

College Hill in the 80's and 90's Memoirs of a Franklin and Marshall Faculty Daughter

by Mary Belle Stahr Heller

P r e f a c e

My mother dictated these reminiscences at various periods during the last ten years of her life. Since her death in June, 1971 I have gone over them and assembled them into some kind of order, omitting repetitious passages and occasionally inserting explanatory paragraphs or phrases. But for the most part the wording is her own, simple and sparkling in its quiet enjoyment. My mother loved life; she loved to recall her early days; and I have found it a labor of love to recall them with her.

Jane Heller

Chapter I

James Street

A new site for the combined Franklin and Marshall College campus was chosen by the trustees in 1853. It lay along College Avenue from West Lemon Street to the Harrisburg Pike. Buildings were erected and in use by 1856 and 1857. The first building was the central towered structure now called Old Main, containing the chapel and recitation halls. To the left and right arose the Goethean and Diagnothian Literary Society buildings. Three residences, one each for the presidents of the college and the seminary and one for the college janitor, a dormitory for forty students known as Harbaugh Hall, and a building to house the Academy (now East Hall) completed the original campus. The whole was surrounded by a white paling fence. There was a gate at the entrance to the main hall, and one at the residence entrance, and another where the North Museum now stands. These gates were kept closed by a heavy chain

to which was attached an iron ball. This was done to prevent Jake Weh's cattle from getting into the campus. Jake Weh owned some of the adjacent farm land.

By the late 1870's West James Street was being developed into a residential area. The Reading Railroad crossed it along Mulberry Street, and west of that there had been some nice homes built. Mr. Jacob Pontz, who owned a lumber yard, had a lovely house at the corner of Charlotte Street and James Street. On the south side of the street, on one corner, lived the Goodells in a very handsome house. Mr. Joseph Goodell was also in the lumber business and in the coal business with G. Sener & Sons. On the north side, across from Goodells, was the Hambright house, an attractive gray house. Mr. George Hambright had a big black and white Newfoundland dog called Rollo. From Charlotte Street to Mary Street was one continuous block, Lancaster Avenue being then unopened.

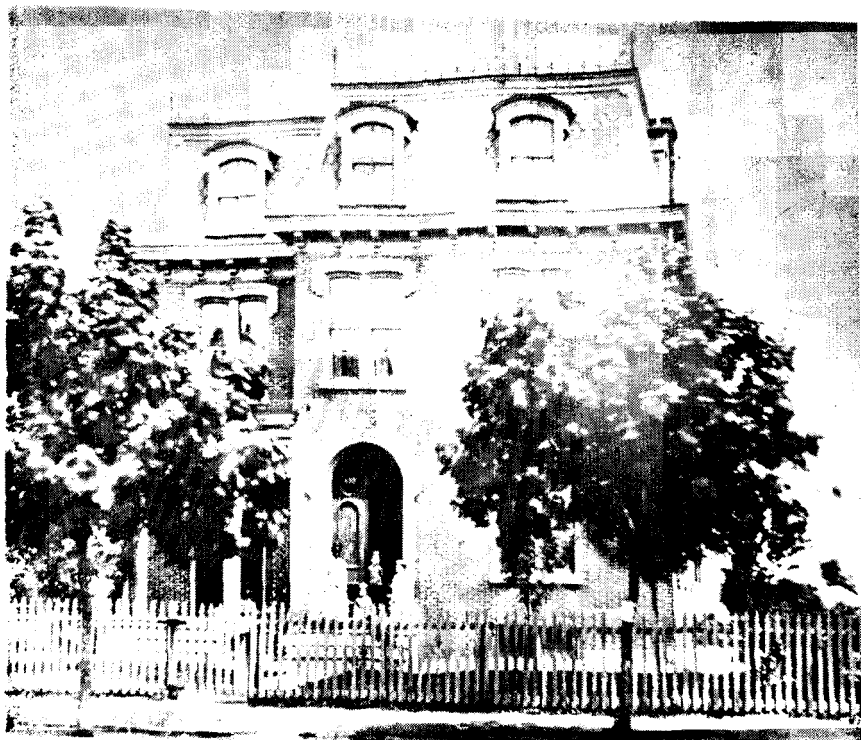
The house in which I was born (437 West James Street, now the Phi Sigma Kappa Fraternity House) was built about 1875 or 1876. My sister Helen and my brother John were not born there, but I think my brother Charlie was. He was born in 1877 and I in 1878, and I *know* I was born there. There is a picture of the house with us four children on the front steps; my youngest brother Hugh was a baby at the time that picture was taken, and he is not in it.

My father, John S. Stahr, was professor of natural science at the college. He built the house. He borrowed the money from his brother, and I can remember my mother fussing about the mortgage. It must have been paid eventually. The house was large, with big rooms and a yard. It was a good house.

We had a big yard. My father loved trees (he taught botany at one time), and he liked to garden. In our front yard were two maple trees, a mountain ash and some bushes. There were three Norway maple trees at the curb. In the back yard was, first, a lawn, and further back a garden. Father had five different kinds of cherry trees, three different kinds of pear trees, a quince, and some peach trees which never did well. I remember his digging out "borers", and afterwards cutting down the trees. He also had grape vines on trellises, which did well. The grapes were delicious. Along the one side of the vegetable garden were raspberry bushes of different kinds, which were also delicious. At the back of the yard were rhubarb plants and blackberry bushes. We had all sorts of vegetables, corn, potatoes, peas, beans, et cetera. Also we had chickens,—a little chicken house in a wire fence enclosure. Of course, we had an outdoor toilet; everyone did in those days.

