

GROWING-UP DAYS

IN

A CELIBATE COMMUNITY

by

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P R E F A

This is a combination of two accounts of time between, of many of the same hours.

During the earlier days of my service, busy with office duties, I sometimes collected little stories, which were then put away until my sister prevailed upon me to go ahead and do our growing up days, which I had previously done. A few years later I happened to collect old stories and found one which not only repeated the same episodes, and more in detail, but I decided to combine them in a revised edition.

The names of most of the girls here are a few of the men's, for the men as a rule were in the area and I feel sure would not have minded.

There seems to be a steadily developing interest in the history of the national Bicentennial Trail.

The Parks and Recreation Division of the Natural Resources of the State of Florida is rebuilding at least some of the old structures and the restoration of the house which was the most of his life in Estero.

To the Memory of Our Parents

and

To Lovelle

Who lived and has relived so many of these experiences and episodes with me.

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## P R E F A C E

This is a combination of two accounts, with a long period of time between, of many of the same happenings.

During the earlier days of my secretarial work, when not busy with office duties, I sometimes occupied the time by writing little stories, which were then put away and forgotten. In 1966 my sister prevailed upon me to go ahead and write the story of our growing up days, which I had previously mentioned wanting to do. A few years later I happened to come across several of the old stories and found one which not only recounted some of the same episodes, and more in detail, but a few additional ones, so decided to combine them in a revised edition.

The names of most of the girls have been changed, but only a few of the men's, for the men as a rule were well known in the area and I feel sure would not have minded, anyway.

There seems to be a steadily developing interest in the Koreshan Unity and its history and it is on both the state and the national Bicentennial Trail.

The Parks and Recreation Division of the Department of Natural Resources of the State of Florida plans to restore or rebuild at least some of the old structures and has begun with restoration of the house which was the home of Doctor Teed during most of his life in Estero.

The Author  
June, 1976

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PART I

P e n n s y l v a n i a

## Chapter I

### Fairwood

Marilyn! Lenore! Mother's call came to us as we played under the big "shady tree," an apple tree with wide spreading branches which accomodated three swings. We raced to the kitchen to find Kathleen already there and Mother breaking newly baked gingerbread into tender fragrant pieces. Or, perhaps it was bread baking day, when she always included a round loaf in a pie pan so we could each have a top crust spread thick with fresh butter, the yellow richness melting deep into it.

Even now the memories of Mother standing in the big bright kitchen, handing out gingerbread or hot bread and butter are fresh and poignant. The kitchen was always the most pleasant room in this pleasant first home of ours, with its cherry stained wainscoted lower walls, light blue above and white ceiling, the coalburning range at one side and a large kitchen table at the opposite one, where Mother mixed up cakes and we children sat to "lick the pans." Often we ate our meals at this table - especially breakfasts, and luncheons when Father was not home.

Mother fitted into the whole house, though, like a picture in its frame, moving quickly and quietly through the rooms, accomplishing so much that it has always been a marvel to me when I look back. She liked a place "that fills the eye," and the white two-story home in its setting of beautiful trees and flowers fully answered this description.

The house itself consisted of parlor, living-dining room, kitchen and large pantry downstairs, with a hall separating the parlor and dining room. The front door opened into this hallway, which contained not only the stairway leading to the three bedrooms upstairs but also the one to the big cool cellar, where the walls glowed with glass jars of cherries, peaches, plums and other good things grown in our own yard. Here, too, without benefit of refrigeration, the butter was kept sweet and firm, while during the winter there were crocks of homemade sausage, "put down in lard," and other, larger crocks of homemade cider.

The parlor was not used much for everyday living as the big dining room seemed to serve the purpose better. One corner took care of dining requirements and the fireplace in this room was the best in the house, warming it comfortably even on the coldest days. There was always a wire fire screen when the fire was lighted for there was also always a baby.

Dark haired, big eyed Kathleen was the only one not born there as Father was stationed elsewhere during the first year of his and Mother's marriage and she arrived just a few days too early to be a first anniversary present. Margaret came next and I followed her. Twenty-two months later Lenore entered the scene and, at intervals of three and two years, Rosemary and Walton.

The yard was unusually large, consisting of three lots, or 24,090 feet, I have since learned, and sloped from back to front, where it was terraced down to a white picket fence.

Directly in front of the house was a tall white birch. This tree was always especially fascinating to me, not only for the soft white covering of its trunk and branches, which could be

pulled off in little strips, but also because it was a favorite nesting place for the bright orioles, which built their hanging homes so low that sometimes Father could lift us up to look in at the baby birds. It was flanked by two "Christmas tree" pines with branches growing gracefully clear to the ground and, at the outer side of each, was a large arborvitae.

The paths around the house and to the front gate were outlined by dull red bricks, set so that just the corners protruded, forming a sort of rick-rack edging which Nature had blended to her own plan by toning to a soft mossy green.

The yard was more especially Father's province and he loved the big clumps of roses close to the house, where there were also peonies, bleeding hearts, flame in the forest, etc., and the more narrow eastern side of the yard had syringas, a lilac, a large snowball bush and a bed of lilies of the valley, while at the foot of the pump purple iris drank from its overflow. An early spring ritual in those days was to spread the flower catalogues out on the kitchen table so that we could help choose the annuals that would be planted that year.

A strawberry bed a short distance behind the house, which he cultivated with a small one-wheel hand plow, was Father's especial pride, and there was a long arbor thickly covered with grape vines - not only the luscious Concordes but also both red and white varieties (more about that later).

The rest of the yard was filled with fruit trees - several kinds of apples, peaches, pears, plums, cherries, and even an apricot and a nectarine tree, the only ones of their kinds around there, while along the path outside in front the maple trees were a shady green in summer and a sunburst of red and gold in autumn. A tall black walnut at the kitchen gate on the side furnished

stained fingers in the fall and flavorful nuts for all year, but especially during winter evenings by the fireplace.

All seasons were wonderful. In spring the peonies opened their big fringed petals, robins came in flocks, and the air was sweet with lilacs, while both spring and summer brought a heterogeneous procession of visitors. There were Armenian peddlers with a wide assortment of items in the packs on their backs - especially embroidered goods and laces, and the tramps to be fed on the back porch. It was said that the latter dropped off the freight trains and headed straight for our house because fellow travelers had told them they could count on something to eat, and it seemed to be true for they would pass right by our neighbors to turn off Main Street to our kitchen gate. Lenore was highly insulted when one talkative old Irishman attempted to be friendly by asking Mother if he couldn't take her along to wash his socks.

A tribe of gypsies came each year to camp on the western outskirts of the town, and children were warned to keep near home as gypsies were supposed to steal children. Everybody in town made at least one trip to the camp during their stay. We usually went in the early evening and always looked to see if they had any blonde children among their black haired ones. The women wore big rings in their ears, bright colored handkerchiefs on their heads and wide, gay skirts. The young men and women sometimes danced to entertain visitors, while the sharp-eyed old women accosted passers-by with offers to tell their fortunes. Their wagons, however, never looked nor smelled very inviting to us children and we always had the fear that we might find ourselves leaving town in one of

them. Other harbingers of spring, and our favorite visitors, however, were the organ grinder men and their cute little monkeys, which would peer up from their tiny old-man faces while they held out their cups for coins.

One year a glowering, swarthy faced man brought a bear which he put through its tricks in front of our yard. We did not enjoy that exhibition, though, for we were animal lovers and the bear was a miserable looking creature and sometimes did its tricks only through persuasion of a long spiked pole which the man seemed to use with unnecessary cruelty so, when Father came home a few days later with word that the bear had managed to get loose during the night and killed the man, none of us could feel too sorry for him.

Summer was the time for picnics in nearby woods, usually as entertainment for cousins from nearby cities and towns. One item of the menu was always hard boiled eggs colored in beet juice, and to this day a picnic does not seem complete without them. Locusts droned in the trees above, their song sometimes rising to such a crescendo that we would stop what we were doing to listen.

Excepting, of course, the Christmas season, I believe that autumn was the most wonderful, for then the maple leaves showered down until they were almost knee deep around the yard and rustled beautifully as we kicked through them. The woods were full of hickory, hazel and big burry chestnuts to be had for the taking. Mother made applebutter out in the yard in a big copper kettle, stirring it from a distance with a long handled wooden contrivance. Father brought out the cider press and little boys appeared as if by magic from all over town, eager to assist in some small way so

as to be in at the finish. Father gravely assigned them little tasks and of course gave the expected reward. There was always plenty of cider, both for drinking and to provide the necessary household vinegar.

Winter meant snow and coasting from the back of the yard to the front on the red sleds which Father, himself, made for us. The town blacksmith put the runners on and apparently thought he could have done the whole job better for, when we would occasionally pull them past his shop, he would remark in anything but an approving tone of voice, "Great sleds!!" The blacksmith shop, originally built and operated by our own great grandfather, was at the beginning of the block nearer town than our place and across the street, or catercornered from it, and was very fascinating to us. We always wanted to stop and look back into its cavernous interior, where sparks were flying up from the big anvil and from which such intriguing sounds emanated - the clinks and clanks as he hammered, the hissing sound as he plunged the red hot metal into his big vat of water, the neighing, blowing and restless stepping around by the horses. We were just a little afraid of the blacksmith, himself, however, for he would sometimes come out, wearing his big leather apron, and yell at us youngsters as we passed. Looking back, I think now it was probably just his way of being friendly, but it did not seem so then.

Christmas was the big event of winter and of the year, with trips to Pittsburgh to visit the toy departments of the big stores and Santa Claus, and there was always a Christmas tree reaching almost to the high ceiling. Two or three days beforehand we children helped pop corn and string great quantities of it, some of which Mother colored pink with red sugar. This appeared later festooned

on the tree as part of the trimming, together with big sweet pink and white balls of it. Oranges were not matter of course then as they are now in most homes, but there were always big golden ones hung among the tinsel ornaments.

Looking back, it seems to me to have been an almost ideal home for little children to spend their first years. We were a healthy, happy lot, and the only times the doctor, who had to come from a neighboring town, ever needed to visit us was when he accompanied the stork - the other member of the trio always being old Mrs. Wickham, who assisted most of the mothers in Fairwood on such occasions - until the death of little six and a half year old Margaret. Golden haired and pink cheeked, she was unusually friendly and loved to go to Sunday school at the one little church the village afforded. On this particular Sunday she had attended as usual and came home the picture of health and happiness, eager for dinner and to tell all that had happened.

The outside cellar entrance had a door slanting up from bottom to top and was one of our favorite play places. Running back and forth across the lower part was always entertaining, and after dinner Margaret tripped somehow and fell, afterward telling Mother that her back hurt. Mother rubbed it and, although Margaret was unusually quiet the rest of the day, she did not complain further. The next day Mother went to her bed and found her with a high fever, so Father telegraphed immediately for the doctor, but she lived just a few days. Although only a little past four, many scenes in connection with her death are still quite vivid to me. A bed was brought downstairs and set up in the dining - living room, and there Mother spent most of her time, the rest of us

being kept out. Next there was the little casket in the middle of the parlor, which was banked with flowers. The kitchen was filled with women cooking, or baking cakes and pies, preparing to feed the throng of people who were sitting or standing everywhere in the house and yard, for in those days relatives and friends came from near and far to a funeral. Father took Lenore and me to the nearby woods, supposedly to gather wild flowers, but more probably to keep us out of the way as much as possible, and when we came home he lifted each of us so we could place our small offering in the casket. We accepted his explanation that Margaret was taking "her long sleep," but later, when dressed in white and taken to the little graveyard, I wondered why they put her in the ground to take her sleep.

In earlier days our cow Daisy was kept during the daytime in "Grandpa's Pasture" (so known by the whole village though it belonged to our own grandfather) and at night in a shed attached to what we called the wash house. This was a finished one-room building where Father indulged in his sidelines and hobbies and we children played on rainy days with playthings not kept in the house. Daisy was a Jersey and the cream on her milk was so heavy that it could be lifted with a fork until it looked like a tent. I do not remember this myself but have heard Mother speak of it during later and leaner years.

The only chickens we ever kept, however, were some given to us by a neighbor as presents - two hens and a rooster. The rooster was mine and I was very proud of him and his colorful tail until he disappeared one day - into the cooking pot of a family of Italians who lived nearby, we thought, though there was no bit of proof and neither Mother nor Father would have

accused them even if there had been. The neighbor then gave me a hen, too, and as each showed inclination for motherhood, she was given a setting of eggs and in due time brought off a brood of chicks. After the novelty had worn off, Mother bought them from us, one or two at a time, and we helped eat them.

I must have been the most trying child of the family for I was always up to something almost from the time I learned to walk. A good bit of my time was spent in the tops of the fruit trees, and more than once came back to the house clad only in panties and panty-waist after having disengaged myself from my dress, which had become entangled in the tree branches.

We never went barefoot during the summer, as most of the children in the neighborhood did, but once in awhile after a rain, as a special privilege, were allowed to take off our shoes and stockings to paddle around in the mud puddles. One of these instances occurred just after the house had been painted. I do not know just how old I was at the time, but undoubtedly very little or I could not have done what I did. The lightning rod conductor attached to the gleaming white side of the house by its glass insulators evidently attracted my attention and, before anyone noticed, I had climbed clear up under the eaves of the slate covered roof, holding to the twisted steel of the conductor and walking on the side of the house like a fly. Probably Kathleen discovered me, but the first Mother knew of it was when she heard Father cautioning me to hold on until he could get me or he would be carrying me in on a shutter (this was Father's favorite threat when we got ourselves into any predicament where we were likely to fall). Fortunately, the painter had not yet taken his long

ladder away so, while Mother stood by encouraging me to hold fast, Father put the ladder up and was able to reach me. Looking down from the top of a tree never held any terrors for me, but trees had branches to step on, so the house must have looked pretty steep and smooth and I was somewhat like the kitten that the fireman is sometimes called upon to rescue. Then Father had to mount the ladder again, this time with paint and brush to clean and cover the trail of muddy footprints on both sides of the lightning conductor.

It was pure joy when I discovered that I could climb one of the Christmas tree pines, however. Though its branches grew quite close together, by twisting myself through them I could climb clear to the spire, which was so slender that it could be swayed back and forth away above the rest of the world. This was the most fun I had found and it had happened many times before attention was directed my way and then, as before, Mother's first inkling of it was when she heard Father saying: "All right, go just a little further and we will carry you in on a nice green shutter." Finally I was persuaded to come down and then Mother tried to prevail upon Father to saw off the branches as far as I might be able to reach, to avoid repetition, but Father couldn't see it that way. It would spoil the looks of his beautiful trees, and I had shown that I could go up and come down without getting hurt. Mother never argued or quarrelled about anything but, after Father had left for work the next day, she made use of the saw herself and later answered Father's shocked exclamation, "Why, you've ruined the trees" with: "Better ruined trees than a broken-backed child." However, knowing my persistence, she kept me

more or less under surveillance for awhile and when she spied me trying to grasp the lower branches while standing on the back of the hobby horse which, in turn, was standing on its noses and rocker fronts on a box, she came out. In my hurry to clutch a branch before she reached me, my combination base became unbalanced and we all fell over. Without a word, Mother picked up the hobby horse in one hand and the box in the other and carried them back to the wash house where they were put out of my reach, while I ran after her, wailing my frustration.

The last of such escapades on my part, that I remember at least, was some time later. One of my favorite climbing places was the grape arbor, which was built of strong narrow slats and had a curved top. Sometimes I climbed the outside and others the inside and, on one of these latter tours, found a thick strong vine that could be pulled down to make a swing in the very top of the arbor, so I had many delightful times swinging away above the ground. Then Rosemary was born and Eliza Barnes, who had been one of Mother's girlhood friends, came to stay with her. Eliza happened to come out while I was in my swing, was properly horrified and immediately ordered me down. She even broke off a switch to strengthen her command, which outraged me for we were never switched. I was then five years old and considered myself quite grown up, so defiantly ignored her, remaining where I was until she went into the house. Nothing was said to me by either Mother or Father, but the next time I climbed to my swing, I found it neatly severed in the middle.

As mentioned, Father and Mother did not believe in punish-

ing. When we indulged in some childish tantrum, he generally teased or ridiculed and she ignored us for a time and then just suggested that we come out of it. One evening while we were having oyster stew for supper, Lenore and I both became offended at something and left our seats to sulk under the table. Father laughingly hunted around with his foot as if trying to find one of us to use as a footstool, but Mother continued eating until she thought the whole thing had lasted long enough and then said quietly, "Come on now and finish your suppers. Your oyster crackers are as big as toads." We both climbed from under, a little shamefacedly, and did as we were told.

She was never afraid to be alone, though our place was isolated behind its trees. Father had bought her a large dagger-type knife for her protection when he was working at night and she kept it in its scabbard under her pillow. There was also a gun but she preferred the knife and Father always said it was probably better, anyway, for the sight of a bright knife in the hands of a woman would be more likely to scare an intruder than a gun as he would know that she was accustomed to working with a butcher knife. She never needed either, though there was one attempted break in. It happened one night when there were guests - a young couple with a baby. During the night they were awakened by some unusual sound outside and, slipping over to the window, the man guest saw that someone was working on the window just below. Looking around for something to use, he saw the baby's soiled diaper rolled up nearby so, spreading it out, he dropped it over the head below and the man took off without even trying to be quiet.

Rosemary was a baby not yet walking when she was stricken

with polio and from the neck down became as flaccid as the body of a doll insufficiently filled with sawdust. Her arms and legs remained in the positions they were placed, though her mind and tongue kept busy for she learned to talk unusually early. The doctor was called and, after he left, Rosemary, who later became quite a poet, made her first rhyme: "Bad Doc Nye; he made me cry." He must have told Mother there was nothing he could do, for I believe this was his only visit, but she would not accept this second blow lying down. As Mrs. Wickham was the village standby when a new baby came to town, so Mrs. McRae was available for washdays and housecleaning seasons. She lived on the street above us and was very fond of Mother so willingly gave up other work to spend most of her time with us, while Mother devoted herself to Rosemary. Preceding Sister Kenny by at least eighteen years, she used the same methods. Practically every minute of the time Rosemary was awake she massaged and manipulated the little body, guided only by her own great love and determination, and brought her through the ordeal without a trace of paralysis - a normal child in every respect.

Father was a railroad telegrapher for the Pennsylvania Railroad and worked at a station a short distance from our village where the roadbed had been cut through a rocky hill which, in addition to a sharp curve, cut off all view in both directions, so it was known as one of the most critical sections in that area and there had been some bad accidents in the vicinity. He was always something of a perfectionist and anything he did he tried to do the best that it was possible to be done, so he practiced "sending" and "receiving" until he became so proficient he at-

tracted the attention of the Pittsburgh office and was called there to what was not only a better position, but offered opportunities for advancement, much to Mother's delight for it would also mean moving to some place where there were good schools and other advantages for us children. Her delight, however, was short-lived for the man who succeeded him, through carelessness or inefficiency, caused several near-wrecks and then had one bad one so the trainmen petitioned the office to send Father back. His superiors left the decision up to him and he returned, being too conscientious for his own material gain.

As he could not be idle at the office, neither could he at home. In the wash house was a loom on which he wove pretty chenille rugs, which he seemed to have no trouble selling, and even carpets for people who brought their balls of rag strips for this purpose. The balls could not be used as such, however, so we youngsters transferred them into steel cylinders. To this day I do not know the original purpose of the contrivance which we used, but it had a seat on which we sat and a wheel which could be turned with one hand while, with the other, we pounded the filling into the cylinder by means of something like a light baseball bat.

He was also very inventive and had patented what he called a "temple and shuttle guide," for his loom, which evidently proved very worthwhile for he received many orders from weavers throughout the country. Part of it was a light iron casting which he had made somewhere according to his own specifications, and the other was wooden and included pegs with rounded ends. We youngsters sanded these smooth for him, one of us using the same equipment with which we filled the cylinders and the other an old fashioned spinning wheel. For these jobs he conscientiously paid us and we

were encouraged to save rather than spend this money. However, we soon became bored with these chores and, before very long, would ask: "Father, can't we go out and play?" The preface to his consent would usually be, "and dilly-dally all the day."

