

Chapter One

“At least for me a flirtation ...”

(Nan Moale Smith's Memoir)

Cadet Hospital

West Point – N.Y.

Nov. 21st 1872



Now My dear Miss Nannie

You must not be surprised at getting this letter because I could not really help writing it and then again, I know what a terrible disappointment it is to me not to have one of your letters to spend Sunday with so I wishing and hoping to do as I would be done by would not fail you in your accustomed Saturday billet. Yet when one epistle follows so quickly upon another I fear that it may prove flat and tiresome and am doubtful if it were not better judgment to leave you for some little time in undisturbed peace, but to repeat my former assertion I know how I would feel if you denied me a letter and therefore will stop all this useless preliminary chatter and hasten to an hour or two of cosy chat.

*And with what shall we begin, metaphysics, art, riding, driving, boating, hops, opera “prospects” or with the topic I would be certain to choose were I by your side – you! Yes that is it, it will give me more pleasure than any other and you are powerless to interrupt. So how have you been and what have you been doing since last we met *ma chere* (that doesn't sound quite so shocking in French but it is just as sincere.)*

Have you enjoyed yourself and what are your latest conquests? But the pleasantest thoughts of you are of those walks and talks at West Point and those drives in Green Spring Valley.

The slow strolling through the narrow windings of “Flirtation” now stopping to criticize a monument or a view now admiring a trophy or a relic. These are the pleasantest reminiscences of you because I shared your pleasure then. What times those were at the hotel Miss Nannie. A dance in the night parlor and then a stroll on the moonlit porch another whirl under the gas light and another promenade under the moon, very much like the moth that flutters now 'round the light and anon dashes off into the darkness until finally it falls a victim. The spooney corners of that old hotel have seen many a victim at the foot of his flame. What romances they could entertain us much if they could only talk, and what a pity they cannot talk is it not? No indeed! On reflection it is not, unless we could hear all about our neighbors and then stop their communications, but I daresay you feel little interested as yet.

Will you tell me which of your friends you would particularly like to have hop invitations? Any time in the next three months will do. I merely wished to speak of it while I thought of it. It would be very pleasant would it not? to have your friends here with you, you must try and persuade them to come and you cannot begin too early to do so. You know I want you to have as pleasant a time as possible next summer. There I've been dragged into a discussion about a war with Spain and the possibility of graduating us and sending us direct to Cuba and Mexico. Of course we all hope for it and so I was led away from you for a while and I can't help thinking how splendid it would be to go right into active service it makes me joyful to think of it, they have almost persuaded me that we may have such luck, but I am afraid not.ⁱⁱ Max'll have a chance too and if we don't find bullets for us we'll get decent shoulder straps to wear.ⁱⁱⁱ Hang peace for the army, it's only made for war. My fellow impatient patients have been entertaining themselves by recounting the deaths and suffering that each particular bed has witnessed, that is giving its history. This naturally led

to ghost stories and after some recitals that made your flesh creep they are proposing single expeditions to what we call the "Dead house" it is the room just above this ward and is where nearly every one is carried to die that has to pass that inevitable ordeal in this forlorn place. A man who sat by the side of a classmate while he died up there is now going up to resume his place by the bedside and try and call up his spirit to renew the acquaintance it is pitch dark of course or the "sperrret" wouldn't come. We've nothing else to do so of course we indulge in nonsense. I have just opened and read a letter from sister Hannah in which she says – "Do always give my love to Miss Nannie S. she is a dear, sweet, womanly girl, and I formed a warm affection for her." My! That's enough to make a body jealous. Well Miss Nannie you can be as certain as the sun shines that Sister means every word of it. She is to most people cold and silent and dignified and has too much character ever to "gush." Allow me to congratulate you on the impression you have made for she will battle for you now, if need be" against all the world: and it's good to have friends.

I study every night now so cannot write you a long letter until tomorrow I mean day after tomorrow which you will get, I hope, on Tuesday. I am about the same today (thank you) & am again allowed to sit up and talk to my own darling Miss Nannie who certainly is the dearest, sweetest most womanly little girl with the kindest heart imaginable except that she is so awfully "spoiled, self-willed, and affected."

I forgot till now to explain that having the only portfolio and writing materials in the hospital I supply the latter to everyone nurses included so that one kind of paper is used up and I am obliged to change to this but I suppose it makes very little difference to you what I write on so that you can read the writing.

I have been enjoying "Happy Thoughts" all day to-day and have nearly finished them, that is the book but the happy thoughts connected with it I hope never to finish O Miss Nannie why do we have to work for our bread and butter? Why can't we live on in careless happy ease taking no thought for the morrow? Why in heavens name is there such a thing as money or poverty? There! Mon amie is a set of prize conundrums, but I am sore afraid you cannot answer them for me my dear little wiseacre as no one yet has solved them. Oh! Dear. O! dear I can't write here with all this babel around me. I wish they would stop their yarns, but I fear they won't as a perfect old raconteur is now in possession of the floor or more properly of the beds.

I hope that somebody will send me another letter this week what will I do in this dreary place all Sunday without a letter to comfort me?

I must leave you now.

Good bye, good night and God bless you

Yours forever

C,E,S, Wood,"

A cold blustery wind blew off the Hudson River, swirling leaves and broken branches in its path. The cadet barracks were shuttered for an impending storm while the Academy classes maintained their usual schedule that Thursday afternoon. The sky was dark and bleak, and as nightfall approached the handful of cadets sequestered in the Academy hospital grew restless and lonely. It was an evening filled with shadows and gloom, lying underneath the hospital morgue, thinking of the men who had once breathed their last in these very beds. Hastening to chase away the spooks, Cadet Charles Erskine Scott Wood joined his ward mates with impromptu storytelling, looking for a measure of fun. He was hospitalized for a severe bruise received when he fell from a cavalry horse during drill practice. The recipient of his letter (and his desires) was

Nannie Moale Smith, a young, coquettish society figure of Washington, D.C. Miss Smith and Mr. Wood were a perfect challenge to one another as their later correspondence would reveal. Charming and attractive, once dubbed “the Devil’s hind leg” for her adventuresome attitudes,^{vii} Nannie was intrigued by the roguishly handsome, curly-headed Cadet Wood whose family conveniently lived at Rosewood Glen in the Green Spring Valley, not far from the home on the outskirts of Baltimore of Nan’s paternal grandparents, Dr. and Mrs. Nathan Ryno Smith who lived at Atamasco, Maryland.