Back of the chicken house I had a little play-house built by my brothers out of old lumber. There I played dolls with my friends. We had a little oven made of bricks where we could cook.

We had a croquet set in our back yard between the house and the garden where we had many happy afternoons. My father liked



Residence of Dr. John Stahr, 437 West James Street, about 1881

to play games, and our neighborhood friends would come to play with us.

At that time there was a vacant lot on the east side of our house where we could play. In winter water would collect there and freeze, and we had great fun skating or sliding on the ice.

Next to our house on the west side lived Miss Sarah and Miss Catherine Wolff and their niece, Miss Mary Gormley. They had a very good two-and-a-half-story brick house and a big yard. Next to them, at the corner of Mary Street, were the Killeffers in a rather small brick house but a big yard and a garden which extended back of Miss Wolff's house and back of our yard to what is now Lancaster Avenue. Mr. Killeffer made hand-made cigars and he raised delicious corn. He had a daughter named Alice.

Across the street from us, where the Lestz wholesale store now stands, was the James Street School, where we all went to school.

Next to the school lived Miss Sally Kahl and her father. Old Mr. Kahl owned a brickyard that extended westward all the way from

Next to the Kahls lived Mr. Grabill Long, who was one of the owners of Long & Davidson, the shoe people. He had two sons, Charles and Edwin, with whom we played.

Next to the Longs lived Professor William Marvel Nevin. Professor Nevin was professor of English literature at the college. He was quite old and lame and, I think, retired. He had two daughters, Miss Minnie and Miss Nan, and a son, Mr. Alvin. Mr. Alvin was interested in the Lancaster & Oxford Railroad, which is now extinct.

On the other side of Mary Street were two houses, in one of which Mr. Gideon Kahl lived with his family,—Nellie, Irene, Edith, Bessie and Clara! I knew them all and played with them.

On our side of James Street, beyond Mary Street, came first the Evans property. Mr. John Evans was a Welshman and an architect and builder. He built one of the buildings of the Methodist Church, at the corner of Duke and Walnut Streets, which was destroyed by fire. He also built the Theological Seminary and the old County Home.

The Evans property was quite large. From Mary Street came first a big corn field, then the Evans yard and house. Then it extended back of Dr. Theodore Appel's property;—that is, all the way from Mary Street to what is now Pine Street along what is now Frederick Street. Mr. Evans grew corn, potatoes, and all sorts of vegetables. There were two immense cherry trees and many apple trees.

The house was a very interesting old house. It was frame, with bay windows and large rooms. It had a lovely big porch where we used to sit on summer evenings. It was torn down, probably during the years when I was in college. I know it was there in 1897.

In the Evans's "out-kitchen" there was an old-fashioned brick oven in which Mrs. Evans baked bread. There was a hearth in which they would burn logs of wood. The oven extended above and back of the wood fire. The raised dough was placed on wooden shovels or paddles with long handles, which would put the loaves of bread into the oven and get them out.

Maud and Jennie Evans were my friends all through girlhood. They were grand-daughters of Mr. John Evans. Their mother had died and their father remarried and moved out West, so Maud and Jennie lived with Mr. and Mrs. Evans. There were also Miss Mary Evans, who married Mr. Stehman; Miss Sallie, who married Mr. Shindel; Miss Ermie, who died; and Clifton, a son who was also an architect.

Dr. Theodore Appel, the professor of astronomy, lived next to the Evanses in a brick house which was a double house. I don't remember the people who lived in the far side of that house, excepting that their name was English. Dr. Appel's house had a two-story wooden addition. The lower part was Dr. Appel's study, and the

room above it was the Appel's sewing room. The family consisted of Dr. and Mrs. Appel; Miss Charlotte, who became one of the presidents of the Iris Club; Miss Bessie, who married (I think) Dr. Theodore Nevin of Pittsburgh; and Theodore, whom we called Thee and who became a doctor. Thee had a little terrier called Tippy. They were a very pleasant and much beloved family.

In one corner of the Appel yard was a pump, a large wooden pump. The water was very good. I don't know if it was a spring, but it probably was. All the passers-by stopped to drink at the pump. The street cars would stop there, and the conductors would go over to the pump to get a drink of that good water.

Beyond the Appel property was an open field belonging, I think, to Jake Griel. That field usually had wheat growing in it, sometimes corn.

All along James Street from the Appel property to College Avenue there was a row of poplar trees which my father did not like. He said they were "dirty" trees. But the leaves of those trees became gaily colored in the fall, and we would gather them and press them in our books. In winter, we used to pull our sled up to College Avenue and, when the students were dismissed, we would get them to pull us down over the three blocks,—which was great fun!

Some years later, after Lancaster Avenue was opened, a double house was built on the vacant lot beside our house. The side next to us was occupied by Professor Mull, who taught Latin and whose daughters, Lucy and Katharine, were my intimate friends. The other side was owned by Mrs. Belle Fisher, who had two children, Willie and Rachel.