As these activities and what he did around the yard still did not occupy all of his spare time, he decided to try his hand at printing, so bought a printing press and type, which were set up in the wash house. As he knew absolutely nothing about the printing business, a printer was advertised for to stay at the house while he taught Father the know-how of operating it, and in due time one arrived and began the process of his initiation. At first it was thought he must have been out of work for some time as he was chronically hungry. He not only ate enormous meals, but also drank great quantities of coffee. In fact Mother finally brought out what we called the jumbo cup - one that somebody had brought back from the Pittsburgh Exposition as a souvenir some years before and held about what three ordinary ones would hold. She filled this twice each meal and he poured it down. If it had made him alert for the instruction sessions, everything would have been fine, but it seemed to have the opposite effect for he existed between meals in a sort of daze so, after a short time, Father regretfully let him go and tried again.

The second applicant for the position was entirely different. A young college graduate, he was decidedly what in those days was called "genteel," with a quiet, self-assured manner and a dark Van-dyke beard. Father progressed rapidly under his tutelage and needed less and less of his time, so Mother suggested that he tutor Kathleen. He was very glad to accept this extra duty, partly, of course, because of the extra pay, but also, perhaps, be-

cause he enjoyed teaching. I seemed to irritate him, though, probably because I was too active and inquisitive. The lesson sessions with Kathleen were very fascinating to me, and especially the grammar and its diagrams, the lines in this particular book being red. At any rate I suppose my head frequently got in the way for he spoke to me sharply two or three times and, consequently, was no favorite with me.

Amazing as it may seem, but apparently supporting the slogan that it pays to advertise, some commercial printing began to filter into the wash house - not, of course, from our own little village, whose business houses consisted of two small general stores and a railroad lunchroom, but by mail.

By this time the school question had become one of paramount importance to Mother. There was a little country school at the edge of town but when Kathleen had reached school age it was decided to enroll her instead in a convent school in a larger nearby town to which a Catholic family in Fairwood sent their children. Kathleen, however, became more and more unhappy with this arrangement so the one with the printer followed. Then a second cousin of Mother opened a little private school in town and, as by that time I was six, both Kathleen and I attended it for a term. Mother still did not think this was what we should have, so prevailed upon Father to ask for a transfer to a larger town with a good school, which was granted, and we moved to Riverton.

## Chapter II

### Riverton

They had tentatively planned to buy a house which was so surrounded by trees it was slightly reminiscent of our Fairwood place, but learned that it was considered damp and that there had been a great deal of illness among families previously living in it, so abandoned the idea and rented one of two houses which shared a lot right in the heart of town, and was just across the street from a general store and home of the German family who owned both store and houses.

Walton was a little over three months old when this change was made and Mother's health was far from good, but she plunged into the task of making the house a home for her brood. There was no front yard as both this and the house next door fronted directly on the street, but there was a brick courtyard, shared by the other house. Our parents had a high latticed fence built to prevent little feet from wandering out to the street and perhaps on the streetcar track. In this courtyard was the pump that supplied our water needs - one of the endless chain variety, with little cups that emptied their contents as the chain reached the turning point at top.

Riverton was built on a hill so the yard sloped gradually upward, but was terraced down to the kitchen windows to give as much light as possible and supported there by a low stone wall. There were several steps set in this wall by means of which we entered the yard, and it was in this area our flower beds were planted. The back yard ended in another wall, a high one, at the top of which was the street on which our school building stood.

Although almost opposite our house, to reach it by the normal route we had to go the length of most of our block, up its side, and then back practically the same distance to the school. To shorten this, Father built a ladder and fastened it against the wall, so all we had to do was run up through the lot, climb the ladder and cross the street. We usually came home the longer way and can remember Lenore and I would do it with a springy hop. The yard boasted a few fruit trees and space for a garden, but lacked much when compared with the home we had left behind.

The family of a steamboat pilot lived in the house next door, Mrs. Dee, black-eyed and quick tempered, Clifford, a quiet boy of thirteen, and pretty little, badly-spoiled Tommy. One of our first neighbor callers commiserated with Mother over the Dee family. "You'll not stay long," she predicted, "for no one can get along with Mrs. Dee and that terrible child. One family after another moves into this house, but none of them can stand it very long." "Oh, I think we'll get along all right," Mother answered, and we did. Mother was always friendly and cooperative with her neighbors, but never intimate, so there was nothing to quarrel about, and Mrs. Dee, herself, told me several years later that she had thought more of Mother than any other neighbor she ever had.

We had been there several weeks before Mr. Dee appeared on the scene. He was a little, wiry man with a big moustache and a picturesque vocabulary, as might be expected of a river man, but generally quiet and retiring and devoted to his family. No one in the neighborhood knew him very well, I am sure, but all felt it as a real shock when the boat he was piloting went down, carrying him with it. True to river tradition, he remained at the wheel

until everyone else had managed to escape and then it was too late for him.

There was no wash house or other similar building at the Riverton place so the printing press and type cases went into the long dining room, as well as a new paper cutting machine which Father added when we moved. Mother must have disliked this arrangement for the printing equipment certainly did not add to the coziness of the dining room and left little extra space, but there was no better place for it so she made no objection. The loom was setup in the big attic and she did voice her disapproval of this for it fairly rocked the house when Father was weaving and the sound seemed to carry over the neighborhood, but Father just laughed and reminded her that it would be only temporary, anyway.

The house needed papering so Mother arranged with the landlord to furnish the paper and she put it on. She did this well and easily, just as she did everything else, and then painted the kitchen woodwork, so the whole house was soon clean and bright. She washed and ironed, cooked and sewed, for she made all of our clothes. The neighbor who had advised her against Mrs. Dee remarked to Mrs. Dee once about her, "That woman would die if she stopped long enough." Mother always seemed to have an inner strength and vitality, though, that carried her on when others might have stopped and died.

In the spring she found time for a little garden to provide lettuce, onions, radishes, etc., and for the flower bed beyond the kitchen windows. The flower wagon which came by early in the season brought geraniums and other plants, but whatever else she had, there



along the banks of a pretty little brook, or "run" as we generally called it. Sometimes he rented a rowboat and we went rowing on the river, but we all enjoyed the brook most. It was so bright and busy, chattering about so many stones in its way, and then hurrying on to eventually lose itself in the muddy, sullen river. One early spring morning, after the snows had been melting rapidly for a week or two, someone told us that the brook was threatening the bridge on Main Street, and we all rushed down to see. To our amazement, it wasn't a brook at all but an angry, rushing, swollen brown river, lashing at everything along its banks and carrying the wreckage of small buildings and bridges from further up the valley. From the way it was rising, it seemed impossible that the bridge could withstand its force, but the crest was reached just in time to save it.

Lenore and I maintained quite an extensive cemetery, not on our side of the lot but the Dee side, and there was no objection as they paid very little attention to the yard, while we had our little garden in the upper left hand corner and our playground, which Tommy shared, was under the fruit trees occupying most of the rest of our side. Some grave decorating was carried on throughout the year, especially for the newer graves, but on the two Decoration Days we were there, we went all out. The little graves were outlined with white clover flowers and then others - lots of red clover, with whatever else we could find - were put on the mounds themselves. We transplanted some of the portulacas into little containers and placed them on the graves, also.

One day our room at school decided to hold a flower show and each pupil was instructed to bring something from home to help make up the exhibit. In casting around to see what I could take,

I decided on a variegated portulaca planted in a baking powder can lid, which was on one of the graves. For some reason it had grown marvelously large for a portulaca and was practically covered with the lovely red-streaked pink flowers. I don't think the family were much impressed at my choice of a lowly portulaca, so their amazement was as great as my own had been when I brought it home again with the first prize ribbon attached.

I do not remember whether the first burials were the several birds which died in a severe rain storm occurring during the early part of the time we lived there, or the litter of kittens which our cat mothered under the raspberry bushes and we found one morning with their throats cut by a tomcat (we thought their father). Later, another of our kittens, little "Rosy," run over by a street-car in front of our house, was added.

One grave was that of a toad which either Mr. Dee or Clifford had accidentally stuck a pitchfork into while gathering up some grass he had just mowed on an otherwise bare section of their side. Finding it sometime later, we moved it into the shade and then sat grieving over it until the end.

My real grief, however, was over the last interment, just before we left for Chicago. When we first moved to Riverton, Mother had bought a young goose, his favorite fowl, for Father's birthday in February, and put it in a coop to fatten, but I fell in love on sight and named it Fanny (appropriately, as it turned out, for later she laid a good many nice big eggs), and the first thing I always did on coming from school was to run to Fanny's coop to see that she was all right. I made up a song to her, entitled "Fanny, my gosling, Fanny, my goose," and drew a colored picture of her to fit into a little flat glass covered boxlike

container that had been one of those games where one tries to work tiny shot into various depressions. Father's birthday came and went but nobody had the heart to kill her, nor for his next birthday, either, but when we were all prepared to leave for Chicago, something had to be done about Fanny so, while I was at school, she lost her head, and Kathleen, who had arrived home first, greeted me with the news. I was so upset and wept so loudly and long (I was then nine) that I think they must almost have regretted that they had not planned some way to take her along. However, we were given her head and feet to bury, and Nature wept with us while Lenore and I dug the grave and conducted the rites. Mother held an umbrella over us during the doleful ceremony, much to the amusement of Mrs. Dee who, of course, knew the whole story.

The dinner at which she was served was even more like a funeral, though. Nobody had much to say. I had vowed I wouldn't eat her and tried to get Lenore not to, either, but Fanny had not meant so much to her as to me, so she gave in when urged, but I just sat there. Finally Mother coaxed me into eating some mashed potatoes and gravy, and I did between tears. This brought the scornful remark from Kathleen that I might as well eat the devil as drink his broth, but to my mind the gravy was not Fanny and I simply could not have sunk my teeth into her flesh.

There are souls who are always reaching out, seeking something more ideal than life as a rule seems to offer, even though their own lives might seem to be more run of the mill human being to approach as ideal an existence as mortals should expect. Father was one of these. Deeply religious, he eagerly investigated any new creed brought to his attention, but none ever seemed to answer his need until Doctor Teed, founder of the Koreshan Unity,

a religious community in Chicago which held all its worldly goods in common, came to the area. Riverton was not on his itinerary but a larger town a few miles away was, and it was there he was making his headquarters at the home of a family who were of the faith but not to the point where they would burn their bridges behind them by joining the main body and turning in their earthly possessions. There were many of these "outside Koreshans" scattered all over the country, as we were to learn later. Two of them came to talk to Father at his office, and Lenore and I found them there, expounding and arguing, when we brought his lunch. Father finally became so interested that he took us all to attend the lectures.

To Lenore and me the net gain was that we enlarged our stock of rhymes by learning the streetcar ads on the trips to and from them. One of our favorites was that of a tailor:

"Higgeldy, piggeldy, my son John  
Went to bed with his britches on.  
He was in love with their style, you see,  
Because they were made by Kent - that's Me."

Another, from which we still quote the first two lines when appropriate, was:

"Man wants little here below  
But wants that little good.  
Heinz baked beans with tomato sauce  
Is the daintiest, best of foods."

And there were a whole series of "Spotless Town" cards by Sapolio, such as:

"This is the Mayor of Spotless Town,  
The cleanest town for miles around," etc.

Father then arranged for a hall, printed the posters, himself, and brought the Doctor to Riverton for a lecture and as a guest in our home the last day and night before leaving for Chicago. He and

our parents sat up away into the night talking. The Doctor was a man of strong personal magnetism, as well as a fluent and persuasive talker, and eventually dispelled any lingering misgivings Father might have had. By morning he was ready to throw his lot in with the community and turn his worldly goods into the common fund, but mother was neither converted nor convinced. She even suggested that if Father wanted to join, he should do so and she would keep us children where we were. This, however, was not what Father wanted. It was his idea that we should all go, and we children, thrilled with thoughts of a trip to Chicago and the excitement of the change, were all for going.

The finances of the Community, always a series of hills and valleys, happened at that time to be in a very deep valley so Father immediately drew a check for the money we had in the bank, except what would be needed to take care of us until we reached Chicago, and we prepared to leave as soon as possible. Mother must have suffered many pangs with delivery of that check, for it represented not only a new home, but also the beginning of careful savings which were to have eventually sent us all through college.

One of her grandfathers had learned the iron foundry business after his War of 1812 service, and went into partnership with another man in the little town then called Sharon (later consolidated with Bridgewater) built on a triangular flat formed by the confluence of Brady's Run and the Beaver River in Western Pennsylvania. Incidentally, there was an interesting bit of history connected with this little town as it was here that Aaron Burr outfitted some of the boats designed to carry provisions and accompany the expedition which was to establish his proposed "Northwestern Empire."

Later the partnership was dissolved and her grandfather became interested in a foundry in eastern Ohio, but came home week-ends to be with his family, which had remained on the farm and eventually consisted of eight boys and two girls. Of the boys, three became successful doctors and two bankers. Mother's father, however, was the one who had learned to love the land best and he became a farmer. As often happens in such cases, some of the brothers were in position to give their children greater advantages and sent their daughters to an eastern university. One of the uncles, who was very fond of Mother, tried to persuade her to go, also, at his expense but, much as she wanted to, she declined, either because she was too proud to accept from another what her own father could not give her, or she did not want to risk hurting her father, to whom she was devoted. At any rate, it became her dearest dream that all of her children should have the opportunity she could not take.

In fact it must have all been a great shock to Mother, wrapped up in her family as she was, for the Community was a celibate society and there was no family life, as such. Men and women lived separately and the children were supposed to be turned over to a caretaker. On this point, however, she balked utterly, saying that under no condition would she turn her children over to anyone unless they elected to go of their own free wills, and the Doctor promised that no one would ever ask her to give them up.

The lecture had naturally created a great deal of discussion in town and, when it was learned that we were planning to join the Community, our neighbors were particularly interested,

and generally disapproving. One told Mother, "I think it is terrible that your family should be broken up, for it is the happiest family I have ever known."

The Pennsylvania Railroad, for which Father had worked for so many years, provided a box car in which to take our household furnishings and his printing equipment, but the loom was left behind, as was the old spinning wheel which we had used to round the pegs for the shuttle guides. I have often thought of that old wheel and wondered which of our ancestresses may have sat at it and spun flax or wool into thread or yarn in the earlier days.

Some years later, on a visit to our grandparents, I also visited the Dees. Clifford was then engaged to the older sister of a boy who had been in my class in school (later they married), and Tommy was planning to study for the ministry.

On still later trips to Pennsylvania, my husband and I passed through Riverton but did not stop to look around much. The two school buildings had been torn down and a new, larger one occupied the old grounds; otherwise, the heart of the town, at least, appeared to be about the same.

## PART II

### I l l i n o i s

### Chapter III

#### The Unity and Its Chicago Homes

The Koreshan Unity was founded by Dr. Cyrus Reed Teed, born October 18, 1839 near Trout Creek in Tompkins Township, Delaware County, N. Y., in a small town called Teedsville. His parents were Jesse and Sarah Ann (Tuttle) Teed, and he was the second son of their eight children. His mother's ancestry traced back to John Reed, who came from England in 1630 and settled in Rehoboth, Mass. Jesse Teed, said to have been a successful country doctor, was probably, like so many in his profession then, not so successful in collecting his fees, for Cyrus when eleven left school to help support the rapidly growing family. Friends and relatives tried to persuade him to study for the ministry, his family being of the Baptist faith, but his inclinations were to follow in his father's footsteps so he turned to medicine instead and, in 1859, when he was twenty, began to study with his uncle, Dr. Samuel F. Teed, in Utica, N. Y. (Note: His father Jesse Teed was with the Unity in Chicago for awhile, but I remember him only as an old man with white hair and beard.)

After serving with the Union forces throughout the Civil War, he entered the Eclectic Medical College in New York and, after graduation in 1868, began his practice in Utica. However, his experiences during the war combined with his naturally religious nature, it is said, gave him the urge to help mankind not only physically but spiritually as well, so he delved into metaphysical research

and, in 1869, during a period of fasting and prayer, experienced what he always called "The Illumination," which he believed was a revelation of the mysteries of life and death and the relation of man to God. He continued his practice but his theories made him "different" in the conservative community in which he lived and eventually it began to fall off.

When he was invited to address the National Association of Mental Science in Chicago, in 1886, his natural ability as an orator, and his great personal magnetism impressed the convention to such an extent that he was invited to accept the presidency, which he did, and he and his then small colony of followers, founded 1880 in Moravia, N. Y., left that state and settled in Chicago, where they incorporated the "College of Life" under the laws of the state of Illinois. The organization was also known as "The Church Triumphant" and two years later, in 1888, it became the "Koreshan Unity," Koresch being the Hebrew translation of his given name Cyrus. Those who joined the community turned in all of their worldly possessions and lived a celibate life as brothers and sisters in a communal society. Doctor made frequent lecture tours and usually brought in new converts.

It was a bitterly cold December day when we arrived at Washington Heights, the Chicago suburb where the main body of the Unity lived and, unfortunately, through some misunderstanding, did not get off at the station where the reception committee was awaiting us, but at another one. As there seemed nothing else to do, we started out on our own, trudging through deep snow and biting winds until almost frozen. Realizing at last that we must have gone too far, we crossed the street and turned back. Finally stopping at a house to inquire, we learned that our objective was

just a block further but the kindly German woman insisted that we come in and warm ourselves at her fire before going on, which we were glad to do, but it was a dejected, exhausted group that eventually entered through the gateway to our new home.

While the greater number of the members lived at Washington Heights, those engaged in printing and publishing were at Englewood, a closer in suburb of the city, where they had a home as well as the publishing building. Publications were The Guiding Star, The Flaming Sword and The Cellular Cosmogony, the last named being considered the standard textbook of the Koreshan belief that all life was contained inside, not outside, of the globe.

Father's printing equipment was welcomed into the shop and he was assigned to the duties connected with it, principally as an estimator, proofreader and solicitor for the commercial department.

Sometimes when the printing office had a rush job requiring the folding and insertion of leaflets or papers, Father would take Lenore and me down to help, which was always fun for he usually drove old Nelly at such times so we enjoyed the trip down and back. Everybody made a good bit over us, the men at the printing office and the women at the house where we ate our dinners - which we also always enjoyed, as the group was smaller and consequently the food seemed better prepared and more homelike. Sometimes, however, during periods when nobody came around, we just sat and worked, and that became a little tiresome. Recently, during a conversation in this connection, Lenore recalled the first trip we made to Englewood on the streetcar alone, or so we had supposed until we got up to change cars at the junction and spied

Father sitting in one of the back seats, and his sheepish look at being found out.

I had not known until I saw the map of Washington Heights as it was then, which I obtained from the Chicago Historical Society, that it comprised such a large area, for we had always thought of it as just one of several small communities, including Walden and Longwood. The map shows that in addition to the Hilliard & Dobbins Subdivision (where we lived), and Hilliard & Dobbins Re-subdivision, which adjoined in the extreme northern part of the Heights, there were three other large subdivisions - Halstead Street, Hitt's, and Blue Island Land & Building Co.'s, as well as several smaller ones; the latter including a small "Mrs. Hilliard's Subdivision" to the south and east. There was even a Hilliard Avenue running from the southern boundary, which apparently became Winston Avenue after a break at the right of way of one section of the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad.

The little shopping center which we used most frequently, and knew as Washington Heights, was either at the point of the triangle between 101st and 102nd Streets or that between 102nd and 103rd of the Blue Island Land & Building Co.'s subdivision.

I cannot, however, pinpoint Longwood so it may have been beyond 95th Street from us and not in Washington Heights. We only occasionally made trips to Longwood and then mostly to buy candy or cookies when we had a little change to spend. There was one kind of candy I have never seen anywhere else - little irregular drops of some dark caramel-like concoction, lightly covered with a white frosting, which sold seven for a penny, so we nearly always bought some of them, and M M Walnut cakes, which Lenore remembers as: "Than which there was nothing better." Grandmother

regularly sent us the Sunday edition of a Pittsburgh newspaper and, when the wrapper was cut and the paper opened up, a dime always rolled out. This was candy money.

