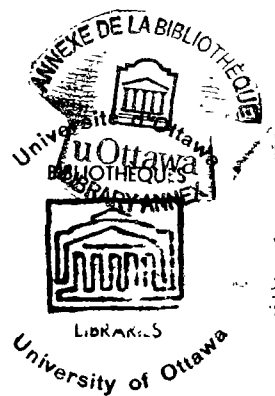


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SOME ASPECTS OF THE GROWTH OF BERKSHIRE COUNTY,
MASSACHUSETTS, AS A RESORT AND CULTURAL CENTER,
1800-1952)

by

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Submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
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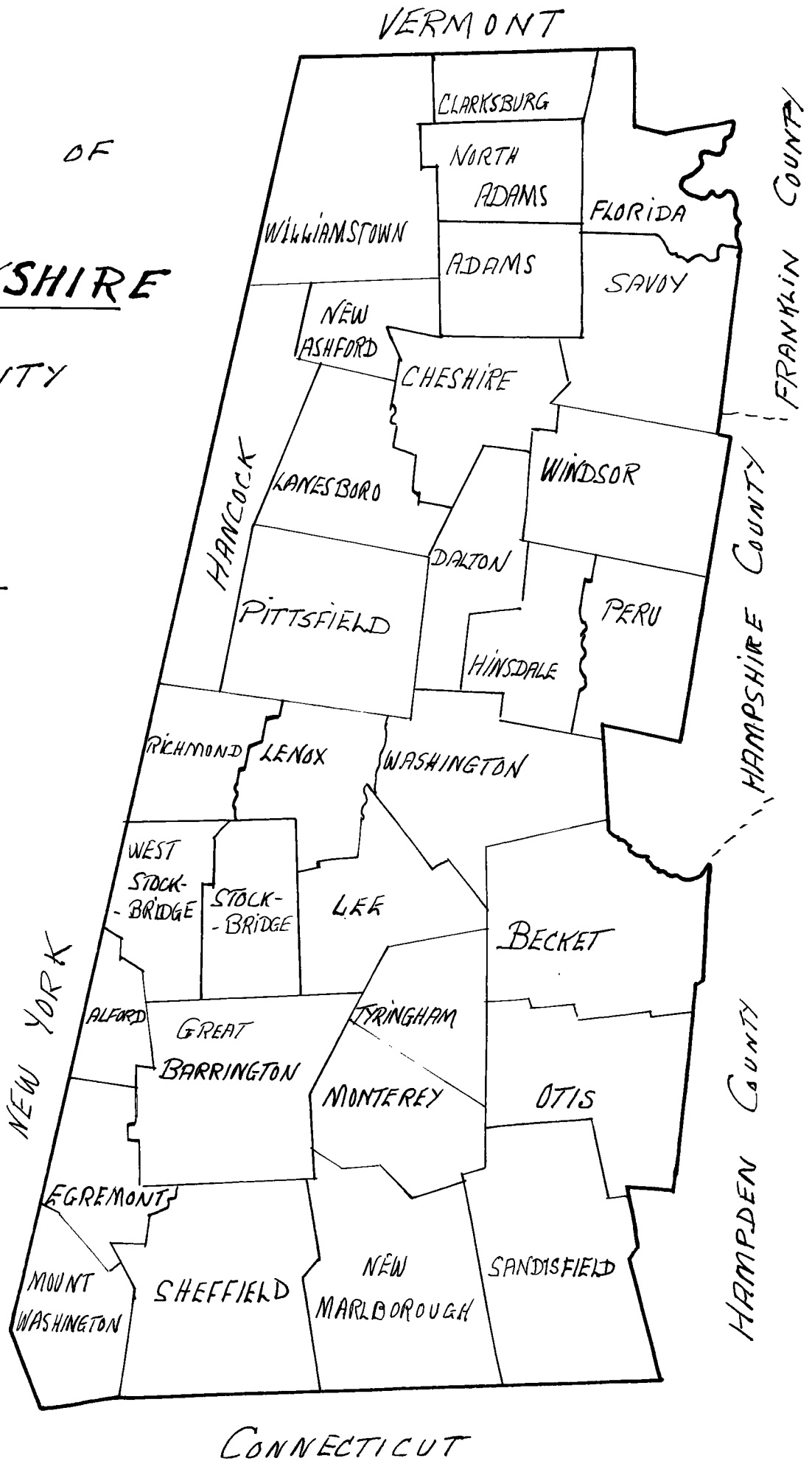
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MAP OF
BERKSHIRE
COUNTY



CHAPTER I

PHYSICAL ASPECTS OF BERKSHIRE COUNTY--HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Berkshire County, Massachusetts, has long been one of America's favorite resort areas. Its appeal was evident at the opening of the nineteenth century, and since has grown steadily throughout the western world.

This work is a study of the County's development as a resort area during one hundred and fifty years. Where Nathaniel Hawthorne once wrote some of his most famous books, now thousands assemble among the pines at Tanglewood to listen to music under the stars.

Basic to this continuing appeal is the eternal beauty of the Berkshire countryside. Yet there are other areas quite as scenic, and one must look further to discover the reasons for its special popularity among vacationers. Its location has always been a large advantage. Accessible to the large populations of the Eastern cities, it has remained far enough away to be immuned to the encroachments of the urban areas which have suffocated resorts nearer the centers of trade.

Further, the happy chance that led literary figures to visit it at the country's beginning provided it with a cultural tradition whose charm has persisted. In the wake of the men of letters came persons of wealth and social position not unimpressed by the artistic reputation the Berkshires had ac-

quired. Magnificent estates began to add social distinction to the county's other appeals. After the turn of the twentieth century, improved roads and easier transportation brought the region within the reach of a larger group of vacationers.

Thus a series of waves - each built upon the continuing strength of its predecessors - have swept across Berkshire County. Artists, millionaires, and week-enders, have responded to its charms, providing a rich diversity to its culture, but all reflecting its resort function.

Berkshire County in Massachusetts, is located in the extreme western end of the state, adjoining New York State to the west, and extends from Connecticut on the south to Vermont on the north. The county is fifty miles in length (north and south), twenty-five miles in width, and contains thirty towns and two cities.¹ It is a region of hills and valleys, lakes and streams. The inexhaustible variety of its vistas is renowned throughout the country.

Into this rugged land the first settlers came in early 1700.² At that time the Massachusetts frontier moved westward into the Connecticut River Valley and there found fertile land, which was rapidly developed.³ Here the western expansion was halted for a short time in spite of the desire of the colony to establish as far west as possible its New York boundary.

1. H. Child, Gazetteer of Berkshire County, I, 2.

2. Ibid.

3. J. G. Holland, History of Western Massachusetts, p. 47.

What halted the frontier at Westfield, Northampton and Deerfield was the steep, forbidding wall of the Berkshire Barrier,¹ clothed in dense forest, and the fear of Indians. But the land urge was too strong to be held permanently in check, and the Massachusetts General Court in 1722 granted petitions of Joseph Parsons and one hundred and fifteen others for two townships in the Berkshire Valley.² In 1725 two additional townships were established, Sheffield and Great Barrington.³ In 1739 the town of Stockbridge was incorporated.⁴ In quick succession thirty towns of western Massachusetts were incorporated and in the year 1761 the County of Berkshire came into existence.⁵ Meanwhile, all the towns which were poor by present standards of living were dependent on their own labor for life's necessities. During most of the eighteenth century it had been a true frontier, inhabited by subsistence farmers and trappers, constantly imperiled by the French to the north and their Indian allies. As a part of the colony of Massachusetts, much of its life was dominated by the Established Congregational Church. In every town the minister was a leading, if not the leading citizen, and all were taxed for his support

1. Ibid., p. 52.

2. General Court, Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Acts and Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, 1722, chap. 14, p. 206. (Hereafter cited as Mass. Acts and Laws.)

3. Mass. Acts and Laws, 1725, chap. 22, p. 107.

4. Ibid., chap. 22, p. 107.

5. Mass. Acts and Laws, 1761, chap. 117, p. 213.

unless they could demonstrate membership in some other faith.¹ Theological questions furnished the chief topic for any intellectual discussion. Among the inhabitants who ranked highest, next to the ministers, were the resident proprietors who had achieved the largest land holdings and made them profitable. Lastly, there seem always to have been lawyers, perhaps because the original land surveys were so sketchy that litigation was constant. These three classes were, for the most part, the educated men of the community.² It was the sons of these classes who went to college, and it was they who founded the famous family lines of Berkshire County - the Edwards line, which included President Dwight of Yale, and Aaron Burr; the Field line, with its four famous sons of the Stockbridge minister; the Sedgwick; the Hopkins line.

At the dawn of the nineteenth century when this study begins, Berkshire County ceased to be a wilderness country. The hill towns of the Berkshires expanded and thrived. The building of turnpikes had begun in the last decade of the previous century, and of course these improved means of transportation helped greatly.³ By 1820 there were several stage lines⁴ going across the region and on to Albany or to Hudson. Inns

1. Thomas Allen, An Historical Sketch of the County of Berkshire and the Town of Pittsfield, p. 20.

2. Ibid.

3. Clark W. Bryan, The New Book of Berkshire, p. 42.

4. Child, Berkshire County Gazetteer, I, 81.

sprang up along the turnpiles which made possible the quicker movement of agricultural products.¹ Small-scale industries arose. There was plenty of water power and wood still standing on the mountain sides to make charcoal for the ironworks, and plenty of top-grade iron ore in the towns of Richmond and Lenox.² Machinery had just been invented for spinning and weaving, and it was natural that this machinery should be set up where sheep were plentiful and spinning already a domestic art. There was also an outside market for all products the region could supply. What happened was that Yankee ingenuity went to work at once to capitalize on the situation, but unfortunately without any consideration of the conservation of natural resources on which any permanent prosperity must depend.

The woolen industry called for large sheep farms, the cheese industry for cattle, the woodworking industries for a steady supply of timber, the iron industry for charcoal. The Berkshire region could not compete with these on a large scale. There was a good topsoil under the virgin timber on the Barrier, but it was a thin layer and soon exhausted after the timber was out. The tannery industry required hemlock bark, and it did not take long to remove the hemlocks. The clear white pine out of which the pioneers had fashioned their homes yielded to the ax. And, while this process was going on, the railroads

1. Ibid.

2. Holland, History of Western Massachusetts, p. 109.

came, the West was opened, and there was the competition of richer soil, vaster resources, and a rapid breakdown of the old economy of local self-sufficiency. It was difficult for the people of that generation to predict the future of Berkshire County. The future was thought by many to be industrial, but even after the advent of the railroads the early trains had difficulty climbing the hills, and the cost of freight prohibited any industrial profits. Nevertheless, as we go through the hill country and mark the signs of ancient industries, their expansion in this earlier era seems almost incredible. Early industries gradually declined, with the railroads by-passing numerous hill towns, and Berkshire County became primarily an agricultural section with the exception of the industries today in its two cities, Pittsfield and North Adams.¹ This study will continually point out that in the early years of the history of Berkshire County the evolution of this section as an eventual resort area was taking place because it had one great asset, the beautiful, natural scenery of its territory which gradually through the years tended to develop a new enterprise which the early settlers never imagined.

The county of Berkshire affords a peculiarly interesting study for to its soil came a sturdy people--men and women who were of that overflow from Puritan Boston which traversed

1. Willard D. Coxey, Ghosts of Old Berkshire, p. 18.

an unbroken wilderness to make homes where savages still roamed, and to conquer primeval nature. The courage, fortitude and activity displayed by these hardy pioneers were most remarkable. When the struggle for national independence came, the sons and daughters of this new country were not wanting in patriotism and devotion. And so too in each generation and at every stage of progress the people of Berkshire County have come into prominence both in war and peace, in statesmanship and in letters.

As this study is concerned with the growth of Berkshire County as a resort and cultural center, a short review of each town and of the two cities in the county will now be presented to offer a complete and fuller picture of this particular section of the United States which today attracts thousands of visitors from both here and abroad.

Adams

The valley in which lies nestled the busy town of Adams is about four miles long. The south branch of the Hoosac runs quite swiftly through it,¹ finding its way out of the south end of the valley which at this point is practically closed in,² through a narrow defile. High hills and ragged peaks with their wooded slopes and rocky crowns form an almost complete

1. Child, Gazetteer of Berkshire County, I, 27.

2. Ibid.

barrier which is nearly impassable.¹

To Adams belongs the honor of owning Greylock, the highest peak in the state, a point about 3,535 feet above sea level and seen from almost every town in the Berkshires.² Greylock is the pride not only of Adams but of all Berkshires. Poets and writers have vied with each other in song and prose in praise of Greylock, a name applied to the peak because of its resemblance to the grey locks of an old man when the stern old summit is crowned with the frosts of late autumn and early winter.

Adams was colonized first by the Quakers.³ They came in 1726 from Rhode Island and, after trying to mine gold on Mt. Greylock, settled down to farming.⁴ The town was incorporated in 1749 and grew steadily.⁵ The census of 1880 showed Adams had a population of 5,591.⁶ The numerous early short-lived industries disappeared and today Adams is a center mainly for cotton spinning, and its lime companies.⁷

Adams is no summer resort; the town today is much of a

-
1. Holland, History of Western Massachusetts, p. 24.
 2. J. A. E. Smith, History of Berkshire County, I, 442.
 3. Holland, History of Western Massachusetts, p. 203.
 4. Child, Gazetteer of Berkshire County, I, 186.
 5. Ibid.
 6. Ibid.
 7. The Berkshire Eagle, June 4, 1950.

manufacturing center and its industries are too much within the village to make it attractive to vacationers. Outside the village country homes are endless and summer visitors live in sweet rural atmosphere. Within the past years there has been an advance in permanent homes of architectural beauty, and the hillsides scattered through and about the town afford rare sites for them.

Susan B. Anthony, the pioneer for "women's rights," was born in Adams, in 1820.¹ The birthplace of this famous suffragist in Adams is a shrine to those women who have struggled for political and legal equality.

Alford

Alford lies in the southwestern part of the county and is bounded on the northeast by West Stockbridge, on the east by West Stockbridge and Great Barrington, south by Egremont and west by Hillsdale and Austerlitz, New York. The township is extremely irregular in outline, being about five miles in length and approximately three miles in width and containing about eleven thousand acres of territory.²

Its present choice possession is the Green River, a very picturesque and historical stream, with its source among the highlands of the southwestern part of the town, flowing through a charming valley and meandering through Egremont and

1. Child, Gazetteer of Berkshire County, I, 34.

2. Smith, History of Berkshire County, I, 586.

Great Barrington till it unites with the Housatonic. This latter stream has the honor of having inspired the pen of William Cullen Bryant to write the fine descriptive poem which begins:

When the breezes are soft, and the skies are fair,
I steal an hour from study and care
And hie me away to the woodland scene,
Where wanders the stream with waters of green,
As if the bright fringe of herbs on its brink
Had given their stain to the wave they drink.
And they whose meadows it murmurs through
Have named the stream from its own fair hue...¹

Alford was incorporated as a town in 1773. The early small-scale industries of the town declined with the years and Alford became a purely agricultural community. Today it is a quiet village and a resort area which attracts innumerable summer visitors who become attached to the place for its rustic peculiarities, its native beauty and wild forests. The tempo of the town has not changed with the coming of "summer people" who have built fine new homes and restored old farm houses that had succumbed to desolation.

Becket

Becket lies in the eastern part of the county. It is bounded north by Washington, northeast by Hampshire County, east by Hampden County, south by Otis, and west by Tyringham, Lee and Washington.² Its general elevation is about 1200 feet,

1. Beatrice Hart, Seven Great American Poets, p. 26.

2. Child, Gazetteer of Berkshire County, I, 213.

accounting for its delightfully cool and invigorating breezes.¹
The scenery is wild and vigorous in places, with boulders of
almost every kind around. It is indeed one of the summit
towns of the county, and a quiet, thrifty community.

In 1880 Becket had a population of 1,123.² The early
settlers were mostly from Connecticut.³ The only industry
that ever entered Becket was a basket factory which was
established in 1795 and is still in existence today, having
passed down from generation to generation.⁴ Today Becket
Center still has only a tiny town hall and a white Congrega-
tional Church which dates from 1780 and boasts a bell made by
Paul Revere.⁵

Cheshire

Cheshire, incorporated in March 14, 1793,⁶ lies in the
northern central part of the county. It has an area of about
18,000 acres enclosed within an outline more irregular than
that of any other town in the county.⁷ Its boundary has

-
1. Smith, History of Berkshire County, I, 597.
 2. Holland, History of Western Massachusetts, p. 183.
 3. Ibid., p. 185.
 4. Ibid.
 5. Albert B. Hart, Commonwealth History of Massachusetts,
p. 241.
 6. Child, Gazetteer of Berkshire County, I, 476.
 7. Holland, History of Western Massachusetts, II, 476.

twenty-five angles, obtuse, right and acute, all of varying degrees. It is said that in laying out the town the western line was drawn with reference to the religious views of the settlers, taking the farms of the Baptist families into Cheshire and leaving the Presbyterians in Lanesboro, resulting in a boundary very much like a rail fence.

The surface of the town is sufficiently diversified by hill and mountain to form a pleasing landscape, containing soil which yields, in general, good farming and grazing lands. The Hoosac River flows a northerly course through a rich and fertile valley in the central part of the town. On either side of this valley rise gentle hill slopes and mountain crests, affording many excellent dairy farms for which the town has for many years been justly renowned.

Visitors reared in the proper historical traditions naturally hope to find cheese in Cheshire. Once this little town was known throughout the country for its cheeses, the most famous of which is actually commemorated. A large sign on the main highway in the center of Cheshire reads:

NEAR THIS SPOT

WAS MADE, IN 1801,

THE GREAT CHESHIRE CHEESE

Weighing 1,235 lbs., One Day's Product
of the Town's Dairies, Moulded in a
Cider Press, It was drawn by Oxen to
Hudson, N. Y., And shipped by water to
Washington, It was presented at the White

House to President

THOMAS JEFFERSON

As a Token of Regard from the Citizens of
¹
CHESHIRE

"The Great Cheese" symbolized Cheshire's satisfaction with the election of Thomas Jefferson to the Presidency in 1800. The idea of creating this monster among edibles was put forth by a clergyman of Cheshire, Elder John Leland. A friend of Jefferson, he thought the town should send the new executive a testimonial of esteem. Most appropriate would naturally be a Cheshire product without peer in size or quality - cheese, of course. The gargantuan delicacy was eaten by President Jefferson, by members of his cabinet, and by various foreign and domestic dignitaries. And even though the White House servants got their wedge, after six months cheese was still in evidence.

In Cheshire Center, next to the Cheese sign, is the old
²
CHESHIRE INN, built in 1797. In stagecoach days glass blowers, lime burners, iron miners, and woodsmen stopped here to regale themselves with rum or flip.
³
The inn, known at that time as the Hoosac Valley House, was the favorite meeting place of glass blowers, many of whom lived in Cheshire, the first

1. Child, Gazetteer of Berkshire County, I, 114.

2. Holland, History of Western Massachusetts, p. 212.

3. Child, Gazetteer of Berkshire County, I, 126.

Berkshire town to take up glass manufacturing as a major occu-
1
pation. The excellent sandbeds in the vicinity are said by
local authorities to have been used in the production of cut
glass and plate glass, but "pressed glass," a specialty
of Sandwich industry, was never manufactured in this town.

Though the manufacture of blown glass, plate and window
glass all began in Cheshire before spreading to other Berk-
shire towns, it survives today only as a quarrying operation
in one locality, about a mile out of the village near the south
2
shore of Hoosac Lake. The principal contemporary industry
has become the processing of lime for building and allied
3
purposes.

Clarksburg

Clarksburg lies in the extreme northern part of the
county. The town was incorporated March 10, 1789, receiving
its name in honor of the numerous families of Clarks residing
4
in the town at the time.

The surface of the territory is uneven and mountainous,
Hoosac Mountain lying on its eastern border and Bald Mountain

1. Ibid., p. 128.

2. Ibid., p. 131.

3. Ibid.

4. Child, Gazetteer of Berkshire County, I, 123.

on the west. The latter elevation, sometimes also called "Clarksburg Mountain," attains an altitude of 2,272 feet, affording an excellent view of Greylock and other mountains of the surrounding country.¹

The town proper today, small and scattered, has no church, no lawyer, and no physician. Here there is no summer or tourist trade, nor has the community made any effort to make known its really fine resources. Back among the hills and narrow valleys live descendants of the old Yankee stock, still wresting a fair living from the soil. They find a ready market for their dairy and garden products in North Adams,² but for the beauty of their surroundings they have no sale since they have not yet peddled it to outsiders.

Hence, the town is primarily agricultural. Architecture of modern style has obtained no foothold here, and the town's best attraction is still what a lavish nature has scattered so profusely on every side, something which is better appreciated by sight than by description. With reference to its natural setting, Clarksburg is a typical New England village.

Dalton

On the banks of the Housatonic, rimmed by hills, lies

1. Ibid., p. 124.

2. Ibid., p. 127.

the industrial town of Dalton. It is situated just north of the central part of the county. It is bounded north by Cheshire, east by Windsor and Hinsdale, south by Hinsdale and Washington, and west by Cheshire, Lanesboro and Pittsfield. It was originally known as "Ashuelot Equivalent" for the reason that it was granted to Oliver Partridge and others of Hatfield as an equivalent for a township of Winchester, New Hampshire.¹ In 1784 the township was incorporated under the name it now bears, given in honor of Honorable Tristram Dalton,² then Speaker of the House of Representatives.

The surface of the town is, in general, rough and broken, especially in the northern and southern parts. Through its central section, from northeast to southwest, extends a beautiful valley through which flows a branch of the Housatonic. This stream, while lending charm to its surrounding scenic beauties, also affords many excellent mill privileges. This fact was not lost sight of by Zenas Crame when he came to the Berkshire Hills in 1799 prospecting for an eligible site for the establishment of the first paper mill in western Massachusetts.³ The limpid stream together with the springs of exceptionally pure water he found in the surrounding hills led him to locate in Dalton. Since then, this nar-

1. Holland, History of Western Massachusetts, II, 481.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid., p. 484.

row valley has gained world-wide prominence for the fine paper it produces. The Government Mill manufactures all the paper for the United States Government paper money.¹ In these mills are made the bank-note paper used by the national banks and the paper used by the United States Government for currency and bonds,² also paper for the currency and bonds of other governments. They also make high quality parchment, drawing and tracing papers, parchment deed, antique letter, artificial parchment, onion skin, map, and other papers. These are the highest priced papers made in this country, possessing great strength and wearing qualities.³

Yet the fact that Dalton is the home of so many large manufacturing establishments might create the naturally assumed impression that it is not a desirable summer home. This idea is wrong, for Dalton is one of the loveliest towns in Massachusetts, due largely to the Crane and Weston families which have made it notable as the home of fine papers. The mills are all located in the valleys and almost hidden from sight, so that the town has none of the appearances of ordinary New England manufacturing communities. The approach from Pittsfield is bordered by the red brick mansions of the Cranes, surrounded by fresh green lawns and trees which almost dis-

1. Albert B. Hart, Commonwealth History of Massachusetts, p. 318.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid., p. 319.

guise the mills along the Housatonic. Specifically, Dalton is delightfully located and has some of the most beautiful small Colonial dwellings in the state.

There is a great deal of natural scenery in Dalton, which lies sequestered in the busy valley through which flows the east branch of the everlasting Housatonic. Beautiful Day Mountain, seven hundred feet above the surrounding country, rises on the south of the village, and presents an outstanding view of the county. On the south also, and at the foot of the hill runs the old road from Pittsfield to Hinsdale over which Burgoyne's army was marched as prisoner on its way to Boston.¹

Egremont

Egremont, in the southwestern part of the county, first settled by the Dutch in 1730, is made up of two unspoiled New England villages in the Taconic Valley.² The larger, South Egremont, once a stagecoach stop on the Albany to Hartford, Connecticut, road, was a humming industrial settlement with grist and saw mills on Goodale Brook.³ Gradually these early industries declined and the people almost unknowingly began to

1. Child, Gazetteer of Berkshire County, I, 131.

2. Holland, History of Western Massachusetts, II, 486.

3. Ibid.

capitalize on their natural surroundings. Today it is a center for tourists who wish to catch a glimpse of that old New England atmosphere. Many of its early buildings have been restored with an authentic eighteenth century charm.

The scenery about the town is very beautiful, this fact alone bringing many visitors. The added attraction today is its skiing facilities. There are many trails for experts around Catamount Mountain, and eleven ski tows are running all winter. With its western boundary touching Columbia County, New York, visitors from this latter state are numerous, summer and winter, spring and fall.

Situated midway between the excellent facilities, busy life and social brightness of Great Barrington on the one hand, and the airy, prospect-commanding summits of Mount Washington on the other, this pleasant little village always receives a generous share of Berkshire's visitors, eventually establishing for the town a resort economy.

Florida

The town of Florida in Berkshire County is the exact opposite of the state of the same name. It lies in the extreme northeastern corner of the county and has a cold climate of long, severe winters and very short summers. It was incorporated as a town June 15, 1805, the northern point being previously taken by Bernardstown in compensation by a town of that

name in running the line between Massachusetts and Vermont.¹

Florida lies upon the summit of the Green Mountain range, and contains some of the finest mountain scenery in the State, and is also noted for being tunneled its entire width from east to west by the celebrated Hoosac Tunnel.² Hoosac Mountain, which extends nearly the whole length of the town, rises to a height of 1,448 feet above Deerfield River, and provides the visitor with some of the most attractive and magnificent views in all northern Berkshire County. The topography is an unbroken succession of hills and valleys which attracts thousands of tourists yearly.

Great Barrington

Great Barrington, today's shopping center of southern Berkshire County, lies in the southwestern part of the county. Hills surround the town on all sides. Best known is Monument Mountain whose stone face gazes serenely over the landscape. It is four miles from the town center, and its choice possession. It does not rise more than five hundred feet above the plain and 1,250 feet above tide water,³ but it is famous for its views of extraordinary beauty from its summit and from its dizzy precipice. Its eastern side is an almost perpendicular

1. Smith, History of Berkshire County, II, 460.

2. Ibid.

3. Child, Gazetteer of Berkshire County, p. 249.

wall of white granular quartz. It derives its name from a pile of rocks which legend says were left by the Indians to appease the Great Spirit for the punishment of an Indian maiden.¹ She had been hurled off the mountain top because she had married a brave from another tribe. William Cullen Bryant made this mountain famous by his poem "Monument Mountain" of which we shall speak in a later chapter. In a cave on this hillside Nathaniel Hawthorne and Herman Melville met² during a thunderstorm and started their famous friendship. The mountain is a popular place for climbers.

The largest town in southern Berkshire, Great Barrington is the natural trading and business center for a surrounding rural population. Alford, Egremont, Monterey and other neighboring towns all come here for their shopping, and to sell their farm produce. In summer the design for life in the town is changed due to the influx of summer visitors and is marked by such little things as news stands piled high with New York, Philadelphia and other Metropolitan papers. Tradesmen are alert and eager to tell you about their town and the resources, their tongues loosened by frequent conversation with a type of customer not usually found in the average small town.

The fastidious character of the growing summer trade

1. Ibid., p. 250.

2. Holland, History of Western Massachusetts, p. 332.

has led to the passage of careful zoning regulations against garish "improvements." Townspeople have tried to keep gaso-line stations and unsightly corners from destroying the charm of the community. Great Barrington has something of the dignity of Stockbridge, but there is a subdued bustle and an unconscious air of sophistication, which Stockbridge does not possess. The isolation of the town's small factories helps to preserve an appearance of planned beauty.

Almost the whole of the permanent population, except the mill workers of the Housatonic, has some contact with the recreation business. The sale, development and improvement of property employ real estate agents, contractors, carpenters, masons and plumbers. A retinue of cooks, gardeners, waiters, waitresses, maids, handymen, caddies, hostelers and even dog trainers serve the wealthy in summer.

Hancock

Beyond New Ashford, in a secluded valley among the Taconics, lies Hancock. It is a sprawling township, a strip of land one third the width of the State on its western border, and only two miles wide. One might say it is a long, ungainly town so badly located that the inhabitants of one end cannot reach the other without going out of town, and mostly out of the county or out of the state. Houses and farms are scattered down a narrow valley seven miles long, following the course of the branches of the Green and Kinderhook Rivers. It is hemmed

in by steep mountains on both sides, accounting for its original name of "Jericho."¹ Its principal attraction is its natural beauty. It is not a resort to any extent, and the homes are of the architecture of other times. This town was sold by the General Court to the actual settlers in 1789. The territory originally called "Jericho" was incorporated August 26, 1776,² as a separate township under the name of "Hancock," the name being given in honor of Honorable John Hancock, then president of the Continental Congress, and after governor of the State. The town has never witnessed a major change within itself, and not being suitable for industry nor farming, is not expecting any change whatsoever along these lines. It is following with keen interest the resort transition of its neighbors and taking stock of its own potentialities with the same economic trend in mind.

In the town there is a Shaker Village of great historical significance. The great circular stone barn built by the Shakers is still an historical sight. Only a remnant of the once prosperous Shaker family remains today. Now and then a gentle-faced Shaker lady in bonnet, sober gown and antiquated cape is seen on the streets of Pittsfield, although the elders of the sect have not appeared there for some years. They keep their houses freshly painted, lawns trimmed and paths care-

1. Smith, History of Berkshire County, II, 417.

2. Child, Gazetteer of Berkshire County, I, 164.

fully marked. Within their old brick dormitory they guard their precious antiques. A small store sells handicraft work to passersby during the spring and summer, but otherwise there is total loneliness in this moribund community, one of the last of its kind in the United States.

Hinsdale

Hinsdale is located on the high lands of the county, on the main line of the Boston and Albany railroad, which at the station is 1,431 feet above tide water.¹ The Ashmere Reservoir, in the eastern part of the town covers several acres on the road to Peru Center, and the Plunkett Reservoir,² covering many acres, is in the southwestern part of the town.

The first settlement in Hinsdale was started in 1763 by David and Francis Miller from Middlebury, Connecticut. The latter, in 1771, built the first grist and saw mill in the town. From this time up to 1800, the settlement was increased quite rapidly, most of the settlers coming from Connecticut.

This sporadic shift in population gave Hinsdale a tempting promise of a great future. A century ago its five woolen mills, cotton factory, tannery, two bedstead factories, and saw mills rivaled the industrial prospects of its northwestern

1. Smith, History of Berkshire County, II, 76.

2. Ibid., p. 76.

neighbor, Dalton. The manufacture of army cloth created another temporary boom in Hinsdale during World War I, but since the 1920's all manufacturing has been abandoned. The town is today reduced to a typical backwoods hamlet, without any industries, and dependent for a livelihood upon farming, for which it is not particularly suited. The Christmas business, the summer tourist trade and employment afforded by neighboring communities are the backbone of its present economy. But having once tasted the grandeur of some industrial success, however modest comparatively speaking, its present day citizens are not content with their economic status and are, therefore, making a strong bid for more summer business, thus becoming another good example for our present analysis which shows a definite, specific transition of the Berkshires from an industrial to a resort economy.

The exportation of Christmas trees, ferns and other greenery is the present chief industry. The pioneer in this business was Louis B. Bague, a native of the town, who started a modest Christmas tree export enterprise eighty years ago, doing all the work himself. Today, about two hundred men and women, most of them independent, are occupied each fall and winter preparing evergreen trees for shipment to city markets. An average of forty thousand trees, thousands of cartons of spruce and balsam boughs and millions of delicate ferns are shipped annually to Boston, New York, Chicago, Philadelphia

and even as far south as New Orleans.

Before closing our review of Hinsdale, mention should be made of Lake Ashmere, christened by no less a personage than William Cullen Bryant himself, who stopped one day to admire the native ash trees lining its shores. The lake is almost completely surrounded by summer homes and camps. Although widely different in character and background, the various camps are dedicated to the common purpose of providing healthy outdoor life for young people. Therefore hundreds of city dwellers send their youngsters every year to them, and Hinsdale, eager to have them, reaps a goodly profit from them.

Lanesboro

Adjoining Pittsfield on the north, Lanesboro, or Lanesborough, is the northern town of the Housatonic Valley. Its scenery and attractions as in every other Berkshire town, are peculiarly its own. With wooded heights, fruitful hillsides, blossoming valleys and picturesque scenery at every turn, it is an interesting place. Pontoosuc Lake is partly in Pittsfield and partly in this town, with the shores of either community lined with attractive groves, pavilions, and its waters decked with sail and motor boats, thus lending itself popular as a summer resort. Compared with other small towns, Lanesboro's population of 2,169 seems almost a metropolis. However, when compared with Pittsfield and North Adams, Lanesboro is a very small village indeed. Set upon two hills north of Pittsfield,

it stands halfway between the silence of the mountains and the bustle of the city, and has taken on something of the character of both, resulting in a New England village on the edge of the torrent of traffic which rushes constantly north and south. Streams of trucks crawling up the grades and rushing down on the other side prove that all Berkshire County is not somnolent. Modern industry, supplying food and raiment to the outside world, sends out a continuous line of diesel and gasoline trucks that rumble ceaselessly through these otherwise quiet hermitages, and Lanesboro is one of the busiest in this respect.

During the nineteenth century, Lanesboro was a prosperous mining and manufacturing town. In 1822 it boasted five hotels, three tanneries, two hatteries, five shoe shops, three tailor shops, a harness maker, five blacksmith shops, a grinding mill, ¹ five sawmills, and one shop for making spinning wheels. When iron was discovered, the Briggs Iron Company ² was formed to manufacture soft iron. This was in 1847. Then J. L. Colby took over the company, in 1864, and the manufacture of car-wheel iron was begun. ³ The property covered ⁴ four or five hundred acres of woodland and employed 200 men.

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1. Child, Gazetteer of Berkshire County, I, 182.
 2. Ibid.
 3. Ibid., p. 184.
 4. Ibid.

Of even greater importance were the marble quarries which by 1840 had attained prominence in that trade. The marble was of the purest white or of interestingly variegated colors. In 1842 and 1843 the industry supplied the rest of the country with more than two hundred thousand dollars worth of its valuable stone.¹

When the absence of railroad connections made Lanesboro's industries less lucrative, a change was inevitable. Having relinquished its own manufactures, Lanesboro turned to its own natural surroundings, so that now it has established a resort economy and is a typical example of our analysis of the gradual transition of Berkshire County into a cultural and resort area.

Lee

Geographically, Lee is a very irregularly outlined town in the southern part of the county. It is bounded on the northeast by Washington, east by Becket, south by Tyringham and Great Barrington, and west and north by Stockbridge and Lenox. It was incorporated into a township in 1777 with a population of one hundred and fifty.²

Lee, located in the Housatonic Valley, 135 miles from both New York and Boston, is a quiet, and unostentatious town. It is frequented by many summer and winter resort visitors.

1. Ibid., p. 188.

2. Mass. Acts and Laws, 1777, chap. 39, p. 15.

It is noted for its small marble and lime quarries, and for its paper mills which turn out fine paper including cigarette paper and India paper used in Bibles. Lee marble, among the hardest found in the country, was used in the construction of the Capitol in Washington, Grant's Tomb, St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York, and numerous other buildings.

Lenox

Lenox occupies nearly a central position in the county. The territory was incorporated as a town in 1765. Lenox received its name as did Richmond, in honor of Charles Lenox, Duke of Richmond, an early defender in the House of Lords, of American colonial rights.

It is a conspicuous feature of Berkshire County towns that though they all owe a kinship to Berkshire characteristics, yet they have differentiated into individualities peculiar to each one. Lenox bears the stamp of an external hand more than any other town so that it is controlled and regulated to a large extent by people who migrate to it a portion of the year only. The native influence has not been completely extinguished perhaps, but it is all subservient to the newcomers. Lenox has been moulded into one of the most singular

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1. Smith, History of Berkshire County, II, 124.
 2. Mass. Acts and Laws, 1765, chap. 30, p. 87.
 3. Child, Gazetteer of Berkshire County, I, 205.

of Berkshire towns. It has often been termed "The Inland Newport."¹ People of wealth and fashion flock to it in the summer and their number increases in the autumn when the Newport, Rhode Island, season wanes.

But Lenox never can attain a social character that will in the least obscure the work of nature. Here, as in neighboring towns, the beautiful and the picturesque, after types of their own, admit no rivalry. No civilized people can behold Lenox without coveting an incessant inspiration of the spirit of its landscape.

The discoverer of Lenox was the famous Charles Sedgwick; that is, he was the first discoverer to make his discovery known. He responded to the natural beauties of the locale, and through his wide acquaintance he made them and the town known to many people of taste and intelligence who in turn noised abroad the delightful character of the region.² The social life of Lenox was especially notable during the period when it was dominated by Catherine Maria Sedgwick.

But the town is gradually being settled permanently by people who have come here to establish country homes so that the almost complete acquisition of the township's territory by these people is in the near future. Already large portions of Lenox and Stockbridge constitute a huge garden, and it cannot

1. DeWitt R. Mallery, Lenox and the Berkshire Highlands, p. 14.

2. Ibid., p. 147.

be many years before their whole region shall be one magnificent park, tenanted by happy landowners. The town is better in many ways for the growing demand for summer homes here in the leading resort of Berkshire.

Monterey

Monterey boasts one of the most beautiful of Berkshire County lakes, Lake Garfield, named after the late President Garfield, a summer resident. It is a mile from the village, and for its absolute seclusion and the wildness of its surroundings, is a favorite camping site of southern Berkshire. At the northern end of the lake is a natural curiosity that has attracted much attention - a floating island, two hundred feet or more long, that rises and falls regularly with the water.¹

Monterey used to be called "Green Woods," an appropriate name. When the southern part of Tyringham became a separate town during the Mexican War, patriotic selectmen wished to name it in commemoration of General Zachary Taylor's battles in Mexico and Texas, but Palo Alto and Buena Vista were too foreign sounding. Monterey was musical and not too hard to pronounce,² so Monterey it became.

Monterey today is a beautiful summer resort, and the

1. Child, Gazetteer of Berkshire County, I, 221.

2. Ibid.

town is now largely dependent on the summer people who have built new homes or restored old ones. Yet, only seventy years ago it was an industrial center, with cotton mills, and a plant for manufacturing paper.

Monterey's development as a "summer town" commenced in 1894 with the building of several cottages along the southern shore of Lake Garfield. The number of cottages increased, camps for boys and girls were established, and by 1930 the total summer population approached eighteen hundred. The Berkshire Art School, a mile above the lake, was founded by Raymond P. Ensign in 1915 and is open for six weeks during the summer months.

Mount Washington

In the very far corner of the State, on the mountain-fringed plateau south of Egremont and two thousand feet above all neighboring towns is the tiny hamlet of Mount Washington, with its thirty hardy inhabitants. The only approach to Mount Washington from Massachusetts is a narrow gravel road climbing out of South Egremont along a small shelf of land. No state highway, no railroad, and no store serve the town. It is one of the highest communities in the county and, of course, in the State.¹ The habitable part of the mountain is a broad valley on the slopes of which a few people live, with many

1. Child, Gazetteer of Berkshire County, I, 226.

mountain summits rising above them. There are many places of interest on this mountain, remarkable for extensive wild and beautiful scenery. There is no mountain outlook in Berkshire that equals the view from the top of the Dome (Mount Everett).¹ The town was incorporated in 1779.

Mount Washington is the most isolated and backwoods town in Berkshire County. In winter, the hamlet is locked up by narrow snow-filled roads and slippery, impassable hillsides. Yet, out here in the isolation of Mount Washington one sees the luxurious Cadillacs and liveried chauffeurs of swank visitors invading the community in the summer time.

The center of the town - a white church of small dimensions and a town hall that resembles a woodshed - occupies a lonely clearing at a crossroad. One would never know it for the "center" of a town unless informed of it by some native.

New Ashford

Five times in twenty years this mountain village of New Ashford has made the front page of newspapers from Maine to California. New Ashford was the first in the nation to have its presidential choice recorded. It cast its twenty-five or thirty votes first, five times, until 1936 when Millsfield, New Hampshire, won the title.² Today, New Ashford

1. Mass. Acts and Laws, 1779, chap. 36, p. 57.

2. The Berkshire Eagle, November 7, 1936.

boasts a population of one hundred and fifty people. It is a quiet, lonely town, which has grown to maturity in the silence of the hills.

The town is a picturesque gorge, lying between the giant foothills of Saddle Ball Mountain, on the east, and a spur of the Taconic Mountain on the west. The scenery is grand and the drives provide appealing sensuous panoramic delights particularly in the part of the old country road between Pittsfield and Williamstown which passes through what is locally termed the "Switzerland of the Berkshires."

Sugar Loaf is a shapely mountain with several small caves, and dens, which have been the lairs of coons and mountain cats for ages.¹ An autumn hunt at night for these animals is among the attractions of the place.