Cadet Wood caught her attention the summer of 1871. It was his second summer at West Point having entered the Military Academy in July 1870 as a reluctant lower classman among forty-five appointees to the new Class of 1874.^{viii} Nannie sniffed to her cousin, Fannie Moale Gibbon^{ix} that Cadet Wood was “much too young” for her. She was a headstrong (but perhaps naïve) 16-year old who preferred mature officers of the army not lowly cadets flaunting polished gold buttons instead of medals on their grey jackets. But Fannie Gibbon had other ideas and she had met most of the cadets at the dances and hops that summer before her cousin from Washington City arrived. Wood was a good dancer and a charming host who helped organize many of the West Point hops that all the young ladies recently introduced to society loved to attend. Fannie and her younger sister Katie, as students at a Catholic girl’s academy in Philadelphia were accustomed to the stringent regimentation imposed by nuns in a dormitory life. It was such a pleasure for the girls to join their parents for “summering” at West Point while their father (Nannie’s uncle) Colonel John Gibbon was assigned to duties there and in Boston.

Miss Nannie Smith led quite a different lifestyle than her cloistered Gibbon cousins. The daughter of an acclaimed physician and scientist of infectious diseases Dr. Berwick Bruce Smith, Nannie lost her father in 1860 when he died of a virus contracted in his medical laboratory. Her mother, Ann Moale Smith remarried choosing her late husband’s cousin, Dr. Nathan Lincoln within a couple of years. Already a popular physician in Washington, DC, Lincoln relocated his family to an elaborate home at 1319 F Street, not far from the Capitol Building. Nannie called her stepfather “Cousin Nathan” and he adored his new little daughter, showering her with gifts and attention, helping her to attend Madame Burr’s school, the finest in the city for young ladies. Located within a few blocks of their home, the school accepted girls between the ages of six and sixteen. As one contemporary student recalled, “It was the best school I have ever known. The pupils were members of the best families in the city, and every attention was paid to their deportment as well as their studies. We studied everything in French as well as English, and were thoroughly drilled in reading, geography, spelling and arithmetic, in both languages, and though the pupils turned out might not have been as proficient as the ‘ologies’ as latter day school girls are, I do not believe better educated girls could be found than Mrs. Burr’s pupils. ...The honor system prevailed among the girls, and there were none of the mean, underhand tricks played by the scholars on each other that we hear of elsewhere.”^x

F Street in Washington was an avenue filled with Eastern-bred families of society. Elegant old homes lined the curbs hosting government secretaries, high ranking Union officers, foreign diplomats all interspersed with modest, tasteful shops. Before the Civil War many Southern sympathizers lived on F Street and a few of the neighbors suspected of aid and comfort to the Confederacy were kept under strict surveillance and a mounted guard patrolled the area. John Adams owned properties on F Street until his death and Senator Robert Toombs of Georgia with his many slave servants in the household lived next door to Nathan Lincoln's residence until Fort Sumter erupted. Toombs rented his house out as a stately boarding house and Union General Sickles, wounded at Gettysburg was nursed in the boarding house. It was a convenient arrangement for Dr. Lincoln with so many prominent patients boarded next door. Surrounded by his bodyguard, President Lincoln made frequent rides on horseback up F Street to dismount and visit the wounded General. Following the war, several Confederate generals, including Lee, Beauregard, Magruder, Longstreet, and Mosby were entertained there, and Mrs. Jefferson Davis spent several weeks with friends on F Street while her husband was imprisoned at Fort Monroe.^{xi}

Cousin Nathan directed a department at Columbia Medical College, located close by at the corner of 10th & E Streets, so his students and colleagues were frequent visitors in their comfortable home. Though young, Nan was a sociable hostess, and soon enjoyed the role of lady of the household. The doctor's practice first began in the 1850's among prominent people of Baltimore but by the beginning of the Civil War, Dr. Lincoln had a respectable practice among wealthy Washingtonians. He filled his time as a professor of chemistry and theory at Columbia University, and served as surgeon-in-chief of all the hospitals in Washington, D.C. throughout the Civil War. His experience led him to practice difficult surgeries but he abandoned most hospital affiliations for the demands of private practice and a new family when he married Nan's mother.

Other interesting people lived on or near F Street. The famous portrait artist Charles Bird King maintained a gallery in his studio that stood back from the street in a bower of trees across from the college. Mr. Metzenott, a music dealer, bought the artist's home, and Nannie and her friends flocked there to hear the latest musical scores.^{xii}

Following the war, the streets improved immensely, allowing ladies to cross without the help of a street sweeper who cleared a clean spot to rest the soles of their shoes, then another spot was swept, and so on until the other side of the street was reached. The hubbub, hustle and bustle of army wagons and ambulances once kept F and the surrounding streets running in liquid mud that often reached the hubs of wagon wheels.^{xiii} The war's end was welcome to fashionable society for numerous, practical reasons.

Money was plentiful, even during the war, but especially afterward. An orphanage founded by the neighborhood Catholic priest was heavily endowed, as was a nearby school for the deaf and mute. G Street hosted several small shops of booksellers, lady's notions, Mr. Small's Florist Shop and even a popular pet shop that featured a noisy macaw.

Nannie's mother Ann passed away after a lingering illness in 1868, and while the Smiths and the Moales rallied around after Ann's death, aunts and uncles, and

grandparents, too, all suggesting that Nannie might come to live with them, Dr. Lincoln decided to tackle the task of raising the orphaned thirteen-year old himself.

The nation's capital had become Nannie's home, where she enjoyed many friends at her school only a couple of blocks away and the Roman Catholic Church she had attended with her mother was an easy walk from their house. Gonzaga College adjoined Old St. Patrick's which stood midway of the square bounded by F and G, Ninth and Tenth Streets. The buildings teetered on an embankment high above the street, and parishioners ascended a steep flight of steps to reach the church door. The Moale families were conscientious Catholics, attending Mass regularly and the Confessional.

Lincoln's prominence as a doctor in the busy capital kept him away from the house many hours a day but he had servants to manage the housekeeping and to watch over Nannie. There was Clara, an elderly African American woman who had cared for the child since her birth. Nannie and Clara often disagreed on the proper etiquette for young ladies, but she was a faithful and endearing substitute mother to Nannie for many years.

One might think Nannie's life was sheltered but as a debutante, the early 1870's in Washington, D.C. were a continuous round of balls and germans – early evening dances in more casual attire than the formal balls -- for the social elite. Elected politicians and their families were mostly shunned by the community Nannie and her stepfather knew, but foreign diplomats and high-ranking officers who served in the Union Army were fair game. U.S. Grant was elected to his second term as President in 1872, and many of his Cabinet members were former naval or army officers with whom he once served. He was particularly fond of appointing fellow West Point grads because he was confident in their loyalty to duty and intimately familiar with their training.

