Fort Number Eight

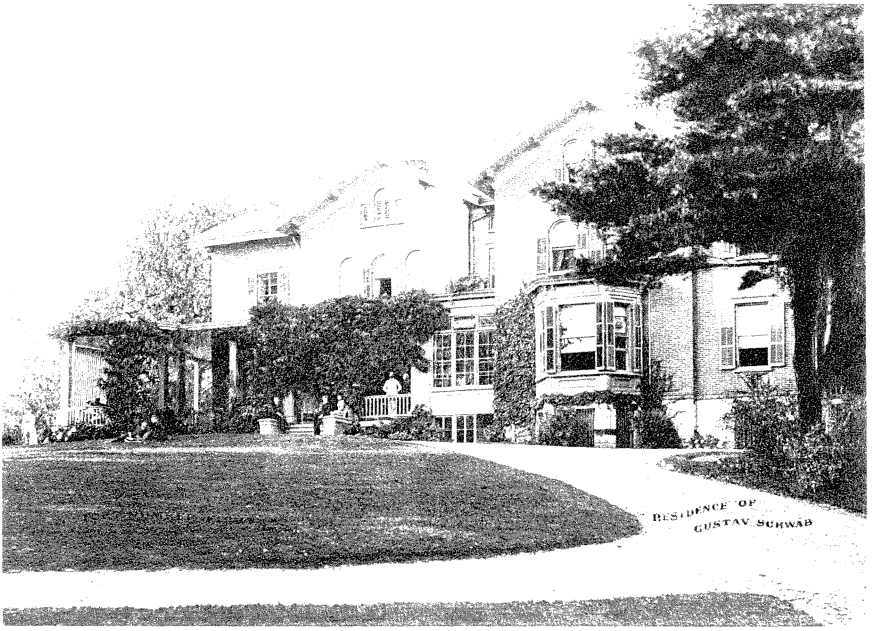


Plate Number Eight

Fort Number Eight

THE HOME OF

GUSTAV AND ELIZA SCHWAB

COMPILED BY THEIR DAUGHTER

LUCY SCHWAB WHITE

FOR THEIR

GRANDCHILDREN AND GREAT-GRANDCHILDREN

THAT THEY MAY KNOW SOMETHING

OF THE ROCK

WHENCE THEY ARE HEWN

1925

Fort Number Eight

THE HOME OF

GUSTAV AND ELIZA SCHWAB

HOME indeed it was, in the deepest and richest sense of the word; the center of a happy family life, and of a wide hospitality, whose warmth still glows in the memories of those who knew it.

There was no formal entertaining, no question of social obligations, no measuring of a guest's qualifications, these things I never heard discussed.

There were friendships of several generations, whose representatives shared in our lives; whole families would come for a week-end or longer, or drive out from New York and Brooklyn to spend the day.

The Sunday dinner table would be extended the length of the room, seating eighteen, and a small table set in the corner, "the cat's table," for the children. A large roast would be set at each end of the table, my father standing up to carve the beef, and one of our older brothers dealing with the turkey at the other end. Then when the meal was over, all would join in singing around the table, the male voices largely predominating. German songs they were chiefly, which our eldest brother Gustav had brought over from Bremen, where he had lived in a highly musical atmosphere.

Music was so much a part of our daily lives that I never knew a home could be without it. Our governess was a trained musician, and she and our sister Henrietta, with Gustav and his friends, sang German part songs, which I thought enchanting.

Sunday evening was given to hymns, English and German, and this practice was continued as long as the home lasted, in spite of occasional disaffection on the part of the younger brothers. Gustav had a good baritone voice, Henrietta and Emily played the piano, Hermann the cello, Henry, in his boyhood, played the violin, but gave it up later, though he was always fond of music in the home. The younger members of the family were chiefly useful as chorus.

On the occasion of our parents' silver wedding all their ten children, assisted by two or three relatives, performed a kindersymphony, which they had rehearsed as a surprise. The house being large, with a music-room remote from the family sitting-room, there was never any restriction of our use of the piano. Our nearest neighbors, the Edsons, were thoroughly musical, and large groups of young people would gather about our piano, spending long evenings playing and singing together.

We were fortunate in having among our near neighbors two mothers who played exceptionally well for dancing, Mrs. Edson and Mrs. Camp; and at the many parties in our house and others, they were untiring in furnishing the young people the waltz, polka, gallop, lancers, and the inevitable Virginia Reel which wound up the evening.

It was a time-honored custom among the families of the neighborhood to see the old year out at our house. At the close of a merry evening my brother Hermann, with his absolutely inerrant watch, would gather us for "Auld Lang Syne"; then, the window having

been opened to let the old year out and the new year in, we would await the striking of the midnight hour in silence. After the customary felicitations had been exchanged, we would form a large circle, holding glasses of a steaming claret cup known as "bischoff," and we would all join in singing an old German round. Many of our friends will recall this "Lebe liebe," etc., and the clinking of the glasses in time to the music, the one with whom the round ended being obliged to empty his glass and retire from the circle. We have continued this old custom at the Christmas celebrations in my home in New Haven.

Private theatricals were very popular in our young days; Gustav and Henrietta were particularly good actors, delighting their uncritical audience without the aid of stage setting or light effects.

Christmas Eve was the occasion for a large gathering of relatives and old friends; thirty or more of us would await the signal, singing Christmas hymns around the piano, while Hermann, utilizing his six-foot-two reach, would light the tree. Sometimes my father had his large flock of children stand in a row before the closed doors, and amused us and himself by having us give "the musical sneeze" for the benefit of the guests.

The tall tree blazing in the middle of the sitting-room, reaching to the ceiling and reflected in the mirror, never failed to thrill me even when childhood was left behind. When the doors were thrown open the family dog was given first chance to go in and discover his titbit under the tree. The room was lined with tables all along the walls, covered with gifts for the family and friends; the servants had their presents in the adjoining library, the coachman and gardener's families having their share in the celebration.

After the presents had all been examined, and the candles on the

tree had burned out, the whole party would adjourn to the dining-room to partake of a bountiful supper amid much hilarity, the anxious question whether "it," the ice cream, had arrived from New York having been happily settled.

The Christmas room, with its delicious fragrance, was the center of family life for a week or more after the celebration. It seems as if no books ever held such charm as those received and read at that time. Uncle Herman always came up for Christmas Eve, the Kluepfels and Jaffrays were a part of it, going through the delays and discomforts of the train trip in mid-winter for the sake of a happy evening together. Laura Wheeler, coming from High Bridge, and other dear friends were frequently with us, as well as various unattached young men whom my father wished to befriend.

At that time Christmas trees with the attendant celebration were not as common in our part of the world as they are now. One of our neighbors' sons confessed to me after we were grown, that as a boy he and his brothers would creep up on our piazza on Christmas Eve, lie at full length by one of the long windows and peek below the shades at the glory within. It seemed very pathetic to me, for whom Christmas without a tree was quite unthinkable.

We, on the other hand, knew nothing of letters to Santa Claus, stockings hung by the fireside, and early rising on Christmas morning to examine their contents.

Holiday making in general has greatly increased within my recollection, but possibly the longer working day of my youth, including the whole of Saturday, gave a special zest to a holiday when it came.

New Year's Day was particularly enjoyed as we grew up. Large groups of young people of the neighborhood, with guests from town,

would gather for outdoor sports, hide and seek in a barn, or other simple amusement. We still have a snapshot of such a group taken on the front steps of the old Lewis G. Morris house, with Mr. Morris's genial face and that of our good friend, his niece, Miss Lucretia Morris, showing in the background.

The practice of New Year's calls obtained in my early youth, and my father was very faithful in the performance of this social duty. Some of the houses on the Ridge acquired a reputation for serving especially delectable luncheons, the Wetmore home being particularly popular on that day.

This large family, comprising representatives of several generations, occupied for many years the house owned by Mrs. Nathaniel P. Bailey near Kingsbridge; they were all dear friends of ours, and Miss Sarah Wetmore as our Sunday school teacher in the Bible class is remembered by Emily and myself with enduring affection.

Valentine's Day brings back amusing recollections of children dashing about among the houses of the neighborhood, leaving their missives, ringing doorbells, and running away, knowing all the time that the youngsters in the house were watching behind the window curtains.