Across James Street, between Lancaster Avenue and the Goodell house, there were three white brick houses built about that time. The Hostettters lived in one, the Basslers in the second, and the Jenkses on the corner. Mrs. Bassler had a boarding house for students, who called themselves "the Jolly Bummers". It was a very popular house. May Jenks, in the corner house, was another of my particular friends.

The Lutz family lived on the south side of James Street between Charlotte and Mulberry in a small frame house. They had a large family of children, ten or more. Mrs. Hannah Lutz worked for my mother for many years,—cleaned, washed and ironed. She told me once that when I was a baby she would iron the clothes with one foot on the rocker of my cradle to keep me quiet. I was a sickly baby for a long time, and cried a great deal.

Chapter II

Childhood Plays and Games

We had a nice crowd of young people in the neighborhood and we had nice parties.

My sister Helen was five years older than I, and I did not play with her much. However, I played a good deal with John and Charlie and Hugh. Charlie loved dogs, and always had one. Our backyard was full of dogs' graves.

May Jenks had lots of dolls, and she had a playroom which was all hers. We had many good times there. I had two dolls that I loved dearly. One was a beautiful colored doll. The other one had hair made with lambs' wool. Helen named her "Juanita" after the song. I had other prettier dolls later on, but I loved those two the best.

One time, when I was playing with May, Mr. Jenks came home to lunch, and I said to him, "Hello, Jenks." He was very angry. I heard him say to his wife that he had as much right to be called *Mr. Jenks* as my father had to be called *Mr. Stahr*. I was only a child and didn't understand why he was upset, but I never did that again.

May had lived in Philadelphia, and used to brag about the superiorities of Wanamaker's Store.

Lucy and Katharine Mull and I were friends from little on up. At one time Professor Mull was the principal of the Academy, and he and his family lived in that building. On Friday evenings when our parents would be going to Clio, I would be invited to spend the night with Lucy and Katharine. Lucy was about my age. Katharine was much younger, perhaps three or four years old. One night we children got out all Mrs. Mull's clean handkerchiefs and rolled them into little dolls. We marked the features,—nose, mouth, etc.,—with blue crayon. Mrs. Mull was not pleased when she found all her handkerchiefs mused up!

As for Maud and Jennie Evans, I remember how we used to play with paper dolls. The Evanses had a large sitting room which they always called "the room". It occupied one whole side of the house, with lots of windows and a big bay window where Mrs. Evans kept her flowers. Miss Sallie was a dressmaker, and had her machine and sewing things in one corner. In another corner was a big desk where Mr. Evans kept his papers. In the center of the room was a large table, and here in the evening Mr. Evans would sit and smoke his pipe and read the paper, and Mrs. Evans would sew. And on that same table sometimes Maud and Jennie and I would set up our paper doll school. Miss Sallie subscribed to "The Delineator Magazine," and she would give the old issues to us, from which we cut our paper dolls. We would make chairs out of cardboard, and we would set up a schoolroom of girls— always *girls* from the fashion

books! I went to the Evanses many, many evenings to play there. One evening, when we had our school all beautifully set up, Mr. Evans just for fun blew a whiff of tobacco smoke upon the school, and the pupils flew in all directions!

Josephine Kieffer, the daughter of the Greek professor, was exactly the age of my brother Hugh, and she used to play with us at times. The college students, who were always ready with their wit, nicknamed Josephine "Iota Subscript." Her father was "Zeus" (the king of the Greek gods), and her mother, who was a tall, fine-looking woman, was "Juno." "Iota Subscript" was the smallest letter of the Greek alphabet.

Mrs. Kieffer was quite a singer, and she had a little choir of us children whom she taught to sing Christmas carols. We would go out with her early Christmas morning in the dark and go around to the professors' houses and sing carols. It was she who taught us "Wonderful Night," from an old Mercersburg song-book.

Mrs. Kieffer's mother, old Mrs. Troop, had a little sewing class for us girls, and she really taught me to sew. We would meet at the Kieffers' house on Saturday afternoons, Lucy and Katharine Mull, May Jenks, Josephine and I. Later on, Mrs. Mull used to invite me over to sit with Lucy and Katharine while we sewed and she read to us, "Tanglewood Tales," and other stories.

We children were sometimes sent to read to people who were invalids. Lucy and Katharine often went to read to Mrs. Frederick Gast on Sunday afternoons. I did not do that, but one time I was sent to read to Mrs. E. V. Gerhart, who had broken her arm. I think I read from "The Outlook." Anyway, I came across the word *facsimile*, which I pronounced like the two words, "face-smile." Mrs. Gerhart and my mother had a good laugh over that.

I used to go walking with my father when he went to call on Dr. John Williamson Nevin, who had been president of Marshall College from 1841 to 1853, and again president of Franklin and Marshall College from 1865 to 1876. The Nevins lived at that time in a very stately home on Columbia Avenue just outside the city of Lancaster. It was a tall white house and had a fountain in the yard. It was a pleasant walk, not too long, and I followed my father as I pleased, close to him or loitering to look at the flowerbeds as I went by. Some neighbor of Dr. Nevin's had two swans which I loved to watch and admire.