New Marlboro

Secluded, quiet and healthful, New Marlboro boasts of being at an elevation of 1,470 feet above sea level.² The whole village is an elevated plateau of more than one thousand acres.

As in other Berkshire County hill towns, New Marlboro is isolated. Manufactured goods and farms produce were exported by wagon and ox team in the old days, but the advent of the railroad through Berkshire County in the 1840's diverted

1. Child, Gazetteer of Berkshire County, I, 229.

2. Ibid., p. 235.

all traffic toward towns more advantageously situated. This southern Berkshire settlement watched factories move away, and men grow tired of farming worn-out lands.

However, the isolation that once crippled this and other Berkshire villages now prove their saving grace. Today, the region is a haven for summer people in quest of hills, rivers, and the smell of growing things after months of subway jams and city uproar. To the practical Yankees of the villages, the summer "army of occupation" means a market for farm produce and a season of employment. They would never willingly admit that they rather welcome contact with urban sophistication and that doings and sayings of the warm-weather transients provide topics of conversation all winter long.

New Marlboro village is most interesting historically as a reflection of Old Yankee New England. Prim, white houses cluster about the village green. The little white church set apart near the head of the common is crowned with a dome in place of the traditional New England spire. Even the newcomers have restored old homes in keeping with the traditional architectural patterns.

In times past the village was the midway station of the old stagecoach line operating from Hartford to Albany, and could claim taverns, fine houses and a population of over two thousand, of which only a few scattered families remain. The oldest house in the New Marlboro township is the Richardson

House, built in 1745.¹ In this sturdy, square structure, with low ceilings and enormous fireplaces was born Mrs. Smith Richardson, who initiated the practice of putting small American flags² on the graves of soldiers buried in national cemeteries.

North Adams

North Adams is one of the two cities of Berkshire County; it is an industrial city lying in the Hoosac Valley among the northern Berkshires. It manufactures a variety of products from electric condensers to shoes and textiles.

Largest of the North Adams firms is the Sprague Electric Company, one of the most important suppliers in the United States of component parts for the electrical and electronic industries.

North Adams enterprise and perseverance went into the cutting of the Hoosac Tunnel, an impressive engineering feat of its day. This tunnel, almost five miles long, was bored through solid rock under the Hoosac Mountain at a cost of 195 lives and \$20,000,000.³ It was begun in 1851 and not completed until 24 years later.

North Adams is the start of the famous Mohawk Trail

1. Ibid., p. 237.

2. Ibid., p. 238.

3. David D. Field, History of Berkshire County, II, 288.

which receives its name from the old Indian path from the Hudson River over the Hoosac Mountain.¹ As you ascend the trail the scenery grows wilder till you reach Hairpin Turn, where the road curves back on itself. An observation tower affords a spectacular panorama of northern Berkshire and southern Vermont.

North Adams has been fertile soil for a crop of inventors. Among those of greatest fame was the late Frank J. Sprague who received his early education in this city. His great inventions were all in the field of electrical engineering. For his electrical motors he received recognition both at home and abroad.

Otis

Otis, sloping down to the valley of Farmington, has always been noted for the number and beauty of its so-called "ponds." Those who never care how far removed they may be from railway facilities, or good highways, find these "ponds" a never failing delight. The largest, lying off in a lonely wooded basin near East Otis, Rand Pond, is known throughout Berkshire County and northwestern Connecticut as an unrivalled fishing place. It looks much like an Adirondack lake, so wild are the surroundings. In the southern part of Rand Pond is a floating island of considerable extent. It is composed of

1. Child, Gazetteer of Berkshire County, I, 247.

debris and the tangled and matted roots of shrubbery, and when one walks over it a quaking motion is imparted to it. Thirteen lakes, great and small, are situated in this town.¹

Otis, like other mountain towns, has been modified somewhat by modern city folks, but seems to enjoy it. A cluster of houses, two old churches, the schoolhouse, the Town Hall, a dance hall, a garage and a general store - that is Otis Center, the civic heart of the town.

Peru

The windswept village of Peru, highest town in Massachusetts, is on the very top of the Washington Mountain range, 2,295 feet above sea level.² Its only paved road is the stretch of state highway which passes through some of the most beautiful country in Berkshire County, on its way to Hinsdale. This was once part of the stage line from Boston to Albany, and the coaches stopped at Peru to rest the horses and refresh the passengers.

Peru Center consists of a small white church, an even smaller white town hall, a schoolhouse, and five houses, two of which have no tenants. The remaining farmhouses are scattered along the narrow dirt roads leading from the center. Here live the rest of Peru's 151 inhabitants.³ The town is

1. Field, History of Berkshire County, II, 316.

2. Ibid., p. 441.

3. Census of 1950.

built on an isolated knoll rising above a swampy plateau. Scrub spruce trees, which impede a view of the mountain and valleys, give Peru the wild, somber aspect of a more northern region.

Peru has always been primarily an agricultural township. There is no post office, and even delivery trucks do not range into the back country. When the farmers come to town with their produce, they do their week's shopping. Families in these back hills usually stock up a winter's supply in the autumn.

Pittsfield

Pittsfield, the shire town of the county, lies in the western central part of the county. It was incorporated in 1761,¹ the name of the town being selected in honor of the English statesman, William Pitt.²

Pittsfield today is a city of fifty-three thousand, and the industrial and commercial center of Berkshire county. Its altitude of over 1,000 feet above sea level,³ its lakes and parks, its golf courses and surrounding hills make it a superb resort city as well.

The surface of Pittsfield is moderately uneven, almost entirely surrounded by mountain ranges, forming, as it were,

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1. Mass. Acts and Laws, 1761, chap. 27, p. 18.
 2. Child, Gazetteer of Berkshire County, I, 345.
 3. Smith, History of Pittsfield, I, 22.

an elevated basin of rare loveliness. It has six sparkling lakes, numerous ponds and brooks, a complete mat of unbroken forest in all directions, and many fine roads leading to and away from it. All of Pittsfield's industrial units are located well within the urban area and so do not affect the city's idyllic setting. Even within the city these factories have always done their maximum best to keep noise, smoke and unsightliness at a minimum, contributing no end to the city's attraction for outsiders.

There is no end of views in this beautiful city, whether in the city proper, on its approaches or on the outskirts. Greylock Mountain looms up into the blue in the north, with fitting pride and grandeur; the rime of mountains and hills all around supported by green vegetation or glistening white snow depending on the season, forms a definite demarcation with the vaulted sky, and confines the city to specific limits.

Traffic surveys taken at the main junctions in the city show that the weekends of summer and autumn bring cars from nearly every state in the Union and from most of the Canadian provinces. Despite large industrial developments, Pittsfield has in its vicinity many natural beauties. The fine lakes north and west of the city are the natural centers of the large playground area of Berkshire County.

It is also a city of gay social events and varied cultural activities. The Berkshire Athenaeum, erected in 1871,

has for its purpose the establishing and maintaining in Pittsfield an institution to aid in promoting education, culture and refinement. Lectures, musicales and historical exhibitions are offered.

Around the corner on South Street is the Museum of Natural History and Art. The building is on the site of Easton's Tavern in which the Battle of Ticonderoga was planned. Among the treasures of Americana one is delighted to see the famous old "one hoss shay" which belonged to Jacob Wendell, great grandfather of the poet, Oliver Wendell Holmes who wrote so amusingly of the vehicle in The Deacon's Masterpiece. Here in the museum one finds also the desk whereon Hawthorne wrote The House of Seven Gables.

Pittsfield is not only the heart of the Berkshires, it is also the heart of society and culture in the County. Here lived Oliver Wendell Holmes at "Canoe Meadows." About a mile beyond, at the top of a hill is the house where Herman Melville lived from 1850-1863. Henry W. Longfellow spent many summers at "Broad Hall," now the Pittsfield Country Club. Later he courted Frances Appleton and lived in the "Appleton House" where he wrote his famous poem, "The Old Clock on the Stairs."

Richmond

Richmond is a quiet farming region. In the northwest corner of the town is Perry's Peak, 2,089 feet high, from

which one of the finest views in all Berkshire County is obtained.¹

Richmond has remained a farming town, though in no sense is it a backward community. Fields are fenced in, barns and silos are painted, cattle well-fed; agriculture still pays dividends in cash money and in independence to hard-working, scientific farmers. Summer people have moved in, bought farms, fixed up old houses that were giving way to time and carelessness. The newcomers have taken the towns as they found them and have not tried to make them into replicas of their home cities. The natives humorously report their principal crops are hay and summer people.

Sandisfield

Sandisfield lies in the extreme southeastern part of the county. The surface of the town is hilly and undulating, being finely diversified by valleys and ponds and streams. Farmington River is the principal stream flowing a southerly course through the eastern part of the township.

Sandisfield, a town which more than any other of Berkshire County represents a vivid example of the fluctuating economy of the twentieth century which rose and fell within a short span of time. During the mid-nineteenth century, the hill town of Sandisfield was larger than Pittsfield. It even

1. Holland, History of Western Massachusetts, II, 561.

loaned the latter city money for its town hall and church. The advent of the railroad, a shift in industrial trend plus the natural decline of small towns by-passed by main highways and the railroad grasped Sandisfield too. Today, cellar holes,¹ occasional rubble such as broken mill wheels dimly recall the fine houses and factories that stood there during the boom era. Now that Sandisfield's industrial days are a thing of the past, its chief income is from tourists, many of whom come from New York.

New Boston, the principal center of Sandisfield, is in the quiet Farmington Valley where the Farmington joins the Clam River. The region is famous for game and trout. It was formerly a main stagecoach stop on the Hartford-Albany turnpike. Many travellers still stop to enjoy its secluded location. It has a summer music festival Sunday afternoons which is enjoyed by several hundred visitors.

Savoy

Savoy lies in the northeastern part of the county, is a mountainous town, containing much that is beautiful in scenery. It is purely a small agricultural section. A large part of the territory is still covered with forests. In 1880 Savoy had a population of 715.²

1. Child, Gazetteer of Berkshire County, p. 409.

2. Ibid.

Savoy today is another typical small New England village. It is today an agricultural town of 300 people. State Forest areas have absorbed much of Savoy's land. Despite the decrease of taxable territory, the thrifty town was freed of debt by 1938. Although the State Forests attract more and more visitors yearly, as yet there is small compensation for the loss of their land.

Savoy is an old people's town. Ruddy-faced Yankee farmers and buxom housewives make up the majority of the population. The men are usually "jacks-of-all-trades," which they have to be in a town where there are no regular trades or jobs. Most of the houses are old and weatherbeaten, with ells and other additions denoting the growth of large families down through the years. On Mass. 116 coming from Adams is a typical Savoy house with seven distinct additions. All the children stayed at home and raised more children to live in new wings. They are all probably buried in one or more of the town's 16 cemeteries.

Savoy's chief attractions today are its three State Forests. A large portion of both the Savoy and Mohawk Forests are within the town's boundaries. Not one of these is easily accessible from Savoy due to poor roads.

Sheffield

Sheffield, noted for its antique shops and eighteenth

century houses, is the oldest village in the county. It was bought in 1722 from Chief Konkapot for 460 pounds, 3 barrels¹ of cider and 30 quarts of rum.

Most of Sheffield's residents are descended from the early settlers, and several of its houses date back 200 years. One of these is the 1750 House whose famous Halladay Thomas collection of American provincial paintings has been shown in many museums. You can see these early primitives in an authentic Colonial setting.

Sheffield takes pride in two of the county's three covered bridges, and in the Berkshire School, a private boarding school for boys. Nearby lives Walter Prichard Eaton, the well-known author, naturalist and dramatic critic whose Colonial home, "Twin Fires," looks toward Mount Everett, popularly known as "The Dome."

Near Bartholomew's Cobble is the dignified Ashley House² built in 1735, the oldest house in Berkshire County. In the second floor study, faced with unusual panelling, Colonel John Ashley and his friend, Theodore Sedgwick, drew up Sheffield's Declaration of Independence which preceded by three years the national Declaration and is strikingly similar to it in language.

1. Holland, History of Western Massachusetts, II, 670.

2. Child, Gazetteer of Berkshire County, I, 345.

Despite its size, Sheffield has contributed many men of unusual note to the world. Chester Dewey, famous in the 1830's and 40's as a botanist and minerologist was a Sheffield man. Sheffield was also the birthplace of Frederick A. P. Barnard, President of Columbia University from 1864 to 1889. Though he established the School of Mines at Columbia, he is best known for broadening the scope of the University to include instruction for women.

Though Sheffield sent few soldiers to the Civil War, it did furnish George Francis Root, born here in 1820.¹ At the time of the Civil War he was a member of the publishing house of Root & Cody in Chicago. President Lincoln had just issued his second call for troops. One afternoon Root was resting on a lounge in his brother's home in Sheffield when the words and music of The Battle Cry of Freedom came to him.² Next morning it was a finished song. He did not shoulder a musket, but he served his country well by writing her was songs, for after the initial inspiration, he went on to write the popular Tramp, Tramp, Tramp the Boys Are Marching, Just Before the Battle, Mother, and The Vacant Chair.³

1. Holland, History of Western Massachusetts, p. 219.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid., p. 222.

Stockbridge

Stockbridge was settled in 1734, but its history properly begins in 1739 with the ordination of John Sergeant, the first missionary to the Mohican tribe.¹ In this same year the settlement was incorporated as a town, the order of incorporation from the Great and General Court reading as follows:

Ephraim Williams, Esquire, Captain John Kunkapot, and Lieutenant Paul Umpeicheanah, Principals: Inhabitants of the Plantation, in the County of Berkshire on the Housatonic River, lately erected into a township by the Name of Stockbridge, are hereby authorized and empowered to assemble freeholders and other qualified voters there, in some convenient place in said town in order to chuse a Town Clerk and all other town officers. 2

At this meeting Ephraim Williams was chosen Moderator, the Indians John Konkapot and Aaron Umpachene selectmen and Josiah Jones, constable. Thus we have an Indian town with an English name, and the New England town meeting appointing Indian officers. This was the most famous Indian Mission of its day, known also as "Indian Town on the Housatonic."

When Sergeant died, 1749, Jonathan Edwards took over the spiritual life of the community. It was here that he wrote his Freedom of the Will concerning one of the great con-

1. Albert B. Hart, Commonwealth History of Massachusetts, p. 409.

2. Stockbridge Town Records, I, 17.

troversial subjects of the age.¹ In 1758 Edwards left to become president of Princeton College, and Dr. West came into the scene. He is described in Miss Sedgwick's stories as

having a well-turned leg, without the aid of garters, a three cornered hat, a gold-headed cane and buckskin gloves; whose first act on the occasion of a pastoral call was to smooth his hair to an equatorial line around his forehead, and then help himself to the decanter.²

Such a picture is far from that usually associated with Puritan ministers.

It was here that the first village improvement society was established.³ So potent was the influence of the society that the following tale is told of Justin Windsor. The distinguished historian was spending the summer at Edwards Inn. One day returning from the post office he absent-mindedly tore up his letters and dropped them on the sidewalk. Suddenly remembering this affront to the Stockbridge tradition, he painstakingly gathered up each of the tiny slips of paper and decorously deposited them in the Inn's scrapbasket.

Stockbridge is an aristocratic town which has kept much of its charm. Here you drive past luxurious estates and a sculptured landscape, and here you find all the habillements of great wealth and power. This is Berkshire County, the sophis-

1. Holland, History of Western Massachusetts, II, 589.

2. Catherine Sedgwick, Life and Letters, p. 61.

3. Albert C. Hart, Commonwealth History of Massachusetts, p. 420.

tiate, in contrast to old New England where simplicity and the old order hold sway. Miles of tailored hedges and smooth roads enclose spacious lawns and gardens, the handiwork of landscape architects who know how to add the fitting human touch to a natural setting of great beauty. So concealed are the mansions in their deliberate isolation that only an occasional roof and chimney are visible above the green tree tops.

Ever since its settlement Stockbridge has attracted many visitors. When Judge Theodore Sedgwick moved his family from Sheffield to Stockbridge in 1785, the town began its life as a resort community.¹ A brilliant lawyer and a firm patriot, Judge Sedgwick was one of the most prominent men in New England. His presence in Stockbridge had a marked effect on the social and cultural life not only of Stockbridge but of all Berkshire County. As Catherine Sedgwick, his famous daughter wrote years later:

My father's public station and frequent residences in town gave him a very extensive acquaintance, and his affectionate temper warmed acquaintance into friendship. There were no steamers, no railroads, and a stage-coach through our valley but once a week. Gentlemen made their journeys in their private carriages, and, as a matter of course, put up at their friends' houses. My father's house was a general 'depot', and when I remember how often the great gate swung open for the entrance of traveling vehicles, the old mansion seems to me to have resembled much more an

1. Holland, History of Western Massachusetts, II, 595.

hostelrie of the olden time than the quiet house it now is. My father's hospitality was unbounded. It extended from the gentleman in his coach, chaise, or on horseback, according to his means and necessities, to the poor lame beggar that would sit half the night roasting at the kitchen fire with the negro servants...Hospitality was not formally inculcated as a virtue, but it was an inevitable circumstance - a part of our social condition. 1

In the early nineteenth century Stockbridge was on the main route of the stagecoach line between Boston and Albany, and eight coaches a day, four each way, made regular stops. During these years Daniel Webster, Martin Van Buren, Harrison Gray Otis and many other notables stopped to visit the Sedgwicks.

But Stockbridge has never become simply the showplace of the wealthy; it still retains the right to be called an aristocratic town, rather than merely a rich one. Descendants of the first families have kept ancestral homes here even into the third and fourth generations.

The immaculate appearance of Stockbridge is not a matter of accident nor of recent planning and care. Ever since the Justin Windsor incident the town has gloried in the achievements of its local improvements. These come under the supervision of the Laurel Hill Association, unique in being the oldest village improvement organization in the United States. One might say it actually started with Mrs. J. Z.

1. Catherine Sedgwick, Life and Letters, pp. 73-74.

Goodrich in 1853.¹ On Laurel Hill, a slight height at the east end of Main Street where once the Indians met in grand council, is a rostrum in memory of Mrs. Goodrich. Through the decades, the Association, a model for the rest of the country, has planted thousands of trees, miles of hedges, installed the first street lights and cared for them for forty years, bought and operated the first snow plow, the first street sprinkler. At present it has under its care all the local parks including caring for Stockbridge's beautiful old elms.

Every year the Society has its outing on Laurel Hill, where hard benches are placed among the oaks, and where a magnificent rock, towering some seventy feet in the air forms an inspiring and imposing background for distinguished speakers. Men of world-wide prominence such as Adolph A. Berle, former Undersecretary of State under the late Franklin D. Roosevelt, a summer resident of the town, spoke here.² One may say that at least since 1800 Stockbridge has always been the home of people distinguished in literature, law, the Arts and Sciences, a goodly part of this being due to the vigilance and efforts of the Laurel Hill Association.

1. Child, Gazetteer of Berkshire County, I, 502.

2. Mr. Berle was the 1951 speaker on "World Crises."

Tyringham

Tyringham, next door to Monterey, is shut off on three sides by mountains, and by inclination, might be considered as being hemmed in by the fourth as well. It does not even have a main highway. However, the elite of the world travel yearly over the dusty roads leading to it. From West Otis where an abandoned church and a weatherbeaten old house stand together, an improved road turns left off the main highway into the valley of which Richard Watson Gilder, noted author, wrote:

Down in the meadow and up on the height
The breezes are blowing the billows white.
In the elms and maples the robbers call
And the great black crow sails over all
In Tyringham, Tyringham Valley... 1

Gilder came from New Jersey by way of Delaware and Kent, England. As editor of Scribners, which later became the Century Magazine, he was a power in the literary world from 1870 to his death in 1909. In 1898 he built Four Brooks Farm in Tyringham. Frances Folsom, later the wife of President Cleveland was a good friend of the Gilders, and both she and the President were guests at the Tyringham retreat.

From Lenox the novelist Edith Wharton was moved to write her Moonrise Over Tyringham, more subjective than Gilder's verse:

1. Original manuscript poem in the Lenox, Mass., Library.

Yet see - night is not; by translucent ways,
Up the gray void of autumn afternoon
Steals a mild crescent charioted in haze,
And all the air is merciful as June.

The lake is a forgotten streak of day
That trembles through the hemlock's darkling bars,
And still, my heart, still some divine delay,
Upon the threshold holds the earliest stars.¹

In Gilder's wake an unusual group came to the valley; Joseph Jefferson, actor, John Burroughs, naturalist, Daniel Chester French and Augustus Saint Gaudens, sculptors, Ossip Gabrilovitch, pianist, Cecilia Beaux, artist, and Henry Adams, noted author and medieval scholar. Mark Twain, summering here, presented the local library a complete set of his books.

The town has several beautiful homes, and palatial mansions, but it boasts an even more extraordinary structure, the home of Henry Hudson Kitson, sculptor. When Mr. Kitson, an Englishman by birth and an American by adoption, came to Tyringham three decades ago, he erected in the yard of the house he had purchased an edifice faintly resembling a Tahitan chief's hut. The thatched roof of the main building is composed of strips of felt and slate laid on rafters. Huge chunks of rock irregularly placed, are piled against the walls, leaving only narrow doors with brightly painted lintels as entrances to the odd house. Behind this hut-like structure stands a cone-shaped tower room. Surrounding studio and tower

1. Original manuscript poem in Lenox, Mass. Library.

is a high fence constructed of rough brushwood. Here Kitson carved many famous works including the "Pilgrim Maiden" at Plymouth, the "Continental Soldier" at Washington's headquarters in Newburgh, New York, the "Minute Men" at Lexington, and most recently, the "John and Priscilla Alden Memorial."

Washington

The tiny town of Washington is centered on top of Washington Mountain and on the edge of October Mountain, State Forest. This largest of the Massachusetts reservations boasts scenery on a grand scale. Part of its fourteen thousand acres was formerly the private wild-game preserve of William C. Whitney, Secretary of the Navy under President Cleveland.

This little community has been invaded by the "moderns" and declines any longer to be considered an old-fashioned mountain town. Elaborate summer camps and fine estates have for their settings lakes, ponds and woodland stretches. But this is only half the picture. A more discerning portrait of the town would highlight remote farm houses, old red barns and tiny settlements of white houses under tall trees. Dense forest land encroaches on field and farm almost as it did when the pioneers first came. In the town of Washington the eighteenth century is still a visual background for the twentieth. Only in recent years have state highways and summer people brought quickening new forces into play. To the nim-

ble-witted natives, strangers have meant a new source of income and a brisk, fresh way of looking at things. Residents of this town and others nearby, including Otis and Becket, now consider the cultivation of summer business their chief pursuit and economy. Most of the descendants of old-time Yankees have lost none of the ingenuity usually associated with the stock. Washington people well demonstrate that once they get on to city ways they can outcity city folks. Old houses have been painted and improved for "paying guests," highway tea rooms and rustic gasoline stations use modern wiles to arrest traffic at their doors. Today the town of Washington is a select New England resort area.

West Stockbridge

West Stockbridge is today a residential town, whose history may be read in its buildings. Square white houses, dignified and well kept, are monuments of a prosperous nineteenth century. They mingle with frame buildings, faced with flat boards grooved to resemble mortar joints, and small house relics of mining and quarrying days when colonies of Italian and Irish laborers lived there. Three lime plants are still in operation, but it is considered unlikely that they will ever expand their business. Prominent citizens who have been engaged in the quarrying industry in the past see little hope of recapturing an industrial boom. Rather, they have turned their backs on the old type enterprise, and look forward to

a new way of earning a livelihood. They hope to develop West Stockbridge into a "home town for city folks," who find in Berkshire County something recreative that cities cannot give. Already many of the homes in West Stockbridge have been purchased and restored to their colonial beauty.

As part of the development program for the town, a road from West Stockbridge to the New York State Line is being constructed to connect with New York City and the Canadian highways, in the hope that it will divert tourists into the Hills of Berkshire County.

Williamstown

Williamstown is one of the most idyllic villages of New England. Its wide elm-shaded Main Street, fringed with luxurious lawns and columned fraternity houses, is set against a background of hills.

Its distinctive possession is a college established in 1793.¹ The most momentous event in the development of the College during the nineteenth century was the appointment of Mark Hopkins as president in 1836. A native of Stockbridge, he presided in that office until 1872.

Hopkins was an imposing figure in the lecture room, so much so that much of the college's, and the town's success is due to his magnetic appearance. His tall frame slightly

1. Holland, History of Western Massachusetts, II, 612.

stooped, his great breadth of shoulders, his massive head, his long high-bridged aquiline nose, his piercing gray eyes beneath their bushy eyebrows, and finally his wide mouth ready to break into a smile all combined into a figure of superb majesty radiating with ready geniality.¹ Attracted by Hopkins' presence, physical, spiritual and mental, many men of learning of the day came to listen to Hopkins lecture, bringing with them reknown and prestige.

During the second half of the nineteenth century, this simple, self-sufficient little college town began to change. New currents and manners made themselves felt there. Summer colonists, attracted by the culture and learning of the College, established homes under the very shades of that institution. New buildings therefore adorned the widening campus, new homes, smarter and more elaborate than any Williamstown had ever seen, were built. Fewer farmers tilled the fields on the outskirts. New roads leading into the town were surveyed. The Hoosac Tunnel, completed in 1875, made travel swift and easy from Boston to the West. Sidewalks were laid, street lighting went up, adding a metropolitan touch to the one main street.

Any attempt to industrialize Williamstown has always been a feeble gesture at its best. Today, only a small wire goods factory, a photographic paper and film concern and a

1. Smith, History of Berkshire County, II, 687.

ginger-ale plant remain. The famous sand-springs supplies water for the ginger-ale. The spring is a thousand feet above sea level, in the northeastern corner of the town near the old Indian North Trail. Indians enjoyed the warm, soft water which welled up, not through limestone but through filtering volcanic deposits, sand and gravel.

Extensive Mount Hope Farm is owned and operated by Mr. and Mrs. E. Parmalee Prentice, son-in-law and daughter of John D. Rockefeller. There are people who, upon hearing mention of Williamstown, think of Mt. Hope Farm rather than of the College. This thought stems from the agricultural research being conducted there which so far has resulted in larger and better eggs produced scientifically and in a newly developed brand of cattle called the American Dairy Cow. Such research has received many awards both in this country and abroad.

Famous though Mount Hope Farm is in certain circles, it is Williams College that still dominates the town, for more than one-half of the townspeople derive their livelihoods from services connected directly or indirectly with the College. The union of town and gown is thus really complete.

The College, opened in 1793 with one building, two faculty members and 18 students, has undergone vast expansion since then. Today, with an endowment of more than seven million dollars, a library of more than a hundred fifty thou-

sand volumes, over a hundred faculty members and a student enrollment of over a thousand, it ranks as one of the best of New England colleges. Its grounds cover more than two hundred and fifty acres, sixty lecture and classroom buildings, dormitories and faculty dwellings.

Despite a variety of architectural styles, an impression of harmony makes itself felt on the Williams Campus where buildings are set on wide lawns and among fine old trees. Thompson Memorial Chapel is probably the most impressive unit. In this great, gray stone, Gothic structure lies the body of Ephraim Williams. Griffin and Hopkins Halls, named for former presidents of the college, flank the chapel. Behind the latter is Stetson Hall, housing behind its red brick facade the Williams College Library and the famous Alfred Clark Chapin Library of rare books. Among the Chapin treasures is a set of the first four folios of Shakespeare, Columbus's letter announcing the discovery of the New World, a copy of Cranmer's Bible dated 1561 and autographed by Queen Elizabeth, and a large collection of incunabula.

Thus, the life of the little town revolves around the aesthetic, cultural and economical influence of the College. The mountains all around, though not of the grandeur associated with the Alps, nevertheless contain a splendor and harmony all their own, and reflect a charm not found in many of the great mountains of the world.

Windsor

Tucked in among the hills, stands the town of Windsor. The early Berkshire pioneers who built it, hacked their way along the route now followed by the modern highway. Through virgin forests and over the tops of the Hoosac range, two thousand feet or more in altitude, they slashed a trail to the high peaks and there they built meeting house and school, and established their village. Fear of the Indians drove them from the valley where they could be attacked with terrifying suddenness.

Windsor's history is like that of its hilltop neighbors, Peru and Savoy. Settled in 1767, it became a prosperous community in its first half century through agriculture and lumbering.¹ The severe climate and thin, stony soil were better adapted for livestock than for field crops. In the 1820's, the supply of lumber along the swift mountain streams seemed inexhaustible. Sawmills, tanneries, shingle and woodenware factories were busy from sun-up to sun-down. In a single generation the forest was stripped bare. By 1850 there were no more giant hemlocks, birches or oaks for the sawmills. With their resources exhausted, the Berkshire hilltown began to decline. Windsor suffered a death-blow when the railroad ran its tracks too far away to provide transpor-

1. Smith, History of Berkshire County, II, 650.

tation.

The people of Windsor are not anxious for city folks to disturb their solitude. However, of late years "Tourists Accomodated" signs have appeared here and there, and Inns have opened up. In its own little way, this tiny mountain town has been prosperous through the years, changing with the changing times, like all other Berkshire towns, abandoning its impotent industrial life and turning to the resort industry for its livelihood.

In summary, the population of Berkshire County resembles that of most of the other sections of the northeast in being conglomerate and representative of successive waves of immigration. The surnames of its original settlers derived from the Anglo-Saxons who came from the east and the south to settle the county in the middle of the eighteenth century, and from a succeeding Anglo-Saxon wave that arrived a century later from the old country to work in the iron mines.¹ There is also a strong infusion of Irish, especially in the industrial centers, and considerable representation for the French (both European and Canadian), the Italians, and the Poles. This variety was formed into an amalgum chemically bound, one might say, by the necessities of the frontier at first, and later by the fact that they had completely forgotten they were

1. Child, Gazetteer of Berkshire County, I, 70.

anything else but neighbors. One ethnic group did not behave any differently from any other; whatever differences occurred in more personal matters such as religion, became sacred privileges respected by other groups. Generally, at least in outward appearance, all groups soon became temperamentally quite homogeneous.

In describing the rural folkways that have been characteristic of the county, it is necessary to begin with the warning that such old Yankee traits were more pronounced formerly than they are now. The revolutionary invention of the automobile has affected every phase of life in rural communities; it has tended particularly to destroy their isolation and to modify seriously many of the social habits and customs that were formerly almost innate. The automobile has not only reduced the difference between city and country life and made for greater social uniformity; it has destroyed the causes which were responsible for a large number of rural peculiarities, namely, the lack of communication and the social starvation that was inherent in farm life on the backroads, particularly in winter and spring.

Nevertheless, old influences still operate. The village church is as important socially as it is for its religious influence. It is a rendezvous where a considerable portion of the populace meets once a week both for worship and for social intercourse. The various church committees bring the members

of the congregation together, particularly the women; the activities of the sewing circle, the choir, the auxiliary, and other organizations are representative of a centripetal and centrifugal force operating in larger or smaller groups. Church suppers, fairs, bazaars, and other projects for raising money for expenses are also effective in bringing people together. Weddings are similarly effective as magnets, and, with the older generation, funerals too because they also bring people together, oftentimes resulting in a cheer that equals, if it does not exceed the gloom.

Another factor tending to draw the county people together is the Grange, each local branch of which ordinarily holds meetings at fortnightly intervals. Originally the Patrons of Husbandry was an organization devoted to the political and economic interest of the farmer. In Berkshire County, it seems largely to have lost this function, which has been taken over by the Farm Bureau, and to have become largely social and fraternal. Since it has no religious affiliations, it provides a common meeting place for both Catholics and Protestants. The ritual and the installations appeal to members, while the plays and frequent dances attract non-Grangers and people from adjacent towns. Grange fairs, which are annual events in many towns is another important contribution of the organization.

This brief survey of the historical evolution and pre-

sent state of Berkshire County reveals a complexity not present in 1800 when this study begins. At the turn of the nineteenth century, its people lived in a simple, predominantly rural setting. However, in these early years it was possible for artisans of various types to make a living. Thus we found leather-workers to make harness, saddles and shoes, fullers and dyers to do the more difficult operations in making woolen goods, and, of course, saw and grist mills. Manufacturing on a small scale existed in almost all the towns until the advent of the railroads, when this modern invention hindered rather than advanced progress in Berkshire County. The hill-towns were by-passed and they became ghost towns. The people then turned to making a livelihood on self-supporting farms which could be taken care of by the family. Thus, in 1800 Berkshire County was mainly an agricultural section of small independent townships, and a place of scenic natural beauty. The people found ample time for relaxation, and opportunities for games, fairs, athletic contests and holiday festivities, all making for a pleasant social life.

The intellectual interests of mankind are concerned not alone with the problems of government and of earning a livelihood. There is the longing for a finer and fuller life which expresses itself in religion, in education, in art and in literature. The stronger and more sensitive minds are continually groping into the unknown in the hope of bringing back some

new ideas or fact which may help mankind in its laborious ascent to new heights.

The first great task of the American people was the conquest and settlement of an immense continent, but even while engaged in this tremendous task they never lost sight of the fact that the spirit and the mind must be fed as well as the body. The immigrants from Europe brought over their culture and added it to our store of knowledge. As time passed, Americans also made their contributions, Berkshire County contributing its own significant share in many fields. We shall see here the development of American literature with a group of the nation's first writers residing in Berkshire County and writing some of the first great American works in and about it. We shall also note the many great minds which Berkshire County has contributed to the nation in other fields such as painting, sculpture, architecture, drama, music, and other forms of art. We shall also observe how natives of Berkshire County early followed enthusiastically the progress of science and in their own part contributed many famous and important inventions. It is in the field of literature that Berkshire County first attained prominence, becoming a great literary center in the nineteenth century.

CHAPTER II

THE BERKSHIRES ATTAIN PROMINENCE IN THE FIELD OF LITERATURE AND INVENTION

Historians have called the first half of the nineteenth century a period of the "Rise of the Common." It is an apt title, for the average citizen gradually obtained the right to vote and to participate in political affairs. With this as a stepping stone, he pushed onward to demand educational opportunities, greater economic advantages and humanitarian reforms of many kinds. This great struggle upward reached a high point in the golden era of American literature. This was the era of Melville, Hawthorne, Bryant, Holmes -- to name but a few of many geniuses who were to mold American life.

In the following pages we shall note how life in Berkshire County became richer as America participated more intimately in this new intellectual life.

At the opening of the nineteenth century America was dependent upon Europe for its literature; by the middle of the century we had written a literature of our own. In the earlier decades New York was considered the center of what literary activity existed. It was the home of Washington Irving, who used the folklore of the Hudson Valley as a basis for many stories. By the 1830's the literary center had passed to Boston, and here American literature experienced its golden day.

To these outstanding two metropolitan centers may be added a third, far less important but perhaps equally interesting, namely, Berkshire County. Into the quiet rural Berkshires came, during this period, large numbers of America's first authors who penned here some of the first prose and poetry using an unadulterated American atmosphere. Thus the Berkshires were serving as a generating center of a new dynamic intellectual life. Already in the 1820's the Berkshires were undergoing the inspection of visitors from the East. Cultivated Europeans wishing to study the habits of the strange New World got out their field glasses and recorded their observations, which were quite favorable.

William Ashburner was the first to arrive, but he, surprisingly, did not have to be coaxed into liking America, or Berkshire County. He had brought his family over from England with the avowed purpose of leaving the decadent Old World behind and putting his agricultural theories into practice in the new.

After a year or so, William Ashburner built a house just outside the town of Stockbridge, under the glare of Bear Mountain, thus bringing Stockbridge a step nearer European sophistication.¹ Built on an English plan and designed by an architect in India, it was called "Bombay Hill", and bore no

1. Christina S. Marquand and Sarah C. Sedgwick, Stockbridge, p. 207.

possible relation to Berkshire requirements. There was a long hall leading from the kitchen, so that cooking smells, all too prevalent in America, could not penetrate into the dining room.¹ The house required more servants than the family could afford to employ and by the time Captain Basil Hall of the King's Royal Navy and his wife came to visit them from England, the Ashburners had fallen partially into American ways.

During Captain Basil Hall's sojourn in this country, he formed definite opinions about the high intelligence of its people, their great stock of information and their capacity for self-government.

The Captain was followed by Lord Morpeth. When he asked to see a typical American, Theodore Sedgwick took him to call on Captain Roswell Palmer who lived upon the hill where John Bacon's house had stood. Two old soldiers, Lord Morpeth and the Captain compared notes about the Revolutionary War and Morpeth carried away so high an opinion of American sturdiness and independence that he won a grateful place in hearts² peculiarly sensitive to English criticism. At about the time of Lord Morpeth's visit, two elegant Frenchmen, Count Alexis de Tocqueville and Gustave de Beaumont arrived. Their curiosity had been so piqued by the rumor that a real authoress lived

1. Ibid.

2. Ibid., p. 209.

in this American wilderness that they visited Stockbridge to seek out the first American woman novelist.¹

They were not more surprised than Catherine Maria Sedgwick herself was when, in 1822, her first novel, A New England Tale, turned out to be a best seller, and she found herself hailed as one of the coming fiction writers in America. At her zenith Catherine was ranked close to Cooper.

Her reputation as an author spread even to Europe, and something of a procession trailed into the Berkshires and found its way to the hospitable Sedgwick Manse. Catherine held a sort of literary salon in the fashionable and delightful home in Stockbridge in what was still a provincial corner of Massachusetts.

But there was something very charming about the locale, as there was, of course, about Catherine Sedgwick herself, warm-hearted, lively and independent of mind. She came into close contact with many of the great of her period and represented an aristocratic tradition in a young nation which had supposedly overthrown aristocratic tradition. It is to Catherine Sedgwick and the Sedgwick family that Berkshire County is indebted for making this section a center of social and cultural prominence.

No family has had so long and conspicuous a place in the

1. Ibid., p. 210.

annals of Berkshire County or of the State of Massachusetts as the Sedgwicks. The present generation includes Mr. Ellery Sedgwick, the well-known but now retired editor of the Atlantic Monthly, and Mr. Dwight Sedgwick, author of many books on Italy, Spain and on historical and literary figures.

On December 28, 1789, the first year of Washington's presidency, a small daughter was born to Pamela and Theodore Sedgwick, named Catherine Maria.¹ We have a self-portrait of her father, Theodore Sedgwick, who early longed for public life:

This life is a checkered scene. I myself have been what is called a prosperous man. I have reason to bless God. I have been less unfortunate, even in my own opinion, than many others. To the view of the world I have been, I doubt not, an object of envy. Connected with one of the best of women, blessed with many children all hopeful and those who have become more advanced of good characters and deserving them, in easy circumstances, respectable in my profession, honored in my own country, and known and respected in others, yet I feel that this life is far from affording felicity. How important is it then, that our hopes should not rest in these things.²

Before he decided upon public life and went to Congress in Philadelphia, he and his wife gave earnest consideration to the matter. Thus Mrs. Sedgwick writes in the deferential manner of the day:

1. Mary E. Dewey, Life and Letters of Catherine Sedgwick, p. 15.

2. Ibid., p. 30.

Pardon me, my dearest Mr. Sedgwick, if I beg you once more to think over the matter before you embark in public business. I grant that the call of our country, the voice of Fame and the Honorable, right Honorable, are high sounding words. They play round the head, but come not near the heart. A wish to serve the true interests of our country is certainly a laudable ambition, but the intention brings many cares with it.

The new government is yet untried. If I mistake not the success of it depends more on the virtue and economy of the people than on the wisdom of those who govern...Should the people find that they are not happy under it, the fault will all be in their rulers. They will be subjected to the envy of some, the reproach of others, and the remarks of all. The interests of your family deserve some attention...On my own account I will say nothing but that I have not a distant wish that you should sacrifice your happiness to mine, or your inclination to my opinion. If, on the whole, you think a public line of life will be most conducive to your interest and happiness, I will pray that He who is alone the author of all good will strew peace in all your paths. Submission is my duty, and, however hard, I will try to practice what reason teaches me I am under obligation to do.¹

And indeed, the responsibility for a large family at that time was demanding. The days of the Indian raids were not entirely over. In fact, Catherine, as a child of three, had been dropped in a thicket by a careless servant and only later, ² after the raid, was rescued by a neighbor.

The terror that women lived under from the Indians is vividly described in the diary of an earlier date, that of

1. Ibid., p. 32.

2. Ibid., p. 17.

Theodosia Burr, the mother of Aaron Burr, when visiting Jonathan Edwards, her father:

Oh, how distressing to live in fear every moment. I haven't had a night's sleep since I left New York. I want to be made willing to die in any way God pleases, but I am not willing to be butchered by a barbarous enemy nor can't make myself willing.¹

The rigors of the New England life, the burdens of her domestic cares proved too great for Mrs. Sedgwick and she died at the age of 54. Mr. Sedgwick married again but apparently not happily, for in about a year Mrs. Sedgwick returned to her home. However, Catherine's childhood with her father was a very happy one. This family life of Catherine is noteworthy to keep in mind as a background for her writings.