The Fourth of July was celebrated much as it is now. We always had a houseful of guests, and somehow the day is associated in my mind with the shelling of peas in enormous quantities, family and visitors assisting, all sitting on the piazza.

Once I remember bets being made as to the number of peas and a pool being formed, the proceeds going toward paying for the fireworks that evening. The peas in a cup were counted, and the total measured. I wish I could remember the figures.

Often we had a party on the evening of the Fourth, our older

brothers and their friends setting off the fireworks. Old alpaca coats were worn by those officiating, for they were riddled with holes from the sparks of the Roman candles.

Thanksgiving Day came so near the birthday of my father on November 23 and that of my mother on November 26 that it made a very festive period in our lives.

On the occasion of our parents' birthdays it was our practice to assemble outside of their bedroom at an early hour in the morning, and sing one of the old German festal chorals, "Lobe den Herren O meine Seele" or "Nun danket alle Gott." I think we always cherished the illusion that we were giving them a surprise; at any rate, I know we gave them pleasure, even though our singing was not up to concert standard.

With so many children there was a pretty constant succession of birthday celebrations, with their table of gifts at breakfast time, decked with flowers, and a cake and candles in the evening. We were allowed to choose the dessert on our birthdays, and Ben caused yearly dissatisfaction among his brothers and sisters, by asking for rice pudding, with the express stipulation that there should be no raisins in it.

I do not recall our having much candy in our childhood, and what there was was exceedingly simple. The "Ridley's fresh mixed broken" variety, as cried up and down the trains at that period, set the standard for that form of indulgence. However, we did have a great many candy pulls in the various kitchens, with delicious results.

As children of course we had a midday dinner, and a second dinner was served to the grown-ups in the evening, each meal meaning

a long table to set and serve. Twelve years, as I recall, was the limit set for the privilege of assisting at the evening meals.

One of the maxims most insisted upon at our long table was that "Children should be seen and not heard." How I hated the sage who invented it! I suppose, however, it had to be promulgated in the interest of self-preservation for the grown-up members of the family.

At breakfast my mother's task was a heavy one, pouring the many cups of coffee for those who had to hurry off for a train. She always had her breakfast seat in the middle of one side of the table, partly to facilitate passing the cups, and also that she might be nearer to most of us and so better able to hear the conversation.

Breakfast was a hearty meal in those early days: steak, chops, liver and bacon, or other meat dishes, beside fried potatoes; beginning with a cereal and ending with griddle cakes, large mountains of them, which disappeared with astonishing rapidity. It certainly seems as if more food must have been consumed then than at present, although less was eaten in the way of sweets.

However, it is probably the fact that those around our table were mostly boys and young men, which makes the apparent contrast with the lighter fare of the present.

In 1873 my three oldest brothers returned from their long stay in Germany. Henrietta had gone over for the summer and came home with them.

It was a wonderful event in our family—the consummation of the hopes and plans of my parents for many years. We had been brought up to look forward to the time when our brothers should return, and it seemed to us as if the whole world awaited that happy event.

After the death of our little brother Leopold that summer, it was a special joy, no doubt, to my parents to look forward to having their sons with them once more.

When the great day arrived, my father met the steamer and brought his four children up in two carriages from Hoboken. I can see it all now, my mother sitting in a corner of the piazza, bowed down with emotion, too overcome to look down the hill at the approaching vehicles. I remember, small child that I was, going up to her and saying wonderingly, "Why, Mamma, aren't you *glad* they are coming home?"

It was altogether too much for her after the years of separation, patiently borne. But the joy and pride in her three big sons soon restored her and it was a happy household that gathered under our roof from that time on.

My father had planned from the beginning that his two eldest sons should come into the old business of Oelrichs & Company, Gustav to be specially connected with the steamship department of the North German Lloyd, and Hermann to be in the mercantile department. They had been trained accordingly, and fortunately their tastes accorded with the plan, so that they were ready, after their business training in Bremen, to step into the positions awaiting them, and in due course of time to become partners in the firm.

It all seemed very natural at the time, but I have realized since how unusual this fulfilment of long anticipation was, and how gratifying to my father as he grew older.

A great change of course came over our life at home, with many added interests; it was especially delightful for Henrietta to have her brothers as companions in the various social activities of the neighborhood. There was quite a little interest among our friends

over this sudden addition to the list of young men. Gustav was particularly social and his music was a great factor at home and outside.

He was not at home very long, for he married three years after his return, and he had been engaged for two years before that.

Hermann remained at home so much longer that he became more intimately a part of our life there, so that when he married at the age of thirty-two it was quite a wrench to have him go. But he used to come in every evening from his house close by and make my mother a little call, and look after her welfare generally.

I always think of my mother as the center of groups of children and friends; sometimes sitting on the big old sofa in the hall with us all gathered about her, some beside her and some on the floor. There seemed so much time in those days for ordinary family intercourse, and it was all a life lived in common.

Our Sunday afternoons were altogether given up to visitors, guests staying in the house, neighbors dropping in, and old friends coming up from town. Frequently we had young Germans who had brought letters to my father, and whom he was always ready to befriend and advise. After the Franco-Prussian War in 1870 there were many young men, just released from the army, who made use of their freedom to travel across the water, some of them making quite a stay in this country. I can dimly recall from my very early childhood some of these fine, upstanding young men, who would spend their Sundays at our house, and would sing their war songs or the old German *Volkslieder*. Our dear cousin, Carl Kluepfel, who was in the office of Oelrichs & Company, was an intimate part of our life from childhood, spending every week-end at our house, and devoting much time and infinite patience to our entertainment

when we were small. When, after one year's marriage, he was left a widower, my mother took his baby girl for a year into our home, and after his marriage with our cousin, Henny Schrader, they and their children continued to spend their Sunday afternoons with us. They are inseparably connected with dear memories of our old home.

Uncle Herman von Post almost always came up on Sundays, a most diverting guest to us children; he could draw delightful pictures on the schoolroom blackboard, could whittle small boats to sail in the brook, and had a fondness for visiting our pigs, scratching their backs with a cane kept for that special purpose, and eliciting grateful returns in the shape of grunts.

My father had a wide acquaintance on both sides of the Atlantic, and many interesting visitors came to the house. We later often regretted that no guestbook had been kept, and no record remained of the many names we would like to have remembered.

There were numerous Germans connected with the diplomatic service: von Roesing; von Schleiden, a very dear friend; Holst, the historian; von Schloetzer, at one time a special envoy to the Vatican; Friederich Kapp; Carl Schurz; Philip Schaff of New York, whose valued friendship dated from schooldays; Judge Stallo of Cincinnati; Professor George Fisher of New Haven; Rev. C. C. Tiffany, at one time rector of St. James Church, Fordham; Miss Mary Rutherford Prime, to mention only a few of those I remember.

My parents, during their early married life in Brooklyn, had formed warm friendships with the Achelis, Dreier, and Pauli families; the children have cherished that friendship, and like to recall the happy days spent together at Fort Number Eight.

Gustav and Eliza Schwab

From a daguerreotype taken in 1856 about the time of purchase of Fort Number Eight

Our Great-Aunt Mary Punnett, with her three daughters, was a frequent visitor, after the death of her husband, who was greatly beloved by my father and mother. Mr. Albert Chrystie of Havre, France, was always a welcome guest on his visits to this country; the stalwart St. Louis cousins, Adolph Meier and his sons, frequently stopped over on their way to their summer outing. My mother's cousin, Rev. Matson Meier Smith, with his wife and daughter, made us occasional visits; the daughter, Emily, afterward the wife of the Rev. Harry DuBois, was one of Henrietta's dearest friends. Our cousin, Emily Jaffray, was another dear friend of Henrietta's and a frequent visitor, as were her brother Robert and his wife.

In 1885 my mother's younger sister, our Aunt Henny Schwab, was induced to come over with her two younger daughters, Sophie and Clementine. She was the widow of my father's only brother, Professor Christoph Schwab; their home was in Stuttgart, Germany, and the double relationship had drawn a very close bond, which distance could not affect. It was my aunt's first visit to this, her native country, since she left it as a child, and her sojourn here for about six months was a most delightful occasion for us all, Uncle Herman sharing in the joy of having his sister as a guest.