We had lots of birthday parties, but the ones I remember best were Reba Kremer's. Professor William Marvel Nevin, who lived across from us on James Street, had another daughter, Martha, who was married to Mr. Brainard Kremer of Carlisle. They had three children, Mary, Brainard and Reba. Reba Kremer had the same birthday as her grandfather, Professor Nevin. They always came to Lancaster to celebrate. We children would be invited. We played

"Musical Chairs" and "Going to Jerusalem." We had paper caps, which were lots of fun, and then we had a wonderful supper. At one of those parties I had a pretty new red dress, over which I wore a white pinafore. At the supper table old Professor Nevin sat on an easy chair just behind me. Just as I was about to take up the orange on my plate, he put out his hand and took it away. I was embarrassed, and tried to be polite. "You may have it," I said. But he laughed and said, "I was just teasing you, Mary Belle."

Charlie Long would be at those parties. (The Grabill Longs lived next door to the Nevins.) At one party Charlie created an instant of consternation by announcing to Miss Minnie Nevin, "Miss Minnie, I could sit on your bustle."

Bernie Kremer was a big boy and full of fun. It was he who made up the famous rhyme about the college faculty:

"Fire, fire," sang the college choir;
"Where? where?" said Mrs. Stahr;
"In the chapel," said Mrs. Apple;
"I don't believe her," said Mrs. Kieffer;
"Bring out the tubs," said Mrs. Dubbs;
"They're all full," said Mrs. Mull;
"Pray to Heaven," said Mrs. Nevin;
"The danger's past," said Mrs. Gast.

I don't remember much about Christmases when I was a child, excepting that we did always have a tree — usually in the dining room. We did not have many ornaments. We used to gather jimson pods and color them red and gold and silver and sprinkle them with some sparkling powder. We had some paper angels, and always candles. I don't think we ever had much of a yard beneath the tree, probably just cotton for snow and a few figures. There was one year when my brother Hugh and I had a fire. That year we had the tree in the upstairs sitting room. Father and Helen had gone to church (early service at Dr. Titzel's First Reformed Church). Hugh and I lit the candles, and I upset one. We had cotton batting on the floor for snow and it caught fire. Fortunately, Sophie, our maid, was coming upstairs with a bucket of water for the bedroom washstands. She used it immediately!

We never used to hang up stockings, nor did we believe in Santa Claus. Once, though, Hugh and I wrote notes to Santa Claus which we dropped into the dining-room register. We had no chimney.

My father was very stern and a strict disciplinarian. I remember one time I was playing in the yard with a little girl who was barefoot. I asked her why she was barefoot, and she said she had no shoes. So I went into the house and gave her a pair of my shoes. When my father found this out he was very angry, and made me go get them from her again.

Like other children, I was occasionally naughty and rebellious. One of my sins was to get a book and climb into a cherry tree and

read when I should have been doing the dishes. I loved to read,—especially novels which my father and mother forbade.

Sometimes, when everything at home seemed too much to be borne, I would slip away and go and visit Aunt Belle and Aunt Mary. These two ladies were sisters of my mother, and they lived at 116 East Chestnut Street. Aunt Mary was a widow and had inherited a little money, but Aunt Belle had next to nothing. They lived very simply, but they were kind and understanding and never asked questions. I would sit quietly with them, or read to myself, eat with them their simple supper of bread and milk and stewed apricots, and then go home refreshed.

The Reading Railroad crossed James Street at the corner of Mulberry, and under a bridge the Pennsylvania Railroad ran. On the other side of the railroad bridge was a vacant lot on which at times some Indians would come and camp. We all used to love to go down in the evenings to see them dance. They wore real Indian clothes.

At the next corner beyond there was a pottery, the Gast pottery. I used to go there sometimes and watch the men make crocks. They had a wheel which they worked with their feet with pedals. They would put a blob of wet clay in the middle of the wheel, then start to turn it, putting their fists in the middle of the clay. The wheel would go round and round, and the clay rise higher and higher. Their fists would keep it hollow, and it would rise up until it was the right height. Then they would stop the wheel and take it off to be baked in the kiln. I spent many hours watching at the pottery.

When I was about seven years old I had a very severe attack of scarlet fever. I was very sick for a good many weeks. That was a sad year for my father and mother. While I was sick, Helen and John and Charlie stayed with Aunt Mary. John got very homesick, and they let him come home. He caught the fever and died. That is the most that I remember of the tragedies of my childhood. Ordinarily I think I was very happy.

Chapter III

School, Sunday School and Church

At the corner of what is now Lancaster Avenue was the James Street School. This is where my sister and brothers had their lower grades and I had all my education. The principal of that school was Miss Emma Louisa Downey.

My first teacher was Miss Mary Sener. She was a sweet and lovely woman. She was being courted by Dr. Carl Netscher. We children were thrilled when he would drive up in a horse and buggy after school to take her driving.

My second teacher was Miss Anna Carter. She was pleasant and a good teacher, but did not speak very good grammar. One time a boy named Ralph Green dropped his slate on the floor, and she yelled at him, "Leave that lay." I had her later in grammar grades. One day she brought an ox's eye to school and cut it open to show us the crystalline lens, the aqueous humor, and the vitreous humor—a good lesson in physiology.

I had Miss Downey for the Fifth and Sixth Grades. I liked all my teachers except Miss Downey, and I hated her. She was tall and thin and had such piercing eyes, and I remember the type of dress she wore:—tight skirts in front and very voluminous in the back with frills and puffs. One day in school she had a tussle with a boy named Peter Rittenhouse. She was going to use the rattan on him, and he seized it and hit her with it, and tore down her hair. That was excitement!

