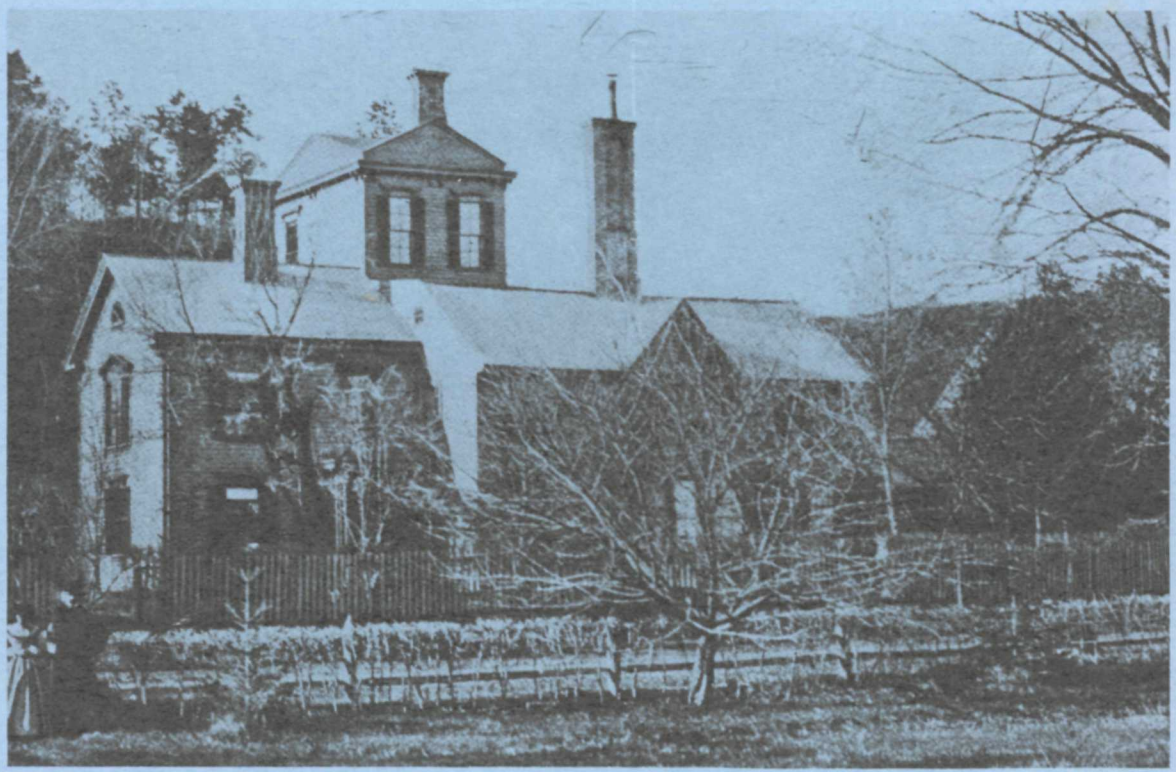
MINUTE MAN NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

THE WAYSIDE

HISTORIC GROUNDS REPORT



MARCH 1970

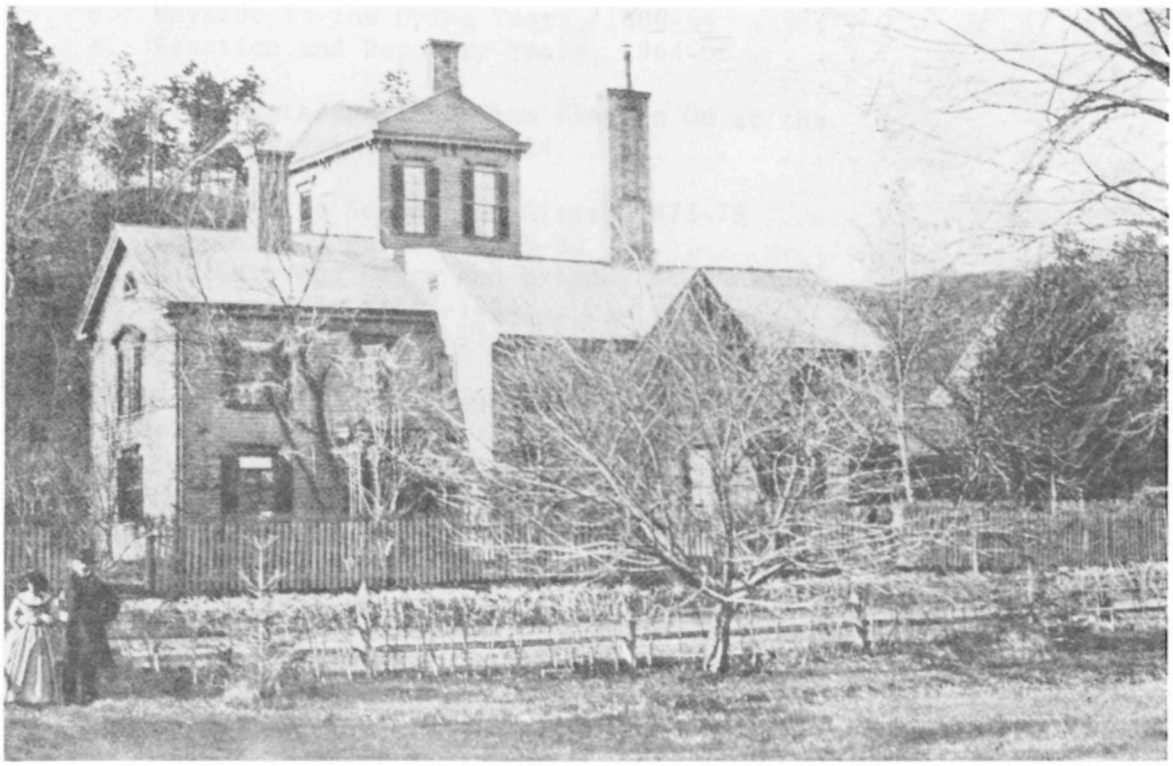
MINUTE MAN NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK
MASSACHUSETTS

THE WAYSIDE

HISTORIC GROUNDS REPORT

by

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EASTERN SERVICE CENTER
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NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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Abstract

In 1965 the National Park Service acquired The Wayside in Concord, Massachusetts, as a part of Minute Man National Historical Park to preserve the home once occupied by such noted Americans as Amos Bronson Alcott, Louisa May Alcott, Nathaniel Hawthorne, and Margaret Sydney, all literary figures of varying stature in American history. The study documents the optimistic expectations of the Alcott and Hawthorne families while residing at the house, and their eventual disenchantment and departure. Her experiences at the Wayside as a child served as inspiration for Louisa May Alcott's Little Women, while Nathaniel Hawthorne wrote several of his later novels in his study or tower between 1860-63.

Following Hawthorne's death the Wayside increasingly became famous as his home. Instrumental in the preservation of the house were the Daniel Lothrops who purchased the Wayside in 1883 and continued to live there until Mrs. Lothrop's death in 1924. During the 41-year residency Mrs. Lothrop, writing under the pseudonym Margaret Sydney, continued to win recognition in her own right as the author of children's books. She also worked persistently to promote historic preservation in Concord. In the 1930s her daughter, Margaret Lothrop, opened the Wayside as a historic shrine, and began some 30 years of private research on the history of the house.

Although considerable documentation on the historic grounds of the Wayside during the three major periods--the Alcott (1845-48), Hawthorne

(1852-68), and Lothrop (1883-1924) ownerships--has been collected, very little of the historic planting remains. In addition, the grounds of the Wayside appeared significantly different during each of the three periods. Consequently, careful planning will be needed to develop an accurate and representative historical interpretation and restoration of the Wayside grounds.

Introduction

The Historic Grounds Report for the Wayside in Concord, Massachusetts, comes as the third in a series of background data studies for the restoration of this home, once the residence of such literary and philosophic notables as Amos Bronson Alcott, Louisa May Alcott, Nathaniel Hawthorne, and Margaret Sydney. Owing to the first two studies--an historical data study and an architectural data study for the Historic Structures Report--sufficient information has already been provided for the backdrop history of the home during the Revolutionary and pre-Revolutionary periods. The Historic Grounds Report therefore begins with the purchase of the home by Amos Bronson Alcott in 1845 and follows through to the present, giving primary focus to the Alcott, Hawthorne, and Lothrop occupancies. Because for interpretational considerations the cutoff date has been set at 1924, the year Mrs. Daniel Lothrop died, the information for the past 46 years outlines only overall, obvious changes that have taken place on the grounds. The contrast between the Wayside grounds during the 19th and early 20th centuries and the Wayside in 1971 is stark: little remains of the historic plantings, and on part of the original property another house now stands. Considerable money and planning would, therefore, be needed to restore the grounds to depict the "flow of history" between 1845 and 1924.

For 82 years--from 1883 to 1965--the Lothrop family owned the Wayside, preserving and cherishing the historical treasures and atmosphere they ac-

quired at the purchase of the house. Margaret Lothrop, a second generation Lothrop of the Wayside, conducted extensive research on the history of the home when she was a professor at Stanford University; following the death of her mother, when she returned to Concord, Miss Lothrop devoted much of her time to carefully copying long passages from every source she could find in books, periodicals, and manuscript collections at Harvard, Yale, and Stanford, the New York Public Library, the Pierpont Morgan Library (New York City), the Huntington Library (San Marino, Calif.), and the Boston Public Library. Her intention, as she often noted in the columns of her notebooks, was to collect information on the lives of the families during their residence at the Wayside, as well as all information pertaining directly to the house and grounds. Her research, donated to and retained at Minute Man National Historical Park, made possible the inclusion of material which otherwise would not have been available on account of the expense and time required to cover such a copious collection of historical data.

On the other hand, with the intention to check the accuracy and comprehensiveness of Miss Lothrop's research in relation to the grounds, the author retraced her tracks to the Hawthorne manuscripts in the Berg Collection at the New York Public Library, and at the Pierpont Morgan and Boston Public Libraries, and found that indeed, Miss Lothrop copied with great accuracy, but, unfortunately, omitted some pertinent information which gave specific details on the historic grounds. While this discovery initially might throw some doubt on her research in the vast collection of Alcott papers in the Harvard libraries, her passages from the Alcott Journals

for 1845-48 reveal that, unlike Hawthorne, Alcott discussed at length in his diary his daily work on the grounds during these years at the Wayside. Moreover, there is some reason to believe that Miss Lothrop might have copied in greater detail from the Alcott papers because they, like the Hawthorne papers in Boston, were readily accessible to her while she was residing at the Wayside; and the bulk of the information she bypassed lay in the two collections in New York City.

Another reassuring test of Miss Lothrop as a researcher was made by comparing her transcriptions with the microfilmed copies of the Alcott Journals and Letters at Minute Man National Historical Park. Finding that her notes were accurate and that her writing was considerably more legible than that of Alcott and his family, this author chose to quote from Miss Lothrop's notebooks for the most part. When the quotations could be double-checked on the microfilm--for the years 1840-52--the footnotes read the microfilm source, and when Miss Lothrop's research alone was applied, her notebooks were cited.

Finally, Miss Lothrop's research checked out well against the Alcott letters published by Richard L. Herrnstadt, who claimed that his edition (1969) was "the first attempt to collect all extant [Bronson] Alcott letters." Miss Lothrop, moreover, copied many of Mrs. Alcott's letters too, even some that did not appear in the microfilmed letters at the park. Credit is certainly due Miss Lothrop for the admirable scope of the research she made available to the National Park Service.

From 1965-68 two staff members at Minute Man National Historical Park became involved in the research and restoration of the Wayside--Historian Robert Ronsheim and Architect Orville Carroll. Both men turned up con-

siderable information on the Wayside from Concord tax records, newspapers, and area periodicals. In this report all the newspaper sources--for the most part researched by Orville Carroll--had been transcribed for the park files; in cases where part of the article was omitted, further research was conducted at the Boston Public Library. The same follows for the magazine articles. My appreciation extends to these researchers and to those at the park who worked to organize and prepare their notes for later researchers' use.

Another substantial aid to the research on the historic grounds was the photograph collection at Minute Man National Historical Park. Unfortunately, however, at least a dozen critical historic grounds photographs were missing from the park files, and should they ever be recovered, they should be incorporated into this report to make a more complete interpretation of the grounds. (Negatives numbered as follows could not be found: SO-3a, SW-8, SW-2a, GR-28, GR-23, GR-15, GR-11B, GR-22, GR-20, GR-24, GR-10, GR-25, GR-26.)

A final debt of gratitude goes to Margaret Lothrop, deceased, for her contribution to the National Park Service of the fine collection of books and papers on the families who lived at the Wayside. With the list of titles in the book collection, the research conducted at the Library of Congress was greatly facilitated. In addition, Miss Lothrop left to the Park Service most of the photographs which illustrate this report.

Finally, I would like to give special thanks to Judy Sprouse who in my absence from the office typed the entire manuscript showing excellent judgement, initiative, and accuracy throughout.

CHAPTER I

Alcotts and the Hillside, 1845-48

In 1845 the Wayside was already over 100 years old and had been the home for farmers, artisans, and American patriots.[1] When Amos Bronson Alcott moved his family to the Concord farmhouse in the spring of 1845, however, he was little concerned with its history, but, rather, with how it would serve his pressing need to provide for his wife, Abigail, and four young daughters--Anna Bronson, 14; Louisa May, 13; Elizabeth Sewall, 10; and Abba May, 5. Moreover, the farm in Concord invited him to rebuild his spiritual and physical strength, for a series of defeats culminating in the failure of his experimental commune, Fruitlands, the year before had nearly broken his will to live.[2]

Providence Takes a Hand

Straying early from his birthplace in Western Connecticut and from his roots in the soil, Amos Bronson Alcott set out to pursue an

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1. See Robert D. Ronsheim, The Wayside: Home of Authors (Washington, D.C., 1968), pp. 2-13, for background information on the house.

2. Walton Perry, Concord, A Pilgrimage to the Historic and Literary Center of America (Boston, 1922), p. 16.

intellectual livelihood centered around education. By 1834, at the age of 35, he had already reached one of the pinnacles of his career by establishing his Temple School in Boston, where he introduced several innovative teaching concepts, among them, single desks for his pupils instead of long benches; slates, pencils, and blackboards for students; a school library; the teaching of the benefits of good reading; the introduction of gymnastic exercises; and an appeal to the children's affections and moral sentiment to control the classroom, instead of the use of punishment.[3] As his scholarly biographer, Odell Shepard, observed, the Temple School lifted Alcott from obscurity to become "the man of note that he was to remain, through good and ill report, for the half century yet to live." Alcott's ideas for the Temple School initially won the interest and support of eminent educators of the period, such as Ellery Channing, Margaret Fuller, and Elizabeth Peabody; and visitors flocked to the school to observe Alcott's pupils, children of the most prominent Boston families.[4]

Ironically, however, Alcott suffered his first bitter failure over his first unquestioned success. In 1837, under pressure from his erstwhile supporters and from growing conservative elements in Boston, Alcott closed his school and admitted defeat. Caught in the financial panic of that year, Alcott not only received a blow to his pocket, but one also

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3. George B. Bartlett, Concord: Historic, Literary and Picturesque (Boston, 1895), pp. 106-07.

4. Ibid.; Odell Shepard, Pedlar's Progress, The Life of Bronson Alcott (New York, 1968), pp. 165-204.

to his prestige, as the flowering liberalism of the early 1830s swung to the right in the economic depression. In 1839, having nearly fallen victim to a mob outraged by his radical teachings, Alcott bitterly turned his back on the stifling air and imprisonment of the classroom, and removed his family to the Concord countryside.[5]

Alcott, however, had not lost prestige among the group of intellectual elite he had joined during his stay in Boston. With other active thinkers of the period--Ralph Waldo Emerson, George Ripley, O.A. Brownson--he had helped organize a Transcendental Club in 1836 which continued to meet for 14 years to discuss social reform, individualism, and other topics taken up by the New England Transcendentalists of the mid-nineteenth century.[6]

From Concord, Alcott maintained many of his intellectual contacts by joining frequent conversations and by lecturing thoughout the Northeast on a wide range of human subjects, such as philosophy, theology, politics, diet, morals, and education. But at the same time, Alcott was still suffering from his crushing experience in Boston. As he later noted in his journal for 1841-42:

> I value this journal of 1841-2 more than any subsequent one because it was a period of my life more full of hardships, doubts, fears, adversities; struggles for my children efforts to maintain cheerfulness and good discipline, under poverty and debt--misapprehension and disgrace.[7]

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5. Shepard, pp. 203-17.

6. Bartlett, p. 207.

7. Alcott Journal II, 1841-44, on microfilm. Alcott dated this comment Nov. 20, 1875.

But Alcott's feelings of disgrace were allayed in 1842 by the news from England that Henry G. Wright had established a school which he had named after Alcott, and into which he had instituted Alcott's educational innovations. Evidently inspired by this flattering news, Alcott visited England, where he was well received among English reformers. One of the newspapers reporting on Alcott's trip gave the following account:

> Mr. Alcott, whose genius and efforts in the great art of Education have been more appreciated in England than in America, has now been spending some months in that country, with the aim to confer with the most eminent educators and philanthropists, in the hope to exchange intelligence. . . . Mr. Alcott has been received with great cordiality and respect by his friends in London . . . presently found himself domesticated at an institution, managed on his own methods, and called after his name, the School of Mr. Wright at Alcott House, Ham, Surrey.[8]

Alcott returned to America with two of the English reformers, Charles Lane and Henry Wright, the former of whom purchased the Cambridge farm for the experimental commune, Fruitlands. In August 1843, while at the commune with the Alcott family, Lane gave credit to Alcott for inspiring in him new ideas on reform. In an article to the New York Weekly Tribune he wrote, "A. Bronson Alcott's visit to England last year, opened to me some of the superior conditions for a pure life which this country offers compared to the land of my nativity." But the set ideal of Alcott and Lane to attain "simplicity in diet, plain garments, pure bathing, unsullied dwellings, open con-

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8. Clipping entitled, "English Reformers, 1842," in Alcott Journal XVI, 1842-46.

duct, gentle behavior, kindly sympathies, serene minds,"[9] did not help to make the commune a success, especially in the opinion of Mrs. Alcott who entered in her diary after six months at the farm: "Our situation here quite uncomfortable. Mr. Lane moody and enigmatical. We shall probably leave here as soon as we can see our way clear where and how to go."[10] Later, she described in more detail, "Here my labours were excessive; for many months I was the only woman there--and finding the scheme not likely to succeed--I hired a small house in Still River (part of Harvard) and took my four girls with our worldly goods and went there in January 1844."[11]

With her strong-willed and practical decision to abandon the experiment at Fruitlands, Mrs. Alcott signaled the second major failure in Alcott's career. Overwhelmed by his disappointment, he refused to eat, attempting to end it all.[12] But the family survived this trying period, moving from place to place until finally they ended up back in Concord in the house of Edmund Hosmer.[13]

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9. "The Consociate Family Life," Harvard Mass. August 1843, in New York Weekly Tribune, September 2, 1843, a clipping from Alcott Journal XVI, 1842-46.

10. Mrs. Alcott's Diary at Fruitlands, in Alcott Journal II, 1841-44 on microfilm.

11. "Fruitlands," in Alcott Journal II, ibid.

12. Perry, p. 2.

13. The Alcotts left Fruitlands on January 16, 1844, after seven months at the farm, and moved to Concord on November 12, 1844. During the ten-month interval, they visited with the Lovejoys and then went on the Still-River nearby, where they took half of a house and garden. Index to Alcott Journals, 1800-1850, in Margaret Lothrop Notebook A VI; this index, compiled by Alcott himself, helps to shed light on 1845, as the journal for that year is missing.

Concord represented the most logical place for Alcott to regain his confidence in himself, for in Concord resided the seer of Transcendentalism, Ralph Waldo Emerson, who looked upon Alcott as a close friend and great thinker. Emerson later described his impression of the Alcott family during their early years in Concord: "In the year 1840 a remarkable family moved to Concord; high minded, cultivated, exceedingly poor . . . apparently so ill-fitted to fight the world's fight that failure was sure. Yet they won in the end, respect, recognition, success, and their name is honorably associated with that of the town."[14] And of Alcott he later wrote, "He was the one man I had met who could read Plato without surprise. . . . As for pure intellect, I have never seen his equal."[15]

Expressing similar admiration for Emerson, Alcott wrote, "Fortunate the visitor who is admitted of a morning for the high discourse, or permitted to join the poet in his afternoon walks to Walden, the Cliffs, or elsewhere--hours likely to be remembered as unlike any others in his calendar of experiences. I may say for me they have made ideas possible by hospitalities given to a fellowship so enjoyable."[16] Most obviously, the interchange with Emerson bolstered Alcott's flagging ego. Indeed,

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14. Josephine Latham Swayne, ed., The Story of Concord Told by Concord Authors (Boston, 1906), p. 97.

15. Ibid., p. 90.

16. Ibid., p. 76.

as Odell Shepard perceived the relationship: "there was no metaphor bold enough to express the quietly ecstatic happiness of those interviews in which two minds that had been made for each other before the beginning of time met and married."[17]

In addition to finding moral support in his friend, however, Alcott also received financial assistance from Emerson after his Fruitlands disaster. In the midst of moving to Concord in October 1844, Alcott wrote to his brother, Junius, transmitting the news that "Emerson has offered to buy me a few acres and build me a plain house."[18] In the same letter, he reported that his wife's family had also offered support: "Mr. May and others desire to aid in placing us on the soil, free of rents and landlords." Friends and family alike no doubt had come to the same conclusion as Emerson had about Alcott: "It must be conceded that it is speculation which he loves and not action,"[19] and that no amount of speculation or philosophizing would buy the family a home and farm.

Alcott, on his part, not only appreciated the efforts made by his friends and family to assist, but assumed, at the same time, that it was God's will. When he wrote to his brother the day after purchasing the Wayside on January 1, 1845, Alcott explained: "Our friends are

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17. Shepard, p. 201.

18. Alcott to Junius S. Alcott, October 28, 1844, in Richard L. Herrnstadt, The Letters of Amos Bronson Alcott (Ames, Iowa, 1969), p. 114.

19. As quoted in Perry, p. 16.

endeavoring to plant us here in Concord, and this wish of theirs is perhaps the clearest purpose of Providence yet made to us, and so is to be accepted."[20]

Ironically, Providence for the Alcotts entailed the death of Mrs. Alcott's father, Joseph May, in 1841, and the resultant small inheritance which covered the bulk of the $1,350 for the "Cogswell Place." Thus, Samuel Sewall, acting as agent for Mrs. Alcott, put up $850 of her inheritance for the 3 1/2-acre plot with the house, while Emerson invested $500 for the 8-acre field across the road.[21] Even though the house badly needed repairs and the grounds, almost devoid of trees, showed little more than gravel and sand,[22] Alcott could only praise his family's new home:

> Close by Emerson's, under the brow of the hill, lies a very pretty spot--the Boston Road running between the House and the fertile field of eight acres, every rod of which is adapted to gardening, and lies warmly to the sunny south. The house is a convenient structure, and with some additions and repairs would serve two families.[23]

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20. Alcott to Junius S. Alcott, January 2, 1845, in Herrnstadt, p. 117.

21. Shepard, p. 391; Index to Alcott Journals, 1800-1850, Lothrop Notebook AVI, MMNHP.

22. Shepard, p. 391. According to Shepard and other sources, the farmhouse yard had served as a hog sty for the previous owner. See also, Frank B. Sanborn and William T. Harris, Amos Bronson Alcott, His Life and Philosophy, 2 (New York, 1965), p. 429. Robert Ronsheim disproved this, however, in his report, The Wayside, p. 43.

23. Alcott to Junius S. Alcott, Jan. 2, 1845, in Herrnstadt, p. 117.

Alcott's glowing description, however, was largely for the purpose of luring his brother and family to come live at the new homestead, which he decided to name, "Hillside."[24] Alcott intently explained and appealed to Junius, "Emerson will give the eight acres, in trust to us, for all such as desire to come upon a free soil, and to occupy and till the earth unmolested by loads of land or men--tax gathers, usurers, and other oppressors of freemen. . . . I will not abide in a house set apart for myself and family alone."[25] But Alcott's ambition to arrange a farming commune with his brother never materialized, despite his frequent encouragements and plans during the first half of 1845.[26]

Hillside: Paradise to Prison

In true character, Alcott approached the hard manual labor at Hillside with an intellectual and philosophical eye. His toil of "Hope and Promise,"[27] lifted him spiritually, for as he envisioned it, he "would draw some lines on the landscape, restoring what man had taken from it, and completing, in some simple style, what God designed."[28]

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24. Compare the above description with Alcott's disparaging comments in his Journal for 1846, several of which are quoted in the following section, "Hillside: Paradise to Prison."

25. Ibid.

26. Alcott wrote Junius urging him to come in October 1844, on January 2, & 28, April 6, July 27, and in August 1845. See Herrnstadt, pp. 114, 117, 118, 120,122.

27. April 18, 1846, Alcott Journal XX, on microfilm, MMNHP.

28. April 19, 1846, ibid.

In short, he aimed to "mend Nature and the ill taste of [his] predecessors" by converting his grounds and "sand bank into a Paradise."[29] He could not plant simply for profit alone, but had to bring beauty into his labors "to delight the fancy as well as the bowels."[30]

From April through October he toiled up to nine hours daily on the hillside, around the house, and across the street on the Emerson field. He built 12 terraces on the hillside,[31] planted flower beds, and fruit, locust, maple, birch, spruce, pine, and larch trees over his grounds, raised almost every vegetable imaginable--cabbage, carrots, celery, beets, radishes, buckwheat, potatoes, clover, corn, oats, rye, strawberrys, lettuce, peas, beans, turnips, spinach, cucumber, tomatoes, rhubarb,--and constructed fences, paths, walls, and outbuildings on his property. He felt healthy and happy working with his hands.[32]

But Alcott could never have denied his mind its exercise as well. Besides teaching his daughters and reading and relaxing with his family, Alcott planned several hours of reading and study each day. He applied

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29. May 8, 1846, Alcott Journal XX, on microfilm, MMNHP.

30. June 8, 1846, in Alcott Journal XX, ibid.

31. When the original purchase was made, Alcott did not own the hilltop. In September 1846 Mrs. Alcott's brother offered the money to buy the rest of the hill from Mr. Moore. In June 1847 Alcott was still working on the last four terraces. See Sept. 14-15, 1846, Alcott Journal XX, and June 14-15, 1847, Alcott Journal XXI, on microfilm at MMNHP.

32. On June 6, 1846, Alcott noted in his diary that he was "always happy in drawing pretty figures in the earth's surface. It is art in Nature." For a detailed account of Alcott's gardening and designing during this period, see his journals for 1846 and 1847. Ibid., Alcott Journal, XX.

his intellectual proclivities to his agricultural livelihood. In his "Idyllic Diary" (April to December 1846) Alcott referred to numerous classical and contemporary authorities he was studying on landscaping and gardening. The scholarly approach he adopted ignored the current Romantic rave for raw, untamed nature, and pursued the classical intent to control and design nature, like an artist.[33]

Alcott's gardening soon won the admiration of his neighbors and friends. As early as June 1845 Mrs. Alcott wrote her brother that "Cousin Sam . . . seemed pleased with the place--and astonished at Mr. Alcott's garden--the amount of labor which is very apparent. It is quite a pet with Mr. Emerson and brings [sic] everybody down to see it."[34] The attention Alcott's garden and grounds received was owing in part to its novelty. Among the "Concord Group" of intellectuals, Alcott was the only member who kept a garden with his own hands, and certainly none of the local farmers could have boasted of such a diverse horticulture, much less an assortment of plants raised by Charles II's courtier. By the end of his third year at Hillside, Alcott was recognized for raising the best garden in town.[35]

However, as if to reassure himself and Emerson that the manual labor was not demeaning for a man of his intellectual prowess, Alcott explained in June 1846 that

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33. Alcott Journal XX; Shepard, pp. 394-96. For an idea of the books Alcott studied on gardening, see Appendix A.

34. Mrs. Alcott to Samuel J. May, June 8, 1845, Family Letters 3, 1828-1861 on microfilm at park. In his diary for Sept. 16, 1846, Alcott noted about his gardens and groves, "my work wins the admiration of all." Alcott Journal XX, on microfilm.

35. Shepard, pp. 393 and 395.

> it seemed good for me to be using the rake on this little spot; as good, or better, than attempting broader reforms in a popular, or any manner. I seemed to be as worthily employed as any of my contemporaries. No voice come [sic] to me of potency to summon me away into other spheres of activity.[36]

Again the next year Alcott remarked, according to Emerson, that "Gardening was a good refuge for reformers, abolitionists, etc. that they might acquire that realism which we so approve in merchants and Napolean."[37]

Such was Alcott's rationale from April 1845 through 1846 and it kept him well pleased with his life in Concord. Intellectual stimulation from Emerson, Henry Thoreau, and Ellery Channing nearby, and from occasional visitors such as Charles Lane and Robert Owen, balanced by healthy outdoor living and a keen awareness of his artistic designs on nature, created for Alcott a semblance of the paradise he had hoped for at Hillside.[38]

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36. June 5, 1846, Alcott Journal XX, Microfilm from MMNHP.

37. Emerson's journal for 1847 according to Sanborn and Harris, p. 436.

38. Alcott mentions many get-togethers with Emerson, Thoreau, and Channing in his journals for 1845-48. See also Index 1800-1850 for reference to these men and Charles Lane, in Lothrop A VI, and Margaret M. Lothrop, The Wayside, Home of Authors (New York, 1940), p. 67. Charles Lane, having visited the Alcotts for a few weeks during the summer of 1845, apparently was left with a positive impression of the Alcotts. According to Frank Sanborn, Lane commented that Alcott's garden in the field across from the house was "the best piece of preaching he has for a long time preached" and predicted it would be better in 1846. Sanborn, Bronson Alcott, At Alcott House, England and Fruitlands (New England, 1908), pp. 67-68, as copied by Margaret Lothrop and transcribed to note card at MMNHP. Thoreau, many years Alcott's junior, had a deep respect for Alcott and an interesting description of him which he set into his Journal: "Alcott is a geometer, a visionary, the Laplace of ethics, more intellect, less of the affections, sight beyond talents, a substratum of practical skill and knowledge unquestionable, but overlaid and concealed by a faith in the unseen and impracticable. Seeks to realize an entire life; a catholic observer; habitually takes the farthest star and nebula into his scheme. Will be the last man to be disappointed as the ages revolve. His attitude is one of greater

Alcott's four young daughters, aged 5-14, also thrived at Hillside, enjoying the family closeness, the Concord friends, and their country surroundings. Louisa May, later to write Little Women from her memories at Hillside, was a sensitive and talented teenager who took full advantage of her natural and social surroundings. After an early run in the woods one morning in 1845, Louisa recorded her responses which indicate her early roots as an author:

> The moss was like velvet, and as I ran under the arches of yellow and red leaves I sang for joy, my heart was so bright and the world so beautiful. I stopped at the end of the walk and saw sunshine out over the wide Virginia Meadows. It seemed like going through a dark life or grave into heaven beyond. A very strange and solemn feeling came over me and the sun so glorious, and for me alone. It seemed as if I felt God as I never did before, and I prayed in my heart that I might keep that happy sense of nearness all my life.[39]

In later life Louisa wrote a sketch of her childhood that, though her memories may not have been absolutely accurate, depicts the joyful moments while at Hillside:

> Those Concord days were the happiest of my life, for we had charming playmates in little Emersons, Channings, Hawthornes, and Goodwins, with the illustrious parents and their friends. . . . Plays in the barn were a favorite amusement, and we dramatized the fairy tales in great style. . . . Pilgrims journeyed over the hill with scrip and staff and cockle-shells in their hats; fairies held their pretty revels among the whispering birches, and strawberry parties in the rustic arbor were honored by

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faith and expectation than that of any man I know; with little to show; with undue share, for a philosopher, of the weaknesses of humanity. The most hospitable intellect, embracing high and low. For children how much that means, for the insane and vagabond, for the poet and scholar." Bradford Torrey and Francis H. Allen, eds., The Journal of Henry David Thoreau, 1-7 (1837-October, 1855) (New York, 1962).

39. As quoted in Swayne, p. 101.

> poets and philosophers, who fed us on their wit and wisdom while the little maids served more mortal food.[40]

Elizabeth, the third born, kept a diary during 1846 as she passed from her tenth to eleventh year. Her daily accounts emphasize the simple pleasures pursued and enjoyed by young and old alike. The following series of short quotes from her diary illustrates the companionship felt among parents and children, the sense of family cooperation in transforming the Hillside into a beautiful setting, and the daily appreciation for the natural surroundings:

> Father walked in the woods with us. We saw some pretty trees to set out in the yard at home. . . . We went on the hill to see the rainbow, it was very beautiful
>
> I picked blue violets and dandelions. . . .
>
> I went to the field to get some cranberries.
>
> I carried my doll on the hill to the little school house.
>
> I sat on the hill and read my letters from mother a good while, and had a very quiet time.

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40. As quoted in Ednah D. Cheney, ed., Louisa May Alcott, Her Life, Letters and Journals (Boston, 1928), p. 21. Miss Cheney explained that this account was drawn from three sources: Miss Alcott's journal, an article she wrote for publication, and a manuscript she prepared for a friend. Ibid., p. 17. One inaccurate recollection made by Miss Alcott was her reference to the Hawthorne children as playmates. The Hawthornes were living in Concord at the Old Manse from 1842 to 1845 but the only child born, Una (March 1844), was just a few months old when the Alcotts were at Hillside. For a touching and entertaining account of the childrens' dramas by their father, see Alcott's Journal for 1878, p. 268, in Lothrop Notebook, A VI.

I sat in the cherry tree and wrote my journal.

Mother came home and brought cousin Eliza Wells to spend a few days with us. She swung with us, and ran about the paths. We ran down the hill swiftly.

I heard the birds sing and pressed some flowers. . . .

I worked more in the garden.

This morning I swept the paths.

Some of my friends came to see me. . . . We went on the hill and made wreaths.

Before school I dropped some beans in the garden with father. . . . I like to work in the garden.

Abba and I went to the brook to get some strawberries.

Louisa and I weeded the potatos in the garden. We all went in the woods to spend the day. We played "Jack of All Trades and Hurly Burly." Miss Ford made a little bower for us and we made wreaths.

Abba and I played school and made a little garden. We planted some corn and beans in it.

This morning we bathed in the brook. After we picked up the apples, I shelled some beans and did some French with Anna.[41]

Clearly both Alcott and his daughters greatly appreciated their country surroundings, and for this reason one of the most popular delights at Hillside came to be Alcott's two rustic structures--an arbor on the hillside and a garden house by the brook--which he built in 1846 and 1847 with materials secured from the woods. On August 27, 1846, Alcott recorded in his diary, " Began a summer House on the Hillside to be constructed of rustic Hemlock wrought in lattices of hazlenut oziers,

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41. April-September of Elizabeth's Journal for 1846 in Family Letters, 1, 1837-1850, on microfilm at MMNHP.

and sticks of willow and larch." By August 31 he proudly noted in his journal, "It is wonderful how with a few saplings and oziers a comely design may be wrought."[42]

Alcott shared this pride and delight with his womenfolk. On September 2 he wrote, "My wife and daughters visit my work regularly every night . . . [they] seem to partake of the beauty already visible amidst the locusts."[43] Besides the strawberry parties in the arbor already mentioned in Louisa May's childhood sketch, at least one other special event occurred in the arbor: Elizabeth's eleventh birthday. The memory of this distinctive occasion has been preserved in Alcott's Journal for June 24, 1847:

> It was celebrated in the evening, by light in the arbour, music, and some tableau, arranged by her mother and sisters, and to which her little friends from the village were invited. The effect was very pretty, and gave infinite satisfaction to the little company.[44]

In addition, the Alcotts enjoyed simple family gatherings in the arbor, such as a breakfast of berries and cream followed by readings from the gospels, Quarles, and Krummacker.[45]

The next summer Alcott began work on his garden house, which he had planned "for bathing and an alcove for retreating from the summer heat and rains." He set it purposefully in the field across from the

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42. Alcott Journal XX, on microfilm at MMNHP.

43. Ibid.

44. June 24, 1846. Alcott Journal XX, on microfilm at MMNHP.

45. July 24, 1847. Alcott Journal XXI, on microfilm at MMNHP.

house as that area stood "without character, a bald plain," and it needed "some object of art to give a central point."[46] When Alcott had finished with the constructing, thatching, and ornamenting of his gabled garden house it sat nicely near the willows by the brook.[47] On hot days the girls scampered across the road and field to plunge into the brook or take showers, and then they dried themselves by the towels hanging in the bathing room.[48] The Garden House henceforth offered the Alcotts ready relief from the scorching Concord summers.

While a good deal has been written by and about Alcott and his daughters at Hillside, Mrs. Alcott has remained largely behind the scenes in the records of these years; and yet she constituted much of the heart and backbone of the family, providing moral and financial support to her husband and children. Through all his idealistic disasters, Mrs. Alcott never relinquished her confidence and belief in her husband, nor her very practical good sense. While Alcott was the visionary, Mrs. Alcott was the daily planner in the family, and this is

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46. September 18, 1846, Alcott Journal XX, on microfilm.

47. Alcott had finished his work on the garden house by August 12, 1847, when he began his work on a rustic structure for Emerson's lawn. Alcott Journal XXI, on microfilm.

48. Clara Gowing, The Alcotts As I Knew Them (Boston, 1909), p. 4; July 8 and 20, 1847, Alcott Journal XXI, on microfilm.

reflected in what is known about her feelings towards Hillside.[49]

With a history of defeats and poverty behind them, Mrs. Alcott no doubt was slow and cautious to form her initial impressions of Hillside, especially since the site, as her husband admitted in his journal, had a natural unseemliness to it.[50] By June 1845, however, she had written happily to her brother: "[I] begin to find comfort which I had not realized in my most sanguine hopes."[51] Her preoccupation with the repairs and additions to the house and grounds throughout the summer no doubt reaffirmed her optimistic expectations. Moreover, by the fall many friends and neighbors had dropped in and lifted her spirits with "pleasant visits and cordial congratulations on our pleasant home." She agreed, "The place looks beautifully." And, most importantly for her as a mother, her four daughters were very happy and doing well.[52]

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49. In her journal for January 1844, just after Fruitlands had disbanded, Mrs. Alcott made the following enlightening observations and comments: "Mr. Alcott cannot bring himself to work for gain--but we have not yet learned how to live without money or means. . . . Should like to see my husband a little more interested in this matter of support. I love his faith and quiet reliance on Divine Providence--But a little more activity and industry would place us beyond most of these disagreeable dependencies on friends." January 16, and 28, 1844, Amos Bronson Alcott Journals and Diaries, 2, 1841-44, on microfilm at MMNHP. Mrs. Alcott in the years following appeared to give up this disquiet feeling and accept the necessity of her own working to support the family. See her letters to her brother in Family Letters, 3, 1828-61, on microfilm at MMNHP.