A number of years later Aunt Henny twice repeated the experience of crossing the ocean, after her two daughters had married. In 1894 another sister of my mother, our Aunt Clementine Schrader, came over with her, and had a happy reunion with her sisters and brother, as well as with her daughter, Henny Kluepfel.

There were other visits of relatives from Germany which remain pleasant memories. Gustav Kluepfel, director of the Royal Mint in Stuttgart, and formerly of St. Louis, came over as one of the representatives of the German Government at the World's Fair in

Chicago. He brought his attractive wife, Mathilde, and they made headquarters at our house during that summer.

Betty Noltenius of Bremen was another visitor whom we recall with pleasure. Her family and ours had been intimately connected by a friendship of four generations, my father having been induced to come to Bremen as a lad by her great-grandmother, widow of H. H. Meier, who procured him a position with her husband's old firm and installed him in the household of her daughter, Mrs. Noltenius. Many years after, when my two oldest brothers, Gustav and Hermann, were sent to Bremen to receive their business training, they, in their turn, became members of that same Noltenius household, and formed enduring friendships with the young people of the family. One of the sons, Bernhard Noltenius, came over on a visit to us after my brothers were established in business in New York.

After my father's death, in 1888, it was inevitable that some of his connections with the larger world should cease, and our home was more apt to be filled with guests of our own generation. I retain a strong impression of the freedom given us by our mother to invite our friends at all times. There was never a suggestion of fatigue or boredom with the constantly changing household. The number at the table had to be indicated for each meal, and we never had fixed places at the board, because it was always shifting.

My father was an example of the power of concentration. I have always remembered how he would sit immersed in a book, with a roomful of youthful chatterers about him. Then suddenly something in the conversation would arrest his attention, he would break in, and immediately become absorbed once more in his reading.

He and my mother kept up a regular weekly correspondence with

my uncle and aunt in Stuttgart. They shared each other's lives and interests to a remarkable extent, and these letters, with those to my two older brothers while they were abroad, form a valuable family record, and have furnished the material which antedates my recollection.

My father often spent long evenings at his desk in the library, writing, with the thick reed penholder he used on account of writer's cramp, letters, or frequently reports for the Chamber of Commerce, where he was constantly serving on committees. His letters to his brother during the Civil War are a wonderfully detailed and vivid comment on the absorbing events of the time. His brother followed it all with most intelligent interest, seeing it through my father's eyes.

So intense was my father's feeling for the cause of the North that after the battle of Bull Run he was for some time the victim of a nervous twitching of the face. We still have the flag purchased by my father to celebrate the victory at Gettysburg.

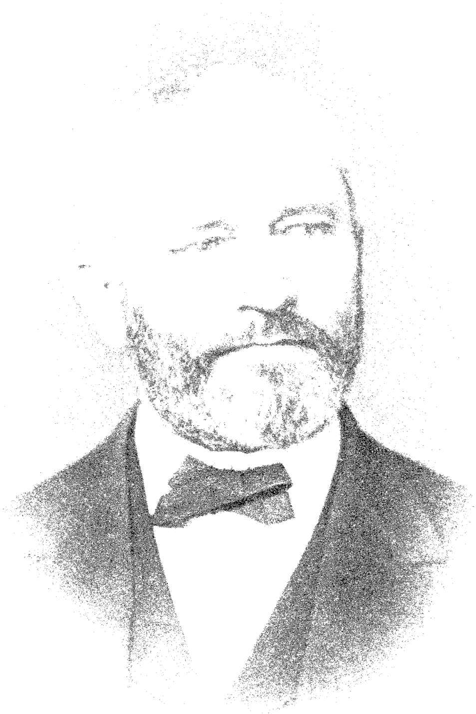
In connection with my father's devotion to his adopted country, I recall that during his last illness when his mind was wandering, the nurse heard him one night fervently praying for his country, in such touching words that she was deeply moved. It was the expression of a major passion on his part.

Busy man that he was, my father was always ready to do his part in public welfare work as well as in the ordinary duties of citizenship. It was quite a sight to see him on the morning of election day, get into the carriage with his grown sons, the gardener and second man squeezed in somehow, beside the coachman, and all bound for the polls, the employés, it must be confessed, under some duress with regard to the disposal of their votes.

When we were children my father would always devote a part of his Sunday afternoon to us, showing us interesting pictures, giving us elementary instruction in astronomy, etc. He had a special gift for dealing with young children, and stimulating their minds; even now I recall with delight some of these hours spent with him. A word from him carried great weight; he believed more in practice than in precept, and neither he nor my mother gave us many rules of conduct. Yet I think we instinctively knew what their attitude and convictions were.

My father's working day was long. He left the house before eight, taking the boat in summer, the *Tiger Lily* or *Water Lily*, from Morris Dock to Harlem, and the *Sylvan Dell* or others of that line from there to Peck Slip; at other seasons he used the trains on the Hudson River Railroad. In the early days of Fort Number Eight he was obliged to go back and forth by the Harlem Railroad, driving a mile to the station, whereas the Hudson River station was only a few minutes' drive. It sometimes happened that the boat had left before the carriage reached the dock, and by fast driving to High Bridge, the coachman was able to overtake her there.

In going back and forth to town my father always carried a large black bag, slung by a strap across his shoulder. The practice was begun when the New York stores did not deliver, and he transported packages in the bag for family use. Later, when this was no longer necessary, he still clung to the bag for his newspapers, glasses, etc. So well known was this adjunct of his, that one day when, for some reason he had left it at home, the gateman at the Grand Central Station, who knew him only as "the man with the bag," refused to honor his pass, much to the diversion of the other commuters.



Gustav Schwab

From a photograph taken in 18[illegible]

My mother was greatly occupied with the cares of a large household, often harassed by the difficulty of obtaining adequate service in the country. She was never very well during the years of our childhood, but later fulfilled the prediction of our clever little family physician, Dr. Frothingham, of gaining health and strength as she grew older. Her deafness unfortunately increased with the years; yet she never allowed it to embitter her. She would sit at the head of the table with a sweet and ready response for anyone who would speak directly to her, but with no sign of resentment when she could not join in the general talk. She was very fond of driving over the many attractive roads in our region, and after she fractured her hip in her fifty-first year these daily long drives became her principal diversion and kept her in excellent physical condition.

From 1860 to 1870 my mother's youngest sister, our Aunt Emily von Post, was a member of the household, the greatest possible assistance to my mother, for she was devoted to all of us, as we were to her. She was handsome and greatly admired and beloved among our friends and neighbors, so that when she was married from our house in June, 1870, two of her bachelor friends were so overcome by their feelings that they were unable to be present at the wedding. She went to Bremen as the bride of Dr. Bernhard Pauli, and her house there, with its loving welcome, was home for any of us who came over.

It may be of interest to insert a little account of the purchase and laying out of Fort Number Eight, and the early history connected with it.

My parents were married May 8, 1850, and spent their first year

at Willowbank, in Bloomingdale, 118th Street and the Hudson River, the home of my mother's grandmother, Mrs. Caspar Meier. Their eldest son, Gustav Henry, was born here May 30, 1851. After two years in Brooklyn, where the second son, Hermann Caspar, and the first daughter, Henrietta Margaretta, were born, they returned to Bloomingdale, renting a house of Mr. Whitlock, father-in-law of my uncle, Herman Caspar von Post. Here their fourth child was born, Laurence Henry, and, having seen the advantages of life in what at that time was still more or less country, they determined to acquire a permanent home outside, but within reasonable reach of the city.

The site finally selected was on the heights above the Harlem River, about twelve miles from the City Hall, now 181st Street in the Borough of the Bronx.

In the spring of 1857 a tract of land was bought jointly with my mother's uncle, James Punnett, and his brother-in-law, Albert Chrystie. The three purchasers made an amicable division, and my parents felt well pleased with their share, eight acres, although they had not desired quite so large a piece.

The price paid was $1,000 an acre; in 1869 six additional acres were bought at $2,500 an acre.

The original owners, named Archer, had held the land since early Colonial days, but the representatives of the family who made the sale could neither read nor write, and affixed a cross to the deed. The last descendant known to us was a cab driver in Fordham.