There was a boy in that school who was very fond of me and I of him, Thomas Franklin. He used to bring me picture cards. One day I had been naughty, and Miss Downey kept me in after school. I had been invited to go to a wedding after school; Miss Minnie Apple was being married to Mr. Lloyd Coblentz. I cried because of being kept in. Tom spoke to Miss Downey, and she let me go. He was a very nice boy, the son of Mr. George Franklin, who lived in a big house on the corner of Chestnut and Charlotte Streets, where the Stevens School now stands. He afterwards went to Yale, and was killed while playing football.

Mr. John B. Kevinski was the music teacher for all the public schools at that time. He would go about from school to school with his violin and play for us to sing. The songs we sang were nearly all from Mr. McCaskey's song collection. I suspect Mr. Kevinski may have helped him to make it. Mr. Kevinski was a Pole, a gentle old man and very kind. He used to tease me at school. We sang at Christmas time a song called "The Merry Bells," and he would laugh and say, "Now we will sing Mary Belle's song!"

He was quite a botanist, and Kevinski Glen in York County is named for him. He used to call on Miss Sallie Kahl, who lived across the street from us. He would play on his violin and she would sing. She had a sweet voice. We used to think they would get married, but they never did.

When I went to Girls' High School, Mr. Carl Matz taught us music. He also taught German. He was a German and spoke with quite an accent, and he was a good teacher. He would come to the High School twice a week and play on the piano for us to sing. He was the organist at Trinity Lutheran Church, and one time he had the entire High School, boys and girls, sing the "Hallelujah Chorus" in the church. He had us practice many times. Louis Higbee was in High School then; he had a beautiful voice. Mr. Matz would often say, "Tch, tch! That Louie Higbee, he can sing." Once he said,

after rehearsing some song with us, "Girls, you did ssing that like anchelsss!" When World War I broke out many years later, he was distressed because of his German nationality and he committed suicide.

Miss Sarah Bundell was the principal of Girls' High School. She wore her hair plastered close to her head, parted in the middle. She always made out our reports, and such grades as I used to get! I don't know how she did it, but my grades would be 98 and 99/100, or 99 and 98/100. My father thought it was "ridiculous."



High School classmates, about 1892. (Left to right, Mary Bell Stahr, Kate Dimmock, Gertrude Scofield, Emma Burrowes, Salome Rhoads)

We went to St. Luke's Sunday School. So did the Mulls and May Jenks. We would walk up James to College Avenue, then along the path beside the college fence to where Chestnut Street is now. At that time none of the streets were paved. James Street was a mass of mud and clay in winter and a cloud of dust in summer. So was College Avenue. There were no houses there then, but fields, across which we would go to Marietta Avenue to the St. Luke's Church. Some fields belonged to Jake Weh, I think, and some to Jake Griel. There was quite a large pond in one corner, called Griel's Pond, which made a wonderful place for skating in the winter.

The primary class in Sunday School was taught by a Miss McCuley. The organist was Mr. McComsey, who was blind in one eye. The minister was Rev. William Lichliter, a gentle man, a bachelor. He wore a beard very much like the one in the pictures of Jesus. We girls thought he liked to make himself look like Jesus.

We always had very happy festivals at Christmas. There was a tree with candles which were always lighted while we sang carols. One of the Hammond boys (there were several Hammond boys in

(Sunday School) would stand beside the tree watching lest it catch fire. Sometimes a twig would catch fire, and the smell of the burning cedar was so fragrant and gave us a thrill! There was never any accident that I remember. At that festival various groups of children would recite verses, and at the end each child was given a bag of candy. The bags were made of tarleton (perhaps by the ladies of the church) and filled with candy. We didn't care much for the candy—it always tasted of rose water.

At that time there were two memorial windows in the front of the church for two Sayre children. I think they were grandchildren of Dr. John Williamson Nevin.

One of the great pleasures of my girlhood was the King's Daughters' Pansy Circle. It was organized by Miss Mary Hager, daughter of Mr. Charles Hager, who lived on Chestnut Street. She organized this circle and called it The Pansy Circle because pansies are for thoughts. The girls of the neighborhood who belonged to it were: Eva Foster, Caroline Herr, Miriam Herr, May Jenks, Josephine Kieffer, Katharine Mull, Lucy Mull, Salome Rhoads, Miriam Sener and myself.

We met every other Saturday afternoon and sewed underwear for "the poor" from unbleached muslin. My sewing was not very fine and neat, and the muslin was stiff, and Miss Hager once said to me, "Mary Belle, aren't you afraid they'll catch their toes in your stitches?" When the Lancaster General Hospital was first formed, we made sheets and we furnished one bedroom. The bowl and pitcher on the washstand were decorated with pansies.

We always met at Miss Hager's home, and there were no refreshments. At the opening of each meeting each of us was obliged to recite from memory a verse of scripture. One day Katharine Mull forgot to memorize a verse, so when it came her turn she repeated the shortest one she could think of, "Jesus wept."