50. April 24, 1846, Alcott Journal XX, on microfilm, MMNHP.

51. Mrs. Alcott to Samuel J. May, June 8, 1845, A.B. Alcott Family Letters, 3, 1828-61, on microfilm at park.

52. Mrs. Alcott to Samuel J. May, September 19, 1845, ibid.

In addition, Mrs. Alcott had realized even before their move to Concord that it would be wise to support the plan that Alcott and Emerson had arranged. Her insight, foresight, and compassion, as expressed in the letters to her brother, bring much of the story at Hillside into focus. As she explained in a letter of September 1844:

> I do not object to the plan - in as much as it will throw Mr. A more into the society of those he likes - and may help to mature a wiser and broader scheme of action than can be concocted in Mr. Alcotts esthytac [?] . . . or closet cogitations. Emerson will keep a rational view in sight and there will be less of Ultraism and yet perfect freedom of action. - I dread his falling into that solitary life he led last winter. He is in fine health and spirits. . . . Mr. Alcott leads a solitary life. . . . . But existence is immaterial -- the universe I [sic] Eternal is his care and hope. He says the world has scoffed him--his friends betrayed him--and he waits patience for the hour when intolerance and prejudice shall crucify him.[53]

Indeed, as has been discussed previously, Mr. Alcott underwent a quick recovery once he set out to make Hillside a paradise. And Mrs. Alcott, while hopeful that the farm would eventually financially support the family, immediately engaged herself as a tutor to a local scholar for two dollars a week, and spread the word among her friends that she would be glad to teach five more. With the hope of establishing a school, she invited Miss Ford to come assist her, but nothing ever materialized from these plans.[54] After a year at Hillside, Mrs. Alcott was

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53. Mrs. Alcott to Samuel J. May, September 27, 1844, Family Letters, 3, 1828-61, on microfilm at MMNHP.

54. Mrs. Alcott to Samuel J. May, August 9, 1845, and February 15, 1846, ibid.

still without a penny and was receiving money from her brother. Nonetheless, she still could write optimistically, "Our place is looking beautifully and promises to realize all our expectations if we can be sustained upon it a little longer." Although she admitted, "as yet it is but little in the way of living," she hoped that "all will be well in the end."[55]

Despite this poverty Mrs. Alcott and her family were happy together in 1845 and 1846 because they remained a strong family unit, sharing activities, convictions, and privations. The daughters worked and played together, they walked together with their father through the woods to Walden Waters, and they joined their parents at Anti-Slavery and other social reform picnics, where they heard such notable speakers as Emerson, Channing, and Stetson.[56] On occasion, as they grew older, the daughters joined in Alcott's conversations with Thoreau, Channing or Emerson, discussing such topics as art, literature and French.[57] All the family shared Alcott's restrictions against eating animal food--fish, flesh, and fowl--as he felt a deep conviction that the "Abolition from animal food, would abolish war and bloodshed, by refining . . . ferocity which provokes and maintains war."[58] And they continued their ban on products

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55. Mrs. Alcott to Sam. J. May, July 9, 1846, ibid.

56. Alcott mentions at least two such picnics, on August 1, 1846, and July 5, 1847, in Alcott Journals XX and XXI, on microfilm at MMNHP.

57. In reading the microfilm Alcott journals for 1847-48, the author took mental note of this reference but failed to find the citation for the footnote. Time did not allow a thorough rereading of the microfilms, but it is the author's guess that the reference could be found in the 1848 journal.

58. March 7, 1848, Alcott Journal XXII, on microfilm at MMNHP.

made by slave labor as dutifully as possible.[59]

Throughout the three years at Hillside the strong bond between the family members colored their impressions of their Concord home. When Alcott was still happy and optimistic about his year-round regime of winter study, spring conversations and city visits, summer labor at Hillside, and fall construction of Gothic architecture, the rest of the family were also maintaining a positive outlook.[60] But by February 1847 the bright world at Hillside was starting to dim, and slowly the lovely "estate" began to act as a prison for the family members, especially the parents.[61]

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59. In a letter of Jan. 13, 1847, to her brother, Mrs. Alcott related the family's sheltering of a fugitive slave for two weeks. "He agrees with us about slave produce," she wrote. Family Letters, 3, 1828-61, on microfilm.

60. 1847, Alcott Journal XXI, on microfilm. Of course this yearly regime was flexible. For instance, in November 1846 Alcott went to Boston to address the Abolition Society, the Teachers Institute, and the Peace Society. (Nov. 11-15, 1846, Alcott Journal XX, on microfilm.) In the fall of 1846-47, however, Alcott did attend to his rustic arbor and garden house, as well as the garden house he built for Emerson. His vast reading during the winter months included such authors as Carlyle, Schlegel, Goethe, Coleridge, Ritter, Hermes, Richter, Aubrey, Plato, Wordsworth, Spencer, Downing, Melville, Aristotle, Emerson, Channing, Milton, and Pythagoras. See reading lists for 1846-47 at end of each journal, and Appendix A. For the months of January to April Alcott set down in his journals his reflections on several of these authors--especially Plato, Goethe, Pythagoras, Emerson, and Thoreau--as well as on such topics as freedom, physics, slavery, culture, identity, man, mind, woman, frost, and country. See 1846 and 1847 especially.

61. In describing his new home, Alcott often referred to it as his estate. See, for instance, Alcott to Junius Alcott, July 27, 1845, in Herrnstadt, p. 122.

Three major factors obstructed the Alcott family's continued contentment at Hillside: their financial, intellectual, and social confinement. For both Mr. and Mrs. Alcott the seeds of the dilemma took root in the spring and summer of 1846, with Mr. Alcott suffering most from an intellectual anxiety, while Mrs. Alcott was grappling valiantly with the monetary problems. Both felt a social wall separating them from the general population of Concord. As the situation became increasingly apprehensive for the parents, the daughters grew likewise tense and sensitive to their times of trial.

As early as January 1846 Mr. Alcott had expressed his first strong urge to return to his earlier calling. To Charles Lane he wrote, "I visited last week the town Schools and am encouraged to repeat my calls. Just now there is begotten in me the liveliest sense of my right and duty of Teaching again."[62] But the subject was not to reappear in his writings for another year and a quarter.

In the spring of 1846 Mr. Alcott alluded to the second complaint he had about Concord--a complaint which grew to greater proportions in 1847-48--when he noted in his diary, "I am scarcely on human relations with any one of my townsmen. The coarse tie of appetite brings us sometime together in field, or road, and farm house."[63]

But the real problem revolved about the family income, which was little to nothing. Mrs. Alcott by July 1846 was accepting regular

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62. Alcott to Charles Lane, January 1846, as copied by Margaret Lothrop, Notebook AVI.

63. April 25, 1846, Alcott Journal XX, on microfilm at MMNHP.

financial aid from her brother and admitting that without his help she was penniless.[64] While Mr. Alcott was absorbing himself in the arrangement of the grounds at Hillside, Mrs. Alcott had placed regular advertisements under the "Wanted" column in the town paper, thereby displaying their uncomfortable condition to all the neighbors.[65] Having little success with her plans to take in students and set up a school, Mrs. Alcott sadly admitted to her brother that, "as dear as this sweet home is to me I now gladly would shake the load from my back and take a subordinate place in some institution if I could thereby see my children provided for, . . . and happy first and without anxiety or distrust."[66]

Instead of leaving home, however, Mrs. Alcott decided to take in a 15-year old girl, Eliza Stearn, whose parents had intended to place her in an asylum because they no longer could manage her. She agreed to take the youngster for one year with a compensation of $4.00 a week. But Mrs. Alcott clearly had to rely as well on the money her brother sent, and this indebtedness left her uneasy. Reflecting her desire to repay him somehow, Mrs. Alcott wrote, "I would be wretched if I did not foresee so clearly that we are laying up riches for you and yours--as well as ourselves . . . house and lands yours as well as mine--or I bid it farewell forever tomorrow."[67]

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64. Mrs. Alcott to Samuel May, July 9, 1846, Family Letters, 3, 1828-61, on microfilm at MMNHP.

65. Ibid.

66. Mrs. Alcott to Samuel May, August 2, 1846, ibid.

67. Mrs. Alcott to Samuel May, November 2, 1846, ibid.

Despite her diligent efforts to raise money, however, the financial problems escalated rapidly during the fall of 1846 until in December their debts had reached nearly $100.00.[68] The strain and anxiety took its toll on Mrs. Alcott's health. Pathetically she wrote her brother, "I am so used up these short days--and my eyes are good for nothing in the evening."[69] Anna, the oldest daughter, sensed the domestic troubles and wrote her father expressing an earnest desire to help the family situation. She asked her father what she could do to lighten her mother's cares and give her father a deeper enjoyment of herself. Mr. Alcott had much to say to Anna, none of which could ease the pressing financial crisis.[70]

By February 1847 Mrs. Alcott was forced to face the reality that the raising of money was solely her concern; it was at this point that she decided to take the ship into her own command. Mr. Alcott still lived in his own private world of idealism, insisting to his wife that the family would never be safe until they got a hut on Walden Pond, where, with their beans, books, and peace they would live honestly and independently. But Mrs. Alcott realized, "I must think Action here is a duty--contemplation is necessary . . . but doing is coextensive with Being."[71]

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68. Mrs. Alcott to Samuel May, December 4, 1846, ibid.

69. Mrs. Alcott to Samuel May, January 13, 1847, ibid.

70. Mr. Alcott to Anna Alcott, February 1847, Family Letters, 1, 1837-50, on microfilm at MMNHP.

71. Mrs. Alcott to Samuel May, February 8, 1847, Family Letters, 3, 1828-61, ibid.

By March the worry and strain began to affect Mrs. Alcott's spiritual well-being as well. Obviously grateful to hear from her dependable and loving brother, she wrote back that

> A thought now and then seems all important--just to keep the soundings and hearings--otherwise in this busy world we get used up and find we have little left for our individual purposes, we become shallow or indifferent--at least I may speak for myself. I plod on day after day--at last something arrests me. I am led to look at life from a different point of view and find with all my doings I am not being much.[72]

No doubt painfully aware of Mrs. Alcott's trying situation, some of her friends began to urge her to move closer to Boston. Mr. Alcott, when considering the possibility of moving to Boston, found himself attracted by expectations of more frequent conversations.[73] Having passed two long summers and falls at the Hillside tending to the garden and grounds, Alcott had begun to feel "Restless to devote [his] energy on man" to find entire joy in life.[74] Work on the farm had become his "drudgeries of keeping my little glebes in order." He admitted to himself, "I have passed many busy days in [labouring] improvements on this spot, yet do not find myself so attached to it as to be unwilling to leave it."[75] But Alcott was only to leave briefly that spring to attend a meeting of intellectuals at Theodore Parker's, where the discussion con-

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72. Mrs. Alcott to Samuel May, March 18, 1847, ibid.

73. May 1, 1847, Alcott Journal XXI, on microfilm at MMNHP.

74. May 21-22, 1847, ibid.

75. May 26-27, 1847, ibid.

cerned the Aspects and Methods of Reform.[76] Through most of the summer and fall Alcott continued to devote his energies to the twelve terraces on the hill and to the garden houses by the brook and at Emerson's.

By the fall of 1847 Mrs. Alcott was working at a new scheme to raise money, for the family debt had grown to $200 and there was no money nor credit available in Concord. Even though the prospective employment involved the matronage of a water cure spa in far-away Waterford, Maine, Mrs. Alcott no longer could stand by and see her girls feeling wretched over the family predicament; she had to accept the separation for the good of all.[77]

While arrangements were slowly being defined, Mrs. Alcott proceeded to pull the house to pieces for complete repair. This kept her so occupied that she fell behind with "ten thousand obligations." Moreover she now had the added responsibility of discharging the harvesting and family cares because Mr. Alcott had absorbed himself with the construction of Mr. Emerson's Pavilion. Nonetheless, she began to feel some encouragement with the prospect that the house, with some $150 to $200 invested in repairs, would fetch up to $3000 on the market.[78]

Perhaps to allay the expenses of a large family, 13-year old Elizabeth was sent in December to stay with Miss Robie for the winter in Boston.

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76. May 28, 1847, ibid. Among the intellectual elite present were: Mott, Channing, Garrison, Emerson, Howe, Phillips, and Sumner.

77. Mrs. Alcott to Samuel May, Sept. 12, 1847, ibid.

78. Mrs. Alcott to Samuel May, October 22, 1847, ibid.

Mr. Alcott reported to Anna, "Your Mother, Louisa and Abby . . . returned from the station . . . with tearful eyes and a sadness at the heart. And little Abby declares there is no pleasure now for her in this old ugly house."[79] Elizabeth, too, was depressed by the separation from her family and by January she had returned so that the Alcotts, save Anna, were once more reunited.[80]

Family unity at this time must have been particularly gratifying for Mrs. Alcott, as she missed the company of Mr. Emerson exceedingly, and, at the same time, she felt a growing repulsion for Concord and its people:

> Concord is a cold beautless [sic] Brainless, Loveless place. It is very difficult to excite into thought, move into action or . . .(?) into love, this stupic community.[81]

Despite the fact that she was hoping to sell the house in spring, Mrs. Alcott determined to venture one last experiment in making Hillside a viable investment. Spelling out the pressures on her and her children, she wrote,

> I hope to sell the place or get Charles to come and join us--Stock the place with a Corn house cart and Pig--Chickens and Doves--then we can do as other people do--make the land fruit and milk support us--without the constant appeal to our friends for help--which is most distressing to us--and disastrous to the comfort and independence of our children. . . . . all my friends are greatly opposed to my selling here. . . .

Obviously quite aware that stocking the farm with animals would abuse her husband's dietary principals, Mrs. Alcott relentlessly kept the prac-

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79. Mr. Alcott to Anna Alcott, December 10, 1847, Family Letters, 1, 1835-50, ibid.

80. Mrs. Alcott to Samuel May, January 10, 1848, Family Letters, 3, 1828-61-, ibid. Anna, Mrs. Alcott reported, was passing the winter very delightfully with Elizabeth Wells.

81. Ibid. Emerson was in Europe.

tical needs first. She knew as well that, "Mr. Alcott will yield to any plan of mine--he is so helpless here as things now are."[82]

And no wonder Mr. Alcott felt so helpless at this point: he had to admit that his inability to raise the best fruits and vegetables had forced him to compromise his principles and allow milk and cheese in the family diet so as to avoid further health problems among his children.[83] In addition, Alcott was growing ever more painfully sensitive to the social frost he encountered in Concord. After more than three years in the village he wrote:

> But between us and our townspeople only relations the vaguest, and in most instances of a character wholly fabulous, exist. We are ghosts and spectres, chimeras, rumors, holding no known relation to the fields and houses where we are supposed to or seem to abide; and our dealings with men have an aspect ridiculous and to be made game of at the bank and bar-room. Our very virtues are mythological.[84]

Moreover, as spring arrived Mr. Alcott's spirits plummeted further, as he began to agonize seriously over his lack of meaningful service in behalf of his fellow man. He no longer felt "the spring impulses to work in the soil,"[85] but awaited "some coming flight to the towns or mountains, as the Fates decree." Having "read the dark page," he joined his wife in the anticipation that Hillside would not much longer be his family estate.[86]

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82. Mrs. Alcott to Samuel May, Feb. 13, 1848, ibid. Within 2 weeks Charles had sent his refusal to this plan. Mrs. Alcott to Samuel May, Feb. 29, 1848, ibid.

83. March 7, 1848, Alcott Journal XXII, on microfilm at MMNHP.

84. As quoted in Shepard, p. 411. No date than March 1848 is given and no indication whether it is from a letter or his journal; his journal for March 1848 does not contain this quote.

85. April 7, 1848, Alcott Journal XXII, on microfilm at MMNHP.

86. Mr. Alcott to Anna Alcott, April 13, 1848, Family Letters, 1, 1835-50.

Mrs. Alcott indeed most obviously was very anxious during the spring of 1848 to sell the Concord house. In March she went to Waterford, Maine, to discuss her employment at the water cure spa, and returned in April suggesting the family sell Hillside and move there. Later in the month she visited Boston to try to arrange for the sale of the house. But most likely not immediately successful in her endeavors, and pressed to earn some money, Mrs. Alcott departed for Waterford with Abba, aged 8, on May 10.[87]

On the day after their departure, Mr. Alcott wrote his eldest daughter exposing his inner disquiet with the separation of family and his particular sense of isolation from the world of human affairs:

> [Mrs. Alcott], with the little Abby, is by this time far away on the mountains of Maine, and only this remnant of the six of us remains behind. This separation breeds unwonted sensations, and calls forth what of fortitude and courage there lies within us all. I honour the good Mother for this brave deed for hers, . . . at the cost of so many enjoyments, taking her from those whom she loves and has served so well, and whom she still loves and serves in the pains of absence. All Saints and Angels will accompany and bless the dear woman in her ministrations at the Pool. Would that some Power as propitious might task my gifts, and fill my hands too with bread. . . .[88]

Though Mr. Alcott thus yearned to feel as useful in life as he knew his wife was, he did not suffer any disapproval from the family members. Anna wrote back to her father, "I am glad Mother is going to

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87. March 28, April 7, and April 27, and May 10, 1848, Alcott Journal XXII, ibid.

88. Mr. Alcott to Anna Alcott, May 11, 1848, Family Letters, 1, 1835-50, ibid.

Waterford. I think she will be happy and though perhaps she may be rather homesick yet as she knows she is earning some thing I hope she will be happy there."[89] And Mrs. Alcott herself, having had a month to reflect on her situation, reaffirmed her devotion to her husband: "Mr. Alcott writes me cheerful beautiful letters--his spirit-culture has been the best blessing of my life. . . . I am delighted with his style--there is a glow and freshness quite uncommon in Unitarian writers."[90]

Alcott as well was able to justify, temporarily at least, his idleness at Hillside with the rationale: "I submit to the decrees of fate, till times and men discover and use me, as I would be used. They also serve who only stand and wait."[91] But the people of Concord were not quick to discover and put to use Alcott's talents. As the spring progressed into summer, Alcott bided his time arranging his papers, writing, discussing, reading, and conversing with his wife--who had returned early from Waterford on July 11--about plans to move to Boston.[92] As he had for some months felt that there was nothing for him in Concord,[93]

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89. Anna Alcott to Mr. Alcott, May 13, 1848, ibid.

90. Mrs. Alcott to Samuel May, June 14, 1848, Family Letters, 3, 1828-61, ibid.

91. Mr. Alcott to Anna Alcott, May [11], 1848, Family Letters, 1, 1835-50, ibid.

92. See months of May and July 1848 in Journal XXII. According to Margaret Lothrop the month of June had been removed from the diary by members of the family. See Notebook A XI for her comments.

93. April 17, 1848, Alcott Journal XXII, on microfilm at MMNHP.

the idea of moving to Boston to gain a more intimate communication with his intellectual peers, and to perhaps start a school, club, journal or reading room, boosted his morale.[94] But by August his self doubt and involuntary confinement had gotten the better of him. His journal reflects his daily anguish:

> I am unfit for Earth; why detain me, O Father, from Heaven. . . . O God wilt thou permit me to be useful to my fellow man? . . . Sat awhile after dinner in my arbour on the hillside meditating on that destiny of mine by which I am rejected of all men, and kept here in . . . unprofitableness. Pray God I may find resignation to this.[95]

As Mrs. Alcott persevered in her search for a house in Boston, Mr. Alcott continued his reflections on his life, developing the idea of establishing a Boston Club for conversations among the great thinkers of his time. He realized that "a wider and kindlier fellowship seems desirable, and quite attainable"; that is, if they moved from Concord.[96]

Alcott's final blow from the Concord community, however, did not descend until September when the district people chose to reject his application for service as a teacher.[97] After a month had passed, he was still seething as he wrote, "I felt today as I have never before, the bitterness of grief at that prejudice which excludes me from occupying any place of useful activity in the town where I live."[98] His wife, too,

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94. July 29, 1848, ibid.

95. August 2, 7, and 23, 1848, ibid.

96. Mrs. Alcott left for Boston on August 21; the next day Mr. Alcott recorded the above thoughts in his Journal XXII.

97. September 2, 1848, Alcott Journal XXII.

98. October 9, 1848, ibid.

felt the bitterness and distaste for her Concord surroundings, and felt almost frantic at the prospect of remaining at Hillside during the oncoming winter.[99] Back to Boston she went, soon to be joined by Mr. Alcott, the two now searching together for a house to buy.[100] On November 5, after a short trip to Providence, Alcott engaged a house on Dedham Street in Boston, where they moved on November 17, 1848, with few, if any, backward glances at Hillside, their Paradise Lost.[101]

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99. October 24, 1848, ibid.

100. October 30 and 31, 1848, ibid.

101. November 2, and 5 and 17, 1848, ibid.

CHAPTER II

The Hawthornes and the Wayside, 1852-68

The Interlude, 1848-52

For the period 1848-52, when the Alcotts resided in Boston but still owned their Concord Home, the Wayside was not neglected. During the first year in the busy and social world of the big city, Mr. and Mrs. Alcott rented their country home and made arrangements for the farm crops. In March 1850 Mr. Alcott noted in his diary:

> Went to Concord to see about house and lands at Hillside. Mrs. Lauriat concludes to occupy the premises, as she has done for the year past, paying us rent one hundred dollars per annum. The grass on the Emerson field I reserve for Hosmer, the carpenter, in payment for repairs made by him on the buildings. Mrs. Lauriat has the fruit.

After living a year and a quarter in the city, Mr. Alcott "felt inclined" to return to his property to resume his labours on "the pleasant spot, where I have passed some happy hours and days." Clearly Hillside no longer was associated with the disappointment and bitterness of his last year in Concord. Indeed, the Alcotts were even considering the possibility of returning to the village:

> Another year's residence in the City will determine this matter for us. My wife begins already to tire of the charities that have given her days of exhaustion, and but scanty rewards, for her labours of love, and I am as well placed in country as in town, for

> my special pursuits. It would be easy to hold Conversations from Concord, and there is nothing to compensate for the loss of the country during the summer season.[1]

But by March of 1851 Alcott was in Concord showing the house to Mr. Hoffman, a prospective buyer of Hillside.[2] Nonetheless, Alcott was still feeling a nostalgia for his country residence and a renewed concern for its appearance. While the house stood empty,[3] Alcott had let the Emerson field to farmer Watts and had arranged to have him transplant and manure the young apple trees, and plow the field. During a visit to Hillside in April 1851 Alcott noted, "the memory and sight of this brown house and barn and its surroundings is pleasant to me and I would return to pass summer months, if no more."[4] However, the Alcotts no doubt could not afford to maintain a summer residence in the country. In June the level-headed brother-in-law, Samuel May, recommended to Alcott and his wife that they sell the house and invest the money in family support as far as it would go.[5]

Perhaps ambivalent about selling the old home, or perhaps unable to find a reasonable buyer, the Alcotts rented Hillside in October to

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1. All above quotations come from March 26, 1850, Alcott Journal XXIV, in Margaret Lothrop Notebook A I, MMNHP.

2. March 25, 1851, Alcott Journal XXVI, in Lothrop Notebook AXIII.

3. Mrs. Alcott to Samuel May, April 28, 1851, Family Letters, 3, 1828-61, on microfilm.

4. April 28, 1851, Alcott Journal XXVI, in Lothrop Notebook AXIII.

5. June 4, 1851, ibid.

Mr. Wier, the tailor of Concord, for six months at $100 per annum.[6] And then sometime during the winter of 1851-52 Alcott, having apparently heard from Ellery Channing that Nathaniel Hawthorne was enquiring into real estate in Concord, contacted and sold Hillside to Hawthorne on March 10, 1852.[7]

A Year of Pastoral Pleasures, June 1852-July 1853

When first considering the possibility of buying a home, Nathaniel Hawthorne expressed a wish that it be "on the sea-coast, or, at all events, with easy access to the sea."[8] And yet he decided on Alcott's Hillside, even though there was "not so much as a gleam of lake or river in the prospect," and though he first saw the house "in snow-time, when it seemed fit only for a menagerie of cattle," undoubtedly because Concord as a home had many points in its favor.[9] For one, both Mr. and Mrs. Hawthorne had fond memories of the town, for it was here in the Old Manse that they had passed their first happy years of marriage. Moreover, Hawthorne appreciated both the good company of Emerson, Thoreau, and Channing and the solitude and privacy accessible in the community. Un-

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6. October 20, 1851, ibid.

7. Newton Arvin, Hawthorne (Boston, 1929), p. 175; Alcott Journal XXVII, in Lothrop Notebook AXIII.

8. Hawthorne to William B. Pike, July 24, 1851, in Anon., "Hawthorne Among His Friends," Harpers, 63, (July 1881), p. 261, as copied by M. Lothrop in Notebook B V.

9. Hawthorne to George W. Curtis, July 14, 1852, as quoted in George Parsons Lothrop, Study of Hawthorne (Boston, 1876), p. 244; and Sophia Hawthorne to Mrs. Peabody (Mother), June 6, 1852, in Berg Collection, New York Public Library, New York City.

like his predecessor at Hillside, Hawthorne had no regrets about the dearth of socializing in Concord, and relished the solitary walks through the countryside and across his grounds. And finally, Hawthorne not only found the quiet village a good place to pursue his writing career but also an easy commute by train to Boston where his publishers, Ticknor and Fields, had their offices.[10]

When Nathaniel Hawthorne, his wife and three children moved from West Newton to Concord in June 1852, Hawthorne had been writing--but with little public recognition--for twenty-four years, and had published seven of his literary works: Fanshawe (1828), Twice-Told Tales (1837), Mosses From an Old Manse (1846), The Scarlet Letter (1850), The House of Seven Gables (1851), A Wonder-Book (1851), and The Blithedale Romance (1851). All but two of the above he had written after his marriage to Sophia Peabody in July 1842, and during the ten "up and down" years in Concord, Salem, Lenox, and West Newton.[11]

When the Hawthornes purchased the Alcott property for $1,550, and poured more of their skimpy savings into repairs on the house, they were investing their hopes for a permanent home in "the Wayside," as Hawthorne

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10. Hubert H. Hoeltje, Inward Sky, The Mind and Heart of Nathaniel Hawthorne (Durham, North Carolina, 1962).

11. For background information on Hawthorne and his family see, Moncure D. Conway, The Life of Nathaniel Hawthorne (New York, 1968); Julian Hawthorne, Nathaniel Hawthorne and His Wife (Boston, 1885); Louise Hall Tharp, The Peabody Sisters of Salem (Boston, 1950); and Mark Van Doren, Nathaniel Hawthorne (New York, 1949).

named it.[12] Within days of their arrival at the house in June 1852, however, an exchange had begun between Hawthorne and Franklin Pierce which would cut short that hope; but, at the same time, an impression had taken root which would help decide the family's return to the Wayside after a seven-year absence.

In answering a letter from Franklin Pierce, his close friend from college days at Bowdoin, Hawthorne wrote, "I did not hear of your nomination till yesterday. . . . My house is hardly fit for the reception of a future President."[13] But despite his reluctance, Hawthorne soon was involved in Pierce's campaign, hosting a preelection reception at the house on July 5, 1852, receiving frequent office-seekers at the Wayside during the summer, and writing a biography of his friend for the campaign.[14] Pierce's ultimate election won Hawthorne the consulship in Liverpool, England, which he accepted. In July 1853 the family sailed

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12. Hawthorne explained his choice of name as follows: "The house stands within ten or fifteen yards of the old Boston road (along which the British marched and retreated) divided from it by a fence and some trees and shrubbery of Mr. Alcott's setting out. Whereupon I have called it 'The Wayside.'" Hawthorne to George W. Curtis, July 14, 1852, as quoted in Ronsheim, p. 22. A copy of this letter is now in the files of MMNHP, donated by William Harris, Director of Fruitlands Museum. March 10, 1852, Alcott Journal XXVII, Lothrop Notebook AXIII. By July 13, 1852, Hawthorne's expenses on the house had reduced him "to a penniless condition." Hawthorne to William D. Ticknor, July 13, 1852, Letters of Nathaniel Hawthorne to William D. Ticknor 1851-1864, 1 (Newark, 1910). On June 18, 1852, Hawthorne wrote his sister, Louisa Hawthorne, to say, "We like the house and the place very much and begin at last, to feel that we have a home." Lothrop Notebook Yale I

13. Hawthorne to Pierce, June 9, 1852, Lothrop Notebook Yale I.

14. Townsend to Scudder, Concord: American Town (Boston, 1947), p. 210; Theodore F. Wolfe, Literary Shrines, The Haunts of Some Famous American Authors (Philadelphia, 1895), p. 66; Lothrop, The Wayside, p. 85-86.

for England, having spent only one short but generally happy year at the Wayside.[15]

Their brief stay at the Wayside for the year 1852-53 filled many needs for the Hawthorne family and by so doing, left them with an impression of the Wayside which led to their return in 1860.

For Mrs. Hawthorne, a true romanticist in her delight over the rural surroundings in Concord, the Wayside became a transfiguration of her hopes for a happy home. When she arrived at the Wayside in early June 1852 she was really astonished at "what magical changes have been wrought inside the horrible old house," and by September she was proclaiming that "I already love this place very much."[16] She found the setting picturesque and soon completed a sketch of the Wayside for George Putnam.[17] She proudly noted to her mother that an English artist who had visited the family had been enchanted with the home.[18]

As a sensitive and artistic individual herself, Sophia found that the Wayside grounds inspired poetic and mystical responses in her:

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15. Tharp, p. 249.

16. Sophia Hawthorne [SH] to her Mother (Mrs. Elizabeth Palmer Peabody), June 6, 1852, Berg Collection, New York Public Library; Journal of Sophia Hawthorne, 1844-54, Pierpont Morgan Library, New York.

17. SH to Mother, July 4, 1852, as quoted in Rose Hawthorne Lathrop, Memories of Hawthorne (Boston, 1897), p. 195.

18. SH to Mother, no date, as quoted in ibid., p. 201.

> I am sitting in our acacia grove, on the hill, with a few pines near enough for me to hear the oceanic murmur. It is only necessary for me to shut my eyes, to hear every variety of water sounds. The pines give me the long, majestic swell and retreat of the sea waves; the birch, the silvery tinkle of a pebbly brook; the acacia, the soft fall of a cascade; and all mingled together, a sound of many waters most refreshing to the sense. I thank heaven that we possess a hilltop. No amount of plains could compete with the value of this. To look down on the world actually is typical of looking down on the [sic] spiritually, and so it is good.[19]

The beauty of family, nature, and God, the bread and water for a nineteenth-century Romanticist, nourished Sophia Hawthorne's impression of the Wayside throughout the year. In October of 1852 she glowingly depicted a Sunday together with her family:

> Today we all went into the woods above and behind the house and sat down and wove wreaths of red and russet leaves, and dreamed and mused with a far-off sound of booming waves and splash of sea on smooth beach in the pine trees about us. It was beautiful to see the serene gleam of Una's face, flecked with sunlight; and Julian with his coronet of curls, sitting quietly in the great place. My husband, at full length on the carpet of withered pine, presented no hindrance to the tides of divine life that are ready to flow through us, if we will. [20]

Two of Sophia's three children, Una, Julian, and Rose, were old enough to appreciate the Wayside as their home. Una, aged 8, and Julian, 6, absorbed much of their mother's love of nature and the simple family life. They both were thrilled with the gardens at Wayside, and each claimed his own little spot on the terraces of the hillside. Julian had a "peculiar

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19. Ibid. And so quoted in Swayne, p. 137.

20. SH to Mother, October 24, 1852, as quoted in Swayne, The Story of Concord, p. 137; in Lathrop, p. 206.

passion for planting" and could often be found hoeing, or gathering the vegetables and fruit on the grounds. Una as well worked happily in the gardens, but she also reflected her mother's sentimental impressions of the new home. One fall afternoon on the terraces Una remarked to her mother that when Papa sat where she, her mother, was sitting, "he always looked so happy" and that the spot was "the sweetest place of all."[21]

During the year the two children shared many hours outdoors with their parents, on walks, sitting in the Alcott arbor on the hill, or on the terraces behind the house.[22] Julian, an active youngster, attracted much of his mother's admiration: she was "very much impressed with Julian as he played with his bow and arrow"; she noted that "Julian dug away with great energy around his one hill of corn and his one bean," and entered long passages in her journal about "beloved" with his turtle, and Puss, his cat.[23] In later years Julian was to write fondly of his memories of these years. Of his mother he recalled, "Sophia was ecstatic:

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21. September 1, 5, and 7, 1852, Journal of Sophia Hawthorne, 1844-1854, pp. 124, and 127, in Pierpont Morgan Collection, New York City, New York.

22. See SH to Mother, October 24, 1852, Lathrop, p. 206; SH to Mother, Oct. 3, 1852, SH to Father (Dr. Nathaniel Peabody), February 20, 1853, and March 20, 1853, Berg Collection; and Journal of Sophia Hawthorne, pp. 123 and 132. Rose, the one-year-old baby, was included in many of the outdoor gatherings in the summer house and under the acacia trees. On one occasion Sophia noted that she and Julia dressed Rose and took her to walk. "She enjoyed it very much indeed." SH to Father, Feb. 20, 1853, see above.

23. Sept. 5 and 7, 1852, Journal of SH, pp. 125, 139, and 147.

the children were unfallen angels to her."[24] More sharply grafted in his memory, however, were the walks with his father:

> Our walks together were my chief education during my childhood years, all joy, wonder, and sunshine. For he not only found answers to my queries, but told me tales of great men and mighty deeds, of heroic valor and endurance, of the victories of Yankee patriots over British oppressors, of the glories of George Washington and Paul Jones. Or, in other moods he would tell of witches and hobgoblins, and all the wondrous horde of Gothic and classic imagination . . . always uttered under the open sky, as we walked side by side through the woods and meadows of Concord.[25]

Nathaniel Hawthorne too shared the family enthusiasm for the Wayside. When he arrived there in June of 1852, Mrs. Hawthorne recorded, "he had quite a civilized impression of the house at first glance, and was delighted with it."[26] He particularly took a liking to the hillside and hilltop where he could find a relaxing spot with shade, breezes, and a good view, as well as a private place to meditate and commune with nature. With relish he spoke of his "delectable hours there in the hottest part of the day, stretched out at my lazy length, with a book in my hand or an unwritten book in my thoughts."[27]

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24. As quoted in, Maurice Bassan, Hawthorne's Son, The Life and Literary Career of Julian Hawthorne (Columbus, Ohio, 1970), p. 8.

25. As quoted in ibid., p. 33.

26. SH to Mother, June 6, 1852, Berg Collection. On Oct. 5, 1852, Hawthorne wrote to Longfellow: "I should like much to show you the old house. . . . I am beginning to take root here, and feel myself, for the first time in my life, really at home." Quoted in Orville Carroll, The Wayside, June 1968, p. 21.

27. Hawthorne to George Curtis, July 14, 1852, as quoted in George Parsons Lathrop, Study of Hawthorne (Boston, 1876), p. 244.

The broad meadows and gentle, hilly outlines seen from the hilltop were pleasing to Hawthorne because, unlike the mountains of Lenox, they did not stamp a strong impression on the mind, and thus grow wearisome to the eye. Instead the landscape outlines seemed forever new, as they continuously were fading out of memory.[28]

When visitors came to the Wayside to see Hawthorne, he more than likely took them up to Alcott's rustic arbor on the hill. Julian remembered that Ephraim Bull, the Hawthornes' neighbor who became famous for cultivating the Concord grape, "often came over and sat with my father in the summer-house on the hill, and there talked politics, sociology, . . . morals, and human nature, with an occasional lecture on grape-culture." Julian also recalled that his father took Richard H. Stoddard, the poet, up to the summer house for a talk.[29] And Hawthorne himself, in describing Alcott's arbor in his introduction to Tanglewood Tales, pointed out how the rustic structure stimulated his imagination:

> It looks, and is, as evanescent as a dream; and yet, in its rustic network of boughs, it has somehow enclosed a hint of spiritual beauty. . . . Simple as it looks . . . this little edifice seems to be the work of magic. It is full of suggestiveness, and, in its way, is as good as a cathedral. Ah, it would be just the spot for one to sit in, of a summer afternoon, and tell the children some more of those wild stories from the classic myths.[30]

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28. Hoeltje, pp. 361-62.

29. Julian Hawthorne, Hawthorne and His Circle (Hamden, Conn., 1968, reprint of 1881 edition), pp. 70-71; Hawthorne and His Wife, 1, 459.

30. "The Wayside," as quoted in Lothrop, p. 92.

For quiet moments alone or with his wife, Hawthorne retreated again to the hillside. In a letter to her mother, Sophia noted, "I left you to go out again to join my husband on the hilltop. . . .[we] sat on a terrace on the side of the hill, both looking off upon the tranquil horizon."[31] By February of 1853 Hawthorne had already worn a path on the hilltop from his frequent walks back and forth in meditation.[32] Not just meditation, however, prompted Hawthorne to pace the hilltop, but a deep grief as well. The news that his sister, Louise, had been killed in a shipwreck in July of 1852 frequently drove Hawthorne to seek refuge and solitude on the hilltop.[33]

While Hawthorne clearly was a deeply sensitive individual, he was also a practical, money-minded family man. When the Liverpool consulship was offered to him, he saw the opportunity to save enough during the four-year appointment to make him independently wealthy so as to be able to return to the Wayside and to his writing career without the worry of financial matters.[34] But Hawthorne's plan did not operate as he had hoped. Instead of the yearly $25,000 salary anticipated, Hawthorne received only $10,000, a year, $6,000 of which went toward the living expenses while in Liverpool.[35] And instead of just four years abroad, the Hawthornes remained

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31. SH to Mother, Oct. 24, 1852, as quoted in Lathrop, p. 208.

32. SH to Father, Feb. 20, 1853, Berg Coll. Mrs. Hawthorne referred to "Mr. Hawthorne's well worn path on the highest point."

33. Conway, p. 143; Lothrop, p. 89; SH to Mother, Aug. 5, 1852, Berg Coll. Sophia wrote, "Once alone since Louisa's death I went upon our hilltop just to sunset, and Mr. Hawthorne has been there very often."

34. Tharp, p. 252.

35. Ibid., p. 253.

in Europe for seven, leaving the Wayside often vacant and yet often fresh in the Hawthorne family's memory.