Of Catherine's childhood and girlhood we have a pleasant picture. We see her as a little girl sitting by her father as he read aloud Shakespeare, Don Quixote and other classics which she was too young to understand, but from which she imbibed something of her father's enthusiasm and from which she gained her love of reading. She studied, as children did in those days, the three R's, Dwight's geography and history, and relates how at recess she would hide under her desk lost in Rollins' Ancient History while she munched on apples and good things packed in her lunch box.² She spent six months in a boarding

1. Original diary in Stockbridge Museum Room, p. 37.

2. Mary E. Dewey, Life and Letters of Catherine Sedgwick, p. 70.

school at Boston which was all the formal education she ever acquired. She speaks of her sojourn at boarding school:

I was attractive in my appearance and from always associating on equal terms with those much older than myself, I had a mental maturity rather striking, and with an ignorance of the world, a romantic enthusiasm, an aptitude at admiring and loving that altogether made me an object of general interest...The winter passed away in a series of bewildering gayeties. I had talent enough to be liked by my teachers, and good nature to secure their good will. I gave them very little trouble in any way...

When I came from Boston I felt the deepest mortification at my waste of time and money, though my father never said one word to me on the subject. For the only time in my life I rose early to read French, and in a few weeks learned by myself more than I had acquired all winter. But, alas! what irretrievable opportunities gone!¹

Her formal education, fragmentary as she described it, was supplemented by her own fine intelligence, the circle of a highly cultivated family, and the friends among whom she grew up. She was sensitive to the beauties of the country round, grew up with outdoor sports and early American village pleasures, had a tender conscience and a deeply religious nature. But she tired of the Calvinism preached in the local church and still more of the lip service it elicited from hypocrites. Her lively revolt against it has the aura of typical New England social adjustments which writers of early historical fiction discussed with the avidity of modern newspapermen.

1. Ibid., p. 77.

Her adult life was spent chiefly in Stockbridge, or with her brother, Charles, in neighboring Lenox. She had a wing built on to his house and maintained her independent establishment, and here she carried on the generous hospital-¹ity to which she was accustomed. It was in this house that distinguished visitors sought her out and fell under the charm of her personality.

Miss Sedgwick's fame was not merely local. De Tocqueville and his travelling companion, Beaumont, went out of their way to see her: "A lady novelist of distinction in America?" Here indeed was a phenomenon! Unfortunately we do not have a description of her from their celebrated pen as she was away from home. But Edgar A. Poe in his Literati writes:

She is about medium height, perhaps a little below it. Her forehead is an unusually fine one, nose of a slightly Roman curve, eyes dark and piercing, mouth well formed and remarkably pleasant in its expression. Miss Sedgwick wears a cap at least most usually. Her manners are those of a highly bred woman but her ordinary manner vacillates in a singularly way between cordiality and a reserve amounting to hauteur.²

William C. Bryant speaks of her as:

...well formed, slightly inclined to plumpness, with regular features, eyes becoming with benevolence, a pleasing smile, a soft voice, and gentle and captivating manners.³

1. Ibid.

2. Mary E. Dewey, Life and Letters of Catherine Sedgwick, p. 92.

3. Original letter written to Miss Mary Dewey on Reminiscences of Catherine Sedgwick, in Stockbridge Museum Library.

Fanny Kemble characterizes her as "...one of the most charming, most amiable and most excellent persons..."¹ she had ever known.

The list of famed personalities with whom she came in contact with is inexhaustible. Martin Van Buren, eighth president of the United States, frequently drove over from his home in Kinderhook, New York, to be a guest at the Sedgwick mansion. Fanny Kemble, an eminent English actress who had a summer home in Lenox, was a frequent visitor. Others whom we might list included Longfellow, Bryant, Harriet Martineau, and G. P. R. James.²

On her trip abroad she received marked attention and was hospitably entertained. She met Macauley, whose conversation was "rich and delightful. Some might think he talks too much; but none except from their own impatient vanity, could wish it were less...."³ She had tea at Carlyle's and found him "simple, natural and kind, his conversation as picturesque as his writings...."⁴ She had an amusing evening at Mr. Hallam's who made her "quite forget he was the sage of the Middle Ages...."⁵

1. Original letter written to Henry James, in Stockbridge Library.

2. Mary E. Dewey, Life and Letters of Catherine Sedgwick, p. 87.

3. Ibid., p. 94.

4. Ibid. .

5. Ibid., p. 96

At Hallam's she met Sydney Smith who was:

...in the vein, and I saw him, I believe, to advantage. His wit is not as I expected, a succession of brilliant explosions, but a sparkling stream of humor.... 1

As her adventures were simply an expression of her personality, so also were her books. And as times changed, and Catherine's personality faded from man's memories, so did her writings. They met their natural death or fell into obscurity because they were overshadowed by fresher and superior productions. Her only claim to success and fame is her priority in time. As society altered its pace to meet physical progress and development, a certain universality was found lacking in her works. Society became molded and remolded so that the picture of Catherine Sedgwick's time came to bear no verisimilitude to the newer world. However, like a picture, however unskilfully wrought, she preserved with truth the features and costumes of a past period. Even the rustic phrases that characterized her heroes and heroines came to pass away from usage.

Yet she has a deserving place in our history. Harriet Martineau wrote of her in the Westminister Review of October 1837:

It is not, however, for their moral aim, high as it is, nor for their charms of execution, that we most value these books. It is because they are the first complete specimens of higher kind

1. Ibid., p. 100.

of literature that the United States have hitherto possessed...It is because these books are a sign of new and better times. The weakness of the American people -- a most perilous weakness -- has been their want of self-reliance, their proneness to imitate and view life with whatever they could ascertain of the old world. They have resented the fact that their own singularity is an imputation, and wrought hard to keep up a resemblance to the outward and inward life of the mother country. Nothing could come of this but inferiority, insignificance, whether in literature or in anything else. Here we have something better than whole book-stores full of imitative effusions: the vigorous beginning of a national literature; the first distinctive utterances of a fresh national mind, telling, not what it ought to see in obedience to old methods of looking but what it does see of actual life on its soil. 1

Another claim Miss Sedgwick has for remembrance was the great influence exerted by her writings. She was probably the most popular novelist of her day. Chief Justice Marshall sent her this message: "Tell her I have read with great pleasure everything she has written and wish she would write more..."² Dr. Channing, at that time considered a high literary authority, wrote:

I cannot without violence to my feelings refrain from expressing to you the great gratification with which I have read your Live and Let Live. Thousands will be better and happier for it...your last three books, I trust, form an era in our literature. 3

But it was not only in America that her novels were

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1. The Westminster Review, October, 1837.
 2. Original letter to Henry Sedgwick, in Stockbridge Library.
 3. Original letter to Catherine Sedgwick, in Stockbridge Library.

popular. They had a wide reading in England, and several were translated into French, German, Italian and Spanish.

A New England Tale, Miss Sedgwick's first novel, appeared in 1822. It was dedicated to Maria Edgeworth. It is a tale of a young orphan, and contrasts her genuine religion with that of her aunt who observed every orthodox requirement, but who never had a kind thought nor did a charitable deed. Though it was well received and immediately made her famous, there was some criticism of the book as giving a wrong impression of New England people. In the preface to the second edition she apologizes if she has cast any reflection upon their general character. She justifies her choice of subject, however, saying:

To exhibit our religion in its uncorrupted state and in such a form as to interest the affections and influence the conduct, is a right and a duty which the writer has attempted to exercise and perform.¹

A New England Tale, overdrawn and less interesting than some of her other writings, was followed two years later by Redwood which includes an interesting picture of the life of the Shakers. This she had special reason for knowing, having lived in the neighborhood of a community of Shakers and having made many friends among their members. Religion in its various manifestations always interested her and in one form or another supplies the theme of all her books.

1. Catherine Sedgwick, A New England Tale, preface.

Redwood contains the excellently drawn character of Deborah Lenox, the big competent sister of a New England farmer. This novel was followed in 1827 by Hope Leslie, a tale of the days of Governor Winthrop. This is probably the best of her long novels, or, if not the best, certainly the best known. The story centers around four people -- Hope, the ward of Mr. Fletcher, his son Everell, Magawisca, an Indian maid, and the Governor's niece, Esther Downing. As an example of Miss Sedgwick's style, the following quote is given. The Indians had massacred the family of Mr. Fletcher and were carrying off Everell and Hope's little sister, Faith:

They had entered the expanded vale by following the windings of the Housatonic around a hill...garland with laurel now in full bloom; here and there surmounted by an intervening pine, spruce or hemlock whose weared winter foliage was fringed with the bright tender sprouts of spring. We believe there is a chord, even in the heart of savage man, that responds to the voice of nature. Certain it is the party paused, as it appeared, from a common instinct, at a little grassy nook, formed by the curve of the hill, to gaze on this singularly beautiful spot. Everell looked on the smoke that curled from the huts of the villages embosomed in pine trees on the adjacent plain. The scene to him breathed peace and happiness and gushing thoughts of home filled his eyes with tears. Oneco plucked clusters of laurels and decked his little favorite and the old chief fixed his melancholy eye on a solitary pine, scathed and blasted by tempests, that rooted in the ground where he stood, lifted its topmost branches to the bare rock where they seemed in their wild desolation to brave the elemental fury that had stripped them of beauty and life.¹

1. Catherine Sedgwick, Hope Leslie, p. 89.

Though Miss Sedgwick had refused to marry, the fate of unmarried women attracted her sympathy and she endeavored to prove that the single woman could have dignity and happiness. This is the theme of her last novel, Married or Single, written when she was sixty-eight years of age. It appeared after a long period in which she produced only short sketches. Miss Martineau comments on this book:

It is remarkable that the first book on this condition of modern human life should reach us from a country where the condition is supposed to be almost unknown. In other parts of the country marriage is almost a matter of course. It therefore happens that between the supposition that every woman is to marry, and the necessity of a large number of women remaining unmarried, while there are no single gentlemen to be seen above the age of five and twenty, the condition of old maids in the New England states is one of peculiar depression.¹

Following Hope Leslie came Linwoods. This is a revolutionary story in which Washington and Lafayette are rather inadequately drawn. Moving as it is, comments Miss Martineau, "it is so quiet and so true as to refresh the reader as a way-side fountain solaces the traveller in busy highroads."²

Besides her longer works, Miss Sedgwick wrote a number of short stories which, according to one critic was really her proper medium:

Holding her powers in the high estimation that we do, we may be permitted to say that we do

1. The Westminster Review, October, 1837.

2. Ibid.

not think her forte lies in that artificial complication of plot which is necessary to sustain the interest of a long story. Her mind in order to put forth its full strength, needs to be excited by the sense of having undertaken to impress some weighty doctrine of practical philanthropy; and all experiences speak against the attempt to enforce a single moral of any kind by a fiction extended to any great length.¹

Home, one of these shorter works, is a fine example.

It is a simply-told little story contrasting two kinds of family life and has a kind of nostalgic appeal in these days of latchkey children.

Miss Sedgwick's choice of subjects from simple American life and local frontier problems did not come from an unfamiliarity with English or continental European literature. Though she was motivated in her writings by deep religious convictions and was thoroughly versed in theology, she wrote of religion because of her great interest in our young country and our religious doctrines springing up. She did not believe in the strict Puritanical ideas of her day. Rather, she pictured religion as something which made life beautiful and gave courage for the day, in contrast to hollow observances of rites and ceremonies. She was a true democrat, seeing worth and pointing it out in the humble, the poor and the unfortunate.

Perhaps her special qualities are best summarized in the following quotation from a contemporary critic:

She writes with a higher object than

1. The Berkshire Eagle, April 27, 1902.

merely to amuse. Animated by a cheerful philosophy, and anxious to pour its sunshine into every place where there is lurking care or suffering, she selects for illustration the scenes of everyday experience, paints them with exact fidelity and seeks to diffuse over the mind a delicious serenity and in the heart kind feelings and sympathies and wise ambition and steady hope. A true American spirit pervades her works.¹

William Cullen Bryant said of her:

Beautiful as were the examples set forth in her writings, her own example was, if possible, still more beautiful.²

Catherine Sedgwick may be considered one of the pioneers of American fiction especially in the delineation of American life and character, with pictures of American scenery. From her writings we gain a true picture of New England village life of that day. Her novels contain many descriptions of Berkshire scenery. We see through Catherine Sedgwick the puritan life in all its solemnness. Her books are all didactic and written in that almost incredible stilted and sentimental style dear to the readers of the Annals, published in the first half of the century. Compared with the novels of a young English woman of the time, also a provincial, named Jane Austin, Miss Sedgwick's books hardly bear thinking about. But, historically, it is of importance to remember that next to Cooper, hers were the first major books to use American settings in

1. Mary E. Dewey, Life and Letters of Catherine Sedgwick, p. 203.

2. Ibid., p. 207.

fiction, and, this local atmosphere was the Berkshires. The secondary purpose, more cosmopolitan in nature, was to turn the light of humanism and common sense on the theology which had dominated so much of New England.

About the time Miss Sedgwick began her literary career, a youth of twenty came over the hills from Cummington, his native home, to commence law practice in Great Barrington, but actually to usher in the dawn of American poetry. Eight months earlier this same youth, a would-be poet, had gone to Plainfield, Massachusetts, on a like errand.

William Cullen Bryant had been admitted to the bar in Plainfield. He then travelled on foot to Great Barrington and located there in partnership with George H. Ives, the firm bearing the name of Ives and Bryant. A year later Bryant¹ bought out his partner. During a part of his residence in Great Barrington he was elected town clerk, and the records² which abound in his signature are carefully preserved.

Bryant could never be a lawyer, even an unsuccessful one. He was repelled by the sharp practices which he thought a law career necessarily involved. He was by nature meditative, and in his surroundings there was abundant solitude; he was given to long walks and to close communion with nature,

1. Beatrice Hart, Seven Great American Poets, p. 5.

2. The Berkshire News, November 3, 1894.

and all about him were wild mountains, dark glens, woods, deep-flowing rivers and sparkling brooks. The picturesque, inspiring material for a poet's soul was in the very air he breathed, ready to be put down in poetry; here were Indian legends in abundance; here were the customs of "primitive" New England, now dying away, the house raising, the quilting party, the old fashioned corn husking parties held in the barn by the light of a lantern, with soft seats upon piles of dry husks. The following reveals his personal feelings:

I well remember, as I passed through Stockbridge, how much I was struck by the beauty of the smooth, green meadows on the banks of that lovely river, which winds near the Sedgwick mansion, the Housatonic, and whose gently flowing waters seemed tinged with the gold and crimson of the trees that overhung them. I admired no less the contrast between this soft scene and the steep, craggy hills that overlooked it, clothed with their many forests. I had never before seen the southern part of Berkshire, and congratulated myself on being a resident of so picturesque a region.¹

This was in 1815, and on one of his later visits to Stockbridge, he delivered the Fourth of July oration in which he uttered an indignant protest against the Missouri Compromise.

It is therefore no surprise that Bryant came to know the flora of his beloved Berkshires as well as he knew his law. He worked diligently at his profession, but nothing wearied him more. The wildflower, the violet, the brier-rose, the golden-

1. The Berkshire News, October 9, 1815.

rod and the gentian, the trees and the shrubbery tugged away at the poet in him. The sight of a solitary bird winging along the shadowy horizon immediately excited his genius and that night in the loneliness of his bedchamber he penned the memorable To a Water Fowl.

The Berkshire region afforded him ample opportunity to escape the haunts of man, and to enjoy the full beauty of waterfall, river, mountain, plain or woods. Bryant, after coming to Great Barrington, had formed the habit of taking long, solitary rambles over the fields and through the woods. It is quite certain that during his nine years at Great Barrington, his happiest moments were spent in the study of nature, and in voicing her beauties in his poems, for the practice of law was becoming more and more uncongenial to him.

In 1817, while at Great Barrington, Bryant wrote Green River, a beautifully descriptive poem expressing in part his dissatisfaction with his profession and his longing to be wholly free:

Yet pure its waters - its shallows are bright
With colored pebbles and sparkles of light,
And clear the depths where its eddies play,
And dimples deepen and whirl away,
And the plane - tree's speckled arms o'ershoot
The swifter current that mines its root,
Through whose shifting leaves, as you walk the hill,
The quivering glimmer of sun and rill
With a sudden flash on the eye is thrown,
Like the ray that streams from the diamond stone.
Oh, loveliest there the spring days come,
With blossoms and birds and wild bees' hum;
The flowers of summer are fairest there,

And freshest the breath of the summer air;
And sweetest the golden autumn day
In silence and sunshine glides away...¹

Thanatopsis, The Yellow Violet, and The Fragment had already been written, but he had hidden them away, since poetry was not a bread-winning occupation, and poverty kept spurring him on. However, one of his father's former neighbors from back in Cummington was a projector on a new enterprise in Boston known as The North American Review. Believing in young Bryant's poetic ability he had asked him to contribute to the magazine. Bryant refused, but his more ambitious father took matters in his own hands and finding the concealed Thanatopsis, forwarded it to Boston, where it appeared anonymously in the September number of the Review for 1817.

On all sides, though slowly, there arose murmurs of applause. Some said the poem could not have been written this side of the Atlantic, others doubted the rumored authorship, while all admired its nobleness of measure and its loftiness of thought. He wrote to a friend: "Alas, Sir, the Muse was my first love..."²

At Great Barrington, Bryant met Miss Frances Fairchild, whom he married in 1821. Song and Oh Fairest of the Rural

1. Beatrice Hart, Seven Great American Poets, p. 26.

2. Original letter to Henry D. Sedgwick who had invited him to come to New York as his guest and enter journalism as a career. December, 1824.

Maids are two poems in which he expresses his love for her. Mrs. Bryant was a woman of a gentle, sympathetic and deeply religious nature. She was her husband's only intimate friend, and when she died, he had no other.

In the same year of his marriage, 1821, he was invited by the Phi Beta Kappa Society of Harvard to write a poem for them. In response, he went out on the porch of his home and penned The Ages, his longest and most elaborate poem. As it does not pertain to Berkshire County, it shall not be presented here. It is a thoughtful presentation of the history of mankind from the earliest period.

During this same year, upon urgent advice of Berkshire friends, especially Henry Sedgwick, Bryant was induced to publish his first volume of poems. The book was well received everywhere and it established firmly his reputation as a poet. Shortly after appeared his Hymn to Death, which is his tender tribute to his father.

During the next four years, Bryant wrote about thirty poems, this group often being referred to as his Berkshire poems. Some of the most familiar are, The Rivulet, Monument Mountain, Autumn Woods, Hymn to the North Star, The Forest Hymn, and The Old Man's Funeral. These are also among his finest poems. Monument Mountain is a pathetic and tragic love-story of an Indian girl of the Stockbridge tribe. It abounds in exotic descriptions and strong veneration of the idyllic

"Eden" as seen in the following:

...There is a precipice
That seems a fragment of some mighty wall,
Built by the hand that fashioned the old world,
To separate its nations, and thrown down
When the flood drowned them. To the North, a path
Conducts you up the narrow battlement.
Steep is the western side, shaggy and wild
With mossy trees, and pinnacles of flint,
And many a hanging crag. But, to the east,
Sheer to the vale go down the bare old cliffs --
Huge pillars, that in middle heaven upbear
Their weather-beaten capitals, here dark
With moss, the growth of centuries, and there
Of chalky whiteness where the thunderbolt
Has splintered them. It is a fearful thing
To stand upon the beetling verge, and see
Where storm and lightning, from that huge gray wall,
Have tumbled down vast blocks, and at the base
Dashed them in fragments, and to lay thine ear
Over the dizzy depth, and hear the sound
Of winds, that struggle with the woods below,
Come up like ocean murmurs. But the scene
Is lovely round: a beautiful river there
Wanders amid the fresh and fertile meads,
The paradise he made unto himself,
Mining the soil for ages. On each side
The fields swell upward to the hills: beyond,
Above the hills, in the blue distance, rise
The mountain-columns with which earth props heaven...¹

Naturally cautious, and doubting his ability to support himself and his wife by his pen, since even his best during this period brought him no more than two dollars per poem, Bryant found himself at the threshold of a great enigma; his profession was not much to his liking, his "first love" could not be pursued as a career.

In 1824, Bryant visited New York for the first time,

1. Beatrice Hart, Seven Great American Poets, p. 30.

meeting, while there, the best literary men of the city. The United States could not be robbed of a great mind and a great poet. He visited Henry D. Sedgwick at his home, and began to associate with people who shared his interests. This proved to be the catapulting force that carried Bryant to immortality in the fields of literature and journalism.

The next author to arrive in the Berkshires during this period was Oliver Wendell Holmes. Doctor Holmes had an hereditary claim on Berkshire County. His grandfather, Jacob Wendell bought a large amount of land in the township of Pontoosuc (later Pittsfield) in 1735, and the author had visited the county many times during his youth and was naturally attracted to the place.¹

After Colonel Wendell's death, his lands in Pittsfield were divided among his heirs. To Oliver Wendell went twelve thousand acres, half of the twenty-four thousand owned by Colonel Wendell. The author decided to establish a summer home on this land, so in the summer of 1848 he built an attractive home on his inherited estate and named it "Cance Meadows".² It was situated about two miles from the center of Pittsfield and on a road thereafter called Holmes Road.

Holmes enjoyed the social life which the Berkshires pre-

1. J. E. A. Smith, The Poet Among the Hills, p. 49.

2. Ibid., p. 46.

sented at this time. He frequently was host to dinner parties at which were present Nathaniel Hawthorne, Herman Melville, Longfellow, Bryant, and Fanny Kemble.¹ His estate, Canoe Meadows, was a favorite rendezvous of the intellectuals of the day, and was second in place to the Sedgwick mansion in Stockbridge.

His fondness for his Berkshire home is revealed in the following letter he wrote on October 16, 1849, to Mrs. Charles W. Upham:

I hope sometime we shall see you at Pittsfield, where we have better appliances for hospitality than in town, and where it takes a great deal less to make a visitor contented than in Boston. Here I am with the hills, the green fields, the streams, the magnificent woods, all beyond the sunset, and my table covered with papers, my hand at this moment cramped with writing, and everything in bustling preparation for a new campaign of lecturing. 2

During Doctor Holmes' seven summers in Pittsfield, he wrote several poems in special commemoration of some significant event in the city. It seems that any special occasion arising in the county would bring to Holmes an invitation or a request to write a poem about it. After writing the poem, he always made it a practice to attend the celebration and to read it. This collection of poems forms a group by itself, and

1. Ibid., p. 50.

2. Original letter to Mrs. Charles W. Upham, in Stockbridge Library. October 16, 1849.

while most of them are now precious possessions of all English speaking peoples, they were local in their inception and development. A description of the scenery which helped to inspire them, with a narration of the circumstances which led to their writing, and public delivery in the author's living voice, will follow.

The prominent quality in Doctor Holmes' Berkshire poems is their naturalness. In style, these poems are distinguished for their clearness and grace. In subject matter they point to an affectionate and sympathetic nature, courteous but truthful, precise in expression and of quick apprehension.

In 1844 there was celebrated in Pittsfield the Berkshire Jubilee. The idea originated with Reverend Russell S. Cook, of New York, a native of New Marlboro and then secretary of the American Tract Society. His duties called him to all sections of the country, and everywhere he found Berkshire County men in respectable and high positions.

From these observations Mr. Cook conceived the idea of bringing these Berkshirites together in a social reunion with a view towards awakening in the citizens of the county an interest in the fame and usefulness of those who had gone out from among them, and also of furnishing to the world an illustration of the influence New England was having in the formation of the character of the country.

There was no difficulty in organizing a "New York Com-

mittee," made up of such names as William C. Bryant, Orville Dewey, Judge Samuel R. Betts, David Dudley Field, Theodore Sedgwick, Marshall S. Bidwell, and Drake Mills.

The Jubilee was held August 22 and 23, 1844. The program called for a sermon and historical poem on the first day, an oration in the forenoon and a dinner in the afternoon of the second. The sermon was preached by the most famous educator, metaphysician and orator, President Mark Hopkins of Williams College.

Another pleasant and notable feature of the Jubilee was the presence of Reverend Doctor David Dudley Field of Stockbridge, the first historian of Berkshire County, accompanied by two of his famous sons, David Dudley and Cyrus W. Field. Fanny Kemble also was present and read her Berkshire Ode,¹ written by her especially for the occasion.

Governor Briggs, then governor of the Commonwealth, introduced Oliver Wendell Holmes. The poet was already well known to fame, and the governor's announcement was received with the ringing cheers of "Come forward!" The governor suggested that Holmes should mount the table in order to be seen by all.² Doctor Holmes followed this advice and when the renewed cheers subsided he read his Poem of Welcome, which began:

1. The Berkshire News, August 22, 1844.

2. Ibid.

Come back to your Mother, ye children, for shame,
Who have wandered like truants, for riches or fame!
With a smile on her face and a sprig on her cap,
She calls you to feast from her bountiful lap.¹

Holmes' versatility adapted itself to all situations.

His Vision of the Housatonic River, written and used as an epilogue to his lecture on Wordsworth, is a marked tribute to his pen.² Then again, when in 1849 he was invited to speak at the graduation exercises of the Maplewood Young Ladies Institute in Pittsfield, he read a poem called A Vision of Life,³ which he prefaced with a short speech describing his affection for Pittsfield. At a meeting of the Berkshire Agricultural Society in 1849, Doctor Holmes presented his Ploughman,⁴ again displaying his deep affection for the Berkshires and for the simple farmers who peopled it. Running the gamut of his ability and technique, he climaxed the ceremonies formally opening the Pittsfield Cemetery, September 9, 1850, with his masterpiece, Dedicatory Poem.⁵ The poems are different in theme and purpose, yet all tied to a common sentiment about the Berkshires.

1. See Appendix A for Poem of Welcome, reproduced in its entirety.

2. See Appendix B for The Vision of the Housatonic River, reproduced in its entirety.

3. See Appendix C for poem A Vision of Life, complete text, including Doctor Holmes' introductory talk.

4. See Appendix D for The Ploughman, reproduced in its entirety.

5. See Appendix E for the complete text of Dedicatory Poem, copy of original manuscript now housed in the Lenox Library.

Holmes was as equally responsive to gayety as to tragedy. The summer of 1854 witnessed a severe drought in western Massachusetts, where the Berkshire Horticultural Society held its anniversary dinner on September 13th of that year. The ubiquitous doctor was present to commemorate both the Society's birthday and the period of trial just completed. The New Eden is especially suitable for its natural descriptions and absolute sincerity.¹

Holmes' facility and charm are revealed in an episode involving a distressed church fair. During his Pittsfield residence, Doctor Holmes was a constant attendant at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, and he took a genuine interest in the prosperity of the parish. In 1855, St. Stephen's parishioners were even more than usually zealous. The ladies, as ever, were foremost in their zeal, and they made extraordinary preparations for a fair. They solicited not a donation of money from the poet, but a poem for the fair. The bard happened at the time to be deep in writing and pressed for time, and was compelled to plead preoccupation.

The committee was in despair, or at least all but Mrs. J. R. Morewood who at once mounted her horse and dashed off to the villa by the Housatonic. There she presented her petition

1. See Appendix F for the complete text of The New Eden, transcribed from the original manuscript now housed in the Lenox Library.

and she was given the promise of two poems.

Doctor Holmes escorted his fair besieger to the door, of course, and in assisting her to remount her horse, he did not calculate with precise accuracy the amount of force necessary to place her gracefully in her seat. The saddle was gained however, without a fall.¹ But the poet, busy as he was, did not forget the incident, and when the fair lady received the two poems promised for the fair, there came also one for herself which describes the incident with his never failing grace and wit:

Camilla

The gray robe trailing round her feet,
She smiled and took the slippered stirrup
(A smile as sparkling, rosy, sweet,
As soda, drawn with strawberry syrup);-
Now, gallant, now! be strong and calm,-
The graceful toilet is completed,-
Her foot is in thy hollowed palm-
One little spring, and she is seated!

No foot-print on the grass was seen,
The clover hardly bent beneath her,
I knew not if she pressed the green,
Or floated over it in ether;
Why, such an airy, fairy thing
Should carry ballast in her pocket,-
God bless me! If I help her spring
She'll shoot up heavenward like a rocket.

Ah, fatal doubt! The sleepless power
That chains the orbs of light together,
Bends on its stem the slenderest flower
That lifts its plume from turf or heather:
Clasp, Lady, clasp the bridle rein!
The filly stands - hold hard upon her!

1. Smith, The Poet Among the Hills, p. 152.

Twine fast those fingers in her mane,
Or all is lost - excepting honor!
Earth stretched his arms to snatch his prize,
The fairies shouted "Stand from under!"
The violets shut their purple eyes,
The naked daisies stared in wonder:
One moment. - Seated in her pride,
Those arms shall try in vain to win her;
"Earth claims her not," the fairies cried,
"She has so little of it in her!"¹

The two other poems enclosed in envelopes, were inscribed with mottoes. These were disposed of in a raffle, the winner of the first prize selecting that of the two poems which pleased him, from the motto on the envelope. Mrs. Ensign H. Kellogg drew the first prize and selected the envelope inscribed with the following:

Motto

Faith is the conquering Angel's crown:
Who hopes for grace must ask it;
Look shrewdly ere you lay me down:
I'm Portia's leaden casket.

The following verses were found within:

Portia's Leaden Casket

Fair Lady, whosoe'er thou art,
Turn this poor leaf with tenderest care
And - hush, O hush thy beating heart-
The One thou lovest will be there!

Alas! not loved by thee alone,
Thine idol, ever prone to range;
Today, all thine, tomorrow flown,
Frail thing that every hour may change.

Yet, when that ruant course is done,
If thy lost wanderer reappear,
Press to thy heart the only One
That nought can make more truly dear!²

1. Ibid., p. 153.

2. Ibid., p. 155.

The second prize fell to Colonel George S. Willis.

The following was the:

Motto

If man, or boy, or dolt, or scholar
Will break this seal, he pays his dollar;
But if he reads a single minute,
He'll find a dollar's worth within it.

The poem found within was:

A Dollar's Worth

Listen to me and I will try
To tell you what a dollar will buy.

A dollar will buy a Voter's conscience,
Or a book of "Fiftieth thousand" nonsense:

Or a ticket to hear a Prima Donna,
Or a fractional part of a statesman's honor;

It will buy a tree to sit in the shade of,
Or half the cotton a tounure's made of;

It will buy a glass of rum or gin
At a Deacon's store or a Temperance inn.

(The Deacon will show you how to mix it,
Or the Temperance Landlord stay and fix it.)

It will buy a painting at Burbank's hall
That will frighten the spiders from off the wall;

Or a dozen teaspoons of medium size,
That will do for an Agricultural prize.

It will buy four tickets to Barnum's show -
(Late firm of Pharaoh, Herod & Co.)
Or get you a paper that brings by mail
Its weekly "Original thrilling tale" -
Of which the essential striking plot
Is a daddy that's rich and a youth that's not,
Who seeking in vain for Papa's consent,
Runs off with his daughter - the poor old gent!
The Governor's savage: at last relents
And leaves them a million in cash and rents.

Or a Hair-wash, patent, and warranted too,
That will turn your whiskers from gray to blue,
And dye old three-score as good as new;
So that your wife will open her eyes
And treat you with coolness, and then surprise,
And at last, as you're sidling up to her,
Cry, "I'll call my husband, you saucy cur!"

Or a monochrome landscape, done in an hour,
That looks like a ceiling stained in a shower!

Or a ride to Lenox through mire and clay,
Where you may see, through the livelong day,
Scores of women with couples of men
Trudging up hill, and down again.

This is what a dollar will do,
With many things as strange but true:
This very dollar I've got from you-
P. S. We shouldn't mind if you made it two.¹

The sale of the two poems sent by Doctor Holmes to the Fair added twenty-five dollars to its receipts! The above quoted poems are far from completing the group written by the poet while vacationing those seven summers in Pittsfield. Many more were written during his stay, all depicting amusing incidents while in the Berkshires, or full of Berkshire scenery which he so admired.

Yet Holmes is only a single, even if conspicuous example, of the uplifting and stirring dynamism of the Berkshires, only one of those who sought refuge in Nature simple and proper, smothering theories, paradoxes and half-truths with outbursts of words and song. Hawthorne sought escape from ordinary life by looking into the hearts of men and finding hopes and fears

1. Ibid., pp. 156-57.

that are typical of all mankind. Poe got away by idealizing persons and surroundings until they approached his notion of perfection in beauty and, or, horror, or mental acuteness. Herman Melville sought spiritual and emotional relief from the routine activities of the American town and city by fleeing from them and settling down with the recollection of his experiences near the locale which Holmes immortalized.

In 1841 Melville, a young man of twenty-two, had taken a sea voyage aboard a whaling vessel. It was not a mere venture, some prank, but a four year stint which provided him with all the tense and dramatic experiences required to provide material for a born writer. On returning, he took up residence in New York City. However, Lizzie Melville, his wife, had an intense dislike for New York City summers and looked around for a country home. The family decided on Pittsfield.¹ Before buying a place for a permanent home, they spent the first summer at Broadhall Inn, an old historical mansion known well by Melville, for it had formerly been the home of his uncle, Major Thomas Melville. Herman had spent much of his youth there, and recollecting how much he had enjoyed it then, the opportunity to experience the same reactions to beauty of form and color with a more mature mind fascinated him. It was an exclusive boarding house at the time, and among the other agree-

1. R. R. Wilson, New England in Letters, p. 327.

able fellow boarders, Melville found the poet Longfellow with his wife and children.¹ During the summer he renewed his acquaintance with Holmes and became his neighbor, buying a large farmhouse on Holmes Road, not far from the Holmes estate, Cance Meadows.² Melville named his place "Arrowhead," because of the many Indian relics found on the land in the first plowing of the fields.³ Such treasures could only serve to intensify his adventurous spirit and thus endear the Berkshires, and Arrowhead, in particular, to his artistic nature. Arrowhead was a gambrel-roofed house of two stories, but Melville made it a house of many 'stories' by writing all his later works in it.

Melville's masterpiece, Moby Dick (1851), was written while he was living at Arrowhead. It contains the absorbing narrative of Captain Ahab, whose leg had been bitten off in the South Seas by a great whale, affectionately, or vindictively, referred to by the sailors by the name, "Moby Dick." The captain's voyage of revenge is terminated by his death in a fierce struggle with the hated foe.

Among Melville's other works, Piazza Tales, though far from the most widely known book, is of local interest to Berkshire County. It was so titled because its stories originated

1. Geoffrey Stone, Melville, p. 49.

2. Ibid., p. 51.

3. Ibid., p. 53.

in and from a piazza which Melville added to the north end of the house where it overlooked a noble landscape extending through a picturesque vista of twenty miles to Greylock Mountain.

A New England farm-house as venerable as Arrowhead could not fail to have its huge old chimney in the center of the house according to the fashion of the day. Melville made it the hero of one of his most curious and characteristic sketches, My Chimney and I. Unchanged to this day, the chimney is twelve feet square at the base. The woodwork over the fireplace mantle is of oak from the original forest. On it, one sees a large Indian tomahawk found by Melville in a grove of pines still standing south of the house.¹

October Mountain, a sketch of mingled philosophy and word-painted landscape was written by the author from his famous piazza. He found his inspiration in the massive and brilliant autumn tints of the Hoosac Mountains as seen from the piazza on a fine day after the early frosts.²

The author was extremely fond of hikes among the Berkshire hills and valleys, a well preserved relic of his early passion for far wider wanderings. His rambles were never solitary, and rarely with a single companion. He rather delighted

1. Seen by the writer on numerous visits to the home.

2. Stone, Melville, p. 27.

leading parties of people with kindred tastes, often including guests of note from abroad. In such fellowship he climbed to every alluring hill-top and explored every picturesque corner and hidden nook that he could hear of.

It was on one of these hikes he accidentally met Nathaniel Hawthorne again, and on this memorable meeting a lasting friendship was formed. Up to this time Melville had been a lonely man -- the usual payment for individual thinking -- until chance drew him into a strong friendship with Hawthorne. The latter was aware that Melville was the author of a very appreciative review of The Scarlet Letter. This very knowledge perhaps had kept apart the two sensitive men, each shying the other's approach although occasionally thrown together in company. One day a group of men including Hawthorne were exploring Monument Mountain, described so vividly by Hawthorne in The Wonder Book, when they were forced to seek shelter from a thunderstorm. Melville, on a hike also, and seeking shelter, met Hawthorne.¹ Two hours of enforced companionship revealing so much of each other's thoughts and feelings sealed the strange friendship that was spiritual food for Melville.

And how did Hawthorne come to be in the Berkshires? Well, Bryant had long been established as a well-known journalist in New York, and Hawthorne was at the height of his career

1. Clark W. Bryan, The Book of Berkshire, p. 104.

when, in 1851, the latter decided to come to Stockbridge to establish a home there to regain his health and continue his writing. The home he chose was a small red house with a picket fence in front of it, on the borderline between Stock-¹bridge and Lenox.

Hawthorne had just written The Scarlet Letter and was at the threshold of his great fame, so that although he longed for solitude, as usual, it was harder than ever to avoid callers. His wife often remarked in her letters that they saw more people here than they ever had in Salem. Hawthorne cared little for society. His greatest luxury, his most congenial association, was the company of his own thoughts.

This little red cottage amid the hills, the hermitage he wished to be a natural seclusion, was the place where for the next two years the shy, reserved author made many new friends. It was here, in a small story-and-a-half building, rude and simple, clinging to a great hillside, that Hawthorne settled down and began that isolated, happy family life which had belonged to the Old Manse. Here he was perhaps happier than he had ever been, combining the paradise surrounding his home on the outside with the rich, comfortable, familiar atmosphere on the inside which his wife maintained for him. They had brought the relics of family furniture, the oriental objects

1. Ibid., p. 107.

from overseas inherited from his father, and the Italian Madonnas, the casts and paintings in which his wife delighted. As the quarters were very small, the effect was one of mingled homeliness and refinement.

Hawthorne breathed the air of successful authorship at last and knew its vanities and pleasures. The mail brought him new acquaintances and now and then a hero-worshipper lingered at the gate for a look. As the warm days went by and the frosts came, he sheltered himself from the world, living practically alone with his wife and children, yet exhilarated by a sense of friendliness with the world which cheered and warmed him. He remarked that his mind never worked well till frosts brought out the landscape's autumnal colors and worked some similar alchemy in his own brain. In the summer time, he relaxed and acquired much needed rest, giving and receiving those early hospitalities he experienced in his new environment.

He found at times that the broad view from his home was a distraction which made it hard for him to write in its presence. He had always been used to narrow outlooks from his windows; even at the Old Manse the scene was small, though open. With the coming of fall days, however, the broad expanse visible suffocated him with its grandeur and magnitude, urging him to heights he considered impossible. Indeed, during his stay in the Berkshires he produced more than he ever had in

previous years.

Hawthorne's quality was different now. He began writing novels studied, and composed differently, from his earlier stories, and more akin to the usual narrative of fiction. He began The House of Seven Gables in September and finished it early in January.¹ On finishing this work, he took that rest which he always required after any great exertion.

His second daughter, Rose, one of the most famous converts to the Catholic Church, was born in the spring.² A happier childhood is seldom read about than that which appears in the reminiscences of this small family.

As always, Hawthorne arranged his life to his own liking. He was accustomed to a daily walk to the Lenox post office; and although he worked every morning, he found hours in which to lie on his back and look at Monument Mountain, or tell his children stories of Greek heroes until the children and the stories mingled with the countryside, to be transmuted into The Wonder Book and Tanglewood Tales. In comparison with the fluffy sentimentality of most contemporary descriptions of the landscape, Hawthorne's meticulous observations have all the reassurance of fact. Yet he disposed of his Berkshire interlude by a few descriptions recording, as in a dry-point etch-

1. Ibid., p. 111.

2. Ibid., p. 113.

ing, the effect of tumbling brooks, leafless trees, and clouds.

Hawthorne was not social by nature, hence his acquaintances in the Berkshires were few and consisted mainly of the literati of the day. He often saw Fanny Kemble, Longfellow, G. P. R. James, Holmes and Melville.¹ His friendship with Herman Melville, previously referred to, was one of the closest of his life. Melville was accustomed to ride over to Tanglewood evenings to chat with his friend.² Others were a group of distinguished writers and people of culture who offered him conviviality, but little inspiration for his writings. The novel, The House of Seven Gables, written while in the Berkshires, was actually brewed in Salem. The open hills and lakes of Berkshire County had come too late; they could afford him neither the inspiration they had to Bryant nor the release they had to Fanny Kemble.