Walden's Addition to Washington Heights seems to have been a part of Deres Subdivision, and the little railroad station at Walden was at 99th Street and Walden Park Way, the latter so named, probably, because of a narrow strip of public park between it and the railroad. Lenore has always remembered especially the violets at Walden. She expressed it this way: "From a distance it was a purple mound, and even up close there was hardly a leaf to be seen, just flowers, the center ones with stems ten or more inches long. I doubt if violets grow better anywhere." There were also wonderful woods around Walden, and a block somewhere along the way on which the trees and undergrowth were so thick that we sometimes went exploring - Lenore as Balboa and I as Americo Vespucci.

The Washington Heights home consisted of an estate fronting on 99th Street, between Winston Avenue on the east and Charles Street on the west, and was owned by Laurin P. Hilliard, a real estate operator of great wealth. The main building was originally known as "The Hilliard Mansion," as he lived in it during the period of 1891 through 1895, when it was rented by the Koreshan Unity through 1902. The block on which the mansion stood was the eastern half, between Winston and Oak Avenues, the latter now known as Beverly, and perhaps four fifths of it was occupied by the main living complex. The northwest fifth, separated by a fence, had the cottage which was turned over to our family when we entered the colony. Doctor Teed named the place "Beth Ophrah"

(meaning House of Sacrifice in Hebrew) and the words were spelled out in white stones on the lawn next to 99th street.

The master building was a large two and a half story affair, with a ground level basement housing a pump which brought up water so cool it might have come from a refrigerator.

The first floor hallway had doors to the dining room on one side and the first parlor, used as a general living room, on the other, and a door opening into Doctor's bedroom at the back. This latter had probably been Mr. Hilliard's study or the library, and had a large open fireplace. The matron occupied the second parlor. Both hallways had stairways leading to the second floor.

By present standards, the kitchen was enormous, with two large ranges and a small butler's pantry at one side through which the food and dishes were conveyed to the dining rooms. The individual sugars and creamers were always washed here separately - the other dishes being taken care of in the kitchen. It also contained the "speaking tube" for communication with the other floors. At first it was rather startling, in those days before radio, or even telephones to any extent, to be on the second floor, when suddenly a bodyless voice would sing out: "My-ray, My-rah (or somebody else) come to the t-u-u-be." It was in this little butler's pantry that I performed the only duty ever asked of me around the "big house" - wiping the glasses and little individual creamers and sugars as helper to one of the older girls who prided herself on her fine sarcasm, and practiced on me during our sessions there.

There were two dining rooms, the one in the back of the building was called the front dining room and the other, on the front,

just the dining room. Each had a long table.

The rest of the house was given over to bedrooms.

There were small, sharp gables, topped with little iron grill fences, over most of the upper windows, and the roof peaked up three or four times, making nice, concealed areas where the older girls often carried their bedclothes and slept on especially warm nights. The mansion stood back quite a distance from the street, and was reached by a white crushed stone driveway, which entered from 99th street at the southwest corner of that part of the block, curved toward the house and then clear around it. Another driveway joined this and led from the house to a Winston Avenue entrance. There was also a foot walk from 99th Street about the middle of the front, which led through the flower beds to the house. The entire area was enclosed by an ornamental iron fence.

Just a little inside the lot, and accessible from the driveway, was a large two-story building which had been the "carriage house," but which we used as a general assembly room.

In the earlier days church meetings were all held here, though later on an old building down town, known as "The Rookery," originally a theatre of some kind, I believe, was rented as it not only had a much larger place for meetings, but was easily accessible for just anyone to come in and listen. Doctor's talks were seldom less than two hours long and I always wondered how he could stand so long and still talk so vigorously. For myself, I am afraid my mind wandered much of the time to other things - a book I was reading or had read, or something similarly unrelated. I remember that during the period when I was studying

that part of grammar, I would diagram what he was saying rather than try to understand it, and therefore did not end up so well informed on the subject in point as I might have otherwise.

Occupying the western side of the assembly room was the library - the combined libraries of those who were members of the community or had been at some time in the past - books and magazines brought in from all over the United States. There were, I remember, complete sets of Shakespeare, Dickens, Bulwer-Lytton, etc., and *The Argosy*, *The Atlantic Monthly*, *Munsey's*, *The Review of Reviews*, and many more. Immediately after discovery, I became its principal patron. The librarian, Sister Eileen, a small woman with a low voice and soft brown eyes, her iron gray hair parted in the middle and pulled smoothly back from her face, lived in one of the rooms above the assembly room, and always seemed glad to accommodate when I went for a new book, though this was nearly every day for a long time, but finally became worried because a child of my age was reading so many novels, so insisted that I devote myself to histories for awhile. I willingly accepted what she selected for me and found the lives of Frederick the Great and His Court, Alexander the Great, Maria Theresa of Austria, Marie Antoinette and the others just as interesting as "Linda, or the Pilot of The Belle Créole."

One item of continuous interest to us youngsters during the first days was a stuffed pelican mounted on top of a high revolving bookcase in one corner, and we heard for the first time the rhyme which is still used so much on postcards picturing pelicans: "What a wonderful bird is the pelican, his beak can hold more than his belly can," etc., which seemed so appropriate to that big pouch.

At the very back of the property was a long building, part two-story and the rest single, which contained the machine shop and other work rooms, one being where clothes were ironed, while the second floor of the central part provided sleeping quarters for the men who lived and worked at Beth Ophrah. Later on Belgian hares were kept in part of the one-story building and a temporary structure in front of it.

The last of the buildings was a small one which was used as the school house when we first moved there, and then Victoria took it over for her Persian and Angora cats after classes were no longer held there.

The grounds themselves were beautiful. There were several large oak trees, one right in front of the house, and between that and the street was a large circular arrangement of flower beds, including many roses, with paths winding among them. Just opposite the assembly room, across the driveway, were lilacs and a large round bed of lilies of the valley. The other corner of the lot fronting 99th Street had quite a grove of pine trees which, with a smaller clump at the other side and behind the assembly room, were always so thrilling to me when loaded with fresh snow. Although the short driveway to Winston sloped down gradually, the part of the lot to the north of it was terraced, so made a nice place to coast on our sleds when the snow was right for it.

The cottage on the extreme southwest corner of the block, separated from the rest, was probably occupied by servants originally and turned over to our family in its entirety when we first entered the Unity. A little later Father moved to quarters over the laundry, where he had more room for working on his temple

and shuttle guides, etc., and then Doctor Charles and Nancy took over two of the upstairs bedrooms, but Lenore and I still had the other one until a fire caused us to move temporarily to another place on the back of the lot on Charles Street - which also had a house on the front part. When the firemen came, the first thing some of them did was to begin to throw things out of the windows, including our most prized toys - a pair of gray cloth covered plaster of Paris donkeys, whose heads hung on hooks so that they moved up and down when the donkeys were pulled or pushed. Later we grieved to find them crushed beyond repair. The building was only slightly damaged by the fire so we soon returned to it but, as by then Kathleen had joined the other girls of her group at the big house, not only the second floor was taken over by others, but also the front room on the main floor, so Lenore and I slept in a double bed in what had originally been the living room, and Rosemary in a smaller bed beside it.

There was a storm entrance at the front door and a much larger one at the back. In the latter was the flight of stairs to the first floor and the few necessary to enter the basement, which was almost ground level and divided into three rooms. The first of these we children used as a play room and Father as a workshop during the time he lived with us in the cottage. The middle one contained the bakeshop where Mother baked the bread; these were both plastered and floored. The third was the unfloored cellar type and was used mostly for storage.

Our front yard had a tall pine tree, decorated clear to its top, in season, by the orange-red blossoms of a trumpet vine which

grew near its base, and there were two kinds of flowers that we children, at least, had never seen before - the yellow California poppies in the front corner of the other side, and the big, thick, velvety, red cockscombs, which never seemed to rightfully belong on a plant.

The front part of our lot was separated from the other one by a double up-and-down board fence, something like a wall as it had a top which could be walked on, and sort of undulated upward with a couple of curved steps to a big open shed on the other side. This shed roof was one of our play places for it was almost flat and well shaded by a walnut tree nearby. I still love Virginia creepers because of the one which climbed the back part of the fence and along the front edge of the roof and was always so bright red in the fall. The shed and walnut tree were in a kind of corridor formed by our fence on one side and the western wall of the assembly room on the other. Lenore recalled the tall apple tree, also in it, with big green apples which made such delicious apple-sauce that she still thinks it was the best she ever tasted.

The rest of the strip along the western or Oak Avenue part of the grounds, not occupied by our cottage and its yard, had been devoted to fruit trees - just pears, as I remember, a trellis for grapevines and some garden vegetables, mostly radishes, onions and parsley. The only time I ever saw artichokes growing was along the western fence, or asparagus - though this bed was inside our part of the lot and no longer cared for.

Between Oak Avenue and the next block, the other half of the Hilliard estate, were the tracks of the Pittsburgh, Cincinnati & St. Louis Railroad, now owned by the Pennsylvania Railroad. Its

right of way was always a source of fun and pleasure for us children. In the spring it was covered with what we called blue-bells (I have since learned they have several names, one being Jacob's tears), lilies of the valley and other flowers, and a little later we gathered and ate the wild strawberries that grew in such profusion - tiny, but unusually flavorful, and sweet as sugar. In the winter months the long frozen ponds at the sides of the tracks provided fine skating. Sometimes the winds from the lake were so strong we had to bend at right angles to make our way from one end to the other, but then all that was necessary was to stand up and keep our feet pointed in the right direction for the winds to carry us back with no effort at all on our part.

Our real playground in warm weather, however, was the block on the other side of the railroad right of way, which had originally been the farm.

At the southwestern corner of the block, 99th Street and Charles Avenue, was "Aunty Brown's Cottage," occupied when we first knew it by a group of women who seemed to live rather independently of the main house, and the matron was an old lady whose last name was Brown. I knew it much better later on as "The Children's Cottage." Behind this cottage was the large barnlike two-story building, the lower part of which was the laundry and the upper floor mostly for storage, other than that section where Father had his living quarters and I spent many happy hours with him when he was not at Englewood and I was living at the children's cottage.

On the other side of the block, next to the railroad, was the barn where the three horses, as well as the cows, were kept.

The loft above was always inviting to us with its hay and sweet clover smells. One of the cats - the Maltese one - always chose a nook in this loft to bring her offspring into the world, which made it a very exciting place to us at such times. Someone would say, "That old gray cat is going to have kittens again," and after that we made it our business to chase up the ladder into the loft whenever we saw her heading into the barn.

From the barn to the back of the lot was a strip of tall oak trees and, adjoining it, an area of fruit trees, mostly apples and cherries but also some others.

The remaining and greater part of this block was the actual farm where we children were sometimes called upon to help plant corn, tomatoes, green and wax beans, watermelons, muskmelons, etc., and later on to assist in the harvesting; though I don't remember that this applied to the field of muskmelons, we sometimes harvested one or more of those without being asked. And such muskmelons!! Thick meated ones with a flavor out of this world. The tomatoes, too, were perfect - the round kind with a rose tinted color and seldom a blemish.

"Doc" Charles was in charge of the farm and one or two of the other brothers assisted. We never minded much when we were asked to help for we liked Doc Charles in spite of his teasing. He was also the community doctor, but that did not take up much of his time. The young brother who took care of the horses would obligingly fix them up for us to ride sometimes when they were not otherwise engaged. There was just one saddle and this was placed on Nellie, the carriage horse, which had taken Doc on his calls when he practiced outside and then accompanied him into the Unity.

There was a blanket for one of the farm horses, but the other offered just his own sleek brown back. We always took turns; the one who rode in the saddle first took the blanketed horse next and then went it bareback. Our riding was always done within the enclosure of the farm.

In the spring we played in the apple orchard, a fairylike place with its pink and white blossoms overhead and carpet of fallen petals. Later, when the apples began to fall, we played hospital there, making patients of the fallen fruit - a small one for the head and two larger ones for the body, with sticks for arms and legs. We operated on wormholes and other blemishes or irregularities, afterward fitting in a sound piece from another apple. The saying, "The operation was a success, but the patient died" applied to our efforts, for the flesh around the wound and the graft, itself, always turned brown soon.

Or we made Indian villages under the oaks, the tepees covered with corn husks and the Indians themselves made of acorns and sticks with corn silk hair and warlocks. More often, however, we would just lie for hours at a time watching the various colonies of ants - big and little black ones, and small and smaller red ones - carrying on their multitudinous activities at the bases of the trees. They would build their homes, entering through holes or between roots, carrying out piles of sawdust and carrying in their supplies of bugs and worms. Sometimes one kind invaded the home of another, and then it was the bodies of the victims which were carried out and dumped in a pile, or some of those which had escaped death frantically trying to save as many of the white eggs as they could.

Often we helped the struggling locusts out of their clear,

varnishlike shells and watched them shivering in the ecstasy of their transformation from dull brown, crawling bugs into creatures of creamy white with lovely iridescent wings, though destined to again become dark.

## Chapter IV

### Early Days

There were a half dozen or so girls in the Unity at the time we entered, ranging in ages from fifteen to twenty-one or twenty-two, and Kathleen, not yet fourteen, was accepted into the group known as "the big girls." Before long she moved over to the big house to live with them, though spent a good bit of time at the cottage, too. Lenore and I ate our meals at the main dining room but Mother took care of the little ones at home.

We younger children were accepted with some reservations by some of the sisters, who feared we might disrupt the set order of things, and this was the attitude of the matron and her assistant, the latter remarking dourly to Lenore and me one time when she was instructing us to stay on the porch until the second bell should ring, that "Children are all right in their place, but their place is not in the house."

This same rule applied to Duke, a big tan mastiff, who was the outside dog at that time. There was also an inside dog, Queenie, a white great Dane, owned by two sisters who lavished all the care and affection on her they might have bestowed on their families in other circumstances. She was carefully fed, bathed and walked around the grounds and streets, but Duke was never bathed, and his food consisted of scraps from the kitchen, given to him outside. However, he was probably the happier of the two for he could come and go without let or hindrance.

One cold day Lenore and I were sitting shivering on the porch

waiting for dinner when Doctor came by and, surprised to see us there, asked, "Why aren't you little girls inside where it is warm?" When we replied that we were not allowed in until after the second bell, he said, "Well, I know where you are allowed. Come with me," and escorted us into his room where, by the brightly burning fire in the grate, stretched out in luxurious comfort, lay Duke, doggy smell and all. As we left to go to the dining room, Doctor told us we were not to sit out in the cold thereafter, but to come immediately into the house where it was warm. Evidently the same instructions were given to the matron and her assistant for there was never anything said after that when we went right into the living room.

One day soon after our arrival, when Mother had gone over to the big house on some errand and paused in the hall to warm at the radiator, she suddenly became conscious that two sisters in the living room were discussing us, one complaining, "I don't know what Doctor was thinking about, bringing in that sickly woman and all those children. She'll die and then we will have the children on our hands." But they didn't know Mother. The last thing she intended was to leave her children to anyone. Her body may have looked frail but her spirit was strong, and she had such an indomitable will to live and carry on that she would survive both of them by many years.

She was determined, also, to do even more than her part of the community work in addition to the care of her children, and soon had taken on the baking. An oven was moved over into our middle basement room and three times a week she set two big pans of sponge and the next day the light, fragrant loaves of white and graham bread were sent over to the kitchen.

Then she was asked to take charge of the laundry and she did this, too, though it meant doing a great deal of the work herself for it was always difficult to find workers for the laundry. However, in addition to the few who would help occasionally, she had faithful assistants in two men. One, Brother Ed, was a quiet, reserved person who seldom spoke but was always on the job, and the other a tall, lanky red headed Englishman named Thomas Beedam, but who called himself "Thomas Be-dam" with the accent on the last syllable. Unlike Brother Ed, he was extremely voluble and, contrary to the general impression concerning Englishmen, witty. It was his duty to hang the clothes on the lines and when Kathleen could stay with Rosemary and Walton, or when Mother would leave to go home, Lenore and I helped him. He usually glanced at the laundry mark on each article to identify the owner and then kept up a steady stream of comments to or about that owner. It kept us giggling for he had been a member some time and knew the characteristics of most of the brothers and sisters, some of whom, probably, would not have found the performance so entertaining as we did. The long union suits, which soon froze and moved about stiffly in the winter winds, constituted particularly interesting subjects.

Mother also took her turn in the kitchen by preparing Wednesday supper. The regular cooks were on duty on alternate weeks for breakfasts and dinners, but other sisters relieved them of some of the evening meals.

As is the case everywhere, some were natural cooks and could prepare appetizing meals from the ingredients provided and others succeeded only in concocting an unpalatable medley of dishes. I still do not care for parsley because one of my early Unity memories

is a thin, watery soup with cut onion tops and parsley floating around in it. As it neared noon, we would often run into the kitchen to ask what we were going to have for dinner and if Sister Susie (who belonged to the latter category) was on duty, she would invariably reply, "I neffer tell," to which we would grumble, "Probably parsley soup." She also made great quantities of gravy which Lenore and I always insisted tasted like rubber, and called it "gum boot gravy," because when we offered it to our talkative cat she refused it with sounds resembling the words "gum boot." Another of the regular cooks made a delicious potpie with biscuit topping.

Mother also performed still another function, minor to her but important to the girls of the community. One day during the spring after we joined, some of the girls had arranged an outing for a certain day but, when the morning arrived, the weather proved anything but promising and all predictions were for rain. Finally Kathleen, who was one of the party, brought them over to Mother to see what she thought about it. Mother looked at the sky and then at the eager young faces waiting anxiously for her words. "Go on," she said. "it isn't going to rain," and it didn't. From then on she was weather prophet for the group and, miraculous as it seemed, was always right.

As already mentioned, the community's finances at the time we entered were at a rather low ebb. It had been away behind with its rents and threatened with eviction before Doctor started on the lecture tour which brought us in, so it had taken the most of our contribution to pay up rents and other obligations and there was still a struggle to make ends meet. Fortunately, the women

could help out with a little home industry. It was during the time that umbrella shawls and fascinators were popular so most of the women kept a shawl or fascinator on hand to crochet on in spare minutes. It is amazing to me to remember how many Mother managed to sandwich in between the other things she accomplished, but she crocheted very rapidly and never wasted a minute. Lenore and I did our stint also, although there was no compulsion for us or, in fact, for anyone else. The shawls, as some will remember, were perfectly round and in a graduated shell stitch. White seemed to be the most popular, generally with pink or blue purling on the edge, but there were lots of black and red ones, and even some chinchillas. Personally, I liked to make the fascinators for they were generally in colors and could be finished so much more quickly.

As Father still had his connections with weavers throughout the country, he did his part by making and selling his temple and shuttle guides. The front basement was converted into a workroom and he spent a great many of his evenings there making the equipment and preparing it for shipment.

Soon after our arrival two little boys who lived in another part of the Chicago area and sometimes visited the Unity with their parents, outside Koreshans, presented Lenore and me with three white rats, much to our delight. We named the male Dreyfus, the older female Cleopatra, and the young female Fern - perhaps because she seemed too small to rate anything very pretentious.

One of the interested members resurrected a large squirrel cage for their home and Father made a revolving tin wheel in which they might exercise. It was like a large tin can with about five round holes in the ends for entrance and exit, and long slits cut

in the main part, with the edges turned outward, making running in it easy and comfortable. A wire through the center suspended it in the cage, and we often awakened during the night to hear it humming as the rats took their nocturnal workouts. A two-room box fastened to the back, one filled with soft grass for a nest and the other just to give them a dark room to which to drag their food, if they wished, completed a very satisfactory apartment; especially as the cage had a removable floor which could be covered with sawdust and cleaned easily. The cellar room was turned over to us for our rats.

Except for the fact that we could never reconcile ourselves to their tails, we enjoyed them as pets. Their red eyes were like jewels in their clean white fur, and they had cute little habits like squirrels. The females were very tame, almost affectionate, but Dreyfus developed goiter and an uncertain temper after awhile. Also, his fur was more harsh and not so nice to pet. When we gave the cage a thorough housecleaning, the rats were dropped into a barrel, but our reach was not long enough to always get them out again on the first try so sometimes we succeeded only in pulling out fur. The only one who seemed to resent this was Dreyfus, who would crouch down as low as he could and look mean, but he never bit either Lenore or me, apparently respecting the hands that fed him. However once, when one of the other little girls with longer arms tried to help after two or three of our unsuccessful attempts, he sank his sharp teeth into her finger.

