

## From Waltham to Auburndale · *Austin Warren*

IN THE EARLY 1900s Waltham was a city of about twenty-five thousand, a suburb of Boston, but still, before the period of the automobile, dominantly Republican and Protestant, in contrast to Boston. The chief industry was the Waltham Watch Factory, which had as its only competitor Elgin in Illinois, and Switzerland. When there was a depression, the factory laid off workers and all business suffered.

There were some large estates at the lower end of Waltham, summer houses for wealthy Bostonians. I used to hear my father speak of their owners chiefly in tones of reprobation. Though he stood in no awe of financial or social eminence, my middle-class father firmly thought in terms of classes, and of keeping to his own, the best. For him those classes were still: the rich, generally immoral (they 'drink' and don't pay their bills); the poor (poor, because they are lazy and shiftless—and because they 'drink'); and, finally, people like the Warrens—people who don't drink, who work hard, who don't buy things till they can pay for them in cash—in fine, sound, solid, respectable people.

Waltham was still for the most part a Yankee town. There were no Negroes and almost no Jews, and but few French Canadians. The 'intruders' were the Irish, accepted as a fact and a fixture, though a nuisance, as outsiders of alien standards. How they came to be dwellers in New England, who let them in and why, I never, in my childhood, learned. But I knew they were Democrats and Catholics; indeed, as a boy, I took Irish, Democrat, and Catholic to be synonyms.

I was born in 1899, in the West End of Waltham, a block away from the intersection of Main and Prospect Streets. ('Prospect' is always a high-toned name for a street, and this was, in its context, a good residential street, though it offered no prospect.) With the exception of two early years on a farm in northern Massachusetts, I lived till the age of thirteen, in a house, still standing, on the corner of Prospect and Russell—a corner house, with horse chestnut trees in the yard and a stable—not the largest house in the neighborhood: there was, a block down Prospect, what seemed to a child's eyes a small estate complete with mansion, which belonged to Colonel Stearns: and across the street was the Barker house, which boasted a white-pillared facade. But ours was a house of neighborhood dignity, a single house in a period when double-houses (the 1890 predecessors of apartment houses) were already visible in the neighborhood and distinctly inferior in status.

My grandfather Warren died when I was five. Two years after, my grandmother remarried; and, on our return from the country to Waltham, she was living, as the wife of Isaac Snow Dillingham, in Auburndale.

Auburndale, only three miles geographically from Waltham, was, socially and psychically, considerably farther. It is one of the seven or nine Boston suburbs generally called the Newtons, not themselves highly rated by proper Bostonians, but (especially in the eyes of Newtonians) self-evidently more proper than Waltham. Waltham was an industrial city; the Newtons, most of them, and preeminently Auburndale, were purely residential. Even their railroads differentiated them. Waltham was on the Boston and Maine line; the Newtons, on the Boston and Albany. Auburndale, presumably named after Goldsmith's "Sweet Auburn, loveliest village of the plain," was the 'seat' of the home for retired Congressional missionaries and of Lasell Seminary, a finishing school for young ladies. Even the wooden, Gothic cross-surmounted Methodist Church, of which the Dillinghams were prominent members, 'pillars,' was genteel. Their house was on Woodland Road, adjoining the Seminary and across from the impressive, even if wooden, Congregational Church. My newly acquired grandfather never wearied of impressing upon my young mind the superior claims of Auburndale over my native city; and, though he did it half to tease and embarrass me, at which he succeeded, he was also a true believer.

The years of my boyhood were divided between the two worlds—that of Auburndale, ruled over by the most powerful of my relatives, grandmother Warren, now Mrs. Dillingham, and the Waltham of grandmother Anderson, who, though less well placed, never granted the claims of her rival, and, with her dry wit, had her own weapons for disposing of them.

A small house on upper Russell Street held two Anderson grandfathers—Big Grampa and Little Grampa. Little Grampa took the big leather chair by the window of the sitting room—behind him, a high secretary, which, when its baize-covered lid was let down, disclosed many small drawers. Archibald Anderson, called Little because, at nearly a hundred, he was so bent over as to be four or five inches shorter than his son, was a Scotsman with a love of Burns, Sir Walter, and Shakespeare; and the glass-doored shelves of the secretary housed solid reading—a set of Dickens, in squat solid volumes with black leather labels and very small print.