The Hawthornes Abroad, 1853-60

Just prior to his departure Hawthorne had a discussion with Bronson Alcott about the future of the Wayside that gives an introduction to his ambivalence towards the Concord home during his absence in Europe. As Alcott recorded in his diary for May 7, 1853:

> Hawthorne is preparing now for the Consulate . . . intending to be absent for four years certainly, if not for five,. . . before he returns to Hillside and the improvements he designs for it. The shrubbery there is becoming the more luxuriant and graceful every season, and is fast showing the place for the setting of the new House he will build on his return.[36]

This desire for improvements, specifically for a new house, provoked many indecisive moments during Hawthorne's seven years abroad.

But during the first two years in the cold and wet climate of Liverpool, Hawthorne could only feel nostalgia for the Wayside. His family, especially his wife, seemed prone to illness. In the summer of 1854 Hawthorne planned to take his family into Wales or somewhere else for a change of air, since "the hooping cough [was] on the decline." "If I could have but one week of my Concord hillside," he wrote his friend Ticknor, "it would do us more good than all the English air that ever was breathed."[37]

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36. Alcott Journal XXVIII, in Lothrop Notebook AXIII.

37. Hawthorne to William T. Ticknor, July 7, 1854, Letters of Nathaniel Hawthorne to William T. Ticknor, 1851-1864, 1 (Newark, New Jersey, 1910), p. 54. Herein cited Letters.

Again late in 1855 Hawthorne expressed his concern for his wife's health, reporting that though she was recovering, "she had not yet got rid of her cough, the weather having been rainy." Moreover, Hawthorne added, "she is homesick; and I believe we should all be glad to return to the old house at the Wayside tomorrow." "But," he continued, "I fear we shall have outgrown that house before we get back and I shall at least be compelled to make more additions to it, if not to build a new one."[38] So the anxieties about returning to the Wayside began to take root and grow.

Hawthorne was worrying too about the upkeep and improvements he had arranged for during the family's absence. He doubted whether his neighbor Bull was complying with the terms of their lease, which specified that Bull set out an orchard in the field across the road from the house,[39] and he responded quickly to letters from Nathaniel Peabody--his brother-in-law who presumably was living with his family at the Wayside in 1856[40]--when they reported that the house needed repairs. Perhaps these reminders that the house required work aggravated Hawthorne's ambivalence, for in January 1857 he was again writing Ticknor to lament,

> I wish I had a better house to live in, when I come home. It will be necessary to repair and

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38. Hawthorne to Ticknor, November 9, 1855, ibid., p. 112.

39. Hawthorne to Ticknor, May 11, 1855, ibid., pp. 91-92.

40. Hawthorne to Ticknor, Sept. 26, 1856, ibid., 2, p. 27. While Hawthorne received news from his brother-in-law about the disrepair of the Wayside, there is no certainty when Nathaniel Peabody moved there.

> enlarge it; and I sometimes think it would be well to sell the place, and look out for a more inhabitable one. If I once begin to build, I shall spend more than I can afford. . . . The fact is, I do not take root anywhere, and never shall, unless I could establish myself in some old manor-house like those I see in England.[41]

This new sense of alienation from his country and home was festering, however, beside an awareness that his family did not share his sentiments. In March of 1857 he commented, "if it were not for the children (who pine for America) I should consider myself a citizen of the world, and perhaps never come home."[42] But, probably realizing that his return to America was inevitable, no matter how unappealing, he wrote,

> I don't quite like to think of giving up Concord; for my place there has many conveniences well adapted to my taste--especially the hill and wood behind the house, where I can take refuge from intruders, at any moment; a privilege which I mean to use pretty extensively. I have received and been civil to, at least 10,000 visitors since I came to England, and I never wish to be civil to anybody again.[43]

Finally in March of 1859, while vacationing with his family in Rome, Hawthorne overcame his brooding about returning, especially to a house that did not suit his needs, with an idea on how to build an addition to the house. This relieved his anxiety considerably, for as he admitted, "I should be very reluctant to leave Concord, or to live anywhere else than by my hillside; . . .I am tied to it by

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41. Hawthorne to Ticknor, Jan. 31, 1857, ibid., p. 39.

42. Hawthorne to Ticknor, March 13, 1857, ibid., p. 46.

43. Hawthorne to Ticknor, July 30, 1857, ibid., p. 58.

one of my heartstrings, all the rest of which have long ago broken loose."[44]

One year later, after a prolonged and serious illness suffered by their eldest child, Una,[45] the Hawthornes waited their departure for the United States, "all restless and feverish with the thought of home." Hawthorne, trying valiantly to adjust himself to the return, commented, "I cannot promise to be contented when I get there, after becoming habituated to such constant change; but I mean to try to settle down into a respectable character."[46] The four years to follow at the Wayside proved Hawthorne correct in his anxieties; he never did acclimate to his Concord life before his death in May 1864.

Wayside in the Dying Years, 1860-64

From the day of his arrival in Concord in June of 1860 Hawthorne assumed a posture of social withdrawal which was to continue throughout his final stay in the town. As Frank Preston Stearns, a native of Concord, recalled, "There was no little curiosity concerning them [Hawthornes] in the quiet old settlement, which was increased by the fact that nothing was seen of them for several months after they came."[47]

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44. Hawthorne to Ticknor, March 4, 1859, Letters, 2, 75.

45. In a letter to her Aunt Lizzie on May 11, 1859, Una explained about her long bout with Roman malaria fever and with typhoid, and how her parents "went through all the terrible tribulation of expecting my death day by day." As quoted in Lothrop Notebook Yale IV.

46. Hawthorne to Ticknor, April 6, 1860, Letters, 2, 100-01.

47. Stearns, Sketches From Concord and Appledore (New York, 1895), p. 54. Moncure Conway, another Concord native, had a more modest recollection: "Hawthorne repaired to his residence, 'Wayside', with such avoidance of parade that the quiet little Town was for some days ignorant of his arrival." Life of Nathaniel Hawthorne, p. 199.

That Hawthorne "was so celebrated that every eye was upon him," gave the author little consolation; fame, he felt, had come too late to be of any satisfaction, but, rather, more of an annoyance.[48]

Hawthorne did, however, immediately contact carpenters for the house, a gardener for the grounds, and Bronson Alcott to superintend improvements on his property. The house itself had been occupied during the last three years of the family's absence--from 1857 to July 1859 the Nathaniel Peabodies were at the Wayside, and from September 1859 to June 27, 1860, Mary Mann, Sophia Hawthorne's sister, lived at the Wayside with her three sons following the bitter death of her husband, Horace Mann--and so most of the needed repairs had already been taken care of.[49] But Hawthorne had not relinquished his plans to enlarge the Wayside, and by August 1860 the carpenters had begun their work on a three-story tower as an appendage to the north, or rear side of the house. Other alterations also proceeded to move

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48. Stearns, The Life and Genius of Nathaniel Hawthorne (Philadelphia, 1906), p. 376. In 1860 Hawthorne was 56 years old.

49. On May 10, 1857, Alcott noted his journal, "Nathaniel Peabody, Mrs. Hawthorne's brother, now lives here [Hillside], gardening a little and doing business in Boston." Alcott Journal XXXII, Lothrop Notebook AXIII. On July 28, 1859, he recorded, "Peabodies move to Watertown--leave Hillside in our care." And on September 1 he noted, "Mrs. Horace Mann and family arrive at Hillside." Alcott Journal XXXIV, Lothrop Notebook A V. Finally, on June 27 he observed, "Mrs. Mann and boys pass night with us--Hawthornes coming tomorrow." Alcott Journal XXXV, Lothrop Notebook A V. Mrs. Tharp in her The Peabody Sisters of Salem, discusses Mary Mann's bereavement and recuperation at the Wayside, pp. 274-75. Frank Sanborn, an ardent reformer, paid many visits to Mary Mann at the Wayside, even spending a night in the house while hiding from U.S. soldiers out to arrest him for his association with John Brown, Lothrop, p. 98. See Hawthorne to Ticknor, Sept. 26, 1856; Jan. 31, 1857; Dec. 1, 1859, in Letters, 2, 27, 39, 84, for mention of repairs on the house. According to Julian Hawthorne, "the house itself was in excellent order," at their return, "and looked just the same as in our last memory of it." Hawthorne and His Wife, 2, 263.

the barn to the east side of the house and connect it with the wing on that side.[50]

In Bronson Alcott's opinion, the Wayside grounds had been sadly neglected during Hawthorne's absence. In the spring of 1857 he visited Concord with his daughter Louisa, and afterwards observed that "very little has been done in the way of improving the place during [his] absence, and fewer traces of my handiworks survive than I could wish." Specifically, Alcott regretted the disappearance of the arbor and garden house, and the overgrowth of his brookside willows and garden paths.[51] Hawthorne, quite aware of this neglect, had written by March 1859 to arrange for "some person to do the necessary work in the garden," and "to pay whatever amount may be necessary for manure, labor, or other expenses" on the grounds.[52]

Furthermore, the very day after he returned to the Wayside, Hawthorne invited Alcott, who now lived next door at the Orchard House, to dinner to exchange his many thoughts and hopes for improvements on the grounds with Alcott's suggestions. By August 8, Alcott was busy supervising the laying out of walks on the hill about the woods, and

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50. Aug. 8, 1860, Alcott Journal XXXV, Lothrop Notebook A V; Hawthorne and His Wife, 1, 452. According to Julian the town carpenters, Mr. Watts and Mr. Wetherbee, were commissioned to do the work on the house and outbuildings. Ibid., 2, 267.

51. May 10, 1857, Alcott Journal XXXII, Lothrop Notebook A XIII.

52. Hawthorne to Ticknor, March 5, 1859, Letters, 2, 75.

down to the brook; and the setting and pruning of trees.[53] And late in October, he wrote his wife, "Next week I suppose I am to see to transplanting the evergreens about Hawthorne's grounds."[54] Alcott was referring to the several hundred larches and Norway spruce which the Hawthornes had sent to the Wayside from England to be planted along the paths across the grounds, and which came to be a prominent natural feature at the Wayside for years to come.[55]

On May 16, 1861, after nearly a year at the Wayside, Hawthorne wrote, "The house, by and by, is finished and painted, and really makes a very pretty appearance."[56] During the months of repair, Hawthorne had attempted no writing, but instead had either watched the operations "with his hands folded behind him and his soft felt hat pulled down in his forehead," or had "ascended the hill, to escape the hammering and sawing." For the two youngest, Julian (14), and Rose (9), "the racket, the clutter, and the construction was delightful, a continuous vaudeville." And, as Julian recalled, "my mother was always an interested spectator and counselor; but my father's

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53. Alcott Journal XXXV, Lothrop Notebook A V.

54. Alcott to wife, Oct. 29, 1860, Alcott Family Letters 1859-64, vol. 5, in Lothrop Notebook A XII.

55. Hawthorne and His Wife, 2, 263; Sophia Hawthorne to Frederick Goddard Tuckerman, April 5, 1868, Yale Review, Autumn 1933, p. 214, as copied in Lothrop Notebook Hunter.

56. As quoted in Caroline Ticknor, Hawthorne and His Publisher (Boston, 1913), p. 257.

bearing denoted humorous resignation oftener than any other emotion."[57]

But if it were a touch of humor Hawthorne felt as he watched the repairs in progress, he was quick to change his mood once the final bill arrived. Only ten days after reporting that the house had been nicely completed, Hawthorne wrote his good friend Horatio Bridge,

> the house . . . cost me three times the sum calculated. . . . it is the first time, and will be the last, that I make a fool out of myself this way. . . . The worst of it is I must give up all thoughts of drifting about the world anymore, and try to make myself at home in one dull spot. It is rather odd, with all my tendency to stick in one place, I yet find great delight in frequent change; . . . in this point of view, I had better not have burdened myself with taking a house upon my back.[58]

This sense of frustration and disappointment over his decision to return to and invest in the Wayside as the future family home plagued Hawthorne until the year of his death. On January 16, 1864, he sardonically wrote to the American essayist, Donald Grant Mitchell:

> I have been equally unsuccessful in my architectural projects, and have transformed a simple and small farmhouse into the absurdest anomaly you ever saw, but I really was not so much to blame here as the village carpenter, who took the matter into his own hands, and produced an unimaginable sort of thing instead of

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57. Julian Hawthorne, "Hawthorne's Last Years," in Thomas W. Higginson, ed., The Hawthorne Centenary Celebration at the Wayside, Concord, Mass., July 4-7, 1904 (Boston, 1905), pp. 111, 112.

58. As quoted in Horatio Bridge, Personal Recollections of Nathaniel Hawthorne (New York, 1968, reprint of 1893 edition), p. 168.

> what I asked for. If it would only burn down! But I have no such luck.[59]

And in the same year he wrote to his neighbor Bronson Alcott about the eight-acres across the road:

> [they] are said to be the best land in Concord, and they made me miserable, and would soon have ruined me if I had not determined nevermore to attempt raising anything from them. So there they lie along the roadside, within their broken fence, an eye-sore to me, and a laughing-stock to all neighbors.[60]

While straining under this particular dilemma, Hawthorne had other personal and political worries which weighed on him and which helped to bring a gradual but steady decline in his health and spirits. In the autumn of 1861 Hawthorne's daughter Una again contracted the virus from which she had nearly died in Rome. Once more her life was in danger, and the mental pressure on Hawthorne was even more exhausting the second time.[61] In the same year Hawthorne began to brood over the Nation's politics, particularly distressed over the issue of abolition.[62]

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59. Notes made by a student at the Yale Library, Hawthorne collection and forwarded to Minute Man N.H.P. by Dr. Pearson, 12/67.

60. November 30, 1864, Alcott Journal XXIX, Lothrop Notebook A V.

61. Stearns, Life and Genius, p. 394.

62. On May 23, 1861, Alcott entered in his journal that Hawthorne could "think of nothing but the state of the country." Alcott Journal XXXVI, Lothrop Notebook A V. Hawthorne became uncomfortably split in his loyalty to his old friend, Franklin Pierce, who was no abolitionist; and his close association with many liberals of the day, including his sister-in-law, Elizabeth Peabody, an avid abolitionist. Most of the biographies of Hawthorne listed in the bibliography discuss this political issue in Hawthorne's life.

Hawthorne came to depend on three safety valves to ease the swelling anxiety and depression with which he struggled during his last four years--his family, his hilltop, and his short travels. From the time of his engagement, Hawthorne had always showed devotion, reverence, and concern for his wife, Sophia, and as he grew more detached from life in the 1860s he turned more completely to her for support.[63] During 1860-61 he devoted as much attention as possible to his children, but then--as his son remembered--

> unexpectedly, and with what seemed some abruptness, his health and strength began to fail. He lost weight, his cheeks grew hollow, his hair whitened, his once firm and elastic step grew slow and uncertain. He still climbed his hill, though slowly, and paced to and fro on its summit, or sat for long periods gazing out over the meadows, or listening to the music of the pines. He would also shut himself up in his tower study for hours each day. . . . his general mood in quiescence became grave, though in family intercourse he still maintained the playfulness and humor that had always marked him in my knowledge.[64]

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63. In 1907 the entire collection of 164 love letters from Nathaniel Hawthorne to Sophia was privately printed by the Society of the Dofobs in Chicago under the title, Love Letters of Nathaniel Hawthorne, 1841-1863. A copy can be found in the Pierpont Morgan Library in New York. Randall Stewart, who for many years has studied and written on Hawthorne and the collections around the country, found this edition of the love letters "far from satisfactory." Nonetheless, they give an idea of Hawthorne's feelings. For further comments on the love letters and on letters published in various secondary sources see Stewart, ed., "Letters to Sophia," Huntington Library Quarterly 7, (1943-44), 38-95. Rose Hawthorne, when recalling the years 1860-64, saw most clearly in her mind the picture of her father and mother "stepping side by side about the grounds, looking at a branch here or a vine there." Rose Lathrop to Mrs. Daniel Lothrop, July 5, 1904, Higginson, p. 149.

64. Hawthorne, in Higginson, pp. 113-14.

As his spirits continued to drop, Hawthorne mounted his hill more frequently to tread back and forth in solitude. Often Sophia would join her husband on the hilltop to sit with him on the broad bench under the white pine, and look out over the meadows.[65] The hill increasingly fed Hawthorne's imagination as well as his sense of self. Having been stimulated by a story Henry Thoreau told him that the Wayside had once been inhabited by a man who believed he should never die,[66] Hawthorne adapted the idea in a novel which also closely projected his own personal experiences on the hilltop. In Septimius Felton or the Elixir of Life, written in 1862, Hawthorne cast the shadow of his soul on the main character:

> It again smote Septimius with a strange thrill of surprise to find the walk which he himself had made, treading it, and smoothing it, and beating it down with the pressure of his continual feet from the time when the tufted grass made the sides all uneven, until now, when it was such a pathway as you may see through wood or ever a field, where many feet pass every day--to find this track and exemplification of his own secret thoughts and plans and emotions, this writing of his own body, impelled by the struggle and movement of his soul.[67]

To Hawthorne the path meant all that and more, for to Emerson he despondently commented one day while pacing the hilltop that the path would be the only remembrance of him to remain.[68] Moreover,

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65. Edith Garrigue Hawthorne, ed., The Memoirs of Julian Hawthorne (New York, 1938), p. 21.

66. Hoeltje, p. 363.

67. Hawthorne, Septimius Felton (Boston, 1899), p. 74; Stearns, pp. 379-80.

68. Hubert H. Hoeltje, Sheltering Tree, A Story of the Friendship of Ralph Waldo Emerson and Amos Bronson Alcott (Durham, 1943), p. 162.

as if to assure himself that posterity would associate him with the hilltop, Hawthorne consistently invited those infrequent visitors at the Wayside to join him on the hill. William Dean Howells, in the 1860s known only to a comparatively small circle as a poet, obtained a card of introduction from James Russell Lowell and traveled to the Wayside to meet the famous author. As he recalled, "[Hawthorne] . . . asked if I would like to go up on his hill with him and sit there, where he smoked. At the top, . . . we found a log, and he invited me to place on it beside him. . . . he [said] . . . he preferred the hill-top, and if he could have his way those arable fields should be grown up to pines, too."[69] And his close friend and publisher, James T. Fields, wrote to Hawthorne in appreciation, "We enjoyed, we always do, our visit to the Wayside. . . . I think as I write of Hawthorne 'on the Hill'."[70]

But for the most part Hawthorne preferred to enjoy his hilltop refuge by himself. Bronson Alcott, still very sensitive to social amenities, remembered of Hawthorne, "I seldom caught sight of him, and when I did, it was but to lose it the moment be suspected he was

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69. Howells, Literary Friends and Acquaintance, A Personal Retrospect of American Authorship, ed. by David F. Hiatt and Edwin H. Cody (Bloomington, 1968), pp. 47-49.

70. James C. Austin, Fields of the Atlantic Monthly, Letters to An Editor, 1861-70 (San Marino, California, 1953), p. 214. This letter is undated. Fields in his book, Yesterdays with Authors (Boston, 1882), wrote, "During this period, after his return from Europe, I saw him frequently at the Wayside. . . . He now seemed happy in the dwelling he had put in order for the calm and comfort of his middle and later life." (95) These frequent visits, however, have no other documentation other than the above allusions.

visible; oftenest seen on his hilltop, screened behind the shrubbery and disappearing like a hare into the brush when surprised."[71]

In addition to his hilltop, Hawthorne found that short journeys away from the Wayside gave him some relief from his spells of spiritual and physical distress, as well as from the scorching Concord summers. At the same time, they also served to ease Mrs. Hawthorne's deep concern for her husband's welfare. Hawthorne usually headed for the New Hampshire or Maine coast, often taking his son or daughter with him. Julian no doubt looked forward to these trips as much as or more than his father for, as he later vividly recalled,

> At certain seasons in Concord the heat in summer stagnates and simmers, until it seems as if nothing but a grasshopper could live. The water in the river is so warm that to bathe in it is merely to exchange one kind of heat for another. The very shadow of the trees is torrid; and I have known the thermometer to touch 112 degrees in the shade. No breeze stirs throughout the long, sultry days and the feverish nights bring mosquitos but no relief.[72]

Having been left behind at the Wayside in the summer of 1861, Mrs. Hawthorne wrote to her dear friend, Annie Fields, "We slowly consume beneath our lovely hill, but there are breezes in the Hawthorne path on its summit. I rejoice hourly that Mr. Hawthorne and Prince Rosered (Julian's sobriquet at five years when he wore damask cheeks) are at the sea, daily plunging there in."[73] In February 1862 Sophia again

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71. As quoted in Swayne, p. 144.

72. Hawthorne and His Wife, 2, 262.

73. Aug. 4, 1861, Fields Collection, Boston Public Library, as copied by M. Lothrop in SI.

reflected her personal desire to see her husband travel: in explaining that Hawthorne had been invited to visit a friend in Washington, D. C., she commented, "I am sure it would be of great benefit to my lord in all ways, physical and in regard of spirits also, to recreate from his steady writing."[74]

Hawthorne departed for Washington in March 1863 and returned in April, having witnessed the Civil War at close range. Undoubtedly the reality of the national dilemma did not allow him much rest and relaxation, and by July he had left again with his son to vacation on the rustic seacoast of Mount Desert Island, Maine.[75] Anticipating his departure, his wife wrote, "I shall be thoroughly refreshed as soon as Mr. Hawthorne is breathing salt air away from these marshes."[76]

Despite the salt air, Hawthorne increasingly fell ill. In December 1862 Sophia, after returning from a short trip to Concord, "was quite alarmed to find Mr. Hawthorne very ill." "I do not feel at all secure about his health," she wrote Annie Fields.[77] During the spring and summer of 1863 the family noticed no improvements in his health, but,

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74. Sophia to Annie Fields, February 20 [1862], ibid. During this period of intensive writing, Hawthorne worked on his English notebooks, Our Old Home, Septimius Felton, Dr. Grimshawe's Secret, and Dolliver Romance. Ronsheim, p. 29.

75. Julian Hawthorne to James T. Fields, July 25, 1862, Fields Collection, MS Cl 11, Boston Public Library; Hawthorne and His Wife, 2, 375.

76. Sophia to Annie Fields, c. July 1862, Fields Coll., BPL, as copied in S I.

77. Feb. 11, 1863, ibid., as copied in S III.

rather, he grew thinner, paler, and more languid each day.[78] A trip to the sea with his daughter Una in September did not avert an alarming decline in his condition in October.[79] Sophia, sensing the seriousness, wrote, "I am needed at home very much indeed. . . . I do not find Mr. Hawthorne very well--or rather he is in too negative a state to resist damp and the world's fare . . . . He takes cold every day."[80] Distressed, Sophia began to seriously propose moving from the Wayside because she was afraid that Concord was not the best place for him. But Hawthorne abjured suggestions to move, and claimed that he found the Wayside very pleasant.[81] Nearly every month that followed Hawthorne battled another round with his health. In November, Sophia reported, "Mr. Hawthorne was ill, more ill than ever in his life."[82] In January, he told his wife that travel in Europe was the only thing that would do him any good, a thing which he knew he could not do.[83] In February his health was very fragile and he refused to see a doctor.[84] As Julian later recalled, "'There was nothing the matter' with him; and that indefiniteness of ailment

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78. Hawthorne and His Wife, 2, 329.

79. Sophia to James T. Fields, Sept. 13, 1863, Fields Coll., BPL, in Lothrop Notebook SVI.

80. Sophia to Annie Fields, Oct. 11, 1863, ibid.

81. Sophia to Annie Fields, Oct. 1863, ibid.

82. Sophia to Annie Fields, Nov. 29, 1863, ibid.

83. Sophia to Annie Fields, Jan. 2, 1864, ibid.

84. Sophia to Annie Fields, [c. Feb. 1864], ibid.

was the serious feature. He was approaching the end and silently adjusting himself to the prospect of death."[85]

Struggling desperately against this ever-so-subtle death-wish, Mrs. Hawthorne continued to arrange trips for her husband, as she felt it was "imperative for [him] . . . to change the air and scene."[86] Ironically and tragically, however, the trip she arranged for Hawthorne with his friend William Ticknor to Washington, D. C., in April was interrupted by the sudden death of Ticknor. Hawthorne returned broken-hearted to the Wayside, appearing "so haggard, so white, so deeply scored with pain and fatigue . . . so much more ill."[87] His convalescence throughout the end of April was slow. Sophia never left his side: "He is my world and all the business in it, " she wrote Annie.[88]

Unaware, they planned together Hawthorne's last trip from the Wayside. Hawthorne had begun to feel a desire to visit the Isles of Shoals off the coast of New Hampshire--a favorite sea spot for him.[89]

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85. Hawthorne, Higginson, p. 114.

86. Sophia to Annie Fields, March 5, [1864], ibid., in Lothrop Notebook S VII. Mrs. Hawthorne gave a moving and revealing description of her husband's condition to Horatio Bridge: "Mr. Hawthorne has really been very ill all winter, and not well, by any means for a much longer time; not ill in bed but miserable on a lounge or sofa, and quite unable to write a word, even a letter, and lately unable to read. I have felt the wildest anxiety about him, because he is a person who has been immaculately well all his life and this illness has seemed to me an awful dream which could not be true. But he has wasted away very much, and the suns in his eyes are collapsed, and he has had no spirits, no appetite, and very little sleep. . . . He needs the damp sea-air for health, comfort, and enjoyment." Sophia to Bridge, April 5, 1864, as quoted in Bridge, pp. 189-191.

87. Sophia to Annie Fields, [April 18, 1864], ibid.

88. Ibid.

89. Sophia to Annie Fields, [April 22, 1864], ibid.

But he could not walk more than ten minutes without feeling the need to sit down.[90] Through the Fieldses Sophia arranged that Hawthorne travel with his longtime friend, Franklin Pierce. When the two left for New Hampshire in early May, Hawthorne was much weaker and Sophia felt particularly anxious about him.[91] On May 19, 1864, Hawthorne passed away in his sleep, leaving his wife and three children his heirs.

During the three years of Hawthorne's declining health, Sophia and the three children had led a very simple family life at the Wayside. Una, the eldest child was away from home for much of 1862 and 1863, but frequent letters kept her in touch with the family. Julian was finishing his courses at Mr. Sanborn's school in Concord, and planning to apply to Harvard.[92] Rose, the youngest, aged 9 at her return to the Wayside, reenacted the childhood exuberance in the gardens, brook, and orchards of the country home that her older brother and sister had experienced seven years before. As Mrs. Hawthorne so colorfully depicted, "Rose raised all the echoes of the county by scream-in with joy over her blooming crocuses, which she found in her garden."[93]

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90. Sophia to Annie Fields, [April 29, 1864], ibid.

91. Sophia to Annie Fields, [May 7, 1864], ibid. Isles of Shoals included the islands of Appledore, Star, and White. The group of eight barren islands lies 10 miles southeast of Portsmouth, New Hampshire.

92. See letters from Sophia to Una in Berg Collection. When Una returned home to the Wayside for summer breaks, she worked in the gardens. "I enjoy it very much," she explained to her brother, "for I always like to be in a rustic farming place as this is." Una to Julian, Aug. 19, 1862, Ber. Coll. See also Stewart, "The Hawthornes at the Wayside, 1860-64," p. 266.

93. Sophia to Husband, n.d., as quoted in Lathrop, p. 426.

The children became fast friends with the Alcott daughters next door, and the Alcott house, Julian recalled, became "just the place for what we called 'parties,' and my sisters and I were often invited; or we would drop in and the party would begin. There were dances--polka, schottische, lancers, waltz--with Louisa and Abby at the piano."[94] Dances were also held at the Wayside, such as the party held for Una with 40 guests invited in June of 1862.[95] Several smaller parties were held in the autumn of that year, despite the war, and several times the Alcott daughters came over to play cards.[96]

Mrs. Hawthorne was less inclined to socialize, although she made a point to leave Wednesdays open as her official visiting day so the townswomen could walk down the Boston Road to see her.[97] But, as she wrote to Annie Fields, "I have not much enterprise for society since I returned from Rome."[98] In fact, the only company other than her family's Mrs. Hawthorne really felt concern for during these years was that of Annie Fields. The copious letters and frequent visits to her young companion--Annie was 27 and Sophia 52--occupied most of her free time, as well as her thoughts. Her love for

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94. Hawthorne, ed., The Memoirs of Julian, p. 61.

95. Lothrop, p. 115; Sophia to Annie Fields, June 29, 1862, Fields Coll.

96. Hawthorne and His Wife, 2, 322.

97. Lothrop, p. 116.

98. c. March 18, 1862, Fields Coll., as copied in Lothrop Notebook S I.

Annie gave her strength and happiness while they remained in close contact, but despair once she finally realized that Annie had lost interest in their friendship. This crushing discovery coincided with her delayed reaction to her husband's death, and Sophia found that during much of her last years at the Wayside she had difficult times at best.[99]

Reaction and Recovery Years, 1864-68

For the first two years after Emerson brought the news of her husband's death in New Hampshire, Sophia Hawthorne showed remarkable resilience and strength in the face of her great loss. She found comfort, serenity, and even joy in the knowledge that her husband was beyond, in the company of God. She wrote Annie, "Do not fear of me 'dark hours,' . . . I think there is nothing dark for me henceforth. I have to do only with present--and the present is Light and Rest. . . . If I could bear all sorrow I would be glad--because God has turned for me the silver lining and for me the darkest cloud has broken into ten thousand singing birds."[100]

Lifted by her awareness of God's omnipresence, Sophia felt a renewed sensitivity to the beauty surrounding her at the Wayside. She yearned to share her delight with her closest friends, the Fields.

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99. The Fields Collection contains 275 letters from Sophia to the Fields, the vast majority of which are addressed to Annie. Mrs. Tharp discussed Sophia's friendship with Mrs. Fields in Peabody Sisters of Salem.

100. Sophia to Annie Fields, May 30, 1864, and Aug. 2, 1864, Fields Coll., in Lothrop Notebook, S VIII.

She worked diligently weeding, hoeing, and tending to gardens and paths so closely associated with her sacred memories of her husband at the Wayside. She was entranced by the sunrise and sunset, the greenness of the grounds, the soft breezes of summer, by her cathedral aisle that looked like "the straight and narrow way that leads to life eternal." She planned to plant periwinkle and violets from the hillpath on Hawthorne's "sacredest spot" in the garden, and set arbor vitae trees around it, leaving two entrances. And, after two years, she could walk over Hawthorne's paths and say, "I think I can truly rejoice for him."[101]

In May of 1866 Sophia wrote her sister, Elizabeth Peabody, "we are all abloom. I trim trees and rake leaves, and sit and hear birds sing and winds make music. And I work very hard." Only one month later, however, she again wrote Elizabeth declaring, "since your moving . . . I have been in a most miserable state. . . . There was no positive in me. . . . I could not do my woodland work at last, which was my only relief. . . . Earthly existence became intolerable."[102] Here was the first sign of Sophia's physical and emotional decline which overshadowed her last two years at the Wayside.

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101. Sophia to Mr. Fields, Oct. 9, 1864, Fields Coll., in Lothrop Notebook, Si IX; Sophia to Una, Sept. 15, 1864; Sophia to Mary Mann, June 15, 1865; Sophia to Una, June 9, 1865; Sophia to Una, May 3, 1866, Berg Collection, New York Public Library; Sophia to Annie Fields, July 4, 8, 1866, Fields Coll.

102. Sophia to Elizabeth, May 13 and June 15, 1866, Berg. Coll., NYPL. Sophia's hard work included her copying over Hawthorne's English journals, which Fields hoped to publish, among other Hawthorne works left behind by the author.

On the first of October Sophia reported to Annie, "My health has gone down greatly this summer, I am only half myself now,--shaken, jarred, tossed in many ways."[103] The security of her world at the Wayside slowly was beginning to fall away, while Sophia, bewildered by the changes, struggled weakly to adjust. In September of 1866 Julian proposed he study in Heidelberg and that the family join him there. To Una, Sophia wrote, "I shall wrench myself away and go wherever you three wish. For after all I live in you and not at the Wayside--and my husband is not now confined to place."[104] But a year later Sophia admitted her real emotional reaction to the proposal:

> No words can ever tell the harassment of spirits I have undergone for a year, ever since Julian first proposed to go and study philosophy at Heidelberg. My first emotion was one of terror at the idea of stirring from this peaceful old home, with all its sacred associations of pain and happiness, and of crossing the sea again without him who is the centre of all my thoughts and feelings.[105]

Sophia's unsettling sense of imminent departure during the fall of 1866 found her increasingly dependent on family and friends. But her dearest friend, Annie Fields in Boston, unexpectantly grew silent and unresponsive to Sophia's urgent appeals for love and attention. In October Sophia attempted to arouse her companion with guilt: "the joy you must have felt at my missing you on Saturday," she wrote.[106] The

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103. Sophia to Annie, Oct. 1, 1866, Fields Coll.

104. Sophia to Una, Sept. 22, 1866, Berg Coll.

105. Sophia to Elizabeth Peabody, Oct. 13, 1867, Berg Coll.

106. Sophia to Annie, Oct. 28, 1866, Fields Coll.

next month, however, she found herself writing, "Oh Annie Fields, Are you lost? Annie, I love you. I wish to see you. I wish to hear you."[107]

But with apparently no response Sophia spent much of the winter of 1866-67 ill--"my head is not well,"[108] she wrote Annie's husband. To add to her anxieties, in January 1867 Sophia for the first time feared bankruptcy.[109] Her lawyer, Mr. Hilliard, could send no more funds, and by March she could not even buy coal. "In short," she appealed to Mr. Fields, "I am in a desperate strait."[110] The financial crisis also automatically cancelled the move to Heidelberg as nothing, Sophia stressed, "would induce me or Julian to borrow money."[111]

Finding herself alone at the Wayside in June 1867, Sophia nursed her "heart stirring memories," and admitted to Mr. Fields, "each day I cling more to the friends who are left to me." Still very sensitive to the estrangement with Annie but bolstered by a renewed idealism, she wrote, "Annie and I have drifted away, from the lake of ink--but we are united in a purple and gold lake of air and sun forever."[112]

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107. Sophia to Mrs. Fields, Nov. 24, 1866, Fields Coll.

108. Sophia to Mr. Fields, February 25, 1867, Fields Coll.

109. Sophia to Mr. Fields, Jan. 2, 1867, Fields Coll.

110. Sophia to Mr. Fields, March 28, 1867, Fields Coll.

111. Sophia to Elizabeth Peabody, Oct. 13, 1867, Berg Coll.

112. Sophia to Mr. Fields, June 10 and 16, 1867, Fields Coll.

In August, Sophia took several steps to cut back on expenses: she and Rose closed up the Wayside and proceeded to accept invitations which lasted for a five-week sojourn from Concord. She also "scattered" her maids and Una returned to help with the housework and family affairs. Finally, she gave notice to Rosy Burns that she intended to sell the Wayside.[113]

Sophia's efforts to be thrifty initially provided some comfort--"I am at last rested and well," she wrote Mr. Fields on October 8. Morever, she now was able to proceed again with her editing of Mr. Hawthorne's manuscripts for publication, with the anticipation of substantial financial returns.[114]

But by October 27 the family debts had reached an alarming size: Mrs. Hawthorne feared she had overdrawn upon Mr. Fields $700.[115] That winter Sophia succumbed again to the physical and emotional strain and became severely ill.[116] By April she had regained enough strength to attempt to deal with the pressing financial problems, and she began to contact prospective buyers for the Wayside--but not without considerable mixed emotions.[117] Having somehow reestablished her correspondence

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113. Sophia to Elizabeth Peabody, Oct. 13, 1867, Berg Coll.; Sophia to Annie, [Aug. ?, 1867], Fields Coll.

114. Sophia to Mr. Fields, Oct. 8, 1867, Fields Coll.

115. Sophia to Mr. Fields, Oct. 27, 1867, Fields Coll.

116. Sophia to Annie Fields, May 10, 1868, Fields Coll. Sophia wrote that her hair was all coming out, "as usual after a severe illness."

117. Sophia to Frederick Goddard Tucherman, April 5, 1868, Yale Review, Autumn 1933, p. 214, as copied in Lothrop Notebook Hunt VI, MMNHP.

with her confidante, Annie, Sophia had an outlet to discuss her personal responses. In May she wrote:

> For the first time, yesterday I walked along the paths of the Wayside--through the larch avenue, and on the lawn, and it seemed an awful thing to resign all property in the place where his feet had trod. But then comes the memory of his distastes, not only of Concord, but of this side of the water. . . . The knowledge of his unease here ought to make me willing to give it up. It is a pain to think of him here. . . . So I take what comfort is left in knowing he had no love at all for Concord. . . . He wished we had never returned to this house, but had found a residence by the sea. . . . the sacred, beloved dust upon that hilltop it seems impossible to leave. But he is not there at all.[118]

Clearly torn and trying to disengage herself from her sacred memories of shared happiness at the Wayside, Sophia dramatized the worst: "Ah, how he pined for [England] . . . too! How homesick he was. . . . I cannot bear to think of his stifling under this hill for four years. It makes me almost hate it on that account, as I hate it now for Una's sake."[119] She concluded her argument in a letter to Annie: "it will do to leave Concord at present, where the serpent has trailed over all our associations and sacred spots."[120]

Whatever Sophia's feeling were during the summer and early fall of 1868, they remain hidden behind the day-to-day affairs she and her children shared while living at the Wayside.[121] On October 13, 1868,

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118. See Footnote 116.

119. Sophia to Mr. Fields, July 5, 1868, Fields Coll., Una was sick.

120. Sophia to Annie Fields, May 24, 1868, Fields Coll.

121. Sophia wrote sparsely during this period to Mr. Fields and Annie, saying little about her personal feelings. See Fields Coll.

the family left for Dresden, Germany, where Julian was to study engineering, having been unsuccessful in their efforts to sell the Wayside.[122]

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122. October 13-14, 1868, Alcott Journal XLIII, in Lothrop Notebook IX-A; Lothrop, p. 145.

CHAPTER III

Hawthorne Tradition Lingers on at the Wayside, 1868-1924

The removal of the Hawthorne family from Concord did not diminish the notoriety of the Wayside as Nathaniel Hawthorne's home. Bronson Alcott, now at last able to demonstrate fully his sense of affinity and sociability towards the Hawthornes, became an "indulgent guide" to out-of-town visitors interested in seeing the Hawthorne home. From 1871 to 1875 Alcott mentioned taking numerous guests to see "Hawthorne's place" and hill. He told them antecdotes and stories related to Hawthorne and his home.[1]

Several persons, including Alcott himself, expressed an interest in buying the Wayside, with the anticipation of using it as a home, a summer residence, or an academy.[2] But in July 1870 Abba

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1. In his Journal, Alcott kept clippings written on the Wayside which Mrs. Lothrop copied but failed sometimes to note the source. Either Alcott clipped without leaving the paper's name or this information was omitted by Mrs. Lothrop. He also noted his various guests to whom he showed the Wayside. Aug. 9 and 15, 1871, Alcott Journal XLV, Lothrop Notebook A VI; Mrs. Moulton's article, New York Tribune, June 4, 1874, June 18, 1874, and two untitled clippings in Alcott Journal XLIX, Lothrop Notebook A IX; each of the three clippings alluded at least once to Hawthorne's presence or memory at the Wayside.