We could hardly wait for Cleopatra to have her first babies, and every few days had either Mother or Father inspect her to see

how long they thought it would be, but were terribly disappointed when we found the ten hairless red morsels in the nest one morning. We had expected soft little balls of white fur and it seemed impossible that these repulsive bits of flesh could ever be anything.

Fern's first contribution consisted of only four, but she soon caught up with Cleopatra and they seemed to vie with each other from then on to see which could have the largest litter. As there were no more squirrel cages, the later generations had to make out with wooden boxes and wire netting so, as they arrived every few weeks, six to nine at a time usually, we finally moved some of them into the front basement room to have them near a window. This was accepted without question by both Father and Mother but, with the first infiltration into the middle room where Mother did the family baking, she called a halt - especially since with so many to care for we were not quite so conscientious with our housekeeping, she was beginning to notice the rat smell.

As a matter of fact, by that time rat culture had begun to pall on everybody. Lenore and I had become tired of the work entailed, for feeding them, cleaning the cages, and gathering dry grass for their beds had become an almost full time occupation outside of school or anything else we were supposed to do. Father had had to drown several that had escaped from their boxes and were mutilated by the wild rats, which he was too tender hearted to want to do, and we did not want poison or traps put out for the wild ones because the wild ones had permitted some of the white ones to join them so, when we opened the door to the dumb waiter which ran from the kitchen to the first basement room, we were beginning to see not only both dark and white rats, but also

spotted ones running up and down the ropes.

Finally when Father suggested that he take a few at a time down town and place them in a small cage in the printing office window, we were only too happy to agree and, to everybody's amazement, they went like "hot cakes" at twenty five cents apiece for the big ones, fifteen or two for twenty five for the little ones. Even old Dreyfus, who had become so morose that we had not thought anybody would want him, was snapped up, goiter notwithstanding.

During our first winter or early spring in the Chicago area, for the third time the illness of one of her children was to strike terror to Mother's heart. This time it was Walton. The trouble at first seemed to be only a cold but when it became apparent that the usual remedies were not accomplishing anything, she called in Doctor Charles. His efforts, however, were of no greater avail and, as the days went by the little body burned with fever and wasted away. Finally one evening Doctor Charles came by to tell her he had been called out of town for two or three days. After examining Walton for the last time, he left a different kind of medicine, but told her flatly that he had done all he could and did not expect to find the baby alive when he returned. Mother did not cry - she never cried, but after he had left she put the medicine aside; if he had no faith in it, neither had she. A few minutes later Doctor came in, evidently after talking to Doc Charles. He looked closely at the little patient and then turned to Mother. "Don't believe what Doctor Charles told you," he said, "the child isn't going to die," and his words gave her comfort and hope.

She did not lie down that night. Though worn by the strain of Walton's illness, she was calm and assured. At such times she

could call on an inward strength she seemed always to have in reserve. If she had to carry him through the crisis herself, she was prepared to do it.

When we went to bed, Walton's head was turning one way and the other, his eyes rolled back, with no sign of recognition, even for Mother, but in the morning when we tiptoed into the room where they were, the fever was gone and his eyes were bright and knowing. From then on his recovery was rapid and Mother serene.

We children had a great affection for Doctor, always running to kiss him when we were playing near the Winston side of the lot and he would come in that way from the 99th Street car stop when returning from Englewood. Even after I went to the children's cottage and would see him coming from the Walden station alone, I ran out to kiss him, and then we walked together as far as the railroad tracks, he with his arm around my shoulder. Usually Father was with him and of course shared our kisses. Occasionally Victoria, "Pre-eminent," or head woman of the Unity, was also included, though did not share them. Unlike Doctor, she was rather standoffish and not a person with whom we children could feel natural. Looking back, I am sure she craved the love and attention of the young people which was so freely given to Doctor but, instead, we felt constrained and uncertain in her presence.

Very "finished," according to the standards of the day, she devoted a great deal of time to the older girls, conducting classes in drawing, painting - including china painting, and embroidery, and gave individual singing lessons to those whose voices showed promise. Kathleen, who had a beautiful voice with an unusual range, was her favorite pupil in the voice lessons and the only one she continued to

teach long after we all went to Estero.

Breakfasts and dinners she always ate in the front dining room with Doctor and others, but at noon she had only the older girls that she might teach them table manners. She considered me too young for most of these efforts but did include me for table etiquette, which made me anything but happy for she also used the occasions to lecture me on anything she had seen or heard about that the children had done of which she or someone else had not approved. Lenore ate her meals in the other dining room and the only other girl then near my age and who played with Lenore and me a good bit of the time lived with her mother in a cottage of their own and just ate with us off and on, so I received the reprimands for all three. I would wrack my brain to try to think of something any of us might have done that I could be called down for and decide there was absolutely nothing, only to learn that I had been mistaken, for there always seemed to be something.

One of our principal misdemeanors was in connection with a bicycle - not our own bicycles, but an old wreck which was kept in the machine shop, though why it was kept at all we never knew for nobody ever used it because it simply wasn't usable. It must have been the granddaddy of all bicycles to follow the big front-wheelers. There were small, solid rubber tires, and the contraption was so old and rusty that it was almost impossible for any of us to ride it around the house once. We persisted in taking it out and trying, however, and then, childlike, abandoning it somewhere, at least for the time being. Someone would complain to Victoria and that would constitute my lecture for the day.

Another was for a breach in the rule not to play with "outside" children. Sometimes when we were walking the top of the

fence which divided the part of our lot from the main one, and playing on the shed top, a little neighbor girl who frequently passed our cottage would stop to watch us longingly, and finally, unable to resist the urge any longer, joined us one day. We had not invited her but could hardly refuse to talk when she came among us. Somebody reported this to Victoria, who refused to accept this explanation, and when the little girl joined us the second time we were forbidden to walk the fence again since it not only attracted the unwelcome guest but was also unladylike.

Another sufferer was Myrah, a quiet girl with big brown eyes, and when Victoria would suddenly turn to her for one reason or another, poor Myrah would roll her eyes and gulp down whatever she had in her mouth, often a bite just taken.

Victoria also coached us on our "speeches," which we were called upon to give at our various entertainments, and actually ruined me for ever speaking in public, though in school and Sunday school activities before we came in, I had loved to give recitations, and even the first part of the time we were at Washington Heights. She would pick out words which she said I used with a "Pennsylvania accent," though I could not see that I said them any differently than anybody else, including Kathleen, whom she never accused of such an accent, and certainly I did not use a Pennsylvania Dutch accent for I had never associated with anybody who did, and at that time did not even know that we had any Pennsylvania Dutch ancestry. After a few such sessions, I developed a horror of having to go on the stage alone, and my last time was to give "The Schooner Hesperus." Victoria, who was very emotional, sat in the front row and I could see her dabbing at her eyes frequently. Afterward she came to me

to say that I had done it beautifully, but to me it seemed that I had done it automatically and that it would never end. From then on I absolutely refused to go on the platform except as part of a group.

## Chapter V

### Entertainments and Pleasure Activities

My most pleasant memories of Victoria in the Chicago days are of the times she shepherded the girls to theatre matinees. These occasions were always unbelievably thrilling - at least to Lenore and me, and were the inspiration for our toy theatre. We fixed up a wooden box for the stage, with draw curtains which could be worked from behind. The actors were all little homemade stuffed rag dolls, their faces crayon colored and their black, brown, yellow and white hair raveled from ribbons, which always seemed to be obtainable from somebody. By means of wires running through staples driven into the ceiling of the box and out of holes in the top back, we could make them "dance" while we sang the songs. I remember especially a dark haired girl who wore pink satin tights and a very short skirt made from ribbon. Then there was a man doll with gray hair and beard raveled from a rope who sat in a chair made from a tin cup with a piece of cardboard inserted for the back and arms, the whole thing covered by a silk brocade handkerchief, and rocked a baby, while we manipulated the chair by a wire fastened to the handle of the cup and sang:

"I've a sweet little wife,  
She's just twenty five;  
Just ten years younger than I.  
She's fond of all pleasures  
And drinks Lager beer  
And often goes out on the sly.

"Sing a-laa-hoo, a-laa-hoo,  
Rock the dear baby and swing  
  it so high.  
Sing a-laa-hoo, a-laa-hoo,  
Mother'll be home by and by.

"She leaves me behind  
The baby to mind,  
The house in good order to keep,  
But don't be alarmed  
For I'm sure there's no harm  
In walking out on the street.  
"Sing a-laa-hoo, a-laa-hoo" etc.

One day while we were playing with it, somebody, though I have forgotten who, happened to come in and was so amused she insisted that we give an exhibition at the main house. Arrangements were made to use the parlor bay window where curtains could be stretched across except for the little theatre, mounted on a table, with short curtains from the wire to the top of the theatre and from the table to the floor, so that only the theatre, itself, was visible. Father was there to play the accompaniments on a comb, and we had as an added attraction Sister Lucile.

Lucile was quite a character who liked to wander around the grounds before sunup in her bare feet, taking what she called "a dew bath;" a tall, angular woman whose attempts at curling her coarse black hair (we always thought she was part Indian) usually resulted in a few wiry loops pinned in place, so that we always referred to unruly loops in our hair as "Luciles." She loved to give readings, and was good at it, two of her favorites being "Pigs is Pigs" and "How I came by the Eye," the latter explaining a "shiner" the teller had acquired. She had a whimsical sense of humor and always placed her finger under her glass eye, to everyone's amusement.

On the evening of our little theatre entertainment, instead of sitting out with the audience and merely coming up front to do her part, as we thought she should, she insisted on staying behind the curtain with us, offering unwelcome suggestions, and finally was the cause of a laugh that was not intended. To our minds the

whole thing was beautifully synchronized - singing, comb accompaniment and chair rocking, but Sister Lucile, peering into the theatre with her good eye, decided the tempo was too slow and made an attempt to speed up the rocking, at least. She grasped the wire in front of my hand with a jerk that brought down the house as well as the cup, which fell with its bright tin bottom toward the audience, much to our chagrin.

My favorite sister was the school teacher, Nancy Charles. She had come into the Unity not because she believed in its principles of life or religion, but because she was very much in love with her husband, Doctor Charles, who did. They had been in love from their college days and were married after he began his practice as a doctor and she her teaching profession in a midwest town. She came in with him but would not give him up, so they continued to live in the marital order during all the years of their stay.

Sister Nancy was not pretty, but was the most young at heart adult I have ever known, with an ever ready sense of humor and a quick laugh. We always seemed to be contemporaries, though I was only nine when our acquaintance began, and spent much time together off and on during the years we were there, both in Chicago and Estero.

In the early spring she, Lenore and I always went hunting dandelion greens for the table. None of us ate the bitter mass they cooked into, but many of the others liked them and the hunting was fun.

During nice weather, especially on Saturdays, we would take such of our share of the dinner as could be conveniently carried, and picnic in nearby woods or one of the parks that were not too

far distant. There were seldom any real picnic items to take, but we made the best of what was available by pretending it was something else. I remember one time in particular when, after we had spread our lunch out on the ground, another group decided to camp close to us. Perhaps, under other circumstances, we might not have been self conscious, but theirs was a regular picnic lunch. We Koreshans were never ashamed of our poverty for we considered it a condition of choice. Any sacrifice was for our religion and way of life so it was something in which to take pride, not shame or embarrassment but, even so, our cornbread became cake and we commented on how unusually delicious it was until our neighbors stared wonderingly, if not enviously, and at least we had as good a time as they.

Sister Nancy was always getting up school entertainments and I was her girl Friday. She would go around among the sisters begging or borrowing materials which we would make into costumes and, of course, the whole community attended.

The one which entailed the most work, but which we enjoyed most in getting ready, I think, was a doll show.

Shortly after we joined the Unity several other families came in, also, so by then there were a good many children in the school and all took the parts of dolls. It was my job to make their rag faces with pencil and crayon, and there were so many that it was a relief that even one, little Rosemary, could attend in her own face as a French doll. Stage fright had not yet afflicted most of us, as it did later, so the performers probably enjoyed the whole affair even more than the audience.

One corner of the assembly room was devoted to the exhibit

of a doll house mounted on one of the zinc squares which were used under stoves. Its brick construction was outlined and crayoned on the sides and the shingles on the roof. There were attached porches and lace curtains at the windows. The lawn was made of pads of moss carefully fitted together, and the white dust from the real walks and driveways provided the paths. There was even a hammock hung between two of the trees (broken from shrubs) around the grounds. Nancy was especially pleased with this little exhibit - she had personally furnished the lace for the curtains - and of course the guests exclaimed over it.

All of our entertainments were held in the assembly room, of course, as it was large enough for anything and had a good sized stage. Music was provided occasionally by a small orchestra, though most of its members lived at Englewood so it was not the regular thing it was later in Estero. Louis ("Louie") Boomer, who was not a member of the Unity but visited often as his mother and sisters were, always led the orchestra when he was there. An unusually talented violinist, he had attracted the attention of a wealthy man who wanted to take over and finance his musical education at the best conservatories in Europe. Louie did not accept, however, and went into the hotel business, later becoming the owner of the Waldorf-Astoria in New York.

One time the girls all made suitable costumes, half for men and half for women, and we had a cakewalk to the rhythm of Alexander's Ragtime Band. Kathleen was voted the star of that one for her fine strong voice led the singing and she was always a natural and graceful dancer.

The Unity attracted all kinds of people, some for reasons other than the belief, and Madam Dis de Barre was one of these. A very large woman with florid complexion and straw colored hair, drawn straight back, she wore a full black dress, gathered into the neck, with two continuous scarves around her neck and reaching practically to the waist - one white and the other orchid in color. Having come with the announced intention of putting a considerable amount of money into the coffers, always welcome information as there were many needs for funds, she was given the red carpet treatment. Although an interesting and, apparently, interested, talker, she was accepted with decided reservations by some of the members, but we youngsters liked her for she always petted us and pretended great interest in anything we were doing when she happened by, even lowering her great body to the ground to play with us. Sometimes, like Victoria, she accompanied Doctor and Father down to the printing office so was included in the kissing when they all came home together, though it never occurred to us to kiss Victoria. It seemed unthinkable that she would want to be kissed so we listened with amazement when Mother told us that Victoria had come to her one day, very much disturbed, saying that apparently we hated her, and citing as proof the fact that we kissed even Madam, but never her. It was easier after that to not be on the reception committee when she was one of those returning, for we could not continue to ignore her and still we could not kiss her.

The Madam claimed to have just returned from India and she would get the older girls into her room in groups to tell them tales of her travels in that country, and weird stories of supernatural experiences which, when Kathleen repeated them to Father

and Mother made them warn her to be very careful with Madam, and, sure enough, it was not long until she tried to persuade two or three of the girls, including Kathleen, to leave with her. When this became known, any popularity she had immediately plummeted, though she stayed on a little longer.

Then one day while some of us were playing in the yard to the back and west of the kitchen, we were attracted by a commotion and ran to the porch just in time to see a big, blackrobed body rolling down the side stairway, weeping and screaming, the orchid and white silk missing for the first time, and her hair hanging around her face in short yellow wisps. The Madam was drunk, though we did not know it then. That was the last of her as far as the Unity was concerned, for drinking anything stronger than coffee constituted grounds for expulsion. Some time later we heard that she was in an English prison.

The money we had earned helping Father with his temples and shuttle guides had not been turned into the common treasury so it provided the wherewithal for bicycles. From then on Lenore and I practically lived on wheels and our trips were extended further than to the little shopping centers. We especially liked to go to Beverly Hills, where there were nice homes and gently rolling hills, and to Morgan Park. There was a military academy at the latter which Harry Boomer attended before he ran away to join the Spanish American Army band, and also a long steep hill that we loved to coast down. We had to walk and push our bicycles to the top, as it was impossible to pedal them, but the ride down was a real thrill - faster and faster, and then across a road at the bottom. If traffic at that time had been anything like it is now, our careers would probably have ended at Morgan Park. Fortunately

for us, the few automobiles around Chicago then were mostly electric and confined to such places as Washington Park, as far as we ever saw, and we never happened to collide with anything else.

"Family Tie"- affection for members of ones own family greater than for any other member of the community - was not supposed to be a characteristic of a good Koreshan but, though Father lived strictly up to all other tenets of the faith, he always enjoyed best being with his own family, so, in order to be with us more on Sundays and to accompany us on our trips, he brought a bicycle that was at Beth Ophrah to the house where we were then living on Charles Street and learned to ride it in the cow pasture next to our place. (Lenore remembers he said he had ridden one of those with a big wheel in front and a tiny one at back when he was young, which was probably the one still at the house when I visited our grandparents as a girl and was told had belonged to Uncle Walter. There was also one at Beth Ophrah which I rode once for a short distance.) We worried about him at first when crossing ditches on the narrow planks provided because he wobbled so we were afraid he might run off, but he never did. After acquiring enough self assurance, he would take us on long trips to some of the parks where we could not have gone alone.

There was no "Children's Cottage" at the time we entered the Unity because there were no children. After we had been there for awhile, Doctor's brother Oliver came in with his two little motherless girls, near the ages of Rosemary and Walton, and Mother was asked to take them until some other arrangement could be made, so the children lived with us for several months. Then a couple came in with two little boys and their mother offered to take the girls,

too, since Mother already had so much on her hands.

Soon there were several children, so it was decided to turn Aunty Brown's cottage into a children's home.

True to Doctor's promise, Mother was not asked to place us in it, but I thought it would be fun to join the others, anyway, and she did not object. It was rather fun, too, in most ways. There were several girls close to my own age. One of them played the guitar and most of us enjoyed sitting around in the evenings singing while she strummed the guitar in accompaniment or played little selections for us, our favorite being The Spanish Fandango. Our only duties consisted of taking care of the cottage itself and helping the matron and her assistant to some extent with the younger children.

Meals were brought in from the big house but we did a little extra cooking and I remember how proud I was of the first gravy I made all by myself. It was nice and smooth and there was no "gum boot" taste.

It was while we were at the children's cottage that Sister Lucie (pronounced "Lu-see'") decided, or was persuaded, to teach French. Either French herself, or of French extraction, she had taught the subject at Wellesley College, which, incidentally, was the one Mother's cousins had attended and to which her uncle wanted to send her. I have wondered since if she ever thought about this and that her children were receiving at least a small part of what she had missed.

The program began with lessons taught by her to the older girls and then they, in turn, were to give them to the younger ones, though I believe that only Kathleen and one other did.

They came to the cottage after our regular school was over. When we became somewhat proficient, Lucie began taking us for long walks during which nothing but French was spoken, and I, at least, looked forward to these walks with great enthusiasm. Ena was hardly less interested but was more timid about talking than I was, and we were the only ones who cared enough to carry on long after the classes were discontinued, by talking to each other in French when we were alone; for awhile pretending that we were two French maids and telling each other of supposed happenings in our make-believe lives.

Although we all liked the assistant matron, the matron herself seemed to rub the older girls the wrong way, and before long Ena and Ruby moved back to the mansion. I stayed but maintained my independence and, in addition to the time I would spend with Father in his quarters over the laundry, especially when he would stay home to work on his temples and shuttleguides, I would go up to see mother and the rest of the family nearly every every afternoon for awhile. The matron objected to this, though it did not interfere with my duties in any way, and finally complained to the Beth Ophrah matron about it, who, in turn, went to Mother. Although Mother willingly did everything else she was asked, where her children were concerned she was adamant. Her reply was that when things reached the point where I could not come to see her when I wanted to, she would take me and leave, which ended any further attempt to interfere.

Ena and I had chummed together a good bit, off and on, and, while she was still at the cottage, we had embarked on the project of collaborating on a novel, writing alternate chapters, which

continued for a good while after she left, as Father obligingly carried the ever larger manuscript back and forth when he went to his meals at Beth Ophrah.

About the same time we also began a correspondence in French, each taking what we considered a rather "sissy" man's name. She was Percival, or Percy, and I Reginald, or Reggie, a nickname that stuck with me for many years, Kathleen and Lenore both using it, though Lenore always pronounced it "Riggie." Even Mother called me Reggie sometimes. Father acted as the postman in this case, too.

