its rounds. Then there was the trip to the cornfield to choose a pumpkin for a jack-o-lantern. It took a whole afternoon to cut the cover just right, scoop out the rather slimy seeds, etc., and cut the face. The teeth were the hardest and the most fun to do. I am still grateful to our elders for being so satisfyingly terrified by our handiwork.

By this time Grandma was beginning on one of her September projects. All summer the shredded wheat papers had been saved and now she was busy drawing all sorts of pictures on them. Some had geometrical designs. When we left she gave them to us with crayons and big black-headed pins — the kind she used to pin her veil on her bonnet. These pictures we colored and then put on the train seats and pricked the outlines. When held against the window on the sunny side of the train we considered the effect most artistic.

All this screed and not a word about the unforgettable evenings! Supper was early — and such a good supper! — perhaps chipped beef on toast, cracked cocoa, the tall glass dish full of pale new applesauce with a slice or two of lemon on top, and thin ginger cookies. Then the parlor lamp was lighted, Grandma got out her knitting and Grandpa read aloud. He read delightfully and thoroughly enjoyed doing it. Mr. Dooley, Little Ezekiel, Sonny,

all sorts of light humorous things. On long visits he read whole books. I remember a winter visit when it was bitter cold. We sat between the dining-room fireplace and the studio stove with our feet on a chair, tucked up in a blanket while he read me **The Eustace Diamonds**. That was the time he caught me carrying a hot-water bottle upstairs to my bed in the cold balcony room, and demanded to know where my pain was, insisting that no one would want a hot-water bottle unless in pain.

Another of the joys of Berkshire was that so many relatives of all ages came there. Grandma's Aunt Mary Ela who was reported to have felt that being married with a ring on her finger was a badge of servitude, so Uncle Jacob put a heavy watch chain around her neck instead. Aunt Maria who seemed a pleasantly soft background for her lively daughter, Cousin Mabel Hatch. After years of courtship, Cousin Mabel married at fifty-four a man seventeen years younger. Once I heard him say plaintively, "The next time I get married I hope I'll be wise enough to marry a woman old enough for me to keep up with." The Thayers came, Gra telling wonderful stories; Aunt Kate and Uncle Fisher Baker, for whom an effort must be made; Grandpa's brother, Uncle Frank, who was excitingly explosive; Cousin Alice and Cousin William Stone who represented the romance of foreign travel — she brought us necklaces of Venetian beads; Uncle George and Aunt Kitty Fisher, the Hooper and Wheeler cousins and dear Cousin Addie Sessions as well as countless others — friends and relations — who loved Grandpa and Grandma. I always sat as close as possible listening to their talk and loving to be part of such a family.

And all this is just a small hint of what Berkshire has always meant to me.

Love from Dorothy Fenn Duncan