Reconstruction of the defeated South, industrialization of the North and settlement of the West were in full swing. President Grant's children were close in age to Nannie and Nellie Grant attended her same school. The wealth of the nation flocked to Washington, D.C. for appointments and favors. It was an era in which to "be noticed" and Nannie Moale Smith was a young woman who enjoyed the delightful swirl of popularity showered upon her and her sociable friends. The mothers of her girl friends, many of them widowed by the Civil War and left with immense wealth, were strong influences on the impressionable Nannie. They hosted galas and fundraising events (a holdover from the activities during the war) to ensure that their children mingled with the finest society – a circle of people only they acknowledged and selected. These well-to-do widows enjoyed nearly a decade of power in Washington and Baltimore, marrying their daughters to prominent and successful men and turning the reins of finance over to their sons who received the finest educations to be had.

Nannie Smith particularly like private theatricals and the popular fundraising productions gave her an immediate (and socially acceptable) opportunity to develop her acting talents and elocution. She played the piano well and early on she learned to sew, alter, and tailor her costumes for her delicate little frame. Her seamstress talents would serve her well in the future when designer tastes did not always match her pocketbook. Even street dresses, usually made of lightweight woolens or fine summer cottons demanded yards and yards of fabric. The remnants of strife and frugality in war taught many families to do with less, and Nannie's parents, aunts and uncles were no exception. Men in the military managed social customs easily in the full dress uniform,

but the ladies needed a greater variety and should not be seen twice in the same ball gown. Nips, tucks, and bouquets helped alter the gowns for more frequent wear, as did travelling to different cities for galas where few people would remember what you may have worn once before.

Nannie was quick, intelligent and adaptable. Her charm opened doors and was especially appealing to the gentlemen in any room. She was encouraged and applauded by her audiences and pampered by a lonely widowed stepfather. She enjoyed reading uncomplicated stories like *Happy Thoughts* written in London in 1868 by Frances Cowley Burnand, a burlesque playwright.^{xiv} Nan sent a copy of the book to the unfortunate convalescent Cadet Wood to cheer him in late 1872.

Her stepfather had more refined and literary tastes than little Nannie. Dr. Lincoln was a graduate of Dartmouth College (1850) with a Master of Arts degree, and soon after he received a Doctor of Laws. Lincoln studied medicine under his esteemed grandfather (and Nannie's) Dr. Nathan R. Smith, and received his Doctor of Medicine from the University of Maryland in 1852, while still in his early twenties. Lincoln's library was lined with books of great writers – Shakespeare, Goethe, and Voltaire – but Nannie never spared the time to crack their covers or read the many pages of poetry or prose.

Between doctors on the paternal side and army officers in her mother's family, Nan Smith enjoyed a broad exposure to American culture. Uncle John Gibbon held a distinguished military record and continued to travel throughout the continent with his family in tow. Her mother's brother Edward Moale was aide-de-camp to General John G. Foster, her mother's brother-in-law. Nannie's Aunt Mary passed away in 1870 and Uncle Foster was invited to live in the Lincoln household while on assignment in Washington D.C.^{xv} She and her uncle grew close, as the older gentleman regaled her with stories of his youth at West Point and his glorious days in the War with Mexico. Foster and Grant graduated together from the Military Academy in 1846; Foster was fourth in his class; Grant was twenty-first in a class of thirty-nine cadets. Annual reunions at the Academy were a given so Nannie had a standing invitation each summer for a visit to the fashionable Cozzen's Hotel at the center of the Highlands on the Hudson River.

Cozzen's was the grand establishment that hosted a retinue of former West Point graduates and while Grant was President, a flashy crowd of New Yorkers began to summer there, too. Businessmen escorted their families to the Cozzen's Hotel in early July – usually arriving in time for the bang and roar escapades presented by cadets for the Fourth of July and, leaving their wives and children through the week, the men commuted between city and resort for the weekends and summer holidays. At \$4.50 per day, Cozzen's was an expensive retreat, but cadets from the academy were always welcome in the evenings to escort the blushing maidens to hops and Germans and squire them about on "Flirtation Walk."^{xvi}

Situated on the bluff on the west bank of the Hudson, about one and a half miles below the Military Academy, the old hotel was tradition itself. President Grant, General Robert E. Lee, Generals Phil Sheridan, William T. Sherman, Phil Kearny, George C. Meade, Pierre Beauregard, and many others danced in its halls and promenaded on its broad piazzas when they wore cadet grey in common. The main building was a spacious three hundred fifty feet long by fifty feet wide, with a long side wing seventy-

five feet long and forty feet wide. The grounds encompassed forty acres with four cottages attached. ^{xvii}

Nannie met Cadet Wood the summer of 1871. Tucked safely into the opening pages of her girlhood scrapbook was the formal invitation from the Corps of Cadets requesting the pleasure of the invitee's company "every Monday Wednesday and Friday evening during the encampment." The list of hop "Managers" included C.E. Scott Wood, dated 21st June 1871. West Point operated then (as now) on tradition and regimentation



and cadet entertainment was no exception to the regulations. The hops were held in the "Old Gymnasium" – a building dating to earlier West Point classes of the 1830's and 1840's. Young ladies, known also as "femmes" to the cadets, either walked with escorts or were delivered by family carriage to its doors. Cadets and their O.A.O. ("One and Only") passed through the receiving line which included the Cadet Hop Manager (Cadet Wood in 1871-74), at least one officer and his wife, or sometimes more. The escort gave the young lady's name to the Cadet Manager, who in turn introduced her to the officer. The officer presented "Miss Smith" to his wife. Hands were shaken all around with smiles, showing a courtesy to their elders and respect for higher rank. West Point belonged to the Old

School, and even at hops and dances, a dignified, old-fashioned formality prevailed.

The femmes were closely observed by the Superintendent, the tactical officers at West Point, and most decidedly by their wives. Cadets were to have proper feminine

associates because fiancées would soon become Army officers' wives. The wife's role carried a certain responsibility, and she was above all to be socially acceptable. This was why many wives of officers who were not West Point graduates led a more challenging role adapting to the social reign in forts around the country. They had not been carefully screened at the Academy and were often placed a notch below the other wives for that reason. The officer's wife was to be "poised and well versed in the social amenities, able to adjust herself, to conform to conditions and be at ease in any situation that may arise. She should know how to dress on any and all occasions, and how to conduct herself at all times as a lady."^{xviii} Fortunately for Nan, her family connections were superb and in fact, her acceptability arguably exceeded the social grace of Cadet Wood. With naval not military connections, the young Wood was expected to prove his worthiness as an army officer to his superiors.