The little town of Lenox is indeed alive with the memories of Hawthorne. Here one sees the rather delicate looking man of hollow eye and thoughtful mien, who, to the ordinary villager, seemed somewhat unsociable as he trudged to and from the village to receive his corrected proofs and other mail. To that cozy home by the lake, bright with pictures, pervaded with the warmth and gladness of Hawthorne's personality came

1. Ibid., p. 114.

2. DeWitt Mallory, Lenox and the Berkshire Highlands, p. 84.

Oliver Wendell Holmes riding down from Pittsfield. The publisher James T. Fields, drove up from Stockbridge just to enjoy the writer's presence. There came also other friends quite as distinguished - James Russell Lowell, E. P. Whipple, Cooper, and many more of the literati of the day. Rarely does one see at anyone's threshold such a group of masterful intellects.

Mrs. Hawthorne writes thus to her mother, September, 1851:

It is very singular how much more we are in the midst of society in Lenox than we were in Salem. All types of literary persons seem settling around us.¹

Thus the unsocial Hawthorne enjoyed the acquaintance and friendship of more of his contemporary writers than he had or possibly would have had, in the proper cultural surroundings of Boston. Often while on a walk through the town, he would jump over a fence and tramp through fields to avoid meeting strangers. The solitary genius was no introvert, for when company forced itself upon him he was the most genial and ac-
²
comodating of hosts. There was one visitor who came almost daily to intrude on his meditation, Fanny Kemble. She was excessively social and became greatly attached to Hawthorne's

1. Original letter in Stockbridge Library.

2. Mallory, Lenox and the Berkshire Highlands, p. 163.

young son, Julian, whom she carried with her on horseback for long rides through the valley.¹ So regular were her visits that the small boy would look for the spirited lady daily to give him a gallop up and down the country roads. This visitor never caused Hawthorne to seek a furtive exit.

His attitude towards G. P. R. James was not quite as affable, but the latter was one of Hawthorne's dearest male friends. James, the English author of more than a hundred historical novels, had come recently to Stockbridge. Hawthorne sent him the manuscript of his House of Seven Gables, a gesture which delighted James as much as did the story itself. But James was as flamboyant as Hawthorne was saturnine. Somewhat reminiscent of E. Phillips Oppenheim, James brought a smoothness to Stockbridge which suggested London drawing rooms. He had met Campbell, Southey, and Byron, and was known to be a friend of Sir Walter Scott. Urbanely used to success, he used his talent with sophisticated ease and never worked after eleven in the morning. What influence this diletantism had on Hawthorne can only be conjectured; it certainly never inspired him.

Thackeray's parody of James' style hardly exaggerates it. The first draft of his manuscripts, which he rarely changed, was dictated to his secretary, an invaluable catch-all of a

1. Ibid., p. 172.

person who was his master's valet, the brother of an Irish baronet, and the master of several languages as well. James' man-of-the-world exterior prevented any more than superficial cordiality on the unsocial Hawthorne's part, but he made more of an impression on Hawthorne than any other author of the time, and next to Melville, Hawthorne considered him the next closet friend.

Very early in the nineteenth century, a certain mansion in Pittsfield became the residence of Thomas Gold, a lawyer of some note and a man of wealth. His daughter, Maria Theresa, became the wife of Honorable Nathan Appleton, a Boston gentleman of culture and distinction. After Gold's death, the homestead, although the property and home of his widow while she lived, was the summer residence of the Appleton family.

The reason for Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's frequent visits to the Berkshires during 1842 and 1843 was in that home in the person of Frances Elizabeth, daughter of Nathan Appleton. After a most romantic wooing, Longfellow won Frances Elizabeth and they were married at Boston, July 13, 1843.

It was during his wedding trip that he stopped at the Appleton mansion, "Pine Knoll," and noticed with particular interest the old clock at the head of the broad flight of stairs leading from the spacious entrance-hall of the Gold-Appleton home. However, he did not begin writing the poem which made the clock famous, until November 12, 1845, when its memory was

recalled by a passage in the writings of Bridaine, an old French missionary. From the latter also he took the refrain:

Forever, never! Never, forever!
(Toujours, jamais! Jamais, toujours!)¹

The poem at once attained remarkable popularity which time has increased rather than diminished. The frequent allusions to it in the author's diary show that it was as much a favorite with him as it was with his readers. The marvelous hold which it took upon multitudes of hearts is explained by the elements of deep thought and feeling which are combined in it. The refrain suggests, and almost expresses, the emotions that spring irrepressibly while contemplating a timepiece of past fashion that has marked the hours as they grew to years and the years as they grew to generations in an old family mansion.

Longfellow must himself have felt that he had glorified the mansion as much as the clock on its stairs, for it will be observed that in his diary he rarely speaks simply of the clock, but almost invariably of the "House of the Old Clock." The clock was of the tall, old-fashioned kind made in Pitts-
field and Lanesboro in the late 1700's.² In old Berkshire

1. See Appendix G for complete text of poem, The Old Clock on the Stairs.

2. The writer visited at the Appleton home on numerous occasions when a child. The house has since been razed and in its place now is The Pittsfield High School.

families they are preserved as precious heirlooms, while strangers buy them at high prices merely as antiques.

The old clock was removed to Boston in late years by Longfellow and stood in the hallway of the Appleton mansion there. Professor Longfellow placed one of the same kind in the hall of the Craigie House, his Cambridge residence, where many visitors erroneously supposed it to be the original clock of the poem.

Longfellow's visit in the summer of 1849 brought him to Broadhall Inn, now The Pittsfield Country Club. He was much impressed by the beauty of the neighboring South Mountain and the variety of grand views from it. He took extreme pleasure in wandering about the shores of the charming lakelet on the Broadhall grounds in the companionship of his children. He liked the Berkshire scenery so well he tells of several pleasant drives, particularly around the regions of Roaring Brook. This notable mountain streamlet dashes down a romantic gorge on the west side of Washington Mountain, a summit of the Hoosac Mountain a few miles southwest of Oliver Wendell Holmes' villa. Longfellow visited the brook on summer days and left the following spirited account of the excursion in his diary:

August 28, 1849:

In the morning, sat with the children by the water-wheel in the brook, then walked to the village for the carriage to take us in the afternoon to Roaring Brook. A lovely drive, and lovelier walk. Leaving the carriage at the foot of the hill, we climbed

the rough wagon-way along the borders of the brook, catching glimpses of its waterfalls through the woods and hearing the perpetual music of its murmur. The water is of a lively brown color, like Rhenish wine -- the Olympian wine spilled from the goblet of Hebe when she fell.¹

At the time of this excursion Longfellow was writing his novel, Kavanagh -- an enchanting little volume, and he painted his visit to Roaring Brook in it. The paragraph regarding it is as follows:

Every State, and almost every county of New England has its Roaring Brook -- a mountain streamlet, overhung by woods, impeded by a mill, encumbered by fallen trees; but ever-rushing, racing, roaring down through gurgling gullies and filling the forest with its delicious sound and freshness; the drinking place of home-returning herds; the mysterious haunts of squirrels and blue-jays; the sylvan retreat of schoolboys, who frequent it in summer holidays and mingle their restless thoughts with its restless, exuberant, and rejoicing streams.²

Longfellow was not the only guest of the House of the Old Clock who left choice memories behind. Charles Sumner, distinguished American statesman, was frequently a guest. In the late summer of 1844 he was recovering slowly from an alarming illness and his physician advised him that Berkshire air would hasten his convalescence appreciably. He was a great favorite of the Appleton family and one of Longfellow's dearest

1. Beatrice Hart, Seven Great American Poets, p. 164.

2. Ibid., p. 167.

friends. He was therefore invited to make his home at the Appleton Mansion as long as he would, and accepting the invitations, became their guest for several months.¹

Honorable Edward A. Newton, a neighbor of the Appleton's and a man quick to perceive and appreciate intellectual qualities like Sumner's, loaned him a fine saddle-horse to make frequent visits to the Sedgwick home. As a result, Sumner very soon had a new friendship. Twelve years before, in 1832, when he was a law student at Cambridge, he became thoroughly fascinated with the beauty and genius of Fanny Kemble who was making an American theatrical tour. His personal acquaintance was, however, of the slightest until he came to Berkshire County. It was then a great friendship began between the great Shakespearean actress and the statesman.²

Longfellow shared fully Sumner's admiration for Fanny Kemble, and in neither did it fade with time. Both were in raptures with her Shakespearean readings. After one at Boston, in 1849, when Longfellow had recently returned from Pittsfield, he wrote her a sonnet complimenting her on her achievement. Sumner copied it for publication in the Evening Transcript, a small incident revealing the wonderful friendship of the little group of great minds in Berkshire County at this time.

1. Roderick Peattie, The Berkshires, p. 172.

2. Ibid., p. 179.

At the time of this incident, Fanny Kemble was already thoroughly attached to the Berkshires. One of the greatest of English actresses, she had come to Stockbridge in the autumn of 1835 to forget her unhappy marriage, drawn by the magnetic spell of Catherine Sedgwick and the reports she had heard of western Massachusetts. After this visit she came often until she bought an estate and a country home, "The Perch," in Lenox. Here, by her dramatic genius and the amplitude of her personality, she triumphed over the separation from her children, which was the great tragedy of her life.

The informality of Berkshire County enchanted her, and characteristically she flung herself into elaborate descriptions of the countryside. One might say she came, she saw, she was conquered till she came to worship the matchless outspread, the lavish beauties of nature, the majesty of the hills she saw there. This is one of her many portrayals:

Immediately sloping before me, the green hillside, on the summit of which stands the house I am inhabiting, sinks softly down to a small valley, filled with thick rich wood in the center of which a jewel-like lake lies gleaming. Beyond this valley the hills lie, one above the other to the horizon where they scoop up the sky with a broken irregular outline that the eye dwells upon with ever new delights as its colors glow and vary with the ascending and descending sunlight, and all the shadowy procession of the clouds. In one direction this undulating line of distance is over-topped by a considerable mountain with a fine, jagged crest, and ever since early morning troops of clouds and wandering showers of rain and the all-prevailing sun-beams have chased each other

over the wooded slopes and down into the dark hollow where the lake lies sleeping, making a pageant far finer than the one Prospero raised for Ferdinand and Miranda on his desert island.¹

To have Fanny Kemble at any place in those days was to distinguish it above all others in the United States. Where she went, the wealth and culture of the country must also go, and when it was known that she had found a charming summer country home in Lenox, Berkshire County got its first decided start as a fashionable resort.

Fanny invested her daily life with theatrical overtones. One day, alighting from her carriage, she turned to the man who was driving and announced in her most dramatic manner: "You have been driving with Fanny Kemble." "Madam," was the quick Yankee answer, "You have just rid with John Smith."²

For the approximate thirty years (1836-1863) that the great actress was in the Berkshires, her cultivated imagination was always in harmony with her natural and social environment. It is small wonder her enthusiasm over the town of Lenox and its setting should have endured so long.

At about the time of Fanny's first visit, another celebrated English woman came to see Catherine Sedgwick. Ear trumpet in hand, Miss Harriet Martineau arrived to take notes on the New England scene. Stockbridge rose to the occasion

1. Bryan, The Book of Berkshire, p. 187.

2. Ibid., p. 190.

and "Lafayetted" her, putting that jaundiced but intrepid devotee of causes into a friendly frame of mind. Never before had Miss Martineau been the cause of such attention. She liked being given roses by the village children. In fact, she liked Stockbridge so much she came to visit it once more, boarding on the top of the Hill for the sum of two dollars a week. She enjoyed her visits thoroughly, particularly because of the many intellectuals there, and after her return to France she often wrote pleasantly of her visits.

Other women of note that came to visit Catherine Sedgwick during this period included Mrs. Anna Jameson, the well-known art critic, Frederika Bremer, the Swedish novelist and believer in women's rights, Lucy Stone, the abolitionist, and Sara Barton, alias Fanny Fern. The latter was popular as the author of several works, among them Fernleaves from Fanny's Portfolio. So too, came her brother, N. P. Willis, handsome author of Pencillings by the Way and Loiterings of Travel. Of this writer, Oliver Wendell Holmes said he was "the remembrance of the Conte D'Orsay and the anticipation of Oscar Wilde!"¹

Names pass into history, others take their place, the shadows of the hills sheltered in turn one, then another, famous American personage, overwhelming each and every one with

1. Wilson, New England in Letters, p. 112.

the sylvan beauty and eternal magnificence which remains perpetually glorious and virile. Henry D. Sedgwick, writing an article, Reminiscences of Literary Berkshire, made an interesting enumeration which reads in part:

In August, 1850, four months after going up Monument Mountain with James Russell Lowell, I ascended the same mountain with a company of authors - Mr. Hawthorne, Dr. Holmes, Messrs. Evert A. and George L. Duykinck, Cornelius Matthews (who wrote under the name of Puffer Hopkins), Herman Melville, James T. Fields, whose novels, however, were in the line of Justinian rather than of Sir Walter Scott. I remember little more of their conversation than that they talked prose apparently as unconsciously as Mr. Jourdain himself, and that I enjoyed the distinction of being the only one of the party who had not written a book.¹

Literature thrives best amid the beautiful, and so it has been with the Berkshires -- a literary halo investing this charming region. Such an effect forced the Reverend Henry Ward Beecher into an almost pagan adoration of the world about him in that region. He had come to Lenox in 1853 and had bought a house and several acres of land on a hill towards Lee, called "Beecher Hill." Henry Ward being a man of strong emotions, the effect of such a region as Berkshire upon his imagination and feelings can hardly be gauged. His whole soul went into his adoration of the surroundings till his enthusiasm

1. A talk given by Henry D. Sedgwick to Stockbridge Literary Society, October 17, 1890.

grew boundless. It was his opinion the Berkshires were too fine a place to be absent from for an unnecessary moment, and so often did he come here that his congregation in Brooklyn stood in actual fear that he would abandon his church and pass the remainder of his life in Lenox. Such was the hypnotic effect of the hills upon its admirers.

Henry Ward's Berkshire inspiration found expression in several of his letters and in his major work, Star Papers.

Here he speaks of Berkshire scenery thus:

Great Barrington is one of those places which one never enters without wishing never to leave. It rests beneath the branches of great numbers of the stateliest elms. It is a place to be desired as a summer residence. Next, to the north is Stockbridge, famed for its meadow-elms, for the picturesque scenery adjacent, for the quiet beauty of a village which sleeps along a level plain, just under the rim of hills. If you wish to be filled and satisfied with the serenest delight, ride to the summit of this encircling hill-ridge, in a summer's afternoon while the sun is but an hour high. The Housatonic winds in great circuits all through the valley, carrying willows and alders with it wherever it goes.¹

After the Civil War, the Berkshires continued to appeal to outstanding literary figures. Edith Wharton was one of these. Tiring of the jaded society of Newport, she bought land in Lenox in 1899, the year of her first major work, The Great

1. Henry Ward Beecher, Star Papers (New York: J. C. Derby, Publishers, 1855), p. 178.

Inclination.¹ The mansion she built was located on a slight knoll, and christened "The Mount," not because it was on one, but because another home owned by the family elsewhere had already been so named. She speaks of it in her autobiography as follows:

We sold our Newport house and built one near Lenox, in the hills of western Massachusetts and at last I escaped from watering-place trivialities to the real country. If I could have made the change sooner I daresay I should never have given a thought to the literary delights of Paris or London; for life in this county is the only state which has always completely satisfied me, and I had never been allowed to gratify it, even for a few weeks at a time. Now I was to know the joys of six or seven months a year among fields and woods of my own...On a slope overlooking the dark waters and densely wooded shores of Laurel Lake we built a spacious and dignified house, to which we gave the name of my great-grandfather's place, The Mount. There was a big kitchen-garden with a grape pergola, a little farm, and a flower-garden outspread below the wide terrace overlooking the lake. There, for over ten years I lived and gardened and wrote contentedly, and should doubtless have ended my days there had not a grave change in my husband's health made the burden of the property too heavy. But meanwhile The Mount was to give me country cares and joys, long happy rides and drives through the wooded lanes of that loveliest region, the companionship of a few dear friends, and the freedom from trivial obligations which was necessary if I was to go on with my writing. The Mount was my first real home.²

The Berkshires stimulated her creative zeal and a year

1. Edith Wharton, A Backward Glance, p. 103.

2. Ibid.

later, in 1900, she published a collection of short stories under the title of Crucial Instances.¹ This was followed by her second novel, The Touchstone. Her third novel, The Valley of Decision,² was also written here. Her writing was done early in the day and by eleven o'clock she was ready for friends and for engagements, for walking or for garden work. Next to Holmes' and Catherine Sedgwick's mansion, no house had greater hospitality nor was more full of charm than The Mount. Edith Wharton surrounded herself with the intelligentsia of the day. The author enjoyed Berkshire County to such a large degree mainly because of the high cultural nourishment she received here.

The three principal rooms at The Mount were a library, a drawing room and a dining room. The latter had French windows which opened on a broad terrace overlooking the formal parterres of the garden, and this terrace was shaded by an immense striped awning. Beyond that, a lawn sloped to a meadow stretching to the border of a little wooded lake. One day when a party for lunch had gathered on the terrace, Mr. Choate, Ambassador to England, arrived, accompanied by the Austrian Ambassador. "Ah, Mrs. Wharton," he said as he stepped from the house, "when I look about me I don't know if I am in England or

1. Ibid., p. 125.

2. Ibid.

in Italy."¹

It was an amusing and delightful house to visit, with no sophistication, pretentiousness nor sham. These were the days of horses, and only an occasional motor car wended its way on the county's dirt roads.

Among the friends whom Mrs. Wharton gathered about her social circle were, Henry James, Edward Robinson, Bayard Cutting, John Cadwalader, Egerton Winthrop, Walter Maynard, Charles McKim, Stanford White, Ogden Codman, John Hay, Henry Adams and George Cabot Lodge, and hosts of others too numerous to mention. She speaks of her group of friends thus:

This circle had happily always been mine, and I enjoyed its renovated air all the more now that I had found my own line in life; but though I liked New York well enough, it was only at The Mount that I was really happy. There, every summer, I gathered about me my own group of intimates, of whom the number was slowly growing.²

She speaks of her times with this group as follows:

About this time we set up a motor, or perhaps I should say, a series of them, for in those days it was difficult to find one which did not rapidly develop some organic defect, and selling, buying and exchanging went on continuously, though without appreciably better results. One summer, when we were all engaged on the first volumes of MMe Karenine's absorbing life of George Sand, we had a large showy car which always started off brilliantly and then broke down at the first hill, and this we christened, "Alfred de Musset,"

1. Percy Lubbock, Portrait of Edith Wharton, p. 20.

2. Wharton, A Backward Glance, pp. 149-50.

while the small but indefatigable motor which subsequently replaced "Alfred" was naturally named "George." But those were the days when motorguides still contained carefully drawn gradient maps like fever-charts, and even "George" sometimes balked at the state of the country roads about Lenox; I remember in particular one summer night when Henry James, Walter Berry and my husband and I sat by the roadside till near dawn while our chauffeur tried to persuade "George" to carry us back to The Mount...In those epic days roads and motors were an equally unknown quantity, and one set out on a ten mile run with more apprehension than would now attend a journey across Africa. But the range of country-lovers like myself had hitherto been so limited, and our imagination so tantalized by the mysteries beyond the next blue hill, that there was inexhaustible delight in penetrating to these remoter parts of Massachusetts discovering derelict villages with Georgian churches and balustraded house-fronts, exploring slumberous mountain valleys, and coming back weary but laden with a new harvest of beauty, after sticking fast in ruts, having to push the car uphill, to rout out the village blacksmith for repairs, and suffer the jeers of horse-drawn travellers trotting gaily past us. My two New England tales, Ethan Frome and Summer, were the result of explorations among villages still bedrugged in a decaying rural existence, and sad, slow-speaking people living in conditions hardly changed since their forbearers held those villages against the Indians.¹

Among all of Mrs. Wharton's novels, the two outstanding are Ethan Frome and Summer, which unfold the tragedy of circumstances in as different a method as possible from all her other works. Her fashionable New York novels and her two rural New England works, however, have something in common. In the

1. Ibid., p. 152.

desolate forgotten hill towns of Berkshire County which witness the agonies of Ethan Frome and Charity Royall, not only is there a stubborn village decorum, but there are also the bitter compulsions of a helpless poverty which binds feet and wings as the most ruthless decorum cannot bind them. She consequently brings into her narrative an outlook not to be found in any of the novelists who write of rural New England. Her insight comes, naturally, from very intimate acquaintanceship.

In Ethan Frome, losing from her clear voice for a moment the note of satire, she reaches her highest point of tragic passion. In the bleak life of Ethan Frome on his bleak hillside there blooms an exquisite love which during a few hours of rapture promises to transform his fate; but poverty clutches him, drives him to attempt suicide with the woman he loves, and then condemns him to one of the most appalling expiations in fiction -- to a slavery in comparison with which his former life was almost freedom. Not since Hawthorne has a novelist built on the New England soil a tragedy of such elevation of mood as this.

Mrs. Wharton continued to write both short stories and novels while at The Mount. Her eager intelligence derived fresh vigor and atmosphere from this beautiful section of western Massachusetts. Sparkling conversation with the prominent personages of that day kept her home the center of society and cultured minds.

Her closest friend was Henry James, the novelist, who spent many summers at The Mount after selling his own home in Stockbridge, a mansion he had purchased in 1851. The two writers would discuss the literary works of the day, read them aloud and criticize them. Of his visits, Edith Wharton writes:

I believe James enjoyed those days at the Mount as much as he did anything connected with the American scene; and the proof of it is the length of his visits and their frequency.¹

Edith Wharton is probably the most distinguished among American women novelists. Much in her life and work reminds one of Henry James. In her youth she received every advantage in the way of social surroundings and educational advantages, both in this country and in Europe. The atmosphere of most of her novels resembles that of James, for in all of her books except one, her characters are persons of leisure and refinement whose lives are spent chiefly in society distinguished for its good breeding.

The humanitarian, Ellery Channing, was a close friend of Catherine Sedgwick. On the anniversary of emancipation in the British West Indies he delivered his last public address in Lenox. In 1844 Macready visited Stockbridge and was so delightfully impressed by its culture he declared frankly he regretted leaving. After the Brook Farm Movement declined, George William

1. Ibid., p. 186.

Curtis spent many of his summers in Lenox where he enjoyed the culture and artistic atmosphere of the Berkshires. Lydia H. Sigourney, an early American author, spent many summers in Lenox also. She, too, was a great friend of Catherine Sedgwick and a member of the latter's literary circle. In 1844, Fanny Kemble had read before a literary assembly Sigourney's poem, Stockbridge Bowl, a tribute well paid to an idyllic natural garden. And in the allied subject of art was Frederic Crowinshield, the celebrated artist who resided in, and painted, the Berkshires in each of the seasons.

Isaac Garfield, an ancestor of President Garfield, was one of the settlers of the town of Tyringham in 1739, and some of his descendants have always lived in this community. One recalls that President Garfield himself lived in Tyringham before attending Williams College in Williamstown, Massachusetts.¹ Colonel Daniel Garfield's daughter had a pleasant recollection of her distinguished cousin's good spirits and good humor of his boyish days. The President always looked back with pleasure to his life in Berkshire County both before and after going to college. He was preparing to attend a commencement at Williams when he was assassinated. Lake Garfield in Tyringham is named in his honor.

In more recent times, 1866, Matthew Arnold too, partook

1. Bryan, The Book of Berkshires, p. 171.

of the delight obtainable in this section of the State of Massachusetts. He was thirty years too late to be welcomed by Catherine Sedgwick or to sympathize with Hawthorne about the changeable weather, but he was welcomed by another group of literati and shed his genius on them that one Indian summer he spent here that year. His impressions were mostly pleasant, as one may deduce from the following which he wrote back to his daughter after returning to England:

You cannot think how often Stockbridge, in fact all of the Berkshires come into my mind. None of the cities could attach me, not even Boston, but I was fond of Stockbridge. 1

Humor being one of nature's wisest gifts requires that its possessors be counted among those who have graced the fields and hills with their talents. Henry Wheeler Shaw, the shrewd and kindly humorist known to the world as Josh Billings was born in Lanesboro, in 1818. He came from a distinguished family, both his father and grandfather having been members of Congress. His parents intended that he should study and practice law, but he ran away from home while a lad in his teens, to lead a roving, checkered life in the West. At the age of forty, poor in material goods but rich in experience, he settled in Poughkeepsie on the Hudson in the business of auctioneer. In this pursuit his ready wit, affable mien, country

1. Original letter, in Stockbridge Library.

philosophy and sage homilies soon attracted the attention of the editor of the Poughkeepsie Press, who asked him to become a contributor to its columns. He responded, and contributed about forty short essays, and thus, without his seeking, he found himself starting a literary career.

Shaw considered his own material good, or at least that it was sufficiently infused with humor and wisdom to appeal to any reading public. Yet, nobody was noticing it outside of Poughkeepsie. One day he read a few lines by Artemus Ward, who was then in the flush of his popularity. The subject was one which Shaw had used, and as he read, he pondered the question why Ward's writings should be widely quoted and his own not. His conclusion was that the bad spelling was the difference. Acting upon this conviction he took one of his essays, clothed it in cacographic dress and signed it "Josh Billings," then sent it in to a New York paper. The misspelled Essa on the Muel instantly caught the popular fancy and ere long became a favorite with President Lincoln who often read parts of it to his Cabinet---much to the disgust of the irascible Stanton.

Thus encouraged, its author translated others of his essays into a similar peculiar phonetic system, and with their reprinting in another garb the fame of Josh Billings went even out of this country to the remotest ends of the earth.

Shaw established a summer home in Lanesboro, the town of

his birth, from whence his keen wit spread throughout the county.¹ As a moralist whose philosophy combined humor and wisdom, Shaw had no equal in his day. He died in California in 1885, but his remains, in fulfillment of his last request, were brought back to Lanesboro and buried beside those of his parents within the shadows of his native hills.

This narrative so far has concerned itself mainly with literati coming in, and less with its own native sons. Time, and a good portion of it, is required to lift any primeval area out of darkness. It takes many centuries to produce a Homer or a Michelangelo, or even to produce the bare level of civilization out of which will arise the food for fame. When people of outstanding talent invade a region, they sometimes inspire natives to achievements they might otherwise not have reached without a special stimulus. With so many great minds effusing their uniqueness over the Berkshires, it was perhaps not surprising that the county produced more than its share of American leaders in many fields, including politics, law, and science. Among the many, the Field family offers a good example of the accomplishments of the Berkshire native sons.

In 1819, a young minister, who had given up a Connecticut parish to tend the souls of the immigrants on Lake Ontario, obligingly preached several times for aging Doctor West. The

1. Katherine M. Abbott, Old Paths and Legends of the New England Border, p. 83.

now bedraggled meeting house on the hill seemed almost luxurious to him, for he had been riding through the wilderness of upper New York State preaching in log houses. This young man, David Dudley Field, was so orthodox that even the congregation which had been indoctrinated by the minister, Doctor West, could find no loophole in his theology, and gave him a formal call.

Not since the War of 1812 had Stockbridge seen such heavily loaded wagons as those that made the journey from Had-dam, Connecticut, bringing the new minister's belongings. It took them a week to come and return. They were piled high with beds, tables and bureaus and heavy boxes full of books. There were also his wife and six children. Out of the caravan¹ stepped Submit Dickinson Field, the new minister.

Only two months after their arrival, a new Field came in-
to the world. He was tactfully named after two village
figures: Cyrus, for Cyrus Williams, a neighbor, and West, for
his father's predecessor.² After two or three years, the
Fields moved right into the village just west of another famous
preacher's house, Jonathan Edwards', on the north side of the
street, and here the children settled themselves to the business
of growing up.

1. C. S. Marquand and S. C. Sedgwick, Stockbridge, p. 189.

2. Ibid., p. 190.

The Fields began each day with prayers. They sat around the fire, their Bibles in their hands, and each took turns reading a piece a day until they got from Genesis to Revelation, then started all over again. After this, the children who were old enough tramped down to the village school. It was here that Dudley first saw Mark Hopkins. Although the two were somewhat divergent, their backgrounds and their futures met. They were to be friends for life.

In 1825 a new Stockbridge Congregational Church was built for Doctor Field. Soon after the new church had settled into the landscape, a wave of religious revivals swept the village. Up at Cherry Cottage, Harry Hopkins cast a skeptical modern eye upon the revivals. In vain his brothers begged him to become converted. Mark taught school for a while in the South. After his graduation he became a doctor and had started to practice in New York when he was called to be Professor of Moral Philosophy and Rhetoric at Williams College, of which he later became the head. Here, his rigid integrity, intellectual breadth, and the nobility of his character placed him securely among the greatest college presidents of the country. Albert, who achieved distinction second only to Mark, was appointed Professor of Mathematics at Williams.

Meanwhile, David Dudley Field had left Williams and was ready to start out in the world. Upon the occasion of his leaving home his father behaved with classic simplicity. He

gave his eldest son a Bible and ten dollars. Dudley studied law in Albany and afterwards entered the law-office of Harry¹ and Robert Sedgwick in New York.

He did not suffer the pangs of homesickness which afflicted his brother Cyrus when, in his turn, he went out to seek his fortune. The fifteen year old Cyrus spent many lonely evenings watching the boats go up the Hudson, and thinking of home. He remembered how only a month or two before he had taken part in She Stoops to Conquer, given by the students at the Stockbridge Academy, and wondered what his schoolmates, Henry Dwight and Edward Carter were doing.

In those days the business world, still unexploited, was a "bonanza mine" to a capable young man. Cyrus' business career reads like a Horatio Alger story. Upon his arrival in New York, he entered the great dry-goods store of A. T. Stewart, as errand boy. His first year's salary was fifty dollars; his board cost him two dollars per week.² Just as Mark Hopkins had stood ready to help Harry, so Dudley lent Cyrus the money necessary to eke out his earnings. Families stood together then, solid clans against the world's onslaught. Cyrus kept careful accounts of all his expenditures and sent them home to his father.

After working at A. T. Stewart's for three years, Cyrus

1. Ibid., p. 197.

2. Ibid., p. 199.

left to enter the paper business. He prospered until, through no fault of his own, the firm failed. Characteristically, he assumed, and eventually paid, his partner's debts. He married Mary Stone and went to live in Gramercy Park, next to his¹ brother, Dudley.

The Field brothers anticipated the modern conception of the "tired business man," with the difference that they never seemed to be tired. For many years Cyrus' children saw him only occasionally, for he ate his breakfast by lamplight and had his dinner and supper downtown. As for Dudley, who shortly became a distinguished lawyer, his day was hardly less crowded. After an early ride in Central Park, he worked steadily until just before dinner, after which he took a short nap and then was ready to work on his hobby, the reconstruction of the laws of New York, until late into the night. His evenings he considered as a mere "healthy diversion after the strain of the day."

Dudley was fond of saying that the only men who made a lasting impression upon the world were fighters, and his life bore out this idea. Tall, straight, handsome, he had the look of a sulky mastiff who could take up his enemies one by one, shake them, and then throw them off. He was brilliant, arbitrary, and ruthless. The cases he argued before the Supreme

1. Ibid., p. 201.

Court have passed into history. Yet, accused of illegally arranging an election for his disreputable clients, Jay Gould and Jim Fiske, in the Erie Railroad litigation, he argued his case so vehemently his conduct was questioned by the bar of New York. No vote was ever taken, however, on the report of the investigating committee.¹ Acting upon the principle that every man has a right to be defended, Field incurred further criticism when he served as chief counsel for the notorious Boss Tweed.²

Law reform, however, remained his chief interest. After years of struggle, he succeeded in getting the legislature of New York to appoint a commission to "reduce into a written and systematic form the whole body of the laws of this State."³ Dudley did most of the commissioners' work, and, although his Penal Codes were not adopted by New York until 1880, his Civil and Criminal Codes were accepted in many other states. He also drafted the outline of an International Code and helped to form the Association for the Reform and Codification of the Laws of the Nations.⁴

Meanwhile, in Stockbridge, the remaining part of the

1. Ibid., p. 203.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid., p. 205.

Field family continued to grow up. The beautiful Emilia Ann was married to Josiah Brewer of Tyringham. The Brewers' oldest son, David Jonathan, was later to become a member of the United States Supreme Court. There he was welcomed by another resident of Berkshire County and member of his family, his uncle Stephen Johnson Field, brother of Cyrus and Dudley.

As a young man, Stephen had gone to California during the gold rush. He early displayed his family business capacity by selling chamois skin he had bought in New York for gold-dust bags at an excellent profit. He became the leading lawyer in the boom town of Yubaville, and in 1864 was elected Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, where he served for fifty-four years.

Henry Martyn, the youngest of the four famous Field brothers, was smaller and more delicate than the rest. Henry, like his father, became a minister, but of the broader, nineteenth century brand. He had European aspirations, and his brother, Dudley, always ready to help his family, offered him money that he might study in Germany, and thus he went to Europe.

After observing the Revolution of 1848 in Paris, he went to Rome and became very much interested in Catholicism -- especially so when letters reached him that a member of the famous Sedgwick family, Catherine Anne, was converted to catholicism, in Stockbridge. However, he was hesitant and returned

to the Presbyterian Church in St. Louis. Later he became editor and owner of The Evangelist, an important Presbyterian periodical.¹ He was also the family biographer and from his Victorian pen the massive Dudley, the inexorable Cyrus, emerge like Titans resting on pink clouds.

There was one respect in which the little Henry out-distanced his brothers. Field wives heretofore had fitted into the Field picture as mere incidents to the composition, thus in no way disturbing the preponderance of mass. The other wives were all Berkshire County natives, whereas Henry's wife stuck right out of her setting to assume vigor and coloring. Stockbridge's little children used to call her "the French Mrs. Field," to designate her singularly among the others.

While observing the Revolution of 1848 in Paris, Henry had met a young woman who had been implicated in one of the country's most famous murder trials. Henriette Desportes had been a governess in the family of the Duc de Praslin. He and his wife were unhappily married, and when the duchess was found murdered, Henriette was accused to instigating the crime. The trial had far-reaching political implications and did much to shake Louis Phillipe's already tottering throne. Henriette was acquitted, however, and sailed for America where she again met the young American who had been so kind to her during the

1. Ibid., p. 207.

harrowing period of her imprisonment. They were married in 1851, an act which took courage on Henry's part, for it could not have been easy to bring a wife with such equivocal background into the solid phalanx of the Fields. She was undoubtedly charming, with soft brown hair framing a serious, intellectual face, and her knowledge of the world of books and of painting far exceeded that of most well-bred American young ladies.¹

The story of the Field brothers was running its usual well-regulated course when, in 1854, came its most dramatic and unpredicted chapter. Cyrus, at the age of thirty-four, had succeeded in paying back all his debts and had considered retiring on the comfortable fortune he had accumulated. Life seemed about to become a bore to him when his brother, Matthew, introduced him to a man named Gisborne, who had conceived the idea of running a telegraph line between St. Johns, Nova Scotia, and the mainland of America. When Cyrus heard of it, another idea even more romantic, more impossible, lodged in his shrewd Yankee brain where it was held immovably for thirteen years.²

Few adventure stories equal that of the laying of the Atlantic cable. Even Henry's gentle flow of words as family

1. This marriage and story was written into a best seller novel, All This and Heaven Too, by Rachel Field, famous author who herself lived and attended school in Stockbridge.

2. C. S. Marquand and S. C. Sedgwick, Stockbridge, p. 210.

biographer was powerless to clog the excitement of its action. Gisborne was first bought out and a company of solid millionaires was placed in charge, shepherded by the guardian brother, Dudley. After two and a half years spent, among other things, in cutting down the primeval forest and in putting a road through the wilderness of Newfoundland, the optimistic promoters considered that now only the actual laying of the cable remained.

Such an event promised plenty of excitement. The latest of modern wonders was not advertised, consequently the arrival from London of the ship carrying the first portion of the cable which was to stretch from St. Johns to the mainland, was a great social event. One of the most modern steamships, the "James Alger," flags flying, set out from New York for Newfoundland with many important personages aboard. There were Peter Cooper, one of the millionaires, Professor Morse, and many gentlemen of the press. The ubiquitous Henry went along too, flying hither and thither with words of wonder and of praise. There was also a white-haired old gentleman with burning eyes, who had come down from Stockbridge to see how this wild scheme of his son, Cyrus, would turn out.¹

Much time passed before the big steamer discovered the little cable ship hidden somewhere among the rocks in the Gulf

1. Ibid., p. 211.

of St. Lawrence, but when it did, the two started across the Gulf, the cable ship in tow. Halfway across, a storm arose,¹ and the cable had to be out.

A second attempt at laying a cable from Newfoundland was successful, and Cyrus went to work organizing a company in England. So blazoned in glory had been his latest scientific venture that it even became fashionable to subscribe to his new organization. In 1857, two ships set out from England with the first Atlantic cable. Several hundred miles at sea it broke and a half million dollars quite literally lay at the bottom of the ocean. Three times more the experiment was repeated; each time a different technique was used and each time it failed. Many people now wanted to abandon the idea, considering the plan a 'harebrained' scheme, and classifying Cyrus either as a knave or a fool. Probably it was the combination of knave and fool that made him outstanding and daring enough to try a fourth time. This time he was successful, a hero for posterity, introducing an era of other impossibilities by sending his father the laconic message: "Cable successfully laid. All well."² Bells were rung and guns were fired. Children let out of school shouted, "The cable is laid! The cable is laid!" The rest of the country echoed the little town of

1. Ibid.

2. Ibid.

Stockbridge's wild joy.

A special celebration was planned by the town for the receipt of the first cable message:

Europe and America are united by telegraphy.
Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace,
good-will towards men.¹

This was sent by the directors of the company in England to those in America, and was followed by a long message of congratulation from Queen Victoria to President Buchanan. In order to send direct, detailed accounts of the Stockbridge celebration to the New York papers, a telegraph line was put through direct from Pittsfield, the main terminus, to Jonathan Edward Field's law office in Stockbridge, a little white building next to the late Congressman Treadway's present house. Young Stephen Field, Cyrus's nephew, took the message when it arrived. In Stockbridge, the cable was still a family affair.

In New York, a huge parade was followed by a magnificent banquet. Churches were covered with flags, placards posted in store windows modestly stated, "Our Field is the field of the World!" Yet the festivities were hardly over when news came that the cable had ceased to work.

At this tragedy the world swung into reverse. The adventure was discredited, and before long the Civil War came to occupy everyone's attention. Cyrus Field's business was in a

1. Ibid.

state of collapse; his New York office and warehouse, burned. Undaunted, he formed another company, again chartered a steamship, the Great Eastern, largest in the world, and started all over. He obtained a much stronger cable with much better insulation than any of the others, and again put to sea. Not only once, but two and three times more his work was in vain. It was not until 1866 that the first American cable was laid¹ successfully.

Despite their individual achievements, the Fields retained close family ties, and as a family they reached their apotheosis in 1853 when the Field parents celebrated their golden anniversary. Thirty-five members of the unit met in Stockbridge, and a room, called The Golden Wedding Room, was added to the Rectory for the occasion. Present were Dudley and his wife and three children; Emilia Ann and Josiah Brewer, home from Smyrna, and six of their seven children; Matthew, who had made a name for himself building suspension bridges, and his wife and six children; there was Jonathan Edwards, his wife and two of his five children. Edwards had come back from Ann Harbor, where he had practiced law, to live in Stockbridge and enter politics; although a Democrat, he was so popular that the Republicans elected him President of the Senate thrice. In 1862, he took the lead in putting the first water system into

1. Ibid., p. 214.

the town.

Naturally, Cyrus with four of his seven children, Henry with his charming Henriette, and Mary Elizabeth, youngest of the family, were present. Only Stephen Johnson, who had not been able to return from California, and Timothy Beals, reputed to be the most brilliant of them all, were the missing links in the chain. Timothy had enlisted in the navy and had disappeared at sea.

The same strongly marked features, the deep-blue eyes, high brows and sandy hair could be seen in every member of each generation. A blurred daguerreotype recalls them, and in the midst of the group Submit Dickinson's face shines with the quiet radiance of fulfillment. Her children were together as in the old days, and as in those days her husband rose and commended them to God.

There is another Field upon whom one should dwell for a moment before reverting to the literary groups which grew up in the meantime. Stephen Dudley Field, son of Jonathan Edward Field, nephew of Cyrus Field, he, who took the first famous message over the cable in Stockbridge, arrived in 1879 from California. He was a rising inventor and had just completed the first long distance telephone line from San Francisco to the summit of the Sierras.