To my younger brother Russell and me, Little Grampa seemed too ancient and withdrawn into himself to be quite real. He was like an old turtle or rock—some ancient thing sunning and basking. But he had one way of reaching the young. He was locally so famed for his love of sweets that, on his hundredth birthday, when there was some kind of party in his honor, attended by people like his Universalist pastor and the head of the Odd Fellows as well as the neighbors on Russell Street, people brought candy as presents—sixteen or seventeen boxes of it. Acquaintances brought chocolates, but friends knew his fondness for peppermints; and it was peppermints which Little Grampa kept in a drawer of his secretary and used to bestow, though without prodigality, upon Russell and me.

Shortly after the birthday celebration, he properly and quietly died—without specific ailment or illness. Through the false delicacy of their elders, the children did not attend the funeral and were not taken to ‘view the remains.’ In the interval between the death and the funeral, a wreath of purple flowers and ferns hung on the door of the house; a little friend and I noticed it; and I, feeling proprietary claim to my grandparents’ house, walked up the steps to the porch and smelled of the flowers, putting my nose close against them—an impropriety for which I was, of course, rebuked.

Big Grampa was a tall man with a white beard who almost never spoke when in the house. My father told me of his surprise when, visiting some lodge to which Mr. Anderson belonged and of which he had, for many years, been chaplain, he heard this silent old man make a neatly aimed and witty speech. Living with three voluble women had given him a separate domestic self. At home, he was happiest when, in the well-equipped workshop fitted up in his cellar, he made some things and mended others.

By trade he was an organ builder; and he worked for years at the Hastings factory in Kendal Green—walking back and forth the three miles from his home.

Grandma Anderson was a professional invalid who lived to be over ninety. She took to her bed when she was thirty-five; and thereafter, little as her husband could afford it, she kept a servant . . . till the time came when the Irish women had graduated from being ‘maids’ and the Scandinavians, their successors, had also graduated. The evil day came about 1920; and the Andersons then had to engage a housekeeper, someone who sat with the family at meals and in the sitting room, if she had a mind to.

In my boyhood, Grandma still occasionally entered the kitchen: when Russell and I were coming to lunch with her by ourselves, an occasional treat, she made tomato bisque and a famed and expected bread pudding, plentiful in raisins and accompanied by ‘hard’ sauce, rich with butter and brown sugar. Like Little Grampa, Grandma had her set treat for us—peanuts in the shell. They were kept always in green square cardboard boxes, boxes in which Grampa’s stiff collars had come. Grandma sat upstairs in her front bedroom window, which gave her a view of the street; she darned stockings out of a basket while she ate peanuts; and she had hair strange and unearthly in color—a kind of greenish yellow, the result I heard my father say, of her dyeing her hair with sage tea.

What Grandma Anderson lived by was not easy to make out. She was not a religious woman, even in old age. Reared a Congregationalist, she may have sat, as a girl, under some theologically minded, ancient Calvinist; but, if so, it had made no doctrinal impression upon her. She regarded all active forms of religion as so many forms of bad taste, and used to make me wince by her satire of the Warren Methodism. In her girlhood, she lived near a camp-meeting, and she recalled its shoutings and convulsions and hearty

hymn-singing. She was probably well aware that the 'old-time' Methodism had disappeared, but she had no wish to admit it. Methodism was eccentric and sentimental—therefore disorderly and comic; and that was the end of the matter.

For herself, she was skeptically conservative. Changes of religion had about them something indecent as well as humorless. As for changing from the religion one was reared in, that was taking the whole business with a seriousness unwarranted. After all, we don't really know anything about the beyond and the hereafter; hence well-bred people have always stayed by the religion in which they were reared. Religions, too, are a matter of one's social class; and Grandma looked down on Methodists as shop-keepers.

Of course she had no objection to religion when religion knew its place and kept it. She attended 'divine service' when she felt able to walk out. She liked to have the Congregationalist minister call twice a year—or at least was offended if he did not. She conceived of clergymen as scholarly persons, of dignified deportment and careful dress. I heard her half-serious, half-amused complaints against her last pastor, the young minister, who duly called at the house: "I am not accustomed to seeing clergymen wear blue shirts." She did not pray or read the Bible, at least in her last years; and she expressed to me, undisturbed but speculative, her doubts concerning the Future Life; yet these insolubles didn't interest her. She did not develop these doubts or speculations.