Each hop consisted of twelve dances, and when the young lady arrived at the dance her cadet host filled out his guest's program for her. It was an efficient way for the cadet to control who his guest would dance with throughout the evening. Evening hops began at nine p.m. and ended at midnight. The receiving line was in formation one hour after the hop began, and cadets were expected to conduct their guests through it. Hops were called "90-minute hops" but their real duration was 110 minutes – allowing up to 30 minutes for the receiving line tradition.

By his own admission (in later letters), Cadet Wood was hoping to find one of the wealthier, well-connected belles among the happy daughters staying at the Cozzen's Hotel. C.E.S. Wood's father was Dr. William Maxwell Wood (1809-1880), the retired Surgeon General of the U.S. Navy. Wood's mother was descended from a long line of Scottish "Erskine's" and both parents were vigilant Presbyterians, manifesting family prayers that their children – all six of them! – remembered throughout their lives. As a boy C.E.S. recalled trips with his father to Washington in the buggy and back to Rosewood Glen, with a few stops homeward bound at taverns along the way.^{xix} Cadet Wood swore off most alcohol, except for very socially recognized situations due to his father's heavy alcoholic consumption and a perpetual lack of funds. Young Wood felt

there was a correlation between his father's society rounds and the stretched income experienced by the Wood family at Rosewood Glen. Both he and his brother Max seemed determined to overcome their father's bad habits, easing matters for their mother and making life a grand parade of gaiety and loving women.

In 1872, the familiar exchange between Cadet Wood and Miss Smith seemed little more than repartee between two sparring flirts attracted by adventurous similarities but



Summer camp of cadets, West Point, 1873. Nanzy Moale Smith, then 18 years old, is in the center of the picture. C.E.S. Wood, her future husband, is standing next to her.

repelled by those same likenesses, always tempted and then, surprised. A scrapbook photo shows Cadet Wood and Miss Smith at the center, Wood with a possessive or protective hand at Nannie's back while she looks afar with an independence that seems to defy all convention in the crowd of handsome cadets. The cadet to her left looks forlorn (and posed) while the one to her right seems to lean in conspiratorially and the cadet beside him looks with longing toward Nannie while ignoring the young lady by his side. Since the women are dressed similarly, it's likely that the lady to Nannie's right is Miss Fannie Gibbon.

Wood chafed at the rules and regulations of the Military Academy and the demerits mounted as his years progressed there. Life was rigid and confining, a stringent regimentation common to a "peace time" army. He excelled in art and cartography; the Academy instructor was the renowned and talented artist, Robert Weir.^{xx} Cadets at West Point were trained to become engineers and the class camaraderie and affiliation with West Point served them throughout their military careers. Wood's affiliation proved no exception, regardless of the free spirit he continued to exemplify. Cartography, geology, and exploration were the guideposts of West Point in the 1870s. Discipline was not Wood's forte and he spent most holidays like Christmas 1872, confined to the Academy. The cadet of fun and gaiety was lonesome in times like those.

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Robert W. Weir's famous painting of jolly old St. Nick in the Smithsonian American Art Collection (circa 1838). Weir was Wood's art instructor at West Point. The Christmas poem was written by Clement Clarke Moore in 1822, with the title *A Visit From Saint Nicholas*. Troy: *New York Sentinel* on December 23. The original publisher hinted at Moore's authorship, though without naming him but in 1829, Moore was first credited as author by Charles Fenno Hoffman, ed. *The New-York Book of Poetry*. New York: George Dearborn, 1837. Weir executed at least three similar paintings of St. Nicholas, each one redolent of Christian influence and Dutch heritage. Weir numbered among the liveliest cultural league of Dutchmen in New York known as the "Knickerbockers", popularized by Washington Irving's comic history of the city published in 1809 under the pseudonym of Diedrich Knickerbocker.

U.S.M.A. West Point, N.Y.
Dec. 24th 1872^{xxi}

'Tis the night before Christmas and indeed dear Miss Nannie the turmoil of the early evening has subsided and it seems as though not a creature was stirring not even a mouse Here sit I alone with my darling Miss Nannie to usher in Christmas with all its bright enjoyments and hallowed associations, hoping that to her it may be a day fraught with all manner of happiness. It is now five minutes of eleven and I have just five minutes left in which to tell you so much Oh! so much.

I want to tell you how eagerly I catch myself wishing to be with you on this night, this wish is ever present to me, and then crowd upon me a thousand regrets and the memory of my utter disappointment to think that at least one cadet will walk the streets of Washington tonight and that cadet not I.

My few moments wing their way rapidly into eternity, as do all pleasures, but Thank Heaven they cannot keep me from you tomorrow and I shall be with you dear, dear Miss Nannie on blessed Christmas day, blessed to me because I can spend hours with you in no fear of "taps" or bugle calls.

Good night my little darling good night. May God keep you and bless you forever.

I pray that you may have sweetest dreams and awake to their fullest realizations. Once more Good night.
E.W.

Clara called upstairs to Nannie's room that one of those letters had arrived from West Point. The door stood open as the teenage girl squirmed and twisted in front of her full-length mirror. Clara just shook her head in dismay. She had been Nannie's mother's servant, too, but "Sipsie," a family nickname dating to Nannie's babyhood when she could not, yet, pronounce "Smith," was trying on dresses and holding up a rhinestone clip to her long dark hair. She imagined the glittery effect in the gas lamplight and sparkling chandeliers. They were sure to serve champagne and play the latest waltzes and schottisches straight from Vienna. In fact, Hallie Hilden, her dearest school friend, had assured Nannie that only the very *best* society of Washington – foreign diplomats, financiers, a few officers of the highest ranks – would fill her mother's ballroom that evening.^{xxii}

Mrs. Hilden was highly discriminating and very rich, but she liked Nannie, a physician's stepdaughter, and because her daughter and Nannie were well-trained young ladies from Madame Burr's school she allowed them to be close friends. Mrs. Hilden felt Nannie deserved extra attention. She came from the finest Baltimore families. Her paternal grandfather, Dr. Nathan Ryno Smith was an elderly gentleman who still held tremendous influence in the medical world. The Smith household overflowed with intelligent, highly educated physicians. His oldest son Berwick, Nannie's father, had shown great promise until his untimely death. Little Nannie and her mother left the Smith household at Atamasco after a suitable period of mourning and moved to Ann's family home in Baltimore.