The Archer family had had a private graveyard on their estate, west of what is now Sedgewick Avenue, and this tract was included in our land. There was nothing to mark the spot; it was supposed to have been a burial ground for their slaves. It gave us children shud-

dering thrills occasionally to find a skull or piece of bone which had come to the surface of the ground on land that otherwise showed no trace of its former use, and the history of which has long since passed into oblivion.

The site for the house, as selected by my father on account of the fine view, seemed so bleak and exposed that he almost decided to build on lower ground, and was ever after grateful to his uncle, James Punnett, for having urged him to abide by his first choice.

A Bloomingdale friend and neighbor, Mr. Mali, bought forty acres adjoining, giving added courage for the enterprise of venturing so far into the country.

My father and Mr. Mali built their houses together, by day labor, without an architect, the builder, Mr. Truby, supplying the plans. The bricks were floated up the Harlem River on barges to Morris Dock.

My father's letters speak of his house as being in Italian villa style; he praises the fine view, which included the spires of New York, and the Highlands of the Lower Bay, later hidden from sight by intervening high buildings.

The stable and farm construction was started at once, and plans made for a vegetable garden in a sheltered part of the grounds.

The serious business depression of 1857 to 1858 caused my father to regret having embarked on so expensive an undertaking; but it was too late to recede, and he found great pleasure in the planning of the house and its surroundings.

The letters to his mother contain full accounts of it all, with minute descriptions of the practical devices then just coming into use: a tank under the roof, fed by rain water, and by a pump from a well under the cellar; a boiler in the kitchen with hot water system

through the house; gas pipes laid in the walls for use in eventual home manufacture of gas; speaking tubes, stationary tubs in the laundry. All these arrangements showed the foresight of an alert and progressive mind, and were entirely new to the relatives in the old country.

There were almost no trees on the place at the time of purchase, so large specimens, thirty or forty feet high, were brought from the woods in the winter, dragged by three or four yoke of oxen, and planted at a cost of ten or fifteen dollars a tree. Those who in later years enjoyed the beauty of the great trees waving above the house, found it difficult to realize that they had been in place so short a time.

One of the interesting features of the new home was the fort on the place, from which its name was derived, a British redoubt, the remains of which were plainly discernible. In digging and levelling for the house a quantity of British relics were unearthed: coins, army buttons, musket and cannon balls, and pieces of camp kettles. These were preserved in a zinc-lined table in our hall, and when the place was sold the relics were presented to the purchaser, New York University, and are placed in their buildings.

The site of the fort was marked by our family a few years before we sold the place. A boulder dug on the grounds and suitably inscribed was set on the site of the fort, and dedicated with a little ceremony, songs and the reading of a historical address composed by my brother, John Christopher. Young Hermann and Laurence, the sons of my brothers Hermann and Henry, unveiled the stone. A large group of old friends and neighbors had been gathered in for the occasion; a lovely afternoon and the beautiful setting of the

old trees, with the fine view beyond, made an impressive picture not to be forgotten.

A little anecdote in connection with Fort Number Eight was told me by our old friend and neighbor, Lewis Gouverneur Morris, who married my grandmother's cousin, Margaretta Lorillard. His grandfather, an officer in the Colonial army, received a safe conduct from Saratoga to go down and visit the slaves on his father's estate, about half a mile from Fort Number Eight, the condition being that he was not to get off his horse in passing through the British lines.

As he came by Fort Number Eight he was hailed by the British officers in command there, who asked for news from Saratoga. Morris replied with the tidings of Burgoyne's surrender, and was hooted at in derision by the incredulous British. When, after a few days spent at his father's place, he returned by the same road, he found the British officers in a dejected and crestfallen state, the news of Burgoyne's surrender having meanwhile reached them officially. This tale Mr. Morris had heard from his grandfather himself, which seems to bring history very close.

The family, with four young children, moved up to Fort Number Eight in the spring of 1858, and greatly enjoyed the life in the country. The large vegetable garden was from the first one of the features most appreciated; it early imbued each member of the family with an ineradicable fondness for vegetables, and, alas, with a standard difficult to attain under modern conditions.

The huge platters of asparagus filled and refilled; the great baskets of peas, shelled by groups of family and guests on the piazza; the luscious melons grown from seed imported by Mr. Mali from

Belgium, all these live in the memory as the accompaniment of happy summers with everything of the best and plenty of it.

Hospitality was from the first the keynote of life in the new home, as it had been in the several other places of abode. Guests came for the week-end or longer; Grandmother Meier, blind and eighty-two, was induced to make more than one visit before her death in 1863.

My father took delight in driving visitors up, and witnessing their surprise and pleasure in the fine view. It was not until the hill on which the house stood had been reached that a newcomer had any idea of the beauty of the scenery. The coachman and horses were kept busy meeting trains, and many of the friends drove up from New York or Brooklyn, quite a journey in those days.

One of my recollections of the end of a Sunday afternoon is that of my father lifting his bag from his coat closet by the front door, taking out a large bunch of railway tickets, and handing one to each of the numerous young men who had been spending the day with us, for their return trip to town.

On the other side of the front door was a corresponding closet for the outdoor wraps, rubbers, and arctics of all the children. Dire confusion reigned therein, and woe to the unlucky guest who left his overshoes in that retreat, where everyone dug freely for whatever gear suited him.

The alcove behind the hatstand in the hall was another spot sacred to the footwear of the family. The stairs wound upward around it, leaving a wide wellhole. It was an occasional practice of the younger members of the family as they went up to bed, the era of evening slippers not having as yet arrived, to drop their shoes down from the second story to the floor of the alcove, where the houseman would collect them for the daily shine. The dog's water

bowl stood in this alcove and, to the joy of us youngsters, one of our guests with long and narrow feet once dropped her shoe accurately across the bowl, cleaving it neatly in two.

The various dogs who were our companions through the years at Fort Number Eight are still affectionately remembered by those whose lives they shared. There was one, Grip, who preceded my recollection, but whose name was often mentioned by the older members of the family, especially in connection with a dinner to which some neighbors had been invited. Just before dinner time the dog appeared in the living-room with the leg of mutton which was to have been the central feature of the meal. This act brought him undying fame in the annals of the family.

We had several Spitz dogs, snappy and treacherous; one of them inflicted a bite on the nose of my brother Henry, the scar of which he carried all his life. A pleasanter memory attaches to Hector, a great curly-haired Newfoundland. Fresh, more or less of the same breed, was named for Ben, a Freshman at Yale, and was much beloved by us all. He and Blarney, my handsome red setter, formed a striking contrast in color, as they lay in their favorite spot, one on each side of the front piazza steps, on the ample stoops which stretched out on either hand.

Blarney, who lived to be nearly twelve, was given me by Ben. I can see Ben now, as he walked up the hill with the puppy in his arms, and coming straight up to my mother's room, deposited him unexpectedly in her lap, as she sat in her armchair by the window. She gave a surprised but cordial welcome to the wee creature, all legs as he was, but from the first delightfully engaging.

My mother's room was the Mecca for all the family. There was compensation for her lameness in the fact that we all came, know-

ing we should find her. The door was never shut, and a chair was always ready beside her own, her deafness making it necessary to sit close by her. The atmosphere of that lovely sunny room, my mother's vivid interest and response, seem a very real and living thing even now.

To go back once more to the earlier days. As the number of children increased, the need of an addition to the house became urgent, and the plan for it was made during the absence abroad of my mother and the children.

It had been my father's great wish to have his mother know all his children. A visit abroad of a year made in 1856 had given the three eldest an opportunity of knowing and loving their grandmother in her own home. In 1866 he determined to take my mother and five children over to Germany, to join the two eldest who had been for three years with their grandmother in Stuttgart. It was a heavy blow when, just as they were planning the trip, the news came that his mother, to whom my father was devotedly attached, had died quite suddenly.

Her expressed wish was that my mother and the children should occupy her apartment in Stuttgart, which they did for about two years, my father leaving them to return to his business in New York. Fort Number Eight was rented to a family of Fabbri, and before my father sailed to rejoin his family abroad work was begun on the addition, which was nearly as large as the old part of the house.

When the family returned in 1868, leaving the three eldest sons behind in Germany, the number of children had been increased by the birth in Stuttgart of the fifth son, Benjamin.