2. As early as August 1871 Alcott had visions of his academy of philosophy, and hoped its success would eventually call for greater space.

Gray (Mrs. George Gray) purchased the Wayside and sold it in March of 1873 to Mary C. Pratt, who had been leasing the house as of March 1871 or 1872 for her girl's school. During Mrs. Gray's residency at the Wayside her son, Arthur, painted seascapes on the ceiling of Hawthorne's tower study in honor of the author. These depictions have lasted through the century since their creation, reminding visitors of Hawthorne's contemporary popularity and fame.[3]

The Wayside School for Girls, 1873-79

From 1873 to 1879 Miss Pratt ran her school for girls at the Wayside but the house remained, in the mind of the public, "Hawthorne's." Tour books such as Homes of American Authors (1853) and Samuel Drake's Historic Mansions and Highways Around Boston (1873) featured substantial excerpts on Hawthorne's home.[4] In 1878 Scribner's Magazine contracted Frank Sanborn and George B. Bartlett of Concord and Miss L. B. Humphries of Boston to write articles on Concord notables, and Reardon and Martin to illustrate the texts. Featured homes included Alcott's, Emerson's, and Hawthorne's.[5]

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3. Ronsheim, p. 30; Lothrop, p. 193; The Concord Freeman, May 18, 1876, p. 1, as copied from the MMNHP files. According to the newspaper article, Miss Pratt's school moved from Charlestown, New Hampshire, to Concord in March 1871; presumably they leased the Wayside for that year, but according to Miss Lothrop, not until 1872. On March 4, 1873, Alcott recorded in his journal that Miss Pratt at Wayside had informed him that she had purchased all the Gray property on the north side of the road, the Grays having reserved the eight acres on the south side to build a house for themselves. Alcott Journal XLVIII, in Lothrop Notebook A IX.

4. Homes of American Authors (New York, 1853), pp. 305-308. No specific author was cited, but the publication was subtitled: "Anecdotal, Personal, and Descriptive Sketches by Various Writers." Drake, Historic Homes (Boston, 1899, entered in Library of Congress by Act of Congress, 1873), p. 373.

5. Clippings from September 30, 1878, Alcott Journal LIV, in Lothrop Notebook A VI.

Attracted primarily by this Hawthorne association, but also by the school of young ladies--as all represented "the best families in New England"--several prominent figures visited the Wayside during Miss Pratt's ownership. In 1874, for instance, the distinguished guests listed at the graduation ceremonies included Bronson Alcott, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Miss May Alcott, Dr. and Mrs. Cotting of the Highlands, Miss Lucy Barrett, and representatives from the families of Judge Hoar and other prominent Concord citizens. Ellery Channing wrote a poem for the ceremony, while Alcott gave a "short but eloquent address."[6]

Miss Pratt's private family boarding school also kept alive much of the literary history of the Wayside. This "very select"[7] group of young girls (and boys) learned from Bronson Alcott himself:[8]

> I meet the young ladies at the Wayside and tell them something about Hawthorne, Thoreau and Louisa. My sketches derive an additional interest in the fact that Hawthorne occupied this House, here wrote

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6. The above information about the school and graduation of 1874 comes from a clipping Alcott filed in his journal for June 1874. The unidentified reporter, who signed the article "M.N.S.," strongly highlighted the Hawthorne association. He (she) introduced the scene with, "It was at the 'Wayside,' once the home of the immortal Hawthorne," and depicted the ceremony with allusions such as, "we could fancy the spirit of Hawthorne looking from his favorite turret window admiring the scene below, while his genius presided over all." The clipping can be found in Alcott Journal LIX, in Lothrop Notebook AVI.

7. "The Wayside," newspaper clipping among those entered June 1874 in Alcott's Journal, ibid.

8. Among the day pupils from Concord were a few young boys, two of whom were Alcott's grandsons, Freddy and Johnny, sons of Anna Alcott Pratt. June 18, 1874, Alcott Journal LIX; May 23, 1876, Alcott Journal LII, and Feb. 5, 1878, Alcott Journal LIV, in Lothrop Notebooks VI and IX.

> his later stories, and here also Louisa passed most of her girlhood, and has woven not a little of it into her "Little Women." The Wayside, hillside, hill-top, the grounds, brook and landscape generally are associated with the life and literature of both.[9]

Moreover, the residents of the Wayside school, as depicted by journalists of the day, perpetuated the tradition of refinement and cultivation earlier fostered by the Alcott and Hawthorne families. Such descriptive phrases as "these young girls in their white dresses of snowy whiteness stood . . . their attitudes seeming to implore his [Hawthorne's] blessing," and "Miss Pratt . . . received her many friends with the ease and dignity that characterize her nature," reflected personality traits from the Wayside's past.[10] In addition, the pupils had excellent cultural opportunities with the Concord public library, lecture courses, and the like.[11]

Even closer than the school residents to the Hawthorne traditions at the Wayside, however, were the living descendants of Hawthorne, one of whom, Rose Hawthorne Lathrop, purchased back her childhood home through her husband, George Parsons Lathrop, in 1879.

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9. April 19, 1878, Alcott Journal LIV, in Lothrop Notebook A IX.

10. Same clipping cited in Footnote 6.

11. "Wayside School for Young Ladies," May 18, 1876, The Concord Freeman, p. 1, as copied for MMNHP files. Sophia Hawthorne, especially, with her instincts to keep her children pure and protected would have found the school appropriate at the Wayside. See Tharp, pp. 302-3, and her letters to the Fieldses after Hawthorne's death in 1864.

The Lathrop Period, 1879-82

During the George Lathrops' brief residency at the Wayside, the popularization of the home as Hawthorne's in Concord continued and grew. The Concord Freeman reported the Lathrop purchase in March of 1879 with considerable flourish: "It is a matter of general gratulation that . . . [Lathrop], editor of the Boston Saturday Evening Courier, and son-in-law of the great romancer, has lately purchased the Wayside estate, which was so long owned and occupied by Nathaniel Hawthorne . . . It must give special pleasure to Mrs. Lothrop [sic] to again occupy the old time house now richly invested with the charms of unique literary associations."[12]

Coordinating well with the rich literary associations throughout Concord (Emerson, Channing, Thoreau), the Hawthorne house became increasingly the object of publication and visitation. George Bartlett added a tour guidebook for Concord to the market, while the Lathrops themselves together printed an article on Hawthorne at the Wayside for publication in Our Continent (March 1882).[13] This is the period when

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12. March 27, 1879, The Concord Freeman, p. 1, as copied for the MMNHP files. The same article reported that the house sold for $4,400. A May 1, 1879, article, p. 1, noted that the Lathrops were to take possession of the house as of June 15th.

13. George Bartlett, The Concord Guidebook (Boston 1880); March 16, 1882, Concord Freeman, p. 1, as copied for MMNHP files. Norman Holmes Pearson, in his article, "Elizabeth Peabody on Hawthorne," Essex Institution Historical Collections 94, no. 3 (July 1958), 257-58, introduced an interesting sidelight to the publications on Hawthorne. Apparently a rivalry had sprung up between Julian Hawthorne and George Lathrop over the profits from Hawthorne's memory, because the latter, having married Rose to almost no one's satisfaction, had the first family book on Hawthorne in the works, and ultimately, in print. Rose consequently suffered estrangement both from her brother and Aunt Ebe (Elizabeth Hawthorne), even though Julian's Hawthorne and His Wife followed in quick succession.

the Hawthorne path on the ridge of the hill first provoked curiosity and fame. "Since Hawthorne's death in 1864," Bartlett related, "nothing has been done to preserve the path his footsteps made; yet nature, as if by secret sympathy with his genius, has thus far refused to obliterate it, and it remains distinct amid the bordering wild-growth."[14]

The tourists so attracted to the Wayside became somewhat of a problem to the Lathrops. To protect their privacy they printed an announcement in the town paper that trespassing on the walk between the Wayside and Alcott's Orchard House (the Larch Path) was forbidden.[15] But the Lathrops could not stem the flow of travelers some of whom, Lathrop explained, expressed considerable indignation and resentment when the Lathrops tried "to insinuate the idea that the house may even be a private dwelling, not at all hours of the day and night open to the inquisitive presence of strangers."[16]

Beginning in 1881, however, the Lathrops' circumstances and professions began to draw them away from the Wayside. In January the local paper reported the rumor that Mrs. Lathrop, a prominent artist, might pursue her profession in New York during the winter. In February the paper announced the death of the Lathrop's only son, aged four, in Boston.[17] The loss, Rose later explained, forced her and her husband away from the

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14. Bartlett, Concord, p. 96.

15. The Concord Freeman, May 1, 1879, p. 1, as copied for MMNHP files.

16. Lathrop, A Study of Hawthorne, p. 451.

17. The Concord Freeman, January 13, 1881, and February 10, 1881, as copied for MMNHP files.

Wayside: "my boy had lately died when we left, and I could rarely bear to open my eyes in the house where I had watched him daily."[18]

On March 31, 1881, the papers reported the imminent departure of Mrs. Lathrop and Miss Alice Wheeler for Europe "for the purpose of pursuing art study under the most favorable circumstances." In June it was reported that Mr. Lathrop was planning to depart for Spain to prepare a series of articles for Harper's Monthly. In July Mrs. Lathrop was in Paris studying, in August Mr. Lathrop in London, considering attending the International Literary Congress in Vienna in September.[19]

In November of 1881 the family of Julian Hawthorne moved to the Wayside. While Julian was still in Europe, his wife and six children planned to occupy "the old Hawthorne Mansion" throughout the winter. In February 1882 George Lathrop returned and gave a lecture at the Concord lyceum on his travel in Spain. And in June he and his wife announced they would spend most of the summer at the Wayside.[20]

But the memory of their lost son no doubt continued to disturb the Lathrops, and in the spring of 1883 they advertised in a Boston paper the Wayside for sale. Within twenty-four hours they received a wire

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18. Rose H. Lathrop to Thomas Wentworth Higginson, Oct. 13, 1899, in Higginson, ed., Autographs of Women Given to the Public Library of the City of Boston, 1911, in Boston Public Library.

19. The Concord Freeman, March 31, June 9, July 28, August 25, 1881, as copied for the MMNHP files.

20. Concord Freeman, Nov. 10, 1881; Feb. 9, 1882; June 16, 1882, as copied for MMNHP files.

from Daniel Lothrop, Esq., of Boston requesting that the Wayside be held for his purchase. And by May 1883 the Wayside once again had passed hands, and for the last time before the house was to become a part of Minute Man National Historical Park in 1965.[21]

The Lothrops Carry and Extend the Wayside Traditions, 1883-1924

Daniel Lothrop, head of the prominent Boston publishing firm, Lothrop and Company, and his wife, writer Margaret Sydney, found the Wayside an ideal summer home. Intrigued by the literary association with Hawthorne, the Lothrops decided to make no changes to the Wayside other than to give the house an occasional coat of fresh paint and a piazza addition to the west side (1887), following the architectural style set by the Hawthornes with their improvements on the house. Indeed, the Lothrops made it a point to inform their many guests that the Wayside appeared "about as Hawthorne left it," which stimulated an increase both in the visitation to and articles about the Wayside by Hawthorne admirers.[22]

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21. Lothrop, p. 153. The Concord Freeman, May 25, 1883; June 8, 1883. The latter article noted that Mr. Lothrop had purchased the house for $5000, and that it was "in a very dilapidated condition." Margaret Lothrop, the Daniel Lothrops' only daughter, sold the Wayside to the National Park Service on June 21, 1965, conveying 3.32 acres and some furnishings and objects, for $56,800. Registry of National Historic Landmarks, Biennial Visit Report, Nov. 30, 1965, in files at History Division Library.

22. The Concord Freeman, May 25 and July 20, 1883, p. 1; Lothrop, pp. 153-60; "The Philosopher's Picnic," Boston Evening Transcript, July 27, 1887, p. 1. The list of articles written about Hawthorne and the Wayside during the Lothrop ownership is long, but a few examples printed before 1924 are: "The Town of Concord," The Domestic Monthly, XXVII: 6, Sept. 1887, p. 410; Eugenie Eldridge, "Concord Days," The Cottage Hearth, XIV: 11, Nov. 1888, p. 347; Oliver Bronson Capen, "Country Homes of Famous Americans," Country Life In America, July 1904, p. 282; "Hawthorne Memories Cling to Wayside at Concord," Christian Science Monitor, June 20, 1914, p. 17; William J. Mann, "Hawthorne's Wayside," Boston Post, August 1, 1921. For books published on the subject during the period, check the bibliography.

During the nine summers passed at the Wayside before the death of Daniel Lothrop in 1892, the couple had their first and only child, a daughter, Margaret, in 1884. The family usually arrived in early May from Boston and remained in Concord until November, with Mr. Lothrop commuting by train during the week to his publishing house in Boston. Each evening, according to one report, his wife and young daughter met him in their coachman-driven carriage.[23]

As Margaret later remembered of these early years at the Wayside, "Both my mother and father were fond of good conversation and music, and enjoyed welcoming friends to our home. . . . guests were almost always present at our dinner table."[24] Among their guests in 1886 was James G. Clark, who set down his impressions in an article, "The Wayside, Visit to the Quaint Old Homestead of Hawthorne."[25] Clark assured his readers and friends, many of whom, he claimed, had questioned him about the occupants of the Wayside, that "it certainly was a merciful and kind fate that placed it in the possession of parties who are in every way fitted to appreciate the rare prize and to guard with watchful eyes and sacred care a shrine that will become more famous and be more

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23. Lothrop, p. 163; James G. Clark, "The Wayside," Saturday Evening Spectator (Minneapolis), Sept. 11, 1886, p. 1. Margaret Lothrop in an interview with Park Historian Robert D. Ronsheim on April 25, 1968, recalled that "the man"--the coachman, grounds keeper, and gardener--was one of three servants, the other two being a maid and a cook. Transcript is in MMNHP files.

24. Lothrop, p. 163.

25. See Clark reference in footnote 23.

and more sought by strangers from all parts of the world as the years go by."

Clark lavished special attention on Harriet Mulford Lothrop, alias Margaret Sydney, noting that her literary works, the best known of which was Five Little Peppers and How they Grew, were "very popular in the East where the author is known and loved by all who know her for her many acts of quiet, unassuming benevolence and for her rare social graces." Margaret Lothrop, commenting on her mother, added, "she loved people and people loved her. She greatly enjoyed entertaining."[26]

With Mrs. Lothrop's rare social graces, her literary and benevolent nature, and her love of entertainment, the Wayside became the scene of a broad variety of gatherings during the four decades following the Lothrop purchase. There were informal gatherings such as the East Quarter Reading Circle, "juvenile" parties for young Margaret's birthdays, benevolent society meetings, school theatricals, historical preservation meetings, and large lawn parties attended by literary and philosophical notables.[27]

The Lothrops' lawn parties became an annual affair at the Wayside. As Margaret Lothrop recalled, "the guests filled the house and overflowed on to the lawn. At the foot of the stone wall, just under the slope of

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26. Address by Margaret Lothrop About Her Mother to the Rhode Island Children of the American Revolution, February 15, 1958, p. 5, Harriet M. Lothrop MSS, 9580215-1, at MMNHP.

27. Lothrop, pp. 165, 180.

the hill, tables were set up for serving ice cream and punch."[28] In 1887 a substantial article was submitted to the Boston Evening Transcript depicting "The Philosopher's Picnic" at the Wayside.[29] As the article related, the philosophical picnic was "the favorite relaxation of old Concord in its most beautiful season." The 1887 "annual garden party" honored the philosophers attending the ninth session of the Concord School of Philosophy. "[Concord's]. . . most prominent citizens . . . are glad to grace the occasion. It is wit, wisdom and sociability in the most refined sense. 'Margaret Sydney,' as hostess, reigns well."

On the agenda for the garden party were literary exercises--held on the upper esplanade, in the curve of the wooded slope--which featured readings from Thoreau, Alcott, Longfellow, Hawthorne, and Burns, as well as from Margaret Sydney's unpublished article, "Concord, Its Highways and Byways."[30] Supper followed, and "among the knot of little tables, sat Mrs. Julia Ward Howe at the table of the host and hostess, together with Mr. and Mrs. Frank P. Sanborn and Professor [William T.] Harris. Over the lawn, in artistic confusion were other circles, everybody in the most genial humor . . . witty speeches prevailed and philosophy in its most charming garb was rampant."

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28. Lothrop, p. 164.

29. Boston Eve. Transcript, July 27, 1887, p. 1.

30. On Oct. 6, 1888 The Concord Enterprise announced that D. Lothrop & Co. had recently published "Old Concord, Her highways and by-ways," (p. 3).

The Wayside provided a picturesque and commemorative setting for such gala events. As the reporter noted in 1887, "The place so dear to all pilgrims, never seemed so glorious. . . . The wealth of foliage in all the shades of green crowning the hill, the sweep of freshly mown lawn, the eight terraces laid out by Mr. Alcott . . . the historic paths, the quaint rambling old mansion, all made a most striking picture."

Besides her enthusiastic involvement in such literary circles, Mrs. Lothrop also donated her time while at The Wayside to charitable organizations. As one of the ten elected directors of the Women's Board of Missions, and as one of the Vice-Presidents of the Benevolent Society connected with the New England Conservatory of Music, Mrs. Lothrop on occasion held committee meetings at the Wayside.[31]

Mrs. Lothrop's involvement with historic preservation took more of her time and energy. Besides sacredly guarding the Wayside as a Hawthorne shrine, Mrs. Lothrop offered the house and grounds to the Concord Old Bridge Society and to the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) for their picnics & meetings.[32] Active in the DAR as a regent (until 1896) and founder of the old Concord chapter, Mrs. Lothrop extended her involvement to organize the Children of the American Revolution (CAR)

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31. The Concord Enterprise, January 17, 1890, p. 3; January 15, 1893, p. 1, as copied for the MMNHP files.

32. Margaret Sydney, "Hawthorne at Wayside," The Interior (Nov. 1896), p. 1540. H.M. Lothrop MSS 8961102 at MMNHP; The Concord Enterprise, July 30, 1896, p. 1; Sept. 3, 1896, p. 5; Nov. 8, 1900, p. 1, as copied for MMNHP files.

in 1895.[33] In 1877 she completed her book, Old Concord, Her Highways and Byways and had it published the next year. In 1899 she purchased the Ephraim W. Bull estate to preserve the home of the Concord grape developer, and, after completing some repairs on the house, held a "Remembrance meeting" to honor Bull in April of 1900.[34] In 1902 she purchased the Orchard House for the same reason, and held it for 10 years until the Louisa May Alcott Association was formed to buy and protect the property.[35] And, finally, in 1904 she organized a three-day commemorative gathering at the Wayside to honor the Hawthorne Centenary.[36]

In May of 1899 Mrs. Lothrop, instead of returning to Concord for the regular summer residency at the Wayside, leased the house and prepared to take her daughter to Washington, D.C., and Europe for two and a half years.[37] That summer they visited Concord twice, residing each time at the Colonial Inn for a fortnight.[38] Throughout the fall-winter-spring of 1899-1900 Mrs. Lothrop and daughter lived at the Wayside,

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33. The Concord Enterprise, Sept. 17, 1896, p. 5; Lothrop, p. 183. Acc. to The Concord Enterprise for Nov. 18, 1916, p. 5, Mrs. Lothrop had been elected as an Honorary Regent for life.

34. The Concord Enterprise, October 28, 1899, p. 1; April 12, 1900, p. 1.

35. Lothrop, p. 183.

36. The Concord Enterprise, June 29, July 6, and July 13, 1904, p. 5 each time; for details, see Higginson, ed., The Hawthorne Centenary.

37. The Concord Enterprise, May 18, 1899, p. 5. The article said the house was leased to Mrs. J. Francis Hayward of Quincy, Mass.

38. The Concord Enterprise, June 15, and Aug. 17, 1899, p. 5.

leaving only for short vacations to Washington, D.C. That summer, following Margaret's graduation from Concord High School, the two sailed for Europe, and during their absence Mrs. Erving Winslow's summer school performed a play entitled "The Romancers" on the Wayside lawn. By September of 1900 the Lothrops had returned to the Wayside for the winter, only to depart once more for the Continent in the spring.[39]

In the fall of 1901 Margaret Lothrop entered as a freshman at Smith College. During her college years she returned to the Wayside, then her mother's winter residence, for several vacations. After graduation, Margaret moved to California where her mother for the last nine winters of her life visited her, leasing the Wayside when possible. Mrs. Lothrop also traveled a good deal in her later years, to Egypt, Palestine, England, Norway and the Continent, as well as to homes of her numerous friends in this country. On August 24, 1924, news was received in Concord of Mrs. Lothrop's death in San Francisco, California, so closing the interpretive chapters of the Wayside history.[40]

Epilogue

During the period from Mrs. Lothrop's death in 1924 and June 1965, when Margaret Lothrop sold the property to the U.S. Government, the Wayside underwent major and rather tragic transformations. Despite the

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39. The Concord Enterprise, Oct. 28, and Dec. 21, 1899, p. 1; Apr. 12, pp. 1 and 4; June 14, p. 5; June 21, p. 5; August 2, p. 1; Sept. 20, 1900, p. 1; Sept. 25, 1901, p. 1.

40. The Concord Enterprise, Sept. 25, 1901, p. 1; Dec. 4, 1901, p. 5; Nov. 25, 1902 p. 5; Dec. 31, 1902, p. 5; Jan. 7, 1903, p. 1; Sept. 9, 1916, p. 5; Sept. 7, 1921, p. 4; Oct. 5, 1921, p. 3; Nov. 2, 1921, p. 3. The last article tells that Margaret then was an instructor of economics at Stanford University.

deep interest and extensive time Miss Lothrop invested in researching and preserving the Wayside's history, she was left helpless to combat the hurricane of 1938, which tore down the majestic spruce and larch trees that had overshadowed the property and had given it such character. Several photographs in the illustration section dramatically demonstrate the devastation wrought by this exceptional storm. Miss Lothrop related her sad memories the next year when writing her history of the Wayside. In recalling the lovely spruce trees, grown to a height of eighty feet, which had snapped off or been uprooted in the hurricane, she wrote:

> Sometimes now I look at the bare terraces behind the house, the destruction of those towering trees seems almost unendurable. They had not only formed a dark green frame for the Wayside, but also created a shaded, sun-flecked retreat.[41]

In 1961 Miss Lothrop attempted once again to give details on the 1938 destruction to the Wayside grounds.[42] Some of the larches of The Larch Path which still line the street between Alcott's Orchard House and the Wayside had toppled in the heavy winds. The tall pine trees which had stood in the front yard (planted by Alcott)--there had been more than three--also fell before Miss Lothrop's eyes. The 80-foot Norway Spruces on the terraces behind the house broke off perhaps 10 or 15, or possibly more, feet from the ground when the wind's force was

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41. Lothrop, p. 186.

42. Handwritten observations on the Wayside grounds by Miss Lothrop, dated May 16, 1961. In files at MMNHP.

broken by the house. "First one tree went down and then another and still another, the amount of visible sky increasing. The noise was terrific," she wrote. As she watched the nightmare unfold before her, Miss Lothrop found it unbelievable to witness the end to the trees she had seen grow from their medium height to their giant stature on the hillside. To her dismay, Miss Lothrop reported, the destruction of the spruce and pine trees on the top of the hill was so great that she could not have borne the expense to restore the grounds, and so she sold the spruce trees as they were to Mr. John Forbes of Concord who had the branches chopped off and the trunks pulled out by a yoke of oxen (see illustrations). Miss Lothrop felt that the five spruce trees standing in 1961 behind the house on top of the stone wall and the one near the southeast corner of the barn were second growth from the Norwegian Spruce that Hawthorne had sent from England.

The Concord Journal also showed concern for the destruction to the Wayside grounds. One of its writers editorialized in June 1940, "Among other severe losses which the hurricane brought to Concord was the practical destruction of Hawthorne's Path, by the uprooting of the pines that surrounded and shaded it."[43] Today one has to apply ample imagination to visualize the Hawthorne path running along the hilltop.

Almost the only residual representations of the grounds during the Alcott-Hawthorne-Lothrop periods now standing are the hawthorn tree in front of the house, perhaps some of the day-lilies in the gardens fronting the house, some larch in the Larch Path, a few spruce from the Hawthorne's Cathedral aisle in the field across the street, the barn, and a few dying elm trees.

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43. "Hawthorne's Path," Concord Journal, June 20, 1940.

CHAPTER IV

The Historic Grounds of the Wayside

Pre-Alcott Period:

This report did not go into any discussion of the pre-Alcott period as Historian Ronsheim already had provided the necessary historical data in the Historic Structures Report, historical data section. For the interpretation of the grounds during this period, practically no information has been found other than a brief notation in a Revolutionary document among the Gage Papers (microfilmed for the MMNHP files) which describes a picket fence fronting the property, then owned by Samuel Whitney, a Revolutionary leader. As the French-speaking spy reported to General Gage, "La Maison ayant une petite Coar devant entourée des palisades."[1]

Between 1778, when Samuel Whitney sold his 3 1/2 acre plot, and 1845, when the Alcotts purchased the house, the property changed hands numerous times, but remained among wheelwrights, blacksmiths, and cabinetmakers. The shop and woodhouse standing on the grounds when the Alcotts moved to Hillside in 1845 carried over from these artisans' occupancies, but their locations on the grounds have never been established. Nevertheless,

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1. As quoted in Ronsheim, p. 8.

the Alcotts proceeded to relocate and divide the extant outbuildings, marking the interpretative starting point for the grounds report.

From every indication in Alcott's journal, the property which the Alcotts moved to in April 1845 was bare of trees, shrubbery, and greenery. Alcott's amount of transplanting, his frequent allusions to his land as a sand bank, and his sketches of the property in 1845-46 (see illustrations) confirm the fact that Alcott nearly started from scratch in developing the grounds.

THE ALCOTT PERIOD
THE GROUNDS OF HILLSIDE, 1845-48

When Amos Bronson Alcott moved his family to Hillside in April of 1845 he was a man haunted by defeat, financially ruined, and anxious to take full advantage of the property made available to him through the monetary support of his wife and Emerson. Maintaining that he could not plant for profit alone, however, Alcott drew "pretty figures in the earth's surface." As he saw his work, he noted, "It is art in Nature." Referring to several landscape gardening books (see list in Appendix A), and to his own sense of design, Alcott set out his gardens, trees, shrubs, flowers, walks, fences and outbuildings over his grounds, daily documenting the progress in his journal. Unfortunately the journal for 1845 is missing, but those for 1846-48 provide an excellent record of the extensive alterations made on the grounds during this period. The following pertinent quotations, having been drawn out of context from the Alcott letters and journals, do not always retain Alcott's original word-order or punctuation, but they do retain the original meaning.

In order to facilitate the documentation from the Alcott materials, certain abbreviations and shortcuts have been employed, such as the omission of articles and pronouns when reasonable, and the use of initials as follows:

ABA - Amos Bronson Alcott
AMA - Abigail May Alcott (Bronson's wife)
SJM - Samuel J. May (Abigail's brother)
JA - Junius Alcott (Bronson's brother)
S-H - Summer-House
G-H - Garden-House

In addition some references in the journals were omitted when repeated frequently (i.e., when Alcott noted dressing the same crops several days in succession).

For the purpose of emphasis and clarification, the quotations have been broken down chronologically and into topics--gardening; trees, shrubbery, flowers; paths, fences, walls, wells; and outbuildings. Accordingly, the contrast in Alcott's enthusiasm for and output on the grounds between the first two and last two years at Hillside becomes more obvious, as do the patterns Alcott followed in planting and arranging his grounds. The description of the grounds map for the Alcott period have been based on these sources.

The Grounds of Hillside

1845-48

SUMMARY:

Gardening

In his 1846 journal Alcott referred to the fertile eight acres across the road as "the Emerson field," "the garden," "the yard (lawn) before the house," and "the semicircular plot opposite the house door." He apparently planted his vegetables, fruit trees and bushes in semi-circular rows along semicircular paths leading to the western gate, or to the brook, the southern boundary of the plot. He planted lettuce, rhubarb, melons, corn, squash, beets, tomatoes, beans, carrots, turnips, oyster-plant, cucumber, potatoes, celery, radishes, spearmint, cabbage, spinach, clover, timothy, red topseeds, strawberries, currant bushes, grapes, rye, hay, oats, and apple, peach, and pear trees in this garden. On the few occasions when Alcott specified where he planted, it was near or along a path, by a wall, gate, or fence, or near the brook or well in the garden. Unfortunately his descriptions of the garden as a semi-circular plot do not correspond with the diagram of the grounds sketched by Elizabeth Alcott in her 1846 journal (see illustration 2). Of course, Elizabeth was only 10 years old at the time, and so she cannot be depended upon for detail.

At the same time Alcott worked hard on his terraces on the hillside behind the house, planting apple and peach trees, peas, cucumber, clover and timothy seed. He sowed buckwheat as well in a semicircular plot behind the house, and grass along the slopes by the terraces. He set a few apple trees near the house and one on the slope behind the barn, but selected 100 more for a stately orchard in the "lawn before the House." By November 1846 these apple trees stood "prettily . . . in semicircular rows" corresponding to his path through the garden.

Alcott's journals for 1847-48 indicate his drop in enthusiasm for manual labor. Restless to devote his energies to man, but without any alternatives for occupation, Alcott busied himself in 1847 with sowing a limited variety of plants--peas, potatoes, melons, cucumbers, squash, sweet corn, beets, spinach, radishes, and grapes--and with plowing, dressing, weeding, and mowing his garden beds. In 1848 he only bothered to plant potatoes, peas, beans, and sweet corn, most likely aware that he would soon be moving from Hillside.

Alcott's terraces preoccupied him during these latter two years, for he now owned the entire hillside behind the house--his wife's brother, Samuel J. May, had sent the money in September 1846 to purchase the extra three acres behind the house on the hilltop from neighbor

Moore[1]--and he wished to extend his terraces on up the slope. By July 5, 1847, he had completed the twelve terraces, and had planted apple and peach trees on them. In 1848 the terraces received little attention from Alcott other than the planting of some early peas and the picking of some apples.

Paths, Fences, Walls, and Wells

During his first two years at Hillside, Alcott ambitiously set out to ornament and define his grounds with paths, walks, fences, walls, wells and fountains. He had paths along and up the hillside, through the locust grove, over the terraces and in the dooryard. He had serpentine walks behind the house from the conservatory to the barn, along the garden plot, and through the locusts on the hill. He made semicircular walks and "alleys" in his garden from the pump (well) to the brook, through the field to the meadow, from the Western gate to the strawberry bed, and from the broad gate by the road to the Garden House.

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1. In his journal for September 14, Alcott noted, "Mr. May sends us $100.00 and his willingness to pay $75.00 towards the Moore purchase, which by survey is a little over three acres and comes to $90.00." Alcott Journal XX, on microfilm at MMNHP. In a unpublished report at MMNHP made from land records and probate records, the unidentified writer explained that Abel Moore sold 3 acres on September 1, 1846, to Samuel J. May, the land lying to the west and north of the Alcott property. It was bounded as follows: beginning at a stake and stones in the orchard east of Abel Moore's Hoar House and running easterly along the Road 16 rods and 4 links to land now occupied by A.B. Alcott, then running north 7 degrees east on Alcott's land 9 rods and 10 links, then north 84 degrees east on said Alcott's land 16 rods and 22 links to land of Ephraim W. Bull, then north 7 degrees east to the corner of Bull's land 11 rods and 1 link, then running about due west 22 links to a stake and stones near the northeast corner of the orchard, then south 29 degrees west 11 rods and 3 links to the point of beginning. In Manila folder, "Wayside," MMNHP files.

Having discovered, shortly after his arrival at Hillside in 1845, that the fence posts were nearly gone and that the whole fence was in a state of decay throughout, Alcott decided to put up a new fence, presumably in front of the house. In November 1846 Alcott set posts and rails in the construction of the lawn fence on the roadside to the front gate. The same year, he set about to embellish his serpentine walk through the locusts on the hillside with a rustic fence of locust, spruce, and larch sticks. He also carried a rustic fence along the bank from the barn to the gate admitting to neighbor Moore's pasture fields by the elms--a description unfortunately unclear in this case on account of the absence of information on the exact location of Moore's pasture, the gate, and the elms referred to. In addition, Alcott repaired the paled (?) fence near Mr. Bull's and altered the fence by the stairs behind the house, extending it, at the same time, across to the conservatory east of the house. Late in November 1846 he took away the fence between the house lot and his newly purchased land the hill and carried the posts and rails up to the hilltop for resetting on the property line the next spring.

Alcott laid a stone wall behind the barn with lime and mortar which he completed to the Bee House by November 1846. He worked also on gates to his walls and fences, setting a picket gate in the wall near the conservatory to pass easily to Mr. Bull's garden and coppice on the hill, and another gate on the western end of the hillside, behind the barn, to pass into the whortleberry lot. Finally, to add some ornament to "the bald field," otherwise known as his garden, Alcott worked on constructing a

fountain over the well and pump, not far from the brook. Two other wells on the property he cleaned or repaired during the first two years at Hillside.

Alcott did more maintenance work than construction on his fences, paths, and walls during 1847-48. As planned, he set the fence again separating his property from Moore's along the hilltop; he cut a foot-path on the wall top around the barn, and added steps near the Bee House to ascend to the first terrace. He constructed a rustic arched gateway at the end of the lawn, and commenced the fence along the bean rows. On the whole, however, he busied himself with leveling, cleaning, dressing, and raising the paths; with adding gravel to the "alleys" about the house; and with repairing fences.

Trees, Shrubbery, and Flowers

One of Alcott's major concerns during 1846 was to beautify his property with trees from the woods. Alone or with his daughters he took walks into the forests of Walden or "over the hill behind the house" to find the spruce, larch, pines, hemlock, maple, and birch, some of which he planted in the yard before the front door to protect his eyes from the market dust and to provide his family some measure of privacy and dignity in their new home. He also transplanted some elm and locusts from the hillside to the yard near the house, one of which he put to use as a support for the swing by the cherry tree.

According to his 1846 and 1847 journals, Alcott took a secondary role in the flower gardening. He prepared the beds for planting and then assisted his wife in setting out the flowers in the dooryard.

For whatever reason, Alcott never specified any flowers other than roses and bergamot, but instead spoke only of setting out or weeding "the flowers."

Obviously more concerned with the farm plants, he specified the planting of clover, timothy seed, red topseed, and other fertilizing grasses around his yard. Evidently interested in the design made by vines, he built trellises for his grape and scarlet runner plants in the lawn and garden.

By 1848 Alcott's enthusiasm for making improvements at Hillside had disintegrated in the wake of his desire to find purpose in his life by serving others, and he made no mention, therefore, of work in the flower gardens or with transplanting during this last year.

Outbuildings

When the Alcotts purchased the Cogswell place in January 1845 the property had three outbuildings: a shop, woodhouse, and barn. By the end of the first year at Hillside, Alcott had moved the barn across the street to the yard west of the house, and had attached the better half of the shop to the east end of the house, dividing it into a bath and woodhouse. Alcott probably left the original woodhouse standing, setting it at the east end of the house, for the next year he mentioned that he had removed the bank between the woodhouse and conservatory for a shop.

In the spring of 1846 Alcott concerned himself with practical outbuildings--a conservatory to protect his garden plants from the spring frosts, and a Bee House, undoubtedly to procure honey. From

his rather vague descriptions, the conservatory was of stone, and somewhere on or near the slope at the east of the house, close to the wall dividing Alcott's and Bull's properties. The Bee House, also of stone, stood between the barn and conservatory below and near the wall and the first terrace at the bottom of the hillside.

Having a decidedly romanticized vision of his grounds, and a strong confidence in his artistic ability in design, Alcott devoted the bulk of August and September 1846 to constructing a rustic arbor or Summer House in the locust grove on the hillside. Working with Nature's raw materials--hazelnut oziers and sticks of willow and larch; moss, hazel rods, and evergreen branches--Alcott designed a fair bower with Gothic columns, doors and windows; gables with handsome verge boards over the entrances; animated seats covered with plush, delicate moss; and a thatched roof of the cleanest, neatest straw.

Thoroughly pleased with his arbor and the praise he had received on it, Alcott immediately began planning for and proceeding with a rustic structure near the brook in the garden for bathing and for a retreat from the summer heat and rains. This garden house Alcott began constructing in September 1846, applying much the same materials and methods as in the arbor, but emphasizing more the curved line, which he felt represented the epitome of nature's fine designs, and executing it in a bolder style with heavier materials. When he finally completed his garden house in early June of 1847, he had a neat structure with a family shower bath, a tool house, a parlour for his wife, and a fountain.

He had added many elaborate details--ornaments on the front gable, cornices, a weather vane, a cedar door for the front gable; larch, willow, and birch coverings to hide the seams and nailing of the structure--that had not decorated the arbor on the hillside. Finally his success at such rustic architecture was confirmed when Emerson requested Alcott to construct a similar structure in his garden. On August 12, 1847, Alcott began Emerson's arbor and despite his dedicated work through November, he still had not finished, which helps explain the noticeable decline in references to the Hillside grounds during the latter part of 1847 and early spring of 1848. But Alcott, too, was losing momentum in his agricultural setting and Boston invited him to more intellectual pursuits. On November 17, 1848, the Alcotts moved from Hillside and within ten years many of Alcott's major additions to the grounds had disappeared.

1845-1846: Gardening

Jan. 2, 1845 ABA to JA
as quoted in Herrnstadt,
p. 117

fertile field of 8 acres, every rod of which is adapted to gardening, and lies warmly to the sunny south . . . as generous soil as any in Concord.

June 8, 1845 AMA to SJM,
as quoted in Lothrop,
p. VII

garden has as yet only yielded us lettuce and pie plant (rhubarb) . . . amount of labour which is very apparent . . . quite a pet with Mr. Emerson.

Aug. 1845 ABA to JA
as quoted in Herrnstadt,
p. 122

the garden is now luxuriant and yields abundantly of melons, corn, squashes, beets, tomatoes, beans, carrots, turnips, and your favorite oyster-plant.

July 9, 1846 AMA to SJM
Family Letters, 1828-1861

as yet . . . [the gardening] is but little in the way of living.

Alcott Journal XX as quoted
in Lothrop A

April 10

plowed; set out beds and turnips; levelling and raking over semicircular plot opposite house door preparing it for currant bushes and apple trees; smoothing surfaces for clover beds

April 17

dig holes for half dozen apple trees--set in beside semicircular walk.

April 18

set out apple trees mentioned above--Hubbardstone, non such, Bell Flower, Woods (?); set currants by the fence-side to frame garden

April 29

levelled terraces behind house and set out a dozen peach trees; transplanted some strawberries; planted peas before my door and also on the terraces; brought from Neighbor Moore's some roots of Rhubarb; set fruit trees pears, apples, peaches; planted some beets, radishes, and celery.