But the Moales were a vivacious throng of independent women sharing the grandmother's large old home in Green Spring Valley. Several of the daughters were married to military men. Mary was the wife of General John G. Foster and the mother of Ann^{xxiii}; Frances (Fannie) was Colonel John Gibbon's wife and the mother of two daughters, Fannie & Katie^{xxiv} and one little son, John. Augusta (Gussie) married late in life after assuming more and more household responsibilities as Grandmother Moale grew frail with age. The nieces and nephews all feared Aunt Gussie who smacked their hands if they reached for a second helping of marmalade and shot stern glares in their direction if the children clamored about wildly in the house. But most dreaded of all by the children was if Aunt Gussie overheard their saucy retorts to their elders. Bad language and poor manners were not tolerated in the honorable Moale household. Making matters even more confused for the children of Union officers and Baltimore women was the profound Southern sympathy of Grandma Moale, a dear benevolent soul who did not like to turn desperate people away from her door. Into this crowd of

women and children, with politics and loyalties divided, came the widow Ann and her only child Nannie to the big sprawling house in Green Spring Valley near Owings Mills, Maryland.

Barely a year after her father's death, an adventure with Uncle Foster and Aunt Mary turned into declared war. Thinking it a pleasant respite from the female household, Uncle Foster invited his wife, daughter, sister-in-law Ann and Nannie to join him in a jaunt to Fort Moultrie to chase away some upstarts at Fort Sumter. Nannie noticed the admiring attentions Uncle Foster's staff officers paid to her beautiful mother still dressed in the somber black of widow's weeds.

The Baltimore newspaper account gave a splendid description of what proved to be the opening battle of the War Between the States. In the midst of bellowing cannons and blazing gun fire, soldiers wounded and dying as they bled on a steamship's deck in an attempted escape from the ferocious Confederate fire, stood two little girls, Annie & Nannie, as they took in the whole scene hidden behind the ventilator on the Texas deck of the creaky old ship.

Uncle Foster was bawling orders at the inexperienced and surprised crew, when he disgustedly took command of the ship's guns – the crew did not believe they would even fire! Nan's mother rushed to the aid of wounded men lying on the deck and stayed with several until the last breath escaped their lips. The women and little girls escaped unharmed that day but the emotional terror of battle haunted their dreams and challenged their sense of security for years to come.

Edward Moale, Grandma Moale's youngest child and only son, served as aide-de-camp to Foster for the duration of the Civil War. Even though Nannie witnessed the opening rounds of an American world torn by the anguish of battle, dividing and confusing families, and lived in a home where huge American flags hung from the front balcony but Confederate soldiers knew they would be fed at the backdoor, her youth was not monopolized by fear. In fact, in later years, the war was seemingly of passing consequence in her life as a whole, neither impacting her philosophies about conflict and soldiers, nor turning aside racial prejudice entertained by many families who were served by African Americans.

Sadly, with war and the excitement of a lively household, the few childhood memories treasured by Nannie of her father were eclipsed. Her mother's wavering health near the end of the war, led to the personal attentions of Cousin Nathan, Dr. Nathan Lincoln, Ann's future husband.

Ann and Nannie moved to Cousin Nathan's Washington home after the marriage. It was to that address – 1319 F Street Washington D.C. that Cadet Wood sent nearly all of his earliest letters to Nannie.

Clara's slow, plodding steps could be heard on the oak stairs. A freed slave who once belonged to the Moale family, Clara was with Ann when Nannie was born and had cared for her every need since. Following Ann's death in 1868, Clara vacillated between nurse, maid, and tyrant, telling the young lady often that her behavior was "just not right."

It was unusual in Washington society for a teenage daughter to remain with her widowed stepfather. But Dr. Lincoln felt he was entrusted by her mother with Nannie's care, and with so many willing relatives offering their homes or holidays for Nannie, the situation was less awkward. Besides, their community of F Street was a fascinating place to grow up and meet society. In fact, society could be said to come to Nannie. With Madame Burr's school just around the corner from her house, many of Nannie's friends lived in the neighborhood. And frequently, the President and his Secret Service agents rode past their house in carriage or on horseback, headed for receptions at consular homes.

But Nannie loved the horses much better than the important men who rode them. F Street and its environs were open enough to allow nearby stables and of course, Dr. Lincoln kept his horse and buggy available for patient calls day or night.

Christmas in Washington 1872 was a gay festival of lights. Nannie loved Christmas, decorating the eight-foot tree at home, singing carols at midnight Mass at St. Patrick's Church nearby. Father DeWolfe recalled her mother each time he saw Nannie, now a young woman in her own right.

Usually with a beau at her side, Nannie was rarely without the attentions of handsome gentlemen. Sometimes a bevy of girlfriends crowded together to exchange the latest bits of gossip.

Finished with her primping and plucking at her cheeks to pink them, Nannie snatched the unexpected letter from Clara. She loved theatricals, especially comedies – and poor Clara was often the perfect foil for Nannie's dramas.

Heedless of skirt hems or tiny suede boots that did little to resist the mud, Nannie draped her woolen tartan around her shoulders, and pulling the warm hood over her head, she stepped out of the house into the sullen afternoon of overcast skies.

"Happy Thoughts" were indeed in her heart and mind as the words of Cadet Wood danced through her head and raised her spirits. Wood was her own private conquest, the catch of Green Spring Valley where her grandmother lived ... but was he really hers? Did she want him? He was such a boy, only twenty. She was seventeen and liked mature gentlemen with kindly manners. Well, didn't she? Filled with doubts but somewhat charmed, Nan was delighted to receive Cadet Wood's letters.

Wood was proven a good dancer, but he had no musical talents. He organized the West Point hops with a flair that everyone enjoyed. Words flowed naturally and with ease from his lips, which made Nannie a bit uncomfortable, for he always soothed the situation it seemed.

But that hospital stay! He was badly bruised in field *polo practice* – what kind of horseman was he? He hoped to be in the cavalry, yet, he seemed ill at ease with horses.

And yet, he wrote such marvelous letters, as if he was strolling by her side at Flirtation Point. Nannie kept every one of the letters, numbered them, and tucked them away for secret safekeeping. Cousin Nathan might not like the amorous infatuations of this handsome young cadet.



U.S.M.A. West Point, N.Y.
Dec. 25th 1872^{xxxv}

Merry Christmas Miss Nannie! How I wish I could say that to you. Well, well, I wish it all the same. Now you must tell me all you did on Christmas and all about your pretty presents and in fact everything connected with yourself and in order that you may have no excuse for not doing so I will tell you what little I did. I went to the hotel and saw Miss Buckmaster and several other young ladies and we danced a little, talked a little and flirted not at all. I went to a Keno and a faro bank merely because I was so ennuyé that I did not know what else to do. I left very soon and came to my room and began a sketch of it. I went to dinner and came back to spend the rest of the day with the most agreeable company I can find and infinitely prefer this to going back to the hotel as I promised to do, for I intended to write to you tonight. You see my Christmas is nothing more, with the exception of the present, than a quiet stupid day. I have reason to be thankful that I have but one more, to spend here, that's one more Christmas, many stupid days I am afraid. I heard that your friend Miss Annie Barnes was to have been at the hotel last night but she was not I know. Addie's german I hope was a perfect success. Did you enjoy yourself very much or was it to be tonight? Well if it is I hope that you will have a grand time and be perfectly well in the morning. (that last I think shows great consideration on my part) Please dance a waltz or two for me and if it would not be too hard on your partners, try and imagine that it is with me you are dancing.