Then one day Doctor, who had just returned from a visit to the colony in Florida, announced at a meeting called for the purpose, that he would like volunteers, especially among the young people, to join the Florida part of the Unity, and from then on everything was excitement and many decided to go, Kathleen, Lenore and I among them.

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During the summer of 1919, while in the Chicago area, we drove out to Washington Heights to see the old place and found that the mansion grounds had been cleared of the old buildings. Instead, a row of small homes faced 99th Street and another Winston Avenue. Our cottage was unchanged, and the block containing the Aunty Brown cottage and the farm remained the same, even to the sweet clover that grew so high along the fence - it was just as high and just as sweet.

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PART III

F l o r i d a

## Chapter VI

### E s t e r o

In 1884 an old German farmer, Gustav Damkohler, and his family homesteaded a tract of land along the Estero River and then added to it by purchasing an adjoining one. His wife and two of his children died of a fever, but Elbert, a young son, survived and the two of them continued to live on their property. Then, in the early 1890s, Mr. Damkohler became converted to Koreshanity and turned his property over to Doctor who, by that time was planning to establish his growing colony in a home of their own. On January 31, 1894, a pioneer party of sixteen members left Chicago and began the long trip by slow train to Punta Gorda, then the terminus of the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad, and from there, first by sloop and then by skiffs, to join the Damkohlers and begin clearing land and constructing the buildings necessary to house themselves and the others to follow. The first finished was the "log house," still there, and Father's home during his entire life at Estero.

The experiences of this first group are well written up in A Yankee Pioneer in Florida by Allen H. Andrews, one of them. He also has a detailed account of the "Geodetic Survey," made in 1897, which those who took part were convinced proved the theory Doctor had evolved during or following his "Illumination" that all life exists on the inside rather than the outside of the earth. The instrument used was called "the rectilineator," a model or part of which is still in existence at Estero.

Other properties were soon added to the Unity's holdings,

including long strips of beach on Estero and Big and Little Hickory islands, and still later a tract at the mouth of Estero River and Mound Key, both now parts of the Koreshan State Park.

Mound Key is comprised of nearly 140 acres of shell mounds a mile and a quarter from the tip of Fort Myers Beach and about a half mile west of the entrance to Estero River. Frank Johnson acquired it by a land grant which was signed by President Harrison in 1891 and he, his wife, two sons and two daughters lived there and supported themselves by fishing and growing winter vegetables. I remember just one time when Mrs. Johnson came up to Estero, but we often saw Mr. Johnson and the two boys on trips to and from Fort Myers, either there or sometimes around the docks at Punta Rassa.

There was a very interesting article in the all Florida magazine several years ago. I do not have the author's name, but he had made a personal trip to see it and the substance of his story was somewhat as follows:

The mounds on Mound Key are entirely man made of shells gathered from the waters of Estero Bay by a very ancient people who are said to have inhabited it as long as 1,500 years before Christopher Columbus reached this part of the world. It is not known who they were, but from the similarity of the mounds to those of the Mayas it is thought that a colony of these people drifted northward with the prevailing winds and the ocean current from the Yucatan Peninsula to bring their peculiar civilization to the Florida area. This was first pointed out by Dr. Frank Cushing, a noted archeologist connected with the University of Pennsylvania. He also noted that arts of this kind have nearly always traveled by sea, not land.

The highest, or temple mound, rises 60 feet and has a square base measuring an even 150 feet on each of its sides, three of which are steep and the other sloping gradually to face the rising sun. The top is flat, as are the Maya temple mounds of Yucatan, rather than pointed as those constructed by the Egyptians.

Still discernible are the remains of what was probably once a wide Grand Canal, from which a path led to the theatre mound where it is supposed religious pageants were staged and watched by spectators on a plateau constructed for the purpose.

To the northeast of this are the many smaller mounds on which the people lived and burial mounds where they were interred.

There is some conjecture that the island was used by a Spanish mission in the early 17th century, and a more fanciful one that its first inhabitants may have been refugees from the lost continent of Atlantis, which is believed by some to have been east of the east coast of Central America; that, as the Atlantans realized their land was sinking into the sea, they sought new homes elsewhere, taking their customs and arts with them.

At any rate the first known inhabitants of the Florida west coast were the Caloosa Indians, a peaceful, industrious people who used the conch shells to make their household and farming equipment, fitting them with wooden handles. Some of their clothing was woven from the fiber of palms and the yucca plant, which is not native to Florida but is to the Yucatan Peninsula so supposed to have been brought from there. The last of the Caloosa Indians had been thought to have fled to Cuba more than 250 years ago from Key West but, in 1903, it was reported that there was an Indian tribe

living on a remote hammock near Cape Sable, whose language, clothes and way of living resembled the Caloosas.

Allen Andrews, in his brief story of Mound Key, says that gold beads, Spanish coins, cannon balls, a sword hilt, glazed crockery, silver plates and other items show ancient Spanish occupancy, and he also tells of human bones of great size having been dug from one of the burial mounds, indicating that the owners were of giant height, but they crumbled immediately, only the teeth remaining.

As the cannon balls, coins, etc. mentioned by Allen certainly seem to confirm the Spanish mission conjecture, might not the giant bones which crumbled immediately confirm the Atlantis theory, the Mayas having been short in stature?!! The author of the magazine story soliloquizes at the end as to whether in unearthing the secrets of Mound Key the riddle of a lost continent might be solved.

Of course there are various other theories as to the location of this lost continent, but they do not concern Mound Key.

Mother must have had many qualms when Kathleen, Lenore and I all volunteered to go to Florida but, if so, she made no sign. Instead, she helped us get ready for the trip and promised to follow with the next group to go, which, it was understood, would be soon. I think that promise was all that kept us from backing out at the last minute when we were on the railroad platform waiting for our train to leave. The plans and preparations had been very interesting and exciting - especially the trip into the city to buy a few things to wear, all new towels and washcloths and even brush, comb and mirror sets (these last were my especial pride and joy for there was a little turquoise blue china heart set in a silver filagree ornament - even on the comb), but when

it finally came to the point of leaving Mother and Father and going so far away, it seemed to me that I simply could not do it, and the others evidently felt the same for we were all three weeping when the train pulled out.

By the next morning, however, the excitement of the trip was upon us again. The train was speeding through strange country and the whole crowd was in a holiday spirit. We had our car to ourselves and it was fun eating picnic style and getting acquainted with the group from the Englewood house. We talked, sang songs and, when the stops were long enough, got off the train and saw as much of the towns through which we passed as possible. I have no idea now how many there were in the party, but I do know that our car was filled with women and girls, and the men and boys were in another one behind ours. They were day coaches but, most of us being young, we managed to sleep well enough during the three nights, lying on the seats with pillows for our heads. Nevertheless, all were glad when we reached Punta Gorda, the railroad terminus, to find a schooner waiting to take us to Punta Rassa, and from there to Estero Island. That was, to me at least, the most thrilling part of the journey. I had never been on a sailing vessel before, and the soft flapping of the big white sails, the full moon above and its long reflection on the rippling water made it all seem to be part of a story instead of something that was happening to us.

It was late in the evening when we arrived at the Unity's island house where we were to spend the night, and the sense of unreality was even stronger then. The combination living-dining room was a big, bare, unfinished place, typical, as we were to learn later, of all the Unity houses in the south and, as we

entered, a strange, unfamiliar scent greeted us. Now I would describe it as a fragrance, but the first impression of it was not favorable. It emanated from big baskets of guavas on the long, bare dining table, and when we responded to invitations to help ourselves to the fruit, the taste was as unpleasant as the smell. Now there is no fruit I like better, but it took some time for this change to take place.

That was our first night to sleep under mosquito bars. Each bed had its screen of cheesecloth hanging from a light wooden frame suspended overhead and, after crawling into bed, the cheesecloth had to be carefully tucked under the mattress, if uninterrupted sleep was to be insured. Mosquito netting, we were told, would not serve the requirements because protection must be had from tiny sandflies as well as the mosquitos. In the early morning we saw what was meant for the cheesecloth screens at the windows were heavy with mosquitos and sandflies, which clung tightly as the cloth moved gently in the morning breeze.

The island was approximately seven miles long and ranged in width from a half to a little less than a mile, we were informed. There was a beautiful beach all the way around it, but the central strip was partly mangrove swamp and partly higher ground with a few pines and some very thick undergrowth. It was the mangrove swamp land that sent the mosquitos out in swarms when the wind blew from their direction, though when the sun was up or the wind in the other direction, the pests all seemed to disappear as if by magic, and it was a wonderful place to spend a vacation.

Vacations were to come later, however, for after breakfast preparations were made to start immediately for the community

home on the mainland, about eight miles up the Estero River. The Unity owned a steam launch but it happened to be out of commission just then so a flotilla of row boats was used for the trip.

As it happened, Kathleen and I were included in the group in the boat with Doctor and he was as happy as a child on an adventure.

It was a perfect morning. The air was fresh and clean and the snow white clouds, rounded on tops and sides, but flat bottomed, appeared to be painted on the clear blue sky, while on the almost equally blue water mangrove islands gleamed like emeralds. Doctor pointed these out, saying, "Isn't it beautiful?" but when we passed close enough to them to see the many long mangrove roots reaching down into an oozy looking mud, they lost all attraction for me. There should have been nice, clean sand, or at least good firm earth. Nothing could enjoy such islands but snakes.

The two brothers who did the rowing seemed tireless. They smiled at us all impartially while their arms moved rhythmically in unison and the boat seemed to slide through the water from the bay into the river. The lower reaches of the river were wide and the banks low, covered principally by mangrove and occasional cabbage palms but, as we moved steadily on, the ground became a little higher and there were thick clumps of cabbage palms and tall pines - different pines, though, from those we had known in the north; the growth on these was only at the top, and there were wisps of swaying moss. For long stretches the banks were literally covered with wild grape vines. I had to admit that it really was beautiful in its way, but already I had a deep feeling of homesickness for the sturdy, shady trees of the north and a sun and sky that were not so glaringly bright.

Finally the boats all pulled up at the "Bamboo landing," so called because of the large clumps of bamboo around the little dock, and the whole southern contingent seemed to be there to greet us. As we climbed out and looked around, we felt that we had really entered a new world. The grounds were very attractive with their, to us, unusual trees, shrubs and flowers. Tall eucalyptus trees high pointed the landscape, their light trunks seemingly smoothed and rubbed to a soft finish, huge clumps of bamboo, like great bunches of ostrich plumes, and the big china berry, or umbrella trees with their dense dark green tops really resembling opened umbrellas. When these bloomed, the air around them was sweet with their lilac colored scented blossoms. Palms and palms, many different kinds, were everywhere, and mountain ebonies made great splotches of orchid during their blooming season.

There were also fruit trees of all imaginable kinds - oranges, grapefruit, lemons, limes, tangerines, kumquats, loquats, mangoes, rose apples, pomegranates, surinam cherries with their glossy leaves and little fruits resembling tiny pumpkins - of such a dark hue they were almost black, and many others, including, of course, the guavas.

Except for the citrus, however, they all looked better than they tasted to us newcomers. In fact we found many articles of food new to us and most of them tasted as if they had been flavored with some kind of distasteful medicine. A small white bean looked like our Navy beans, but had an off taste. A white yam resembled mashed potatoes but was only a second cousin. there was something else that looked like white potatoes, too, that had a regular place on the table in those days but was even more strange; this was the cassava. The cooked flesh was run through a meat grinder, seasoned, made into flat cakes and fried. Some of the oldtimers seemed to

like it.

With the exception of the picturesque log one, the houses were ugly, black, unfinished shells. Dominating the others was the big three-story building which was the center of the colony's life. The ground floor of the main part contained the dining and general assembly room, which was warmed by a large wood-burning stove. The assembly part had the stage and the library. The women's dormitory was on the second floor and the girls' on the third. The wing on the back had a combination hallway and butler's pantry and the kitchen with its two big wood-burning ranges. From the hallway part there were doors to porches outside and a stairway leading to the second floor. The rest, or butler's pantry part, had a long table in the center where food was deposited by the cooks, dished up by others assigned to that duty, and passed through windows to shelves inside the dining room. Just above the center table in the butler's pantry was a two-tier storage shelf hung from the ceiling. In one corner was a cabinet covered with fine mesh wire netting and, under the stairway, the bread slicer. The dishes were picked up by boy waiters and carried to the proper tables, known as the first, second, third, etc. sisters' and first, second, third, etc. brothers', each seating from eight to ten or twelve persons. The second and third brothers' were the young men; the third and fourth sisters' young women and girls. The men's tables were at one side of the room and the women's and girls' at the other. There were two long children's tables - one for girls and the other for boys, though in this instance there was no separation of sheep and goats for the little boys' was on a line with that of the little girls' in order that one caretaker could supervise both.

Each of the two floors above the kitchen had one bed room, the one on the second being Mother's for most of her life there, though she had first had a place in the women's dormitory, where her neighbor and friend on one side was Abigail Wagnalls, said to be a sister of one of the men in the Funk & Wagnalls publishing Company. She did beautiful sewing.

There was also a one-story attachment beyond the kitchen where the baking was done and a long storage pantry to one side, both opening into the kitchen. Later a two-story building was constructed not far from the kitchen with living quarters on the second floor and the first used exclusively as a bakery, the big oven being built into the back.

There were no partitions in the dormitories except the framework supporting the sheets which enclosed each person's little "room." Each had a long shelf with a row of pegs underneath, covered by a curtain, and a homemade washstand, also curtained. Equipment consisted of a pitcher and bowl or basin and two pails, one to carry up water and the other to carry it down again after used. Later, when the flowing wells were brought in, a community washroom was built in each dormitory and the water piped up, which did away with at least the first of these chores.

There was also a three or four panel screen to shut the little bathroom off from the rest of the room so that one could bathe and entertain a caller at the same time. Another wooden box, fitted with shelves and surrounded with the usual curtain, served as a combination dressing table and chest of drawers for underwear, towels and other such belongings.

As our crowd had not brought any furniture, beds were scarce

so our sleeping arrangements consisted of a canvas cot and a mattress made of ticking filled with pine needles. These gave out a nice woody fragrance but, as one had to reach through an opening in the ticking to fluff them up each morning, her wrists soon looked as if she had the measles where the points came in contact with the tender skin. Of course there was the universal mosquito bar, which was always twisted at the bottom and thrown up over the frame when not in use. Sometimes we would find the cheesecloth practically covered with mosquitoes and sandflies. More than once I awoke to see bat claws and, more indistinctly, the bat itself hanging to the screen.

Each room had at least one and often two windows but, instead of glass panes, there was a frame, similar to that which supported the mosquito bar, but covered with canvas or heavy duck. These frames could be fastened in when the weather was rainy or very cold, but usually were taken out entirely or rested against the inner side of a wooden bar across the window frame, thus permitting air and a more subdued light.

Although there were a few regular rocking chairs, even then, there were not nearly enough, so the lack was made up by barrel rockers. A barrel was cut half way or more at seat height and the top fitted in as a seat. Kathleen and I had both always been in the habit of really rocking in the chairs we had known before, but were not long in learning that this would land us on the floor, so accustomed ourselves to the little mincing motions the barrels would allow. These rockers made for the difference in appearance of the various rooms for they provided a decorative touch when their owners were artistic.

When the last of the Chicago contingent moved down, bringing several carloads of furniture, including many beautiful antiques, the rooms began to lose some of their pioneer appearance.

The big open central part of each dormitory was used as a general sitting room - especially in cold weather, for there was a small stove in the center with chairs around it. The floor was always somewhat warm from the large stove below and the pipe which extended from it through both dormitories to and through the roof, the pipes from the other two being connected with the main one. Years later when I visited the old building, there was a round hole in the floor beside the pipe where a bolt of lightning had passed through and, while the roof had been repaired, the floors had not.

Lenore was sent to the children's cottage and Kathleen and I assigned to the third dormitory, where we combined our little rooms by taking down the partition curtain.

The children's cottage, a two-story building, was some little distance to the west of the main house, the first floor occupied by the girls and the second by the boys, with a caretaker or matron who lived with the girls but looked after all.

Between the big house and the children's were two small cottages, though believe the one directly between was built a little later, and in line with the children's but to the south was a one-story place in which three or four of the women had rooms. Still in line and further to the south was the laundry, with connected machine shop. Mother and I were in the first of the little cottages during my convalescence from typhoid, and later our blind member, Sister Emmet, lived in it. The other was our school for a time, then used by Marie Fischer and still later

by Vesta Newcomb. It was while school was held in this little cottage that I was appointed teacher to fill out the term when Doc Charles and Nancy, who had been the teacher, left before it was completed. Until then I had always thought I should like to be a teacher, but that experience ended any such notion.

During the summer George Hussey, a school teacher from Texas, and his family joined, and he took over the school for the next term, which was then held in a building some distance up the county road, and Rosemary and I had a frightening experience in connection with it one day. I don't know how we happened to be there after all the rest were gone but, as we left and started down the short path to the road, a big razor-back hog, which had been rooting around nearby, though we had not seen him before, charged us. We ran back to the building, hand-in-hand, until we could manage to scramble up on the porch from the side just as he reached us, and there we stayed, marooned. After some time, when he seemed to have lost interest and wandered off behind the building, we decided to make a break for it. With the school between him and us, we slipped off the porch and began to run, still hand-in-hand, only to learn that his interest had not waned after all. When his view was no longer blocked and he saw us running, he started after us again and did not give up the chase until we were about ready to turn into the grounds, out of breath and our hearts pounding.

To the east of the main house and near the road was another two-story house where we went to school when we first came to Estero, Samuel Armour being the teacher. Later it was renovated and used entirely for residence purposes. Both Doctor and

Victoria lived there at times, and when Doctor's son, Douglas Arthur Teed, and his wife visited for some months, they had the upstairs room facing the big house.

On the river bank, reached by a short path from the main walk and from the river by a flight of steps, as there was a little landing there for row boats, was the little thatched building we called "Sister Emma's Cottage," as she lived in it for some time after we first arrived. I believe this was the original Damkohler home. Doc Charles and Nancy did not come with our crowd, but followed with a smaller group soon after and, as in the north, Nancy refused to be separated from Doc, Sister Emma's Cottage was turned over to them, and Nancy immediately took over the school. I was delighted to see them for Nancy was still one of my favorites and we remained close friends as long as they were there.

Not far from this cottage, cornered by the river and county road, was the original store and postoffice, which later burned and was replaced by a larger and better one.

Others from the north, or new members, kept coming occasionally, but it was not until the fall of 1903 that the remainder of the Chicago colony came to Florida from Englewood, the Washington Heights place having been given up in 1902 and the ones living there moved to the downtown house. With their arrival, our population soared to around two hundred and things really began to hum.

The first need was a new building to house the printing and publishing department, so work was begun immediately on a two-story building near the river and on the other side of the county road. This offered an excuse for little groups of the young people to have get-togethers. We would go over in the early evenings

to see what progress had been made during the day and usually a group of six or eight would meet, make seesaws by putting planks across sawhorses, and some of the more adventurous of us would climb around on the floor beams; then all would take a walk up the road. Sometimes, but not always, we would take something to eat.

After completion of the printing office, the sawmill was moved to the river bank beyond it, and boatbuilding docks and other facilities built closeby.

Much later, after the Lewises both retired (she was a sister of Rose Gilbert and a postmistress somewhere and he was, I believe, a Western Union operator), they leased a lot on the same side of the road as the printing office and built a nice little home there.

I am not sure whether it was before the visit of Arthur Teed or just after that the art hall was built, but certainly the name was given to it because of the large collection of his paintings which adorned its walls after the Unity purchased them at the end of his stay. He had received his training in various art centers of Europe and was considered an artist of note. For some time, anyway, the Unity had felt that a separate place should be provided for church meetings, entertainments and concerts. Situated right off the road and some distance from the strictly living and utilitarian buildings, it was easily accessible to the general public and more suitable for such purposes. It still houses much of the history of the community in the various objects kept there, even the old orchestra and band instruments.

I believe the Planetary House was the last to be added, and

that this was after I left, though of course am familiar with it from my many trips back while Mother and Father were still living. It is just east of the big house, which has long since been torn down and no trace left.