1845-1846: Gardening

Alcott Journal XX April 24	got buckwheat of my Neigh Moore-- sowing plot before house and some early potatoes
April 27	setting current bushes and levelling yard for sowing clover and other grasses
May 2	Raked over little semicircular plot opposite House door; sowed it with clover, timothy, and red topseeds; sowed roadside with grasses.
May 5	make paths in my garden for planting corn, melons, etc.
May 12	sowed oats, clover; planted peas by sides of my "alley" planted peas on hill-side; let neighbor a piece of land near brook to be planted with potatoes
May 19	grape [vines] deeper tint of green; dressed peas and sowed front terrace to clover and timothy seed; planted willows beside path . . . to Brook where planted spearmint
May 20	cut a wide cart track from western gate to the strawberry bed, and planted straw- berries to correspond. Peas, potatoes, spinach, lettuce and radishes were ready above ground
May 21	Neighbor, Mr. Moore, ploughed garden beds deeply for planting . . . double ox-team
May 22	heavy frost nipped vines and beans of gardens; planted sweet corn and peas along path from Fountain to Brook
May 27	spearmint by brookside growing finely
May. 28	prepared soil of vineyard for squashes; manured with a fine compost of ashes, peat and plaster.
June 1	planted cucumbers in beds near house and beans in Emerson field

1846: Gardening

Alcott Journal XX

June 2	set a dozen tomato plants in garden
June 3	planted beans; ploughed melon bed
June 5	raked and levelled all day in melon beds; plastered squash
June 6	Planted melons in large "Geometrical Hills" manuring well
June 8	long stretching corn and bean rows--trim as an air line--the peas binding the central walk
June 9	set some cabbage planted; planted some white field Beans for winter's use near semicircular walk. Planted potatoes under the apple trees near the wall near the lane-side
June 19	planted more potatoes and sweet corn for later table use; sowed cabbage seed, spinach, radishes . . . now nearly filled my garden beds and completed planting for season
June 12	weeded currants near garden gate; dressed peas by the middle alley.
June 17	hillslope weeding cucumbers
July 1	buckwheat behind house in semicircular plot
July 8	dressed cucumbers near Serpentine walk behind house
July 14	dressed potatoes and corn near pump; raked beet and spinach beds; sold clover and timothy
July 17	began to cradle and bind sheaves--rye.
July 20	mowed grass on slope by terraces and in semicircular plot opposite house
July 31	tended hay; raked garden

1846: Gardening

Alcott Journal XX

August 12	cradled oats . . . sold them
August 18	cut corn stalks; dug chenango potatoes; the field at present is without character, a bald plain, it needs some object of art
August 25	Gardening and threshing rye; neighbors help and get paid with rye
October 10	set a score of apple trees in lawn before the House in pretty scallops . . . and in fine rich mould about the lawn. Set a couple . . . near the house--one on slope behind and the rear the barn
October 13	gathered apples--5 barrels--Baldwins, Greenings and Fairmans. Set 3 thrifty Pear trees in lawn before House
October 21	gathered some corn
October 24	selected 100 fine apple trees for setting the lawn opposite the house--transplanted a peach tree or two; set a dozen apple trees in lawn
November 6-8	planted apple trees by paths in lawn . . . for orchard
November 17-19	apple trees stand prettily on lawn before my House in semicircular rows corresponding to my path and will soon grow to a stately orchard.

1845-6: Paths, Fences, Walls, and Wells

August 1845 ABA to Junius, as quoted in Herrnstadt, p. 122	fencing, levelling and underpinning are in daily progress

1845-6: Paths, Fences, Walls, and Wells

June 8, 1845
Mrs. Alcott to brother
Lothrop A VII

had the well cleaned out and stoned round it and we are beginning upon the fence on examining the old one the Posts are nearly gone--and it is in a state of decay through out.

Alcott Journal XX: 1846

April 17

repaired paled (?) fence near my Neighbor Bulls

April 18

made a neat path up hillside from kitchen door back of hse.

April 24

began sodding paths before my gate; prepared for the alleys and sodding in the door yard . . . sodding ground in front of street gate.

April 30

began sodding the Serpentine walks, by the wall, in front of my currant bushes.

May 5

fitted my gate behind the house on Hillside . . . sodded paths at the east side of the dooryard

May 6

busy all day sodding about dooryard. surprising the effect of a little green border disposed in regular neatness, defining the paths, and marking the place for human footsteps.

May 7

cut foot paths in slope behind house, through locust grove

May 8

all day sodding--to convert sandbank into Paradise

May 9

adding a little verdue [sic] to landscape, sodding and disposing the landscape behind the house

May 13

defined paths in garden before door

May 14

my "alley" through the field to the Brook

May 15

finished "alley" across garden to Brook & set pump for watering plants

1846: Paths, Fences, Walls, and Wells

Alcott Journals XX

May 16	worked path through field to meadow so could be used as a cart track.
May 18	worked hard fixing the pump in the field, and water spouts
May 19	planted willows beside the path from the pump to the Brook defined path from Western Gate to the Strawberry bed
May 20	busy all day with shovel and rake making path in field; cut a wide cart track from the western gate to the strawberry bed, and planted the strawberries to correspond.
May 21	all day at work on paths
June 27	fitted a cistern for the Fountain in garden and sodded ground around it . . . planted peas by path sides, between Fountain and brook
June 30	shaped hillside over? the serpentine walk between house and barn
July 1	shaped hillside beyond Barn, and set a gate for passing into the whortleberry lot
July 2	set a picket-gate in wall near conservatory to pass easily to Mr. Bull's garden and coppice on hillside
July 8	dressed cucumbers near Serpentine walk behind house
August 3-4	improved path near locust trees
August 5	cut a serpentine walk through the locusts in the hillside
August 6	Began a rustic fence of locust, spruce and larch sticks beside the serpentine walk
August 7	Altered slope behind the house and put a rustic work(?) of willows and locust twigs, as the beginning of the walk in the hillside and terminating on the western side of the Barn

1846: Paths, Fences, Walls, and Wells

Alcott Journal XX: 1846

August 8 — Trimmed locust grove--small sticks serving me well for fence on hillside

August 11 — carried a rustic fence along the Bank from the Barn to the gate admitting to Neighbor Moore's pasture field by the elms and altered gate.

August 13 — altered fence by stairs behind house and extended same across to Conservatory. This fence will form a pretty lattice frame for the support of vines of some kind.

August 24 — Cut a walk through locusts and trimmed apple trees

August 25 — engaged some larch pole for trellises and rustic fences

September 19 — Built curb with timber for well in garden

September 23 — finished planking well curb.

October 2 — levelled earth behind Barn and spread in path from the great street gate--preparing the hillside for wall behind the barn.

October 9 — lime from Mr. Britton for laying back wall . . . sloped the ground behind the peach trees by the Conservatory for a path up the Hillside . . . the wall progressing daily

October 21 — assisted in laying some of stones in wall

November 1 — wheeled earth from behind house to open a wider passage from Barn to Conservatory. Bank wall from behind the Barn to the Bee House is now complete except for a little pointing with mortar.

November 4 — semicircular path from broad gate by road to Garden House

November 21 — Set post and rails, in construction of the lawn fence on the roadside to the front gate

1846: Paths, Fences, Walls, and Wells

Alcott Journals XX: 1846

November 23 — set a fence at the head of the land by the nursery and repaired the well and fence in front of Moore lot.

November 24 — took away fence between house lot and Moore purchase, carrying posts and rails to hilltop for resetting on the line in the spring.

1845-46: Trees, Shrubbery and Flowers

Jan. 2, 1845 ABA to SJM
Family Letters, 1835-50 — There are a few fruit trees beginning to bear . . .

Sept. 19, 1845 AMA to SJM — we shall begin soon to transplant trees. Our grapes look finely Thousands of roses--and many other sweet(?) plants are all about us--we setting in a few forest trees to screen us from the road--as the dust annoys us

Alcott Journal XX: 1846

April 19 — walk over hill behind house--see trees to transplant

April 29 — brought some pines from hillside near the house and planted them before the door; the place needs shrubbery removal of my quince bushes . . . transplanting of some berganot [bergamot] and roses . . . set out more pines in door yard and a circle plot opposite house . . . level door yard . . . for laying into beds and border for flowers

April 25 — The pretty traffic of my townspeople passes by my door; and I have not as yet been able to plant a screen of pines, larches, and spruces to protect my eyes from the market dust the tramp of [?] and the roll of wagon wheels

1845-46: Trees, Shrubbery and Flowers

Alcott Journals XX: 1846

May 1 — Brought load of trees from woods--Spruce, larch and pines set another load of trees in yard before door

May 6 — if trees survive shall find seclusion from the road . . . Had I chosen I should have sought a place remote from the road, and approach through a park of trees

May 6 — There is no dignity to a residence if thrust upon the highway. But I will mend Nature

May 11 — Bring more pine, hemlock and few maple and birches . . . planted in yard

May 13 — levelled earth in flower beds near house. prepared beds in yard for flowers and plants. raked over earth about the rows of evergreens just set out (near the house) ready for sowing clover under them.

May 14 — transplanted some elms and locusts from hillside and set them out near house--one as a support for the swing by the cherry tree.

May 15 — helped wife set out flowers in beds in dooryard

May 18 — took load of spruce and larches--put in yard

May 19 — Locust grove behind the barn, sloping so narrowly to the south . . . planted willows beside path from the pump to the Brook

May 22 — consider buying 3 acre hilltop . . . at top already-some shrubbery of pines and birches.

May 28 — Spruces, larch and pine from woods . . . in yard

1846: Trees, Shrubbery, and Flowers

Alcott Journal XX

June 20 — set more forest trees before house--several spruces and larches and a pine or two. Nearly all set in April and May survive and are quite thrifty.

July 1 — weeded flower beds

August 7 — removed much of locust twigs as had not withstood transplanting

1845-46: Outbuildings

Jan. 2, 1845, ABA to JA, as quoted in Herrnstadt, p. 117 — There is a woodhouse and a Shop

July 27, 1845, ABA to JA, as quoted in Herrnstadt, p. 122 — I have had the shop set at the end of the House, and it is now being partitioned and done off into several convenient rooms . . . I have also moved the barn to a better place, and am having it repaired for storing our crops

June 8, 1845, AMA to SJM, Lothrop A VII — we moved up the best half of the shop and made a bath house and wood house of it

Oct. 4, 1846, ABA to SJM, Family Letters 3, 1828-61 — It was a fair Bower, rising so softly from amidst the locusts, and giving a tempting glimpse of its shapeliness from house and roadside. It had been decorated by the Sister and nieces to meet the eyes of their expected guests, as a scene from fairy land itself. Its Gothic columns, doors and window osiers, and its animated seats woven of hazel rods on a warp of locust, hung gaily in festoons of evergreens, and were spread with soft plush coverings of delicate moss . . . with its light gables, and serpentine rustic fence, and inviting approach . . . cleanest neatest thatch of straw, and so be complete.

1846: Outbuildings

Alcott Journal XX

May 23	help of some neighbors, laying wall of a conservatory in slope east of house
May 27	swept barn: fitted up water spout on the Woodhouse
June 7	discussed improvements with Mrs. A-- alcove in locust grove and Bee House on serpentine wall at base of it.
June 24	levelled dooryard near Conservatory
July 28	secured rye in barn--about 35 shocks
August 27	Began a Summer-House (S-H) on Hillside to be constructed of rustic hemlock wrought in lattices of hazlenut oziers and sticks of willow and larch
August 29	wrought pretty arched door of hazel and willow
Sept. 1	constructed other door to arbour and another window
Sept. 2	replenished stock of willows and made a seat for S-H.
Sept. 3	cased front window and finished approach
Sept. 9	began seat in front of arbour--making it from hemlock sticks and locust roots
Sept. 10	Improved divan in rear of S-H.
Sept. 12	Put the front gable, with brackets and verge swoop (?) over the main Gothic window--and added some of the rafter to the main Body of the frame
Sept. 13	running pine and plush moss for decorating the seat and columns of the Bower
Sept. 14	put gable with handsome verge boards over entrance door

1846: Outbuildings

Alcott Journal XX

Sept. 15	added western gable
Sept. 16	completed roof--ready for thatching
Sept. 18	I mean to build a neat, rustic structure for Bathing, and an alcove for retreating from the summer heat and rains
Sept. 22	Went to Walden for Hemlock posts for the garden house (G-H) to stand near the well; curved sticks also for seating. From river, willow osiers, very green and supple for lattices and casings; engaged at Britton's some studding for sleepers for the floors.
Sept. 23	laid sleepers to G-H; set posts for G-H.
Sept. 25	set a bathing floor of poles for taking a shower or foot bath at the feet of stairs; levelled ground for a rustic bridge
Sept. 26	G-H . . . to be executed in a bolder style and built of heavier materials--willow lattices, larch or spruce, wainscotting and gables, 4-fold use: fountain, bath, bower, tool house
Sept. 28	larch timber from Mr. Gowan for G-H.
Sept. 29	laid plates and set posts for G-H
Sept. 30	added plates for front Piazza and casements for front window--trying effect of willow lattice
Oct. 1	cased columns on front piazza and prepared the eaves for the rafters of the front gable; made a window seat for front of building
Oct. 2	found many graceful curved sticks in woods for cornices of my G-H.--for arched doors and windows
Oct. 5-6	added pillars to south Piazza and raised the front gable neighbor resumed laying of wall of conservatory and will complete it this time; added main rafters to G-H.

1846: Outbuildings

Alcott Journal XX

Oct. 9	planned elevation and proportions of Conservatory--the wall progressing daily
Oct. 11	nailed rafters to G-H and added slats for thatching; wall of Conservatory now ready for the plates being firmly laid in lime mortar.
Oct. 14	gathered good many curved pine sticks for G-H; began a work table, settee, a flower stand, and book commode, in one piece to stand as a fixture in a corner of the Parlour intended mostly for my wife's use
Oct. 21	had brook widened near Bridge in Lane
Oct. 28	helped draw some stones for the wall of the Bee House
Oct. 31	removed bank between Woodhouse and Conservatory for setting a shop.

1847-48: Gardening

Alcott Journal XXI

April 25	Began to set about gardening
April 26	Planted early peas and potatoes
May 10-11	Sodded first and second terraces; weeded peas on second terrace; plowed garden and prepared lot for loam
May 13-15	worked on hillside, sodding; peach trees in bloom; planted peas and potatoes
May 17-18	set some grapes by the wall near the barn
May 21-22	Planted peas, beans, beets, spinach, radishes near G-H

1847-48: Gardening

Alcott Journal XXI

May 24-25	planted sweet corn
May 26-27	planted melons, cucumbers, squashes; labored at vines disposing them near my Bean trellis in the garden
June 7	planted sweet corn and cucumbers in garden; melons and peas on terraces
June 8-9	dressed my alleys in the door yard about the front gates
June 14-15	worked all dozen of my terraces, having now completed four of them and having four more to finish
June 18-19	began on grape arbour near the barn by the Beehouse with a trellis of lathing and rustic posts
June 22	cut the highest terrace on the hillside trenching a little way upon the Moore lot and opening on the last row of apple trees
June 25	dressed squash and melon and potato hills; weeded beet row and strawberry bed
June 29	set a trellis of branching pines by the Pea-row behind the house and also a like trellis for the scarlet runners by the Conservatory. Raked over turnip plot near G-H.
July 5	completed terracing on hillside, the apple and peach trees now stand in the terraces, and are all of easy access.
July 7	mowed the clover plot opposite the house; and on the door yard, and on the hillside by the arbour; dressed the cucumbers in the conservatory
July 11	dressed tomatoes, beets, potatoes, beans, corn, melons; secured hay before the shower
Oct. 17	gathered some winter apples

1847-48: Gardening

Alcott Journal XXII: 1848

March 7	inability to produce best vegetables and fruits
April 7	raked over my yard a little
April 18	planted early peas on terrace behind house
May 1	ploughed garden . . . but spade and rake cannot compete.
May 5-10	planted potatoes, peas, beans, and sweet corn
June	[missing from journal]
June 24	dressed vines and cucumbers in conservatory bed; dressed melons
Aug. 23-25	dug potatoes; tended to apples, cucumbers, corn
Sept. 1	took apples to barn
Sept. 26	picked apples on hillside

1847-48: Path, Fences, Walls and Wells

Alcott Journal XXI: 1847

April 25	made the walk before the door
May 20	set fence between Neighbor Moore and self over hilltop; this makes now a pretty enclosure of four acres on this side of the road and with the Emerson lot gives me twelve acres to improve--about eight acres more than I want and can do justice to.
June 4-5	raised walk to arbour
June 8-9	cut a real footpath on the wall top around the barn, just over the Bee House.

1847-48: Paths, Fences, Walls, and Wells

Alcott Journal XXI: 1847

June 12	made some steps near the Bee House to ascend upon first terrace
June 16	dressed walks about door yard
June 17	gravelled the alleys about the house
June 22	made a rustic arched gateway at the end of the lawn, and commenced the fence along the bean rows
July 7	repaired the rustic fence by the arbour
July 9	levelled the path to the barn
July 12	dressed broad walk through lawn to G-H.
August 2	dressed walks in dooryard
August 4	cleaned well

Alcott Journal XXII

July 24	cleaned walks around the house

1847-48: Trees, Shrubbery, Flowers, Grasses

Alcott Journal XXII: 1847

April 25	raked over flower beds
May 11-12	set elms by roadside before door; sowed clover into borders of door front
May 21-22	sowed clover and timothy near the house; sowed with grass seed a part of lawn before the front gate on opposite side of the road; three bushes of grass seeds--clover, timothy, and red top for sowing on lawn and hillside
May 31	raked over lawn and prepared it for mowing

1847-48: Trees, Shrubbery, Flowers, Grasses

Alcott Journal XXII: 1847

June 18-19	made an embankment for an arbour near the quince trees, by the study door
June 22	made some rafter arched trellises over the rocks in the lawn for the scarlet runner.
July 14	dressed dooryard from conservatory to barn

1847-48: Outbuildings

Alcott Journal XXI: 1847

April 25	cleaned barn
June 25	put bathing place in order at G-H
June 28	cleaned and evened straw for thatching of the G-H
July 1	brought from Neighbor Bowers some straight timbers of spruce and larch for completing my garden house
July 2	completed slatting front roof of G-H
July 6	wrought the lattices to the front of the G-H
July 8	fitted my bathing room with towel frames
July 19	closed front gable and fitted a hose into the pump for a family shower bath; cased front windows . . . inside and out with willows and birch larch sticks to hide seams and nailing; made banisters to fountain stairs; added the verge and weather boards to hide the straw on the gables and side of roof. Worked on ornaments to front gable; made window in gable and added slabs to it over the arch; Worked cornices, verge boards and weather veins (?) and latticed gable window . . . front gable handsome carved timbers from woods for ornaments.

1847-48: Outbuildings

Alcott Journal XXI: 1847

Aug. 2 gable--enclosing it with slabs and added a cedar door to front gable by bath stairs; added slabs to east gable of G-H; made windows to west gable and added ornaments.

AS ALCOTT'S FAMILY RECOLLECTED HILLSIDE:

One of Alcott's daughters: 1860

"A Description of Hillside. The house is about three quarters of a mile from the village. . . . Father built a beautiful arbor on one side of the hill, near the house, the top is thatched and the seats are covered with moss, a bow-window is in front which looks over all the meadows and cottages in the neighborhood and flocks of sheep and lambs which look very pretty among the green fields. There is a lane that leads to another road called the willows; for there are a good many willow trees on each side. On one side of the hill there are some terraces which father made, and I helped him plant some peach trees, they are now large trees and bear fruit. We have a large Barn in which my sisters and myself used to play; and we had some rabbits, but a cat ate off their heads. There is a garden in front of the house, and a great many fruit trees. There is a bathing house which father built for us, it is near a brook, which runs through the lane. A locust grove is on the hill and we girls had a path which lead to a place called "Palastine" and a road lead to a green valley with a little pond in it and trees around it." In Alcott's Journal XXXV, for 1860, Lothrop Notebook A V.

The Hawthorne Period

1852-64

Summary

When Nathaniel Hawthorne purchased Alcott's Hillside in March 1852 he was investing his hard-earned savings in the family's first home. Accordingly, the Hawthornes quickly grew sentimentally attached to their Wayside home, delighted especially with its privacy, its Alcott structures, and the hillside behind the house. According to their correspondence and diaries, the Hawthornes during their first stay at the Wayside between June 1852 and July 1853 made no changes on the grounds, but at their return in 1860, they invested considerable time and money in revamping both house and grounds.

The best record for the 1860 alterations to the grounds comes from Alcott's journal, for it was he whom Hawthorne called upon to superintend the cutting of paths, the transplanting of trees and the addition of rustic benches and structures. Generally speaking while the Hawthorne letters provide little specific information as to the exact location of the plants, they do give a substantial list of vegetation in the gardens and on the hillside. The Hawthornes never took the farming of Wayside very seriously; rather they raised their vegetables as a rural pastime, providing food for their table, but never feeling dependent

upon the production. In fact, they often neglected the eight acre field which had been one of Alcott's most preoccupying concerns, leaving it to grow into giant weeds, and to shame both Sophia and Nathaniel in its appearance.

The overgrown field, however, also reflected the Hawthornes' lack of concern for a formally designed garden and grounds. Hawthorne admitted that he'd rather have forest trees in the field, and Sophia raved over the groves of trees that evoked in her sounds of the sea, or images of spiritual loftiness. Thus, while they initially appreciated Alcott's improvements on the grounds, they did little or nothing to maintain them. By 1857, when the Hawthorne family was abroad, the arbor and garden house had disappeared, and many of Alcott's paths had overgrown. Moreover, at their return the Hawthornes stocked the grounds with more forest trees, Norway spruce and larch, which they had selected and sent from England for the Wayside. And by August 1860, when Thoreau surveyed the property, Hawthorne had purchased from J.B. Moore ten additional acres of woodland extending over the hill. By 1864 he had about 25 acres, having purchased some 4 acres more along the hill. Perhaps, too, the family added another ten acres to the property after the survey, for Julian recalled that they owned "some forty two acres, all told, including twenty acres of second-growth woodland above the hill." (See following quotations under section entitled "As Hawthorne's Family Recollected the Wayside.")

The number of trees sent from England and planted on the property remains uncertain, as Sophia recalled in 1868 that 450 had been sent,

and her son Julian some years later quoted several hundred. Nevertheless, these trees contributed to two main features mentioned by Sophia in the 1860-68 period: the larch path connecting the Orchard House and the Wayside, and the Cathedral aisle to the brook in the field across from the house. Of the former, some six larch trees still stand in the single row along Lexington Road (about 9-10 feet apart as measured by architect Orville Carroll) defining the historic path, while several pine and six spruce still provide a faint indication of the latter path.

Even though the Hawthornes seemed to prefer the wooded effect at the Wayside, they also expressed distress at their inability to afford a full-time gardener to work on the grounds. Sophia in particular regretted that they could not employ Michelangelo, their gardener, more frequently, at least to weed the paths and gardens, a task which she often found herself left with. From her glowing letters describing her garden plants--portulacia, gillia, crocuses, lilies, sweet pea, mignonette, the purple fleur de lys by the door, and "Papa's sunflower"--she clearly derived great pleasure from tending to and displaying to her friends the array of colorful flowers surrounding the house. Had they been able to finance a full-time gardener, there is no telling what other additions the Hawthornes might have made to the grounds.

Tempering such speculation, however, the grounds map for the two Hawthorne residences at the Wayside relies on the information provided in the family's letters and journals while at the home, as well as

their later accounts of the Wayside. To a more modified extent the recollections of friends of the family have also been applied to the base map.

The following quotations have been footnoted with abbreviations:

SH - Sophia Hawthorne
NH - Nathaniel Hawthorne

but have not received any special attention as to topics, on account of the relatively few references.

HAWTHORNE PERIOD

1852-53

June 13, 1852,
SH to Mother
Berg Coll.

The Wayside: Summer House on top of terrace . . . have taken Una and Julian up into this charming Summer house . . . there is a tranquil horizon of green fields and graceful elms--and the hill which is made into terraces behind our house is very delightful. There is an avenue of locust trees now in bloom up to this summer house. It is quite a bower of bloom and foliage as I sit here.

July 4, 1852,
SH to Mother, as quoted in Memories of Hawthorne, p. 197.

Mr. Hawthorne has sold the grass for thirty dollars. He has cut his bean-poles in his own woods.

n.d.
Ibid., p. 201

I am sitting in the acacia grove on the hill, with a few pines near . . .

July 14, 1852,
NH to Geo. Curtis;
as quoted in Lathrop, Study of Hawthorne, p. 243.

Mr. Alcott expended a good deal of taste and some money (to no great purpose) in forming the hillside behind the house into terraces, and building arbors and summer houses of rough stems

July 14, 1852. . . NH to Geo. Curtis. . . continued

and branches and trees. . . . They must have been very pretty in their day, and are so still, although much decayed, and shattered more and more by every breeze that blows. The hillside is covered chiefly with locust-trees, which come into luxuriant blossom in the month of June, and look and smell very sweetly, intermixed with a few young elms and some white-pines and infant oaks--the whole forming rather a thicket than a wood. . . . my territory extends some little distance over the brow of the hill, and is absolutely good for nothing, in a productive point of view, though very good for many other purposes. . . . The house stands within 10 to 15 feet of the old Boston Road. . . divided from it by a fence and some shrubbery of Mr. Alcott's setting out. . . . From the hill-top there is a good view along the extensive level surfaces and gently, hilly outlines, covered with wood. . . . We have not so much as a gleam of lake or river. . . .

Sept. 1-13, 1852, SH's Diary, 1844-54 Pierpont Morgan Lib.

Julian went to hoe in his garden . . . I sent Una and Julian to gather beans . . . also they plucked some peapods . . . up on the terraces with the children . . . they gathered bushels of apples . . . went on the terrace . . . climbed a peach tree near the bower; . . . in the barn . . . yellow apples in a basket went. . . under the acacias at the the end of the lawn. went to the brook . . . had not seen the garden for a long time. It is a perfect wilderness of weeds. Quite a disgrace to us. There was a crop of red clover behind it, most odiferous in the evening damp. . . . Our house looked charmingly from that point and embowered in the greeness of green. . . . The tree of golden apples is very pleasant. . . . it seems all our beautiful golden apples are Porter apples. [Julian and Una] . . . went together into their gardens on the terraces. . . . Julian . . . his one hill of corn and his one bean.

Hawthorne period: 1852:53

Oct. 31, 1852
SH to Mother
Berg Coll.

before the house [there is] . . . a yard with a fence. The summer house is also too low down in the engraving and not half so beautiful in form as the real one. (see illustration#).

March 20, 1853
SH to Father
Berg Coll.

The lilies have peeped up by the side of the front door.

May 7, 1853
Alcott Journal XXVIII
Lothrop A XIII

improvements [Hawthorne] . . . designs for it. The shrubbery . . . becoming the more luxuriantly graceful every season, and is fast showing the fit place. . . new House . . . my arbour . . . amidst the locusts and apple trees.

n.d. 1853
Introduction to Tanglewood Tales,
as quoted in Lothrop,
pp. 92-93.

[Alcott's arbor] . . . is a mere skeleton of slender, decaying tree-trunks, with neither walls nor roof; nothing but a tracery of branches and twigs, which the next wintry blast will be very likely to scatter in fragments along the terrace . . . rustic network of boughs . . .

HAWTHORNE FAMILY ABROAD

1853-60

May 11, 1855
NH to Ticknor
Letters of NH to Ticknor, 1, 92.

improvements to be made on land in front of house . . . as to setting out an orchard . . .

May 12, 1856
Alcott Journal XXXI
Lothrop A XIII

my pretty repairs all falling fast into decay

May 10, 1857
Alcott Journal XXXII
Lothrop A XIII

This morning Louisa walks with me to Hillside. Nathl Peabody . . . now lives here, gardening a little and doing business in Boston. Very little has been done in the way of improving the place during [Hawthorne's] absence, and fewer traces of my handiworks survive than I could wish. My little willow settings by the brookside in the green lane have grown into a tall clump of foliage. . . . the shrubbery thrives about the house.

May 10, 1857
Alcott Journal XXXII
. . . . continued

The arbour and garden house have disappeared. The paths are grass-grown and obscure . . . the hill behind the house . . . Louisa plucked violets.

Aug. 6, 1859
Alcott Journal XXXIV
Lothrop A V.

At Hillside putting things in place . . . cut a gateway for private passing inside the larch row.

March 4, 1859
NH to Ticknor, Letters
Of NH to Ticknor, 2, 76.

arrangements for gardener . . . authorize expenses necessary for manure, labor, etc.

Sept. 25, 1859
SH to Mary Mann,
Mann Coll., 1859-1915
Mass. Hist. Soc.
Lothrop

There is a splendid gymnasium . . . which we sent home from Liverpool two years ago. . . behind the dining room over the cellar door. It ought to be put in the barn . . . all kinds of exercises included in it . . . the rowing exercise among others--and it used to be very inspiring to us. . . . Mr. Bull . . . no right to have anything in [the barn] now . . . all his hay must be taken out at once.

HAWTHORNE PERIOD

1860-64

August 8, 1960
Alcott Journal XXXV
Lothrop A V

carpenters have begun . . . gardener is at work . . . paths are to be laid on hill and about woods

Aug. 14, 1860
Ibid.

superintend the laying of a walk across to Hawthorne's. It is a convenient path and brings the two families together in a few minutes connecting with our walk.

Aug. 17, 1860
Ibid.

Superintending improvements--a walk down to the brook through the willows across the lawn and path about the yard.

Aug. 18, 1860
Ibid.

At Hawthorne's planning and pruning

Aug. 20, 1860
Ibid.

At Hawthorne's superintending making of paths. Gunison finds good treading soil behind the house up the lane for walks.

Aug. 23, 1860
Ibid.

Cut a walk from the barn through the locust grove to the hilltop for Hawthorne. It curves gracefully up the slope under the locusts and pines, and looks as if it had always been there.

Sept. 9, 1860
SH to NH, as quoted in Memories of Hawthorne, pp. 426-27.

The weeds in the garden now exceed belief . . . not a trace to be seen of the melon or cucumber vines or squashes or of beans towards the lane. All are overtopped by gigantic plants. There is a real forest at the back door, between the house and terraces. I picked 40 ears of corn today.

Sept. 11, 1860
Alcott Journal, ibid.

cut and cleared away the birches from the top of the hill east.

Sept. 13, 1860

Garrison and team . . . make a path along front of east Orchard to Hawthorne's.

Sept. 14, 1860
Ibid.

man and team again . . . shovel and make path along the lane to the hot house and cover it with red (?) sand from Hawthorne's pit just in front of my gate hack.

Sept. 18, 1860
Ibid.

Trim pines on hill and cut away underbrush for a seat for Hawthorne. . . . Cut a path over the hill to his seat under the pine behind the house.

Sept. 19, 1860
Ibid.

Assist pruning Hawthorne's apple trees in lawn by house.

Oct. 29, 1860
ABA to wife,
Alcott Family Records, 1859-64, Lothrop A XII.

Next week, I suppose, I am to see to transplanting the evergreens about Hawthorne's grounds

n.d.
SH to NH
(shortly after return from England), Memories of Hawthorne, p. 426.

Rose . . . screaming with joy over her blooming crocuses . . . found in her garden.

May 11, 1861
Alcott Journal XXXVI
Lothrop A V.

have a good sidewalk

June 22, 1861
Rose H. to Mrs. Fields
Fields Coll.

I have a vegetable garden and a flower garden to take care of & this forenoon Mama and I went and got a good many strawberries

July 28, 1861
SH to NH, Berg Coll.

Baby . . . at her flower bed . . . I went to get some squashes . . . Joanna dug some potatoes . . . transplanted a splendid Portulacia plant from the Providential tomato-bed . . . to the small bed which I have devoted to that flower. It had actually bloomed! Rose also planted some Gillia. After dinner we made a settlement with chairs and table and crickets out by the acacia path, in a delicious shade on thick grass, hard by the tomato bed . . . stream of ladies appeared from the Alcott path--the larch path . . . Rose and I . . . up the acacia path to the hill-top, and to your winding foot-track; and we sat down under the tree.

[Sept. 1861]
Rose H. to Mrs. Fields
Fields Coll.

we are having a few apples now

April 9, 1862
Una H. to Mrs. Fields
Fields Coll.

precious little sisterhood of crocuses in our garden

May 7, 1862
SH to Mrs. Fields, ibid.

my gardener has begun his work

June 14, 1862
Ibid.

The locusts all are in full bloom.

June 29, 1862
SH to Mrs. Fields as P.S. in Rose H. to same, Fields Coll.

Mr. Hawthorne and I have been up on the hill along the sacra via [sic] to see where we can have seats put between brotherly trees . . .

[c. July 1862]
SH to Mrs. Fields, ibid.

Persian odors distil from the sweet pea and mignonette the Hawthorne tree stands still like an emerald carved into foliage.

August 5, 1862
Una H. to Julian H.
Berg Coll.

picked berries . . . got 2 1/2 quarts . . . besides a saucer of splendid blackberries and all from our hill.

Aug. 19, 1862
Ibid.

plucking scarlet beans . . . from our own garden.

Sept. 4-7, 1862
Alcott Journal XXXVII
Lothrop A V.

work on arbour for Hawthornes and complete a pretty structure of rustic [?].

Sept. 7, 1862
SH to Una H.
Berg Coll.

I picked some superb cooking apples from the lawn . . . gathered up all the beautiful Porters.

Oct. 1862
SH to Una, ibid.

mysteries of radish seeds . . . strawberries

[Sept.] 1862
Ibid.

beautiful Porters . . . on the terrace . . . Papa's sunflower by the step.

April 14, [1863]
SH to Mrs. Fields
Fields Coll.

Rose brought in some crocuses of the cloth of Gold species.

May 3 [1863]
Ibid.

velvet green is deepening through dry grass of . . . our meadows. Round the door in the borders of the lawn are blooming the purple fleur de lys, (which are a part of the device of the Hawthorne escutcheon [shield] the De L'Aubepines of France).

May 9, 1863
Una to SH, Berg Coll.

All Rose's side of the Hawthorne is covered with buds, and my wild violets are rampant . . . found today on the hill a lonely violet the first of that sisterhood. Julian . . . eating newly dug horseradish.

July 7 [1863]
SH to Annie Fields

lilies are imminent . . . will give him some beer made of the fair plants on the hill.

July 8 [1863]
Ibid.

in consternation with our water fountain . . .white lilies

[July 1863]
Ibid.

since the rain and my 12 days illness the weeds have run riot . . . I cannot get through the paths . . . no order in the grounds now.

July 22, 1863
Rose to Una, Berg Coll.

up on the hill to pick huckleberries

n.d.
NH to SH
Huntington Lib.
HM11021
Lothrop H II

a hen has vouchsafed to lay 2 eggs in our barn

Nov. 8, 1864
Alcott Journal XXXIX
Lothrop A V

Remove the old post-and-rail fence bounding Hawthorne's grounds and mine. This fence . . . ran across the slope in an unsightly line, and is now rendered useless beside my new cedar trellis bordering the eastern boundaries along the base of the hill to the woodlands by the lane. A few evergreens dotting the slope set here and there, will give a cultivated aspect to the view.

Nov. 30, 1864
Ibid.

Taking sods from hillside . . . smooth footpath along Hawthorne's line and mine, east of the house. This path now indicates the division between us.

n.d.
Hawthorne to Alcott
Alcott Journal XXXIX
Lothrop A V.

I have about 25 acres of land, 17 of which are a hill of sand and gravel wooded with birches, locusts, and pitch pines, apparently incapable of any other growth; The other 8 acres are said to be the best land in Concord, ... lie along the roadside, with their broken fence.

HAWTHORNE PERIOD
AFTER HAWTHORNE'S DEATH
1864-68

Summary:

Sophia Hawthorne plunged into spring and summer work on the grounds at the news of the death of her husband, obviously deriving some comfort from her physical labors and from the pleasant results of her efforts. The grounds of the Wayside represented so many fond memories of her adored one that she could almost feel his presence as she passed over his footpath on the hilltop, the sacra via, which she raked dutifully. Everything on the grounds pleased her enormously: the petunias of pure magenta color, her stately and inviting Cathedral aisle, the larch path, the willows by the brook, the Gabriel lilies, the balsams and morning glories, and the Queen of Vraries (?) on the western side of the house. She delighted especially at the hawthorn tree with its wreaths of merry blooms, the young locust trees with their delicate soft color, and the deep crimson cones of the dark Norway pines. She sentimentalized her husband's favorite features on the grounds--the woodbine he had planted under the study window, his large white pine on the hill under which he had liked to recline, the aspen tree on which he had cut his cypher, and a seat on the terrace where he had leaned back

against the bank of the hill. But after she left the Wayside with her children in 1868 few of these cherished natural features reminiscent of Hawthorne remained extant, save the "sacred" path on the hilltop.

1864-68:

Oct. 9, 1864
SH to Mr. Fields

"my petunias madly blooming . . . pure magenta color . . . my Cathedral aisle stately and inviting . . . the Larch Path. . . ."

Sept. 12, 1864
SH to Una

"just crossing the road to go to the willows . . . long shadows and gold light were eminently beautiful in the cathedral aisle . . . instead of me having one hundred dollars for my grass he puts me in debt to him. . . . "

Sept. 15, 1864
SH to Una

"Rose and I sat in the willow cathedral to sew . . . Michelangelo [the gardener] has come and is clipping the hedge . . . my cathedral aisle looks like the straight and narrow way that leads to life eternal. On the western side the upland path goes evidently to the Celestial City--and two rosebuds are opening in the flower bed.

Sept. 17, 1864
SH to Una

"Michelangelo has trimmed the hedge nicely, and all looks nicely but the old fence . . . And all the grapes are purple.

April 26, 1865
SH to Mr. Fields

"this afternoon I have been raking the sacra via [sic] on the hill. Oh it is lovely up there."

May 26, 1865
SH to Annie Fields

"When the Gabriel-lilies come . . . "

June 9, 1865
SH to UNA

"Our garden is to be carefully sodded, and the sacredest spot is to be slightly sacred and covered with periwinkle and violets from the hillpath. Periwinkle remains green all winter, and grows in lovely wreaths. Arbor vitae trees are to border the whole--with two entrances. And I intend to have a pink Hawthorne tree in one corner and four white ones--one in the center. Julian wants a granite pyramid of moderate (size?) but perfect in the centre, because he said he knew Papa liked that better than anything. Perhaps sometime we will." (No indications that any of this was ever carried out.)

June 15, 1865
SH to UNA

"Your balsams and morning glories grow nicely."