But I forget. Before you get this letter your "german" will be over I have been reading your letter and that part in which you say how strange it would be to visit my home and see nothing of me set me off in a long, long day dream. I began by thinking how strange it would be for me to visit Atamasco and see no sign of you anywhere, to hear no sound of your voice.

Oh it would seem so very, very strange. As if some sunbeam, that brightened the whole house, had vanished leaving a gloom strange by contrast. And then my thoughts reverted as they are ever doing to the first time I ever saw you, that queer call, that unseasonable call, made when you, like the Roman matrons, were devoting your energies to industry (I don't believe though that the Roman matrons had sewing machines.) That call, made partly through politeness and partly – shall I confess it – through curiosity. I wanted to see what sort of young ladies were coming to spend their summer or a part of it at least next door to me. And do you know what amused me most, I laughed at it long after I left the house, it was the way you ordered me to have that colt taken out of the pasture field and groomed. The last thing you said to me out in the hall was about that colt. I felt very much hurt. By the way what is the latest news from Miss Fannie?^{xxxvi} You have not said anything about her for a long time. Do you think it probable that you will go to Europe in the Spring? That would indeed be a disappointment. Indeed you must not let me expect you up to the very time and then write that you are not coming. No please tell me as soon as you know yourself or as soon as you can at least.

If you should go it is a pity you go just as my brother comes home. I wanted him to meet you. How interesting it would have been if you could have met as strangers at Nice or Naples or Paris or some of those places and find out that each knew all about Owings Mills, Rosewood Glen and Atamasco, Dr. Wood and Miss Sarah.

Who will you go with when you go? I don't see how you can go, you know your[stet] engaged to me for the 28th german and I absolutely refuse to forget or break the engagement. So you see your destiny is settled.

I don't know whether I ever answered your question in regard to Sister Hannah. Mother tells me that she (sister) has a seamstress at the house and as soon as she is ready she is going in to New York. I presume from that that she will not visit Washington. I had a very interesting letter last week from Miss Sallie Jewett telling me all about her new life, the little oddities and jokes from the Green room etc. and altogether making a very pleasant epistle. I had not heard from her before since long before I went on furlough and although I have seen her name frequently mentioned in the papers it was more satisfactory to hear from her personally.^{xxviii}

Why can't I be alone with you undisturbed for an hour or two? I declare it makes me petulant the way I am continually interrupted. It is release from quarters now and so I am at every one's mercy. I have lots to tell you yet and now I know that I will not have time, however, I certainly have none to waste in fretting about it.

The second of next month you know my examinations begin and then will be decided whether I am to stay till June or to have a New Year's leave of indefinite extension.

Two examinations to pass and then it only depends on my life whether I graduate or not, for once a first classman you'll graduate if you only live.

I presume you will be in Baltimore when you receive this. Please remember me to the Belts if you see them and give my love to Mrs. Belt. Will you have the kindness to give my regards to any of our friends that you may see, particularly Miss Bessie Tysen.

Another pest has been introduced into my life as if Dame Fortune had not treated me harshly enough in dooming me to these two years of exile and imprisonment. Now has she sent an attendant fiend in the shape of a French horn -- or a cornet or some such brazen instrument of torture -- which has locked up in it the rickety (Made a mistake, n'importe) tune of "Champagne Charlie" which tune a plebe tries to force out of the wretched instrument and it groans and shrieks in agony. The plebe will get out two or three bars and then after a deadly pause, which leaves me in agony, he begins again and gets this time a little farther, stops again, while I can feel my hair rising, begins again and so on ad infinitum.

If he drives me to desperation I am going to pitch either him or his horn out of the window. That fiddle and this wretched wretched horn are wearing on me. Oh if it only could blow something besides "Champagne Charlie."

I hope that your friend Mr. Bass^{xxviii} indeed I may say your friends Messieurs Bass are well. This freezing weather probably agrees with them as they always appeared cold during the heat of last summer. First rate fellows, though, if they are so stately, very obliging, too. I know one of them drove a lady friend of mine from Owing Mills to Baltimore in the pouring rain. Still after all that deserves no praise he must have [been] very happy in his companion, his skies could be in her eyes and the only rain he should dread should fall from them.

My room mate, sitting on the corner of the table resting his chin on his hand, looked just now so very sad and pensive so unusually thoughtful, that I said, "What are you thinking of Governor? I was thinking, said he, how many little stomachs there were aching tonight throughout the United States. ["

There is but one step from the sublime to the ridiculous – I thought he was thinking of the quick flight of all earthly pleasures be they great or small into that Shadow land where leaden clouds envelope all things sooner or later.

Indeed there are but two periods of life the past and the future you know that is my opinion or rather my creed, the past irrevocable, the future to be moulded as we will and have strength to do or to personate them. The past sad eyed and pensive flinging us across the ever widening chasm [of] flowers whose sweet perfume recalls our senses to the life of other days, one by one they fail to reach us and fall into the abyss till we are left desolate. And then more than at any other time I think do we stretch our hands eagerly toward the golden haired smiling Future that floats wantonly before us, now dim in a cloud but again glittering brighter than ever in the sunshine, ever tempting us to rush forward, blindly forgetting that a gulf separates us from her, too. Thus are we balanced on a narrow ever shifting ledge between two gulfs which ledge, to choose that will have it so, is the Present, A myth.

Here I have run on, blotting down my fancies, forgetting that I was writing a letter and not an essay on Past & Future till I am sure I have wearied you, but I'll make no excuse for if I have wearied you I am inexcusable and if I have not I have reason to be thankful. Now my dear Miss Nannie I have double lessons to learn tomorrow in both Mechanics and "Chem". I must therefore say that sad word -- Goodbye. No I will not say it. I will for once be a good Christian and look eagerly forward to Easter and as we say to the flowers that we know Spring will bring back to us so say I to you – au revoir.

*Ever Yours Fondly,
C.E.S, Wood,*

P.S. As usual, I have written this as fast as my pen could drive and have no time to look over it. There are doubtless Many mistakes. I pray you to excuse the seeming carelessness.

E.W.