Stockbridge tended to underestimate the achievements of modern Science, even when its native sons were involved in its

application. Even the spectacular long-distance telephone failed to impress a village that looked upon the telephone itself as a toyish contraption, useful only in the cities, if at all. Stephen was just Jonathan Field's boy grown out of a practical, joking boyhood into a burly, genial man measuring up to the typical Field build of over six feet tall. The neighbors were not particularly impressed with his tinkering in the barn behind his house, and, when he invited them to his backyard one August afternoon to try out a horseless trolley, they were not unduly excited. It was with a blunt skepticism they regarded a small object four feet high and ten feet long, equipped with seats for two and a gigantic headlight. The tracks gleamed in the sun as they curved around Field's ample lawn. The first man to climb in beside him winked at the crowd as he jocularly advised Field not to go too fast. But the machine spun rapidly and efficiently around the lawn amid the plaudits of the company. Field explained that the current to propel the contraption was supplied by a third rail placed between the tracks and "picked up" by a shoe which fitted on the bottom of the car. He went on to predict that the electric car would be the modern means of transportation. He himself scarcely realized the sincerity of his prediction. That night, as the neighbors discussed the matter over the evening meal, it was agreed that the prediction was fantastic. The car was simply as amusing toy, clever indeed, and very worthy of

Stephen, but nothing more.

Working quietly in his laboratory for over thirty years, Stephen Field changed the daily life of Stockbridge and of the world of urban transportation. It was not long after these experimental trips in his back yard that the industrial and scientific phases of the new world seized his invention and put it to use. Today, the entire electrical world owes much to Stephen. The typical business man goes upstairs in an electric elevator, glances at the stock ticker and puts in a long-distance call. That evening he may send a night message, or attend an evening performance at his favorite theatre where he is thrilled by the magic of stage-lighting. In all of these, the genius of Stephen Field worked its alchemy to reconstruct a better world with its material goods. Though the trolley itself is gradually becoming history, it attained highest importance in the development and betterment of our cities during their growing years, substituting in every way for the more personal and private means of transportation, the automobile.

To recall the Field family is to recall the post frontier days in the east when science, experimentation and industrial development supplanted the axe, the hoe and the musket. Preceding the Fields were other prominent persons who visited the Berkshires and were attracted by their landscapes. Such men as Martin Van Buren, Washington Irving, Daniel Webster, Ellery

Channing, Henry D. Thoreau, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Millard Fillmore, General McClellan, President Arthur, Sir Edward Thornton and William Crowinshield, are but a part. The famous Jenny Lind came here and was particularly impressed.

The famous delineator of tragic characterization, Charlotte S. Cushman, placed in the Hall of Fame in 1915, spent the latter part of her life in Lenox. Although at times she played high comedy, Miss Cushman was best known as a tragedienne. She had immediate success in both London and Dublin, and remained abroad for several years. The latter part of her life she spent in America, moving to Lenox where she had bought a home, and there became a great social figure.¹

None of the personalities in this study contributed more to the modern age than William Stanley, developer of a commercially practical electric transformer and thus the originator² of the huge power transmission systems we have today. His work actually started in Great Barrington, but he later moved his equipment to Pittsfield, where he acquired larger space to manufacture his brainchild, thus creating the famous Stanley Company.³ Westinghouse, Steinmetz and Faccioli aided in the development of the transformer, perfecting it so rapidly that the demand became a mania. In 1907 General Electric

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1. Bryan, The Book of Berkshires, p. 171.
 2. Peattie, The Berkshires, p. 114.
 3. Ibid.

purchased the Stanley Company, increased experimentation with oil-filled transformers and power transmission, and thus gave a tremendous impetus to Stanley's toy model.¹ The latter weighed approximately ten pounds. The more workable and feasible one weighed approximately twenty-five. Today, the Pittsfield branch of the General Electric Company makes units weighing more tons than a single freight car can carry safely, requiring construction of the units in sections which are then assembled at their destination.

Thus we have gone through literature, science and art to see the reason for the social and cultural growth of a particular section of New England as apart from the industrial and economical growth elsewhere. Since a great many men and women of prominence in American letters sojourned or lived here during the nineteenth century, they produced a very perceptible effect upon the County as well as upon the country at large, till even today the County is resplendent in the galaxy of people of letters. Out of the past come the great political, philosophical and literary questions discussed in the drawing-rooms of Catherine Sedgwick, Oliver Wendell Holmes, Herman Melville, Edith Wharton and others whose genius could not be bounded by mountains; Hawthorne's Wonder Book for Children, John Coleman Adam's Nature Studies in Berkshire, Edward

1. Ibid.

Bellamy's Duke of Stockbridge, and Charles Dudley Warner's A Little Journey Around the World, are only a few of the works trying to reach and convince the American people that we have as much natural beauty as anywhere else in the world.

Though the hills and the beauty thereof may be permanent even with the alterations of time, though the lakes and rivers and the traditions surrounding them may remain stolidly unconcerned with the economics of the nation, certain changes have to be expected, and certain changes have occurred. One does not advertise a home without expecting the new occupant to alter lines and styles to suit his whim, fancy, or taste. Those who come to verify Bryant's Thanatopsis or his Green River, those who are carried away by Hawthorne's Tanglewood Tales or Wharton's Edith Frome, and those who wish to relive Stephen Dudley Field's experience with his trolley car, sometimes arrive in the Berkshires with the intention of remaining. Certain changes are required since progress in a large or small degree involves alterations not necessarily pleasant. The age of literary sophistication, the frontier era, the period of art for art's sake associated with the nineteenth century, was bound to come to an end.

Among the hills, the lakes and the rivers of our locale, appeared an undertone of transformation. Large mansions of magnificent architectural beauty began to appear. The gay 1890's had arrived, bringing to the Berkshires the tycoons of

industry and economic revolution who were changing the entire country. New England, and the Berkshires in particular, suffered a large influx of wealth, of an easy, carefree culture, a careless group of "nouveau riche," as well as of authentic autocrats with many and varied tastes, some genuine, others assumed. This conglomerate public forced its will and wealth upon the established refined culture they found here, but only for a short time. While their pressure was felt, traditional New England spirit was contaminated, but once a relief occurred, the influence of the Sedgwicks and the Fields returned, possibly only as a guiding force, reflecting the vitality of the Berkshires' oldest traditions.

CHAPTER III

SOCIETY AND CULTURE ENTERS

THE BERKSHIRES

Never has American civilization presented such a varied and colorful aspect as in the latter decades of the nineteenth century and in the opening of the twentieth. While millions of immigrants descended upon our shores to enter quickly into the life of the nation, other millions were pressing westward to complete the conquest of a continent. Business leaders and daring speculators who had pushed to the top of the heap in the scramble for the nation's resources were erecting palaces in the city and country. The results of an unrestrained struggle for wealth had become apparent, and a sub-culture of mansions and huge estates had arisen. The rich increased so rapidly that the number of millionaires grew from three in the United States in 1860, to 3,800 in 1910!¹ One tenth of the people, it was estimated,² owned nine-tenths of the wealth of the nation.

This wealth had been accumulated by gaining control of the nation's natural resources, the coal, oil, iron, and other metals, by profiting from rising land values, by building up great monopolies in manufacture, or acquiring control

1. E. Dale, D. Dummond, and E. Wesley, History of the United States, p. 607.

2. Ibid.

of the transportation facilities. The period between 1865 and 1900 saw the evolution of big business and trends toward large scale industry. The nation had a new group of commercial geniuses, who, by reason of their broad vision, creative energy and relentless driving power, were termed by common consent, "steel kings," "coal barons," "railway magnates," and "Napoleons of finance." As this wealth had in most cases been obtained quickly, it was often displayed with an air typical of the newly rich. Grand palaces in the city and broad estates in the country were built in every architectural style known to man. Lavish parties, a great display of jewelry, and human ingenuity taxed to find new and more useless ways to spend money, astounded and excited the common man. Fashionable resorts at Newport, Rhode Island, Bar Harbor, Maine, and Berkshire County, Massachusetts, were developed. It was an astounding show typical of the Gilded Age.

Berkshire County became, to the outward eye, an entirely different section from the one in which Catherine Sedgwick had grown up. In 1900 she would hardly have known it, with the innumerable bright and sumptuous villas that had sprung up on every side! It was now a summer and autumn resort, not only for relatively impecunious artists, but for millionaires as well. But so quietly and gradually did the change come about, that it was a long time before people realized that anything had happened.

The first trains that had heaved themselves up into the valley with such difficulty had cut a new kind of channel of communication with the world. The stagecoach, clattering over the roads in the old days, had poured life in the manufacturing interests of the towns of Berkshire. The railroads, linking these interests to the large industrial centers, had the effect of draining that life off. Big business, sweeping over the country through these new arteries, swallowed up little business, and Berkshire County was "sidetracked."¹ All of its fine manufactures fell into disrepair and the business depression of 1857 gave it a final push.²

The trains of the second generation were larger and sturdier than that of the early pioneers. Gushing forth cinders and black smoke, they roared up from New York and other urban areas. On them were the summer people who must be coddled and catered to in every way, for henceforth they were to be the livelihood of the Berkshires.

The change that the summer people brought to the county was especially marked in land values where farm lands rose from fifty to one thousand dollars an acre, and Swiss chalets, Tudor and Elizabethan castles, and even an imitation

1. Clark W. Bryan, The New Book of Berkshire, p. 212.

2. Ibid.

of the Petit Trianon rose upon the astonished slopes of the hills. Money literally poured into the county with these fashionable and society people in the wake. The scene in 1890 is glowingly described by Clark W. Bryan:

superb roads that in the season are full of gay equestrians and dashing turnouts, handsome women holding the reins of prancing thoroughbreds who drive over the hills with the groom sitting behind with folded arms. Beautiful children drive about in village carts, gayly talking and laughing.... 1

The houses were of the most durable materials. They were substantial affairs of stone, brick, and iron, and one can feel even today the solidity of the incomes on which they were built. This period of the villas was remarkable for the character of the men who built them. They were, for the most part, men who had achieved distinction elsewhere and had come to Berkshire County to spend the summers of their maturing years. Unlike the literary group, they were not solely "birds of passage," but often had come with the view of settling down. This urban class of means, seeking rural retreats added a distinct charm to the region by the creation of their beautiful homes.

Charles E. Butler was one of the first arrivals. In 1840 he built Linwoods whose unpolished marble look of indestructibility was not destroyed by the flimsy and fashionable

1. Ibid., p. 215.

gingerbread of the day.¹ It still stands today on a lovely site overlooking a loop of the river as it winds into Glendale.

Mr. Butler was known to be arrogant, stern, and just. He was one of the most able figures of the day at the New York bar. Mrs. Butler was the appropriate counterpart. She was gentle and loving. She often drove out in her two-seated open carriage. Isaac, the mulatto coachman, sat on the box, his looped whip carried at just the correct angle. The horses were always resplendent in shining harness, and beaded with foam, while Hector, the spotted coach-dog,² ran underneath the carriage. It was a turnout that said to the admiring pedestrians that there were others in the stable, equally good; a high carriage, and a low carriage, a rockaway and a depot wagon, and certainly a smart broughman. It bespoke clearly the Butlers, the plutocrats of the village.³

Joseph Hodges Choate, a younger partner of the Butler, Evarts and Southmayed law firm, built a house⁴ which still stands today upon the Hill in Stockbridge. Urbane, handsome, clever, he was adored by Stockbridge,

1. Ibid., p. 217.

2. Drawing of Mrs. Butler and carriage in Stockbridge Library.

3. Bryan, The New Book of Berkshire, p. 218.

4. Ibid.

and his witticisms were handed about like some particularly rich and delightful kind of sugarplums. It was a constant source of pride for the Berkshire neighbors to read about him in the newspapers. They were especially pleased in 1899 to read accounts of him when he was sent as Ambassador¹ to the Court of St. James.

Back in 1846, Mr. Samuel Ward was the first gentleman of means to develop what was then unpretentiously termed a farm. Besides its one hundred acres, "Oakwood" had a splendid view of Lake Mahkeenac which Catherine Sedgwick had christened "Stockbridge Bowl."² A brother of Julia Ward Howe, Mr. Ward was a New York banker representing Baring Bros. of London, and besides foreign luminaries, he gathered about him distinguished men and women from his own country. Before Boston had an art gallery Mr. Ward would bring back from his travels portfolios filled with prints of European masterpieces for his friends' enjoyment. It was Mr. Ward with whom Emerson corresponded in those Letters from Emerson to a Friend.³ He married a friend of Emerson's, Anna Barker, who turned Catholic after long visits to Italy, and the little chapel on their estate was a special delight to all visitors. Both Catholic and Protestant friends alike who visited the Ward

1. The Berkshire News, May 18, 1899.

2. Bryan, The New Book of Berkshire, p. 220.

3. Ibid.

mansion paid daily visits to this charming spiritual sanctuary.¹

In 1887 George Westinghouse established one of the most fantastic residences in the world at the spot where Lee, Lenox and Stockbridge come together. They called it Erskine Park, after his wife's maiden name, and the house and grounds were the "World's Fair" of that period.

True, there were larger places than Erskine Park; in fact, just around the corner, Shadowbrook was being built - the biggest private house in the world. But "little" Erskine Park had something surpassing all the others. It could do tricks.

The tricks were authentic, none being done with mirrors. For instance, when most of Berkshire County, rich and poor, were trimming oil lamps for light, Westinghouse had 1800 electric light bulbs turned on in his mansion.² The light of the big house were concealed in mouldings where the walls and ceilings joined, so the illumination was like daylight and shadowless. It was Mrs. Westinghouse's idea and was the forerunner of indirect lighting that was to come into its own no sooner than a quarter of a century later. This was its first known application anywhere.

All the roads on the grounds were constructed on a dazzling white marble substance and were said to have cost

1. Ibid.

2. The Berkshire Eagle, November 21, 1946.

fifty thousand dollars.¹ The grounds were laid out with an artificial lake, elaborate fountains and a massive bridge.² One room had a ceiling of tufted white satin. Mr. Westinghouse entertained the elite society of the world here.

Numerous stories have been recorded of the extravagance of Mrs. Westinghouse. Although she recalled the time when she could not afford a silk dress, later a buying mania overtook her and, after selecting a gown, she used to secure the entire bolt of material so no other woman might dress like Mrs. Westinghouse.³

On the grounds, the magic waterfalls of a Century of Progress in 1940 were forecast in the elaborate artificial brooks and fountains that ornamented the two hundred acres of grounds, with the water that fed them being raised from Laurel Lake by electric pumps.⁴ This was at a time when most country folks carried water from wells in pails.

When electric street lights were almost unknown, Westinghouse jumped far ahead into flood lighting! He strung a battery of bulbs backed by reflectors under the eaves of his gymnasium to illuminate the tennis court, and

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1. Ibid.
 2. Ibid.
 3. Ibid.
 4. Ibid.

to top the effect, hung two lights with reflectors on the top of his lofty flag-pole on the front lawn. The bulbs were of the early stopper type, made in two parts that fitted together like a cork and bottle.¹

Not one overhead wire marred the Lenox estate. Westinghouse took another bold step at which many power companies still shy and buried his cables in underground conduits.² A few years later he provided current from the estate for the Lenox Electric Company, which was wired into homes in the town.³ Underground conduits also were used, one line extending up Kemble Street and another along the Stockbridge Road, some of which is still in use. Westinghouse sold the current wholesale to the Lenox Company for twenty cents a kilowatt hour, which put it well up in the luxury class.⁴

Erskine Park had the first private electric generating plant in the world, producing 2,200 volts of alternating current.⁵ The building still stands on the shore of Laurel Lake, an elaborate marble structure with a smoke-stack bearing a battlement top like a tower, and completely

1. Ibid.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid.

made of fitted stone. Two of the first power customers were W. D. Sloan and Henry C. Flick who had estates nearby.

At first, the generators were driven by steam engines fed by Westinghouse upright boilers, but later he installed a system developed in his Pittsburgh plant, known as "producer-gas."¹ Anthracite was processed to create coal gas which ran internal combustion engines. A like device was employed as recently as the last war in gasoline starved countries to run autos.

Little is left of these marvels of the Gay Nineties. The power house is abandoned except for a single transformer housed in a corner of the great place, which has become a crumbling liability for Foxhollow School, the present owner of the estate. Miss Aileen M. Farrell, principal, wishes there were some easy means of piling the stone building back into the quarry from which it came, just across the road to Stockbridge.

This quarry supplied stone for the Westinghouse mansion, and may still be seen, water-filled, on the west side of the Lenox-Stockbridge road where the cement pavement turns to macadam through the swampy section about a mile south of Lenox. Mr. Westinghouse invested a million and a half dollars on the place.² Hardly a vestige of this

1. The Springfield Republican, June 5, 1930.

2. Bryan, The New Book of Berkshire, p. 149.

remains, except the landscaping.

George Westinghouse was a fabulous product of the country's painful change from an agrarian to an industrial economy. He was born October 6, 1846, at Central Bridge, New York, and grew up in the atmosphere of his father's modest machine shop. He served in both the Army and the Navy during the Civil War, and by a series of lucky changes, hit upon the device of a railroad air brake which he copyrighted and started to build in 1869 with five hundred dollars of borrowed money. A few years later his enterprises were netting a million and a half dollars annually. He was at the very top of the heap when he came to Lenox at the age of forty-one,¹ after his wife's doctor had prescribed mountain air for her health.

History actually proves Westinghouse to have been a machinist with vision who "struck it rich." Many of his ideas were worthless and cost his concern tremendous sums. One was the stopper type electric light, another was an impractical device to eliminate overhead trolleys and third rails for street cars.

Big business of the Westinghouse period might be described as a loaded dice game on an oriental rug. The wizard of Erskine Park had to take part in this piracy to

1. The Berkshire News, June 17, 1900.

survive, and in the end lost control of all his industrial holdings, luckily retaining most of his fortune. As an example of the big operations of the period was the trick his neighbor, Henry C. Flick, of Lenox, played on his associates on the Board of the Philadelphia Gas Company, owned by Westinghouse. By a ruse, which today is called a "confidence game," he unloaded a wad of the company stock on the other officials at a \$90,000 profit by playing on their cupidity. This was a respectable business practice of the period and gave Flick a good laugh, and is reported to have paid for most of his Lenox estate.¹

Westinghouse himself did not lack the master touch either, when pressed. He bought the Philadelphia Gas Company which owned nothing but a piece of paper and made it a legal corporation, simply so he could by-pass a city ordinance and sell natural gas he had struck on his Murrysville, Pa., estate.² He stretched the letter of the law several hundred miles in this move, since the Philadelphia Gas Company actually sold gas in Pittsburgh. Later he set up a company in England to make air brakes, and paid himself 48,000 pounds (\$240,000) for use of his own invention, plus 6,000 pounds (\$30,000) a year "for use of future inventions."³ In this way he "had his chickens before they were hatched."

1. The Berkshire Eagle, November 21, 1946.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

While the Westinghouse Air Brake Company was the parent concern, he had established the Westinghouse Electric Company by 1896, and six other manufacturing establishments earning about four million dollars a year. He fought the intrepid Thomas Edison on the comparative merits of direct versus alternating current, and won.¹ Today alternating current is the accepted practice of electrical power transmission, since under Edison's direct current method extremely large copper wires had to be used even for a short distance. Westinghouse realized that to convey power any distance from the generators with the Edison method would require wiring so bulky and expensive as to be hopeless. His alternating current system finally led to present-day, widespread utility transmission hookups.

Despite the immense earning capacity of his companies, Westinghouse spent almost as much on experiments and the purchase of outside inventions. He weathered the panic of 1893, but in 1907 the Westinghouse concern failed and went into receivership, and three years later George Westinghouse was forced out of even the nominal presidency of the parent unit.

He lived only four years longer. Though he had homes also in Washington, D. C., and Pittsburgh, he spent

1. Ibid.

most of that time in Lenox, with his private railroad car, Glen Eyre, parked on the Lenoxdale siding. Heart disease made him a semi-invalid, and on December 3, 1914, he died in his suite at the Hotel Langham in New York City, while en route from Erskine Park to his home in Washington.¹ His widow died less than a year later.

Since the passing of Westinghouse, his wonderland in the Berkshires has had a series of reversals. At its zenith, the local newspaper remarked:

The home of the millionaire electrician and inventor is built of white limestone from the estate, and is so enduring it will stand for ages....²

Only three decades later, however, the late Mrs. Margaret Vanderbilt Emerson bought the estate and her first move was to have the building torn down, proving the slogan, "Never underestimate the power of a woman."

Whatever became of the salvage, no one knows, but two of the solid marble bathtubs rest in a lot on the Bishop estate, for cows to drink from. They are so mammoth that Mrs. Westinghouse had a little stepladder made so she could climb into them. Mrs. Emerson had the former superintendent's cottage moved to the site of the vanished mansion, enlarged it, and lived there until her death. Shortly after this

1. The New York Times, December 3, 1914.

2. The Berkshire Eagle, June 12, 1929.

building became the Foxhollow School, the underground conduits which were the pride of the estate started to fail, and since no one had any idea of their location, they were left to rot away. The local electric company tried every known means of locating the lines, but soon abandoned the project.

The generating plant ceased power production about 1912, being retained however as an auxiliary substation for a few years more. At one period, the plant also acted as a supplementary station for the Lenox Water Company to pump water into the town mains when the central station was overloaded, or had stopped.¹

In all probabilities, the last distinguishing mark of the inventor's million dollar toy "that could do tricks," will soon disappear. While the interior has survived half a century, the crenelated smokestack is starting to disintegrate.

However, despite the ultimate financial confusion that overturned his industrial establishments, the Westinghouse inventive genius still pays generous dividends, if only in the fields of transportation and power. The air brake made modern railroads possible, his AC generator opened the doors of the electric age. Million-dollar Erskine Park was a practical toy, even if it led only to

1. Bryan, The New Book of Berkshire, p. 319.

these two inventions and their development.

History, legend, and tradition are back of Wheatleigh, in Lenox, the estate of Mrs. Carlos M. de Heredia, of 110 East 70th Street, New York City, whose father, Henry M. Cook, an eminent banker and director of many railroads, built the stately villa of Italian design in 1893.¹ On the site of the house which overlooks Lake Mahkeenac in the very heart of the most aristocratic section of the Berkshire Hills, Gideon Smith, a Revolutionary Tory had a tavern which was a rendezvous for associates who were loyal to the British crown.²

At one time the patriots so harassed Gideon Smith that he sought refuge in a cave on the west side of October Mountain near New Lenox, and it has been known ever since as Tory's Cave.³ A sign dated 1788, which lured travelers to the old Smith Tavern was recently presented by Mrs. de Heredia to the Stockbridge Library Museum and is one of its most treasured relics. It is a pine board two by three feet in size. On one side is a picture of an anchor with the word

1. Ibid.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid. James S. Matton, of 378 South Street, Pittsfield, Mass., native of Lenox, told author at an interview he recalled hearing Gideon Northrup Smith relate the Tory Cave story as told to him personally by his grandfather, Gideon, who died in 1838 in his ninety-eighth year. The grandson died May 5, 1907.

"Entertainment," covering two lines. Then follow the initials G. S., and the date, 1788.

Despite old Gideon Smith's political views, the patriots of Lenox and Stockbridge respected him because they believed in his honesty and sincerity. They never confiscated his property as they did that of most Tories. After a while, however, the popular landlord of Smith's Tavern became so outspoken in the British cause that the Committee of Safety ordered him to stay on his farm where he ran the tavern, for one year, and not to leave it. If he did, he was warned, his life would be in danger.

He paid slight attention to the warning, however, and failed to check his glib tongue. Like many people of that day, he liked to air his political views to Patriots and Tories among his tavern patrons and he was finally forced to a new place of safety - the cave on the mountain near Roaring Brook four miles away. Every night Smith's wife and children carried food and drink to him over circuitous routes to avoid pursuing Patriots who sought to learn the location of the hiding place.

Gideon Smith and Tory's Cave have been immortalized by Joseph E. A. Smith in his romantic book, Taghconic.

Thus writes the local historian:

In one cave Revolutionary tradition affirms that an outlawed Tory, Gideon Smith, of Stockbridge, once found refuge for weeks. It is a dreary habitation, a couple of small

rude chambers built of huge overlapping flint rocks, without a pendant stalactite, or sparkling incrustation, not even a grotesquely shapen fracture to relieve the barren walls. Not a desirable residence in any respect and I sincerely pity that hunted Tory driven out to make his home among the wild beasts. 1

Besides this fascinating historical tale of Revolutionary days, these beautiful acres have a contemporary fame. Wheatleigh Estate is widely known throughout the country as the scene of the outdoor Sunday-evening sunset services sponsored by Trinity Episcopal Church of Lenox, of which Reverend Ralph B. Putney is now the rector. The initial sunset service was held in the Wheatleigh gardens² August 7, 1921, at the invitation of Mrs. de Heredia. The services were so successful from the start that they have been held annually up to World War II, when gasoline restrictions thwarted Reverend Putney's plans, but they are to be resumed in the near future. In propitious weather the attendance has been recorded as high as 700 persons.

At first, the setting was just a beautiful garden with flowers and shrubs against a background of tall trees. The years have brought changes to the garden. A boulder from a nearby field was dedicated as an altar; two iron lanterns were placed on each side of this rock to enclose the vesper candles, so that during each service a processional

1. J. E. A. Smith, Taghconic, p. 147.

2. The Berkshire Eagle, August 8, 1921.

cross behind the altar was silhouetted against the western sky.

For the Wheatleigh congregation the view across the lake with Monument Mountain and Mount Everett in the distance, is entrancing. A background for the garden on the north is furnished by about thirty tall shagbark walnut trees, all that are left of a grove of over five hundred when Mr. Cook bought the property in 1892, the period we are now discussing.

Henry H. Cook bought the two hundred acre farm of Gideon Northrup Smith, a grandson of the Tory, for \$50,000.¹ The banker built a sumptuous mansion on the land in 1893. He also built what is today one of the tallest water towers in Berkshire County. It is of ornate wood construction, one hundred feet high, with a clock. Water is pumped to this tower from never-failing Indian springs near a twenty acre lily pond on the estate. Mr. Cook constructed miles of winding roads and three gatehouses.

Henry H. Cook named the property for the ancestral estate of the Cook family at Wheatley, England. George Cook, a member of the sixth generation, was made a baronet in 1661.² His nephew, the third baronet, Sir George Cook, married Catherine Copley, member of a family descended from William the Conqueror.³

1. Ibid.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

Captain Thomas Cook came to America in 1635, settled in Massachusetts, and later became a founder of Portsmouth, Rhode Island. Judge Constant Cook, lawyer and banker, who built a part of the Erie Railroad, was Mrs. de Heredia's grandfather. The father, Mr. Henry, used the money lavishly on his Lenox estate, in this Gay Ninety period, and royally entertained New York and Boston's social set here.¹

Typical of another outstanding palatial mansion, was Croton Place. Its owner, Grenville Lindall Winthrop, was a direct descendant of John Winthrop, the first governor of Massachusetts. Mr. Winthrop was a multi-millionaire, and his gardens, trees and ninety-five acres of lawn represented the last word in landscape architecture.

His forty room mansion of native stone, partly covered with English ivy, reminds one of a 17th century castle. Mr. Winthrop bought the place in 1902, completely remodelled and enlarged it, and installed in it rare and costly objects of art and sculpture which reflected the fine, discriminating taste of an extraordinary connoisseur.² He enjoyed showing his friends his art collection, his carefully selected library, and especially the trees which had been nurtured and cared for scientifically down through the years with all the skill and knowledge of up-to-date forestry.

1. Ibid.

2. The Springfield Republican, May 7, 1902.

He had three tree experts on a year-round payroll.

Mr. Winthrop was an annual exhibitor at the Lenox Library with a display of arts and crafts, and for several years showed cross sections of forty varieties of trees that grew on his estate. He reforested many acres, demonstrating an intense zeal in beauty and perpetuation of natural surroundings. One year he exhibited at the Library thirty kinds of field stone collected from Groton Place fields.

The visitor at Groton Place would see any afternoon in summer, brilliantly plumed pheasants and proud peacocks stalking and strutting through the glades of the beautiful woodland.¹ In Mr. Winthrop's pheasant flock were over five hundred birds, representing eleven varieties, many of which had been imported. He also had many rainbow-hued European finches, cardinals and parakeets, together with oriental birds. All the beautiful and rare ornithological specimens were in a ten acre, eight foot high wire enclosure!

Groton Place was first established as a gentleman's estate in 1855 by William Ellery Sedgwick, and is one of the oldest in the Berkshires. Sedgwick sold Groton Place to Professor Salisbury of Yale, a distinguished scholar who

1. The Berkshire Eagle, June 3, 1907.

specialized in oriental art and literature. The original stone house was of quite modest dimensions and was kept, for the most part, in its original state until Mr. Winthrop bought it in 1902. He remodeled and rebuilt it completely from plans of architect Hastings of the New York firm of Carrere and Hastings. These plans called for the preservation of the English ivy which now covers almost one side of the structure.

Mr. Winthrop made a show place of Groton Place. The walls of the entrance doorway are Vermont marble; the vestibule is serpentine marble, the door is of oak.¹ The floors of the entrance hall and of all rooms on the first floor are of American white oak quartered out of even grain and kiln-dried before being used. The ceiling in the library and the dining room are of the same wood. Every room on the first floor has a fireplace with artistic mantle.

Beyond the main hall is a reception room, to the left are a smoking room, dining room and two small rooms, one used as an office and the other, for a guest waiting-room. At the right of the main hall is the library with its attractive fireplace of marble.

On the second floor are five bedrooms, six bathrooms and seven fireplaces. The third floor has seven master bedrooms. In the basement are three coal-burning steam heating

1. Ibid.

units and a separate hot-water heater with a 350 gallon hot-water tank which supplies the whole house.

To make sure that the water supply never should fail, Mr. Winthrop had two artesian wells bored, one to a depth of 506 feet, the other to 498 feet.¹ Samples of the earth's strata down to the water line were kept in long glass tubes by Mr. Winthrop. These are of special value² to geologists studying Lenox rock formations. The top soil where one well was drilled was 65 feet deep and the other, 140 feet. One electrically operated pump draws 100 gallons of water a minute. Lenox town water is also piped into the house.

Located some distance down the hill from the castle amid carefully cropped evergreens on the wide expanse of lawn, is a white-painted studio of wood construction, twenty feet by thirty, with a glass wall on the north side. This was built by Mr. Winthrop for his daughter, Mrs. Corey L. Miles. This ornate little building is now a museum filled with cross-sections of wood cut from trees that grow on the estate, casts of leaves and a mineral and rock collection. One also sees mounted specimens of owls, hawks, and other winged enemies of the pheasants - wildlife vermin that were shot on the place.

1. Willard D. Coxe, Ghosts of Old Berkshire, p. 47.

2. C. J. Palmer, History of Lenox, p. 52.

The ten-car, steam heated garage, is on two levels, with two rooms and bath. The steam heated poultry house is on the edge of the ten acre, wire fence enclosure. The white painted, one-story aquarium and bird-house are hot-water heated.

The ten-room, white painted superintendent's cottage would today be regarded as a large house in the average town or city. Summer and winter, Mr. Winthrop kept a minimum force of thirty employes on his Lenox estate. In summer there would often be thirty-six to fifty workers.¹

A graduate of Harvard '86 and Harvard Law School '89, Mr. Winthrop bequeathed most of his treasured art collection to Harvard University, all of which had been taken to the Fogg Museum, toward the upkeep of which he left \$100,000.

The Lenox Winthrops were always regarded as members of the ultra-exclusive set. Beekman Winthrop, brother of Grenville, graduated from Harvard in 1897 with a magna cum laude rank in scholarship. President Taft appointed him chairman of the Phillipine Commission and he was judge of the Court of the First Instance. In 1904 President Theodore Roosevelt appointed him governor of Puerto Rico and later he was Assistant-Secretary of the U. S. Treasury. During the

1. Bryan, The New Book of Berkshire, p. 89.

social height of Groton Place, it was the scene of lavish entertainment.

It was in the year 1899 while Mr. and Mrs. Robb de Peyster Tytus were on their wedding trip that they travelled through the Tyringham Valley and were so overcome with its breathtaking beauty that they decided to build their perfect home in that region.¹ Of all places on the globe, it seemed strange to their friends that they should choose this section of Western Massachusetts. The Tytus family, one of the oldest in North Carolina, had extensive estate holdings in and near Ashfield, where Robb Tytus was born. On his mother's side the de Peysters had accumulated a vast fortune through their international banking houses with headquarters in The Netherlands, at Amsterdam.

The de Peysters consorted with the nobility and some of the royalty of Europe and were on friendly terms with the Khedive of Egypt. Thus, young Tytus and his bride were welcomed in the higher echelons of society on both sides of the Atlantic, and could, if they chose, make their lives one long round of playing in the best circles of society in the smartest resorts of the world.

1. The Boston Advertiser, June 4, 1950.

But neither felt drawn to the bright spots of America, or of Paris or the Riviera; neither cared much for society as such, nor for the glittering balls and glamorous parties available to them. It was typical of the young couple that after the wedding they turned their backs on fashionable resorts and set out for Canada on horseback. The trail took them through the Berkshires and the decision to make their permanent home in the Tyringham Valley.¹

They wished to visit Egypt first and do some exploring. Robb Tytus took with him on his adventure his wife and Howard Carter, and for more than six years they explored the Valley of the Kings. In this exploration Tytus, Carter and Grace Tytus sought out the palaces of Tutankhamen's ancestors, spending their days digging and cataloguing and their nights living on a houseboat on the Nile.

In the ruins of the palace of Amenhotep III, young King Tutankhamen's grandfather, they found priceless relics. As these were unearthed and carefully crated Robb Tytus and his wife made plans to place them in their new home.

The couple returned to New York with two daughters, Victoria and Mildred, and with truckloads of antiques and pottery, and full of ideas for the building of their dream-

1. Ibid.

home Ashintully. Construction started in 1909.¹ The marble mansion was two years in the building. Its design was pure Georgian with great Ionic pillars; its dimensions were 170 by 130 feet, a structure so large that the library contained 12,000 volumes yet did not seem out of place.² A portion of the wall frieze which had decorated the banquet hall of Amenhotep II of Egypt was transplanted to the great hall of Ashintully.³ The master bedroom was decorated in Flemish tapestry and with 16th century furnishings, and lesser rooms were set off with Japanese brocade of the same era.

A sunken garden lay between the place and the children's playhouse, copied from an English peasant's cottage. By the time the building was completed and the landscaping done, Robb Tytus had spent several hundred thousand dollars on the project.⁴ He was no stranger to Berkshire people when he moved in as master of Ashintully. During the construction he and his family had lived in a smaller home nearby. His popularity was proved when, running as a Democrat in a strong Republican territory, he was elected to represent the Seventh Berkshire District in the

1. The Springfield Republican, April 4, 1909.

2. The Berkshire Eagle, May 2, 1909.

3. Ibid.

4. The Berkshire Eagle, June 6, 1911.

Massachusetts Legislature.¹ Another surprise came when he was re-elected, although his opponent had campaigned much more vigorously than he. Tytus was content to visit in the valley and distribute 1,800 boxes of chocolate drops. The sweets were given, not to the voters, but to their wives and daughters. Robb Tytus won easily.

As the Squire of Ashintully, his was a life of complete happiness, although it lasted only a few more years. He suddenly began to fail physically, possibly from the effects of his long labors in the sun-baked Valley of the Kings, or perchance from the equally hard work he put in while planning and building the great palace. He was still in his forties when he died, August 15, 1913, two years after the completion of Ashintully.

During the last months of his life Robb Tytus, like an Egyptian king, had selected his burial place. A crypt was hewn in a rock atop Lone Mountain, a mile from Ashintully, and there he was entombed.² The mountain top was craggy and steep and the pallbearers had to carry the coffin the last thousand feet of the journey uphill.³ In a modern way his tomb was almost as inaccessible as that of Amenhotep III.

1. Ibid., October 10, 1912.

2. The Berkshire Eagle, August 17, 1913.

3. Ibid.

Grief-stricken, Grace Tytus rented the huge estate to Henry James, doubly qualified as a tenant because of his writings and the fact that he was the great-grandson of John Adams, second President of the United States. Mrs. Tytus took her two daughters to London where they were presented at the Court of St. James.

In 1928 Mrs. Tytus returned to Ashintully and again the house became the busy center of social activity in the Tyringham Valley.¹ She was the perfect hostess and participated in the games, indoors and out. At fifty-two she still played a good game of tennis and she was engaged in a spirited volley game when she slipped and fell to the court. She suffered a broken hip and died August 29, 1928.

Once more a funeral procession traversed the mile from Ashintully to Lone Mountain; once more the pallbearers struggled up the last thousand feet to the peak and deposited their burden in the crypt alongside the vault where Robb de Peyster Tytus was entombed.

Only a few months after it was announced that Ashintully had been purchased by Mr. I. M. Rubin, a New York real estate man, for thirty-five thousand dollars. The price included the marble mansion and one hundred acres of surrounding land, leaving a thousand acres and lesser buildings in the estate.

1. The New York Times, July 22, 1928.

The new owner did not reveal his plans for the fabulous landmark and the people of the Tyringham Valley evinced no great interest in the transfer. The name of Robb de Peyster Tytus is heard infrequently nowadays, but it is remembered every Christmas Eve when a caretaker climbs Lone Mountain to place a holly wreath on the tombs there. Ashintully, meaning "overlooking a valley," actually describes the mansion's location and Tytus's eternal resting place with reference to the Tyringham Valley he so admired.

To enumerate and give a complete description of all the pretentious mansions of this era in Berkshire County is not the purpose of this study. Only a few of the prominent estates are mentioned here, but there were hundreds of magnificent villas dotting the hillsides.

It was a gay period of living in America which was reflected in the Berkshires by the birth of a social set or society which was to result in the establishment and growth of this section of western Massachusetts as one of the great social centers and resorts of America.

Of the hundreds of fabulous homes which sprang up during this period, the estate of Mr. Morris K. Jessup ranks with the foremost. Belvoir Terrace was built by him in 1891. Money had little value to Mr. Jessup, a New York capitalist and a great philanthropist. He and the

late Zenas Crane of Dalton helped finance Commodore Robert E. Peary's successful trip to the North Pole.¹

His beautiful mansion of fifty-two rooms, and his fifty-seven acres of land was another beauty of the Berkshires. The home was styled after an ancient castle in Norway, with tall chimneys and turrets.² It was furnished with the costliest rugs, draperies and furniture obtainable. The main rooms are panelled in solid mahogany and quartered oak.

In the rear of the mansion is a twenty by forty-five foot oval swimming pool. The beautiful landscaped grounds feature a great variety of flowers and shrubbery, massive ornamental trees and broad lawns.

Another large estate,³ Stonover, was developed by Mr. John E. Parsons in 1893. He was the able lawyer for the sugar trusts. Here were entertained the highest society in America on a grand and lavish scale.

Mr. David W. Bishop, a New York banker, lived in a huge villa called Interlaken, which he filled with curios from his world travels and which were given to the Pittsfield Museum of Natural History when he died. His son, Mr. Courtland Bishop, married Miss Amy Bend and they went all over the face

1. Bryan, The New Book of Berkshire, p. 57.

2. Child, Gazetteer of Berkshire County, I, p. 402.

3. The Berkshire Eagle, June 3, 1893.

of the earth, bringing back startling innovations to Lenox. One was the first automobile seen in the county streets - a distinct hazard to carriages and horses. One day in Lenox, Mr. Bishop almost collided with Mrs. William Sloan as she drove from church. Mr. Sloan asked him reprovngly what he would have done had he killed her? To which the young man promptly replied, "I would at once have written you out a check for five thousand dollars!" The rest of the incident is found in an ordinance restricting to four miles per hour the speed of anything propelled by a power other than horses.¹

Harley T. Proctor, the late Ivory Soap king built the Gateways in 1912 at a reported cost of \$108,000. He was one of the nation's richest industrialists. The interior of the house was furnished luxuriously. He surrounded his place with a heavy wrought iron fence eight feet high, still intact. At one time Mr. Proctor had fifty horses in his Lenox stables and was a leading exhibitor at the Lenox horse show and October coaching parade.² He did not yield to the inevitable four cylinders until 1918, when he sold his stable.

Thus, during this progressive period in our nation's history we see the marked changes taking place in Berkshire

1. DeWitt Mallory, Lenox and the Berkshire Highlands, p. 54.

2. Ibid., p. 59.

County. Here, as throughout the rest of the United States, the aristocracy of that time was founded on wealth gathered by competition in the business world. It is easy, therefore, to understand that by constructing and maintaining homes of an elaborate type the owners should wish to give tangible evidence of their acquired wealth. Impelled by both habit and ambition, they often competed with proportionate vigor in spending money. Thus, during the summer season, the entire area of Berkshire County was a beehive of activity and competition for bigger and better events. It was difficult at first to see how the palatial homes, often copied after European manors or castles, bore any relation to the period, the place or the individual's need. But they were certainly used. With hordes of immigrant servants on the indoor staff and many more to attend the gardens, greenhouses, coach stables, and estate farms, the stage was set for a period of elaborate living and entertainment in magnificent surroundings. The vast formalized lawns and gardens and the products of the estate provided the necessities for huge house-parties, lavish, elaborate balls, sports events and horse shows, all combining to make a luxurious life of entertainment.