Although there were already many plantings of tropical trees, shrubs and flowering plants on the grounds before the arrival of the last contingent from Chicago, a crash program was soon under way to make the place outstandingly beautiful. A large crew of workers were employed to complete the project as soon as possible. Walks and driveways were widened and new ones made and covered with shell brought up from the bay. Mounds were constructed and sunken gardens dug. Many more palms of various kinds, and other trees, shrubs and flowers set out. Soon a plant nursery was built up which for many years to come helped add to the community's income.

## Chapter VII The River

As Lenore now lived with the children and I with the older girls, our lives diverged for awhile. She and Minnie became practically inseparable companions for a time and, though Kathleen and I shared the same room, we both turned to others for companionship. She had always been more friendly with Eugenia than any of the other girls in the north, but after coming to Estero, she and Vesta spent much time together.

My first companion was Bertha Graham, whom I had not known in the north as she had been at Englewood and was four or five years older than I, though never seemed so to me. We spent practically all of our free time together and, if it had not been for Bertha, I would not be here now.

Of course we new arrivals were all eager to learn to swim right away, but several of us did not have bathing suits so set about immediately to remedy the lack. The only thing I could find among my belongings that it seemed at all possible to convert into one was a red woolen blanket with black stripes at the top and bottom, so I chopped it up and was quite proud of the finished product. Bathing suits then were not the light free things they are now, of course, but had bloomer pants below the knees and even short sleeves, with an extra skirt to button on, and I planned mine so that the black stripes edged the skirt and sleeves. We usually put our suits on in our rooms and took our clothes with us to the bath house. There we doffed the skirts and went right in, while

the dry clothes were ready for us when we came out.

There were two bathing places provided not far from the main buildings, one for men and the other for women, but after I nearly drowned the women's place, called the royal landing because of a royal poinciana tree nearby, was abandoned and we had certain days to use the men's place for it was decided that ours was too dangerous for those just learning to swim because the ground shelved abruptly a short ways out to a depth of about eighteen feet.

On this particular day the only ones of the group who could swim were the chaperon, who did not go in, and Bertha. Although she had come south with us, she had been with the southern branch before and had learned to swim then, so was acting as instructor. Most of the group had left the water and were dressing in the bathhouse, but one or two others and I were still practicing our kicks and strokes when suddenly I found that I was under water. Looking up, all I could see was green, with the sun's rays looking like long diagonal stripes. I tried to rise but could not, and realizing that Bertha was the only one who could save me, I prayed she would see me in time. I believe it was the chaperon who was really the first to see what was happening, but it was Bertha who came for me. I cannot remember much about it other than my unavailing struggles in that horrible, bearing down water until I found myself on the floor of the landing and the others rolling me around. Later Bertha told me that when she reached me, I immediately climbed on her back in such a way that swimming was impossible, so all she could do was walk, and hope it was in the right direction. Some of the girls said I had gone down and come up

three times, but I was not conscious of it.

The men's place was much nicer, anyway. To begin with, it was further from the main buildings and around a bend, which gave more privacy, and then it was shallow for a sufficient distance to enable us to play around without getting into deep water. Just across, on the other side, it was too deep for one to stand, but there were rocks that we could rest on or hold to. However, thought of these rocks always brings back a terrifying experience a few of us had one day. We were holding to the rocks and calling to the rest of the group at the other side when suddenly several bullets spattered against the rocks just to the side of us. We could not see who did the shooting and never found out who it was, but it must have been someone who thought it would be fun to see just how we would react. We could not think that one of our own men would do it, but the shots did come from our property.

When one finally reached the point where she could cross the river and come back again unaided, she had graduated into the ranks of those who could really swim.

The men never wore swimming suits, and sometimes we girls would slip out of ours after we were in the water to feel the joy of shooting through the water without heavy, hampering clothes. One girl, wearing her suit, would stay on the platform keeping watch while the others swam, but persons rowing on the river were usually very considerate and announced their coming before rounding the bend by calling, "man coming," or "women coming," as the case might be and then waiting, if told to wait, while the swimmers took refuge in the bath house. Power boats, of course, always heralded their coming some time in advance.

Many years later I was again to owe my life to a Graham - Bertha's brother Robert. While in Seattle during a trip, Robert, who was then working for a publishing house there, and I planned to join a bus touring party to Mount Rainier National Park. As I remember, the total cost was to be \$17 each for the trip, entrance fee and dinner at the hotel but, when he happened to mention it to his foreman, the latter suggested that, instead, we pay him the amounts (he wanted the money to pay for a seasonal entrance ticket) and he would take his family and camping equipment and we could make a two day camping trip of it. We were both disappointed but it was difficult for Robert to turn the proposition down so that was the way we went. The wife, little boy and I were to have the tent while the man, Robert and the big boy would roll up in blankets and sleep around the campfire but, at the last minute, the man decided to crawl into the tent too, so with his snoring added to the discomfort of the hard ground, the cold, and having to sleep in my clothes, I was unable to sleep at all. The others were slower about getting up so Robert and I decided to take some pictures before breakfast and wandered up to the falls. We each had our own camera and, in order to get the desired view, I stepped out on a ledge with a two hundred or so foot drop off in front of me, raised my camera, and then everything went black. I awoke lying on solid ground with Robert's scared face just above mine. He said he had looked away from me for only a second and then back to see me swaying on the ledge. He jumped and caught me just in time to prevent my falling into the abyss.

After Bertha I went around some with Maxine but that companionship was not always harmonious. She had a mania for collecting

all sorts of insects - butterflies, spiders and anything else that she could catch, and impaling them on boards with pins to die, which to me, always tenderhearted to the point of fanaticism, seemed horrible so I, when around, fought to save them from her. I remember once even dropping to the ground and spreading my skirt over a big spider she was attempting to add to her collection.

Meanwhile Kathleen was frequently calling on me to act as her companion when she and Vesta's brother James, who were then interested in each other, wanted to meet somewhere. These sessions were more than boring to me. I was entirely out of the conversation but just had to be there.

On the whole, however, those early days were happy ones as everything was so new and different and there was always so much going on. Even the freeze which occurred the first winter had its thrills. Men were up all night during it to fire the citrus groves and several of the women were in the kitchen to have hot coffee and snacks ready when they would come in off and on. The first night I hardly slept for, sitting at my third floor window, I could see the many fires with the men moving around among them under the pink tinted smoke clouds, and it all seemed too beautiful to leave for sleep.

Although the young people were not supposed to date alone, we were always together in groups and I believe really had much more fun than most of the young folks outside who were supposed to be more privileged.

One of the favorite spots for little get-togethers was Victoria Island, a small plot of ground in the river some distance further up toward its source. In addition to its own growth, the

trees from both banks of the mainland leaning over made it a regular little bower. Groups of six, usually, and a chaperon would build a fire at one end, eat their little picnic supper and then lounge around, talking or singing.

Lenore tells of a time when she was a member of such a group, with Kathleen as chaperon. Redbugs were always something to be reckoned with, but must have been especially bad this time as Kathleen memorialized the occasion with the following poem:

"The Redbug  
A Picnic Tragedy.

"What's this romantic sight?  
An island where moonlight  
And dusky shades of night  
War for supremacy.  
Above, the tree-moss grows;  
Below the river flows;  
O'er all a south wind blows  
With luxuriance.

"Upon the rugged ground,  
In restful postures round,  
On picnic pleasures bound,  
Three men, three maidens lay.  
In dreamy thought they smiled  
Or murmured low the while  
In indolence they wiled  
The summer hours away.

"But ah! The treach'rous earth  
Ere this has given birth  
To things of spurious worth  
And man's discomforture.  
Within this snowy sand  
A red fiend has his stand  
Nor thought, nor act, nor hand  
Can stay his silent tour.

"He bores into the flesh  
And leaves behind a mesh  
Of crimson sores that rush  
With stinging biting fire.  
The victims tear and scratch  
But this they find no match  
For those small mounds that hatch  
To raise and test their ire.

"Salt baths, indeed, or Oh!  
Coal oil! Sapolio!!  
In quantities that grow  
Can bring them no relief.  
Tired out, their efforts cease;  
Sleep brings them a release;  
Into unconscious peace  
They sink at last from grief."

I can remember similar times, though I believe our chaperon would be Rose Gilbert, who always entered quietly into the spirit of things, and was an especial favorite of mine.

The river was a never ending source of pleasure to be in, on, or just looked at.

We loved to sit on the edge of the bamboo landing with our feet hanging over and watch the graceful, sharp-nosed gar fish weave back and forth in the water below. There were many other kinds, too, but it seemed an especially favorite haunt of the gars. Sometimes a sheephead would pass by in the distance looking like an escaped convict in his striped suit, or a jackfish, the sun glinting on his yellow sides.

Another favorite watching place was on the rocks close to the water at "the point," a kind of miniature promontory, at one side of which there were some low rocks where a little stream that ran through the grounds entered the river. One day, however, an unusually large water moccasin came shooting across the river to a destination just below me so, from then on, that place was off my sitting list.

On dark nights at certain seasons the phosphorescence in the river was so heavy that, from a distance, it almost looked like a river of milk, but when one looked directly into it he or she was reminded more of the milky way for it was simply filled with myriad points of light, like tiny stars. Rowing on such

nights was an adventure in fairyland. Two strings of gold beads marked where the oars had entered and left the water, and schools of fish burst like skyrocket from under the boat's bow, leaving wakes of gold behind. This phosphorescence almost disappeared in later years, but it was beautiful while it lasted.

There were always rowboats tied up at one or more of the docks and we spent much time rowing up or down the river. It was wonderful for two or three of us to get up in the morning before the rest of the community were stirring and slip out into the misty morning for an adventure on the river. Everything would be so still we could hear the soft drip of the dew from the shrubbery along the shores as it dropped into the water, and that from the overhanging tree branches soon had us about as wet as if we had been in, not on the river. Often alligators would slide from a low bank or log so close to us that the disturbed water rocked our boat, or a startled snake bird would suddenly leave its perch on a partly submerged tree where it was watching for its breakfast to come by, and fly off with a great flapping of wings. As the morning light began to filter through the moss laden trees, there was a heliotrope haziness over the world and the dew drops still clinging to leaves sparkled like precious jewels.

Evening rows were more fun, however, for then both boys and girls would go in two or three boats for little singing parties, with Harry playing his cornet -- its notes always honey sweet, or Jay would accompany us on his guitar.

Sometimes on dark nights there were fire-fishing excursions. Allen, in his book, tells that the first group had them to provide food, but ours were more for fun, though the same methods were used - a pitch pine fire on the stern deck of the launch Victoria

and the string of skiffs tied behind (the large one next to the launch was called the "shark boat"). When enough fish had jumped in for our purposes, we would land somewhere, the boys would dig shallow pits and build fires in them; then the cleaned fish were baked in the coals and we had a fish supper by the light of a fire. There was one supper that Bessie did not enjoy so much as the rest of us for a big fish struck her in the stomach and made her quite sick for awhile.

The river was also our chief means of transportation. There was a narrow, deep sand road leading to Fort Myers, about seventeen miles away, where we did most of our trading, but the slow tortuous trip in a wagon behind horses or even mules, sometimes, was almost unendurable, while in the steam launch, and later gasoline launches, it was even interesting. As there was a sandbar at one place in the river which could be crossed only at high tide, we had to get up at all sorts of hours in order to arrive at the bar just when the tide was full, but nobody minded that since it could not be helped anyway.

During the citrus fruit season the boat made regular trips, carrying not only our own fruit but also that from groves up the river for shipment to northern states. At these times the boat was packed full but there was usually room for one or two passengers up in front with Brother George Hunt, who was captain and pilot. Brother John Watson was the engineer and a Scotchman with the traditional blue eyes, sandy hair, and even a slight brogue. He also served as cook, for the trip required that at least one meal be eaten enroute each way. He seemed to enjoy the role and would come climbing over the crates with his wide Scotch grin and plates of food for us.

I liked Brother John, but Brother George was always my favorite of all the men I ever knew in the Unity. Only in his middle thirties when I first knew him, he was bald on the top of his head even then. The hair that he had was very curly and his eyes were blue, but a twinkling blue like the water he watched so much. The main part of the entertainment on the boat trip was his singing in a clear tenor voice. He was first tenor in the male quartet and often sang at little community entertainments, but the times I liked best to hear him were when he was sitting at the steering wheel, his eyes fixed on some distant channel marker, singing Grandfather's Clock, I stood on the Bridge at Midnight, or even The Frog Who Would A-wooing Go.

When the boat was not loaded with fruit, and there were several on board, we generally played cards to help while the time away, usually euchre or whist.

George was also one of Lenore's two favorite men there, and she brought back to memory the times after we first came to Florida when he would play on the organ or piano in the dining room and sing from memory some of his numerous songs, while we all crowded around to listen. She quoted this one, which she remembered especially:

"I would I were a fish  
How happy I would be  
If I could live on land  
As well as in the sea.  
In a birdcage I'd be useful  
As a preacher in a church,  
And if a bird should light on me,  
Why then I would be perch.

"I would I were a fish,  
I'd rather be a whale  
A-swimming all around  
And sticking out my tail;  
And when some honest man,  
Who had to work and toil,  
Would bore a hole down through my back,  
He surely would strike oil.

"I would I were a fish,  
I'd rather be a smelt,  
And happen to be thrown  
At some young lady's feet;  
And when she picked me up,  
If so inclined she felt,  
She'd put me under her little nose  
And then I would be smelt."

She mentioned his good humor and integrity, which had impressed me, too. He was so solid and dependable I have always felt that he had really been the pillar of strength upon which the Estero segment had leaned during the spare years that it carried on alone before reinforcements began to arrive. In an emergency he seemed to know what to do and did it, quietly and efficiently; doing very little talking himself, he was ready with an appreciative little laugh when somebody else said something that hit him just right.

One special instance of his dependability comes to mind. A crowd of us had gone on a picnic and swimming party to one of the Hickories in the Victoria with the Aleida in tow. During the afternoon, leaving the launch with the women, the men took the sail boat over to another island for their swim. All but two of them went around to the other side where they would be out of sight of the women and the two remaining decided to go for a sail, but, not being experienced enough in handling it, the boat drifted across the pass, where they lodged in the mangroves of another island and were unable or afraid to try to sail back. George tried to call and signal instructions but they remained right where they were so somebody had to go after them. Others of the men could both swim and float, but it was George, who had never been able to float, who waded in and began swimming. He could not go straight across because of the current in the pass, but used a diagonal and much longer course so that the current would be a help instead of

a hindrance. As he had to swim every foot of the way, unable to turn on his back and rest, as some of the others might have, we were all worried about him. Nor was the possibility of his becoming exhausted our only anxiety for the passes, swift and deep, also usually had sharks in them, so it was a great relief when we finally could see him climbing into the boat. The castaways were not very popular with some of the others when they were brought safely back, but there were no recriminations from George. For awhile we had been in the predicament of our group being on one island with the Victoria and unable to operate it; two of us at another with the sail boat and not able to sail it; and the rest marooned on a third with no transportation at all.

## Chapter VIII

### General Activities and Pets

In those early days we lived pretty much outdoors, for there seemed so much of interest to do outside.

Nearby hammocks furnished beautiful little wild orchids and other flowers with which to dress up our rooms, or to wear in our hair.

Wild huckleberries grew thick in some areas and made delicious pies so, while they were in season, we spent a good bit of time gathering them.

Mushrooms, also, could be had for the taking - they were especially abundant in the sweet potato patch - and, when fried and served on toast, took the place of meat, which was not always available.

The meat in our diet was more often than not wild game. There were always two or three hunting dogs, and the main duty of one or two of the men was hunting. They even hunted for pork, which was in the form of our own razor back hogs allowed to range in the woods nearby, although some, and especially the mothers and their piglets, were kept in a big pen back a ways from the big house. After we had been there a short time we were treated to alligator steaks. The river was full of alligators and, as a rule, nobody molested them but somebody thought we might like to know what alligator steak was like. Taken from the fleshy part of the tail and fried a golden brown, the steaks looked quite delectable, but the taste was that of fishy meat. Evidently

everybody felt the same about them for, as far as I know, they were never served again. Anyway, it seemed a shame to kill such a big thing for so little meat. Another source of meat unusual to newly arrived northerners was that of the big loggerhead turtles which were frequently brought up from the island. The flesh was ground up and baked in big pans; the eggs, either taken from the turtles or dug from the sand, were used in cooking.

Work in the kitchen and dining room was generally rotated among those assigned to do it. As there were so many to cook for, the pots and pans were heavy, so men as well as women worked in the kitchen, and when there were quantities of food to be prepared, such as potatoes to pare, guavas to pare and seed, peas to shell, etc., someone would arise at the breakfast table and announce a "bee," in order that anyone who had the time and inclination could assist. After they had straightened up their rooms, or performed any other little duties they considered necessary, those who elected to help would meet in the kitchen to work and talk, or perhaps a group would take their pans, knives and fruit or vegetables into the dining room and sit around the general utility table there to do their work.

We also had peanut bees, but these were mostly for the men and girls. Peanuts were harvested and stored. Then some evening, usually, a group would get together in the barn to pick off the peanuts, which brings to mind a frolic of the very early days, though I do not remember that I, at least, took part in it later, that of converting the sugar cane into syrup.

The grinder would be set up not far from the little bridge over the stream that ran through the grounds to the river (mentioned

before), between the big house and the log one. A horse, connected by a bar to the grinder, would walk around and around it while the juice ran into a container from which it was transferred to a big kettle over an open fire. After being boiled to the right consistency and transferred to a container, the young people, who had each brought a spoon, would join in "scraping the kettle." The next day we had another get-together, this time in the kitchen, where the older girls made peanut brittle.

Not long after our contingent came to Estero, Elton, one of the younger boys, found a nest of alligator eggs which he divided among the girls who wanted them. All but two had already cracked and these were most in demand as everyone thought they would be the first to hatch. Ruby and I were the last to put in our bids so received the two still uncracked, and turned out to be the fortunate ones as the nest was just above the edge of a little creek and the water had evidently been high enough to cover the eggs at some time and drown the little occupants of the cracked ones. Ruby could not wait for hers to hatch of its own accord, but took it down to the bamboo landing and broke the shell; then, startled as the baby saurian emerged, threw it into the river.

Some one had advised me to put mine in a box of wet sand and wait, which I did, though not very patiently. One morning I discovered that it had cracked and, when I held it in my hand, distinctly felt it move. Immediately it became the center of attraction for all the girls in the dormitory. Kathleen was at the island at the time so, afraid to leave the box on the shelf for fear the egg might hatch while I was downstairs and the alligator fall and be injured or killed, I appropriated her bed, put the basin to

which I had transferred the egg in it and carefully tucked the mosquito bar under the tick when I had to leave.

Contrary to the way such things usually turn out, little Impie was considerate enough to finally come out of his shell while an interested audience was present. It was during an equinoctial storm so everyone was confined indoors, anyway, and each girl in the dormitory at one time or another came to look. The ones of us most interested knelt around the bed by the hour and watched the crack become wider, exclaiming excitedly each time the egg jerked a little. Then, all at once, the egg split open and out he popped. He was cute, too, as most young things are. The black was really black and the yellow clear and bright. His eyes were a warm brown instead of the cold grayish tone of the older alligators.

Kathleen was quite indignant when she came home after the three day storm was over and learned that her bed had been used as a delivery room.

Because Elton felt a sort of godfatherly interest, it was easy to coax him to fix up a cage to keep Impie in, and also to catch little minnows for his meals.

Sometimes, however, Impie managed to escape from his cage to go on exploring tours all over the dormitory. Several times he fell through both stair wells and appeared in the kitchen. The first time a colored woman who was helping out there announced his arrival with a loud shriek, and continued with one after another until I could get down and corner him, none the worse for his experience. Other appearances among the cooks also caused a good bit of unpleasant excitement, most of them not considering an

alligator an appropriate pet.

Poor little Impie's life span was short - only about six months. One morning I found him dead, the victim of my own ignorance, I was told. For some time he had not seemed hungry and had lost his usual pep. Afraid he would starve to death if left to his own devices, I would conscientiously open his little jaws and insert a minnow, and this, according to my informer, was just what I should not have done. He had been trying to hibernate and I had interfered.