Cadet Wood was lonely Christmas Day 1872. Demerits for discipline and slack academic studies kept the young man away from hearth and home in Owing Mills, Maryland. His mother missed him, he was sure, even if his father did not. Rose Mary Carson Wood came from a strong line of Scots with close blood ties to the old homeland. But his father, William Maxwell Wood, was a trial-by-fire naval surgeon built of stern and sturdy stock. He was the now-retired naval Surgeon General of the U.S. Navy who had traveled to the Pacific and ports in China and Japan. A no-nonsense Presbyterian, Maxwell Wood had little patience for his second son "Erskie" as his mother called him. The lad was besieged with grandiose ideas of art and writing adventure novels. Dr. Wood was a published author himself of true swashbuckling adventures on the high seas aboard frigates and ships of war. The grand old sailor held fast to a mariner's dream of owning land and a productive farm and so, he purchased the acreage near Owings Mills that became known as Rosewood. With eight children from two marriages, the wizened old salt had little enough money for maintaining a farm, paying servants, and educating his children.

He managed a naval academy appointment for his oldest son, also William Maxwell, and for Charles Erskine Scott to West Point both courtesy of President U.S.

Grant. He hoped that with solid educations, commissions, and decent society that his older sons would marry wealthy brides. He felt that Erskine's talents as an artist or a writer – however well the words and sketches flew from his pen – were not likely to sustain him through life. He was correct.

ⁱ Wood File, Box 1, Folder 1-5 at Lewis and Clark College Special Collections, Portland, OR.

ⁱⁱ Wood was correct, but the US came very close to war with Spain in 1872, known as the “*Virginius* dispute with Spain.” The merchant ship *Virginius*, commanded by Captain John Fry, a U.S. citizen, and flying the American flag, was captured by the Spanish gunboat *Tornado*. Claiming that the vessel was aiding Cuban rebels, Spanish authorities executed Fry, 36 of the crew members, and 16 passengers. Resisting intense pressure to declare war on Spain, Grant secured a successful arbitration of the matter, including an indemnity and apology from the Spanish government, November 28, 1873. Authorities later discovered that the *Virginius* was owned by Cubans, was illegally registered, and had no right to fly the American flag. [See *Ulysses S. Grant Interpretive Outline* by Frank Scaturro of the Grant Monument Association.] The U.S. nearly declared war on Great Britain again, too. The Treaty of Ghent (1812) and its successors to the last, the Treaty of Washington which disputed the boundary lines of Texas, California, Mexico, the Pacific Northwest and British Columbia was at last settled by the Emperor of Germany who adjudicated the argument.

ⁱⁱⁱ Like many young men at West Point or Annapolis following the Civil War, Wood 's idyllic view of war and glory spelled the opportunity for promotion. The irony of the young cadet's remarks is almost too much to bear. When the U.S. went to war against Spain nearly 30 years later, Wood adamantly opposed the war fought in Cuba and the Philippines. Many of his cadet classmates and fellow officers from the West were by then the colonels and generals in command, leading the invasion of the Philippines from his former garrison at Vancouver Barracks.

^{iv} Hannah Wood Morgan was one of the few Wood or Smith family members who supported the couple's future engagement and wedding plans. Sister Hannah became a lifelong friend to Nannie.

^v The source of Wood's quoted words is unknown. He may have simply been teasing Nan and pretending to quote rumors or gossip.

^{vi} A signature glimpse of the C,E,S,Wood who later wrote social criticisms and separated his initials throughout his writing career with flamboyant periods that looked like commas.

^{vii} Erskine Wood, CES Wood ...

^{viii} Forty-two cadets graduated in 1874.

^{ix} Born Frances Moale Gibbon, eldest daughter of Colonel John Gibbon and Frances (Fanny) Moale.

^x Virginia Miller, “Dr. Thomas Miller and His Times,” *The Columbia Historical Society*, (Wash D.C. 1900)

^{xi} Ibid. (Miller)

^{xii} Mrs. Jeannie Tree Rives, pp. 78-9 *The Columbia Historical Society*, (Wash D.C. 1900)

^{xiii} Ibid.

^{xiv} Happy Thoughts by F.C. Burnand, London: Bradbury & Evans, 1868. Twelve thousand – 1869. Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1868. Available on line at http://books.google.com/books?id=lbMaAAAAyAAJ&printsec=frontcover&dq=happy+thoughts+by+burnand&source=bl&ots=s5vhIEGOBJ&sig=UehR_iinmDpD6lof2laPEIm28E&hl=en&ei=plOrTcjEGonGsAO8xuCFBw&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=resuIt&resnum=1&ved=0CBMQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q&f=false

As a play, "Happy Thoughts" ran in the London theatres for 12 months. Allibone's Dictionary of English Literature, (J.B. Lippincott Company, 1891) writes, "Of the many 'Happy Thoughts' which have occurred either to Mr. Burnand of his hero, the thought of having such thoughts is the happiest ... Utterly ludicrous as his characters are, they are neither monstrosities nor abortions. They are exaggerations of what is perfectly real, living humours combined too copiously, but not invented. They have too many sides and each side is brought out to turn with too much completeness but in every case the skeleton is familiar to us. When Mr. Burnand begins to sketch in the first outline, we recognize them at once, and perhaps we wonder at the absence of all novelty. But then he overlays them with such a vivid wealth of caricature that we forget our first impression, and give ourselves up to the most uncritical enjoyment."

^{xv} Foster was born 27 May 1823 in Whitefield, New Hampshire. When he was just 10 his family moved to Nashua, New Hampshire where he received his early education. He attended West Point graduating 4th in the class of 1846 and was assigned as a 2nd lieutenant in the construction engineers. He saw service during the war with Mexico during which he was brevetted 1st lieutenant and captain, and was severely wounded at Molino del Rey. After returning from Mexico he was assigned as assistant engineer in Maryland where he served from 1848 until 1852. He was then assigned to coast survey duty stationed in Washington, D.C. from 1852 until 1854. After being promoted to 1st lieutenant he was assigned as an assistant professor of engineering at West Point from 1855 until 1857. Following that he was assigned as an engineer in charge of the fortifications in Charleston, South Carolina.