My poor mother must have endured great trials in coming back

Eliza C. [illegible]

From a photograph taken in 190[illegible]

to a house given over to workmen, for it was far from finished, and great disturbance was caused in the household by the many men about. The breaking through of the walls, when the building of the addition was completed, remained a nightmare in the memory of the grown-up members of the household.

During a very hot spell that summer, the twins, Albert and Louis, were born, and the additional space provided by the new quarters was most welcome.

While work on the house was going on, a small room to the right of the front door was used to store the carpenters' tools, etc. We children, when we were given our daily eleven o'clock lunch, made necessary by a very early breakfast, were told to go and "make crumbs" in that little room, which thenceforth and for all time was known as the "crumbroom."

The house, as complete with the addition, was very large, with many rooms, none of them spacious, but conveniently arranged, and with facilities for escape from each one, a great point in domestic architecture. It faced south and had a large hall running north and south, the dining-room opening from its north end. To the left was the sitting-room, facing south and west, and on the northwest corner the library. These rooms were all in the older part of the house, and above them were three good-sized bedrooms, one smaller one, and a bathroom, all grouped around a square hall.

The third story in the older part of the house contained a room for the tutor or governess, one single and one double maid's room, and a large trunkroom. A tower rising on the northwest corner contained a fascinating room, with windows on all sides; in my day it was a storeplace for old toys and other interesting relics, and

was a most attractive center for games of all kinds. I believe the older children used it for a schoolroom in the early days.

The newer part of the house was entered through the "crumb-room" and another small anteroom, leading into the parlor with its sunny southern bay window. The music-room came next, with double doors between, and in the northeast corner was the schoolroom of our childhood, later known as "the study," and the safe retreat of any engaged couple in the family.

A large back hall ran along the north side, connecting with the front hall by a swinging door. From the back hall a long straight stairway, in addition to the one from the front hall, led to the second story, and its banister was admirably adapted for sliding, and ending with a bump at the newel post.

Above were my father and mother's room, dressing-room, and bath, and a delightful sunny balcony, another good-sized bedroom, and a smaller one, used by a nurse or maid.

The story above this had two good-sized bedrooms, and a smaller one for the houseman, a large hall, and the tankroom, with its huge water tank and space for walking around it, an abode of mystery and strange damp smells.

There were endless opportunities for investigation, places to hide in, and mysterious dark cubbyholes. The word trunkroom has a spell for me to this day, with its vision of trunks of all ages and sizes, from the "Saratoga" down to the small old haircloth. Occasional glimpses of the contents served to heighten our interest, especially at housecleaning time, when the treasures in hiding would be revealed. The very smell of that room comes back to me, a mixture of leather and smoked ham. For there stood the tall ham rack on which the winter's supply of hams was hung in the early days,

when provisions were laid in by the wholesale. Although this practice was discontinued long before I was grown, yet the odor never quite disappeared, and, I dare say, clings to that old room even now.

Another odorous reminiscence is that of the storeroom on the third floor, where were kept supplies of soap, chests of tea, and dozens of glasses of currant jelly. We children were frequently sent up there with the key to fill the tea-caddy, and the long dark space seemed full of rich and mingled fragrance.

My two older brothers, Gustav and Hermann, and my oldest sister, Henrietta, received their early education from a tutor, Mr. Boeklin, a South German. I never saw him, to remember him, but from the impression he left on the family he must have been a man of most unusual gifts, exceptionally qualified to stimulate and instruct his young charges. He was very musical, had a great love and knowledge of nature, and a lively imagination, with deep religious fervor and almost morbid conscientiousness. He brought up my brothers to early rising, took them on long walks, and gave them rigorous training in all respects; he also was inventive in games, and clever in contriving all sorts of articles, which were handed down and used by the younger children.

The Christmas hut, made in 1859, with its shepherds and its wise men, little ancient wooden jointed dolls, beautifully dressed to the minutest detail—this was one of our inheritances from Mr. Boeklin's days; it figured at every Christmas celebration, and testified to his skill and patience.

The salary of this remarkable man was $400 a year, according to a letter from my father, in which he enjoins his brother not to mention this figure, for fear he might be thought extravagant.

In a letter to Gustav, after Mr. Boeklin had taken the two eldest boys abroad and left them with their grandmother, my father sympathizes with them in their sorrow at parting from him, and says that outside of their own family no one could love them more devotedly than their tutor; he hopes "they will never forget him, nor cease to be grateful to him for his unremitting care and devotion."

I always felt that if ever a man's work lived after him, it was true of this faithful soul. After taking the two boys over and leaving them in Stuttgart, in 1863, Mr. Boeklin returned for a brief time to take charge of Henrietta and Henry; but he soon followed the call of his conscience to the mission field on the African coast, and died of fever in Liberia.

After our return from two years in Germany, in 1868, my parents sent for Mr. Boeklin's niece, Miss Schwarz, who remained as our governess and a member of our family until 1876, when my sister Emily and I went to Mlles. Charbonnier's school in New York.

Miss Schwarz must have had her hands full with four children of different ages, whom she had to instruct in all branches, including music, and handiwork for the girls. She was a thorough and conscientious teacher, a strict disciplinarian, with a stern sense of duty. Her devotion and loyalty to the family never faltered, and after she left us she always remained a dear and valued friend. As she softened with age our reminiscences of her former strict discipline would cause her some compunction, which always gave us particular delight.

My sister Emily and I had to read aloud to her or to my mother four afternoons a week, a privilege not always valued at the time, but greatly appreciated in retrospect, for we thus became acquainted

with the best in the literature of three languages, English, French, and German. Miss Schwarz was an excellent French scholar; she had prepared us so well that when Emily and I entered Mlles. Charbonnier's school, which was conducted entirely in French, we experienced no difficulty whatever in keeping up with our studies.

After a few years with Miss Schwarz, Christoph was put in charge of a visiting tutor, Mr. Feistkorn, who also gave Emily and me some instruction. With all his great learning this man was not gifted in transmitting it to his pupils, and our experiences with him were not happy.

The boys later had two successive tutors, Mr. Lachmann and Mr. Schaedel, both imported from Germany. They remained two years each, living in the house, after which the boys attended Gibbons and Beach's school in New York, where Christoph and Ben prepared for college. Albert and Louis were sent for a year to Mr. Reed's boarding school in Lakeville, Connecticut.

Henrietta had attended Miss Ballow's school in New York, spending the week with our cousins, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Jaffray, and coming home for Sunday. Henry attended a school kept by our rector, Dr. Maury, and in 1874 went to Yale.

In our childhood there was very little organized play; I have little recollection of football or baseball. My brothers often played hare and hounds, we took long walks, rowed a great deal on the Harlem River, and played tennis constantly, large parties meeting on our tennis court. Croquet was somewhat in vogue, but was chiefly useful in entertaining the influx of Sunday visitors.

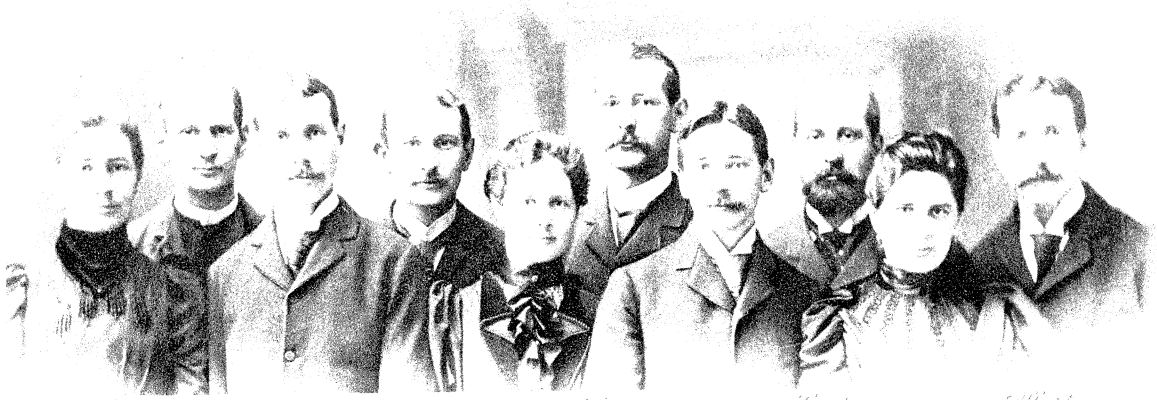
It is amusing to recall that one of the rectors of St. James's Church, the Rev. Joseph N. Blanchard, who came to us as a young man, confessed to having been deeply shocked when he came to visit

the parish before accepting the call. He was brought to our house on Sunday afternoon, to find us, the family of the Junior Warden, playing croquet, and he wondered what sort of people he was to minister to. However, he later assured us that his fears had proved groundless as far as we were concerned.