The second of Lenore's favorite men there was John Sargent, a Civil War veteran on the Union side and, perhaps because of his beard, I could always picture him in his blue cap and uniform (incidentally, his place at the dining room table was across from a veteran on the Confederate side, whose last name was Cross but I do not remember his given name now). Brother John was in charge of the stock and Lenore says she would sit for hours on the high fence watching the young pigs, the first she had ever seen. After awhile he gave Julia Wright and her each one for her own. Julia's was black and she called it Love, but she soon tired of and abandoned it. Lenore's was black and white spotted and she named it Beauty (hardly suitable, perhaps, as pig names, but seemed so to them). Beauty followed her around like a dog and was the only pig that could climb over the stile. She bathed and perfumed it, tied ribbons around its neck and loved it, so was broken hearted when the man who was doing the butchering one time included Beauty.

There were always cats, many of them, which were fed by the cooks at the back door, but the only other pet that I cared es-

pecially for was our beautiful little golden-brown spaniel Don. He was everybody's pet, but loved the young people most and when we would be going somewhere in a boat, would always swim after it for some distance. This, unfortunately, was what brought about his end, for he was killed by an alligator and his body found later.

## Chapter IX The Typhoid Epidemic

The water had always been supplied by big cisterns, one at the corner of the dining room with the butler's pantry and the other at the southwest corner of the kitchen porch. A big toad lived for a long time under the latter and was considered more or less as a pet so one day while several of us were working in the kitchen and heard a muffled but still loud croaking, we ran out and found a big blacksnake swallowing our toad. John Watson grabbed a broom and beat the snake until he disgorged the toad, which was then washed off under the cistern faucet and allowed to go back to his retreat, the snake meanwhile oozing off to a less hostile environment, minus his dinner.

After the arrival of our crowd, the increased use of water, along with an unusually long dry spell, soon exhausted the cisterns so a well was dug not far from the kitchen to take care of the needs. However, as it turned out, the well was not deep enough and the water evidently contaminated, which eventually resulted in several contracting typhoid fever, I among them.

My first zest and interest in things waned. I was tired all the time and everything seemed to call for too much effort. My dining room duties assumed appalling proportions. I became the last to get through each time and felt as if I could hardly drag the broom around the tables that were my allotment. Two or three of the sisters noted with disapproval that I was doing just that - dragging and not sweeping. Then I had to rest twice on each of the two flights of stairs to get to my room, but nobody paid

much attention. One of the sisters remarked that there could not be much the matter with anybody who had such red cheeks; that I was the picture of health. Mother would have noticed at once that all was not well.

I became unhappy and homesick for Mother, but could not go back to Illinois for the people there were all coming south as fast as it could be arranged. Then my thoughts turned to Grandmother in her big rambling Pennsylvania home where the cookie jar was always full and sympathetic interest could be expected when one did not feel well.

At the time we entered the Unity Grandmother still had a sum of money that Mother had lent her in some emergency and which was therefore not available to be turned in with the rest of our funds. After she visited us in Chicago and learned of the many scarcities, she decided not to pay it back all at once but, rather, to hold it ready for our small needs as they might arise. Therefore in my discontent I wrote to Grandmother and asked her to send me fare to Pennsylvania and let me come to her. She seldom answered letters very promptly so I had made up my mind in advance that I would not hear from her right away, but the days dragged on interminably and no letter came so there seemed nothing to do but drag on, too.

One day Kathleen suggested that we go for a row on the river. We usually sat together and each manipulated an oar, but this time I simply could not make mine obey my will and the boat continually swung around with Kathleen's stroke. She soon became disgusted with this and gave up the idea of a row. The oars were never left in the boats when not in use, but were carried to the store, where

they were kept, and, while climbing the steps up the bank where we had tied our boat, mine felt as if it weighed a ton. Kathleen was behind and below me so, when the oar wobbled up and down in my weak hands and hit her on the head, it probably seemed to her, too, that it weighed a ton.

Several of us girls were assigned alternately to dining room and dishwashing chores. In the dining room each was responsible for five tables. We not only cleared and reset them for each meal and swept around them once a day, but also ironed their tablecloths and polished their silverware. Then three of us at a time would take over the dishes in the kitchen; one would wash, one wipe and the third roustabout, which meant scraping, stacking, bringing the dishes to the dishwasher and putting them away after they were dried.

Finally I finished my dining room shift and progressed into the kitchen as a roustabout but, by then, had reached the last of my endurance and, as I started to take some dishes from the shelf, fell headlong in a faint. When I regained consciousness I was lying on my bed with Kathleen and several of the other girls standing around with frightened faces.

Doc Charles was on a trip to Marco Island at the time so one of the girls ran for Sister Emma who, though not a doctor, served in that capacity when there was nobody else. She was the matron and, consequently, seemed always to be telling us that we could not do something we wanted to do or giving us some job we did not want to do, so was far from being my favorite sister at that time, though later I developed a real affection for her, and know that many of the others did, also. She was Doctor's sister.

Her gentleness as she examined me made me see her in a new light, but there was nothing gentle about her treatment, which began with an emetic. She stood there, tiny and mild looking, but uncompromising in her will to force glass after glass of warm ginger water down my throat. After I felt as full as one of the rain water tanks after a hard rain and that I simply could not swallow another drop, there was a glass of warm soda water still to be downed. That was the end, though, for ginger and soda both came up in a great rush that seemed to wrack and twist me from head to toe, leaving me so weak I could hardly move. Then they covered me with blankets and, when I asked for a drink of water, was given a bowl of hot lemonade.

That was the beginning of the fever epidemic. Nora, a big laughing Irish girl; Minna, the eldest of a large family who had entered just before we came down from the north, about my age but much larger and many times huskier; and Ruby and Betty, both from the northern branch; all took to their beds within a day or two.

Two or three days later Doc Charles came home. I was glad when I looked up and saw him standing by my bed, but he had always teased me and could not resist doing so then. He just stood there grinning for a minute or two and then asked, "What are you covered up with blankets for? Are you cold?" I knew he knew I was not cold but murmured that it was to sweat out the fever, I guessed. He stood there a minute longer looking at me; then reached for the blankets and pulled them off, leaving just a sheet over me. "It will take more than blankets to sweat out the fever you have, young lady," he said.

Nora and Minna both seemed to have more violent cases and

both were delirious almost from the beginning. Nora's bed was just across the room from mine and there were two or three of the sisters with her all the time for she was determined not to stay in bed and, unlike me, she seemed to have tremendous strength. I lay there listening in horror to the wild things she said and watching them hold her in bed. When Doc Charles saw the way I was worrying about it, he had me moved to the other end of the dormitory with Ruby and Betty, who had milder cases. Minna was taken into the room across the hall from the dormitory and over the kitchen annex.

The things that Nora and Minna kept crying out made such an impression upon me that it became my one thought that I must not become delirious. Nora, who had a strong clear voice, and sang at the top of it most of the time, was concentrating on "Home, Sweet Home" just then and it rang in my brain almost incessantly, but especially when I shut my eyes, so when I closed them and my mind began to drift, I immediately opened them and concentrated on something definite. Doc Charles told Mother later that with my high prolonged fever, it was amazing that I had never been delirious and he was sure it was nothing but my determination that had kept me from it.

Nora lived only a short time. Awakened early one morning by someone crying, I saw it was Molly, Nora's sister, so I looked immediately toward where Nora had been, but even her bed was gone; I cried, too.

Sister Annabel, who had a place in the girls' dormitory, was assigned as nurse to Ruby, Betty and me, but nursing was not in her line. She performed really necessary duties and then felt she must conserve her strength by spending the rest of the time in bed, herself.

The weather had become very hot and the horsefly season was in full swing. Great, enormous things, they came at us like dive bombers, and their bite, when they managed to get one in, seemed no minor matter to us. We fought them off, weakly, but they were too much for us. When we complained to Sister Annabel, she tucked our mosquito bars around us, and then the heat was unendurable.

Kathleen spent as much time as she could with me, fanning and chasing horseflies away with a mosquito switch. These mosquito switches were an essential part of everyone's equipment; made of shredded dry palm or palmetto leaves, they were bound together at one end to form a handle. There was generally a loop so they could hang on one's arm when not in use, and were the most effective weapon we had against flying pests.

Doc Charles must have told Nancy that I needed more attention than I was receiving for one day she came up and took charge. She fanned and chased horseflies and, knowing that I had always loved to read, brought magazines and read me stories, but the only drawback to this was that I had become too weak to listen to stories. They tired me, and especially the ones that Nancy chose, for she seemed to have a grewsome twist to her reading tastes. One of the stories was a long serial about some men and women captured by Turkish bandits, who beat or killed their victims. However, I was too grateful to tell her so, or to ask Kathleen not to whistle. She could whistle beautifully and, when I was well, I loved to hear her but, lying there, I felt sometimes I couldn't stand it.

Meanwhile, the fever had left both Ruby and Betty and they were able to get up, but Minna and I became worse and then Minna died. I did not know how sick I was but life had gradually lost

its meaning until Kathleen told me that Mother was coming, and then interest came back with a rush. She did not tell me, of course, that they had wired her to come immediately if she wanted to see me alive.

As it turned out, Grandmother had finally taken action on my letter. She had decided to have me come to her if Mother approved, so had sent my letter to Mother, together with money for the trip in order that Mother could send it to me if she thought that was best. The money and the telegram arrived the same day, so Mother wired that she was coming, packed her belongings and, with Rosemary and Walton, caught the first train toward Estero. There was not enough money to bring the children and take a Pullman so the long tiresome, dusty trip was made by day coach

At the end of the line she transferred to a launch which would take her to Fort Myers, where the Unity boat would pick her up, and found the only other passengers to be a young mother and her little girl.

People were always attracted to Mother and she and the young woman were soon talking on the most friendly terms until, when questioned as to her destination, Mother replied that it was Estero. "Why, that is where that terrible community is," the young woman exclaimed. "In what way are they terrible?" asked Mother, "I have lived with the community in Illinois for almost four years and have never found anything wrong with them." The young woman stared at her a minute, then, clutching the child to her as if to shield it from something evil, moved to the other side of the boat, refusing to even look in Mother's direction the remainder of the trip.

The captain of the launch, a kindly, weather beaten old man, who had listened to the conversation without taking part, now remarked comfortingly, "Don't mind her, Maam; some folks just talk."

"But, are the Unity folks disliked by their neighbors and people in Fort Myers?" asked Mother.

"Well, Maam, I figger it this way. The Unity folks mind their own business, which is more than some others do. I only know the men who meet my boat to send or get cargo or transfer passengers, but they always seemed all right to me. I figger there are two kinds of people who talk against the Unity. One is the politicians who don't get elected. You know the Unity is making itself felt in politics now because they all vote, and they seem to vote the same way. Then there is the young men. The Doctor has some danged pretty girls down there and he won't let the young men come to see them, and that makes the young men mad." Then, as an afterthought, he added, "One of the girls died night before last."

"Marilyn," Mother cried out. "Marilyn has died before I could get to her."

"No, no, Maam," the Captain hastened to reassure her, "Your daughter was still alive yesterday when the men came to tell me to expect you."

It seemed strange that Nora and Minna, both big and strong, had gone so suddenly while I, who was little and had hardly any strength to keep going for so long before, was still living. But I had something definite to live for now. Mother was coming - was actually on her way. It was all I could think of.

Then, all at once, she was there. I wondered why so many people were coming upstairs, but when she entered the room, I saw only her. I held up my arms and she took me in hers. For a long time we just held each other and then, when Mother straightened up and I looked around, it seemed as if half of the community were standing around us, smiling their approval. From then on she was

virtually my prisoner, though of course I did not realize it. I had to have her bed so close to mine that I could reach out in the night and touch her to be sure she was really there, and in the daytime I begrudged even the time that it took for her to go down to the dining room to eat.

The one item of diet I had craved was buttermilk but, though we had cows, the milk was used fresh and there was no buttermilk, so the first thing Mother did in the morning after she arrived was to find a little sour milk and churn it in a bowl. After that there was always buttermilk.

My sickness forced Mother to do the one thing she had never wanted or intended to do - place her children in the care of others without the choice of the children, but it was impossible for her to care for me and keep Rosemary and Walton with her, so they had to go into the children's cottage.

Rosemary, being a little older, seemed to adjust to the change better than Walton. He would come over from the children's cottage and sit on the steps, the nearest he was allowed to come. It must have been heartbreaking to Mother to know he was there, but, for the time being, she felt that my need of her was greater.

For awhile, too, it did seem that I was better, but the high fever was steadily consuming what little strength and endurance I had left and finally, after examining me one day, Doc Charles called Mother out into the hall. They thought I was asleep when she came back but I was just too tired to keep my eyes open so she might as well have told me as Kathleen, who was sitting with me, that Doc Charles did not expect me to live through the night. He had brought a new medicine to give me but admitted that he had no hope that it would help so, after he left, she placed the

bottle on the shelf, saying, "If he, himself, doesn't think it will help, I won't worry her with it." She touched my forehead, chest and limbs. "Her head and chest are burning up, but her arms and legs are cold," she told Kathleen, and the rest of the afternoon and into the night she worked over me almost constantly. She bathed my face and body with cool water and rubbed my arms and legs. By morning the crisis had passed. When Doc Charles came in to see me the next morning, he was pleased. "Well, that last medicine did the trick, didn't it!" he congratulated himself, and Mother let him think so.

Although my body had become so weak that I just lay there for long periods without moving, my sense of hearing had become abnormally keen, making me conscious of all the sounds of living around the big house that I had never noticed before - people walking, walking, walking on the three bare floors of the building and the constant murmur of voices; the rattle of pots, pans and dishes in the kitchen and dining room, and the calls of the cooks and servers at meal times: "first sisters," "third sisters," "seventh brothers;" the first and second bells ringing; the prayer being read before each meal; people calling to each other outside; and the continual striking of clocks. Each of the sisters in the second floor dormitory seemed to have a clock that sounded the hour and half hour, and some even the quarter hour, but no two clocks had the same time. It was impossible for me to close my ears to all the sounds and rest, so Doc Charles decided that Mother and I should be moved out of the dormitory into the little one room cabin surrounded by mulberry trees some two hundred feet from the main building and near the childrens' house. He had evidently

cautioned the six men who were to carry my cot and me to the new location against any excitement, as he had me, for they had every semblance of pall bearers as they quietly filed in and took their stations around the bed.

It was very peaceful there in the shade of the trees, and I slowly began to improve, but soon after the change Mother succumbed to an attack of fever so that she, also, was confined to bed, and there we lay together for awhile.

Then, twelve weeks after I fainted in the kitchen, Kathleen propped pillows behind my back and I sat up for the first time. After that my strength began to come back, slowly at first and then more rapidly, but poor Mother, though her fever did not last very long, remained confined to the cabin for several weeks with a bad attack of arthritis, which took over after the fever left, so it was some time before we moved back to the big house. By then the others who had been sick were all well again, including Brother Moses, who had the worst case among the men, and life in the community had returned to normal, other than that two of the girls were no longer with us.

Doctor was in Chicago at the time, but when he returned he brought a well drilling crew with him and soon we had three good flowing wells of artesian water, with a sulphur flavor. The main one was some distance east of the big house and at first it caused the surrounding area to be permeated with an odor like overripe eggs, but this gradually dissipated. Though the water always had a slightly sulphur taste, most of us learned to like it, and on our later visits to Estero a drink from the fountain was always one of the first musts.

Perhaps the worst after effect the long siege of fever left with me was a fear of lightning. Before that I had always loved to watch an electric storm - the great zigzagging streaks of lightning were so awesomely beautiful, especially in a dark sky, while the crashing, rolling thunder was exciting and exhilarating, that Mother would sometimes have to tell me to shut the window and come away from it. But that all was changed during the weeks I lay in bed for the storms that rainy season were, I believe, the most frequent and vicious I have ever known.

Kathleen was away at the time so Lenore came up to bring me my supper a few days after I became ill. There was a severe thunder storm in progress at the time and, just as she prepared to give me a spoonful of something, there was a deafening crash and crackling sound. Lenore dropped the spoon and was off like a deer. I listened to her running down the stairs and, realizing that I was alone in that big room, looked up to see the entire unfinished inside area of the roof filled with an opaque violet light, which soon gave away to flames at the far end of the room from me. Within minutes it seemed that the entire dining room erupted into the third floor dormitory, the men carrying pails of water; though as it turned out they were not necessary for the rain, coming down in such torrents, soon extinguished the fire without aid. The bolt had come in through the extreme end of the roof peak and passed out through the window in Maxine's room, cutting the wire holding up her mirror as it passed and dropping it to the floor unhurt. A sister who was standing near a dining room window just below at the time said it looked like a ball of fire as it came past the window and struck the ground.

Perhaps even this would not have left such a lasting impression if it had not been followed by another a few weeks later. A large pine tree stood near the doorway of the little cottage to which Mother and I had been moved, and this was struck by lightning with an ear splitting crash which seemed to fill the world. From then on, for years, the lightest patter of rain would wake me from a deep sleep, my heart pounding and every nerve tense, waiting for the lightning to come. While storms had always seemed more wonderful at night before, now they were more terrible and, after returning to the third dormitory, I could not bear the thought of looking up into that weird violet light again. Often, when the crash followed the flash too closely, I would leave my own bed, run down to the second floor dormitory where Mother had her room, and slip in with her. Neither of us ever said a word that might disturb our neighbors but she would lay her arm over me in a gesture of welcome and protection, and her mosquito bar seemed to enclose us in a zone of safety. Often I was soon sound asleep, utterly oblivious to the thunder and lightning. After the storm had receded into the distance, I would return to my own bed with no one being the wiser.

While the first rainy season we experienced in Florida left memories of vicious lightning storms, the second one tried to compensate with its rainbows. Each rain seemed to terminate with at least one big perfect rainbow arching across the sky in the distance, and sometimes two at the same time. Watching them, I often thought of the one in Riverton. I had gone to the kitchen window to see if the rain was over, and there, to my astonishment, was a rainbow clear to the ground in our back yard. Everybody had always said it was impossible to get to a rainbow even when it seemed near, for it

would recede as one approached, so I raced out of the house and up the steps into the back yard, expecting to see that it was already at least to the wall, but it was just where it had been and I ran right into its misty veil of iridescence. Holding out my arms, I saw them through the soft multicolored hues, which gradually became lighter and then were gone. There was no pot of gold, but I did reach the end of the rainbow and stand briefly with it all around me.

Sometime later, Lenore graduated from the children's cottage and moved into the dormitory with us. Kathleen's bed was at the east side of the room, Lenore's at the west, and mine across the south side. I suppose there was some excuse for the accusation by some that we had too much family tie, for we did manage to keep together to a greater extent than members of other families.

## Chapter X

### Social Activities and Entertainments

By the time the last of the northern group had come south, the community numbered around two hundred persons and there was much social activity in the evenings when everybody relaxed in the dining room, always the main meeting place.

There was always someone, or perhaps several, ready to play for dancing but this was not generally indulged in since, being a celibate society, men and women did not dance together except, occasionally, in square dances or Virginia reels.

Sister Esther, a Pittsburgher and, incidentally, a first cousin of Andrew Mellon, conducted dancing lessons for the girls, and taught us not only the waltz and two-step, but also the polka, the schottische, and some specialties such as the Portland Fancy, but we never really danced anything much but the waltz and two-step. Sometimes the men paired off, but they never seemed to find it interesting enough to dance with other men and soon joined the watchers again. Sometimes we did the Portland Fancy more as an exhibition than anything else for it was a chain dance in which we did certain things as we wove in and out, going through set figures.

The square dances and reels were the most fun, however, for in the former the young men asked the girls quite formally and that was our only public pairing off. Once we had a very elaborate masked ball at which the participants wore colonial

costumes, the girls powdering their hair and the men wearing cotton wigs, making the Virginia reel that time a very colorful affair.

Brother Ross always called for the square dances and the older members liked to join in these ("older" taking in all who were not classed as "the young people."). Brother Ross had plenty of energy and a full sonorous voice, and there was always a rollicking spirit to these dances.

When Johnny Horne, a Scotch boy, came and danced the Highland fling, some of the younger girls immediately wanted to learn it so he trained a foursome of them, including Rosemary and Julia. Later he and Julia married and brought up a family near the Unity.