June 21, 1865
SH to UNA
Berg Coll.

"we invited her to come back and play croquet . . . This morning . . . first I went to the strawberry bed, . . . Ephraim and Connor were mowing, so we look very nice over there . . . . After tea we went out and nailed up vines, . . . weeding grapes and tomatoes and tying up vines . . ."

June 26, 1865
SH to UNA
Berg Coll.

"sat at the library western window looking out at the larch path . . . to go up in the pine grove . . . . The shafts of lilies are lovely now and the Queen of the Vraries (?) is superb on the western side of the house

June 30, 1865
SH to Mary Mann
Berg Coll.

"too hot to walk . . . sat on the lawn for the wind to blow upon me."

April 25, 1866
SH to Annie Fields
Fields Coll.

"the larches and willows are pluming themselves . . ."

April 29, 1866
SH to Mr. Fields
Fields Coll.

"sitting upon my upland path . . . I slowly descended the hill . . . I had in my hand the first dandelion found at the Wayside."

May 13, 1866
SH to Elizabeth Peabody
Berg Coll.

"all abloom. I trim trees and rake leaves. . . ."

May 28, 1866
SH to Annie Fields
Fields Coll.

"Have you then gone away without one glance at the Wayside? . . . . There is a beauty in May which there is not in July. After these latter rains, the glory of tender and deep greens surpasses all words. . . . I did so want to show you the Hawthorne tree . . . wreaths of merry blooms--half double and half single, the single with the rose-tinted stamens and the delicious perfume. The double of perfect form with no fragrance and all pure white. Also the walks--the paths

May 28, 1866
SH to Annie Fields
. . . continued

look so nice, and there is no knowing what enormity of sauciness the weeds will arrive at by July. The young locust trees, a quite new growth, are of the most delicate soft color, and the dark Norway pines have put out deep crimson cones on light green tips that contrast wonderfully together. On the broad terrace, looking down on the congregation of trees to the lowest lawn, while sitting on a favorite seat of my husbands--on which he could lean against the bank . . . . My cathedral aisle is especially lovely . . . wish for you still in July . . . perhaps the white lilies will be in bloom.

July 4, 1866
SH to Annie Fields
Fields Coll.

"The lilies are just bursting today into splendor bloom."

July 8, 1866
SH to Annie Fields
Fields Coll.

"A heavenly breeze stirs the Aspen tree on which my husband cut his Cypher."

August 2, 1866
SH to Annie Fields
Fields Coll.

"group of sweet peas at my side. They are too lovely and send out an odor like a blessing."

Sept. 12, 1866
SH to Mr. Fields
Fields Coll.

"Are you going to accept any of my trees? It would be some comfort to shade you and Annie in your city garden."

April 5, 1868
SH to Frederick Goddard Tuckerman
Yale Review, Autumn 1933
p. 214

"To think of you . . . preserving the aspen tree upon which he cut his cypher--and the woodbine he planted and watered, which he intended should climb to his study window, . . . the foot-path . . ., on the summit of the wooded hill above the terraces--and the large white pine under which he liked to recline and listen to the seas song in the branches--while in May the grass was blue with violets around hime. . . . A part of that tree was burned by accident, when trying to destroy the undergrowth around it. Even this marring is precious to us, as a sign of his hand . . . . being unable to

April 5, 1868
SH to Frederick . . .
continued

hire a laborer it is in neglect as to cultivation. There are a few charming paths, cut and good--and Mr. Hawthorne planted four hundred and fifty Norway Spruces, which he selected in England--and there is a row of fine larches of what we call our larch avenue. . . they are now sealed up."

June 12, 1868
SH to Mr. Fields,
Fields Coll.

"Don't you want to secure some of my Norway Spruces? You know I offered you two--but you have scorned them. But you shall have them if you can send for them . . . . They are very strong and persistent in life. . . . There is a Scotch gardener here who might dig them up and pack them. (No information whether these trees were sent.)

AS HAWTHORNE'S FAMILY RECOLLECTED THE WAYSIDE

Julian Hawthorne, Hawthorne and His Wife, 2 vols. (HW)
Hawthorne and His Circle (HC)
Memoirs (M)
"Hawthorne's Last Years," Hawthorne Centenary (HCEN)

"When Mr. Alcott took possession of [the Wayside] . . . the barn was separate from the house, and stood against the hill on the spectator's left. Hawthorne . . . in 1860, . . . moved the barn to the other side of the house, and connected it with the wing on that side." HW I, pp. 451-52.

"The larches and Norway pines, several hundred of which had been sent out from England, were planted along the paths, and were for the most part doing well. The well-remembered hillside, with its rude terraces, shadowed by apple trees, and its summit grown with pines, rose behind the house; . . . in front . . . a broad meadow of seven acres, bounded by a brooke, above which hung drooping willows." HW II, p. 263.

"the pathway along the summit of the ridge of the hill at Wayside . . . was a deeply trodden path, in the hard, root-inwoven soil, hardly nine inches wide and about 250 yards in length." HC, p. 53.

"Late on a wintry evening a few days after Thoreau's death [1862], . . . we heard . . . a tap on the door. . . . Through the dark was visible the faint whiteness of the winter's snow, the dark firs standing as a hedge along the highway, and the bare boughs of the mulberry tree on the lawn." M, p. 116.

"In the renovated Wayside we passed blessed days; . . . the author . . . climbing our hill in the forenoons, to pace his beat along the summit, under the shady boughs between the sweet-fern and huckleberry bushes; or sitting beside his wife on the broad bench under the pines looking out over the meadows . . . or in the summer-house halfway up the slanting path." M, p. 31.

"For the accommodation of the two households, [Hawthorne and Alcott] a footpath had been made along the base of the acclivity, passing a couple of small hallows, once cellar-holes of huts which Time had devoured before our era: in which my father had planted sunflowers, that throve exceedingly and smiled upon the passer-by." M, p. 68.

"a well dug by a past farmer . . . weeds and old boards covered it. . . . It was on the south side of the roadway, between it and the rail fence that bounded the meadow beyond." M, p. 36.

"The level meadow on the south of the road was laid out partly in young fruit trees, and partly in corn and beans; a straight path to the brook was made, and larches were set out on both sides of it. A few old apple-trees grew to the west of the area divided by the path; and there was one Porter apple-tree that stood close to the fence, on which early and delicious fruit appeared in profusion every year.

"another summer-house arose in the meadow opposite, which went with the property, and rustic fences separated the domain from the road." HC, p. 58.

"The estate, comprising, I think, forty-two acres, all told, including upward of twenty acres of second-growth woodland above the hill, . . . " HC, p. 58.

"My sister Una and I just missed tragedy in our snow-sporting days; we had dragged the big sled up the hill, and started to slide down on it, forgetting the rail fence at the bottom . . . one winter . . . four-foot snow-drifting over the pickets of our front fence, and higher yet against the corner barn." M., p. 118.

"The house inclosure was protected from the street by a hedge, and by tall spruces; there was likewise an ancient mulberry tree, spreading its boughs over the tiny lawn in front of the library windows, and scattering it, in the season, with its crimson and purple berries. Against its low trunk a rustic seat was put upon which my father and mother often sat in the afternoons, talking over their domestic and agricultural plans. On the hillside, terraced out years before Alcott, more apple-trees grew; and abundant laburnums, their branches heavy with pendulous golden blossoms; and higher up, on the summit, white pines and pitch pines, and a mingled, irregular array of birch, oak, elm, and hickory, all of recent growth; a tangled little wood, with none of the grandeur and spaciousness of the forests of Walden. But there was a pleasant, quiet view from the western brow of the hill, and a seat was made there, in the Alcott style, of twisted boughs; and eastward from it, along the crest of the acclivity, my father was wont to pace to and fro by himself . . . a footpath was worn into the rooty substance of the hill, a distance of some two hundred yards to the fence which inclosed Mr. Bull's estate." HCEN, pp. 110-11.

[Julian relating story he remembered of day before family's departure for England; he, aged six, decided to take a bath.]

"I carried my tin tub around into the outhouse, . . . encountered Ann, the cook, without reflecting, sought to escape around the front of the house. In my agitation I had forgotten the ladies and gentlemen . . . suddenly I was in the midst of muslin frocks, summer bonnets, black coats and top hats." M., p. 41.

Rose Hawthorne Lathrop, Memories of Hawthorne

"I marveled at the amount of sand in the flower-borders." P. 421.

"My father overheard some vainglorious boasts from my lips, one afternoon, when the windows of the little library where he sat were open; and the small girl . . . and I . . . were standing beside the sweet-clover bed, not dreaming of anything more severe than its white bloom." P. 422.

"a cord of wood had been cut upon the hill, and he [Hawthorne] deliberately dragged it to the lower level of his dwelling, two logs at a time, by . . .rope. Along the ridge and down the winding pine-flanked path he slowly . . . stepped." P. 434.

"In 1861 and thereafter he [Hawthorne] traversed the wooded hill-top . . . pretty climbing paths . . . under larches and pines, and scraggy, goat-like apple trees. . . . At one end of the hilltop path was a thicket of birch and maple trees; and at the end towards the west and the village was the open brow of the hill, sloping rapidly to the Lexington Road, and overlooking meadows and distant wood-ranges, some of the cottages of humble folk, and the neighboring huge, owlet-haunted elms of Alcott's lawn. Along this path in spring huddled pale

blue violets, of a blue that held sunlight, pure as his eyes. Masses also of sweet fern grew at the side of these abundant bordering violets, and spacious apartments of brown-floored pine groves flanked the sweet-fern, or receded a little before heaps of blackberry branches and simple flowers." P. 499.

"We could catch sight of him going back and forth up there, with now and then a pale blue gleam of sky among the trees, against his figure passed clear . . . . Along this path in spring huddled pale blue violets, of a blue that held sunlight pure as his own eyes. . . . My father's violets were the wonder of the year for us." As quoted in Allan French and Lester Hornby, Old Concord, p. 136.

"Rose, his daughter, described to me, his appearance as he walked slowly. . . . the trees on the hillside were little like the dense growth that now [1915] meets the eye, so that his figure could be plainly seen. He was majestic, she said, his outline against the sky interlaced with trunks of pine and oak . . . come down over his especial path, across the terrace and lawn." Harriet Mulford Lothrop, "Hawthorne in Old Concord," Everywoman (July 1915), p. 15.

AS HAWTHORNE'S FRIENDS RECOLLECTED THE WAYSIDE

Amos Bronson Alcott:

"During all the time he lived near me, our estates being separated only by a gate and a shaded avenue, I seldom caught sight of him. . . . oftenest seen on his hilltop, screened behind the shrubbery and disappearing like a hare into the brush when surprised." As quoted in Swayne, The Story of Concord, p. 144.

James T. Fields:

"We enjoyed, we always do, our visit to the Wayside. . . . I think as I write of Hawthorne 'on the Hill'; of the two trees, the locust and the oak, living apart yet so near to each other to all outside appearance." Fields to Hawthorne, n.d., as quoted in James C. Austin, Fields of the Atlantic Monthly, p. 214.

William Dean Howells:

"I recall pleasant fields across the road before it; behind rose a hill wooded with low pines such as is made in Septimius Felton the scene of the involuntary duel between Septimius and the young British officers. I have a sense of the woods coming quite down to the house, but if this was so I do not know what to do with a grassy slope which seems to have stretched part way up the hill. . . . We climbed the hill together. At the top, where there was an outlook in

the pines over the Concord meadows, we found a log, and he invited me to a place on it beside him, and . . . he [said] he preferred the hill-top." Howells, Literary Friends and Acquaintance, A Personal Retrospect of American Authorship, pp. 47-49.

T.W. Higginson:

"The house . . . pretty enough . . . a pretty, loverlike path opposite leading through willows and across a brook." Mary T. Higginson. Letters and Journals of T.W. Higginson, in Lothrop Hunt III.

George B. Bartlett:

"From the lawn before the hill I have looked up and seen Mr. Hawthorne's dark, quiet figure passing slowly across the dim light of mingled sky and branches . . . and he seemed to be at one with those surroundings, of eloquent and sombre pines, and the uncloying scent of the sweet-fern."

"the crest of the hill . . .the tangle of trees and underbrush extends back over the high ground unbroken for about half a mile, and on the edge of this Hawthorne used to pace, . . . among the sweet fern and wild blackberries." Concord, Historic, Literary and Picturesque, pp. 95, 96.

Frank Preston Stearns:

"Bronson Alcott more frequently noticed him gliding along . . . by the rustic fence which separated their estates. . . . he formed a habit of walking back and forth on the hillside above his house, where the band descends sharply like a railroad-cut, with dwarf pines and shrub oaks on the further side of it." The Life and Genius of Nathaniel Hawthorne, p. 397.

The Gray, Wayside School for Girls, and Lathrop Periods

1868-1883 Summary:

Very little is known about the changes on the grounds during the period between the Hawthorne and Lothrop ownership other than the noticeable growth of the forest trees surrounding the house. Period newspapers and travel logs made a few noteworthy comments such as the careful description of Samuel A. Drake in his Historic Mansions and Highways Around Boston, first published in 1873:

> The house itself is almost hid from view among the masses of evergreen by which it is surrounded. For some distance a cool walk skirts the street,-- a row of thickly-set larches next the road, with an inner rank of firs and spruces. These trees were set out by Hawthorne. Back of the house, and dominating above it, the hill ascends in terraces, but so densely is it covered with ever-green trees, planted by Alcott when he lived here, as to resemble nothing more than a young forest of native growth. p. 373.

Alcott collected several 1874 newspaper clippings about the Wayside School for Girls, one of which elaborated on the graduation ceremonies and the decorations around the grounds: "the lawn adjoining was hung with chinese lanterns, and provided with seats, also a stand for music. . . . eight of the young ladies entered the lawn. . . . over their heads waged the spreading branches of

oak, and under their feet was a carpet of soft green grass." (See Chap. III, footnote 1, for full citation.)

During the Lathrop residency, George Bartlett published his first guidebook to Concord in which he described the Wayside grounds with some detail, basing it, he claimed, on the Lathrop's own description:

> The charm of the Wayside . . . consists in the effective groupings of pines, the odd steep-semi-circle formed about the lawn by the shoulder of the hill, closely foliaged with several kinds of trees; and in the pretty glimpses of meadows, hemmed with woods, their delicate colors . . . against the dark stems of the pines. . . . A curving path, bordered by pines and locusts, leads to the top of the hill.[1]

In his revised guidebook published in 1885 during the Lothrop period, Bartlett added more details which no doubt reflect features present in the Lathrop period:

> The rambling house had a plain domestic air; and one end is covered with rose vines and woodbine; but the dark pines in front of the lawn, and the prevalence of evergreen trees on the hill, introduce a shadowy presence like that of serious thoughts or a musing mind. . . . A thicket of locust trees in one place spreads a drift of snowy blossoms among the darker boughs in June; and the leafy hillside distills sweet perfumes and a dewy coolness at the close of hot summer days.[2]

As is quite evident from the above quotations, the most striking characteristic of the Wayside grounds beginning in the Lathrop period in the early 1880s was its bountiful and thickly-set evergreens. As the century proceeded and the Daniel Lothrops took ownership of the Wayside, this particular feature of the grounds continued to catch the eye of those reporters who visited the Wayside.

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1. Bartlett, The Concord Guidebook, pp. 58-59.

2. Bartlett, Concord, Historic, Literary and Picturesque, p. 91.

THE LOTHROP PERIOD
1883-1924

Summary:

During the 41 years of the Lothrop period to be interpreted, the Wayside gained increasing attention among journalists, tourists, literary figures, and students as the residence of Nathaniel Hawthorne. Accordingly, for the Lothrop years numerous books, articles, photographs, and even a final thesis exist to document the changes and conditions of the grounds throughout these years.

As most writers of the period observed, the grounds still reflected many features of the Hawthorne residency: the Larch Path, the Hawthorne path, the white pine on the hilltop, the giant pines and spruce, the terraces, the hawthorn tree--all furnished visitors with images from the past. But as Julian Hawthorne noted in his book, Hawthorne and His Wife, several details on the grounds had changed since his family had lived at the Wayside. Moreover, eager to perpetuate the Hawthorne tradition, someone had constructed a tree house in the old pine on the hilltop, starting the rumor that this tree study was where Hawthorne wrote his last works. Years later, however, Miss Lothrop, having researched extensively in the Hawthorne manuscripts, had turned up no evidence of the platform and stairs; but she had heard a story that the platform had been erected for some celebration

after the Hawthornes sold the Wayside.[1] Her mother, Harriet Mulford Lothrop, restored the tree house several times, thinking it was a Hawthorne study, but eventually both the platform and tree disappeared from the grounds.

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1. Transcript of interview with Margaret Lothrop by Robert Ronsheim, Oct. 5, 1967, MMNHP files.

LOTHROP PERIOD*
1883-1924

1885
Julian Hawthorne
Hawthorne and His Wife, I,
p. 452.

The Hill and the surrounding grounds are, however, somewhat more thickly wooded than in those days; and the old picket fence and thickset hedge, which in some measure protected it from the road have disappeared. Along the ridge of this hill . . . a narrow path . . . traces of it are still visible.

1885 (copyright)
George B. Bartlett
Concord, Historic, Literary & Picturesque,
p. 88 (pub. 1895)
pp. 91, 96.

the springing up of a maze of trees . . . dense, tall growth of firs, pitch-pines, larches, elms, oaks, and white-birch, which now envelops the hill. Many of these were set out by his [Hawthorne's] direction, and give the scene the impress of his taste. Close by the porch, too, is a flourishing hawthorne tree, which serves as a silent record of his name.

His constant pacing along the brow of the hill wore an irregular path there, which is still visible. The rambling house had plain domestic air; and one end is covered with rose vines and woodbine; but the dark pines in front of the lawn, and the prevalence of evergreen trees on the hill introduce a shadowy presence like that of serious thoughts . . .

1886
James G. Clark
"The Wayside," Saturday Evening Spectator, Sept. 11,
p. 2.

a stout, heavy-limbed pine, about two feet through, out of which, about fourteen feet from the ground, a limb nearly a foot thick projects horizontally. On this limb is a rough plank platform built by Hawthorne, containing seats for six or more persons and accessible by ladder. It is eight feet above the level of the yard and valley, and some forty or fifty rods north from the house and the street, and was Hawthorne's favorite place for restful meditation . . . . Hawthorne tree, near the porch, . . . white

*All the newspaper and magazine articles quoted in this section represent the research conducted by historians at Minute Man National Historical Park.

1886
James G. Clark
"The Wayside," . . .
continued

blossoms every spring. . . . Hawthorne's sweet briar rose tree still flourishes at the southwest corner of the study. . . the reserved, dark-eyed pansies under the window. . . .

1887 (first published)
Margaret Sydney
(Harriet Lothrop)
Old Concord, pp. 67-68
(pub. in 1892)

scarcely able to realize, even in a vision, the wealth of foliage, and the graceful, tremulous pendants that now, on a summer day, conceal the [Larch] path from . . . passer by. Indeed could Hawthorne see now his old home, what surprise would overtake him! No bare hillside with a scanty growth of infant trees and shrubs to mark its summit . . . but a brave, luxuriant forest.

Drawn back from the Larch path, and within a stone's throw of the old apple-tree on the lawn that furnished a wealth of bloom . . . is the Hawthorne path, on whose crest one comes suddenly upon the supposed site that Hawthorne imagined as the burial-place of a young British officer. . . . Still further on over the ridgy crest one follows the ribbon-like Indian trail, as "Hawthorne's path" winds along its narrow way. . . . to the "Big Pine" and the "Hawthorne Seat" at a little remove in a grove of younger trees. . . . In Hawthorne's day . . . a good view. . . . Now the shrubbery is so intrusive, that the outlying countryside is shut out

1887
"A Philosophical Picnic"
Boston Evening Transcript,
July 27, p. 1.

. . . others went still farther, and climbed the rather shaky steps that led to the platform in Hawthorne's pine.

1888
"At Hawthorne's Home,"
A Boston paper, exact
source unknown

One of the bushes is itself a hawthorne close beside the pretty creeper-covered porch.

1890
Mrs. John Logan
"Hawthorne's Home"
The Home Magazine, Nov. 1890,
p. 7.

Far up in the branches of a rugged pine, he had constructed a seat, where he used to write by the house. This lofty perch of genius is still sacredly preserved as a shrine of Hawthorne.

1895
Theodore F. Wolfe
Literary Shrines
pp. 63-65

The house is separated from the highway by a narrow strip of sward, out of which grows elms planted by Bronson Alcott and clustering evergreens rooted by Hawthorne. . . . The greater part of his domain lies along the dark slope and the wooded summit of the ridge which rises close behind the house. At the extremity of the grounds nearest the Orchard House, a depression in the turf marks the site of the little house . . . Rose Garfield of Septimius Felton . . . . On the hillside remain the rough terraces Alcott fashioned . . . and many of the flowering locusts and fruit trees . . . sombre spruces and firs . . . and all are grown until they over-shadow the whole place and fairly embower the house with their branches. Along the hill-side are the famous "Acacia path" of Mrs. Hawthorne and other walks . . . some of them having been opened by [Hawthorne] in the last summer of his life. . . . The hilltop is clothed with a tangled growth of trees which hides it from the lower world. . . . we trace vestiges of the pathway worn by his feet.

1896
Margaret Sydney,
"Hawthorne at Wayside,"
The Interior, Nov. 26,
Lothrop MSS 8961102

This Larch Path, so named by Hawthorne and his wife, was laid out by them at the top of a gentle slope that rises from the way faring, and following the curve of the highway, "along its outer edge . . . planted the slips of trees brought from Old England scarely able to realize, even in a vision, the wealth of foliage, and the graceful tremulous pendants that now on a summer day conceal the path from the curious gaze of the passer-by."
[NOTE: The source of Mrs. Lothrop's quote in the above passage has not been established, but that the Hawthornes only planted larches on the outer ridge of the path seems to be confirmed by empirical evidence (no larch today stand on the inner boundary of the path) and by a consensus of most of the testimonies.]

1904
Oliver B. Capen
"Country Homes of Famous Americans," Country Life in America, July, pp. 282-83.

To the left of the house, by the hedge, there are a number of pine trees. . . . The larches he planted in a double line to the right of the house, [no evidence of a double line] above the side-path. Just above the larches, the hawthorne path starts its circuitous way up the steep hillside. . . . the ridge back of the house . . . now . . . has a dense canopy of foliage that all but engulfs the house, for the larches and pines have grown to great trees, as have the birches and spruce, the beaches and oaks, that Thoreau helped Alcott to plant.

1905
Charles Everett
Landscape Architecture I, Final Thesis, Wayside, Concord, Mass.

The piazza, a recent addition, is on the South and West sides of the house . . . commanding the fine lawn enclosed by the ridge and the spur. . . . This lawn is rather oblong in shape and somewhat irregular and its contour is clearly marked by surrounding masses of densest foliage. . . . near the street we have a considerable gap in the line of trees shutting us off from the sidewalk. . . . it seems trees were meant to be there to continue the regular artificial screen, but that some may have died and been taken out. . . . Continuing around toward the North our spur keeps ascending and the foliage gets denser until we come to the ridge proper which is very steep, sloping approximately two in [sic] one. . . . a slight bending around of the ridge at the rear of the house, . . . a few straggling lilac bushes mark the point where the hill begins to turn in toward the house. . . . Along the front of the cell [property] or its southern side is a straight double row of pines, the space between the rows is about four feet. Toward the western end this planting suddenly stops. . . gap already referred to. It also stops rather arbitrarily opposite the corner of the piazza, so that the really living portions of the house are screened from the street only by a rather low and scattering lilac hedge. This hedge, running along parallel . . . pines . . . forms all together a triple line

1905
Charles Everett
Landscape Architecture I,
. . . continued

of demarcation from the street. . . . The trees in the double plantation do not occur opposite one another, but alternate, . . . the diameter of most of the pines . . . varies from about one foot to one and one half feet. The trees are of three varieties Norway Pines, hemlocks and three or four magnificent elms. The foliage on the long "aisle" of trees grows very high on tall, tapering tree trunks so that it is possible to see out between a series of parallel lines. As one looks down this plantation towards the West, far out of our composition, the effect is very splendid of a regular aisle with great towering stems like columns. The foliage on the spur and on the ridge is of the densest possible. . . . where the ridge at the back is terraced, a retaining wall of rough stones was necessary . . . drooping branches sweep down and over this wall. . . . at the beginning of this wall there is a slight bay or jutting out and over this droops a superb elm tree, whose branches are so low that they touch the ground, yet the roots . . . some six feet above the green lawn. . . . In one other place three elms occur higher up the slope so that they do not overhang. . . . No grass grows under the trees, but a soft slippery sweet-smelling carpet of needles. . . . The terracing of the ridge seems out of place in this decidedly wild slope . . . It is very impressive to stand in one of the aisles formed by the plantation of trees along the terraces and the effect is almost that of a church. . . . The average height of the trees is from fifty to sixty feet . . . "evergreen walk' is through the afore-mentioned gap and is probably not so much an intended walk as it is one worn by strangers entering the grounds. . . . Adequate entrances are provided by two paths, one . . . about four feet wide, at right angles to the street and following the contour of the piazza then turning and proceeding to the service portions and rear door. The entrance to the front door is diagonal to the street so that is [sic] small lawn in front of the house is irregular

1905
Charles Everett
Landscape Architecture I,
. . . continued

in shape. One lone pine stands on one side of the side path and seems to be a doubtful continuation of the bounding plantation of pines.

not a continuous flat lawn, but one divided without reason into three slopes . . . to be sure, very slight, about thirty feet apart and with a change in height of about ten inches. . . .

the major axis of the lawn is eighty eight feet from the piazza to the first tree of the slope. This axis makes 190° with North. The minor axis is eighty-five feet at right angles to the major, measuring from the stone wall at the rear to the street boundary of trees.

. . . the high growing branches and the trunks at a fair distance apart, [along the front of the property] . . . afford a charming view of the undulating fields beyond.

. . . the terraces are no longer kept up and the whole has a wild and rugged air about it in most effective a contrast with the quiet lawn below.

. . . great contrasts in light and shade, and the open and closed character of the cell.

1913
John J. Busch
An Historic Tour
p. 26

The tablet in the woods on our right marks Hawthorne's favorite path to the study which he had constructed in a mammoth pine tree on the top of the ridge. The outer row of trees are English Larches and were imported by Hawthorne from Liverpool.

1914
"Hawthorne Memories Cling to Wayside at Concord," Christian Science Monitor, June 20, p. 17

A boulder there bears a bronze tablet inscribed: "He trod daily this path to the hill to formulate as he paced to and fro upon its summit his marvelous romances." This boulder was unveiled on July 4, 1904, by Beatrix Hawthorne. . . at the centenary observance planned by Mrs. Lothrop.

1914
Ibid.

First the old barn was moved by Mr. Hawthorne to the opposite side of the house, its present location. The recent introduction of a cement floor has modernized this structure for the housing of an automobile, but the scarred old beams, with their rusty nail prints and rude attempts at carving, and the loft above recall the frolics and games of hide-and-seek . . . "Little Women"

1921
Justin W. Mann,
"Hawthorne's Wayside"
Boston Post, Aug. 1, n.p.

tall larches we now see at "Wayside" . . . now line the famous Larch Path leading from the Wayside to the Orchard House. That path, worn by Hawthorne's feet, no one has attempted to keep. . . open, but there it is today, in plain evidence exactly as it was in Hawthorne's time. . . . is the wonderful pine tree, at the base of which was the novelist's favorite seat.

On the Larch Path is a depression made by the cellar of an old house [according to park historians, this cavity represents the cellar of the Minot House] which Hawthorne was told about, and he made that house the home of Rose Garfield. He would never permit that depression to be filled.

Specific Recommendations

To apply the theme of the "flow of history" to the interpretation of the historic grounds of Wayside requires considerable planning and foresight, as the grounds boasted significantly different features during the eighty years under consideration.

The Alcott and Hawthorne families carried out the major changes on the grounds while the Lothrop family preserved and maintained what they could of the historic grounds. But their efforts were lost to the winds of 1938, the wrecker-hurricane which destroyed the most dramatic features from the Alcott and Hawthorne periods--the tall pine and spruce planted on the hillside and in front of the house.

Hopefully, a restoration of the grounds will highlight specific characteristics of the grounds important to family members in each period. The following represent suggestions that seem feasible to this author.

The Emerson Field

1. The Garden in the Emerson Field. Although the National Park Service owns only 14,247 square feet of the original eight-acre lot across from the house, room should be made to lay out a garden in semicircular rows in at least peas, corn, and

strawberries to give some representation of the carefully designed garden which the Alcott family depended upon for subsistence. A few apple trees should also be planted to represent the arbor he set out in the field.

2. The Cathedral Aisle. The Hawthorne family tended to neglect the Emerson field in terms of a garden, but they did set out Norway Spruce and larch in a straight aisle--the Cathedral Aisle according to Mrs. Hawthorne--to the brook. Six tall spruce and a few pine give a faint indication of this pathway, but with a little work, it could be better defined.
3. Post and Rail Fence. One photograph of the Hawthornes shows also the post and rail fence fronting the field; such an addition would reproduce an historical feature on the grounds.

The Hillside

1. The Terraces. Of Alcott's original 12 terraces, only vestiges of six remain. At least two should be redefined and planted with gardens--melons, peas, cucumbers--and apple, peach, and pear trees. The Hawthorne children as well as their parents enjoyed Alcott's terraces for their shade, fruit, and gardens.
2. The Stone Wall. The stone wall at the base of the hillside has been standing (but reconstructed after the hurricane of 1938 according to Architect Carroll) from the Alcott residency and merits constant stabilization and attention.
3. Hawthorne Path. The path made by Hawthorne's pacing of the hilltop did not survive the century's passing but many descriptions of it did.

At least some part of the hilltop could be designed to represent the path, bordering it with sweet fern, wild violets, huckleberry, blackberries, and pine.

4. Rustic seats. The Hawthornes fully appreciated Alcott's talents in designing rustic seats and structures. They planned benches on the hilltop between trees along the sacra via, or Hawthorne path. At least one seat could be designed for historical interpretation as well as for public relaxation.

5. The Larch Path. Six tall larch still stand on the outer rim of the discernible Larch Path set out by the Hawthornes at their return from Europe in 1860. Preservation of larch stumps should be taken into consideration to show the original line and consistency of the planting. Most evidence points to the fact that the larch trees only lined the street side of the path; but more extensive probing into the soil for remnants of possible tree stumps on the inner line might help to resolve this ambiguous subject.

6. Norway Spruce and Pine. Alcott planted many forest trees on the hillside, including spruce and pine. Hawthorne imported several hundred Norway Spruce and had them set out across his grounds. During the latter half of the Lothrop residency, the most noticeable feature of the hillside was the abundant growth of evergreens, nearly all of which toppled in the hurricane of 1938. As the most universal feature of the grounds, the evergreen plantation should be given special care and consideration, replacing as many as possible on the slope, within financial limits.

7. Acacia Grove and Laburnum. Sophia Hawthorne often mentioned in her letters the acacia grove on the hillside and her son, Julian, later recalled the abundant laburnum, both of which are of the pea family and have bright yellow flowers. A sprinkling of these trees or shrubs on the hillside would add color and beauty to the historic grounds plan.

8. Walking paths. Alcott set out paths on the hillside when his family resided at the house, and again when the Hawthornes returned from Europe. For one path which led up the hill from the kitchen door he built steps into the hillside to the first terrace. The steps--ten of which either remaining or reconstructed stand on the property today--should be maintained, and the path restored. From the available information however, none of the paths could be accurately replaced, which should be clearly understood in the interpretation.

The Lawn and Door Yard

1. Flower Gardens. Alcott and his wife set out flower gardens in the door yard which, no doubt, Sophia Hawthorne, clearly delighted with gardening, found good use for. Alcott seemed little concerned with the flower selection, and therefore the knowledge of the garden plants during the Alcott residency is limited to roses. On the other hand, Sophia Hawthorne spoke often in her correspondence of the blooming crocuses, white lilies, gillia, portulacia, fleur de lys, and sunflowers. Where specified as to location, garden plants and creepers (the woodbine under Hawthorne's study window) should be planted in the gardens still bordering the house.

2. Paths around the House. Through most of the historic period a path led from the central bay window (once an entrance) to the street, through the hedge and fence, which should be part of the historic grounds, as should any other of the paths which appear in the historic photographs illustrated in this report. Alcott set gravel into the paths when working in them in 1847.

3. Hawthorn Tree. The now-famous hawthorn tree stands as one of the last examples of the historic grounds and should, of course, be well preserved.

4. Evergreens fronting House. Alcott entered in his 1846 journal that he had planted rows of evergreens with clover under them in front of the house, aiming to give his family protection from the dust and noise of the highway. In 1905, Charles Everett described a double row of alternately spaced pine trees overshadowing the front of the house, and in 1961, Miss Lothrop related how several of Alcott's pines fell in the 1938 hurricane. As an important feature throughout all the historical interpretation period, these trees should be considered for replanting.

Appendix*

Alcott Readings On Agriculture & Related Subjects

Latin writers:

Cato
Varro
Columella

Abraham Cowley's Essays, especially on gardening (c. 1676)

Francis Bacon on Gardening

John Gerhard, Herbalist (c. 1596)

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Phillip Miller, Gardener's Calendar

Sir John Evelyn, Sylvia, or a Discourse of Forest-Trees and the Propagation of Timber in His Majesties Dominions (c. 1664) (this book intended for estate owners).

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Thomas Tusser, Five Hundred Points of Good Husbandry (1573)

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Pastoral poems of Virgil and Theocritus

Hesiod, Works and Days (c. 172)

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*The above list down to Hesiod reflects the research of Odell Shepard in his Pedlar's Progress, pp. 394-95. When first names have been omitted it indicates that Shepard did not supply them, and that this author could not trace them either. First names and the dates the works were first published have been supplied when possible from the Encyclopedia Americana (New York, 1953), and the Encyclopaedia Brittannica (Chicago, 1967).

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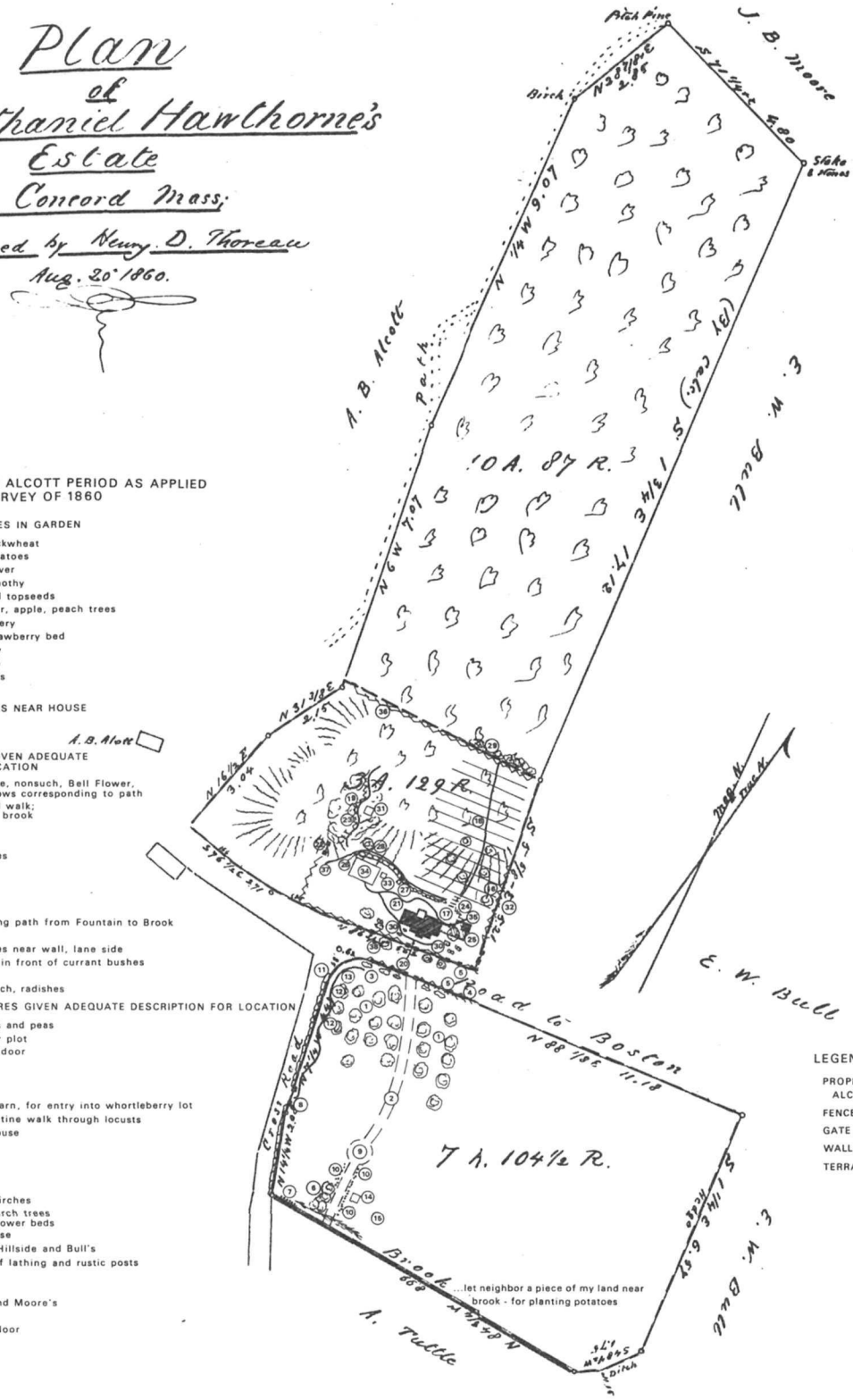
GROUNDS MAPS

ALCOTT PERIOD GROUNDS MAP
1845-1852

Plan of Nathaniel Hawthorne's Estate in Concord Mass.

Surveyed by Henry D. Thoreau

Aug. 20. 1860.