Our greatest delight was coasting; surely no young people ever had more of that. The house was on a ridge, and from it, as well as from all the other houses, there was every opportunity for the sport. Single sleds, bobsleds, all would turn out afternoons or nights, great crowds of young people, often winding up with a dance in one of the houses. Some of our merriest times were connected with this sport, and it seems remarkable that, in spite of the winding roads and the crowds, no serious accident ever occurred. The nearest approach was that of a young man who frequently came for the week-end, and always joined our coasting parties in a frock coat and a high hat. It was his inevitable practice to run into a certain tree at the foot of our circle, to the great amusement of the onlookers, for he never was hurt nor the least discouraged; the tree, however, finally died.

I do not recall my father ever joining us in coasting, but my mother was occasionally persuaded to take a flyer on a bobsled. She was always a good sport, and never more so than when, in the very beginnings of the automobile, she allowed her grandson Gus to take her out in his car, a most primitive construction as it seems in retrospect. As they crawled down the hill at what then seemed alarming speed, my sister Henrietta watched from the front steps, in an agony of apprehension, fearing they might come to grief, but my mother enjoyed the experience.

Our favorite playground during the milder months of the year



Emily *Robert* *David* *Christoph* *Lucy* *Hermann* *Ben* *Gustav* *Henriette* *Albert*

The children of Gustav and Eliza Schwab

From a photographic taken in 1895

was the "Dashwood's Brook," a picturesque little stream flowing out of a pond on the Dashwood place, and running down to the Harlem River through a rocky ravine lined with chestnut trees. Here we sailed boats, built dams, and passed the happiest hours in our early childhood. This was near the present Burnside Avenue; Sedgewick Avenue, when it was put through, destroyed most of it.

The brook supplied the water for several houses, being connected with a ram near the outlet of the pond. During the dry weather, the supply was scant, and we were brought up never to waste a drop, so that even now I cannot bear to have water running unnecessarily. Later on we were able to connect with the Croton water supply, and our worries in that respect were over.

Our own grounds and those of the neighbors afforded space and opportunity for outdoor enjoyment; games on the circle, hide and seek on the place with troops of young friends, an orchard with trees most inviting for climbing, all contributed to a healthy normal life, although it must be acknowledged that from the present point of view we were not given to sport.

Bicycling was one of our favorite diversions in the nineties. Gustav was very fond of it, and often rode out on his wheel, as did many others, for our house was just far enough from town to make a convenient objective. Gustav always came out on his birthday, May 30, and we frequently took long bicycle rides, my mother sometimes driving in the victoria, and all rounding up for lunch at some resort. It seems incredible to me now to look back at my courage in riding my wheel in Central Park, and on one occasion from 57th Street down to 26th Street on Madison Avenue.

The old Croton Aqueduct formed a particularly good bicycle path, and we often followed it for miles, lifting our wheels over

the intervening stiles. When the bicycle parties ended at our house, there would be refreshing drinks of raspberry vinegar, made after an old recipe of my grandmother's. I recall a merry bicycle luncheon on election day, 1896, when free silver was the issue; the weather was mild enough to allow of our lunching on the piazza, with the twenty or more guests from town. The flower beds, which had been prepared for winter, were decorated with small flags stuck in the ground, and an unwary guest who dropped his spoon, was hooted at with cries of "Down with free silver!"

Our extensive piazza was the real family living-room during the summer; all day, and through the evening, some of us were to be found there, for it was so arranged that there was always a spot sheltered from wind or sun. There was a round part projecting from the southwest corner which was specially adapted to a circle of family and friends. It afforded a wide view over wooded heights, across the Harlem River and, through the Spuyten Duyvil Gap, a glimpse of the Hudson could be seen, against a background of the Palisades.

The Harlem Flats, now built up with apartments and industrial concerns, were a picturesque feature in the foreground. The oyster man, Bronson, inhabited a dilapidated canal boat drawn up on the shore there, and was a mysterious and fascinating character to us children, with tales of dark deeds clinging to him and his boat. It was said that Frank Stockton got his first suggestion for his book, *Rudder Grange*, from that battered old hulk.

It is almost incredible to think of our bathing in the Harlem River, as we did all of our earlier years. My brothers all learned to swim in the Harlem; the younger ones were taught by our cousin,

Carl Kluepfel, whose regular feat of swimming across the river with one of the youngsters on his back was part of their education.

We were drilled in rowing by Cyrus Edson, who was on the crew at Columbia; my older brothers did a great deal of rowing in shells, but the craft we younger ones used was a six-oared boat built for us by my father's directions and named the *Eliza*, for my mother.

Skating was not a frequent diversion, there were not many available ponds; the one we used most, called Gobel's Pond, was between Jerome and the present Aqueduct Avenues, near High Bridge. Occasionally the Harlem River would freeze over, and I have seen sleighs on it, but the ice was almost never smooth enough for skating.

We always had a number of horses; my mother took long drives every day with the coachman and pair, and a single horse and buckboard were available for the young people. The region afforded an unusual variety of attractive drives before the network of city streets enclosed it. In later years my mother frequently drove to town, my uncle's house in 57th Street being her usual stopping place.

We all took delight in sleighing over the country roads; my mother never minded the cold, and our good old buffalo robes were an absolute protection. It was a great treat to be driven down through Central Park to see the fancy sleighs, Belmont's four-in-hand, and other elaborate turnouts. My childish eyes were once dazzled by a sleigh lined with magenta rugs, and on the seat beside the coachman a Spitz dog dyed magenta to match.

There were no hard-surface roads beyond Central Park in those days, and in the spring the mud made driving almost impossible even on Seventh Avenue, which was the main artery between the

park and McComb's Dam, now Central Bridge. Mr. Lewis G. Morris used to tell of an exploit of his youth in connection with that bridge. My recollection of it is vague, but I think some company had obtained permission to close the Harlem River by a dam at that point. Mr. Morris, owning the waterfront at Morris Dock, had a strong interest in keeping navigation open. He and a group of young friends hid in the marshes near the bridge, and in the night broke down the dam or barriers, and reopened the river for navigation. No one after that ever attempted to close it.

The two successive family doctors whom I recall, Dr. Frothingham and Dr. G. A. Spalding, both lived below the Harlem River, and had to drive three or four miles to our place; in an emergency they were summoned by telegram, which could only be sent from a station some distance off. Fortunately these emergencies arose but seldom.

Dr. Frothingham used to come up every Sunday afternoon, somewhat on the Chinese principle of keeping us well, although he usually found some small ailment requiring his attention. I remember hearing my father say how thankful he felt each year when February was well over and all his children in good health.

Both our doctors were recommended to my father by Dr. John T. Metcalfe, the brother-in-law of our uncle, Herman C. von Post. Dr. Metcalfe, an altogether delightful specimen of Southern gentleman, was always a welcome visitor at our house, and charmed us all by his genial personality; his wife, our Aunt Janie von Post's sister, we called Aunt Susan, and his children and their families have remained valued friends.

Many of the early neighbors of our parents had sold their homes

and left before my recollection, and I always thought the tales of doings before my day sounded particularly gay and charming.

Following along what was then called Fordham Ridge, the first place was that of Mr. and Mrs. Smyth, a large stone house at High Bridge near the eastern end of Washington Bridge. It was afterward bought by Mr. William B. Ogden, and his sister, Mrs. Wheeler's, house was quite near it. The Smyths entertained a great deal; it was at a party at their house in 1865 that my father met General Grant, and had an interesting talk with him. My father's comment in a letter is: "He is as plain and unpretending a man as you can see, truly a republican general, and not an ambitious conqueror who tramples the world under his feet."

The next place north of the Smyth's was that of Mrs. Lees, a Kentuckian, who remained in her home almost to the end of our own time.