Among children's entertainments given at Estero, there was one I remember especially, perhaps because Walton, then little, was the hit of the show. It was called "The Toys' Rebellion," and the children, made up to represent different kinds of toys, marched around the stage singing and voicing their protests. Walton, a toy soldier, walking stiff-leggedly, brought up the rear. Just as he reached the middle of the stage on the last round, he came to a dead stop as the rest marched into the wings. He stood there a few seconds all alone and then called out, "Wind me up; I'm all run down," and brought the most of the evening's applause.

Many of the young people liked to play cards and sometimes there were several tables going at the same time, often playing different games. I believe cribbage was the more general favorite, though we also liked whist and euchre, and even poker, but think that was more the boys than the girls.

Then there were the little secret get-togethers of the young people. There was not supposed to be any pairing off, but,

after all, the young people had not entered of their own accord - most of them having been brought in as children - and they had the same attraction for each other as young people have the world over, so we sometimes slipped off to the laundry, in fours, sixes or eights, to make coffee and fry frankfurters on the laundry stoves; or perhaps to make fudge, or any other concoction that would serve as an excuse for breaking the rules. Sometimes we had our little parties in the bake room, which was separated from the main part of the house by the kitchen and seldom visited by any of the older people after the supper work was over.

Some time after construction of the printing office was finished, an unusual swing was put up near the short-cut path leading from the dining room to the store and postoffice. Long slender cypress poles were used instead of ropes, and two people standing face to face could "work up" to where it would swing almost straight out. Betty and I never chummed, but I do not remember working up with any of the other girls. We would go down and stand by the swing until one of the men came by to give us a start, and then would keep going until tired. We never did go as far as was possible, but sometimes the boys did. We had been doing this some time before Doctor was told about it and he sent word that it was dangerous so not to do it anymore, and we didn't.

One corner of the assembly part of the dining room was given over to the library, but there was no librarian. Patrons either sat around the big table to do their reading or took the books to their rooms and replaced them when finished. Newspapers came by mail. In line with Doctor's often repeated desire that his people be informed, someone during meals usually read aloud the headlines

and any items thought to be of general interest and then the papers were left on the reading table in order that those who wished might peruse them further.

Impromptu meetings were called sometimes at which incorrectly worded sentences were read aloud from the stage and then it was asked that someone in the audience rise and give the correction.

Spelling bees were popular, too. The participants sat in a big semicircle, each eagerly waiting for an opportunity to move up and there was always a lot of goodnatured rivalry among the really good spellers. I was a fairly good speller so one of those who enjoyed the spelling sessions.

This all had the desired results for everybody naturally made an effort to speak as correctly as possible, and even those who did not have the advantage of much schooling before coming in soon gave the impression of having had an education.

Many years later the memory of the spelling bees was to suddenly flash before me while standing in my eight year old son's class room one day listening to a spelling contest. When I, myself, had taken part, there was no thought of missing the word, only eagerness as my turn came near; now I waited almost with dread for the word to reach my son, the pounding of my heart being in ratio to its approach to him.

Music was always a vital part of Unity life. As soon as we arrived Jay began giving music lessons to those of us who could not already play an orchestra instrument, preparatory to building up an orchestra, and soon a fifteen-piece one was organized. Harry led it with his cornet, the other winds being James Newcomb, second cornet and Walter Bartsch, slide trombone. Strings were: first

violins, Jay Morgan, Laurie Bubbett and Allen Andrews; second violins, Lenore, Annie Ray, Betty and James Bubbett; violas, Robert Graham and I; cello, Wilton Hoyt; while Jesse Putnam solemnly played the bass viol. Esther was at the piano until Maxine took it over. Later Julia joined as flutist and, when Lenore was promoted to first violin, Jay became clarinetist.

The little "music house" to the west of the other buildings, was much in demand for practicing by those of us who were taking lessons. In fact there were just not enough hours in the day to get in all we wanted to do; in hunting around for a place where I could put in some extra time, I came upon a little hut across the river and not far from the county road where I decided I could set up my music rack and practice to my heart's content without bothering anybody or being bothered by someone else coming in with his or her instrument before I was ready to leave. This little hut was just a frame with both roof and sides thatched with palmetto leaves and had originally been used as a bee house, where the honey was extracted, but now abandoned was almost hidden behind weeds and bushes. For a few days I was perfectly happy in my little hideaway and then one day while I was concentrating on my notes a sudden shower of bird shot came through the window and sides of the shack. Terrified, I put my viola in its case, grabbed the music rack and ran for the road. I never did learn who fired the shot, but it was certainly aimed right at me, so the little shack was again abandoned.

On certain evenings those of the young people who were interested, mostly the orchestra crowd, would meet in the music house, where someone would read articles from our two musical magazines, The Etude and The Metronome, and there would be general discussions.

We all enjoyed the orchestra practice sessions. Selections were classical and semiclassical and, after we had played the last long notes of some piece on which we felt we had done especially well, we would turn to each other to smile or laugh, the pianist swinging around on her stool to join in. I am sure this instilled in all of us a love of good music, and back in Fairwood I often felt hungry for it, so always welcomed the opportunities while visiting in Pittsburgh to attend concerts at Carnegie Hall or those given in connection with the Pittsburgh Expositions, which enabled me to hear Sousa, Victor Herbert and others of the great bands and orchestras. Cousin Lois at that time was utterly engrossed in her music and always wanted to go, so was glad to have my companionship.

One of our lighter numbers which we all liked was called "Aleida," so when the orchestra group, in some way I do not now remember, acquired their own little sailboat, we named it for this piece, and often had little excursions to the island, where it was usually kept, for sailing parties.

The most thrilling trip the orchestra made as a group, however, was to take part in the first Fair which was held in Tampa. The Unity had taken a booth (those first ones being temporary, rustic, thatched affairs) where the Koreshan doctrines could be brought to the attention of those who would attend, and the orchestra entertained and helped bring people to look at our exhibits and listen to the little lectures which were given frequently. Eleanor Castle, a brilliant exteacher from Chicago, did most of the talking; her quick Irish wit not only enabled her to hold her own in any argument, but always put a note of humor in it.

The orchestra members wore white uniforms with decorations of

red and gold braid across the fronts of the coats and down the legs of the men's trousers and the side seams of the girls' skirts. As we were mostly young (Lenore and I barely past our fourteenth and sixteenth birthdays - mine may have come during the Fair if it was held at the same time then that it is now), everybody connected with it made a great deal over us, which, of course, we enjoyed. At the time the Tampa Bay Hotel, now the University of Tampa, was still being operated as a hotel, and the orchestra gave at least two concerts in it, which were exciting as we were the center of attraction and were taken around to see the many historic and beautiful art objects which had been brought from all over the world by Mrs. H. B. Plant as furnishings for the hotel when it was opened by her husband, the millionaire railroad magnate, about 1890.

Later there was an all-girl orchestra which Lenore, at the urging of the other girls, organized and led with her violin, but this was after I left so I never heard it.

In the earlier days concerts were under the direction of Harry Boomer and were usually held on Saturday evenings. One of these included an instrumental duet by Lenore and him, she playing the violin and he the trumpet, with piano accompaniment, of the old song "Love Me and the World is Mine." The audience was somewhat amused at this for, though Lenore was never very responsive, Harry made no secret of his interest in her, which began, I believe, when we first went to Estero and she and Minnie, then eleven or twelve, would sit on the woodpile while he chopped wood for the kitchen ranges, and lasted until his death in an army hospital after she had left Estero.

The first band, also, was organized after I left and for

awhile Julia, with her flute, was the only girl in it. I asked Walton about the band as he was a member from the time he was old enough to be until he left and he replied that they had both an orchestra and a band,

"mostly the same members but substituting other instruments when necessary. For instance, Allen Andrews played violin in the orchestra and clarinet in the band. They came and went as the years rolled by. Leaders were George Hunt, James Calderwood and Prof. Schoedler. Musicians were; Jesse Putnam, cello; Celeste Rugg, trumpet; Alfred Christensen, drums; Harold Moreland, violin; Claude Rahn, clarinet; Floyd Moreland, French horn; Virgil Shaw, bass viol; Yolton Bocermany and I trombones; There were others but I do not remember their names."

George and Charley Hunt, Jesse Putnam and Charlie Faulkner were always popular as a singing quartet. Charley Hunt was our official hunter when we first came to Florida and brought in much of the wild game we had to eat. In those days it was not unusual for him to return with wild turkeys.

One of the most ambitious and spectacular of the dramatic productions while I was there was the life of Joseph at Pharaoh's court. For weeks beforehand Moses Weaver, our chief artist, and his helpers worked on the scenery, which they sometimes put up in the assembly room. Finally came the rehearsals. Kathleen and I had been cast as Pharaoh's daughter and her friend. One scene was supposed to open with us sitting in a room talking and then she was to sing while I accompanied her on my autoharp. However, we were equally opposed to taking part in a dialogue so, much to the disapproval of the writers, that part was changed. As the curtains were opened, Pharaoh came into the room where we were sitting and said, "Daughter, sing to me," or something to that effect, and I think she did say "(whatever my name was), will you play?" I inclined my head and we began.

The general public were always invited to our concerts and other entertainments and many came from Fort Myers as well as near neighbors.

When I first acquired my autoharp, which was a large one with seven bars, someone suggested that I get "Old Brother Jacob," an expert in woodworking, to make a case for it. I don't believe I had ever said anything to him before, but when I approached him about it, he readily agreed and I took the autoharp to be measured. The finished case was beautifully inlaid with various kinds and colors of wood but, unfortunately, he had cut off the wrong corner so either it or the harp had to lie on its face. However, I never told him.

Estero Island was where we all went for vacations of anywhere from a few days to a week or two weeks at a time, and there never seemed to be any trouble about "getting off" to go. The main two story house was maintained by a few members who lived there permanently, the men sleeping in a separate small building or buildings; I do not remember much about them. Karl Leuttich and his son Charlie lived there all the time, as did Roy Lamoreaux, and later on Harry Morrow. They were the fishermen who provided that part of the Unity's food supply, which they would bring up both fresh and smoked - mostly mullet, still my favorite fish. We all have happy memories of stays at the island, and I had two exciting and potentially dangerous experiences, one with Lenore and the other with Kathleen.

Ten of us had decided to go to the island for an outing since the launch was making a trip to Fort Myers without cargo but, when the morning arrived, the weather was decidedly not promising and everybody advised us not to go. The five older girls heeded the

advice and stayed home, but we younger ones went on, anyway, and were dubbed "The Five Foolish Virgins" by some of our unheeded advisors. Regardless of the wisdom of our decision, however, we really had a wonderful time. It was dark and stormy almost the whole week we stayed, but we practically lived in our bathing suits, swam and played to our hearts' content. There was no sun to burn us and all sorts of lovely fresh shells and queer things were washed up on shore. We even found a seahorse and a tiny octopus. Victoria, who was also spending a vacation at the island, was unusually warm and friendly and would have us in her room for hot tea quite often, while the regular staff seemed glad to have us there.

Lenore and I and another girl, I believe Ada though am not sure, had waded during an unusually low tide to an exposed sandbar much further out than we had ever been before to look for shells. We found so many nice ones and became so engrossed in our pursuit that we did not at first notice that the area of search was becoming smaller with each wave - the tide was coming in fast. Immediately we started toward shore, but found there was almost no place where we could wade, which meant swimming back the whole long distance to our beach. At first it was funny and we giggled, but learned pretty soon that we had better save our breath for swimming, and it was with great relief that we finally came near enough to the beach to touch ground and wade out, for we were all exhausted.

The other time was just after my recovery from the fever, when Kathleen and I were spending awhile at the island for any possible benefit that might accrue from the change and the salt air. As it happened, there were several others there at the same time - Doctor, Victoria and Clinton, among others. To many of the

Unity boys sailing was almost second nature, but, though this did not happen to be the case with Clinton, he invited Kathleen and me for a sail and we accepted. Everything was fine at first for he could manage as long as the weather cooperated but, while we were still quite some distance from port, a storm began to roll in, preceded by strong winds. Clinton, inexperienced in such a situation, was already becoming confused by the time we reached the pass at the end of the island, and then everybody being out gesticulating and yelling instructions did the opposite from helping and he lost his head entirely. That pass was dangerous enough in good weather for it was deep and swift and always full of sharks. Baited lines were often kept in it and then the sharks brought up and buried in the farming areas for fertilizer. Now the waves were high and we jumped from one side to the other as the boat dipped and water poured over the sides. Kathleen and I both bailed when we could but had to watch for the boom, which swung back and forth. Almost miraculously, it seemed, he did bring the boat close enough to shore so that John Watson and Thomas Gay waded out and pulled it in. They then made a seat of their hands and carried me to the house as, still so weak and burdened with my soaked clothing - then long skirts and petticoats - I could not walk. Poor Clinton, though his intentions had been the best in the world, was in deep disgrace for taking us out when he did not know how to sail.

The two big events each year were Doctor's birthday, October 18, and Victoria's, April 10. On those days the dining room was always profusely decorated with pine boughs, palm leaves, etc.; potted plants were brought in from the nursery and flowers put on the tables. There was always an unusually good dinner, and some sort of entertainment afterward. Also, we girls usually had new

dresses for the occasions.

Over a long period a monthly birthday party was given for all who had birthdays in that month. Each of the men and boys was presented with a big gingercake woman and each woman or girl a gingercake man. Then, following an old Spanish custom, everybody in turn, beginning with the guests of honor - those whose birthdays were being celebrated - was blindfolded, given a heavy stick and turned around a couple of times before he or she tried to break a heavy paper bag suspended from a supporting beam in the ceiling. When the blow was successful, everybody undignified enough scrambled for the various small trinkets, candy, etc. with which the bag had been stuffed. The Spanish and Mexicans call this bag "la pinata," and Lenore and I have wondered if Rollin Gray, who we always thought may have been part Mexican or Spanish, was the one who introduced the idea. He looked Spanish and taught Spanish classes for awhile.

In addition to Father's duties at the printing office, where he read proof as long as he could be up and around, he took on the bees. Bees had always been kept, but it was rather a hit or miss operation until Father began to put his "as near perfection as possible" methods to work. Once when a cold winter and spring had made honey producing flowers scarce, I remember he took his own portions of honey, sugar, syrup, etc. to supplement what he was able to obtain from the kitchen to keep them going until the blooms were more plentiful again. He built new and improved hives of his own design, and the colonies multiplied rapidly. When just about ready to take off a tremendous amount of honey as measured by previous output, the worst flood in the history of the area occurred, resulting from unusually heavy hurricane rains in that watershed. The river

overflowed its banks, as did others, and so much flooding resulted that the launches could be taken from Estero to Fort Myers right over the countryside. When Father could get back to his bees, there were few left. Many of the hives had been barged further down the river to where the mangroves were blossoming and these had generally been washed out into the bay and lost. He retrieved what he could find and brought them back but, though bees were still clinging to some of them, the honey was mostly ruined.

While he was working with the bees, he wrote many articles for bee magazines and one of them, I believe in Ohio, reproduced his hive design for the benefit of its readers.

In later years, when Lenore and I, with the children, would be in Estero for visits, it was at the bee house he liked to have his picnics. This property was across the river and there was a building where the honey was extracted. It had an oil stove which provided for cooking, but Father liked to cook outside over an open fire when the weather permitted.

## E p i l o g u e

I do not know what caused Doctor Charles to become dissatisfied for he had always been a very enthusiastic Koreshan and willing worker but, as he became more disgruntled and outspoken against people and conditions, he, himself, came into general disfavor. Because of my friendship for Nancy, I often spent the evenings with them and when feelings became curdled on both sides and he decided to leave, I spent most of my evenings with them, knowing that I was going to lose her. They returned to their old home in the west, but Nancy did not live long afterward. At one time Doc Charles undertook to write a story of the human heart, and let me see the verses with which he began it. I have always remembered the first one:

"Oh wonderful heart in more wonderful man.  
It works day and night, as hard as it can.  
It never grows fat, and should never grow thin,  
Or the man ceases to live that the heart beats in."

The Unity purchased the San Carlos Hotel on Pine Island with the intention of operating it commercially after extensive renovation. Meanwhile it provided another vacation facility for any who wished to spend awhile in it, and of course this was quickly taken advantage of by the young folks. I remember looking at the hotel register, which was still in the office when I first visited it with an orchestra group, and the first name on it was Roach. I have often wondered why people use this spelling when they might use Roche.

Never were mangoes more delicious than those around the

hotel, nor mosquitoes more ubiquitous and vicious, especially during the early mornings and in the evenings. This detracted somewhat from our pleasure but was later helped by clearing out the rank growth of brush and weeds which had resulted from several years of abandonment of the hotel and grounds.

It burned down during the early summer of 1905. The fire developed during the night and enveloped the building in flames so quickly that many of those in it escaped only in their night clothes. Kathleen, who had been living there and expected to return, lost most of her belongings in it, as she was temporarily in Estero helping Mother to sew for me, preparatory to my leaving for a stay with our grandparents in Fairwood, which Mother had arranged, with Father's consent but not his approval.

In later years we crossed Pine Island several times when we visited our cousin and her husband who had bought a home on Bokeelia Island, connected with Pine by a bridge.

Lenore was the next to leave. She had studied stenography and bookkeeping in classes which had been inaugurated after I left, and went to Washington, D. C. early in 1908 with a group from the Unity who had gone into a cooperative furniture venture there.

Doctor died December 22, 1908, while I was still in Fairwood. Grandfather broke the news to me when I came in from some outing, having learned of it from an item in a Pittsburgh newspaper.

After Doctor's death, a general exodus of the younger people began, some of them to marry each other and others to go to their relatives outside and then to take positions in work for which they had been trained in the Unity. Many were ready to go into printing and publishing concerns as printers, intertype operators, etc., or

into machine shops, and others to find positions as stenographers and bookkeepers or teachers.

Without Doctor's lecture tours to bring in new converts and his magnetic personality to hold those already there, along with the gradual dying off of the older ones, the membership dwindled until there were not many left when Hedwig Michel, a young German woman who had become interested through a group of Koreshan scientific followers in Munich and Bavaria, came from Germany to join the Unity. Being of an energetic and naturally administrative nature, she eventually took over the actual management of the community, though Laurie was its president until his death.

She was the moving spirit in the decision of the Board of Directors, most of them living outside, to turn over to the State of Florida the properties then left. She visited Pennsylvania to see just how this had been handled by the Harmonite Society, a similar colony - celibate and communal - which had flourished during the latter part of the last century and the first of this, now administered and maintained by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission as a public historic monument. At a meeting of the Board in February, 1952, those present being Laurie Bubbett, Hedwig Michel, Claude J. Rahn, and Anne W. Lewis, on motion of Hedwig, seconded by Laurie and unanimously carried, it was decided to contact the proper state authorities with a view to having the home grounds similarly perpetuated as a memorial park.

Finally, after ten years of negotiating with various organizations, on November 24, 1961, a deed to the Florida State Board of Parks and Historical Monuments, conveying 130 acres of the home place on Highway 41 in Estero, 70 acres north and south at the

mouth of Estero River, and about 100 acres at Mound Key, was recorded at Fort Myers. These properties, though in three different places, are now known as "The Koreshan State Park," and this was undoubtedly the best possible use to which it could be put.

During the "Florida Boom" period I remember reading an article on the Unity in which it was estimated that the value of its land holdings was then between two and three million dollars, but of course this was based on fantastically inflated prices and the fact that they included so much beach frontage, then at a premium. Whatever its real value, though, it is probable that if not taken care of in this way, many suits would have been filed by the heirs of those who had put their all into the Unity in days gone by to try to recover shares of what was left, to the end that it would have been eaten up by court costs and lawyers' fees. Now its beauty and history will be preserved by the State of Florida for generations yet to come.

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NOTE: Since the foregoing was written, the Division of Archives, History and Records Management of the State of Florida not only accepted the Koreshan Unity Settlement as an historic district, but proposed to the National Register of Historic Places that it be registered among its national monuments as one, also. Finally, on May 17, 1976, Mildred L. Fryman, historian of the Division of Archives, telephoned from Tallahassee to Hedwig Michel, president of The Koreshan Unity, that the Koreshan Unity Settlement Historic District was accepted to the National Register of Historic Places, so preservation will now be doubly assured. (Information from The American Eagle, June, 1976.)

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