My father had two judgments of Mrs. Anderson: that she "had more fun in her than had any of her daughters"; and that she was a very "selfish woman." Both were correct; and, though he never put them together, they were correlative. Thin and narrow, Grandma was neither bitter nor confused. Her central view of life was dryly satiric. Once, certainly, she must have exerted her will—perhaps petulantly and persistently—in order to secure her status of permanent invalid, based on no more tangible a malady than alleged "quiverings of the stomach." Yet when her claims of invalidism had been accepted, and accepted, had released her from her work, entitling her, for the rest of her life, to the easiest chair and the first look at the evening newspaper, she had energy enough to play—till, bored, she 'went upstairs'—the role of a detached, ironic, even whimsical observer of life. The effect on her three daughters was to reduce their wills and clarity; for the weaker must serve the clear and strong.

In the Anderson house lived also my Aunt Etta, the maiden aunt who was also the 'bachelor girl,' who combined the maiden aunt's function of staying at home with her parents and the 'bachelor girl's' commitment to a career. She was never, according to my father, interested in the boys. Her chief attachment was to her father; when he died, she ceased going to church, saying that she could not believe in a God who would let him die. And she had steady friends of her own sex, 'the girls,' who married not at all or late.

Aunt Etta had taken the 'classical course' in high school, but there was no money for college, nor did she wish to become a teacher, the only career to which it would have led. She went to business school and became a stenographer. In my boyhood she commuted to Boston, working for the Dennison Company, makers of crepe paper. Interested in her work and conscientious, she became private secretary to one of the heads. Later she, who had some talent for writing, was given sole responsibility for writing the Dennison semi-annual catalogue, which contained, along with descriptions of the merchandise, much other reading matter—suggestions for party giving and for the making of costumes and favors. She rose to the highest paid position held by any woman in the employ of the firm; and she was fulfilled both by her work and by the money she was able to contribute to the household, which made possible the hiring of a servant to do the cooking and house-keeping at home.

Across Russell Street and a few doors down, lived the Mosmans. Aunt Georgianna Mosman married early in life—a Vermont boy with all the Yankee virtues of loyalty to family, industry, and thrift. For twenty years, Uncle Ed was a bookkeeper for the Paine Furniture Company of Boston. Then, at the age of fifty, he was engaged by Arthur Lyman for work as expert accountant on the transactions of the Lyman Estate, his work being the meticulous subdivision of the vast property left in trust for distribution among the now innumerable heirs.

The Mosmans lived strangely. For forty years and more they paid rent on a 'single house'—a house upon which, curiously, there was all the while a mortgage, held first by my grandmother and then by my father. Though more than enough rent had been paid to pay for the house, the Mosmans, till their death, still paid rent. Childless, they had no comforts or indulgences. There were no easy chairs in their sitting room, which (after the old-fashioned Boston custom) was on the second floor; but each sat, in the evening, in a piazza rocker, near a wicker table covered with newspapers and popular novels from the circulating library.

The 'parlor' was never used, nor, stiff and cheerless, did it invite use. There was a black walnut upright, of course; but, never played, it served only as a token of gentility. The one object in the whole repertory of Mosman furniture with any tone or color was the plaster 'Rogers Group,' which gave me my first boyhood experience of sculpture. Their 'Group' consists of two church pews, with artfully representative families occupying them. A courteous young gentleman extends a hymn book to a young lady in the pew in front; a little boy squirms or makes faces to amuse his elders; some middle-aged and decorous persons provide foil to love and mischief.

The Mosmans had saved so long that they never learned how to spend. The 'scrimping' was perhaps once necessary. Uncle Edwin had, till fifty, an aged parent and, it may be, other relatives to support, and could not "save."

In any case, they did not spend—except on food, into the cooking of which Aunt Georgie proudly put more butter than any of her relatives.

“Except on Food”: whenever the relatives visited the Mosmans, they were baffled by the provisions in Aunt Georgie’s icebox and pantry—not merely, as in modern houses, rows of cans and packages, but quantities of ‘cooked food’—meat and fish, jelly and puddings and pies—as though this quiet and abstemious old couple, having entertained a large company the day before, had “picked up the fragments, that nothing might be lost.” Was this food eventually eaten, or was it a mirage or a ritual or a tradition uncritically maintained since Aunt Georgie’s girlhood on a farm where there were large-mouthed hired men and growing children? Or did my Aunt equate respectability with the redundant provision of food—as though neighbors might come in any time unexpectedly: though now there were no neighbors?