FEATURES EXISTING IN ALCOTT PERIOD AS APPLIED TO THE THOREAU SURVEY OF 1860

1845-46 GENERAL FEATURES IN GARDEN

Generous soil	Buckwheat
Lettuce	Potatoes
Rhubarb	Clover
Melons	Timothy
Corn	Red topseeds
Squash	Pear, apple, peach trees
Beets	Celery
Tomatoes	Strawberry bed
Beans	Hay
Carrots	Rye
Turnips	Oats
Oyster-plant	

1846 HOUSEPLOT, FEATURES NEAR HOUSE

Apple trees
Cucumber beds

A. B. Alcott

1846 GARDEN FEATURES GIVEN ADEQUATE DESCRIPTION FOR LOCATION

1. Apple trees--Hubbardstone, nonsuch, Bell Flower, Woods--in semicircular rows corresponding to path
2. Semicircular walk; central walk; "alley" across garden to brook
3. Currant to frame garden
4. Fence
5. Roadside sowed in grasses
6. Willows by path to brook
7. Spearmint by brook
8. Western gate
9. Fountain
10. Sweet corn and peas along path from Fountain to Brook
11. Wall near lane side
12. Potatoes under apple trees near wall, lane side
13. Sodded serpentine walks in front of currant bushes
14. Garden House
15. Peas, beans, beets, spinach, radishes

1846-47 HOUSEPLOT, FEATURES GIVEN ADEQUATE DESCRIPTION FOR LOCATION

16. Terraces with peach trees and peas
17. Buckwheat in semicircular plot
18. Path up hill from kitchen door
19. Locust grove behind barn
20. Path in dooryard
21. Serpentine walk
22. Gate on hillside beyond barn, for entry into whortleberry lot
23. Rustic fence along serpentine walk through locusts
24. Fence by stairs behind house
25. Conservatory
26. Wall for hillside
27. Beehouse of stone
28. Apple tree
29. Shrubbery of pines and birches
30. Dooryard: pine, spruce, larch trees
    Roses and bergamot in flower beds
31. Bower; arbor; summerhouse
32. Paled [?] fence between Hillside and Bull's
33. Grape arbor with trellis of lathing and rustic posts
34. Barn
35. Scarlet runner trellis
36. Fence between Hillside and Moore's
37. Footpath on wall top
38. Elms by roadside before door

...let neighbor a piece of my land near brook - for planting potatoes

Scale of 8 rods to an inch.

1 3 6 7 9 11 15 31 37
2 4 5 8 10 12 18 28 30 rods

Distances in 4 rod chains & links
Courses referred to 1853

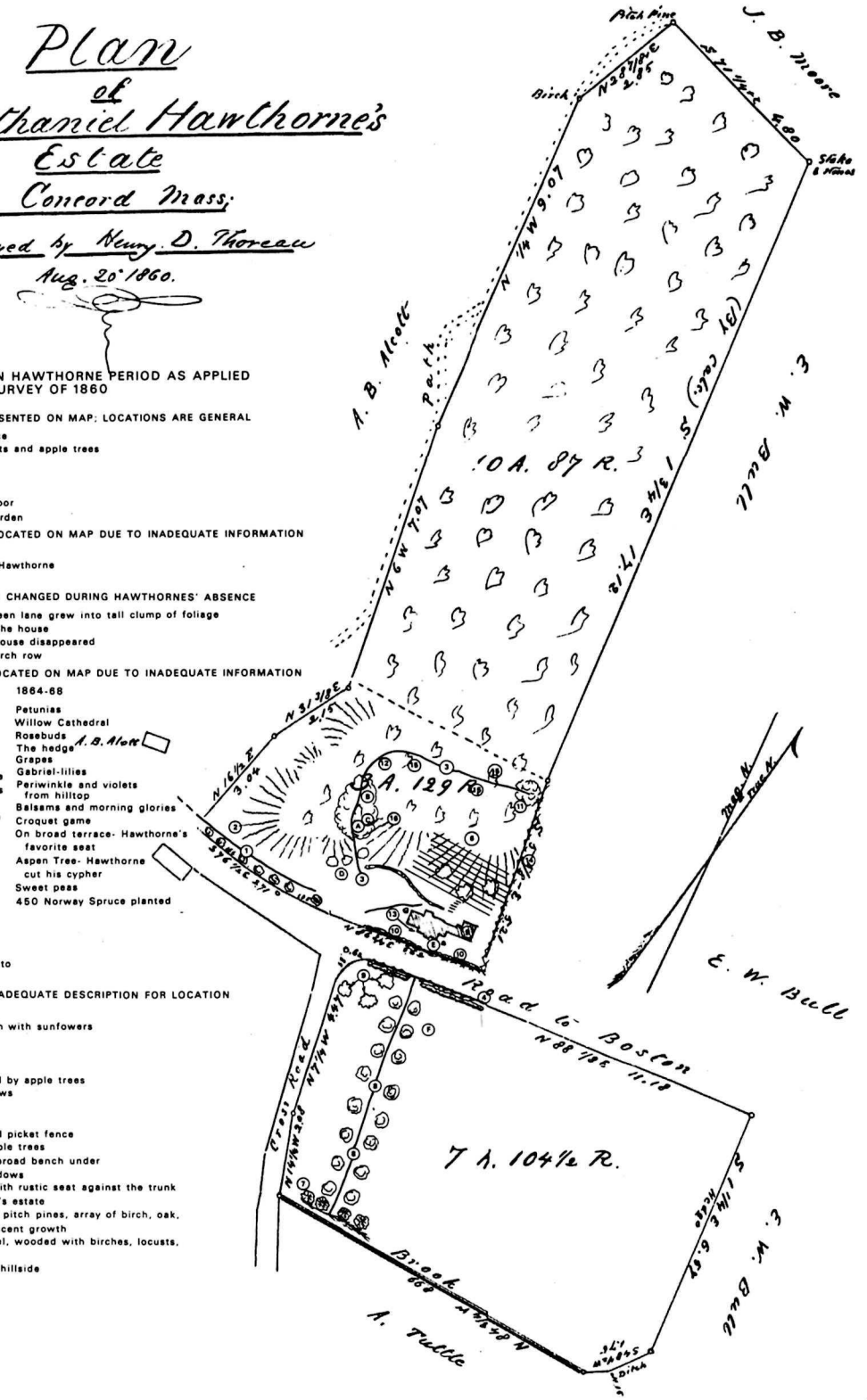
ALCOTT PERIOD - 1845-48

HAWTHORNE PERIOD GROUNDS MAP
1852-1868

Plan of Nathaniel Hawthorne's Estate in Concord Mass.

Surveyed by Henry D. Thoreau

Aug. 20. 1860.



FEATURES EXISTING IN HAWTHORNE PERIOD AS APPLIED TO THE THOREAU SURVEY OF 1860

1852-53 FEATURES REPRESENTED ON MAP; LOCATIONS ARE GENERAL

A. Summer house on terrace
Arbour amidst the locusts and apple trees
B. Acacia grove on hill
C. Peach tree near bower
D. Acacias at end of lawn
E. Lilies by side of front door
F. Crop of red clover in garden

1852-53 FEATURES NOT LOCATED ON MAP DUE TO INADEQUATE INFORMATION

Beans
Grass raised and sold by Hawthorne
Outhouse

1853-60 FEATURES WHICH CHANGED DURING HAWTHORNES' ABSENCE

Willow settings by the green lane grew into tall clump of foliage
Shrubbery thrived about the house
The Arbour and Garden House disappeared
Gateway was cut inside larch row

1860-68 FEATURES NOT LOCATED ON MAP DUE TO INADEQUATE INFORMATION

1860-64	1864-68
Corn	Petunias
Hawthorne seat on lawn by house	Willow Cathedral
Blooming crocuses in garden	Rosebuds
Sweet pea and mignonette	The hedge
Blackberries, huckleberries from hill	Grapes
Scarlet beans from garden	Gabriel-lilies
A rustic arbour	Periwinkle and violets from hilltop
Wild violets	Balsams and morning glories
Radish seeds	Croquet game
Strawberries	On broad terrace- Hawthorne's favorite seat
White lilies	Aspen Tree- Hawthorne cut his cypher
Squash, potatoes	Sweet peas
Portulaca plant in bed devoted to that plant	450 Norway Spruce planted
Tomato bed	
Gillia	
Acacia path-hard by tomato bed- to hilltop	

1860-68 FEATURES GIVEN ADEQUATE DESCRIPTION FOR LOCATION

1. The Larch Path
2. Hallows along Larch Path with sunfowers
3. The Hawthorne Path
4. Rail fence
5. Barn relocation
6. Rude terraces, shadowed by apple trees
7. Brook and hanging willows
8. The Cathedral Aisle
9. Old apple trees
10. Hedge, tall spruces, old picket fence
11. Thicket of birch and maple trees
12. Open brow of hill with broad bench under pines overlooking meadows
13. Ancient mulberry tree with rustic seat against the trunk
14. Fence enclosed Mr. Bull's estate
15. On summit white pines, pitch pines, array of birch, oak, elm, hickory, all of recent growth
    A hill of sand and gravel, wooded with birches, locusts, pitch pines
16. Abundant laburnums on hillside

LEGEND

FENCE
GATE
WALL
TERRACES

HAWTHORNE PERIOD - 1852-68

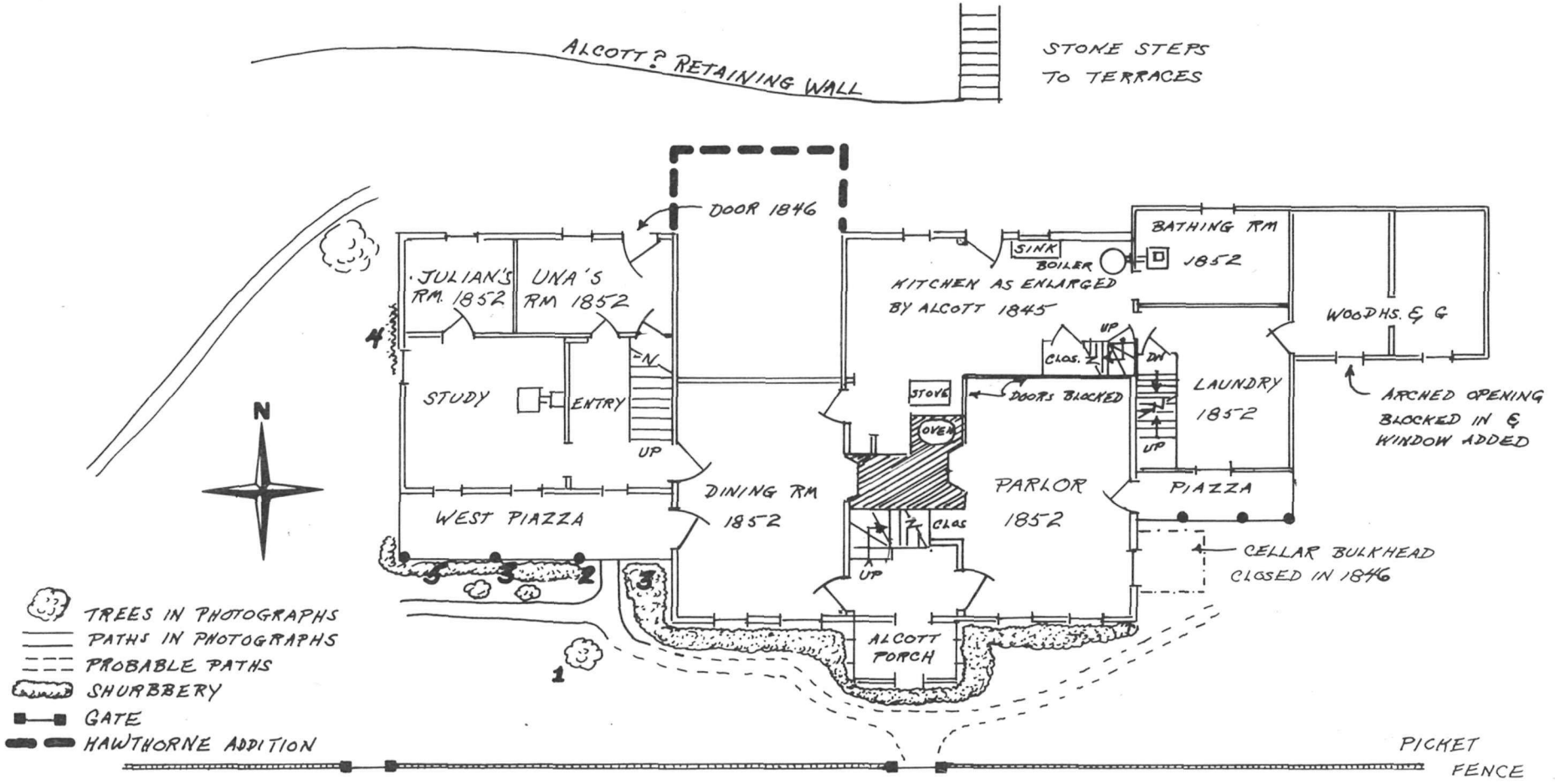
Scale of 8 rods to an inch.

1 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 rods

Distances in 4-rod chains & links
Courses referred to 1853

HAWTHORNE GROUNDS AROUND HOUSE, 1864-68
Architectural sketch by Orville Carroll

1. THE HAWTHORN TREE
2. PAPA'S SUNFLOWER BY THE STEP
3. ROUND THE DOOR IN THE BORDER'S OF THE LAWN ..... BLOOMING PURPLE FLEUR DE LYS
4. WOODBINE HE .... INTENDED SHOULD CLIMB TO HIS STUDY WINDOW
5. WINDOWS OF THE LITTLE LIBRARY WHERE HE SAT .... OVERHEARD ..... BOASTS ..... BESIDE SWEET-CLOVER BED: WHITE FLOWERS



HISTORIC GROUNDS 1860–68

WAYSIDE GROUNDS
1868-1924

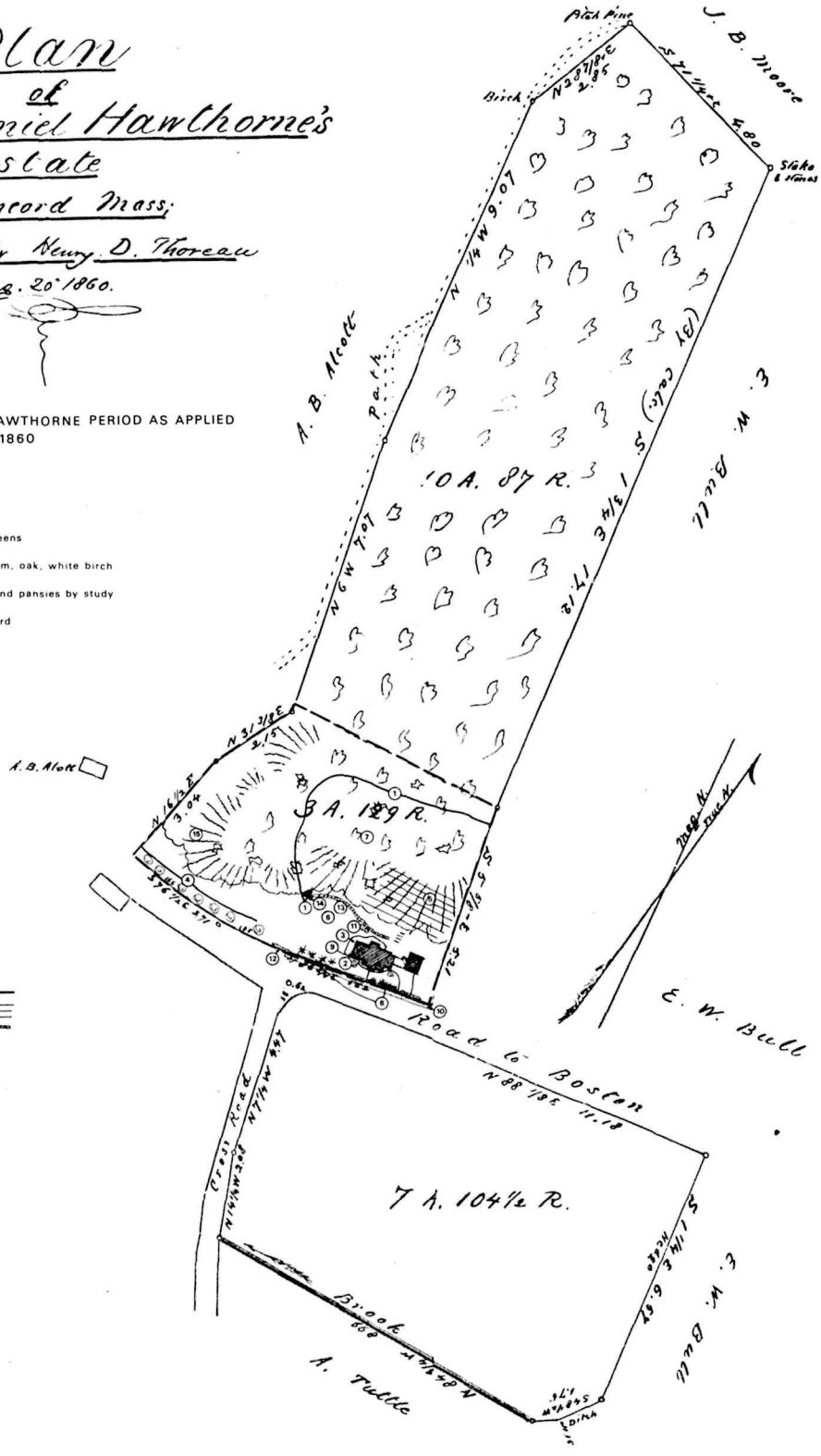
Plan of Nathaniel Hawthorne's Estate in Concord Mass.

Surveyed by Henry D. Thoreau

Aug. 20 1860.

FEATURES EXISTING IN POST-HAWTHORNE PERIOD AS APPLIED TO THE THOREAU SURVEY OF 1860

1. Hawthorne Path
2. Hawthorn tree
3. Rose vines and woodbine, 1868-87
   Creeper-covered porch, 1887-1924
4. The Larch Path
5. Rough terraces covered with evergreens
6. Semicircular lawn
7. Hillside of firs, pitch-pines, larch, elm, oak, white birch
8. Row of pine trees
9. Hawthorne's sweet briar rose tree and pansies by study window, removed 1887
10. Elm trees along narrow strip of sward
11. A few straggling lilac bushes
12. Low and scattering lilac hedge
13. Retaining wall of rough stones
14. Hawthorne Centenary boulder
15. Depression from cellar of old house



LEGEND

PROPERTY BOUNDARY - POST-HAWTHORNE PERIOD

TERRACES

WALL

Scale of 8 rods to an inch.

1 3 5 7 9 11 15 17 37

2 4 6 8 10 12 18 20 30 rods

POST-HAWTHORNE PERIOD - 1868-1924

Distances in 4-rod chains & links

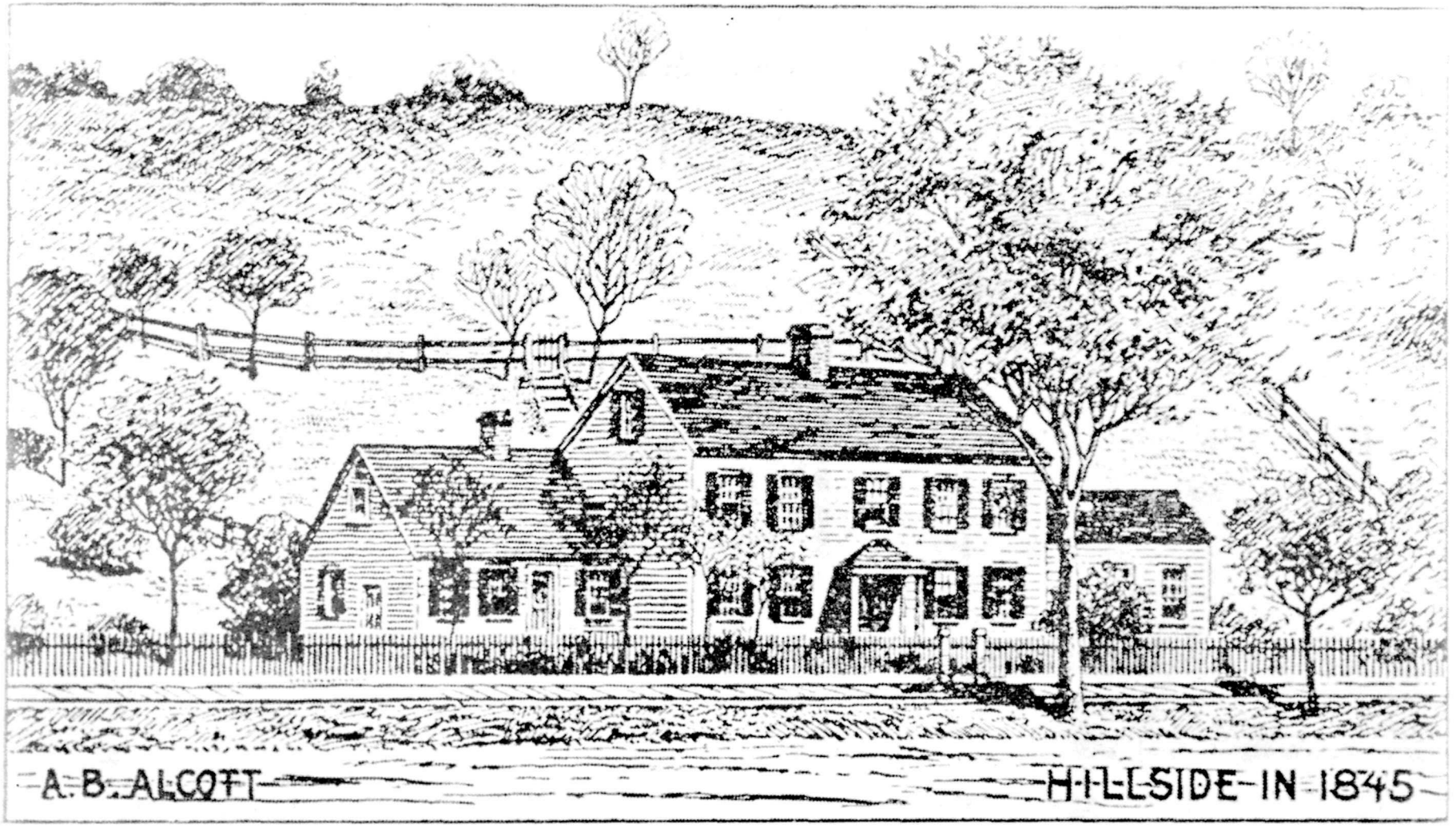
Courses referred to 1853

ILLUSTRATIONS

1. As historian Ronsheim points out, this drawing reflects several features unlikely to be present at Hillside in 1845: porches on eastern and western wings, trees in front western addition, doors and windows of western wing, and blinds. Moreover, the drawing is taken from one executed by Alcott, not the original.

The bare hillside and fences surrounding the home are likely to be historically accurate.

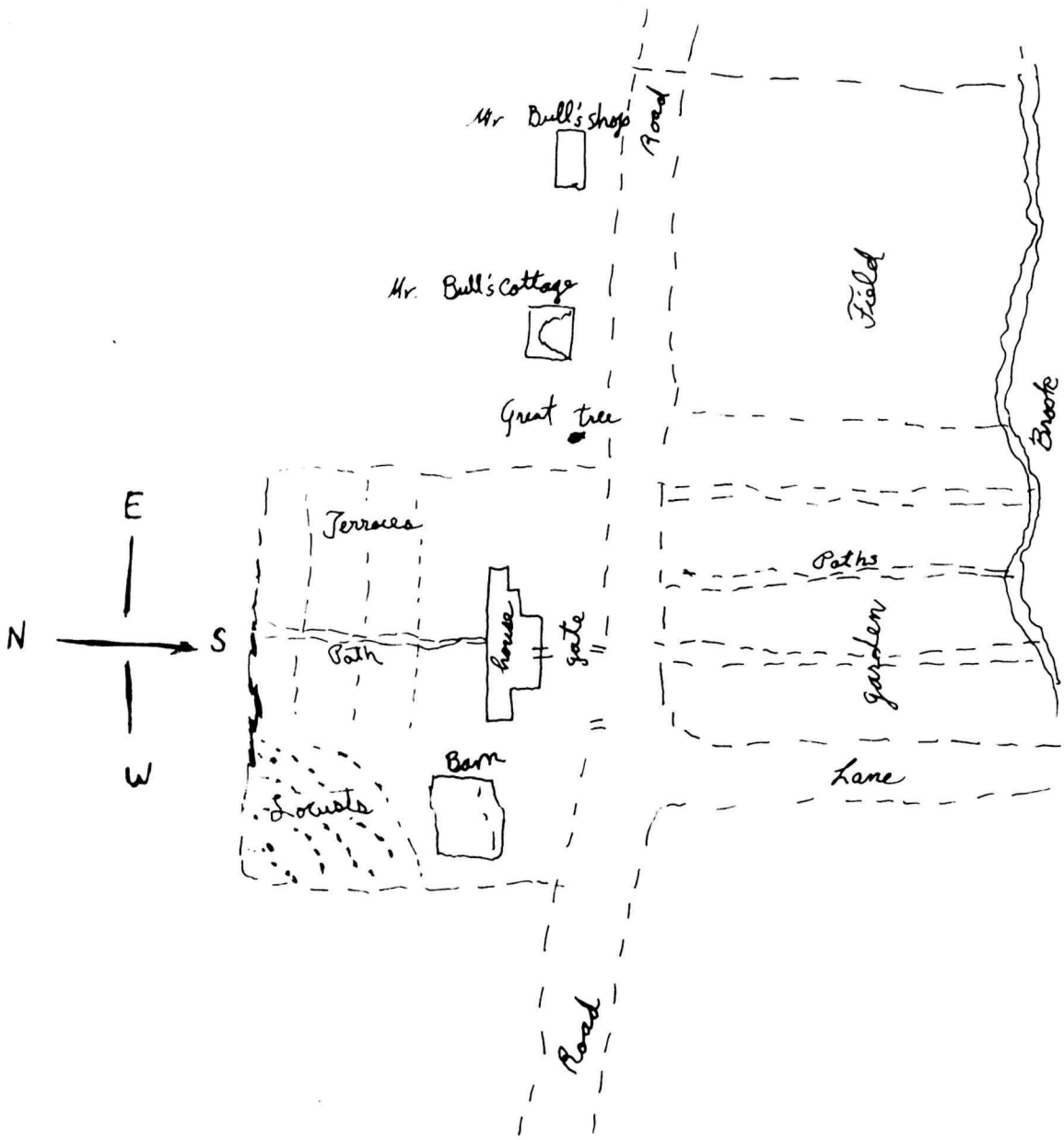
From F.B. Sanborn, Recollection of Seventy Years, 2, 320, now in MMNHP files.



From a drawing by A. Bronson Alcott

2. This sketch of the grounds made by Elizabeth Alcott, aged 10, pin points the locust grove, the path from the kitchen door to the hilltop, the terraces, gates, garden, and Neighbor Bull's.

Traced from sketch found in Elizabeth's Journal, 1846, on microfilm A.B. Alcott Family Letters, Volume 1, 1837-1850 through Volume 5, 1852-55, at MMNHP.

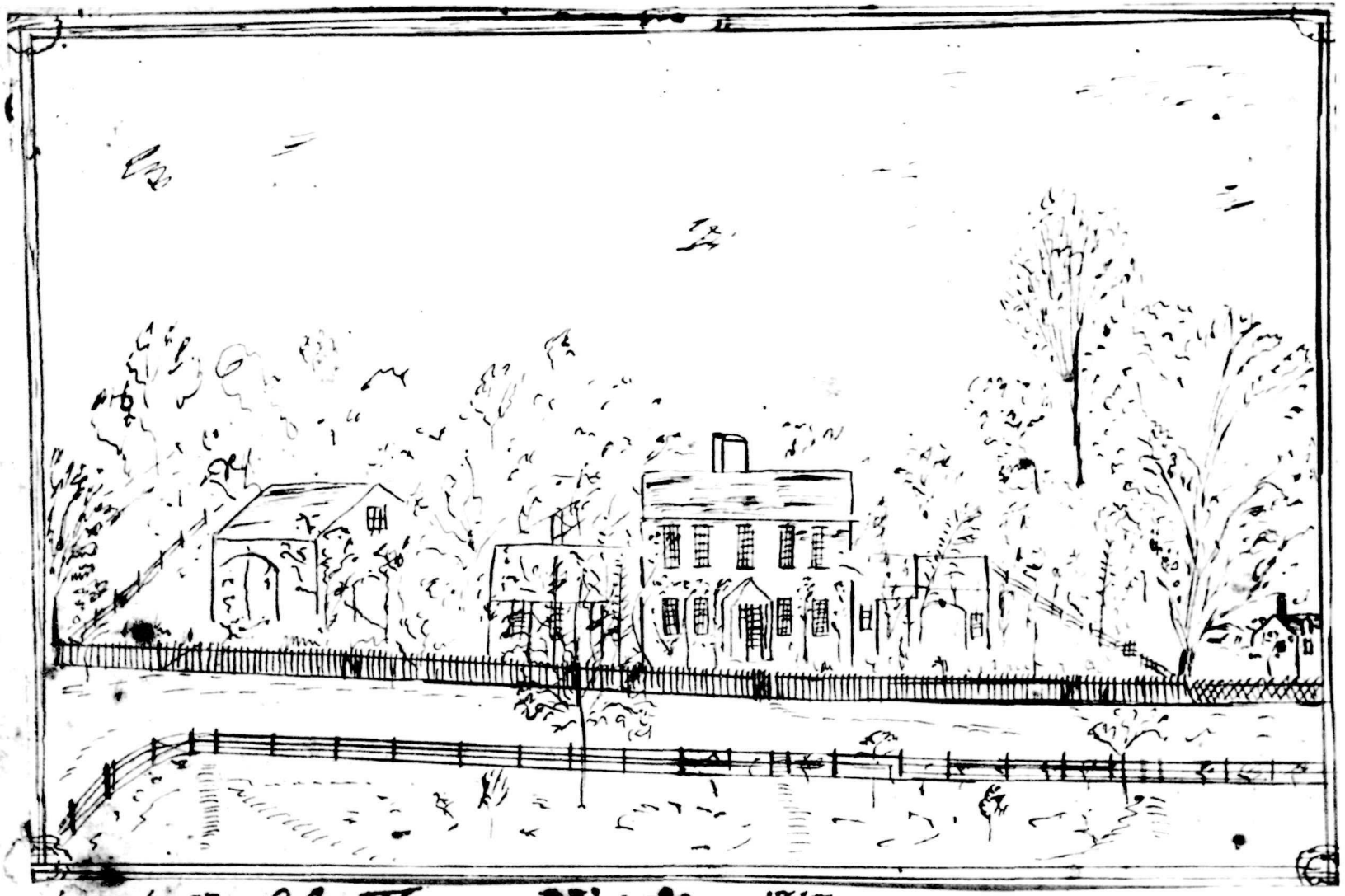


Elizabeth Alcott's Diary - 1846

3. Drawing by Alcott in 1847 gives a clear idea where the barn was relocated and the fencing around the property and fronting the Emerson field. The suggestion of so many grown trees on the hillside is unlikely for 1847.

Original owned by the Louisa May Alcott Association in Concord. A copy in park files.

First Home



Drawing by Mrs. Alcott — Nillside. 1847.

4. This sketch by Alcott in 1848 gives very little idea of the grounds plantings on the house plot, but indicated the semi-circular garden rows so often mentioned by Alcott in his journal, as well as gives an idea of why he referred to the field as a bald plain.

Original owned by Louisa May Alcott Association, copy in park files.

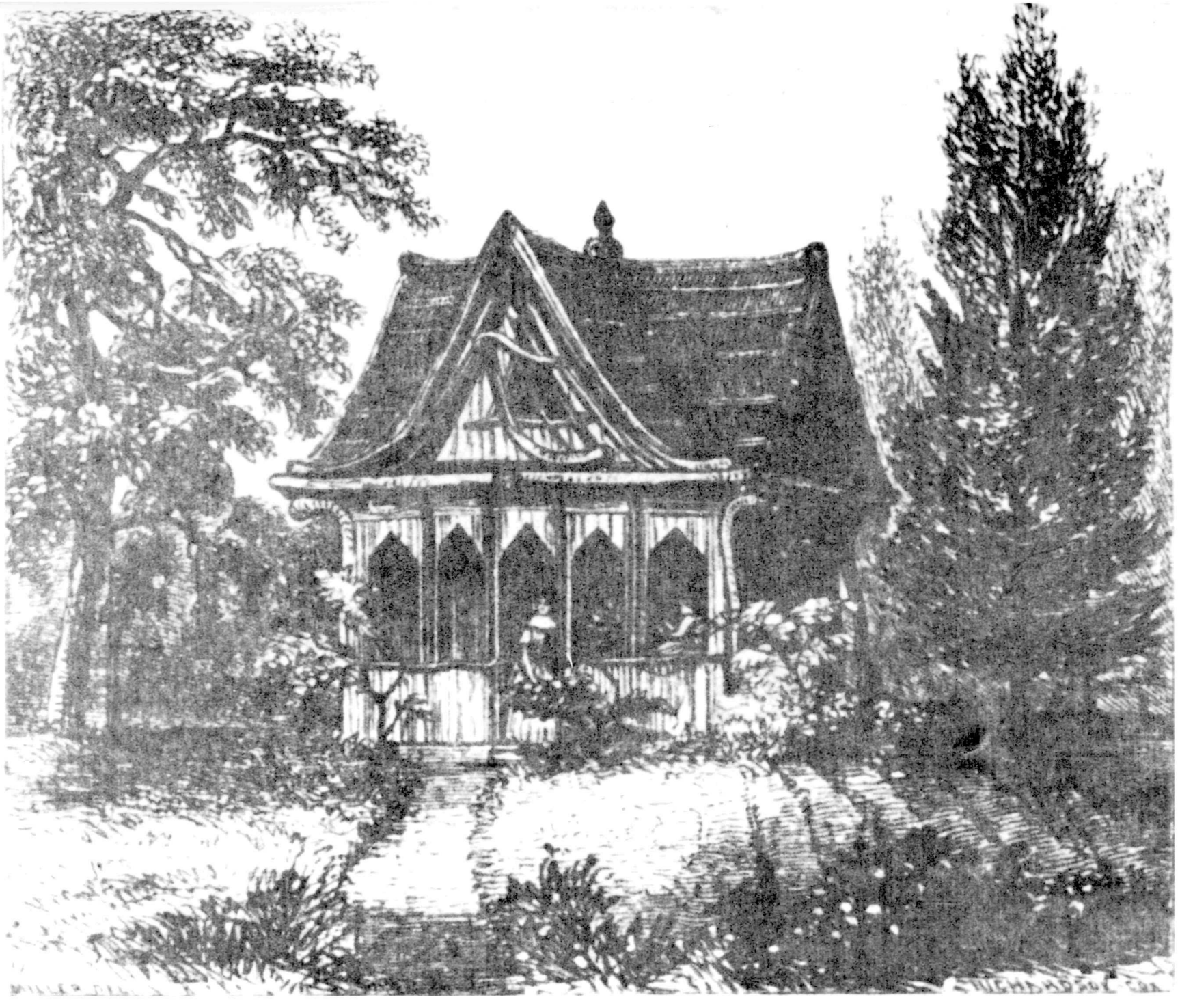


Drawing by Mr. [illegible] · Millside 1848

House of Dr. & Mrs. Meeker at the age of 16 yrs

5. Alcott set this sketch of the garden house which he had completed for Emerson in his journal for 1847. Although most likely more elaborate than those rustic structures Alcott completed for Hillside, it gives a good idea of the style of architecture used.

On microfilm of Alcott Journal XXI, p. 552, at MMNHP.



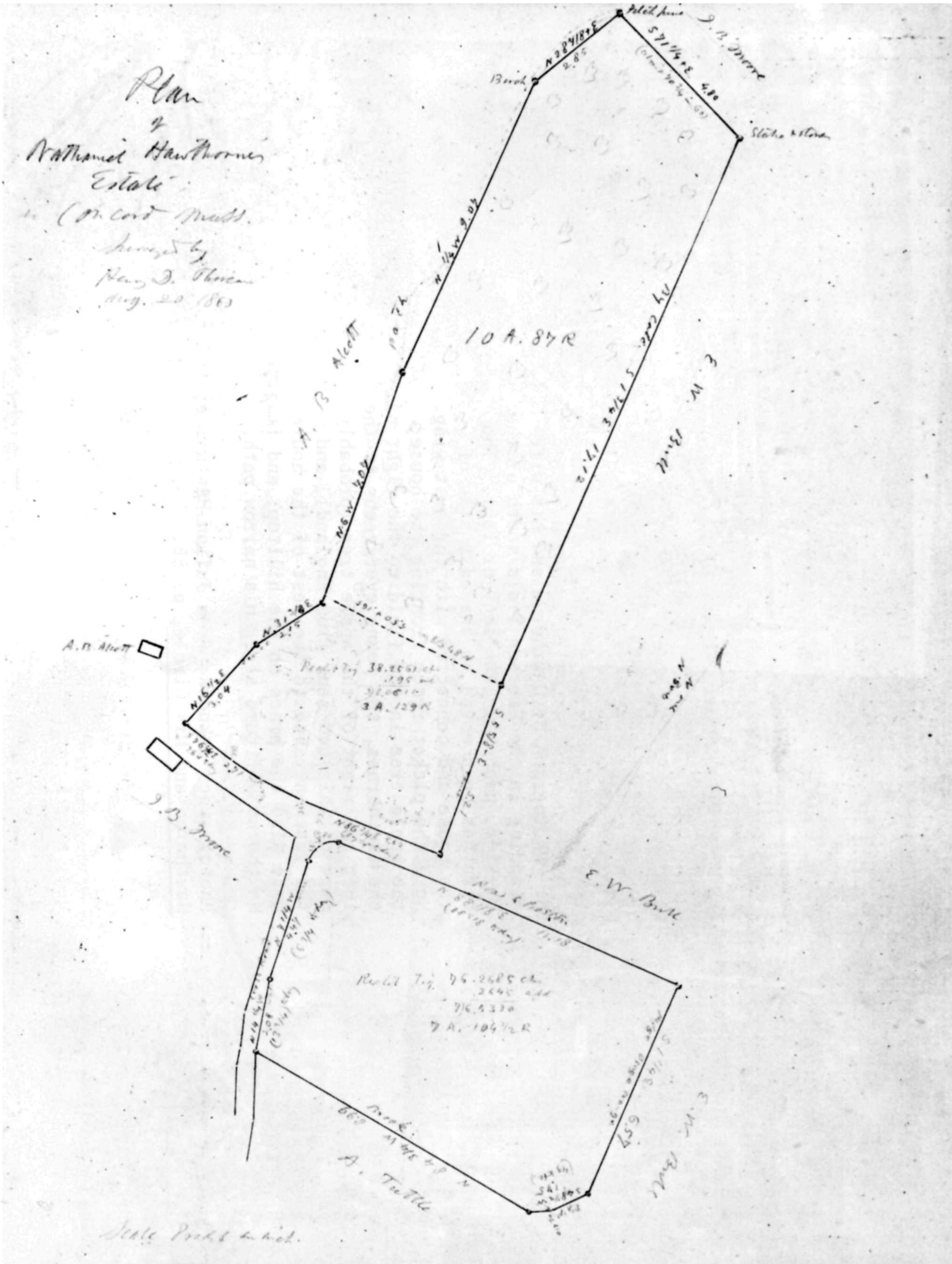
6. Mrs. Hawthorne enclosed this sketch of the Wayside in a letter to her mother in 1852, explaining that the drawing was not accurate; that the hill continued across behind the house, that the arbor on the hillside was far more beautiful in form, and too low down in the engraving, and that there was no broad park before the house, but a yard with a fence. (See SH to Mother, Oct. 31, 1852, Berg Collection.)