The Montgomery family came next; their place was for a long term of years rented by Mr. Henry B. Laidlaw, whose large family was a delightful addition to our circle during my youth. A building on their place was used as a clubhouse by a group of young people who met there weekly for many years, and passed merry evenings with games, dancing, and theatricals.

The place beyond was that of Lewis G. Morris, with a fine old stone house, removed some years ago to make room for an institution.

Then came the estate of Mr. Hugh N. Camp, the Dashwood place, and the Johnson's, with its ancient little building of revolutionary days remaining near the dwelling house of the family.

The next place was at one time owned by Mr. Henry Cammann,

and sold in my childhood to Mr. Franklin Edson, whose family of five sons and two daughters filled it to overflowing.

North of our place was the Mali house, with extensive grounds, owned after Mr. Mali's death by his son, Henry W. T. Mali, and sold by him to New York University. During some years it was occupied by Mr. and Mrs. David L. Turner with their three children, until their removal to Italy in 1878.

Beyond this was the large stone house occupied successively by the Butler, Andrews, and MacCracken families, and now the property of New York University.

Farther north was the Oswald Cammann house, later occupied by the Knevals family, and beyond, on the site of the Webb School of Ship Building, was a house once the home of the Marshall Lefferts family.

The place north of this was the summer home of Mr. and Mrs. Nathaniel P. Bailey, on the site of the present Roman Catholic Orphan Asylum. Mrs. Bailey was a Lorillard, and a first cousin of my Grandmother von Post.

Old letters tell of much sociability among all these families, a series of parties being given at the different houses. My father writes to his mother in 1862, telling of their first party of about fifty: "It would surprise her to see how simply such affairs are managed here. The principal requirements are good lighting and room for dancing, which his house furnished. The refreshments were ice cream, wine, and lemonade. Some young Germans from town introduced a new dance, the cotillon, with great success."

They were dependent on the sociability provided by the neighborhood, for it was impossible, on account of difficulties of transportation, to keep up with social life in New York. Still my father and

mother with my mother's sister, Aunt Emily von Post, attended the Prince of Wales ball in 1860, with some three thousand others; I have heard my mother describe the alarm when the floor gave way and settled down about four feet, without, however, seriously injuring anyone.

No account of our life at Fort Number Eight would be complete without reference to the church, St. James's, Fordham, to which our family gave loyal support from the time my parents settled in that region. The little frame structure first used was succeeded in 1865 by the present stone building, considered in our day the most beautiful church in Westchester County. The stained-glass windows in the chancel were made in Munich by people my father knew of, and the numerous memorial windows chronicle the names of many old residents. My brother, John Christopher, was the first child baptized in the stone church; a few years later, the christening of the twins, Albert and Louis, drew a large group of interested friends and parishioners. Rev. C. C. Tiffany, the rector, used to give a humorous account of the piercing shrieks emitted by the pair of infant lungs. Their godparents became so flustered, that they fled with their charges before the young rector had had time to finish the service, and he pursued them down the aisle, and haled them back to receive the final exhortation.

My father was Junior Warden and Treasurer of St. James's during most of the years of his life at Fort Number Eight. He bore the burden of continual financial worry quietly and uncomplainingly, usually advancing the amount to make good the deficit at the end of the year.

I should like to quote here an extract from a letter of my father's

concerning Sunday observance, a subject which filled much of his thought and time:

"Say what you will about American child training, whatever discipline there is left, and that is far more than people in Europe realize, is principally derived from the observance of Sunday.

"I see it in the case of my own children; their training is greatly helped by it, and a serious character foundation established. They look upon it, not as a restraint, but absolutely as a matter of course. They would as soon miss their dinner, as their Sunday School or church. There is no special virtue in this, but surely it is a help in habit and mode of life, which will guard them from many temptations.

"The Sabbath Committee recently issued an appeal to the President and General in Command, asking for all possible respect for Sunday; whereupon an order of the day was issued to omit all unnecessary parades and movements of troops on Sunday.

"It happens that all engagements so far in which the Northern army has been defeated, occurred on Sunday, and the Northern army was the attacking party, which aided the effect of the petition. We will hope that on the next occasion, we shall be victorious on a weekday."

Each Sunday morning the large barouche would drive up to take our parents and the older members of the household to church, while we young ones walked on the old Croton Aqueduct, often meeting the carryall load of our maids, who were driven to the Roman Catholic church by the second man, while we trudged the mile or more from our home.

There was a good deal of sociability connected with these walks, all the young people on the Ridge turning out for church in a way

unknown at present, and taking an active part in the work of making the Christmas garlands, and arranging the Easter flowers and plants sent from the greenhouses of the various parishioners.

Several members of the family and our governess sang in the church choir; we played the melodeon for Lenten services, and did our share in church fairs and the inevitable Sunday school picnics.

Some of us taught classes in Sunday school, which meant getting to church by nine o'clock; no late hours on Sunday morning. We loved our church and its beauty, and had pleasant relations with all the members of the parish.

The rectors I remember after Rev. C. C. Tiffany were Rev. Mytton Maury, D.D., Rev. Joseph N. Blanchard, and Rev. Charles J. Holt. He was succeeded by the Rev. DeWitt L. Pelton, who still remains in charge at St. James's.

The work of our house was done by five maids, beside the one or two nurses required for the children. After my father's death the staff was reduced to four. Some remained in our service for many years; Margaret Clark, who first came when Gustav was a baby, left to be married, and returned to take care of the younger ones, and especially of our youngest brother, Leopold, born in August, 1872. He was a most beautiful child, the pet of the whole household. His death in 1873 while my mother was on a much-needed vacation in the White Mountains with Emily and me, was a heavy blow to us all, and broke Margaret Clark's faithful heart. She died in our house a year or two later, after a lingering illness.

There was Bessie, our laundress for twenty-two years; she could neither read nor write, and devoted an amount of mental energy to the concealment of that fact that would have carried her through an advanced course of study.

William McQuillen, our large and handsome coachman, was an important figure in the family for over twenty years.

Christine, our cook for five years, married our gardener, John Hebach, and lived on our place until it was sold.

James Nolan was gardener before that for more than twenty years, and was an object of great interest to us children. He always wore trousers built after a model of his own, wide and ample in all directions, so that he could stoop to his work without restraint. His one recreation on a Sunday was to walk about his garden and survey the week's achievement. His plan of hiding the best melons under the wide box hedge, so as to save them for the grown-ups' breakfast, was often frustrated by the youngsters' finding and appropriating them.

We had a second man, who milked the cows, took care of the chickens and pigs, and did work about the house. One of his duties was to lay the carpets each autumn, using a carpet stretcher, and innumerable tacks, which had to be carefully avoided in walking through the rooms. In the spring these large carpets had all to be taken up, beaten, and put away, and a matting laid in their place, which also covered the whole floor. The fragrance of that matting, signifying the end of the long winter, was always pleasant in our nostrils.

The wages of the coachman in my childhood were considered rather high at forty dollars; cook and housemaids received about twenty and fifteen dollars respectively.

There was an immense amount of labor required in caring for the large family and constant guests; the basement kitchen was dark, and all the many store places, breadroom, eggroom, milk-

room, mangle-room, the dark closet, etc., must have made housekeeping complicated.

The laundry was in the newer part of the house, a bright, sunny room, fully equipped with range and boiler. It had a large bay window to the south, which in winter was full of blooming plants, and which was used as a sitting-room by our maids and their friends.

When the many chimneys of the house needed cleaning, our excellent tinsmith, Mr. Shepherd, would arrive with a hoopskirt, which he claimed was ideal for the purpose; he had saved a number of them from the old days.

Our coal, in the earlier years, was bought jointly with some neighbors, brought up the Harlem in a canal boat, and hauled up our hill by a yoke of oxen. It took about forty tons to heat the large house, but the indirect heating system must have been an excellent one, for the house was always comfortable with only one furnace, in spite of its exposed position.

Marketing was done by purchase from the butcher's wagon, which called daily. My mother used to go out in all weathers to select the roast,—twenty pounds of roast beef on Sunday. To protect her while she stood by the cart, our governess and Henrietta manufactured a large woollen hood, which was kept at hand in the coat closet and always known as "the butcher's hood." I am afraid its style was more designed for utility than beauty.