The speed of growth of the era left the older inhabitants in awe, and doubtless the tempo of development and the show of wealth astounded the participants themselves.

Each year and each party had to be succeeded by something more costly and elaborate. Land values soared as the estates were enlarged and more were being built.¹ Thus, in but a few years the name Berkshire became famous as a summer resort. Hotels were built to accomodate the influx of dignitaries from all parts of the world. During the height of the season, presidents, royalty, diplomats and financial tycoons casually rubbed elbows as the social reporters kept the wires humming with news from the social elite.

The height of the era was centered in the Gay Nineties and the early part of this century until the first World War. Then a shortage of labor and materials prevented the maintenance of large places. Apparently this was the beginning of the end of an era, for, while there was a recovery after the war, the spirit and verve was not the same and the decline continued gradually.

It was inevitable that this lush period should disappear. The twentieth century witnessed numerous changes throughout the country. The nation was passing through an economic metamorphosis. Our national economy had changed from one based on self-sufficient local communities to one based on mass production in industry and large-scale specialization in agriculture. After 1900 new factories were built

1. Tax records show that during this period land valuations rose from ten to twenty-five percent.

in clusters near raw materials, markets or the labor supply. Old factories were moved or abandoned. Each farming community concentrated on the crop from which growers could make the most money and produced little else. The industrial centers, the farming regions, and the cities, were all connected by railroads and waterways. Because of the availability of transportation, the steel mills of Pittsburgh and Yorktown, the meat-packing plants of Chicago and Kansas City, the citrus groves of California and Florida and the banking houses of New York City could serve the entire country.

The closing decades of the nineteenth century saw also new opportunities for education, and literary self-improvement. These came at a time when the social life of the average American was being hastened by certain epoch-making inventions. Foremost among these was the telephone, invented in 1876.¹ Social communication was thereby facilitated, business transactions expedited, and the barriers of isolation among rural inhabitants such as in Berkshire County began to crumble. Important discoveries were made also in lighting and we have already mentioned Berkshire County's role in this field.

1. Dale, Dummond, and Wesley, History of the United States, p. 569.

Of equal significance in a different field and perhaps the most revolutionary change yet known occurred in 1895 when the first gasoline-driven automobile was patented. The Ford Motor Company began operations in 1903.¹

The automobile was of enormous economic importance because of the lower cost in transportation made possible by it. As automobiles became common, old highways were improved and new ones were built. There were only 144 miles of paved highway in the United States in 1900. In 1921 there were 387, and of surfaced roads there were 760 miles.² This invention alone made a tremendous change in Berkshire County. No longer were the huge estates desirable. The Americans of wealth now wished to travel and see the country. The age when Americans stayed at home was rapidly passing. America was quickening its pace not alone on economic levels but also in its everyday social life. The invention of the automobile was only one in a series which tended to take the family out of the home. The washing machine, the sewing machine and others, all these reduced home drudgery and provided more leisure time for outside pleasures.

1. Ibid., p. 570.

2. Ibid., p. 571.

The era of concentrated big money for only a few was soon to pass. The income and inheritance taxes began to cut into the huge fortunes. At the same time, bigger wages and the mass production of consumers' goods brought an unparalleled prosperity to the average citizen. While the manner of living in America underwent rapid changes, Berkshire County underwent even greater ones. This section of Massachusetts found itself facing an adjustment to the Machine Age, detrimental to some, beneficial to the majority.

One of the most startling changes peculiar to this section was focused most vividly in Lenox, Stockbridge, Tyringham, Great Barrington, the southern part of Berkshire County, which was replete with palatial show-places of the Gay Nineties. It is a change still going on at the present time at an accelerated pace.

Our nineteenth century economy, of which we have spoken, and which functioned to build up great fortunes that in turn brought about a kind of landed gentry in Berkshire County, was the source of great mansions, the widespread lawns, the carefully cherished woodlands, all of which contributed to a highly groomed and beautiful countryside and spread the fame of Berkshire. The county at this period in her history faced a crisis, for if these estates could not be maintained, the effect on the Berkshires would be profound. It took twenty men to mow the lawns and

groom the drives and tend the flowers on the outside alone¹ of one estate. The twenty men were now no longer available! But even if they were, with the changing economy, who would pay them? Death and taxes, those twin certainties, were throwing the estates upon a market which did not want them. Many of the estate owners owed the towns several thousand dollars on back taxes which were not forthcoming. Thus, this section faced a challenge as to whether or not it was to maintain its social standards and cultural heights which it had attained, and how would it go about doing it.

The problem was partially solved when these fabulous show-places began to be taken over for educational purposes. The change came gradually. Educators, sensing the importance of the Berkshires as a cultural and social center, became interested in establishing schools in this district. Here was a place steeped in culture few locations could boast. Its proximity to both New York and Boston made it ideal, and we see the influx into the Berkshires of private educational institutions taking their places in the pretentious mansions of a generation ago.

The first private school to be established in the Berkshires was The Berkshire School, located in Sheffield. It was a non-sectarian enterprise started by Mr. and Mrs.

1. The Berkshire Eagle, November 10, 1930.

Seaver B. Buck. It opened in the fall of 1907.¹

When the school first opened in a rented farmhouse, there were six boys and four masters. The school was incorporated under the laws of the Commonwealth in 1919. It now has a capacity enrollment of 140 and a faculty of seventeen. Berkshire School is today one of the leading preparatory schools in New England, with the highest standards.

The transition of a number of great estates in the Berkshires from summer homes to educational or religious institutions really began in December, 1922, when the Society of Jesus bought Shadowbrook.² It was opened in 1923 as a novitiate. It prospered well and now has reached its capacity, so that plans have been made and drawn up by architect Joseph Raymond Hampson of Pittsfield for a large addition. The institution now has fourteen Jesuit fathers, ninety students including novices, and sixteen lay brothers, a total of one hundred and twenty persons. The proposed new south wing will provide accommodations for thirty-one fathers and two hundred students.

The property belonged originally to Anson Phelps Stokes, one of the nation's wealthiest bankers of his day, the period when huge fortunes could be accumulated more

1. Ibid., September 5, 1907.

2. Ibid., December 8, 1922.

easily. Mr. Stokes required a large domocile for his family, which consisted of Mrs. Stokes, the former Caroline Phelps, and nine children, of whom eight are living.

Baroness Stokes Halkett died in 1942 in Washington, D. C. The others are Reverend Dr. Anson Phelps Stokes, one time secretary of Yale University, retired canon of the National Episcopal Cathedral at Washington, and now living at Shadowbrook farm; Isaac Newman Phelps Stokes and James G. Phelps Stokes of New York; Harold Phelps Stokes of Tucson, Arizona; Mrs. John Sherman Hoyt of Shennamere, Darien, Connecticut; Mrs. Robert Hunter of Santa Barbara, California; Mrs. Ransom S. Hooker of Charleston, South Caroline; Miss Helen Phelps Stokes of Old Bennington, Vermont.

When Anson Phelps Stokes built Shadowbrook in 1893, it was declared to be the largest private dwelling in America.¹ It represented the very pinnacle of luxurious living, beautiful furnishings and works of art, big conservatories, extensive lawns and gardens laid out by the world-famous landscape architect, Frederick L. Olmstead. Mr. Stokes had one of the finest stables in the Berkshires. His richly caparisoned horses, coaches, traps and carriages attracted attention everywhere, especially in the famous floral tub parade, a gala event which he always led.

1. The Boston Advertiser, May 2, 1895.

When all were home, this family by itself would fill any ordinary spacious dwelling of the Gay Nineties, and when company came, many more rooms were required for the accommodations, especially for the brilliant house-parties, in the entertainment of which Mr. and Mrs. Stokes and their children took a keen delight. Dr. Stokes tells today this well-known story which has travelled all over the world, and only recently has been republished by Punch of London. It concerns a telegram that Canon Stokes sent to his mother at Shadowbrook when he was a student at Yale, from which he graduated in 1896. The dispatch as written, read: "Expect me this evening with a group of '96 men." The telegraph company omitted the all-important apostrophe, and Mrs. Stokes wired back: "Many guests here already; don't bring over forty."¹

Shadowbrook ballroom, 35 by 56 feet, was so large that it was said an expert driver could turn around in it tooling a coach and four. This room is now the beautiful Jesuit chapel, with an altar where once was the great fireplace of Italian marble. Unchanged, however, is the carved quartered oak high ceiling and paneled walls. The highly polished floor is covered with pews. Many brilliant dances were held here when the property was owned by the Stokes

1. Told to writer by Reverend Anson Phelps Stokes.

family. Perhaps none was more regal in magnificence than the Berkshire hunt ball that was given for Mr. and Mrs. Spencer P. Shotter of Savannah, Georgia, on September 8, 1911.¹ All the leading society men and women were there, including Boston matrons and dowagers, sparkling with diamonds and other precious stones. There was music by a New York orchestra and supper served at midnight in the grand dining room. This room was finished in old English oak with an ornate Carrara marble fireplace and mantel above which are English hunting scenes richly carved in the solid oak.

Shadowbrook's architect was the late H. Neill Wilson of Pittsfield, and this one hundred and five room house of rambling old English design was his masterpiece. The house is four hundred feet long, with a maximum width of one hundred feet.² The walk around it is a quarter of a mile. The site is on the Stockbridge hillside, two miles from the Curtis Hotel and civic center of Lenox. Although actually located in the adjoining town of Stockbridge, the Jesuits in Shadowbrook are more closely affiliated with the town of Lenox.

Shadowbrook's main entrance hall is finished in white marble, with marble lintels supported by carved

1. The Berkshire Eagle, September 10, 1911.

2. Ibid.

columns. There are fireplaces in all the sleeping rooms. In a third floor tower Mr. Stokes had a den from which he could survey his 2,000 acre estate. This wonderful view from the marble vestibule is framed and accentuated by the stone arches of the porch which is seventy feet long and twenty feet wide. Tanglewood lies to the east, and is so near that a slight breeze from that direction will waft the scores of Chopin or Straus to Shadowbrook during the summer Symphony Festival.

In the fall of 1917, a part of the estate, including only the great mansion and 350 acres of land, were sold for \$300,000 to Andrew Carnegie who had retired from the steel industry and wanted a quiet place in the Berkshire Hills. Here he meditated upon his plans for world peace.¹ The palace that banker Stokes built reminded Mr. Carnegie of Skibo Castle, and the surrounding hills were reminiscent of the Scottish terrain on which he was born.

The steel king had a high-powered launch built for cruising on Mahkeenac Lake (now Stockbridge Bowl), and from a willow deck-chair he fished for perch and pickerel, with Mark Bourne as his pilot. On his private golf course at Shadowbrook Mr. Carnegie had clubs that he bought from old Tom Morriss, maker of clubs at St. Andrews, Scotland.

Mr. Carnegie died at Shadowbrook August 11, 1919,² and

1. Ibid., October 11, 1917.

2. The Springfield Republican, August 12, 1919.

three years later it was sold to the New England Society of Jesuits.

The steel magnate had been urged to come to Lenox by his old friend, Robert W. Peterson, turpentine millionaire of the south who built Blantyre, on the Lee road. Mrs. Carnegie even now rarely misses a few days stay in the autumn at Red Lion Inn, Stockbridge, and when in Berkshire, always drives past Shadowbrook where passersby now see Jesuit novitiates fingering their rosaries, walking along the numerous gardens, or reading their breviaries.

Life at Shadowbrook has been transformed since its gay days when the Stokes and Carnegie families were in charge. The Jesuit novice at Shadowbrook rises at an early hour. The Mass and Communion are followed by breakfast. Every hour or so, between breakfast and dinner and supper, he hears the sound of a bell whereupon he is expected to end instantly what he is doing and start upon something new. The bell is the symbol of obedience. It invites the Jesuit to do humble work such as sweep the house, read a spiritual book, mow the lawn, hear a lecture from the master of the novices, attend a class, examine his conscience, read the life of a saint, make a sound meditation of half an hour's length, visit the Blessed Sacrament, say the Rosary in bands of three while walking in the open air, prepare the essential points for the meditation of the following morning, then, at last, to bed.

Two years of noviceship are followed by ascetical study of religion, with classical literature and history to amplify it. This is the beginning of a career and the foundation of the newer Shadowbrook. Mr. H. Neill Wilson, the architect of Shadowbrook, predicted it would last for centuries. With the scrupulous care now given it as a monastery by the Jesuit Fathers, his prediction should more than come true.

During this period of social and intellectual ferment in the United States in the early years of the twentieth century, educational progress was rapid. The enrollments in colleges and universities advanced by leaps and bounds. The preparatory school as a step towards a college career was also making rapid advancement, and numerous schools of this type were being established in the Berkshires during this period.

The next estates to go for educational purposes were those of Mr. George G. Haven, Sunny Ridge, and Mr. Frank Sturgis's home, Clipton Grange. The Lenox School for Boys was established here in 1926 with the purpose of providing a sound secondary education at moderate cost.¹ The beautiful and extensive grounds on the two estates served the boys as a campus for outdoor sports, in which they excel. From an enrollment of thirty seven at

1. The Berkshire Eagle, June 7, 1926.

at the beginning the school has grown steadily to a present capacity of one hundred and seventy five. While most of the boys come from New England, New York and New Jersey, there have been always a few from Europe and South America.

The students carry on a large part of the work necessary to operate the school. This, combined with unostentatious accessories makes it possible to meet all expenses without endowment.

The discipline of going without luxuries, so rebelliously accepted elsewhere, has been from the beginning inevitable, and yet fruitful, for the students. An intimacy of contact between boys and masters makes possible a close personal attention, and has created an essentially homelike atmosphere quite opposed to that of an institution. The boys take complete care of their own rooms; they do all the waiting on table and washing of dishes, and have a large share in the actual management and operation of the school. Hence the school has made rapid and steady progress since 1926 and there are now plans for an enlargement.

In the year 1939 Foxhollow School for Girls moved from Rhinebeck, New York, to Berkshire County.¹ The school trustees, looking for a larger campus and a cultural setting, chose the former estate of Mrs. Margaret Vanderbilt Emerson,² Holmwood, in Lenox.

1. Ibid., April 16, 1939.

2. Ibid.

This is an ultra-exclusive private school which combines the preparation for college with a correlated plan of studies calculated to form a sincere interest in intellectual and cultural matters. It has a large enrollment of over one hundred girls from all parts of the world.

Miss Aileen Farrell told the writer that the keynote of the plan of study at Foxhollow is the close relationship of all cultural subjects. Chosen periods of civilization are studied in sequence through their languages, history, art, literature and music. From such correlated experiences are drawn the basic principles of culture and ethics which form a reliable criterion for the girls' adult life. During the summer the school takes advantage of the rich cultural opportunities offered by the region thereabouts.

The same year that Foxhollow was inaugurated, a Catholic school for boys was also established in the county. On May 17, 1939, through the generosity and vision of Mr. Edward H. Cranwell, a prominent Catholic layman of New York, the property and building formerly the summer estate of Henry Ward Beecher, were deeded to the Society¹ of Jesus of New England to be used for school purposes. Upon transfer of the property, it was immediately conditioned for fall occupancy. The Reverend John F. Cox, S.J.,

1. The Springfield Republican, May 18, 1939.

former dean of Holy Cross College, was appointed first Rector and Headmaster of the new institution. During the summer the work of altering and renovating the buildings was successfully completed and the school, incorporated under the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, opened its doors on September 25, 1939 to fifty-five boarding students and thirteen non-resident students.

The school was named Cranwell Preparatory School in honor of the donor. It offers unique educational advantages to Catholic boys desirous of preparing for college, and completely rounded courses are offered for those who though they do not intend to enter college courses, wish to have a firm background for ethical and intelligent living in the future.

The school campus contains four hundred acres of land situated on the eminence of a gently rising slope facing the south and overlooking Laurel Lake, one of the most picturesque spots in the entire Berkshires. Eight buildings adorn the property. Other additions are now being planned.

New private educational and religious institutions continued to open their doors in Berkshire County, and this social area was quickly losing the artificiality of the Gay Nineties era and rapidly returning to the high intellectual and cultural prestige of the past, when America's

first literati roamed the Berkshires together. New schools continued to make their appearance and take possession of the vast estates once the playgrounds of the nouveau riche.

In 1940 the Windsor Mountain School bought one of the most beautiful estates in this section, called Groton Place.¹ Ten years ago the entire estate was valued at \$185,000, of which \$90,000 was on the house and \$21,000 on its contents and the remainder on lands.

The main house is of native stone and cement and the roof is of slate. The walls of the entrance doorway are Vermont marble, the vestibule is serpentine marble and all walls are panelled, and the door is of oak. The floors of the entrance hall and all rooms on the first floor are hexagonal Moravian tile, laid in cement. The walls of all the rooms on the first floor are American white oak quartered out of even grain and kiln dried before being used, as is also the ceiling of the library and dining room. There are fireplaces with artistic mantels in all rooms on the first floor.

On the second floor of the dwelling are eleven bedrooms and adjoining bathrooms. There are fireplaces in seven of the bedrooms. In the servants' wing there are five bedrooms and two baths. On the third floor are seven

1. The Berkshire Eagle, June 18, 1940.

master bedrooms and baths and five servants rooms and baths. Above all is a large attic. Other buildings include the superintendent's cottage, the garage, the studio building, poultry house and the aquarium and bird houses. The water supply for the entire household comes from two artesian wells operated by fifteen and twenty horsepower electric motors.

This sumptuous mansion all completely furnished was bought by the Windsor Mountain School for \$50,000.¹ Although new to the Berkshires, the school was not a new institution. It operated for twenty years in pre-Nazi Germany and in Switzerland. It was moved to this country in 1936, and looking for larger quarters, moved to this section in 1940. There are sixty students now enrolled at a tuition of \$1,700 per, a year. Both elementary and high school courses are offered, with special opportunities in languages.

During World War II, numerous Catholic priests in Poland were killed. Since that country became a satellite of Russia, priests have suffered greatly, and there is constant need to replenish the priests who gladly give their lives for their religion. A new seminary was urgently needed. The Polish Order of Maryan Fathers looked to American shores where they might train in quiet and solitude,

1. Ibid.

young boys for the priesthood. The Catholic Order, hearing of the Berkshires, visited here and bought a beautiful site in Stockbridge for their seminary. This site was Eden Hill, taken over as the Immaculate Conception novitiate. This marked the official beginning of Berkshire County's second novitiate, dedicated in 1944.¹

Situated on property which in its day was a large summer estate, later the site of St. Edmund's Episcopal School, the new Catholic novitiate of Maryan Fathers of the Immaculate Conception actually aimed at educating priests for service in Poland. Seven priestly educators are in residence in the thirty-room house. Visitors are allowed on the first floor only, since the second and third are cloistered.

The Order paid \$30,000 for the fifty-acre estate located on Prospect Hill.² The grounds are beautifully landscaped and large shade trees border the long driveway. The main dwelling is a three story, English type house of stone and stucco. A large reception room, library, music, dining, and billiard rooms are on the first floor. There are also glassed-in porches, an Italian fountain, silver vault and servants' working and living rooms.

1. Ibid., August 31, 1944.

2. Ibid.

The residents of Stockbridge and all Berkshire County have been most generous in their gifts and donations to the seminary.

The history of the passing of the great estates is a fascinating one. No study of the Berkshires in this changing era would have any meaning without the story of these rising and decaying mansions and their subsequent resurrection into a more useful and florious use as educational centers. The fabulous mansion known as Bellefontaine and the millions spent on it in extravagant, sensuous luxury is another example. Having risen to unimaginable heights, it too decayed, only to be bought for a trifle and brought to life as another Catholic seminary for young priests.

Bellefontaine was one of the most palatial show-places in Berkshire County. Owned by Mr. Giraud Foster, he was one of the last of a group of millionaires who brought world-wide fame and distinction to the Berkshire town of Lenox. His departure, like all the others, marked the end of an era of luxurious living that may never return. Mr. Foster, who in his later years had been sometimes called the "grand old man of Lenox," represented to a marked degree the aristocracy, the wealth, the culture and refinement which for a century have been the glory of this Berkshire summer resort capital. His mansion, started in 1896, was

completed in 1899.¹ It was a full-sized replica of the Petit Trianon built by Louis XVI for Marie Antoinette in the gardens at Versailles, following the American Revolution. In this setting on the edge of a pine forest, with a commanding southern view, Mr. Foster lived the life of a gentleman who knew and appreciated the finer things of life.

He was skilled in finance; a world traveler in his younger years, he was well informed in art and literature, especially American, English and French. In his library of five thousand books were complete sets of classics in costly bindings. This library, occupying an ell, is finished in old English oak, with walls and fireplace of Verona marble.²

Outstanding in their regal magnificence are the living, dining, and Louis XVI rooms. The dining room is paneled in light French oak, the living room is in French oak of a darker shade. The splendid paneling was prefabricated in Paris, brought over to Lenox, and set in place by expert French cabinet makers.

For more than forty years Mr. Foster's birthday dinners on November 8 were society events of the first

1. Bryan, The New Book of Berkshire, p. 302.

2. The writer visited at the Foster mansion four months before Mr. Foster's death.

magnitude. Oftentimes he had one hundred guests; the birthday cake was always a masterpiece of culinary art; the entire house was a veritable garden of chrysanthemums, some of which were ten inches in diameter, American Beauty roses, orchids, carnations, rare ferns and tall palms from his own greenhouse. The dinner service was of gold.

This was truly one of the finest homes in America. As one entered through the lovely sylvan forest on the main highway, the visitor could observe Bellefontaine's drive, marble figures placed here and there in exquisite woodland settings. From the public highway a Greek temple sheltering the figure of Adonis is dimly visible. The symbolic figures, all of classical design, were patterned from those at Versailles. Each successive turn in the road up to the gigantic mansion leads to something more interesting until the splendor of the Petit Trianon comes into view. First one saw a semi-circular pergola supported by twisted columns of pink Verona marble. In front was a fountain representing Hercules strangling a serpent, while on every side were rare pieces of statuary and huge vases mainly from Paris.

Guarding a rectangular pool on either side nearest the house is a marble goat, a copy from a Florentine garden, while midway between these and the outer edges of the court stand a large Byzantine column of Greek marble. Across the inner court is a balustrade of pure marble upon which are

Louis XIV figures taken from the Maison Lafitte. In the center stands a massive fountain of Verona marble with winged sea-horses below and mermaids above. Bay trees in terra cotta vases from Florence grow in symmetry along the walks.

The main portico is on the south side of the house and extends nearly its full length. Six great Corinthian columns of pure white marble support an entablature of the same stone, while across the facade extended a floor of marble tile. The balustrade is similar to that fronting the inner court on the opposite side of the villa and along its rail are representations of baskets of flowers carved in ancient times from Grecian marble. Situated at intervals along the portico are marble sarcophagi from Rome for flowering plants.

Two terraces extend along the front, with a large sundial in the center of the first. On the lower one is another formal garden. On the east and west sides are large porticos from which flower-bordered walks lead to an Italian garden. In the east one is a marble fountain representing a faun, and at a turn in the road is a marble pergola sheltering the goddess of plenty. The approach to the west garden is guarded by two Louis XVI sphinxes. The fountain represents a dolphin. The drive from the main state highway on the west is bordered with slender poplars.

In a plot at the northeast stands a copy of the great Sun vase of Louis XIV in the gardens of Versailles. The vegetable garden has a large florentine well, its spiral carved pillars of Verona marble support a slab from which is suspended an ancient iron wheel. The base, or well-head of Verona marble weighs three tons. In the main hallway of the Villa are rare specimens of Persian tile. At each side are Roman mask fountains, in front of which stand ancient marble columns surmounted by statues. This magnificent estate was for forty-seven years one of the great showplaces of the Berkshire Hills.

With floral decorations of extraordinary beauty all over the house, with the illuminated fountains, Bellefontaine on the nights of Mr. Foster's birthday was a dazzling scene, truly representative of an age about to expire. Dying in 1945, he had outlived the age of which he was a part.

A problem was presented as to what should be done with this fabulous place. Mr. Foster's son, Girard Van Nest Foster had a large home, Swingalong Plantation, in Wilson, Louisiana, and wished to free himself of his father's immense holdings in the Berkshires. He placed the property on the market at a selling price of \$90,000, but it was sold to the Catholic Order of the Society of the Fathers of Mercy

in Brooklyn, for \$45,000.¹ It was then named Our Lady of Mercy Seminary, a training center for young Catholic priests.

The building and grounds were dedicated on September 15, 1948, by the Very Reverend George K. McGee, Superior General of the Order. The grounds of the estate which have been described, patterned after the Versailles gardens, were immediately depleted of their pagan statuary, and Christian statues and shrines took their place. A huge cross has been placed atop the center of the building, and religious grottoes and shrines appear throughout the grounds, lending to the place a new spiritual atmosphere.

This was not a new Catholic Order. The Fathers of Mercy came into being in France. Its founder was the Venerable Jean Baptiste Rauzan, a renowned preacher and one of the priests who helped restore the Catholic faith in France during the French Revolution. The Society founded by Father Rauzan in 1808 was first known as The Missionaires of France which in later years was changed by Pope Gregory XVI² to that of the Society of the Fathers of Mercy. The Order is one of the youngest in the Catholic hierarchy.

The purpose of Our Lady of Mercy Preparatory School is to prepare boys and young men from first year high school

1. The Springfield Republican, January 9, 1949.

2. Ibid.

through their second year of college for their life's work as members of the Fathers of Mercy.

There is one other school which deserves mention here, Miss Hall's Girls School in Pittsfield. This school is not new to the Berkshires, for its origins go back to the beginning of the county. But during the twentieth century, it made great progress and became known as one of the most fashionable girls' schools in the country.

The school was established by Miss Mary E. Salisbury of Providence, Rhode Island, in 1845. Miss Salisbury's successor was Miss Mira Hall who bought the school in 1898. At her death in 1937 her niece, Miss Margaret H. Hall was named headmistress and it was under Miss Margaret Hall's guidance that the school was brought to the great standards it now enjoys. It is a significant fact that all educational institutions enjoy being free of taxes, yet Miss Hall makes a substantial donation annually to the city.

A rather different and unique institution was started in the Berkshires in the field of psychology. In 1907 Dr. Austin Fox Riggs came to live in Stockbridge. He had spent his vacations in the village since his marriage to Dr. McBurney's daughter, Alice. But ill health forced him to give up his association with a busy medical office in New York and live in the country the year round. During the years spent in the practice of general medicine, Dr. Riggs

had been struck with the fact that almost three-quarters of the patients who came to his office belonged to a category that doctors could do nothing for. They occupied a borderline between general medicine and psychiatry. There was nothing physically wrong with them, yet they were ill. The size and nature of the problem these cases presented had long interested him and he now felt he had an opportunity to study them by the trial-and-error method. People began coming to Stockbridge to consult him, driving up from the station in a horse and buggy. As his patients increased in number, other doctors became interested in the same work and came to assist him. As years went by and Stockbridge came to mean "Riggs" to an ever increasing number of people, the methods of treatment which are used today gradually evolved. By 1914 the work was outgrowing the informal basis on which it was formerly run, and Dr. Riggs was ready to work on a plan for a more permanent and satisfactory setup.

In 1919 Dr. Riggs put into execution a plan which was to prove mutually beneficial to the town and to his work. A patient, on leaving, had given him a check for five hundred dollars for any use he saw fit. This check was the nucleus of a fund which grew amazingly. It has never solicited funds from the public. Only voluntary contributions from grateful patients have kept the fund alive.

With the original money it was possible to remodel a house on Main Street and build a shop for occupational therapy. Since then new buildings have been continually added until the Riggs Foundation is now a large institution famous throughout the country.¹ Its clients are for the most part wealthy people.

The Foundation obviously brings prosperity to the village, a prosperity that is irrespective of seasons. Apart from the number of people actually employed by the Foundation, and the doctors' families, the patients themselves patronize the local stores, their relatives stay at the hotels, and they sometimes even become so enamoured of Stockbridge that they buy or rent property.

Although the educational institutions increased Berkshire County's fame as an intellectual and cultural center, it still remained essentially a social and resort center. Some of the large estates were taken over for religious and educational institutions, but many remained in private hands as summer villas. Several wealthy families foreseeing the future economic change in the country, tore down their showplaces and rebuilt large, but considerably more modest homes. People of wealth, society and fashion still lived on in the Berkshires but not on the grand scale

1. The Berkshire Eagle, June 2, 1948.

of the fabulous Nineties period. That era had passed forever.

As time progressed, the years brought additional prestige to this section, and the Berkshires were sought after by many wealthy people both here and abroad. Persons began to flock to the Berkshires by the thousands every year from May to December. Facilities to house these guests gave rise to the opening of new hotels, inns and recreation resorts.

The old estates of the Gay Nineties period which were a continual burden to many taxpayers are now being bought and modernized to serve as recreation centers. Thus, this Berkshire region began as a resort center on a more popular basis. Her fame as a society center and as a cultural Mecca acted to enhance the beauty of the landscape and brought persons in ever increasing numbers.

CHAPTER IV

BERKSHIRE COUNTY EMERGES AS A RESORT AND CULTURAL CENTER

By the dawn of the twentieth century America had ceased to be a nation of pioneers. While farming was still a most important occupation, America had become more and more an industrial nation. However, this transition was not simultaneously reflected in the area in and about the Berkshires. The industrialization of Berkshire County, Massachusetts, had reached an early fruition and had declined.¹ The early saw and grist mills, the carriage factories, the marble quarries, the iron furnaces all closed down after the sudden prosperity of the war years of the War of 1812.² The two cities, Pittsfield and North Adams, alone were the exceptions, retaining their local industries.³ A gradual abandonment of the rest of the valley from industry took place.⁴ One by one the small manufacturers of shoes, hats, buttons, shears, textiles, pottery and farm implements succumbed to bigger mass production elsewhere.⁵

1. Diary of John D. Peterson, III, p. 17.

2. Ibid.

3. Hamilton Child, Berkshire County Gazetteer, 1725-1885, I, p. 57.

4. Ibid.

5. Diary of John D. Peterson, III, p. 20.

There was a unique resistance of the whole Berkshire region to the forces of industry.¹ One reason that industry did not survive was the fact that this section was slow in obtaining good railroad facilities.² The first railroad joining Boston to the Hudson River through the Berkshires was completed October 4, 1841, called "The Western Railroad."³ However, the locomotives were poor and there was great difficulty in drawing freight over the mountains.⁴ Coupled with the high cost of transportation Berkshirites were disinterested in entering into large scale industry.⁵ It was not until the Boston and Albany Railroad bought out the Western Railroad in 1851 that dependable facilities were available in this section.⁶ An economic compulsion or desire for industry in the County was almost nonexistent except in the cities of Pittsfield and North Adams.⁷

1. Edward Boltwood, The History of Pittsfield, Massachusetts, 1876-1916, p. 52. Hereinafter cited as History of Pittsfield.

2. Pittsfield Town Record, 7, February 4, 1839.

3. Ibid., October 17, 1841.

4. Boltwood, The History of Pittsfield, p. 58.

5. Diary of John D. Peterson, III, p. 29.

6. Child, Berkshire County Gazetteer, 1725-1885, I, p. 231.

7. Ibid.

The chief occupation of this region remained farming.¹ Though most of the upland farms had extended down into the valleys, yet these were wide and flat between the distant hills and afforded support for a large agrarian population.² Thus, another reason why the people of Berkshire could neglect the opportunities industry offered at this time was that their own population was now stably adjusted to the capacity of the soil to feed them.

After the boom years of the War of 1812 in the small local industries, the population of the entire county rapidly declined with the exception of the cities of Pittsfield and North Adams.³ As an example of this decline, the town of Becket in 1830 had a population of 1472,⁴ in 1910 the population was 674.⁵ The population today is 755.⁶ The town of Florida in 1830 had a population of 1038⁷ but in 1910 only 441 inhabitants.⁸ Today the population is

1. Diary of John D. Peterson, III, p. 33.

2. Ibid.

3. Child, Berkshire County Gazetteer, 1725-1889, I, p. 237.

4. Census figures for the year 1830 in files of Auditor's office, City Hall, Pittsfield, Massachusetts.

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid.

7. Ibid.

8. Ibid.

731.¹ Indeed, for most of the thirty towns of Berkshire County the census reports for the last half of the nineteenth century show a steady decline in population. After 1900 the population became comparatively stable.

This study in the preceding chapters has taken up the influx into Berkshire County of a number of America's first authors in the early 1800's and the subsequent mansion era of the Gay Nineties. However, with the opening years of the twentieth century this section was no longer for the select and wealthy alone, but was advancing to become one of the country's famous recreation resorts where thousands came yearly to enjoy a two-week, or a season's vacation period among the hills.² Gradually through the years the fame of this scenic region had spread through the nation and slowly but constantly after 1900 this area became solidly established as a resort.³ The natives of Berkshire were pleased with this influx of people for it meant to them increased business and a rise in their living standards.⁴ The whole county, therefore, with the exceptions of the two industrial cities, was transformed into a resort economy.⁵ Colonial homes were converted into Colonial inns

1. Ibid.

2. Diary of John D. Peterson, IV, p. 16.

3. Ibid., p. 20.

4. The Berkshire Eagle, June 14, 1901.

5. Diary of John D. Peterson, IV, p. 20.

and the old Yankee New England Taverns began to dot the landscape.¹ Railroad facilities from Boston and New York were increased. One passenger train went through the Berkshires daily in the fall and winter months, but from May to September an extra passenger train was put on to accomodate the vacationers.² The people of Berkshire were thriving in a small way on a resort economy as ever increasing numbers came each summer season.³ However, important writers, statesmen, artists, and inventors continued to make their homes here, adding to this section's lure and fame.⁴

Prominent in the Berkshires at this time were two noted American sculptors who left their distinguished mark not only on Berkshire County but on the whole world, and at a very timely epoch in our history. These men were, Henry Hudson Kitson and Daniel Chester French.

Tyringham's noted sculptor, Sir Hudson Kitson, whose works in stone and bronze have brought him world-wide fame, lived in his unique cottage, Santarella, in

1. Ibid., p. 22.

2. The Berkshire Eagle, June 14, 1901.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.

Tyringham.¹ A native of Huddersfield, England, Kitson was knighted by Queen Victoria.² Recipient of numerous medals and foreign decorations, Kitson cherished particularly that of the Royal Order of Bene Merenti, presented to him by Queen Elizabeth when he was guest of King Carol and the Queen in Bucharest.³

The Kitson home and studio, with two dominating silos, is located behind a six-foot brush fence which served to keep out the eyes of the curious tourist, and also provided a hiding place for hundreds of birds from hawks that came swooping down the Tyringham valley from the surrounding hills.⁴ The main studio is 50 by 30 feet and 50 feet high in the center. Hewn planks eighteen inches wide and ten feet long were nailed around the sides of a large and a small silo in which he kept his plaster. Formerly a barn two hundred years old, its present silo effect appears like a queerly built object.⁵

Through various sized windows one looks out upon the Tyringham Valley and the hills which both in summer and in winter present a scene of uncommon variety of beauty.

1. This famous cottage of Sir Henry Hudson Kitson and his studio have been open to visitors since his death, and records for the year 1951 show that 17,000 persons visited the place.

2. Winfield S. Downs, Men of New England, II, p. 143.

3. Ibid.

4. Visited many times by author.

5. The Springfield Republican, March 18, 1945.

The chicken house has a Japanese roof with a stone chimney. Thousands of persons come from afar to admire it.

In the old apple orchard are bird houses. In winter Mr. Kitson scattered bird-food over many inviting places in his garden. Many brooks, diverted from their natural courses, flow through his property. The roof of the home and studio with its undulating, variegated colors is an oddity providing respect, admiration and amazement.

Mr. Kitson's works in sculpture may be found all over the United States.¹ He designed the statue of the Continental Soldiers in Newburgh, New York, Washington's headquarters; the Franz Kneisel Memorial for the Institute of Musical Art, New York City, is a product of his inimitable talent; the statues of King Victor Emanuel III and of James Viscount Bryce, in the National Museum of Art, Washington, D. C., are his. His works may be found at Paducah, Kentucky,² Vicksburg, Mississippi, and other southern cities.

On the tiny, rocky and remote King Island in the Bering Sea, some sixty miles off the Alaskan coast, facing Siberia, is located one of the world's masterpieces of religious sculpture by Kitson, called "Christ the King."³ The bronze statue was formally dedicated by Father Bernard R.

1. Downs, Men of New England, II, p. 147.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

Hubbard, S. J., the famous "Glacier Priest," in the presence¹ of the entire native population of the Island. During the present period of tension between the world's two most powerful nations, the statue of Christ located on a tiny island between their respective shores seems to plead for peace and understanding.

During the concerts and festivals given by Mrs. Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge in the Temple of Music on South Mountain, Pittsfield, one notices a portrait relief in bronze by² Mr. Kitson, of the "fairy godmother" of Chamber music. He had a highly cultivated taste for classical music and always attended her concerts.

In the passing of Kitson on June 27, 1947, Berkshire lost a man who brought honor and fame to this region. His strong personality befitted the medium in which he worked. His colorful appearance gave a distinction to the public gatherings in which he was frequently seen. His place in American Art is secure, whether the criterion be his "Minute Men" at Lexington or his "Music of the Sea" in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts.

Of all the great names to come out of Berkshire County, that of Daniel Chester French, famous American sculptor, gives

1. The Berkshire Eagle, June 28, 1947.

2. Author was present at special concert on Sunday afternoon, August 17, 1940, when portrait was publicly presented to the Temple of Music, by Mr. Kitson.

the area its greatest pride. Mr. and Mrs. French settled in the Berkshires soon after their marriage in 1900. They chose Stockbridge, and bought the Marshall Warner farm.¹ Henry Bacon, the architect, drew up plans for a studio soon after his arrival, as Mr. French had just received a commission from the women of America to do an equestrian statue of Washington for the Place D'Iena in Paris, the first monument by an American to be erected in that city.²

When the studio was finished, there was a little tea to show it off. It was worth seeing, perhaps the finest studio in the country; a perfect cube, thirty by thirty by thirty.³ The great room had a high peaked ceiling and splendid skylights.

The feature of the main studio was the great revolving modering-table which rested on a flatcar, and this in turn on a broad-gauge track extending from the center of the building into the side garden.⁴ Mr. French wished a studio which would enable him to take his model out in the sunlight, as many of his statues were to go outdoors.⁵ After working for a year, the couple decided to take a vacation in

1. M. F. Cresson, Journey Into Fame, p. 87.

2. Ibid., p. 90.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid., p. 94.

5. Ibid.

Europe and attend the unveiling of his statue there.

It was in Greece that he received the inspiration for his greatest work, the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D. C.¹ He sat on the steps of the Parthenon as some workmen were working high on a platform or staging replacing some broken pieces of marble.² He thought at once as he gazed at the building's majestic beauty that America should have such a monument, a loadstone of splendor that would dazzle the eyes of the world. He returned to America and for many years kept this idea of a great monument in his mind.

The studio became a hive of activity as he finished off some of his famous pieces and started others, while in the background of his titanic, creative mind lurked the desire to accomplish something big. His great opportunity came in 1911 when Congress appropriated three million dollars for a site, a memorial consisting of a building and statue, and an idea strictly American.³ A memorial to Lincoln was deemed particularly appropriate. A committee came to Daniel Chester French's studio in Stockbridge and gave him the job.⁴ Thus it was that here in the quiet of the hills the sculptor

1. Ibid.

2. Story told to writer, June, 1951, by his daughter, Margaret Cresson French. This was the beginning of the idea of the great Lincoln Memorial.

3. Cresson, Journey Into Fame, p. 107.

4. Ibid.

worked for three years on a commission which was really his ideal.¹ The General Electric Company sent experts to his studio to try lighting effects on the plaster statue and to make experiments as to the correct angle at which the best dramatic lighting could be obtained.²

The work was long and arduous, and the people of Washington waited and watched for ten long years as the massive structure rose slowly.³ Finally, on Memorial Day, May 30, 1922, Washington gathered to dedicate the Lincoln Memorial.⁴

The Berkshires was also the home of Albert Sterner, noted American artist, a summer resident of Richmond for over thirty years. A vital force in United States art, Mr. Sterner converted a small barn on his farm into his studio where, during the ensuing summers he did some of his greatest works.⁵ In 1945 he declared that the seasons spent in Richmond added up to "the most fruitful years of my life."⁶

Unlike many seasonal residents, Mr. Sterner participated actively in the life of the Berkshire community,

1. Ibid.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid., p. 117.

4. The Berkshire Eagle, May 30, 1922.

5. Downs, Men of New England, II, p. 189.

6. The Berkshire Eagle, May 10, 1945.

speaking frequently before clubs and organizations and contributing his art to many charitable projects.¹ Numerous² of his paintings are in the Berkshire Museum in Pittsfield.