From an 1852 drawing of W.R. Miller; Photograph collection MMNHP.



7. On August 20, 1863, Henry D. Thoreau completed this survey of Hawthorne's property, indicating that Hawthorne had purchased 10 additional acres on the other side of the hill. This survey map serves as the basis of all the grounds maps in this report.

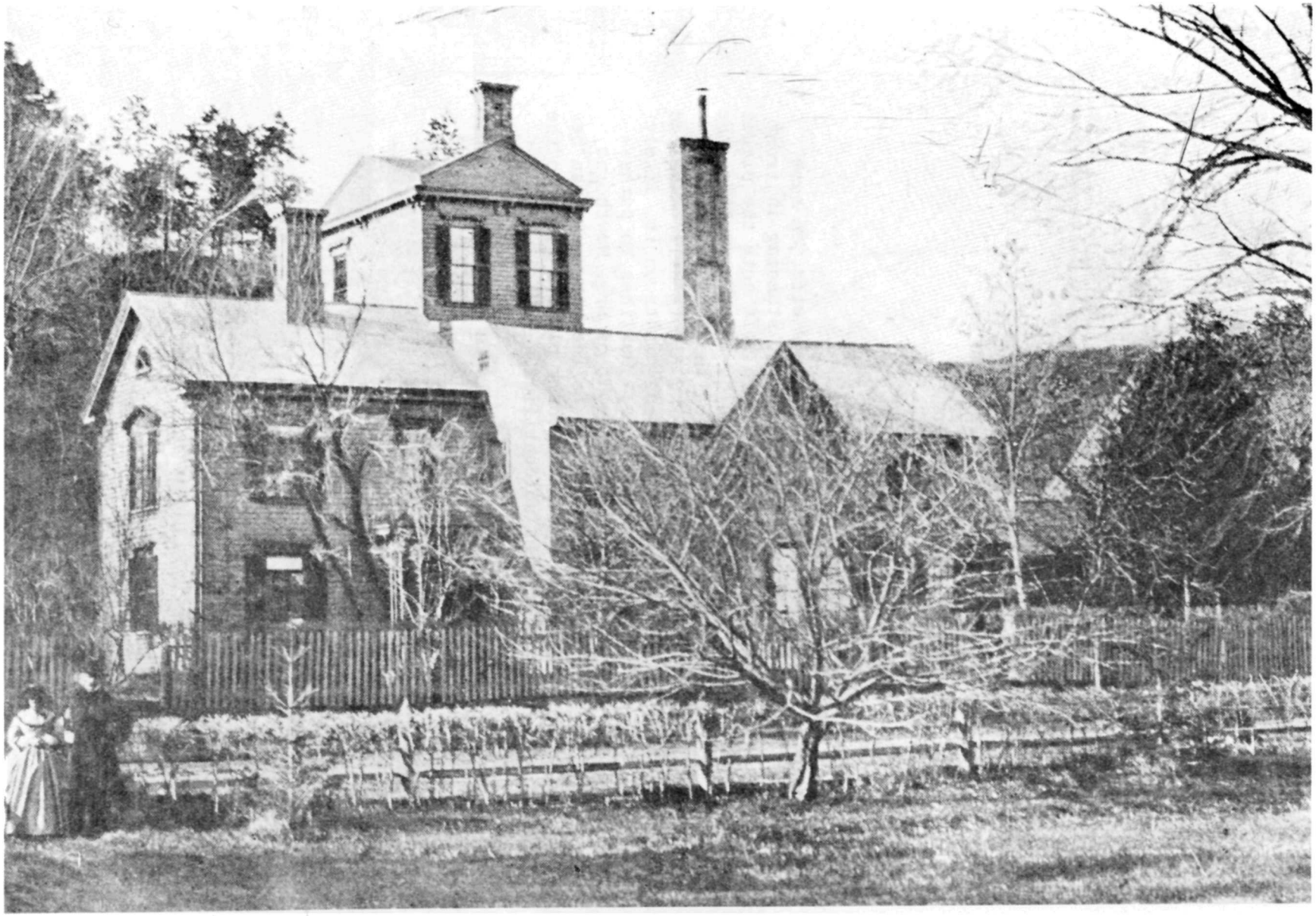
Photograph collection, MMNHP.



Plan of Nathaniel Hawthorne's Estate in Concord Mass.
10 A. 87 R
A. B. Alcott
N 5 W 4.04
N 1/4 W 9.04
J. B. Moore
S 71 1/4 E 4.80
Stake & stone
N 28 1/4 E 2.85
Brook
E. W. Bull
3 A. 129 R
7 A. 104 1/2 R
A. Tuttle
Brook
6.57

8. Photograph of Hawthorne and his wife standing in the Emerson field south of the Wayside, probably late 1860 or 1861. The barn has been moved to the east side of the house and connected with the east wing. Note the picket fence fronting the house, the apple tree in the field to the right of the Hawthornes, the young evergreens to the left and right of the apple tree (probably part of shipload sent from England), and the gate entrance to the west of the house. Note also the pines on the hilltop, and imagine Hawthorne's figure along his narrow path.

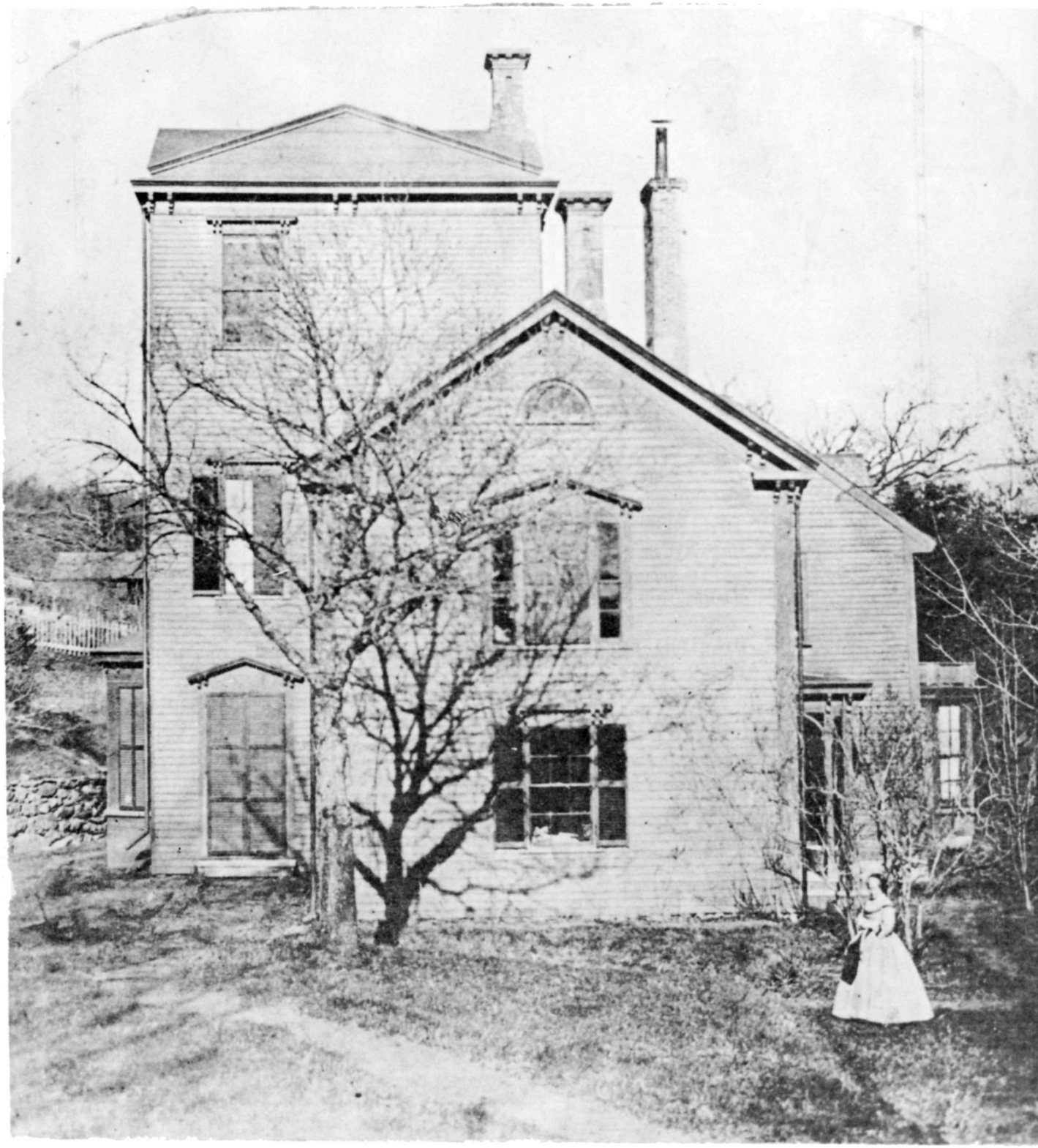
Photographer unknown; from Julian Hawthorne, Hawthorne and His Circle, p. 58.



THE WAYSIDE
(Showing Nathaniel Hawthorne and his wife)

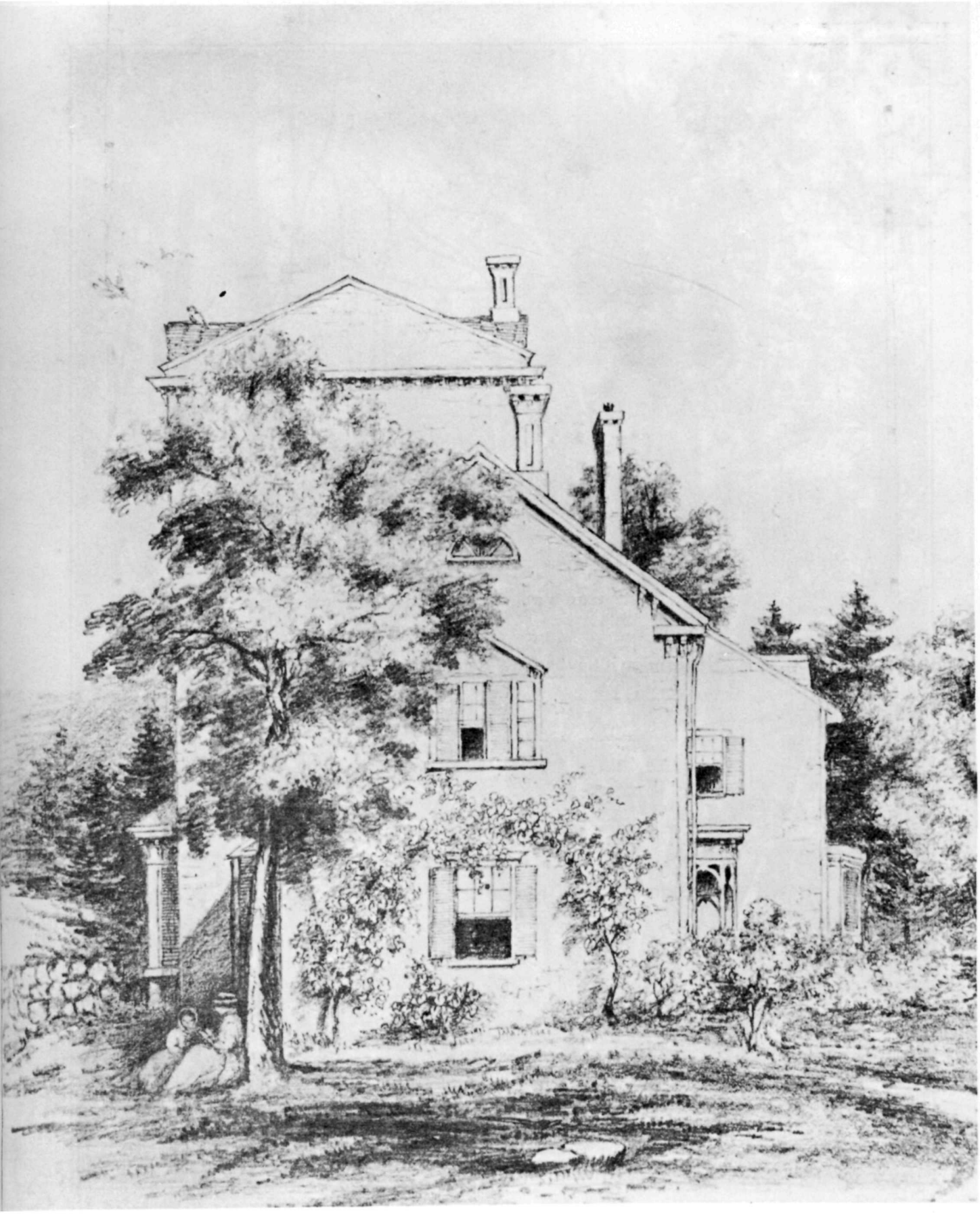
9. Photograph of Hawthorne's wife, on same day as preceding photograph, standing in front of west wing of house. On left note the picket fence dividing the Wayside from Mr. Bull's, the sparsity of plantings on the base of the hill behind the house, and the Alcott wall. The end of the house has creeping plants on it, likely woodbine and rose vines. Outlines to paths--crossing the yard in front of Mrs. Hawthorne, and behind her leading to the entryway--can be made out. Other shrubbery planted close to the house remains unidentified.

Photograph collection, Minute Man National Historical Park.



10. Sketch of Wayside, west, by Louisa May Alcott, showing same natural features as in preceding photograph, but in summer bloom.

Original owned by Louisa May Alcott Associaton. Photo collection, MMNHP.



11. Hawthorne Path along hilltop, sometime before 1904.

Higginson, Hawthorne Centenary, p. 149.



HAWTHORNE'S PATH
(On the hilltop)

12. Hawthorne Path, curving up to hilltop, prior to 1904.

Photo collection, MMNHP.



13. Wayside, west end, c. 1874, judging from growth of forest behind the house. The slightly disorderly look of the grounds might indicate that it was taken when the Wayside School for Girls was closed for the summer. Similar features to the Hawthorne period include vines on west end, spoked semicircular window, shrubbery at southwest corner of the house, the hawthorn tree, and the shutters on the second story window on the west end.

Photo collection, MMNHP.



14. Wayside, west end, probably c. late 1870s judging from further growth on hillside behind the house. The shutters on the second story still have not been removed and the white birch visible on the hillside in the preceding picture is still standing, not significantly changed in width. A fence has been added to the front of the house, which might indicate a change of ownership, perhaps the purchase of the Wayside by Mr. and Mrs. George Lathrop in 1879.

Photo collection, MMNHP.



15. Wayside, west end, at least two or three years following preceding photograph, judging again on development of hillside forest, as well as on growth of vines to second story window, which no longer shows shutters. The portrait might be of kin to Julian Hawthorne who left his family at the Wayside in the fall of 1881 which would suggest that this photograph was shot in the summer of 1882. Still, the persons have not been identified, but the elderly gentleman might be Nathaniel Peabody, brother to Sophia Hawthorne and uncle to Rose Lathrop and Julian Hawthorne. Note gardens lining path as well as the pine trunks and branches in the front yard.

Photo collection, MMNHP. Photographer H. L. Whitcomb.



16. Wayside, front, with same group of people in same garb as preceding photograph. The fence has been replaced by a low line hedge which gives a convenient glimpse of the planting in the front door yard. The elm tree, center, no doubt was originally planted by Alcott. The pines stand to the right and left sides of the house, their trunks not visible in this centered photograph.

Photo collection, MMNHP.



17. Wayside, front, approximately same time as preceding photograph, as hedge and shrubbery appear generally the same, with the exception of seasonal changes. This photograph may have been taken in the fall or early spring of 1882-83, during that winter, and the clothesline and curtains make it obvious that the house is occupied.

Note the fuller view of the barn, and the horse about to enter same.

Photo collection, MMNHP.



18. The first post-Hawthorne photograph definitely identifiable is this Lothrop family portrait, with Mr. and Mrs. Lothrop and Margaret, b. 1884, sitting around Elizabeth P. Peabody, sister of Sophia Hawthorne.

Judging from Margaret's age, this photograph was taken around 1886, just before the Lothrops decided to add the western porch to the house. They had already placed the striped awnings on the windows which identify the Lothrop period in almost every photograph prior to 1900.

Note that the Lothrops chose to cut back the vines along the western end, but the shrubbery remains thick along the house and path.

Photo collection, MMNHP. Photographer A. W. Hosmer



19. The patch on the tree, far right, identifies this and the next photograph as ones by A. W. Hosmer, 1889. Note the two pines beside the hedge in the foreground, and the elm tree (patch) which still stands, diseased, by the driveway. The front hedge has grown up, and has been well tended. The trees on the western end of the property blur together, giving the impression often repeated in historical narratives of the density of the foliage.

Photo collecton, MMNHP. (Many of these photographs from 1887 on can also be found in photo albums at the Concord Library.)



20. Hosmer's change of location for this shot of the east end of the Wayside offers further details on the grounds, namely the vines growing up on the face of the east wing, the roses extending out from the barn side, and the undefined step from the sidewalk to the street. Note also the shadowy effect created by the lighting in this photograph.

Photo collection, MMNHP. Photographer, Alfred W. Hosmer, 1889.

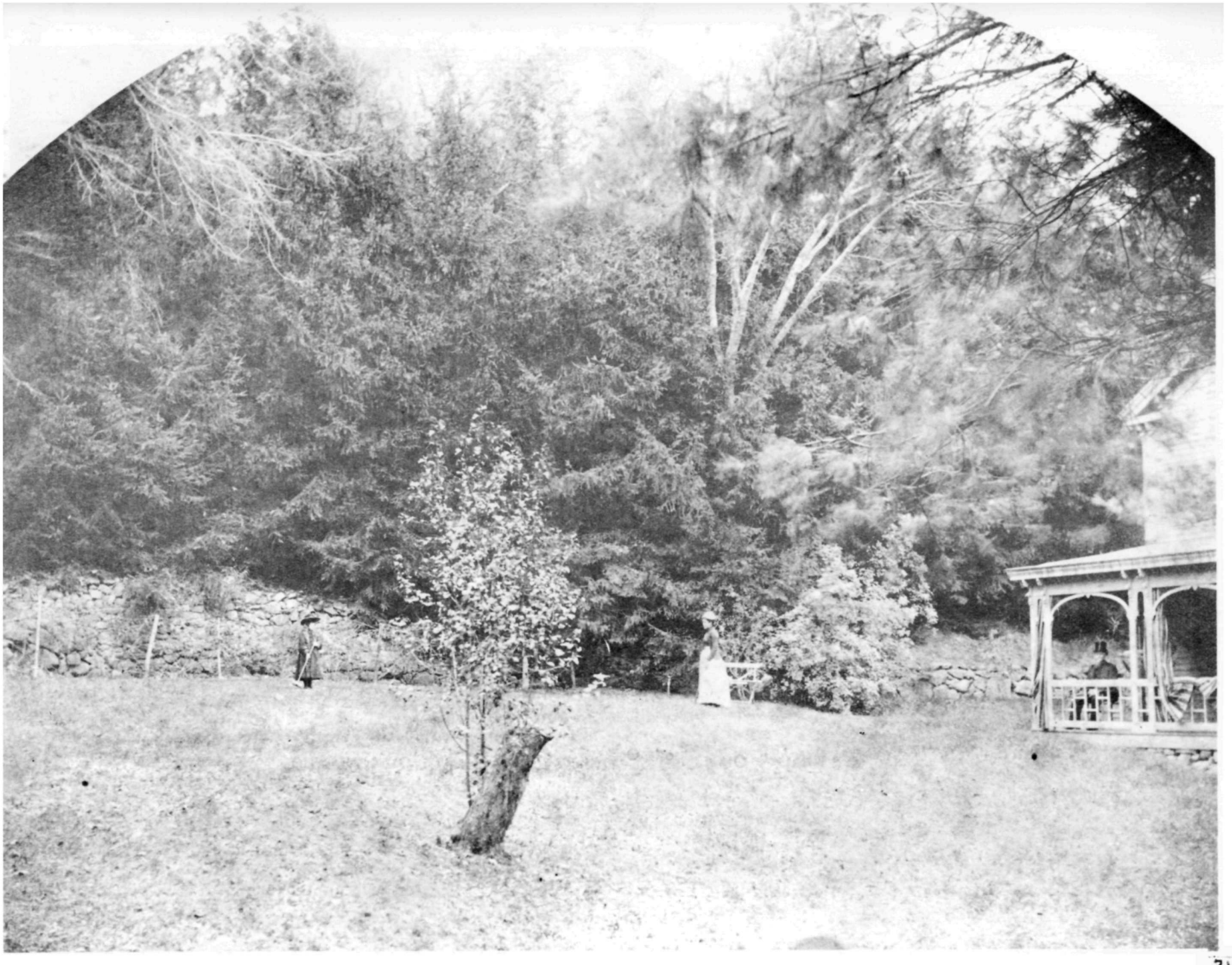


21. As identified by Margaret Lothrop, she and her nurse, Lizette, playing croquet on the lawn, with her father and Uncle James on the piazza. The apple stump (foreground) is from the tree which Louisa May Alcott rode horseback as a child.

The photograph pre-dates 1892, the year Mr. Lothrop died, and probably dates to c. 1890, as Margaret looks about six.

Note the density of the evergreens on the hillside, the clear picture of the Alcott wall with its semi-circular shape where the barn used to be, and the bushes, probably chrysanthemum, at the left of the porch.

Photo collection, MMNHP.



22. The Lothrops' reception for Mrs. John A. Logan in August 1890. Such lawn parties became an anticipated annual event among the notables of Concord.

Note the dark density to the hillside.

Photo collection, MMNHP. Photographer A.W. Hosmer.



23. Wayside from the south, 1892 (date est. by R. Ronsheim), showing the grounds in the peak of bloom with creeping vines, and day lilies (?) in the garden, and the elm shading the walk and street before the house. Note the steps leading up to the hillside between the barn and east wing, and the clothesline.

Photo collection, MMNHP.



24. Wayside from southwest, approx. same date, c. 1892. Rose trellis on barn side is seen clearly, as is path before the house and hedge.

Photo collection, MMNHP.



25. Wayside from southeast, approx. 1892. A more exact idea of the front dooryard--its pathways and its gardens--can be had from this shot. Note also the location and maturity of the pine to the right.

Photo collection, MMNHP.



26. Very much like the illustrations #19 and 20, but three years later, the Wayside from the southeast. Note how far the hedge extends west along the road, and the slight bend in the road and sidewalk, at which point can be seen an old gas street light. Note also the slightly perceptible beginnings of the Larch Path by the tall trunk line just to the right of the elm tree in the photograph.

Photo collection, MMNHP.



27. A winter shot of the Wayside makes it look almost bare of plantings. Probably taken around 1892, as roadside markings--the stepping stone, hitching post, fire hydrant (?)--appear the same. The lawn extends in a narrow patch up the hill, leading to the famous Hawthorne path; the clump of pines by the side of the road to the left of the picture again show the Larch path; the apple stump can still be seen on the lawn, center.

Photo collection, MMNHP.



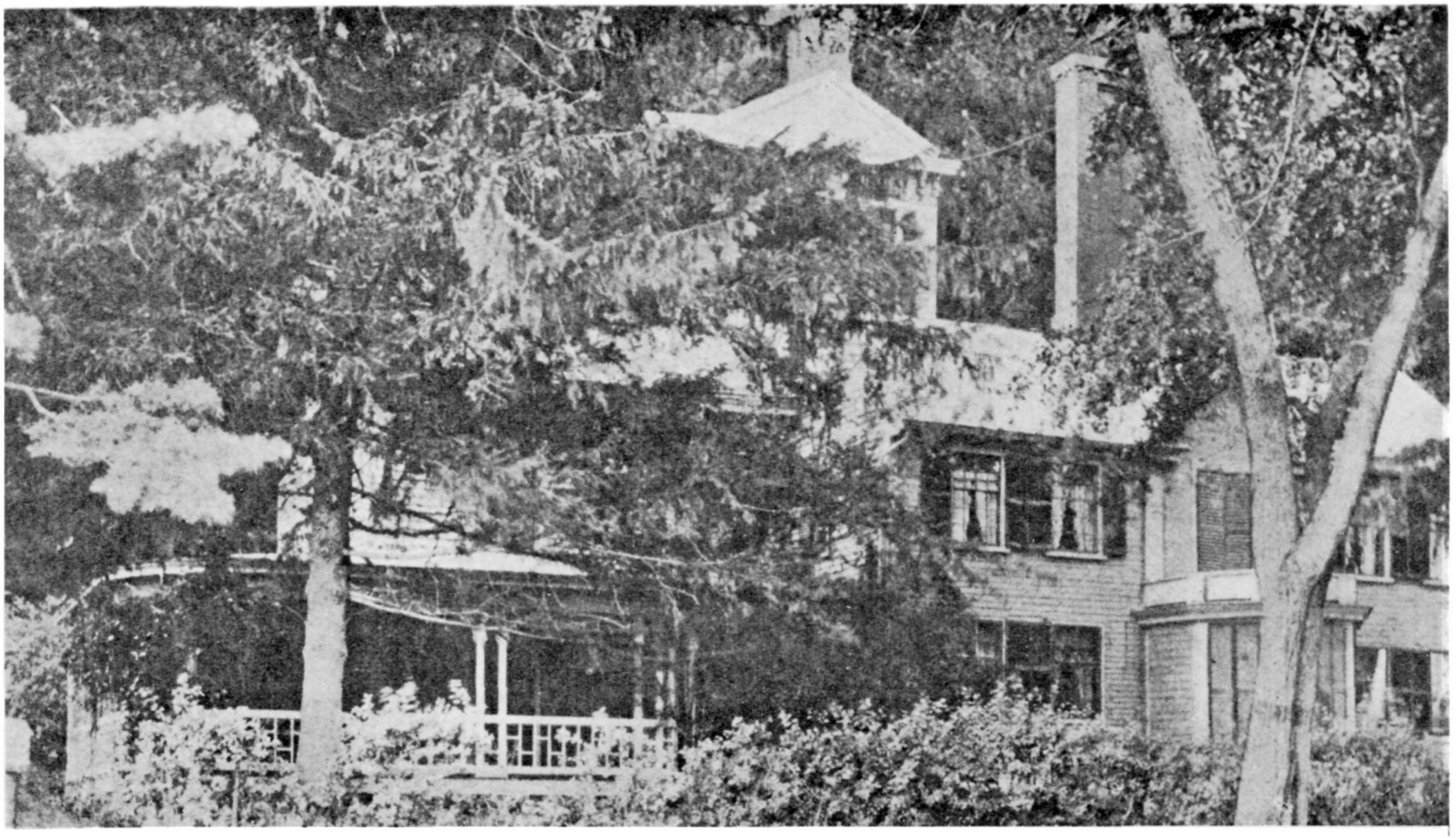
28. The Wayside west end, probably c. 1896. In the years since the porch was added, creepers have grown up along it. The shadowy effect made by the tall pines in the front yard dates this photograph as later in the sequence of Lothrop photographs. The young girls in the picture might be members of the CAR, organized by Mrs. Lothrop.

Photo collection, MMNHP.



29. The Wayside prior to 1906 gives an idea why the period writers described the house as nearly embowered by the growth of forest trees surrounding it.

Photo from Swayne, The Story of Concord (1906), opp. p. 100.

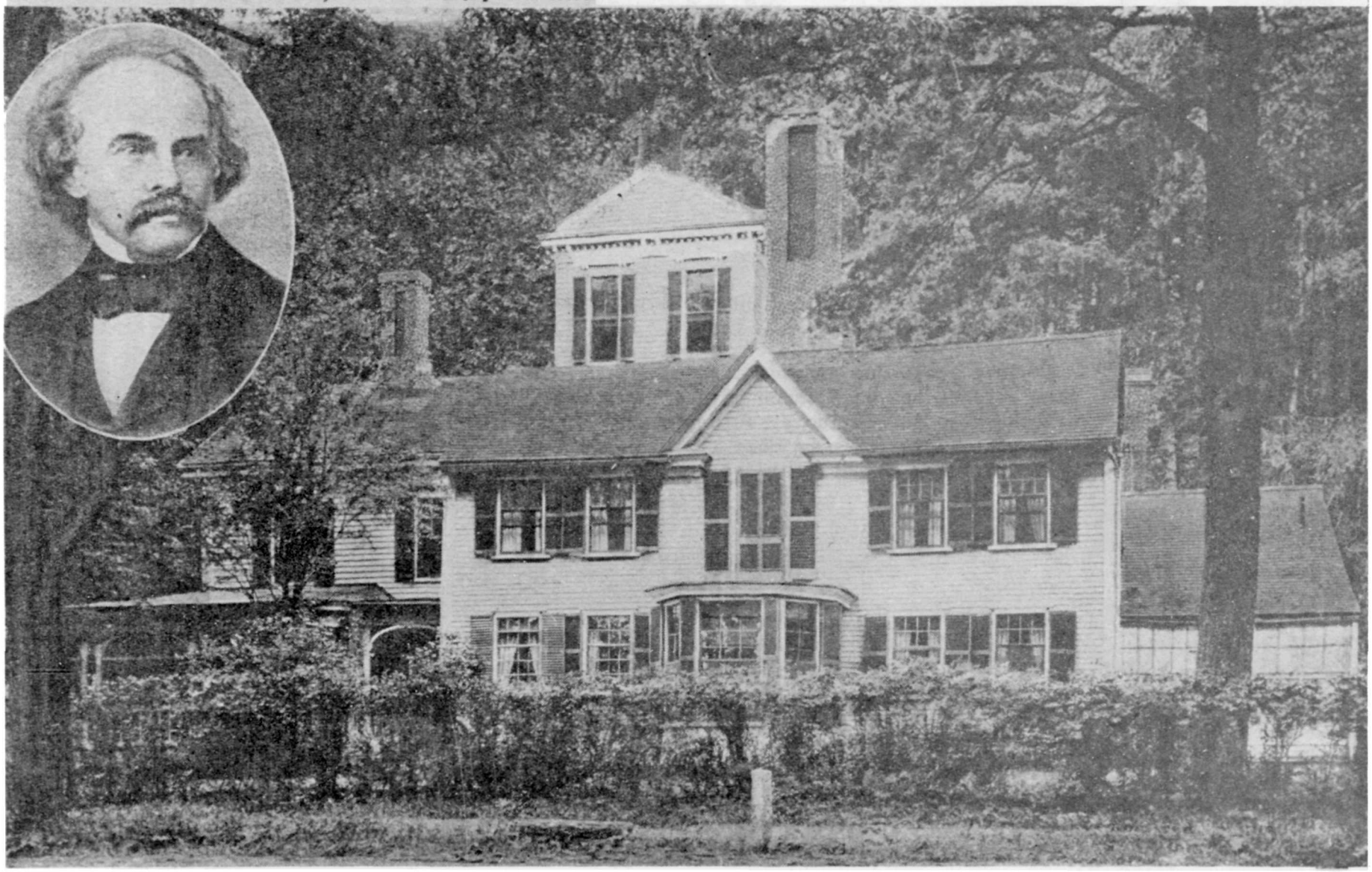


THE WAYSIDE

30. A postcard publicizing the Wayside as Hawthorne's home, after 1902 (east wing enclosed in that year). Note that the hedge has been carried across the central entranceway.

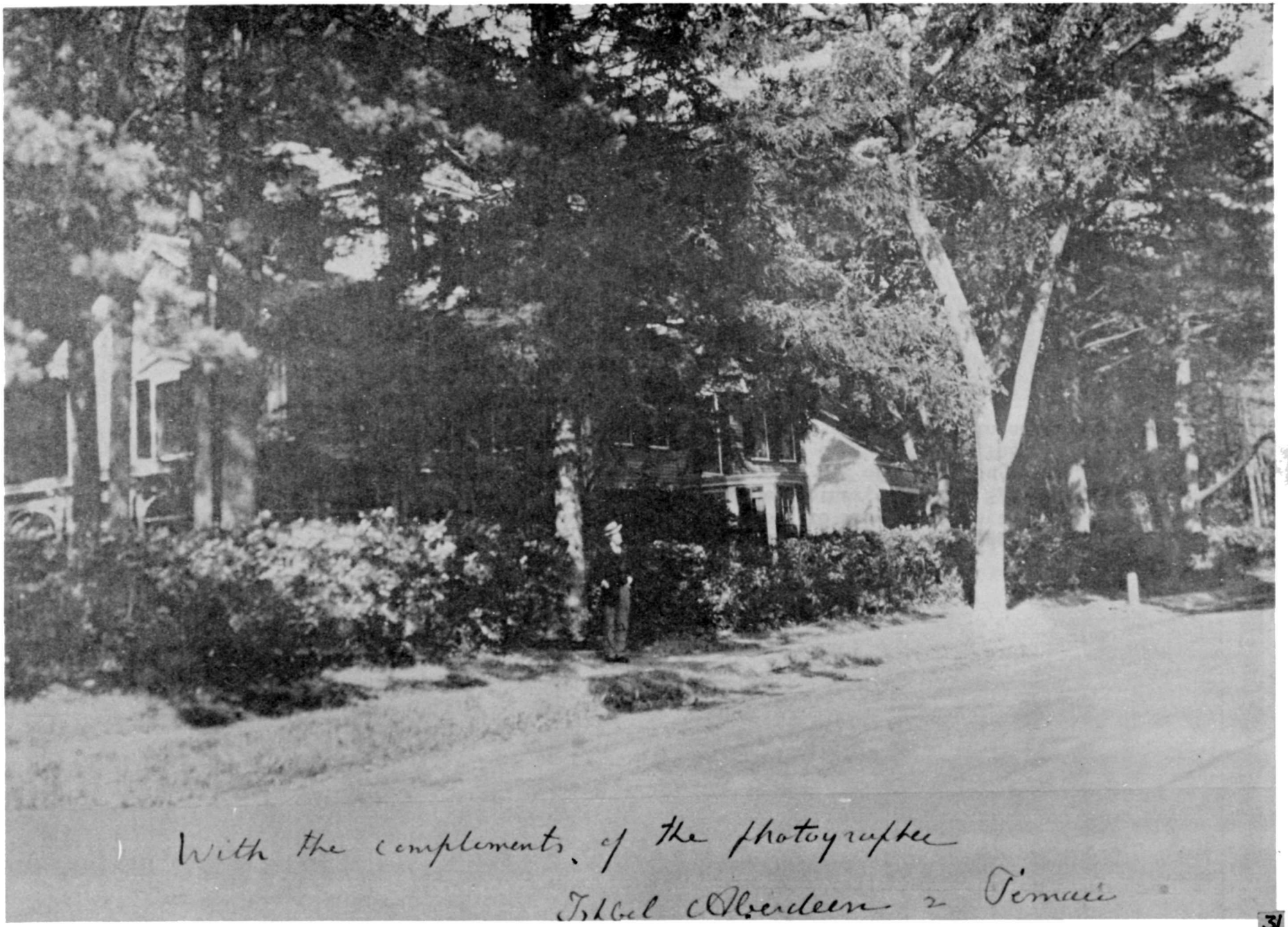
Photo collection, MMNHP.

HAWTHORNE'S HOME, CONCORD, MASS.



31. A good example of Mrs. Lothrop's social connections--a visit from Lord and Lady Aberdeen in 1916. The tall pines fronting and overshadowing the house and the high hedge give the Wayside more privacy and atmosphere than in any other picture available.

Photo collection, MMNHP.



With the compliments of the photographer

Isbel Aberdeen & Jamaica

32. In 1932 Miss Lothrop returned to the Wayside and set this sign out in front to draw tourists to the home of Hawthorne and her mother, Margaret Sydney. The giant pine has had branches cut off near the base leaving an openness to the view of the house. The forest behind the house seems less dense than in earlier photographs.

Photo collection, MMNHP.



33. The hurricane of 1938 left its devastating toll of pine trees in helter-skelter around the Wayside grounds. The 80-foot pine either went over whole, or cracked in half, as the one in the front yard.

Photo collection, MMNHP.



34. The ox team works to haul away the trees damaged along the Larch path. Six larch still stand in the row, showing the regularity of the planting.

Photo collection, MMNHP.



35. The Wayside in 1968, showing little of the historic grounds remaining, other than the barn and elm tree to the right, the hawthorn tree in front of the porch, and possibly one tall pine behind the house. Most of the trees on the hillside make up a second or third growth, but not of evergreen, fruit or locust trees.

Photo collection, MMNHP. Photographer, Orville Carroll.



36. Property sold by Margaret Lothop to the National Park Service in 1965 for the interpretation of the historic Wayside.

Map collection, MMNHP.

MAG. NORTH

MC COUGH

RATHBONE

DONOVAN

ALCOTT ROAD 40' wide County Layout

N22·19·30E 125.14

N76·11·33E 293.59

℄ S.B. FOUND

S 85·02·19E 243.24

℄ S.B. FOUND

S38·58·20E 47.46

℄ S.B. FOUND

20

S83·28·51E

80.11

S55·42·58W

3.27 Acres

MARGARET LOTHROP

D.H. S.B.

R64.51

L113.81

69.50

S78·45·30E

D.H. S.B.

R 666.30

L 143.43

278.86

N88·54·30E

SB

℄ S.B. 0.36' IN STREET

102.00

SB

℄ S.B 0.43' IN STREET

SB 57.27

13.0

S 0° 190.00'

UTILITY & ACCESS R.O.W.

BOLLINGER

LEXINGTON ROAD 50' wide STATE LAYOUT

R716.30

R 81.29

L 111.27

149.32

N06·55W

HAWTHORNE ROAD 40' wide County Layout

N06·55W 131.77

63.51

℄ BACK S.B.

R24.83

L 25.15

℄ BACK S.B.

38.65

N88·54·30E 333.02

133.30

N00·01·13E

14,247 s.f.

MARGARET LOTHROP

GREEN LAW

N82·09E

104.79

D.H. S.B.

D.H. S.B. 0.09' BACK OF ℄

MC DONOUGH

APPROVAL UNDER THE SUBDIVISION CONTROL LAW NOT REQUIRED.

DATE: CONCORD PLANNING BOARD

_____

_____

_____

PLAN OF LAND IN CONCORD MASS.

OWNED BY MARGARET LOTHROP

R.D. NELSON ENGINEER

37 MAIN ST. CONCORD, MASS.

1" = 40' MARCH 31, 1965

MINUTE MAN N. H. E.
P. O. Box 160
CONCORD, MASS. 01742

GPO 916-149