Groceries were supplied by Galway's wagon, making biweekly trips from New York. We children hailed its arrival with joy, for we were often given cookies or other delicacies out of its bountiful interior. We thought the driver was "Mr. Galway," and always called him so.

We also frequently drove to Tremont to the grocery store kept by

Gottfried Schultz, who at one time had been coachman in the family. My father used to instance this man's career as an example of the opportunities available in this country. He had come over as a lad from Germany with nothing at all, and ended as a prosperous citizen, with a son who made a good record in the law school.

Fish was bought at the door from the wagon of Robert Thompson, a man of fine appearance and deliberate speech, who also held the office of sexton at St. James's Church. His efficiency as fishmonger was moderate, but his oysters were a source of delight, for they were ladled, open, out of a large can, and with them often came the little oyster crabs, now so rare a delicacy.

In our childhood the summer vacation was brief; for a number of years we went up to "Hazelwood," the Seaman farm, near Newburgh on the Hudson. The Pauli and Achelis families were often fellow boarders, and we had a happy time in that free, informal life.

In later years Mohonk, and then Minnewaska, gave us our summer outings. My father bought a farm in Sharon, Connecticut, in 1887, a year before his death, and placed the twins, Albert and Louis there to run a dairy farm. Osio Farm, as the place was called, became a resort for the family, Uncle Herman von Post joining us there every summer, after the death of his wife in 1895.

My brother Henry took over a small house on the place, and, with his wife and little boy, spent long and happy summers there. The farm was sold in 1921 to Mr. Harold A. Hatch of New York.

The house at Fort Number Eight was never closed, and some members of the family took their turn in staying on to run the establishment, while others went to Sharon with my mother.

The life at our old home naturally went through many phases as the years brought inevitable changes. The city became more and

more accessible, bringing a greater number of casual visitors, and allowing us to make more use of opportunities for the social intercourse and the diversions of New York.

For the last ten years of my mother's life she formed the habit of spending some weeks of each winter in town, first at a hotel and later with our Uncle Herman von Post when the death of his wife had left him alone in his good-sized house. From this time on, also, Henrietta and I divided the winter in keeping him company in town, until my marriage in 1903; we usually came home for the week-end, and Uncle Herman would come out Saturday and Sunday.

Our father's death in 1888 seemed an uprooting of all the old happy life. His long illness, borne with extraordinary fortitude, left an enduring impression on us all. At his death his ten children were gathered about him, and afterward supported my mother through her loneliness and the readjustment of her life.

She was surrounded by children and an increasing number of grandchildren. Gustav in 1876 had married Caroline Wheeler, daughter of our friend and neighbor at High Bridge. The young couple settled in New York, but often came out to either of the two houses, and their children, Amo and Gus, were frequently sent out with their nurse to spend the day.

Hermann had married Mary Baldwin of Philadelphia in 1885; to my parents' great joy they built a house close to ours, and lived there for a number of years. Their two children, Henry and Hermann, were born there, and naturally spent a great deal of time on our place.

My brother Henry, who had had several charges in New York, married Margaret Paris in 1889, and became the rector of St. Mary's

Church, Manhattanville. They settled in the dear old-fashioned frame rectory beside the church, and their only child, Laurence von Post, was born there. The little family made a practice of coming up on Mondays from St. Mary's and later from the Church of the Intercession, and taking their clerical holiday with us, which usually meant an afternoon outdoors, on foot, driving, or bicycling. Laurence, with Hermann's two boys, and Roland and Alfred, sons of Carl Kluepfel, often formed a lively group on the place.

Christoph, after graduating from Yale in 1886, spent another year there in graduate work, then went abroad to study economics in Berlin and Goettingen. He came home for a visit during my father's last illness, and after my father's death went back to finish his studies abroad. The months he spent with us on his final return, doing special work in New York before taking up the position offered to him at Yale, were a great source of joy to the family. He continued to make frequent visits, even after his marriage in 1893 to Edith Fisher of New Haven. They always spent the Christmas holidays with us, and brought their little daughter from babyhood. Christoph's affection for old family traditions was exceptionally strong. He had for years collected anything he could find published by a member of the family, past or present, and he became the custodian of most of the family archives.

Eliza Pauli, daughter of our Aunt Emily, came over after her mother's death for a long visit at our house, and when her father died, and she left Germany for this country, she stayed with us until she settled at University Heights near by. She became engaged to Otto Schrader, son of our Aunt Clementine, and they were married from our house in 1899, as her mother had been before her, in St. James's Church, Fordham.

Our circle of brothers and sisters was broken in March, 1898, by the death of our brother Hermann, of pneumonia, after an illness of less than a week. He was only forty-five, and had never had an illness since infancy. It was a crushing blow to us all, for he was deeply beloved; he left a delicate wife and two small boys, who for a time spent their summers in Sharon.

Ben had entered Yale with the class of 1888, but in 1886, on account of the death of one of my father's partners, Mr. Rose, it was deemed best for Ben to leave college and enter the business, a step he often regretted in after years, as far as the cutting short of his college career was concerned. He was sent to Germany to study wool, and later went to South Africa and New Zealand to make acquaintance with business connections, an experience he always remembered with delight.

After another business trip, which took him to South America he settled down at home, going back and forth to the office. He was a great comfort and joy to my mother and all of us, full of fun and spirits, and active in games and sports. He brought a great deal of life into the house, and I particularly enjoyed arranging house parties and diversions for him.

When Hermann died in 1898 my brother Gustav was very much bereft in the business, and Ben was advanced to partnership in Oelrichs & Company. He had the great happiness of winning the hand of Amy Dana of New Haven, whom we all welcomed with affection. They were planning for their marriage within a few months, when in September, 1899, Ben was killed by a fall from a horse, and our home was once more plunged in deepest grief.

My mother was extraordinarily brave, and her remaining children rallied around her. Albert and Louis from this time on spent their

winters at home, leaving Osio in charge of a farmer, and my mother lengthened her Sharon stay in the summer and broke the winter with longer visits to Uncle Herman in town.

After these years of sorrow came a glow of sunshine in my engagement to Henry White of New Haven. He at once endeared himself to my mother and sisters and brought a stimulating element into the family. A happy gathering at the old home on New Year's Day, 1903, introduced him to our own circle and a few old friends. My wedding, May 5, 1903, was made a beautiful occasion by the thought and loving care of my sisters and brothers. There were enough of the family to make sure that all strangers and "groom's side" were well looked after from the time they got out of their carriages at the doorsteps until they were ready to leave.

My brother Henry performed the ceremony in the bay window of the parlor, and we stood there afterward for the reception, as my aunt and cousin had done. The rooms looked their best with masses of apple blossoms and other flowers, and the guests overflowed on the piazzas and lawns, some of them staying to supper and all of us joining in a reel on the grass. The day has left a bright memory in the closing year of our old home.

That summer my mother and sisters, with Uncle Herman, went abroad for a short stay with my aunts, and, returning, finished the season in Sharon. I was settled in New Haven with my husband, and we came down for occasional visits, spending Christmas at Fort Number Eight in company with Christoph and his wife and little girl.

The following summer, in July, 1904, our mother left us, after an illness of only three weeks. She had remained so youthful in mind and so vigorous in body, that it was hard to realize the part-

ing had come. All her remaining children were with her through the last days, and retained a beautiful memory of the outpouring of affection for our mother from all sides.

After that break it was inevitable that Fort Number Eight should pass out of our hands, as there was no one in the family able to carry it on. The taxes had mounted until they consumed one-quarter of my mother's income, and the size of the house was too great for the dwindling numbers of the family. So it proved a fortunate solution when New York University, which adjoined our land, was enabled through the generosity of a friend to purchase our place with that of my brother Hermann, and thus complete their holding. It has been used for university purposes, and will always be a part of a permanent and useful institution.

In dismantling the house prior to turning it over to its purchasers, the disposal of the contents furnished a huge task for my sisters, which they accomplished most ably to everyone's satisfaction. Henrietta developed a veritable genius for thinking up individuals who would appreciate certain things, no old retainer was forgotten, and the various gifts were admirably adjusted to the taste of the recipient.

Over one hundred persons received some sort of memento of Fort Number Eight, so that there are many who still share with us in its valued associations.

For those of us whose lives are woven into its past, it remains a dear and vital memory.

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