Aunt Georgie was a New England ‘martyr.’ Like her mother, she always ‘enjoyed poor health.’ Her complexion was waxen; her nose, thin; her eyes, plaintively sunk in deep, dark cavities. Her mouth quivered with unspoken complaints; and when she spoke, her voice gave forth, if not exactly a whine, a querulous whimper, as of one abused by life—one who had always “tried hard” to be honest, upright, and bill-paying, as well as immaculately neat about her person and house, who had “tried hard” to be a devoted daughter and wife.

Intimated were all sorts of unnamed grievances. For years there had been ‘feeling’ between the Mosmans and Aunt Etta, so that, though living on the same street, they saw each other only for short weekly calls and on those holidays when it is a ‘duty’ for relatives to eat together.

In early married life, the Mosmans had been rigid Congregationalists. They disapproved of my father, and of my mother’s marriage, because he used to drive her out on Sunday, drive out behind a spanking horse—perhaps because he played cards now and then and had friends, some of whom danced. The chief tenet of the Mosmans’ religion must have been suspicion of pleasure and hostility to change, for I never heard either of them utter a prayer or quote a verse of Scripture.

When they were in their fifties, their Congregational pastor divorced his wife and, before the marriage was annulled, began going around with one of his female parishioners. In protest against such behavior, Uncle Edwin resigned as church treasurer; but, while some of the Congregationalists marched over to one of the rival ‘faiths,’ the Mosmans just ‘stopped going.’

Their religion having been negation, the double negative was salutary. After a little, they began mildly to relax, to allow themselves little, belated, innocent pleasures. They accepted invitations from my ‘worldly’ father, who drove them for long rides into the country, over the line into Vermont, or to the New Hampshire village where Uncle Edwin had spent his laborious boyhood.

Whether I went down Main Street or Prospect, I was on my way to Auburndale, three miles from Waltham and, even in my boyhood, connected by continuous if not closely built settlement. But crossing the town line did not bring me into quintessential Auburndale. If a river divides Waltham, railroad track divides Auburndale. Humbler Auburndale naturally lay on the Waltham side of the track. On the farther side, a mild climb brought one to the homes of the proper residents. No local architecture antedated the Civil War; and the homes of the chief period of building must have been the eighties; the houses, each with a few acres about them, were less 'beautiful' than 'dignified,' 'impressive,' the homes of Yankees who had offices in Boston.

Large, poised, unhurried gentlemen used to come home from Boston on the four o'clock train, dismounting from the Boston and Albany at the refined granite station designed by the great H.H. Richardson. Before 1920, none but the well-bred people appeared to travel on that line. The men were often whiskered, often in Prince Alberts or some other formal attire; they carried the *Boston Evening Transcript*, reading, as they journeyed, the last reports from the stock market. And the women, returning from a mid-day's shopping, with lunch at Filene's or at Huyler's, wore rimless pince-nez and high lace collars or black velvet neck-ribbons. If there was conversation on the train, it was in low, modulated tones: nothing hearty, jocose, or otherwise crude.

The Dillingham house, on Woodland Road, stood opposite the Congregational Church, whose bell struck deep, mellow hours. The house appeared set in rather spacious grounds. Though they did not really belong to Grandpa, vacant lots adjoined the house on both sides, so that it mastered a block; and the sense of "grounds" was helped out by flowering shrubs—dogwood and syringas—massed to left and right of the path up to the house.

Before the Great Boston Fire of the seventies, Grandpa Dillingham had been a wealthy man and the owner of a more pretentious house on Central Street—a house with a *porte-cochere* and a stable, in which he kept a pair of fine driving horses. But the Fire had sent him into bankruptcy, and he had never recovered his former state. When my grandmother, the decorously recent widow of an industrious Waltham milk-dealer, married him, he was, report had it, as completely 'down and out' as impenitently genteel. His first wife had long been a fastidious and expensive invalid; of his three children, the younger daughter, who took luxury as her due, was still his charge. Further, he came of a family which, in the persons of brother and cousins in Hawaii, had flourished, so that there were many wealthy Dillinghams to remind the Auburndale relatives of their poverty.