As the crisis headed towards armed conflict Foster was in the middle of it. On the night of 26 December 1860 he was instrumental in transferring the garrison from Fort Moultrie to Fort Sumter for which he was brevetted major. Nannie and her mother and her Cousin Annie (Foster's daughter), accompanied Foster to Fort Moultrie and escaped under Confederate fire. Foster remained at Fort Sumter until it was surrendered following the Confederate bombardment, beginning the war, but his family returned safely to the Moale household in Baltimore where all of the Moale daughters lived with their mother and their children for the duration of the Civil War. After the surrender Foster went to Washington D.C. where on 23 October 1861 he was commissioned a brigadier general of volunteers. He commanded a brigade during Ambrose Burnside's North Carolina expedition and was brevetted lieutenant colonel for his services at Roanoke Island. He also saw action at New Berne. Foster was promoted to major general of volunteers on 18 July 1862 and given command of the Department of North Carolina. The Department of Virginia was eventually combined with that of North Carolina with Foster commanding both. He remained in departmental command until November 1863 then was sent to the department of the Ohio where he held a variety of administrative positions and occasionally operated in the field. He was present during the siege of Knoxville, Tennessee in late 1863 and for awhile commanded the Army of the Ohio. In December 1864 he was in command of the Department of the Ohio but was forced to relinquish command following a severe injury after falling from his horse. When he returned to duty he was assigned command of the Department of the South and cooperated with William T. Sherman in the taking of Savannah, Georgia. In February 1865 Foster was in Charleston helping in the reduction of the city when Fort Sumter was retaken. On 13 March 1865 he was brevetted brigadier general in the regular army for his service at Savannah and major general in the regular army for his war service. Effects from his previous injury forced him to relinquish active field command and he was sent to Florida to command that department.

When the war ended Foster was still in command of the Department of Florida and decided to remain in the army. In 1867 he was on temporary duty in the engineering bureau in Washington D.C. then served as superintending engineer of various river and harbor improvements. He conducted many submarine (underwater) engineering operations in Boston and Portsmouth harbors leading to his recognition as an authority on the subject. In 1869 he published "Submarine Blasting in Boston Harbor" the authoritative book on the subject at the time. He also published extensively on other engineering topics. He died 2 September 1874 in Nashua.

^{xvi} A *New York Times* reporter once wrote that Cozzens's and other nearby hotels were the stages for West Point races for husbands or wives – a lottery of sorts – with most cadets on the lookout for a "good bank account" – the "(real attraction in the cadet mind)." Belles looked for handsome beaux who had less chance of being sent to "Alaska or the Dry Tortugas." Wood scrapbook #35

^{xvii} The Cozzens Hotel was rebuilt after a fire destroyed the original site (circa 1849) in 1863 on a promontory point overlooking the Hudson River. The Cozzens was portrayed in paintings and guidebooks for its scenic trails and ambling paths that drew nature lovers through forty acres of natural landscape with waterfalls, manicured garden and wildflower fields in forested lands. As many as 500 guests could be hosted in the hotel and many wealthy families spent the summer weeks at the hotel while the businessmen like J. Pierpont Morgan commuted to Wall Street weekdays. The Prince of Wales was a guest, and West Point Commander Winfield Scott made the Cozzens his summer headquarters. The Cozzens was the fashionable resort for all of the West Point hops that Nannie and Wood attended. The Cozzens was sold for \$65000 in 1876 to Mrs. William H. Osborn, a donation to the New York Hospital Association. The hotel was renovated into a convalescent home for the "comfort and care of patients ... without any distinction as to religious creed or nationality." [NYT, 3/24/1876] See also Dunwell, Frances F. *The Hudson River Highlands*. By the 1880's, the Catholic Church had acquired the property and opened a children's parochial school on the site, and by 1933 a women's four-year liberal arts college campus was operating there. At the present time, this old campus serves as West Point's South Post, which includes it's Visitor's Center, and the West Point Museum.

^{xviii} Nancy Shea. *The Army Wife*. P.8 The book further states that cadets had a reputation for being “high hat”, i.e. “conspicuous for their gallantry, their good manners, and the way they treat every visiting femme, regardless of her looks, her social antecedents and her deportment.”

^{xix} Wood, *Life of Charles Erskine Scott Wood*, p. 4.

^{xx} Weir’s son, J. Alden Weir eventually became a lifelong friend of C.E.S. Wood.

^{xxi} Wood File, Box 1, Folder 1-5 at Lewis and Clark College Special Collections, Portland, OR

^{xxii} News clipping from scrapbook describing Mrs. Hilden’s Germans and an evening ball.

^{xxiii} Ann Foster was four years older than Nannie.

^{xxiv} Fannie was the same age as Nannie, and Katie was two years younger.

^{xxv} Wood File, Box 1, Folder 1-5 at Lewis and Clark College Special Collections, Portland, OR

^{xxvi} Miss Fannie Gibbon, older daughter of Colonel John and Fanny Gibbon, maternal aunt and uncle of Nannie.

^{xxvii} Sarah Orne Jewett (September 3, 1849 – June 24, 1909) was an American novelist and short story writer, best known for her works set in or near South Berwick, Maine, on the border of New Hampshire, which in her day was a declining New England seaport. Jewett’s family had been residents of New England for many generations.^[1] Her father was a doctor, and Jewett often accompanied him on his rounds, becoming acquainted with the sights and sounds of her native land and its people. As treatment for rheumatoid arthritis, a condition that developed in early childhood, Jewett was sent on frequent walks and through them also developed a love of nature.^[2] In later life, Jewett often visited Boston, where she was acquainted with many of the most influential literary figures of her day; but she always returned to South Berwick, the “Deeplaven” of her stories. She published her first important story in the *Atlantic Monthly* at age 19, and her reputation grew throughout the 1870s and ‘80s. Her literary importance arises from her careful, if subdued, vignettes of country life that reflect a contemporary interest in local color rather than plot. Jewett possessed a keen descriptive gift that William Dean Howells called “an uncommon feeling for talk—I hear your people.” Jewett’s most characteristic works include the novella *The Country of the Pointed Firs* (1896); *A Country Doctor* (1884), a novel about a New England girl who rejects marriage to become a doctor; and *A White Heron* (1886), a collection of short stories. Some of Jewett’s poetry was collected in *Verses* (1916), and she also wrote three children’s books. Willa Cather described Jewett as a significant influence on her development as a writer,^[5] and “feminist critics have since championed her writing for its rich account of women’s lives and voices.” Jewett never married; but she established a close friendship with writer Annie Fields (1834-1915) and her husband, publisher James Thomas Fields, editor of the *Atlantic Monthly*. After the sudden death of James Fields in 1881, Jewett and Annie Fields lived together for the rest of Jewett’s life in what was then termed a “Boston marriage.” Some modern scholars have speculated that the two were lovers.^[6] In any case, “the two women found friendship, humor, and literary encouragement” in one another’s company, traveling to Europe together and hosting “American and European literati.” On September 3, 1902, Jewett was injured in a carriage accident that all but ended her writing career. She died three months after being paralyzed by a stroke in 1909. The Jewett family home in South Berwick, built in the late eighteenth century, is preserved as a National Historic Landmark.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Local_color_\(literature\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Local_color_(literature))

^{xxviii} Bass Brothers are listed in Baltimore Business Directories as distributors of wines, liquors, and distilleries, dating back to the early 1870s as Samuel Bass.