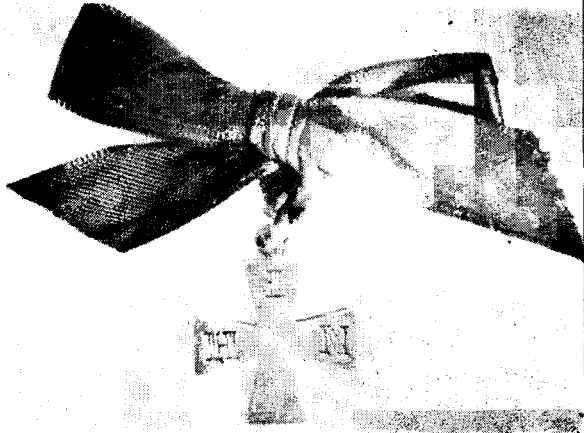
We went to St. Luke's Sunday School, but we went to church in the college chapel, where there was a regularly organized congregation. This was St. Stephen's Reformed Church, of which Dr. E. V. Gerhart was the pastor. Hugh and I were confirmed there by him.

At first there was just a small reed organ, and the college students made the choir. At one time Miss Alice Nevin played the organ and directed the choir.

The chapel then was much as it is now, very bare. The windows were painted with some white stuff which was worn off in spots so we could see the trees here and there. Dr. John Williamson Nevin's memorial window was put in later (about 1895). The wooden pews were bare and varnished with some kind of poor varnish which stuck to our backs in summer, so that we put handkerchiefs on the backs of the pews to protect our dresses.

The chapel was heated by two furnaces below the ground floor, with flues into the chapel. It was usually cold in winter. In one of the old Oriflammes there is a cartoon of the chapel, and below it is this inscription: "Many are cold, but few are frozen."

I have many memories of that old college chapel. It was a bare, bleak place with its plain glass windows. Later there were memorial windows put in by the two Literary Societies. I remember the Greek texts. On the Goethean was the Greek inscription "Let there be Light", and on the Diagnothian was the Greek inscription "Virtue crowns those honoring her."



Young ladies in spring finery in the backyard of 437 West James St. (Left to right, front row: Mary Bell Stahr, Peg; (Seated at left: Kit Clippinger; Back row: McGuffin, Agnes Cort Dutrow, Miss Harner [later Mrs. Appel], Helen Stahr) Right picture: Badge of the King's Daughters Pansy Circle.

At the Sunday services the front pews were occupied by the faculty families and the students sat in the rear. I remember Dr. John Williamson Nevin's family, but faintly. I do remember that Dr. Nevin usually sat on a captain's chair in the right-hand corner of the chapel facing the congregation. He was quite old, and wore a long black cloak. After he died that chair was draped in black, and later there stood an easel where the chair had been on which was a large portrait of him. I think it was a steel engraving. Old Mrs. Nevin used to wear a black velvet hood to church, and afterwards when someone gave me a similar hood I wouldn't wear it because I thought it would make me look like her.

The services were conducted by the faculty, all of whom were ministers excepting Dr. Kershner. Each professor had his peculiarities. Dr. Gerhart preached long and profound sermons. He used to put on a round black skull cap to keep his head warm. Dr. Gast had false teeth, and when he preached they whistled all about the chapel. Professor Mull used very long words, and always wrote out his sermons. One Sunday he dropped some of his pages to the floor. He calmly picked them up, sorted them into order, and then went on with the sermon. Dr. Theodore Appel wore a black wig, and the boys called him "Baldy Appel." My father used to wear two pairs of eyeglasses attached to cords fastened to a little hook in the lapel of his coat,—one for close-up and one for distance. One Sunday the cords got tangled and he had to stop. He just worked at untangling them, finally got the right pair on his nose, and went back to his sermon. He always made notes for his sermons, but never wrote them out word for word.

One Sunday when my father was preaching there was disorder in the back of the chapel. My father interrupted the sermon and said, "Will those young gentlemen in the rear of the chapel stop talking and laughing." They evidently did not, and my father then said, "Will Mr. J———— please leave the chapel." I burned with shame for the poor student thus publicly censured and hated my father for it, but Mr. J———— didn't care.