Writers continue to come to the Berkshires to live and find inspiration among the quiet hills. There is one name, however, which has become synonymous with Berkshire -- that of Walter Pritchard Eaton. Mr. Eaton, a resident of Sheffield, is a noted author, drama critic, regular columnist of the Berkshire Evening Eagle, and retired chairman of the Drama Department of Yale University.³

Mr. Eaton has had a distinguished career in the fine arts. Attracted to the Berkshires in 1910 when he and Mrs. Eaton drove through Stockbridge, they bought a home and stayed seven years.⁴ In 1917 they moved to Sheffield and bought their present home, Twin Fires.⁵ Since then the brick house and his two hundred acres of land in the shadow of The Dome of Mt. Everett, have comprised Mr. Eaton's favorite subject.⁶

These are but a few recent examples of the many creative artists who followed the path Hawthorne and Melville

1. Ibid.

2. Ibid.

3. The Berkshire Eagle, June 3, 1948.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid.

had laid down decades before. They are especially pertinent to this study not only because they lived and achieved many of their greatest works in this section but even more importantly because their presence contributed to the development of the Berkshires as a resort in recent years. As a consequence of their intimate connection with Berkshire County, the County's name appeared repeatedly in newspapers, books and journals distributed throughout the nation. Hundreds of vacationists began to journey yearly to the western section of Massachusetts in the Berkshires where they could visit the studio where Daniel Chester French created the Lincoln Memorial, or to visit Nathaniel Hawthorne's little cottage, to hike up the mountain to the cave where Melville and Hawthorne first met, or to climb Bryant's ever famous Monument Mountain of Indian legend.

The residents of the County were quick to perceive the immense possibilities of turning this area into a resort.¹ Business men saw in the development of this region² as a resort larger profits and increased business. Hotels and inns were the first to recognize a great rise in the summer population in Berkshire County and held a meeting at the Curtis Hotel in 1910 for the purpose of stimulating interest in the establishment of Berkshire County as a

1. The Berkshire Eagle, May 5, 1910.

2. Ibid.

recreation and resort section.¹ Records show that Mr. James Courtland, innkeeper,² was the main speaker. He pointed out that the Berskhires, an unspoiled rural section of western Massachusetts, only one hundred and fifty miles from either Boston or New York should establish a more popular resort section.³ The talk was received enthusiastically by all, especially Mr. Kelton B. Miller, owner and editor of the Berkshire County Evening Eagle, the daily newspaper for the county.⁴ He pledged to support all of their efforts. The matter, however, was dropped for a few years as all of the members present could not grasp the true significance of such an enterprise.⁵

However, by 1915, an automobile was developed within the price range of the average person, and in the next fifteen years, as wages in America went up and the cost of cars decreased, the automobile became a pleasure vehicle for all classes. As a result, the Berkshires were invaded by hundreds of city-dwellers who came purely for pleasure and recreation.⁶ The automobile was breaking down the rural

1. Ibid.

2. Diary of John D. Peterson, IV, p. 26.

3. Ibid., p. 28.

4. Ibid., p. 30.

5. Ibid.

6. The Berkshire Eagle, June 12, 1915.

isolation of the hills towns and opening up beautiful but hitherto forgotten scenic spots of the Berkshires.¹ Gradually the residents of Berkshire came to realize that an opportune time had arrived for enlarging their facilities as a resort. New England inns were established out of large old-fashioned dwellings, gift shops appeared, filled with Yankee notions, and antique barn stands dotted the hill town roads.² People turned their homes into guest houses. Egremont Tavern, a two-hundred year old inn in southern Berkshire, reopened its doors.³

The summer of 1925 was a flourishing one for this area. The Berkshire Evening Eagle for that spring and summer season contained advertising of all kinds to interest vacationers.⁴ Polo matches were presented Sunday afternoons for the first time. Arts and Crafts exhibits, dog shows, fairs, and horse shows were all organized that year.⁵ The reception of all these events was surprising to the Berkshireite. Pleasure-seekers patronized all these new innovations

1. Ibid.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

4. The Berkshire Eagle, September 7, 1925. A survey of the summer trade for that season was made and report written in newspaper on above date.

5. Ibid.

by the hundreds so that the natives realized even more strongly that this region had one great asset -- a beautiful rural setting which could and should be capitalized on and transformed into a resort economy for the people of Berkshire.¹

On the evening of February 7, 1926, a meeting of all interested residents of Berkshire County was held for the purpose of establishing an organization which would promote the Berkshires as a cultural and recreational area.² Seventy-seven attended.³ All thirty towns and two cities sent representatives. It was on this evening that the "Berkshire Hills Conference"⁴ was established. The aims and purpose laid down in its charter are ... "to advertise and publicize, by every possible medium the Berkshire Hills as a cultural and recreational area."⁵ This was the first active step taken to give a resort function to this section. The Conference opened its office that summer in 1926⁶ in the basement of the Court House and is still there today. The group went all out to advertise the Berkshires, and, as a result, Berkshire County reaped surprising profits.

1. Ibid.

2. The Berkshire Eagle, February 7, 1926.

3. From the minutes of the meeting taken by Mr. John Foley, now in files at office of Berkshire Hills Conference.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid.

6. The Berkshire Eagle, June 2, 1926.

Residents soon realized that vacationers came not only for physical relaxation but also to be entertained. A Mr. Walter Clark thought seriously about this and was determined to do something to profit thereby. Mr. Clark was a summer resident of Stockbridge, an artist and retired engineer who in 1927 had just successfully launched the Grand Central Art Galleries in New York and his imagination was searching out another project to feed upon. He always thought the Berkshires should have a summer theater. At first the idea was not accepted. His friends maintained that a town the size of Stockbridge could not maintain a theater. Mr. Clark threw on obstacles and so pitched into his scheme more doggedly than ever. The villagers became intensely interested and gradually several people of the various towns of Berkshire were helping in every way possible.¹ A Board of Directors was formed and they planned a non-profit-making organization, educational in nature, with a resident stock company plus visiting stars.² Carried away by Mr. Walter Clark's enthusiasm, several Berkshirites put up some money, bought the land and remodeled the old Art Casino,³ so that it would be adequate for theater purposes. Rechristened "The Berkshire Play-

1. June 16, 1928.

2. Minutes of first meeting of Board, August 7, 1928, in possession of Walter P. Eaton.

3. The Berkshire Eagle, September 23, 1928.

house," the building opened on June 10, 1929 with Eva LeGallienne in "The Cradle Song."¹ Alexander Kirkland, actor, organized the stock company for the first season of plays.² Audiences came, not only from neighboring towns but from Albany, Springfield and Hartford.³ Subscribers bought season tickets for the next summer,⁴ and the word went about that Stockbridge really had something to offer.

Beautiful productions were expected and presented. O'Neill's "Emperor Jones," Shaw's "Pygmalion," Sherwood's "The Queen's Husband," and an excellent production of "The Lute Song" were put on.

Soon some big red barns on a neighboring property were purchased and a drama school was set up,⁵ where such future stars as Katherine Hepburn, Betty Field, and Jane Wyatt learned their theatrical A. B. C.'s and were thrilled at the opportunity of doing "bit" parts at the Playhouse. The Berkshire Playhouse and Drama School, now completely self-supporting, is one of the most popular attractions of the Hills.

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1. Ibid., June 10, 1929.
 2. Ibid.
 3. Ibid., June 12, 1929.
 4. Ibid.
 5. Ibid., August 4, 1930.

The next venture to popularize the Berkshires as a resort area came in the form of a dance school and theater. In 1930 Mr. Ted Shawn, world-famous dancer, visited the Berkshires and was quite taken with the area.¹ He returned again in the summer of 1931² and it seemed as if the Berkshires had a very special attraction for him. In 1932, at the peak of a career which had made his name synonymous with dancing throughout the world, Mr. Ted Shawn bought a one hundred and thirty year old farmhouse in Becket and established a University of the Dance.³ It had always been Mr. Shawn's cherished dream to start such a University, and for ten years he worked toward this goal. In 1942 the Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, Inc., was chartered, by the State of Massachusetts, as an educational, artistic, non-profit institution.⁴ This newly formed corporation was given title to the property owned by Mr. Shawn which included 200 acres and seventeen buildings fully equipped, situated in Becket, nine miles east of Lee, on the mountain locally known as "Jacob's Ladder."⁵ Adjoining the studio in which for ten years the performances had been given, the

1. The Berkshire Eagle, June 18, 1930.

2. Ibid., May 30, 1931.

3. Ibid., May 17, 1932.

4. Ibid., February 27, 1942.

5. Ibid.

new corporation built the first theater in the United States ever designed, built and used exclusively for the art of the dance.¹ Mr. Joseph Franz was the architect, and while the exterior of the building harmonizes with the New England barns adjoining, the inside is a functionally perfect dance theater seating 514 people.²

The purposes and aims of Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, Inc., are to provide a program of dance education including all forms of dance such as is not now available anywhere in the world; to conduct a theater in which all forms of dance can be shown to the public; to maintain a museum-library of dance art, including a program of filming and building up a motion picture library of all great works of the dance; to become a great University of the Dance -- an overall organization under which a complete dance education will be available to the student under a planned and supervised program.³

Although the idea for a year-round school is still in the planning stages, each summer from May through September⁴ the University of the Dance holds a summer session. The school has each year a faculty of the most distinguished

1. Ibid., May 10, 1942.

2. Ibid.

3. Information obtained directly from Mr. Ted Shawn on aims and purposes of organization.

4. The Berkshire Eagle, June 12, 1940.

dance educators in the world.¹ These celebrated dancers present special weekly programs in the barn theater for the general public.² Preceding the program tea is served to the audience in the garden, and on special occasions Mr. Shawn lectures on the dance program to be presented. These summer Dance Festival programs attract thousands to the Berkshires yearly,³ and are a special feature which summer tourists enjoy. Since their inception they have made a large contribution to the area's appeal.

Each year has seen new ideas and other projects which the resourceful New Englander devised to meet the required social, economic and natural adjustment. Thus in 1934 the Berkshire Garden Center was founded purely as a local organization, but its growth has been constant, and its place in beautiful New England so unique that as a result it has become a favorite place for amateur gardeners to visit yearly. Gardens interest everyone, and in rural Berkshire County one may see the simple dooryard garden with sage and fragrant rosemary and, almost surely, a treasured clump of daylilies brought over from the old country. Nearly every home has a simple garden of some

1. The New York Times, August 7, 1950.

2. Ibid.

3. Records of the organization show that for the year 1951 a total of twelve thousand tickets were sold.

sort; it is the result of an invitation from the hills to take part in the creation and maintenance of life.

In an area where gardening has been foremost in the minds of so many inhabitants for generations, a garden center was probably as inevitable as the garden itself. The Berkshire Garden Center, located in Stockbridge, is an important step in the horticultural development of the region.¹ But to the Berkshirites it is more than this. Now firmly established, the Berkshire Garden Center has proved its worth, and the community is rightly proud of its horticultural influence. It has become nationally known and is visited by thousands of outsiders yearly.² So important has it become to garden lovers throughout the nation that many plan their vacations through the Berkshires just to visit the Center. Thus the Center has influenced the resort function of Berkshire.

From the first, its growth was rapid. It is an entirely Berkshire County organization, started first by a few local neighbors and ever increasing through the towns of the County.³ As the name implies, the organization has become an active center of horticultural information. How well this has been accomplished and the value of its service

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1. The Berkshire Eagle, June 8, 1934.
 2. The New York Times, May 18, 1950.
 3. The Springfield Republican, July 14, 1951.

has often been evidenced by its national recognition for community service by prominent horticultural organizations. Servicing Berkshire County, a large rural area, it has, in this short time, become a dominant factor in the agricultural development of the region.¹

An old farm house and about five and a half acres of land were donated by a member.² In 1936, all was deeded to an incorporated body of trustees with full ownership of the entire property.³ From that time on, the Garden Center was on its own, and, with the help of generous contributions of funds and services by individuals, an extensive development of the grounds and facilities has been possible. The main building consists of an assembly room, library, reading room, and offices. The Garden Center is open during the entire year, and the director and his staff are available at all times for information and guidance in all matters pertaining to gardening. Lectures and seasonal exhibits make their frequent contributions toward the horticultural development of Berkshire.

The grounds have been developed with the twofold purpose of maintaining the delightful charm of the old New England home, and at the same time, making as many plantings

1. Ibid.

2. Ibid.

3. Minutes of Meeting of Berkshire Garden Center, June 10, 1936, in Lenox Library.

and experiments as possible.¹ In a way, the Center's plantings reflect the agrarian interest of the community. Here, every effort is made to anticipate present needs and future agricultural developments in the Berkshires and to give as much information as possible through actual plantings.

With the increased popular interest in herbs, the Center has stressed their culture and many uses. The attractive terraced herb garden is an excellent example of the combination of utility and beauty. The garden itself is one of the feature attractions. Here are found most of the culinary herbs and many that have a medicinal use or are grown because of some interesting ancient lore. In the herb house adjoining the garden is found dried herbs and vinegars. Information on how to dry and process herbs and numerous other suggestions for their culinary uses are available. Teas and lecture programs are sometimes held in the garden itself. These programs draw hundreds yearly to the Center.² Whether one owns a garden or not, the Center is a beautiful spot for summer visitors. Many drive hundreds of miles out of their way each summer to visit the colorful gardens which are a beauty spot of the Berkshires.

The younger set of the County is not forgotten. Activities for children feature a flower and vegetable show,

1. Visited many times by author.

2. Records at the Center reveal twenty-seven thousand persons from outside Berkshire County visited there in the year 1951.

and daily nature walks to help prepare the future homeowners for the garden of tomorrow and to instill an interest in wild life and nature conservation; for both the home garden and the natural scenic beauty must be blended for a better way of life in the Berkshire of the future.

The Garden Center was so unexpectedly successful in drawing visitors to the Berkshires that Miss Mary Parsons dared venture upon an idea of her own on her property, which resulted in another highly interesting spot in the Berkshires which travelers never miss. This is the Pleasant Valley Bird Sanctuary in Lenox. The Sanctuary covers all of Bald Mountain and is the third largest in the country. It was entirely the idea and the gift of Miss Mary Parsons of Lenox. Thus Berkshire's heritage of bird life has not been unappreciated or gone neglected. The Sanctuary has a beautiful, large area for picnicing which attracts many. There is a tea-room in the old farmhouse, and a guide and hostess furnished for visitors who wish to ramble over the several hundred acres. The Trailside Museum has habitat groups, live exhibits and electric nature games. The Sanctuary is now operated the year round for the Massachusetts Audubon Society.¹ The Barn Restaurant, with its Shaker furniture, is an unusual place to have dinner.

1. Records of the Society show that eighteen thousand persons from outside Berkshire visited the Sanctuary in the year 1951.

Thus was Berkshire County gradually assuming a greater resort function. The Playhouse, Jacob's Pillow Dance Theater, the Garden Center and the Bird Sanctuary all lent to the area a great resort interest and brought thousands to the region each summer season. The hotels, inns, and guest houses, mostly privately owned began to modernize and expand their premises. The Red Lion Inn, established in 1793 as a stagecoach stop, added on to its rambling white building to accomodate visitors.¹ So too, the Curtis Hotel enlarged its building of Colonial days. The hotel formerly prided itself on a restricted clientele. Its register was dotted with names like Astor, Vanderbilt, Harriman, Roosevelt and Sloan. Now it has expanded to catch the thousands of Americans from every walk of life who summer in the Berkshires.²

Many private mansions were converted into hotels to meet the steadily increasing throng of summer visitors. The trend is well reflected in the present use of the estate of Mrs. Henry Wilde, a sprawling one hundred and ten acre property at Elm Court, Lenox, one of the earlier and more elaborate Lenox estates, opened in June, 1947, as a resort.³ The guests of earlier days included many inter-

1. There have been seven additions to the buildings, namely, 1895, 1900, 1922, 1925, 1928, 1935, and 1948.

2. Enlargement in 1938.

3. The Berkshire Eagle, June 1, 1947.

national notables in the days when Lenox shared with Newport the distinction of being the summer capital of American society. It still remains the property of the family of the late Mrs. Henry White, the former Emily Vanderbilt Sloane. The property, with its luxurious furnishings, remains for the most part, intact.

Mrs. Wilde, the former Marjorie L. Field, has a sentimental interest in Elm Court, so she has only leased the property, desiring to keep it always in the family. Her mother, Lila Vanderbilt Sloane, was the youngest daughter of Mrs. White, whose first husband was William D. Sloane, internationally known rug manufacturer.

Elm Court accomodates one hundred guests in the mansion and cottages on the attractive grounds, and has been closed only one summer since it was built by W.D. Sloane in 1887. Because of the many cultural activities here during the summer, the owners felt there was a need for a place in the country such as Elm Court.

Alphonse Chague, veteran superintendent of Elm Court, has brought fame to the local estate at flower shows in New York, Boston, Philadelphia, and other places of competitions in the country. Mr. Chague is the originator of the white delphinium and several variety of roses. He is currently

1. The Springfield Republican, November 3, 1946.

putting back into condition the twenty greenhouses on the estate, noted for years for the flowers grown there, and for the fruits and vegetables raised in them the year round.

Mr. Chague devotes considerable time to the elms on the estate, particularly the elm tree near the breezeway at the mansion. This elm is considered to be the oldest and the largest tree of its kind in the United States. It is thirty feet in circumference, and is estimated by tree experts to be three hundred and two years old. The tree was the first in this country to be wired for protection against lightning.

Extending from the road running close to the greenhouses, is the Emily Grove of elms developed fifty years ago. The pebble-stone roadways winding through the estate are again to be lined with flowers and shrubs. On the estate, workmen are today preparing several acres of ground for a garden which will produce vegetables to be served at the resort. Greenhouse men are also at work in the fruit houses where melons, grapes, figs, peaches and nectarines will be raised for the guests.

The mansion, exquisitely furnished, was redecorated and modernized throughout, but the charm and richness of the spacious house remains unchanged. ¹ Expensive furnishings

1. Information on Elm Court received directly from owner, Mrs. Henry Wilde.

and rugs which date back to the days when they were especially manufactured for the house by the Sloanes of New York are to be found in practically every room. Three large tapestries cover three walls in the dining room on the west side of which is one of the several imported marble fireplaces in the house.

There is handcarved woodwork in the library, dining room, lounge, hallway and other rooms of the structure. Damask on the walls in the hallways and the carpeted stairways add to the beauty of the interior. Period furniture is found in several rooms on the first floor as well as in many of the master bedrooms.

In former days, many notables visited Elm Court. Among these were four presidents of the United States, four queens, and other royalty of Europe. Also Marshall Foch, the French military leader, who was at Elm Court after World War I during the period of preliminary diplomatic conferences before the peace treaty was signed.

Mr. White, owner of Elm Court, spent thirty years in the diplomatic service of the United States. He served as Ambassador to Italy, having been named by President Theodore Roosevelt on March 6, 1905. Later he became Ambassador to France, but was removed by President Taft. Following his dismissal, Mr. White and Theodore Roosevelt made several trips together to Europe, and at the close of

World War I, President Wilson, feeling that Mr. White was an experienced diplomat and a Republican of not too pronounced a partisan type, appointed him to the Peace Commission. After spending a few more years in the government, he re-¹tired to his home in Lenox where he died, July 14, 1927.

New life is being injected into the estate at present, with painters, plumbers, seamstresses and others continually modernizing it and putting it in readiness for the yearly June opening. After three months of toil and perplexing problems, the Knott Hotels Corporation has turned Elm Court residence of Lenox, into Elm Court Hotel. This was another venture into converting a private estate into a luxury resort.

Such conversion took painstaking planning. For instance, many floor electric plugs were of an early design, like a three-pronged radio tube base, and were not interchangeable with later types. Moving a lamp in a room could present an electrical problem. Many of the permanent light fixtures originally burned gas. When the first electric lights were installed, the gas brackets had been wired and unique plug-in bulb sockets were concealed in the burner bases. The gas control valve now turns the light switch.

Most of the original furnishings were carried over into the hotel set-up, retaining the illusion of a wealthy

1. The Berkshire Eagle, July 14, 1927.

home of the early 1900's. But rearranging the objects was a major task. Moving a library table across the room requires five men. This famous estate has a huge dining room which attracts thousands of visitors yearly. It is open in summer to the public and many come to visit the estate to capture some of the interesting history of the place.

Music also contributed towards evolving the Berkshires into its new aspect. It came suddenly into the area as a cultural form of entertainment for vacationers and summer guests. The people of Berkshire County have always been music-minded. As far back as 1883 the Stockbridge Cornet Band, assisted by Jourdan's Orchestra, gave combination musical entertainments and strawberry festivals at Music Hall in Stockbridge.¹ But it was not until 1918 that the residents of Berkshire went out for music on a grand scale. In that year Mrs. Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge, herself a pianist and composer, founded the South Mountain Concerts in her Temple of Music on South Mountain in Pittsfield.²

Mrs. Coolidge, born Elizabeth Penn Sprague, at Chicago, is the widow of Frederic Shurtleff Coolidge, a Boston born and trained physician who settled in Pittsfield,

1. Child, Berkshire County Gazetteer, 1725-1885. II, p. 323.

2. The Berkshire Eagle, June 3, 1918.

in 1906, after ill health forced his retirement from a medical career in Chicago. Mr. Coolidge died in 1915. Thenceforth, the sharing of her interest in music and the promotion of the cause of chamber music in particular, have set an extraordinary example of intelligent benefaction¹ both in America and in Europe. It began with Sunday after-²noon concerts in the music room of her Pittsfield house. As early³ as 1916 she established the Berkshire String quartet.

Two years later, 1918, Mrs. Coolidge built the⁴ Temple of Music on South Mountain in Pittsfield. It was a white, wooden structure, with six long French windows and with pews from an old church in Nashua, New Hampshire, as seats.⁵ Near it, several cottages with fanciful names, and a rehearsal hall were built for the use of the assembled musicians. From that day to this the chamber music concerts have been going on, gaining both national and international prominence. Now, for nearly twenty years, the Coolidge Foundation of the Library of Congress may be said to have entered the national field through the series of chamber

1. The New York Times, August 4, 1948.

2. Ibid.

3. The Springfield Republican, August 5, 1948.

4. Ibid.

5. The New York Times, August 4, 1948.

music festivals of concerts in the auditorium presented to the National Library by Mrs. Coolidge in connection with her Foundation.¹ Both to Pittsfield and to Washington she has brought the most accomplished performers of this form of music not only in America but from abroad -- London, Budapest, Berlin, Rome.² Nor has the performance been all. The encouragement of composers to enter the chamber-music competitions under her sponsorship has stimulated creative musicians to high endeavor with rewards not merely artistic. When a bas-relief portrait bust of Mrs. Coolidge was placed by her admirers in the Temple of Music in 1928, there could have been no more accurate designation of its original than the words it bore: "The Fairy Godmother of Chamber Music."³

Through the enlightened generosity of Mrs. Coolidge the Berkshires began to be regarded by lovers of music as a special place to be visited in the summer time. And music-minded Americans began to frequent the Temple of Music until the building is now overflowing with listeners out on the lawn outside the Temple.⁴ The chamber music concerts have become among the most active in the country. These concerts

1. The Berkshire Eagle, May 19, 1949.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

4. Records at the Temple of Music show thirty-two thousand attended concerts there in the year 1951.

have in a large way added to the resort function of the Berkshires.

A Music Festival, with music under the stars in the Berkshires was the great ambition of Henry Hadley, noted composer.¹ In Europe there was music out of doors, so Mr. Hadley reasoned why not capture the same mood in the sylvan setting of the Berkshires.² Dr. Hadley confided his idea to Miss Gertrude Smith while he was summering in Stockbridge in 1933. Miss Smith, captivated by the thought of such combined loveliness, took hold of the suggestion with her dynamic energy and enthusiasm and approached Mrs. Owen Johnson of Stockbridge and Mrs. William Felton Barrett of Great Barrington.³ The response of these women was tremendous and immediately effective.⁴ In June 1934 there were preliminary discussions of the subject and a meeting with representatives of all the towns in Berkshire County took place.⁵

Some disinterest and scepticism had to be overcome for there were some who thought the expense and the trouble attached to symphony concerts far from any large city were

1. The Berkshire Eagle, June 8, 1933.

2. Ibid.

3. Letters of Miss Gertrude Smith in Lenox Library.

4. The Berkshire Eagle, July 7, 1933.

5. Meeting held in Lenox Town Hall attended by fifty-seven. June 12, 1934.

insuperable obstacles. However, Miss Gertrude Smith's zeal and eagerness inspired others with confidence and soon the entire county was intensely interested.¹ It was indeed a democratic community enterprise. Everybody was to be involved.²

In large and small towns, some two hundred in the county, with a local representative of the project in each, choral training was planned for the long winter evenings.³ The Pittsfield Chamber of Commerce endorsed the movement for its commercial importance as well as its artistic value.⁴ The varied advantages of a Festival were pointed out to property-holders and hotel and transportation interests.⁵ Local newspapers, service clubs, civic organizations throughout the county, all added their efforts to those of the small group with which the movement began.⁶

The scene of the first Festival was the horse-show ring of the Dan Hanna Farm at Interlaken in Stockbridge.⁷

1. The Berkshire Eagle, June 30, 1934.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid., August 10, 1934.

4. Minutes of fall meeting, September 21, 1934, of the Pittsfield Chamber of Commerce.

5. Minutes of meeting, September 25, 1934, of the Berkshire Hills Conference.

6. At its annual meeting, December 6, 1934, the Berkshire Museum supported the enterprise and promised to inaugurate bus tours throughout Berkshire County to visit scenic spots.

7. Mrs. Dan Hanna donated the grounds of her estate for use during the Concerts.

Mr. Henry Hadley had assembled and trained an orchestra of sixty-five players from the New York Philharmonic Symphony Society.¹ Residents of Stockbridge, Lenox and Lee provided funds for building the stage and benches. Under local planning and execution a plywood shell was erected, with excellent acoustic results.² The benches and boxes provided seats for two thousand and the total attendance of the three concerts was about five thousand.³ The opening night was August 23, 1934.⁴ The moon was hanging low over the dark shadow of the hills. The branches of the trees stirred gently in the soft, mellow light. Before a good-sized and eager audience Dr. Hadley lifted his baton to conduct the first concert of the Berkshire Symphonic Festival. The audience was wildly enthusiastic, so steps were taken immediately to put the enterprise on a permanent basis.⁵

In the autumn of 1934 the Berkshire Symphonic Festival, Inc., was created, a Massachusetts corporation for purposes defined in its by-laws:

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1. The Berkshire Eagle, August 15, 1934.
 2. Ibid.
 3. The New York Times, August 21, 1934.
 4. The Berkshire Eagle, August 23, 1934.
 5. The New York Times, August 24, 1934.

to encourage education in the arts, to organize, conduct and support an annual musical festival, to provide opportunities for developing musical and artistic talents, to engage in any other activities that will legitimately aid and foster art. There is no capital stock, and the corporation is not conducted for the purpose of profit but to contribute to the development of art and music in the Berkshires. 1

The story of those creative years is a story of vision and hard work, of challenge and response, of personalities and communities. In 1935 the Festival was held again at the Hanna Farm. Dr. Hadley drew on orchestras other than the Philharmonic raising the number of his players from sixty-five to eighty-five.² The audiences at the three concerts grew from the five thousand of the first year to eight thousand.³ A local chorus of three hundred voices appeared for the first time, and also, by way of insurance against rain, a tent with a seating capacity of three thousand was erected.⁴ All agreed that the tent was a comforting refuge on rainy evenings, and the gates closed that season on a Festival that was an established success.⁵ Moreover, the audience that came for the Festival had time

1. From the original private papers of Mr. Henry Hadley and Miss Gertrude Smith in the Stockbridge Library.

2. From the original papers of the Berkshire Symphonic Festival in the Stockbridge Library.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.

5. The New York Times, August 14, 1935.

for other things as well. The Berkshire Playhouse presented "Déclassée," starring Ethel Barrymore, and played to a crowded house all through Festival week.¹ The Garden Center held teas and put on special exhibits.² The Berkshire Museum arranged special guided bus tours through scenic spots in the county.³ The Berkshires, with the advent of the Music Festival was assuming to a greater, increasing degree a resort function.

Dr. Hadley became ill and the little Berkshire organization was at a loss to find someone to replace him, someone with the same zest, interest and outlook. The committee believed in aiming high and invited Dr. Koussevitzky⁴ of the Boston Symphony Orchestra to conduct. The invitation had an unforeseen effect on Dr. Koussevitzky. He had never found complete fulfillment of his musical ideals in conducting merely for select and socially stratified audiences, and the idea of the Berkshire Symphonic Festival filled him with enthusiasm.⁵ Certain aspects of it were similar to something he had once experienced in Russia before the outbreak

1. The Berkshire Eagle, July 5, 1935.

2. Ibid., July 10, 1935.

3. Ibid.

4. Letter of invitation written to Dr. Koussevitzky by Miss Gertrude Smith, in Stockbridge Library.

5. Answer to Miss Gertrude Smith, in Stockbridge Library.

of the Revolution.¹ This new adventure brought back the memory of the concert tours that he had given there during the early years, when he traveled with his orchestra by boat, a kind of showboat along the Volga River from which he gave performances in opportune places, at nominal prices,² for the populace. The general democratic presentation of music appealed to him vitally, and he saw the crystallization of a long-cherished ambition, a great center of music in America.³

Dr. Koussevitzky's soaring imagination, combined with Miss Gertrude Smith's great executive ability raced ahead with more ambitious formulas. The concerts of the Berkshire Symphonic Festival for 1936 were held at Holmwood,⁴ the Lenox estate of Mrs. Margaret Emerson. There was a larger tent seating five thousand. The State Police handled the traffic and there was parking space for three thousand cars.⁵ Olin Downes, music critic of the New York Times, gave lectures on the musical programs at the Berkshire Playhouse prior to the concerts.⁶

1. Ibid.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

4. Mrs. Margaret Emerson donated her estate for use of the 1936 concert series as a larger place was needed.

5. State Police in letter to Miss Gertrude Smith responded to her plea for police aid -- letter in Stockbridge Library.

6. The New York Times, June 8, 1936.

The great Boston Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Dr. Koussevitzky, proved a potent drawing card, and the total attendance at the three concerts rose to nearly ¹ fifteen thousand.

The tent, a magnificent affair, a golden globe of orange color from the light of the sun, stencilled with the shadows of moving tree branches, had poles painted a vivid, rich blue. ² Its scalloped, overhanging border of bright red gave a gala mood to the afternoon concerts, and its enveloping frame gave security, space, and comfort to the evening ones. There was every indication that the noble art of symphonic music, the form of music for which America had provided in the twentieth century, the most congenial climate and fertile soil, stood ready to offer a fresh enrichment to the artistic life of the nation. ³

Plans were made to expand a schedule of six concerts in two weeks. ⁴ Dr. Koussevitzky, however, had felt from the beginning the importance of a special structure, a permanent shelter of some kind, to protect his orchestra, to assure proper acoustics, and to shelter his audience more adequately. ⁵ Just at this moment a wonderful offer

1. The Berkshire Eagle, August 6, 1936.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

4. In the private papers of the Berkshire Symphonic Festival in Stockbridge Library.

5. Ibid.

was made. Mrs. Gorham Brooks, and her aunt Miss Mary Aspinwall Tappan, presented Tanglewood to the Boston Symphony Orchestra.¹ It is an estate of more than two hundred acres, overlooking and bordering on Lake Mahkeenac,² or, the Stockbridge Bowl. Its name came from the imagination of Nathaniel Hawthorne who lived for a year and a half in a little red cottage on the premise.³ It was here Hawthorne told his children stories that were later to appear as Tanglewood Tales.⁴ The name, coined from the little dell where he had spent happy hours with his family, was adopted in naming their entire domain.

Tanglewood was an ideal spot for the Music Festival, and all its space was a challenge to Dr. Koussevitzky's bold schemes. The Festival, now that it had a permanent home, must more than ever have a permanent building.⁵ There should be a building of some kind that would retain the feeling of the out-of-doors and still offer protection to the orchestra and the public. Plans were discussed.⁶ Dr. Koussevitzky ardently put forth his dream of an auditorium. The trustees

1. Ibid.

2. The Berkshire Eagle, September 30, 1936.

3. Ibid.

4. Mentioned in previous chapter.

5. Letter of Dr. Koussevitzky to the Berkshire Eagle, October 1, 1936.

6. Talk given by Dr. Koussevitzky at a Board of Trustees meeting, October 7, 1936, at the home of Miss Gertrude Smith.

attacked the problem, and a campaign was started to raise funds.¹ But it met with only lukewarm interest from the public.² Now that the audience had a tent to keep its feet dry it was content. Why go to the expense of a building? Why enlarge further?

As it seemed impossible to raise the necessary funds in time to erect a building for the summer of 1937, Dr. Koussevitzky agreed to conduct his orchestra in a tent for one more summer.³ The summer came, and again the beautiful pumpkin-colored tent was set up, this time at Tanglewood. The gardens and the lawns were put in first-class order, the water was turned on in the fountains, the hedges were clipped.⁴ Western Union installed a branch office at Tanglewood to handle the flow of newspaper copy, for more than fifty newspapers and magazines were sending representatives.⁵ A business office with an information booth was set up in Stockbridge. With the aid of the Berkshire Hills Conference, lists of rooms available to guests in neighboring towns, inns and in private homes were given out.⁶ Everything was in readiness for the Berkshire Festival,

1. The Berkshire Eagle, November 5, 1936.

2. Ibid., December 2, 1936.

3; In letter to Miss Gertrude Smith, President of the Board of Trustees, Dr. Koussevitzky voiced his dissatisfaction. Letter in Stockbridge Library.

4. The Berkshire Eagle, June 3, 1937.

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid.

the first ever to take place at Tanglewood. There were to be two weeks of music this year, and Berkshire was agog with its own importance.

The first week was triumphant. Everything went smoothly and according to schedule.¹ The first Thursday evening concert was all Bethoven. Crowds turned out in torrents, and absorbed the music eagerly.²

The following Thursday evening, the first evening of the second week, Dr. Koussevitzky had planned an all-Wagner program.³ It was to be broadcast from coast to coast, and it was the climax of the entire Festival. The evening came, the crowds gathered, and with them came some drops of rain and an ominous looking sky. Everyone went lightheartedly into the tent. The audience was seated. The "Overture to Rienzi," was successfully completed, and the "Prelude" and "Love-Death" from Tristan and Isolde, concluded.⁴ But by this time the rain was streaming down through the painted blue poles of the tent. As the lights were turned down for the "Prelude," the lightning flashed and made the inside of the tent as bright as a summer day.⁵

1. The New York Times, August 5, 1937.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid., August 8, 1937.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid.

Thunder was rolling over the heavens and bounding back and forth from the buttresses of the hills. The tightly-stretched canvas assumed the qualities of a drum; it became a sounding board for the downpour.¹ The wind was whipping the sides of the tent, and the side curtains flapped perilously. The temper of the audience ran the gamut, from worry to a very concrete apprehension.² The orchestra played bravely, but the audience heard nothing. No sound but that of the storm could be heard over the tumult. When the storm abated the thousands of people made their way out into the night and picked their steps over the soaked earth with its carpet of leaves and fallen branches.³

Dr. Koussevitzky had had enough! The effect on him, on his musicians, and on their instruments can only be imagined. At last he was vindicated. His pleas for an auditorium could no longer be passed over. Fortune had favored him by sending the storm. It did more than years of persuasive argument to crystallize the sentiment of public opinion in favor of a shelter. Miss Gertrude Robinson Smith seized the opportunity and made the most of it.⁴ At last

1. Details of storm told to writer by Miss Gertrude Smith.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

4. The Berkshire Eagle, August 10, 1937.

the audience was alive to the need of a building and twenty thousand dollars was raised that very night.¹ Thus did that August evening become famous as the "night of the hundred-thousand dollar storm."² Machinery was set in motion around the County to raise immediately the money and in a short time some eighty thousand dollars were in hand.³

By this time the Festival had assumed an importance which justified Miss Smith in making the following declaration:

We are building at Tanglewood a Festival that is national in scope, and we hope that it will become international in influence and attractiveness. The Festival has its base in the Berkshires, but it is already clear that persons from every part of the United States and Canada are making these concerts the hub of their summer plans. It is also clear that we have brought the great masterpieces of music performed by one of America's outstanding orchestras and conductors, to a new audience in this part of the country. We are not interested in developing a Festival that will be confined to the fortunate few who have music available in the winter in New York, Boston, and other major centers. We wish to bring the unifying and healing powers of music to those who cannot hear it otherwise. ⁴

1. In interview with Miss Smith, she stated friends stopped after the concert at her home to leave donations for an auditorium.

2. So headlined by New York Times, August 15, 1937.

3. This was raised through the United Berkshire County Festival fund, all Berkshire County participating.

4. Minutes of meeting of Board of Trustees, October 17, 1937, in Stockbridge Library.

Mr. Joseph Franz, architect, designed the structure.¹
Work was started in zero weather on January 1, 1938.² In
March the steel was delivered by the Bethlehem Steel Corpora-
tion,³ and in April the massive framework was completed.⁴
The building itself preserved the unhampered feeling of the
tent and gave the illusion of being out-of-doors, for it
was open on three sides and the multitudes could gaze out
between the steel pillars that support the roof upon the
tapestry of rolling hills.⁵

Thus, here was the Festival in its fifth year, with
its six concerts instead of the earlier three, with its
audiences reaching a total of thirty-eight thousand, drawn
from many states, from all over the county, and from foreign
lands, with representatives of scores of newspapers and
magazines in attendance, with a Western Union Tanglewood
telegraph office on the grounds to handle their copy, and
with a national broadcasting hookup.⁶

This handsome new Pavilion of Music, now labeled
with sober New England understatement the "Music Shed."

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1. The Berkshire Eagle, November 3, 1937.
 2. Ibid., January 1, 1938.
 3. Ibid., March 10, 1938.
 4. Ibid., April 14, 1938.
 5. Ibid.
 6. The New York Times, August 4, 1938.

was dedicated on the evening of August 4, 1938,¹ with Miss Robinson Smith sketching briefly the history of the Festival and Mr. Bentley Warren projecting into the future what it could and should become. Their spoken words were followed by the program of Bach chorals and the glory of Bethoven's Ninth Symphony.² Tanglewood had at last come into its own.

One of the outstanding things about the Berkshire Symphonic Festival which should be brought out in this study was its neighborhood aspect. This project which has reached nation-wide scope was and still remains, a democratic affair in Berkshire County since almost everyone took an active part and interest in it. Every town and village in the hills and the valleys had a part in creating this masterpiece. One hundred men of the American Legion, all volunteers, took charge of parking,³ and fifteen State Police on motorcycles handled traffic at all the approaches to Tanglewood. A tremendous space within the grounds had been filled in and leveled off for parking. One of the first evenings there were fifty-five hundred⁴ cars, coming from almost every state in the Union.

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1. The Berkshire Eagle, August 5, 1938.
 2. The New York Times, August 5, 1938.
 3. The American Legion groups of each of the thirty towns and two cities of the County is represented yearly.
 4. The New York Times, August 7, 1938.

One hundred ushers, all local young men, and all on a volunteer basis, gave out programs. Refreshments were served by the Thursday Morning Club of Great Barrington. It was all done with the greatest enthusiasm. This was a Berkshire project, and all Berkshire County was eager to assist in any way possible.

But the restless spirit of the Maestro was never satisfied. Six concerts were not enough. He must have nine.¹ Berkshire, he claimed, must not be content with a series of local concerts; they must initiate a great music center where young musicians and composers would be encouraged to produce.² The Festival should be preceded by a school or academy holding annual sessions prior to the polished perfection of the concerts themselves.³ It should be possible to develop orchestral conductors as accomplished as any that Europe can provide.⁴ Berkshire County must produce at Tanglewood music that people cannot hear anywhere else in the world.⁵ With the theory that "music is a powerful force in creating a common bond of understanding," Tanglewood would have to contribute to the needs of the

1. Letter of Dr. Koussevitzky to Board of Trustees, October 3, 1938.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid.

times by providing leadership in the musical arts.¹ Such leadership should be significant of a way of life in a world where cultural values have been overturned by the brutalizing forces of war. Such were the ideas of Dr. Koussevitzky which he gave to the residents of Berkshire County.

And so, in the summer of 1940,² The Berkshire Music Center came into being at Tanglewood. It is a project of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, but Berkshirites all gave it enthusiastic support and interest. It is exclusively the brain-child of Dr. Koussevitzky who had been planning for many years such a project. And it took all the Master's qualities of persuasiveness and guile to achieve it. The erection of new buildings was made possible by a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation,³ but there are never enough buildings for all the activity that is taking place.