As for Mr. Dillingham himself, he was a man of pride: there was a certain standard of living below which he and his family could not properly fall, even though, to maintain this standard, he had to run up bills beyond his

power to pay. My father used to tell, dramatically, how he first encountered his future stepfather. For a time, my father worked as clerk at a grocery store in Auburndale. One day a handsome, portly gentleman, of haughty bearing and utmost assurance, came into the store and commanded a large order, to be charged to I. S. Dillingham of Woodland Road. My father, impressed by the gentleman's manner, accepted the charge. Then the owner came up and said, "Never trust that man. He is as poor as a church mouse, and he owes every shopkeeper in town. Let him have nothing unless he produces the hard cash."

All this was changed by Dillingham's second marriage to my also proud but astute grandmother Warren. Quietly paying up the back bills, she turned the grandiose debtor into an honest man, who had a right to do what he had done anyway—look the whole world confidently in the face.

A single successful marriage is almost impossible; for a woman wants a man who is equally good as a lover, a companion, a father for her children, and a 'good provider'; there is no man who can fill all these requirements. The sensible thing to do is to marry two or three times and get all these qualifications satisfactorily met in a succession of husbands. And this is what both of my grandmothers did.

Louise Gove—successively Mrs. Warren and Mrs. Dillingham—was the dominant member of the Warren family. A lady of some means and some social position, she could have used, intelligently, real wealth and adorned almost any station. Like so many masterful Victorians, English and American, she was compounded of contraries which, though never really integrated, held up, and together, through a lifetime. Like many great women, she was half a man; and used adroitly the techniques of both sexes. She could generally win what she wanted by strength of will or intellectual clarity; but, on occasions when these powers seemed inadequate or inappropriate, she could turn to the feminine repertory of cajolery and tenderness. Though she frankly preferred men to women, she had many close friends among women; and over the younger ones she exercised such a fascination as to make her their perpetual and devoutly loved teacher in the Sunday School or the Home Missionary Society.

She had marked gifts as an administrator and organizer, and had a clear head for 'business': she was the inevitable president of any group to which she belonged; and, by her judicious buying and selling of stocks and bonds, she not only preserved, but substantially increased, what she had inherited from her father, a coal merchant of East Boston, and from her first husband, a milk-dealer.

Of my grandmother, as of another "elect lady," it might have been said that she read two books faithfully every day—her Bible and her stock market reports. She practised the counsel of John Wesley: "Make all you can; save all you can; give all you can."

But she did not believe in confounding these successive precepts: did not, that is, believe in mixing charity with business. She exacted the full value of their wages from her servants, who nonetheless respected her, since she asked them to do nothing at which she was not herself adept. In Boston shops, she felt no compunction at bothering a saleswoman to pull out ten or twelve articles, only to thank her crisply and walk away; and when her young grandson protested, she responded, "Why, that's what they're there for; that's what they're paid to do."

She was privately educated, first, at a Methodist academy at Gilmanton, New Hampshire, and then, for several years, at Bradford Academy, just across the river from Haverhill. In her day, Bradford was a finishing school, offering, in addition to French and other refined studies, rigorous training in deportment. Even in her old age, my grandmother maintained her fine carriage as she walked; and, when she sat, it was her dignified and impressive erectness which made a straightbacked chair the most comfortable. Her posture she attributed to the regimen of the Academy, which prescribed "backboards" to habituate the students to erectness. At Bradford, she made intimate friends, two of whom—women of character and bearing—I long after met. The years at Bradford must have given her character the aristocratic tone which differentiated my grandmother from her Methodist associates.

Both she and Mr. Dillingham were fond of dress; and age had made them, properly, but the more meticulous. My grandmother was wont to dress richly, most characteristically in purple velvet. On Sunday mornings, Grandpa Dillingham took long over the brushing of his white mustache and the grooming of his white hair, which, even in his eighties, could be parted in the middle. Garbed for church, he wore a white waistcoat, against which dangled the gold chain of his nose-glasses; in the spring, he wore in his buttonhole some flower or bit of flowering shrub. Leaning slightly on his gold-headed cane, he and his wife walked to church, at the slow, assured, impressive pace of an episcopal or academic procession.