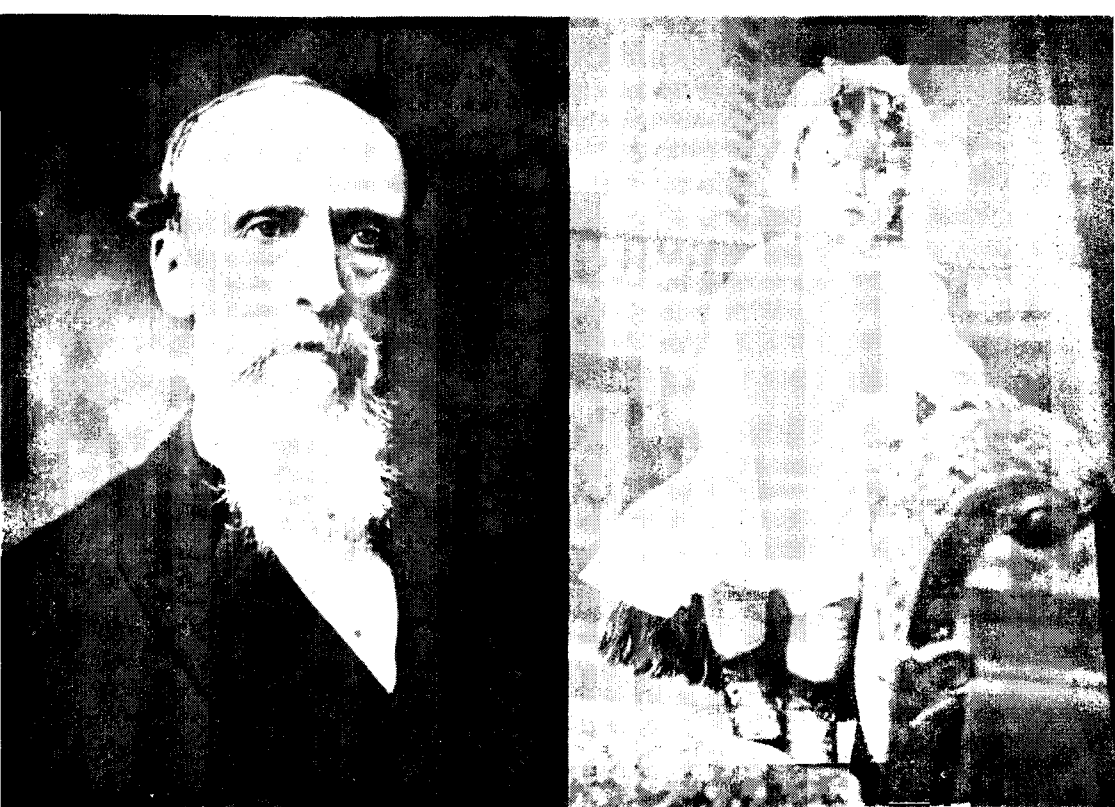
The service which we used was the old Reformed service. The prayers were long, and we stood for prayer. One time my sister Helen fainted during prayer and broke her nose.

About 1895 the William Marvel Nevin family contributed a pipe organ in memory of him. It had an air pump concealed somewhere inside which had to be pumped by a student who got to it through a little door. One Sunday, when the organist was ready to start up a hymn, the organ didn't work;—the young man inside had fallen asleep!

Chapter IV

College Occasions

My father was president of the college from 1890 to 1909. Those were the years in which we grew to be young ladies, and of course we were interested in the young gentlemen at the college. My sister Helen went to Wellesley College, and I passed my entrance examinations there too. At that time, however, the Reformed Church was developing the Women's College of Frederick (now Hood College) as a sort of sister institution to Franklin and Marshall, and my father decided to send me there. It was little more than a ladies' seminary then, and we girls were always chaperoned by a teacher even when we walked in the town of Frederick. But it had one advantage



(Left) Dr. John Stahr (Right) The author Mary Bell Stahr about 1882

over Wellesley; it was within visiting distance of Franklin and Marshall for football games. Football was very popular then, and the growing interest in it prompted the building of the Gymnasium in 1891 (now the Campus House).

While I was still in high school I remember we would have interesting guests come to the house. Dr. Thomas C. Porter was one of our oldest and dearest friends. He was a botanist. I don't know whether he ever taught at Franklin and Marshall, but he and my father were close friends. He was a trustee of Franklin and Marshall, and he taught at Lafayette.

He would come every year to Commencement and stay at our house. One morning when he came down to breakfast he saw a bowl of lilies of the valley which my mother had put on the table. I remember his delight as he smiled and greeted them as friends, "Dear little lilies of the valley." He liked to smoke a cigar after breakfast, but he knew my father didn't like tobacco smoke so he would go out on the front porch and walk up and down smoking his cigar.

I think it was Dr. Porter and my father who planted the bronze beech trees on the campus. I could be wrong about the planting, but I do know that my father and he often went to see how they were growing. Sometimes I would go with them. They were grafted trees, and an experiment. At that time they stood at what was the limit of the campus, just inside the white-washed paling fence.

Another of our guests was Dr. Philip Schaff, who I think had taught at the college but afterwards was at the Union Theological Seminary in New York. My memory of him is that one day Dr. Theodore Appel brought him to see my father, and as they were leaving I was in the yard. Dr. Appel called me and said, "Mary Belle, you shake hands with Dr. Schaff; then you can always remember that you have shaken hands with a great man."

Woodrow Wilson was a guest at our house one time when he came to make the Commencement address. We had a party for the seniors at which he was present, and for amusement we had the guests compose limericks. Mr. Wilson said this one, and I always thought it was original with him:

"For beauty I am not a star,
There are others more handsome by far;
My face, I don't mind it
Because I'm behind it;
It's the ones out in front that I jar."

Mother had guests too. One time Mrs. Richard Schiedt, wife of the professor of German, came to see her. She was then a young bride, had been a teacher, and was inexperienced in housekeeping. She cooked the meals on a coal stove which she had difficulty keeping going. Mother commiserated with her, and she looked up with determination and said, "I will *not* be beaten by a kitchen stove." Mother sent me once or twice to help her, but I don't remember that I helped her much.

The Schiedts had three little children then, and my mother told an amusing story about a time when she and my father were invited there for dinner. While Dr. Schiedt was serving the chicken, the kitchen door opened a crack and a little voice piped up, "Save me a leg." Then another voice called, "Save *me* a leg." And yet a third voice pleaded, "Save me one, too!"

Miss Blanche Nevin, daughter of Dr. John Williamson Nevin, was a very remarkable woman. She was quite an artist, both a sculptor and a painter. She created the fountain which stands at the corner of West King and Marietta Avenues, inscribed, "Ho, everyone that thirsteth." She also did the fountain which is on the Reservoir Park grounds on East King Street, the well-known spouting lion.