A Theater-Concert Hall, designed by Eliel Saarinen,⁴ and seating twelve-hundred people was built in 1941. In this same year was built a smaller Chamber Music Hall, made possible by contributions from Mrs. George Bok and others in the County.⁵ The large house on the estate is used for

1. Ibid.

2. Organized June 18, 1940 at a Trustee meeting held at Tanglewood.

3. The New York Times, June 1, 1940.

4. The Berkshire Eagle, May 22, 1941.

5. Ibid., July 18, 1941.

studios, administrative offices, library, and so forth, and the two hundred acres of lawns and fields and woods provide space for anything that may be needed in the way of future buildings.

At the Music Center's first season there were over three hundred picked students, most of them highly skilled professionals, selected personally through auditions in various cities by Dr. Koussevitzky and his staff.¹ A majority of them were Americans, but many were from Canada and Latin America.²

Dr. Koussevitzky's idea was that the Center should offer a practical method of giving students a summer season of working and living in music, so that they might draw from the members of the Boston Symphony Orchestra some of the essence of the knowledge and experience that had been acquired by the Orchestra in its years of working together.³ The emphasis at the Berkshire Music Center was to be upon the collective aspects of music performance. The hundreds of students would then scatter to the four winds, taking with them something of the spirit and enthusiasm with which they had become imbued at Tanglewood.

1. Ibid., August 4, 1941.

2. Ibid.

3. Essence of talk given at Berkshire Museum, October 9, 1941.

In 1942 war conditions necessitated the abandonment of the Berkshire Symphonic Festival, but to preserve youthful musical talent Dr. Koussevitzky carried on with the Berkshire Music Center,¹ and conducted in the Shed² the student orchestra in a series of concerts. Then came the nonessential-driving ban, but chamber-music concerts were organized, devoted to the compositions of Mozart and Bach and scaled to the small audience that lived near enough to enjoy them.³ Thus the war years were not lost, and there was always sufficient activity at Tanglewood to keep up the interest. Everything was resumed again for the first post war season of 1946, and nine great Festival concerts were planned.⁴ The chamber-music concerts would also be continued and also a new addition -- the presentation of opera.⁵

The Music Center became even more important and successful in this post-war period. To take care of the students, one of the fading Lenox estates was acquired for use as dormitories, with double-decker bunks built into its great rooms, while at Tanglewood, lunch was served al fresco to the five hundred students and the sixty members of the faculty from a cafeteria bus.⁶

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1. The Berkshire Eagle, May 4, 1942.
 2. Ibid.
 3. Ibid.
 4. The New York Times, May 5, 1946.
 5. Ibid.
 6. The Berkshire Eagle, June 6, 1946.

This Berkshire County project has been an overwhelming success, and the whole area takes pride in the outstanding results shown down through the years. The Berkshire Symphonic Festival Concerts are now self supporting and have been so since their third year. The steadily increasing attendance has brought such an overflow audience that there is usually a gathering of some fifteen thousand people, and as many listeners seated outside on the grass as there ¹ are under the roof of the great Shed.

The growth of the Festival from local to national proportions was entirely acceptable to all residents of Berkshire County. There were many who profited by it. Rooms to accommodate the thousands entering the area became an enticing source of revenue, and shops of all kinds flourished exceedingly all summer. The crowds that have gathered at Tanglewood in recent years would in themselves ² make a profitable subject of social study. The audience, drawn from many strata of American life has been plainly an audience that comes together for music appreciation and enjoyment. Overflowing the capacity of the Shed, bearing campstools, rugs, and picnic lunches, the audience spreads itself over the lawns, and under the trees, wondering and marveling at the acoustics of the place spread so far afield.

1. Ibid., August 18, 1948.

2. The Pittsfield Chamber of Commerce holds some valuable papers recording the steady rise in volume of business during the Festival Season.

Automobiles and buses have brought this company from near and far. Youngsters from neighboring camps -- the woods are full of them -- troop in, wearing their camp colors. Altogether, the low income groups have been definitely in the majority.

All of Berkshire County works together to help make the Festival a success. For the past two years the United Nations delegates have been invited as guests of the Festival.¹ The Chamber of Commerce pays the expenses of hiring buses to transport them from New York to Pittsfield.² Various families in the County volunteer to take a family or person from the United Nations as their weekend guests.³ Special swimming parties for the United Nations children are planned. Pionics are held on the grounds of Tanglewood for the United Nations guests, and every effort is made to make these guests feel at home and give them a sample of simple, happy, American living under a democratic government. These many volunteers who do exacting, unpaid work have stood high among the evidences of a community spirit that may well serve for an example throughout the country.

The invasion of young talent, the pervading influence

1. This project was started by a Pittsfield resident, Mr. K.K. Paluev, a native of Russia and now an American citizen.

2. The Chamber of Commerce claims that during the United Nations Visitors Week business increases ten percent.

3. The writer housed a young school teacher from England in 1950. The purpose of housing them in private homes rather than in inns or hotels is to show these guests American homes and our way of life.

of established achievements, the accumulated enthusiasm of the eager crowds who come to learn and listen, brought a tremendous surge of vitality, a new life and elasticity to the entire neighborhood. The number of music teachers and music academies or schools increased, catering to the local residents as well as to the visiting guests; the Berkshire Athenaeum kept pace with the Tanglewood tempo by making available to the public record albums and books of the masters whose works were being played that season, and the Lenox Library and other public libraries together with bookstores and music stores did likewise and smiled pleasingly upon all visitors and their trade; the related art, dancing, a declining entity up to the time of Tanglewood, Jacob's Pillow and the resort economy, immediately took on new life and teachers of the aesthetic branches of choreography as well as of the popular types opened up schools to welcome the established residents as well as the seasonal visitors. Many of the teachers as well as of the pupils were outsiders. They had followed the resort trend into the green hills knowing full well that in such surroundings the new economy had to succeed.

It was now entirely evident as this study has pointed out, that Berkshire County was developing through the years a new industry -- that of the resort industry. It reached great proportions with the coming of the Berkshire Festival. The whole County now reaps great profits from it, and business

of all kinds increases tremendously with the advent of the summer guests.¹ The popularization of the region as a resort area has brought about a thoroughly successful resort economy which was never present before. A recent study has shown that more than half of the homes in the various towns of Berkshire hang out little signs and rent guest rooms for the summer season.² So flourishing is this trade that during the Festival weeks there is hardly a room available in the entire county. Every bed in every house is to be had only at a premium. The eating places carry on their business in shifts. Extra help is called in to take care of the overflowing crowds. To quote an example of this, the Rose Guest House and Restaurant in Stockbridge were unable for the past two years to take care of the standing lines of people, two weeks before the Festival opened.³ As a result picnic tables were placed outside on both the front and back lawns to accomodate them. High School girls and boys were hired as waiters and waitresses as all experienced help were working elsewhere.

However promising the summer business was, the winter trade was the exact opposite. The towns became deserted and

1. There are no actual figures of the increase in the volume of business, but at a meeting of the Chamber of Commerce August 10, 1951, businessmen stated an increase of ten to forty-five percent was reported.

2. Survey made by Berkshire Hills Conference.

3. Incident above described, told in detail by owner, Mr. Howard Rose.

revenue fell off. Berkshire County summers are short, and although many thousands drive through the Berkshires in late autumn to see the foliage of surpassing loveliness, the first frost arrives early. When the first cold air comes over the hills, the vacationers, the weekenders and the travelers, depart. The towns become deserted and the revenue falls off.

Two years after Tanglewood opened, business men complained to the Berkshire Hills Conference that Berkshire summers were too short to be profitable.¹ There should be some means of attracting visitors to Berkshire County in the wintertime.² The development of Berkshire into a winter sports resort area was the thing, and why not? In this way the County's resort economy would be stable the year round. The idea was taken up quickly. Mount Greylock was to be the first ski trail. The Pittsfield Y. M. C. A. had just acquired a young and highly trained physical director, Arthur E. Larkin, who had received portions of his education in Switzerland and was a great skier. Mr. Larkin recognized the possibilities of the Berkshire terrain and plans were made for the Mount Greylock Ski Club.³ As ski bindings, poles, shoes, and most items of equipment were virtually

1. Complaint issued at October 3, 1937 meeting of the Berkshire Hills Conference.

2. Ibid.

3. Meeting held at Y.M.C.A. auditorium, November 20, 1937.

unknown in Pittsfield stores, one of the first activities of the new organization was a display of modern equipment. The whole County was very enthusiastic. The New York papers had attractive ads placed in them by the Berkshire Hills Conference inviting city dwellers to Berkshire County for weekend Skiing on the first Berkshire Snow Train, February 10, 1937.¹ The Berkshires were ready, or at least thought they were, to welcome the first snow train from New York. But when seven hundred winter sports enthusiasts came to Pittsfield on February 10, none fully realized the significance of what this would mean to the Berkshires. The train was originally scheduled to unload at the special siding that is used by snow trains today, but a prominent hotel owner managed to persuade the railroad officials to have the train come to Union Station so that the skiers could see his hostelry from the buses taking them to the ski area.²

The police had expected a crowd at the ski slopes and had taken what they considered were necessary precautions. Hundreds more skiers came up from the city by private car. At that time the road leading to the mountain was scarcely wide enough for two cars to pass, so all but the buses were barred, and pedestrians had to walk a distance of at least

1. The Berkshire Hills Conference headed by Mr. Hadyn Mason worked for two months arousing interest of New Yorkers in Berkshire winter sports, through ads, radio commercials, fliers in buses, etc.

2. Mr. Napoleon Campbell. manager of Hotel Wendell, Pitts-

half a mile one way to get to the slopes, and by mid-afternoon there were seventeen hundred skiers. The snow train representative, conservatively estimating that there were at least thirty-five hundred spectators alone,¹ implored the chief to do something, but of course there was nothing he could do and he said so. With this initial step, skiing came of age, and the Snow Train henceforth became an accepted part of the Berkshire's winter resort program.

Skiing in the Berkshires has very definite advantages to offer. The Berkshires are accessible to more millions of people than any area in the world with equal facilities and weather conditions. Our winters are not as severe as those of northern New England and New York, but this fact, offers both advantages and equally obvious disadvantages. An average winter provides many weeks of skiing but weather conditions are often unsettled and unpredictable. However, ranches, hotels and inns have planned weekend programs of dinner parties and dancing and games when weather suddenly goes against the skiers.² Every effort is made for the comfort and entertainment of the winter sports enthusiast.

The skiing sport is now highly developed in Berkshire County. The areas on public lands include Greylock, maintained

1. The Berkshire Eagle, February 11, 1937.

2. The Berkshire Hills Conference plans a winter program of entertainment with various organizations.

by the County, and the Pittsfield Forest, Beartown in South Lee and East Mountain in Great Barrington, all State forests.¹ There are major private developments at Catamount, on the Egremont-Hillsdale, New York, lines and at Bousquet's on Yekun Seat in Pittsfield, with smaller ones at Otis Ridge in Otis, Jacob's Ladder and Oak'n Spruce in Lee, at Brodie Mountain in Lanesboro-New Ashford, Sheep Hill in Williams-town,² and the Notch Hill in North Adams. In addition, there are open slopes, trails and single ski tows at many other places, and there are miles of unplowed roads which are suitable for cross-country skiing.³

The slopes and trails are smooth and well-sheltered and attract experienced skiers even from snow regions to the north. Special attention is given to beginners, and tows and capable instructors are provided. Equipment may be rented at the various places, and Berkshire County sport stores record a thriving business. Restaurants also entered this new enterprise and canteen service is offered skiers. Press and radio give up-to-date snow condition reports in New York City papers and on broadcasts. Most of the locations are readily accessible to well-plowed highways and many to rail and bus lines.

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1. The Berkshire Eagle, December 4, 1950.
 2. Ibid.
 3. The Springfield Republican, January 3, 1950.

A few of the numerous ski developments will now be taken up to demonstrate the initiative and energy of the Berkshirites in establishing their region into a year round resort.

Greylock Mountain has now the famous Thunderbolt Trail which is built for Championship races.¹ The Beartown snow train development is on public land but has privately operated tows. Snow trains have a special siding at the foot of the mountain for the accommodation of skiers.² Attractive log cabins dot the landscape. There is a large, smooth, open slope, steep enough at the top to interest good skiers; two expert trails, each with an almost vertical descent of over six hundred feet, and a number of fine intermediate and novice trails are part of the available opportunities.³ The whole area is so well laid out that no gash in the mountainside is visible from the road below and the slopes and trails are well sheltered from both the sun and wind.⁴

At East Mountain State Forest in Great Barrington there are two open slopes and two trails having a near-vertical descent of 630 feet, all on public land.⁵ These

1. The Springfield Republican, January 3, 1950.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.

5. The Berkshire Eagle, January 19, 1949.

are served by tows operated by G-Bar-S Ranch, and they also run novice tows on their own open slope.¹ Although most skiers arrive by car or by bus, many are transported to the mountain free of charge from the New York, New Haven, and Hartford Railroad station in Great Barrington.²

Two and a half miles from the city hall in Pittsfield, and less than two miles from the special New Hampshire snow train siding, Bousquets is readily accessible.³ The development at this time claims the greatest tow capacity of any in America.⁴ It offers contrasts ranging from the steep, rough Bousquet run to gentle, open slopes and trails of golf-green smoothness. Crowds of twenty-five hundred skiers are not unusual on any good Sunday or holiday during the winter months.⁵ More than thirty developed ski areas are now scattered all over the County.⁶ Winter has become in Berkshire a thriving recreational season rivaling the popularity of Summer; snow has definitely taken its place as a Berkshire asset.

1. Ibid.

2. Ibid.

3. The Springfield Republican, February 23, 1951.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid.

6. Records of Berkshire Hills Conference.

Conclusion

The developments of a century and a half have changed Berkshire County from a frontier region into a network of well-established communities. Indian trails have given way to asphalt and concrete highways. But the years have not destroyed the beauty of the countryside, nor has the charm of the simple New England villages disappeared. The indestructible hills still dominate the landscape. If Hawthorne would be astonished to hear a symphony orchestra interrupting his afternoon walk, he could still take comfort in the music of brooks and song birds, as much a part of the Berkshire scene now as when the Tanglewood Tales were first written.

That the changes of one hundred and fifty years have been so limited is related importantly to the type of economy which has fixed itself upon the region. A bustling industrial section would have scant use for the charm of a village green. But an agricultural community would see little need to change it. And a population intent upon attracting visitors would have need to preserve both natural beauties and the pleasing remains of an earlier age.

Yet if Berkshire County has not followed the general trend of American culture into urbanization and industrialization, its evolution reflects in other and no less characteristic ways the shifting patterns of the country's social life. The irresistible compulsions towards cities seem always to have been accompanied by no less urgent human desires

to escape at least temporarily to more restful surroundings. Before the Civil War, the sensitive natures of men like Melville and Hawthorne found even the over-grown villages of Boston and New York occasionally oppressive. When they turned for relief to the majestic quiet of the Berkshires, they left an imprint on the region which has become deeper with the passing years.

In the decades after Appomattox, the beauty of many New England communities gave way to the grim utilitarianism of factories and workers' cottages. Forests disappeared and the landscape became scarred with excavations. Yet only a little further west, the Berkshires remained so immuned to this destruction as to attract the admiring attention of the new-found aristocracy of industrial wealth. Costly villas and huge estates appeared on the outskirts of tiny Berkshire towns. Replicas of French chateaux took their place alongside the white frame houses of an earlier era.

As the twentieth century began, summer vacations had become an essential part of urban living. When improved railroads and the mass production of automobiles sent middle-class America scurrying to country and seashore in search of a respite from the city's din, the Berkshires beckoned invitingly. Here was natural beauty enhanced by cultural traditions and artistic facilities. Here were the estates of the "Gilded Age," developed and maintained by individual

families, which could be adapted to popular recreation. Here was a native population untempted by industrial pursuits but willing to open its homes and to stock its stores for summer - then winter - visitors.

Each phase of its past seems to have prepared Berkshire County for its present function as a resort area. Indeed, its history can be measured by the steady increase in the number of its visitors. The mountains have stood unchanged. Meantime, an urbanized industrial society has arisen, producing not only improved means, but also mounting desires to enjoy the attractions of Berkshire County.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX A

Poem of Welcome

Come back to your Mother, ye children, for shame,
Who have wandered like truants, for riches or fame!
With a smile on her face and a sprig in her cap,
She calls you to feast from her bountiful lap.

Come out from your alleys, your courts and your lanes,
And breathe, like young eagles, the air of our plains;
Take a whiff from our fields, and your excellent wives
Will declare it's all nonsense insuring your lives.

Come you of the law, who can talk if you please
Till the man in the moon will allow it's a cheese,
And leave "the old lady, that never tells lies,"
To sleep with her hankerchief over her eyes.

Ye healers of men, for a moment decline
Your feats in the rhubarb and ipecac line;
While you shut up your turnpike, your neighbors can go
The old roundabout road to the regions below.

You clerk, on whose ears are a couple of pens,
And whose head is an ant-hill of units and tens;
Though Plato denies you, we welcome you still
As a featherless biped, in spite of your quill.

Poor drudge of the city, how happy he feels
With the burs on his legs and the grass at his heels;
No dodger behind, his bandanas to share,
No constable grumbling, "You mustn't walk there!"

In yonder green meadow, to memory dear,
He slaps a mosquito and brushes a tear;
The dew-drops hang round him on blossoms and shoots,
He breathes but one sigh for his youth and his boots.

There stands the old school-house, hard by the old church;
That tree at its side had the flavor of birch;
Oh sweet were the days of his juvenile tricks,
Though the prairie of youth had so many "big licks."

Poem of Welcome (cont'd)

By the side of yon river he weeps and he slumps,
His boots filled with water as if they were pumps;
Till, sated with rapture, he steals to his bed,
With a glow in his heart and a cold in his head.

'Tis past - he is dreaming - I see him again;
His ledger returns as by legerdemain;
His neck-cloth is damp, with an easterly flaw,
And he holds in his fingers an omnibus straw.

He dreams the shrill gust is a blossomy gale,
That the straw is a rose from his dear native vale;
And murmurs, unconscious of space and of time,
"A-1, Extra-super - Oh, Isn't it Prime!"

Oh, what are the prizes we perish to win,
To the first little "shiner" we caught with a pin!
No soil upon earth is as dear to our eyes
As the soil we first stirred in terrestrial pies!

Then come from all parties, and parts, to our feast,
Though not at the "Astor" we'll give you at least
A bite at an apple, a seat on the grass,
And the best of cold--water-- at nothing a glass.*

1. J. E. A. Smith, The Poet Among the Hills, p. 67.

APPENDIX B

The Vision of the Housatonic

Come, spread your wings as I spread mine
And leave the crowded hall,
For where the eyes of twilight shine
O'er evening's western wall.

These are the pleasant Berkshire Hills,
Each with its leafy crown;
Hark! from their sides a thousand rills
Come singing sweetly down.

A thousand rills; they leap and shine,
Strained through the mossy nooks,
Till, clasped in many a gathering twine,
They swell a hundred brooks.

A hundred brooks, and still they run
With ripple, shade and gleam,
Till clustering all their braids in one,
They flow a single stream.

A bracelet, spun from mountain mist,
A silvery sash unwound,
With ox-bow curve and sinuous twist,
It writhes to reach the "Sound".

This is my bark; a pigmy's ship;
Beneath a child it rolls:
Fear not; one body makes it dip,
But not a thousand souls.

Float we the grassy banks between;
Without an oar we glide;
The meadows, sheets of living green,
Unroll on either side.

Come, take the book we love so well,
And let us read and dream,
We see whate'er its pages tell
And sail an English stream.

Up to the clouds the lark has sprung,
Still trilling as he flies;
The linnet sings as there he sung;
The unseen cuckoo cries;

The Vision of the Housatonic (cont'd)

The daisies strew the banks along,
And yellow kingcups shine,
With cowslips and a primrose throng,
And humble celandine.

Ah, foolish dream! When Nature nursed
Her daughter in the West,
Europe had drained one fountain first;
She bared her other breast.

On the young planet's orient shore
Her morning hand she tried;
Then turned the broad medallion o'er
And stamped the sunset side.

Take what she gives; her pine's tall stem,
Her elm with drooping spray;
She wears her mountain diadem
Still in her own proud way.

Look on the forest's ancient kings,
The hemlock's towering pride;
Yon truck had twice a hundred rings
And fell before it died.

Nor think that Nature saves her bloom
And slights her new domain;
For us she wears her court costume;
Look on its courtly train!

The lily with the sprinkled dots,
Brands of the noontide beam;
The cardinal and the blood-red spots -
Its double in the stream,

As if some wounded eagle's breast
Slow throbbing o'er the plain,
Had left its airy path impressed
In drops of scarlet rain.

And hark! and hark! the woodland rings;
There thrilled the thrush's soul;
And look! and look! those lightning wings -
The fire-plumed oriole!

The Vision of the Housatonic (cont'd)

Above the hen-hawk swims and soops,
Flung from the bright blue sky;
Below, the robin hops, and whoops
His little Indian cry.

The beetle on the wave has brought
A pattern all his own,
Shaped like the razor-breasted yatch
To England not unknown.

Beauty runs virgin in the woods,
Robed in her rustic green,
And oft a longing thought intrudes
As if we nought have seen.

Her every fingers, every joint,
Ringed with some golden line;
Poet whom Nature did anoint!
Had our young home been thine.

Yet think not so; Old England's blood
Runs warm in English veins,
But wafted o'er the icy flood
Its better life remains;

Our children know each wild-wood smell,
The bayberry and the fern;
The man who does not know them well,
Is all too old to learn.

Be patient: Love has long been grown;
Ambition waxes strong;
And heaven is asking time alone
To mould a child of song.

When fate draws forth the mystic lot
The chosen bard that calls,
No eye will be upon the spot
Where the bright token falls.

Perchance the blue Atlantic's brink,
The broad Ohio's gleam,
Or where the panther stoops to drink
Of wild Missouri's stream;

The Vision of the Housatonic (cont'd)

Where winter clasps with glittering ice
Katahdin's silver chains,
Or Georgia's flowery paradise
Unfolds its blushing plains:

But know that none of ancient earth
Can bring the sacred fire:
He drinks the wave of Western birth
That rules the Western lyre! *

* Smith, The Poet Among the Hills, p. 101.

APPENDIX C

A Vision of Life

(Short talk given by Dr. Holmes before reading his poem, A Vision of Life).

If it were any other place than Pittsfield, and if the occasion were any other than this which has called us together, I should certainly be unwilling to present myself before this audience after the exercises to which we have just listened. But the place has so many claims upon me, connected as it is with my most cherished recollections and my brightest hopes, and the occasion is one so capable of unsealing the lips of the dumb and kindling light in the eyes of the blind that I cannot refuse to follow my impulse against my judgment. After the interesting address which you have heard, the full and most satisfactory report of the committee, and the eloquent remarks of our distinguished visitor, it would ill become me to occupy your time with any attempt at expatiation on those subjects which naturally present themselves, but which have already been so well treated and so vividly illustrated. Let me rather, instead of toiling through an unnecessary series of phrases and bowing myself out in a finished preoration, have recourse to an artifice under cover of which I have sometimes retreated from dangerous positions like that I now occupy.

You have heard some allusions made to the strains of a music-box, which if it is wound up, plays out its single tune, and then subsides into mute companionship. There is another kind of music which, as some think, is occasionally not disagreeable; and of which I mean to give you a most brief and compendious specimen. You must not think you are to have a symphony on the organ or a sonata from the piano; one little tinkling tune is all that will be played to you, and then the box will shut up, and you are to say no more about it.

I will read you a few lines from a scrap of paper which, as you see, I have kept artfully concealed about my person:

A Vision of Life

The well-known weakness of the rhyming race
Is to be ready in and out of place;
No bashful glow, no timid begging off,
No sudden hoarseness, no discordant cough
(Those coy excuses which your singers plead,
When faintly uttering: "No, I can't indeed")
Impedes your rhymester in his prompt career.
Give him but hint; and won't the muse appear?

So, without blushing, when they asked, I came --
I whom the plough-share, not the quill, should claim -
The rural nymphs that on my labors smile
May mend my fence, but cannot mend my style;
The winged horse disdains my steady team,
And teeming fancy must forget to dream.
I harrow fields and not the hearts of men;
Pigs, and not poems, claim my humble pen.

And thus to enter on so new a stage,
With the fair critics of this captious age
Might lead a sceptic to the rude surmise
That cits, turned rustics, are not otherwise;
Or the bright verdure of the pastoral scene
Had changed my hue, and made me very green.

A few brief words that, fading as they fall,
Like the green garlands of a festal hall,
May lend one glow, one breath of fragrance pour,
Ere swept ungathered from the silent floor.
Such is my offering for your festal day;
These sprigs of rhyme; this metrical bouquet.

O, my sweet sisters - let me steal the name
Nearest to love and most remote from blame -
How brief an hour of fellowship ensures
The heart's best homage at a shrine like yours.
As o'er your band our kindling glances fall,
It seems a life-time since I've known you all!
Yet in each face where youthful graces blend,
Our partial memory still revives a friend;
The forms once loved, the features adored,
In her new picture nature has restored.

A Vision of Life (cont'd)

Those golden ringlets, rippling as they flow,
We wreathed with blossoms many years ago.
Seasons have wasted; but, remembered yet,
There gleams the lily through those braids of jet.
Cheeks that have faded worn by slow decay
Have caught new blushes from the morning's ray.
That simple ribbon, crossed upon the breast,
Wakes a poor heart that sobbed itself to rest;
Aye, thus she wore it; tell me not she died,
With that fair phantom floating by my side,
'Tis as of old: why ask the vision's name?
All, to the white robe's folding is the same;
And there, unconscious of a hundred snows,
On that white bosom burns the self-same rose.

Oh, dear illusion, now thy magic power
Works with two charms--a maiden and a flower!
Then blame me not if, lost in memory's dream,
I cheat your hopes of some expansive theme.

When the pale star-light fills the evening dim,
A misty mantle folds our river's brim.
In those white wreaths, how oft the wanderer sees
Half real shapes, the playthings of the breeze.
While every image in the darkening tide
Fades from its breast, unformed and undescribed.
Thus, while I stand among your starry train,
My gathering fancies turn to mist again.
O'er time's dark wave aerial shadows play,
But all the living landscape melts away. *

* Smith, The Poet Among the Hills, p. 111.

APPENDIX D

The Ploughman

Clear the brown path to meet his coulter's gleam!
Lo! on he comes behind his smoking team,
With toil's bright dew-drops on his sunburnt brow,
The lord of earth, the hero of the plough!
First in the field before the reddening sun,
Last in the shadows when the day is done,
Line after line, along the bursting sod,
Marks the broad acres where his feet have trod;
Still where he treads, the stubborn clods divide,
The smooth, fresh furrow opens deep and wide;
Matted and dense the tangled turf upheaves,
Mellow and dark the ridgy cornfield cleaves;
Up the steep hillside, where the laboring train
Slants the long track that scores the level plain;
Through the most valley, clogged with oozing clay,
The patient convoy breaks its destined way;
At every turn the loosening chains resound,
The swining ploughshare circles glistening round,
Till the wide field one billowy waste appears
And wearied hands unbind the planting steers.

These are the hands whose sturdy labor brings
The peasant's food, the golden pomp of kings;
This is the page whose letters shall be seen
Changed by the sun to words of living green;
This is the scholar, whose immortal pen
Spells the first lesson hunger taught to men;
These are the lines, of, Heaven-commanded toil,
That filled thy deed - thy charter of the soil!

O gracious Mother, whose benignant breast
Wakes us to life, and lulls us all to rest,
How sweet thy features, kind to every clime,
Mock with their smile the wrinkled front of time!
We stain thy flowers, - they blossom o'er the dead;
We rend thy bosom, and it gives us bread;
O'er the red field that trampling strife has torn,
Waves the green plumage of thy tasselled corn;
Our maddening conflicts scar thy fairest plain,
Still thy soft answer is the growing grain.

Yet, O our Mother, while uncounted charms
Round the fresh clasp of thine embracing arms,
Let not our virtues in thy love decay,
And thy fond sweetness waste our strength away.

The Ploughman (cont'd)

No! by these hills, whose banners now displayed
In blazing cohorts Autumn has arrayed:
By you twin crests, amid the sinking sphere,
Last to dissolve and first to reappear;
By these fair plains the mountain circle screens
And feeds in silence from its dark ravines,
True to their homes, these faithful arms shall toil
To crown with peace their own untainted soil;
And true to God, to freedom and mankind,
If her chained bandogs Faction shall unbind,
These stately forms, that bending even now,
Bowed their strong manhood to the humble plough,
Shall rise erect, the guardians of the land,
The same stern iron in the same right hand,
Till Graylock thunders to the setting sun,
"The sword has rescued what the ploughshare won." *

* Smith, The Poet Among the Hills, pp. 131-133.

APPENDIX E

Dedicatory Poem

Angel of Death! Extend thy silent reign!
Stretch thy dark sceptre o'er this new domain!
No sable car along the winding road
Has borne to earth its unresisting load;
No sudden mound has risen yet to show
Where the pale slumberer folds his arms below;
No marble gleams to bid his memory live
In the brief lines that hurrying Time can give;
Yet, O Destroyer! From thy shrouded throne
Look on our gift; this realm is all thine own!
Fair is the scene; its sweetness oft beguiled
From their dim paths the children of the wild;
The dark-haired maiden loved its grassy dells,
The feathered warrior claimed its wooded swells,
Still on its slopes the ploughman's ridges show
The pointed flints that left his fatal bow,
Chipped with rough art and slow barbarian toil, -
Last of his wrecks that strews the alien soil!
Here spread the fields that waved their ripened store
Till the brown arms of Labor held no more;
The scythe's broad meadow with its diskish blush;
The sickle's harvest with its velvet flush;
The green-haired maize, her silken tresses laid,
In soft luxuriance, on her harsh brocade;
The gourd that swells beneath her tossing plume;
The coarser wheat that rolls in lakes of bloom,-
Its coral stems and milk-white flowers alive
With the wide murmurs of the scattered hive;
Here glowed the apple with the pencilled streak
Of morning painted on its southern cheek;
The pear's long necklace strung with golden drops,
Arched, like the banian, o'er its pillared props;
Here crept the growths that paid the laborer's care
With the cheap luxuries wealth consents to spare;
Here sprang the healing herbs which could not save
The hand that reared them from the neighboring grave.

Yet all its varied charms, forever free
From task and tribute, Labor yields to thee;
No more when April sheds her fitful rain
The sower's hand shall cast its flying grain;
No more when Autumn strews the flaming leaves
The reaper's hand shall gird its yellow sheaves;

Dedicatory Poem (Cont'd)

For thee alike the circling seasons flow
Till the first blossoms heave the lates snow.
In the stiff clod below the whirling drifts,
In the loose soil the springing herbage lifts,
In the hot dust beneath the parching weeds
Life's wilting flower shall drop its shrivelled seeds;
Its germ entranced in thy unbreathing sleep
Till what thou sowest mightier angels reap!

Spirit of Beauty! Let thy graces blend
With loveliest Nature all that Art can lend.
Come from the bowers where Summer's life-blood flows
Through the red lips of June's half-open rose,
Dressed in bright hues, the loving sunshine's dower;
For tranquil Nature owns no mourning flower;
Come from the forest where the beech's screen
Bars the fierce noonbeam with its flakes of green;
Stay the rude axe that bares the shadowy plains,
Stanch the deep wound that dries the maple's veins.
Come with the stream whose silver-braided rills
Fling their unclasping bracelets from the hills,
Till in one gleam, beneath the forest's wings,
Melts the white glitter of a hundred springs.

Come from the steeps where look majestic forth
From their twin thrones the Giants of the North
On the huge shapes that crouching at their knees,
Stretch their broad shoulders, rough with shaggy trees.
Through the wide waste of ether, not in vain
Their softened gaze shall reach our distant plain;
There, while the mourner turns his aching eyes
On the blue mounds that print the bluer skies,
Nature shall whisper that the fading view
Of mightiest grief may wear a heavenly hue.

Cherub of Wisdom! Let thy marble page
Leave its sad lesson, new to every age;
Teach us to live, not grudging every breath
To the chill winds that waft us on to death.
But ruling calmly every pulse it warms
And tempering gently every word it forms.

Seraph of Love! In Heaven's adoring zone
Nearest of all around the central throne,
While with soft hands the pillowed turf we spread
That soon shall hold us in its dreamless bed,
With the low whisper - Who shall first be laid
In the dark chamber's yet unbroken shade? -

Dedicatory Poem (cont'd)

Let thy sweet radiance shine rekindled here,
And all er cherish grow more truly dear.
Here in the gates of Death's o'erhanging vault,
Oh, teach us kindness for our brother's fault;
Lay all our wrongs beneath this peaceful sod
And lead our hearts to Mercy and its God.

Father of all! In Death's relentless claim
We read thy mercy by its sterner nake;
In the bright flower that decks the solemn bier
We see thy glory in its narrowed sphere;
In the deep lessons that afflicting draws
We trace the curves of thy encircling laws;
In the long sigh that sets our spirits free
We own the love that calls us back to thee!

Through the hushed street, along the silent plain
The spectral future leads its mourning train,
Dark with the shadows of uncounted bands,
Where man's white lips and woman's wringing hands
Track the still burden, rolling slow before,
That love and kindness can protect no more;
The smiling babe that, called to mortal strife,
Shuts its meek eyes and drops its little life;
The drooping child that prays in vain to live,
And pleads for help its parent cannot give;
The pride of beauty stricken in its flower;
The strength of manhood broken in an hour;
Age in its weakness, bowed by toil and care,
Traced in sad lines beneath its silvered hair.
The sun shall set, and heaven's resplendent spheres
Gild the smooth turf unhallowed yet by tears,
But ah, how soon the evening stars will shed
Their sleepless light around the slumbering dead!

Take them, O Father, in immortal trust!
Ashes to ashes, dust to kindred dust,
Till the last angel rolls the stone away
And a new morning brings eternal day! *

* Original manuscript poem, in Lenox Library.

APPENDIX F

The New Eden

Scarce could the parting ocean close,
Seamed by the Mayflower's cleaving bow,
When o'er the rugged desert rose
The waves that tracked the Pilgrim's plough.

Then sprang from many a rock-strewn field
The rippling grass, the nodding grain,
Such growths as English meadows yield
To scanty sun and frequent rain.

But when the fiery days were done,
And Autumn brought his purple haze,
Then, kindling in the slanted sun,
The hill-sides gleamed with golden maize.

Nor treat his homely gift with scorn
Whose fading memory scarce can save
The hillocks where he sowed his corn,
The mounds that mark his nameless grave.

The food was scant, the fruits were few:
A red streak glistened here and there;
Perchance in statelier precincts grew
Some stern old Puritanic pear.

Austere in taste, and tough at core
Its unrelenting bulk was shed,
To ripen in the Pilgrim's store
When all the summer sweets were fled.

Such was his lot, to front the storm
With iron heart and marble brow,
Nor ripen till his earthly form
Was cast from Life's Autumnal bough.

But ever on the bleakest rock
We bid the brightest beacon glow
And still upon the thorniest stock
The sweetest roses love to blow.

So on our rude and wintry soil
We feed the kindling flame of art,
And steal the tropic's blushing spoil
To bloom on Nature's icy heart.

The New Eden (cont'd)

See how the softening Mother's breast
 Warms to her children's patient wiles, -
Her lips by loving Labor pressed
 Break in a thousand dimpling smiles.

From when the flushing bud of June
 Dawns with its first auroral hue,
Till shines the rounded harvest moon,
 And velvet dahlias drink the dew.

Nor these the only gifts she brings;
 Look where the laboring orchard groans,
And yields its beryl-threaded strings
 For chestnut burs and hemlock cones.

Dear though the shadowy maple be,
 And dearer still the whispering pine,
Dearest yon russet-laden tree
 Browned by the heavy rubbing kine!

There childhood flung its venturous stone,
 And boyhood tried its daring climb,
And though our summer birds have flown
 It blooms as in the olden time.

Nor be the Fleming's pride forgot,
 With swinging drops and drooping bells,
Freckled and splashed with streak and spot,
 On the warm-breasted sloping swells;

Nor Persia's painted garden-queen, -
 Frail Houri of the trellised wall, -
Her deep-cleft bosom scarfed with green, -
 Fairest to see, and first to fall.

When man provoked his mortal doom,
 And Eden trembled as he fell,
When blossoms sighed their last perfume,
 And branches waved their long farewell,

One sucker crept beneath the gate,
 One seed was wafted o'er the wall,
One bough sustained his trembling weight;
 These left the garden - these were all.

The New Eden (cont'd)

And far o'er many a distant zone
These wrecks of Eden still are flung;
The fruits that Paradise hath known
Are still in earthly gardens hung.

Yes, by our own unstoried stream
The pink-white apple-blossoms burst
That saw the young Euphrates gleam -
That Gihon's circling waters nursed.

For us the ambrosial pear displays
The wealth its arching branches hold,
Bathed by a hundred summery days
In floods of mingling fire and gold.

And here, where beauty's cheek of flame
With morning's earliest beam is fed,
The sunset-painted peach may claim
To rival its celestial red.

What though in some unmoistened vale
The summer leaf grow brown and sere,
Say, shall our star of promise fail
That circles half the rolling sphere,

From beaches slat with bitter spray
O'er prairies green with softest rain
And ridges bright with evening's ray
To rocks that shade the stormless main?

If by our slender-threaded streams
The blade and leaf and blossom die,
If drained by noon-tide's parching beams
The milky viens of Nature dry,

See with her swelling bosom bare
Yon wild-eyed Sister in the West,-
The ring of Empire round her hair,-
The Indian's wampum on her breast!

We saw the August sun descend
Day after day with blood-red stain
And the Blue mountains dimly blend
With smoke-wreaths from the burning plain;

The New Eden (cont'd)

Beneath the hot Sirocco's wings
We sat and told the withering hours,
Till Heaven unsealed its azure springs,
And bade them leap in flashing showers.

Yet in our Ishmael's thirst we knew
The mercy of the Sovereign hand
Would pour the fountain's quickening dew
To feed some harvest of the land.

No flaming swords of wrath surround
Our second Garden of the Blest;
It spreads beyond its rocky bound
It climbs Nevada's glittering crest.

God keep the tempter from its gate!
God shield the children, lest they fall
From their stern father's free estate,
Till Ocean is its only wall! *

* Original manuscript poem in Lenox Library.

APPENDIX G

The Old Clock on the Stairs

Somewhat back from the village street
Stands the old-fashioned country seat.
Across its antique portico
Tall poplar-trees their shadows throw;
And from its station in the hall
An ancient timepiece says to all, -
 "Forever - never!
 Never - forever!"

Half-way up the stairs it stands,
And points and beckons with its hands
From its case of massive oak,
Like a monk, who, under his cloak,
Crosses himself, and sighs, alas!
With sorrowful voice to all who pass, -
 "Forever - never!
 Never - forever!"

By day its voice is low and light;
But in the silent dead of night,
Distinct as a passing footstep's fall,
It echoes along the vacant hall,
Along the ceiling, along the floor,
And seems to say, at each chamber-door, -
 "Forever - never!
 Never - forever!"

Through days of sorrow and of mirth,
Through days of death and days of birth,
Through every swift vicissitude
Of changeful time, unchanged it has stood,
And as if, like God, it all things saw,
It calmly repeats those words of awe, -
 "Forever - never!
 Never - forever!"

In that mansion used to be
Free-hearted Hospitality;
His great fires up the chimney roared;
The stranger feasted at his board;
But, like the skeleton at the feast,
That warning timepiece never ceased, -
 "Forever - never!
 Never - forever!"

The Old Clock on the Stairs (Cont'd)

There groups of merry children played,
There youths and maidens dreaming strayed;
O precious hours! O golden prime,
And affluence of love and time!
Even as a miser counts his gold
Those hours the ancient timepiece told, -
 "Forever - never!
 Never - forever!"

From that chamber, clothed in white,
The bride came forth on her wedding night;
There, in that silent room below,
The dead lay in his shroud of snow;
And in the hush that followed the prayer,
Was heard the old clock on the stair, -
 "Forever - never!
 Never - forever!"

All are scattered now and fled,
Some are married, some are dead;
And when I ask, with throbs of pain,
"Ah! when shall they all meet again?"
As in the days long since gone by
The ancient timepiece makes reply, -
 "Forever - never!
 Never - forever!"

Never here, forever there,
Where all parting, pain, and care,
And death, and time shall disappear, -
Forever there, but never here!
The horologe of Eternity
Sayeth this incessantly, -
 "Forever - never!
 Never - forever!" *

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