Sitting in his pew at Centenary Church, Mr. Dillingham remained impressive. As a young man, he must have sung an admirable baritone. In age, his voice still kept its power and resonance, though not its accuracy of pitch. Whether through deafness or vanity, he failed to keep time with the rest of the congregation, but, in hymn and responsive reading, prolonged the note till his voice had survived all others. Reared in the old days when Methodists still freely expressed their assent to sound doctrine, he did not hesitate, during the sermon, to boom out *Amen*; but yet more characteristic, as marking his approval of Gospel truth, was an audible sigh, as of one sucking in some savory food—a drawing in and release of the breath.

The Dillinghams should, I often thought, have been Episcopalians or Boston Unitarians. Yet there were elements in their nature which, had they belonged to a socially more respectable faith, would have remained un-

satisfied. For one thing, the exercise of their undeniable gifts needed the “priesthood of all believers”; for another, both were ‘enthusiasts.’ ‘Personal’ religion, a constant sense that Jesus was their friend, companion, and approver, was both central and, doubtless, indispensable to them.

Most of all, they were properly Methodist because they held to a religion which was neither doctrinal nor ritualistic but emotional and pragmatic. “If your heart be as my heart, give me your hand,” Grandfather Dillingham used to quote from the great John Wesley, as establishing the relative unimportance of theology.

The arrangement of the Dillingham house conformed, apparently, to the mode of Auburndale, which was the mode of Boston. The family ‘lived’ on the second floor, descending only for the solemn meals in the dining room. Indeed, the ground floor was rarely used. A wide hall led from the central front door to the stairs at the farther end; and, even from the entrance, one could see a full-length mirror, baroquely framed in gold, which backed—a few shallow steps up—the first landing of the stair. The floor of the hall was carpeted tightly, up to the baseboards, with red velour. From either side of the hall, opened parlors. The left-hand room, in front of the dining room, had been fitted up, at her own expenses, by the second Mrs. Dillingham. Called the Reception Room, it was used to receive callers who should not be made too comfortable lest they stay too long. The room was neat, crisp, immaculate, but uninteresting: an American rug of undistinguished design, a modern mahogany table, a window seat with cushions of green plush, a black walnut bookcase, with some trifling inlay and glass doors. . . .

My taste was for the other side of the hall, given over to a ‘double parlor’—never used, because never refurbished—an unacknowledged remainder from the first Mrs. Dillingham. Portieres shut them off from the hall, and the draperies were generally drawn. Within, the upholstery was damask—faded, and, in the back parlor, tattered. The two parlors were separated by a central chimney, allowing a small but ornate fireplace to open on to each of the parlors. A black upright piano, its case decorated by panels of cutwork, could still emit a muffled music; and beside it stood an ornate black cabinet with open shelves gathering dust upon sheet music and music albums.

Only special intimates of the family were invited to come upstairs, where, like other Auburndale women, my grandmother had her sitting room. It was my grandfather’s bedroom as well; for in one corner stood a black walnut piece—in shape an armoire—which, lowered at night, became a proper bed equipped with its due of sheets and pillows. A couch in red stood in the bay window; before it, an elegant little writing desk. At this desk, my grandmother wrote letters in her clear, firm, Spencerian hand, carried on her transactions in stocks and bonds, wrote cheques, and added up her monthly bank statement. Into this room came Mrs. Professor Bates, lean, pince-nezed, black-ribboned of neck and Mrs. Sophronia Butters,

wife of "dear Dr. Butters," pastor of Centenary Church and Professor of Pastoral Theology at the Boston University Theological School, and also her old friends from Bradford Academy.

Here, in the morning, just after breakfast, came Bible-reading, and the "family altar," which meant two elderly, erect figures kneeling in prayer on the brightly-colored carpet. And it was here, in the evening, that the Dillinghams spent the interval between five-thirty dinner and bedtime. Both were skilled at the art of reading aloud. They read Dickens often: sometimes some contemporary novel, morally sound and wholesome and domestic, with a generous flavoring of broad humor and sentiment—something by Grace S. Richmond or Joseph C. Lincoln. It was painful to me to recognize the literary decline necessary when eminent Victorians, reared on Scott and Dickens and Lowell or even Longfellow, sought to find modern reading matter which should be morally tolerable. Grandpa Dillingham had memorized much poetry in his youth, and could recite, in resonant declamation, stanza upon stanza from "Childe Harold" and "Marmion" and "The Lady of the Lake," poems to which there were no twentieth century equivalents.