One summer she wished to paint a portrait of my father, and father would put on his doctor's gown and go up to the college chapel and *stand* beside the brass lectern which was a memorial gift of the

Nevin family. Poor father! He would stand for hours on a hot day and would get very tired. Miss Blanche got tired too! The portrait was ghastly, and she never finished it.

Miss Blanche was a very affectionate woman and was fond of my father and my mother. She was a delightful person, with lots of fun in her. Miss Alice Nevin was more dignified and sober.

Miss Eliza Smith was the sister of the Hon. A. Herr Smith, the U. S. Congressman. She used to call on my mother, and I used to go to call on her sometimes with Aunt Belle.

Aunt Belle would sometimes take a cottage for the summer at Ocean Grove, N. J., where she took boarders. Miss Smith had the cottage next door. For several summers Aunt Belle took me with her for company. One summer day I was shelling peas for Aunt Belle on our back porch, and I was singing as I worked. In the afternoon Miss Smith sent for me. She handed me a dollar bill and said, "Mary Belle, you sing very nicely. Here is a dollar. When you grow up, you must use it to take singing lessons!"

One time she had a little girl visiting her. When it came time for her to go home, Miss Smith had her coachman drive them out. She invited Aunt Belle and me to go along for the outing. But because the little girl had a sore throat she made me keep a lump of camphor in my throat all the way. The drive was not much fun for me!

Once she gave me a Canadian half-dollar, saying, "Mary Belle, you keep this in your pocketbook. As long as you have it there, you will have money."

But she was kind, and later when my mother was taken so ill with rheumatism, Miss Smith sent her a pair of beautiful red blankets, with the note enclosed, "Miss Smith's cure for rheumatism."

To return to the college and its customs, at one time there was an annual contest between the incoming Freshmen and the Sophomores. The Freshmen would try to put their class flag up on the college tower, and the Sophomores would try to prevent it. This always led to a fight, and sometimes a serious one. One year there was a fight on the top of the tower, and one of the large stones was knocked off and a student almost went with it. Fortunately he was held by another student. After that these fights on the tower were forbidden.

While my father was president he always entertained the Senior Class and the Freshman Class at our home. The yard was pleasant in the summer and fall, and we had it decorated with Chinese lanterns with lighted candles, so that it was very attractive. Jake Griel always furnished the ice cream for these parties. One time at a Freshman Party, when it was time to serve the ice cream, he could not find it. The Sophomores had stolen it from our back

porch! We had to wait while he went for some more.

I do not remember how the college took care of the Alumni Dinner before the Gymnasium was built. But after it was built the Alumni Dinner was held in it. It was called a dinner although it was really a lunch,—cold meats, salad, and again ice cream furnished by Jake Griel. The ladies of the faculty and the Board took care of the dinner, and we young ladies—children of the faculty—served. I think they must have had their own tablecloths, dishes and silverware, but I don't know. Various ladies made various items of food. I think Mrs. Shand always made the mayonnaise dressing. There were always plenty of cakes. Miss Katherine Hager was there; also Miss Alice Nevin, Miss Lottie Appel, and Misses Minnie and Nan Nevin. There were always young girls in evidence, hoping for acquaintance with some of the men!

The janitor of the college at the time was Mr. Leonard. He lived with his wife and son in the little house back of Goethean Hall. At that time he was quite old and ill. He was a dear old man, and my father was very fond of him and of his wife. Their son, Harry, who became janitor after his father, had twin sons whom he called Franklin and Marshall. That was loyalty!



Decorating the chapel for a wedding, 15 October 1904. Included in the group are Josephine Kieffer, Alice Byrne, Charlotte Appel, Claribel Schaeffer.

Commencement exercises were held on the college campus on the ground where the library now stands. We girls would go out to attend Class Day; it was always gay and full of fun. Part of the program consisted of giving presents to the graduates appropriate to their behavior,—little jokes and sly humor, et cetera. When Mr. William Keller graduated, he was courting Miss Nan Dickey whom he afterwards married, and they gave him a birdcage in which to keep "his Dickey-bird." When my brother Charlie graduated, they gave him a big sour-ball (Charlie always looked grim, but he really wasn't). To my brother Hugh, who was class valedictorian, they gave a laurel wreath, which was unluckily appropriate because Hugh died the very summer after he graduated.

The college chapel was the scene for all weddings and funerals. When a professor died, the college bell was tolled. The students would attend the funeral in the chapel and walk, escorting the cortege, down James Street to the Lancaster Cemetery, where the college had a lot and where many of the early professors and their families are buried. The college bell tolled all the time the cortege was passing.

Most of the daughters of the faculty at that time were married in the chapel. Lucy and Katharine Mull and Helen and I were all married there. I have a picture in my scrapbook of the ladies decorating the church for my wedding.

I was a bridesmaid for Lucy when she married Sumner Hosterman. There were two bridesmaids. We wore white dresses of some thin material and sage green sashes. Miss Lottie Appel did the decorations in the chapel. The day before the wedding we girls had gone to Mr. Willson's meadow (the man who then owned Wheatland), and gathered huge bunches of red clover and white daisies; and Miss Lottie made what she called *flambeaux* and fastened one on the aisle end of every pew. It looked lovely, and didn't cost much but love. Things were very simple in those days.