Up Woodland Road lived the Butlers and the Bishops. The Butler house was built about 1895; and its interior decoration—the ceiling blue, like the heavens, and sprinkled with stars—was the last work of its kind done by great-grandfather Butler. He had started life as a 'fresco' painter, and had developed a prosperous business which employed his nephew as foreman. Boston's Tremont Temple seems to have been the height of his professional career. In payment for a bill unpaid by a church in Newton, he took the piece of land upon which, after his second marriage, the house was built. When I knew him, Mr. Butler, already deaf, spent his time painting or napping or reading the novels of Marie Corelli; but he was reported to have been, in earlier years, a man of many talents and highly entertaining—an untrained performer on the piano, the cabinet organ, the violin, the flute, the guitar; a singer, a whistler, an adept at sleight of hand, a raconteur.

He had one studio over the white stable in the back of the house and another in the summer home at Oak Bluffs, both places I delighted to visit. I studied the piles of unframed landscapes stacked against the walls; I drew and painted in water colors; and, on one occasion, when Mr. Butler's nephew was visiting, I sat for my portrait—one in which my family found no marked likeness but in which I took vast pride because it made me look as I wanted to look—"dreamy." Done at one stretch, the portrait was certainly the best thing Horace Giles ever did. At a later time, visiting his own studio, I saw his other works, mostly pictures of women out of his imagination, all of them 'finished' to the point of fussy exhaustion and still further deadened by layers of varnish.

My great-grandfather Butler reluctantly did some portraits but he preferred to paint landscapes, both in oil and watercolor, the latter perhaps the

best. The subjects were rural—woodlands and pastures; the pastures were provided with cows, authentically as well as artistically treated.

An admirer and cherisher of his own paintings, Mr. Butler was reluctant to part with them, even when Christmas came round. In his middle years, he held annual exhibitions in Waltham and Oak Bluffs. He could have sold largely had he been willing to set modest figures under them; but he priced one at a thousand dollars, adding that it was criminal to let the picture go at such a price. About sales, he said, "I felt just as though I were putting up my children at auction; I want to keep them by me."

There was a third house in Auburndale for me, the stately Bishop house—a mansion in all save size, which stood on the opposite corner to the Butler's. The Bishops, who had formerly lived in the once at least mildly fashionable South End of Boston, were distant cousins of my grandmother's: perhaps the long since dead Mrs. Bishop had been a Gove or a Whitney. In Auburndale, the family had consisted only of two unmarried brothers, John and Thomas, and their unmarried sister, Jane—the relations between the three very close. John, like his father, was a businessman with an office in Boston. Thomas, who graduated from Harvard, became a Methodist clergyman, of scholarly tastes and an excellent library. Because of his attachment to his family, he refused to accept any appointment which he could not fill while living at home—which limited his area of professional activity to parishes adjacent to Boston, such as the Lafayette Street Church in Salem.

I regret not having known 'Cousin Thomas'; but from his library, after his death, and after several Methodist clergymen of scholarly tastes had chosen their pick, 'Aunt Jane' (as it was the custom in our family to call all older cousins Uncle or Aunt) permitted me to choose fifteen or twenty. Upon this, my first look at such a library, even in a depleted state, I was, even by present judgment, judicious: I still retain his copy of Marcus Aurelius in Long's translation and Dean Arthur Stanley's *Lectures on the History of the Eastern Church*.

Jane, the sister and the youngest of the three, I do remember—a square, solid old woman with her white hair mannishly cropped. Not very feminine, she was, however, helpless in administering her affairs. Her brother had attended to both the bookkeeping and the housekeeping. After their death, she was ruled by the Irish cook who (my grandmother Dillingham said) supported her family out of my aunt's larder and otherwise pilfered. And, when she had drawn the last check from her check book filler, she appealed to my grandmother for help, supposing that she could no longer draw money from the bank.

The story has it that, upon one of the Bishops' trips to Europe, Aunt Jane, then in middle life, met a well-to-do and cultivated English gentleman who proposed to her and whom after hesitation, she accepted. The date of the wedding was set; and many wedding gifts arrived. After further hesita-

tion, she revoked her acceptance, deciding that she could not leave her brothers. But, my informant said—with what mixture of feelings I cannot reproduce—she never returned the presents.

Of my Auburndale relatives, my great-grandmother Butler later, already an aged lady, moved away to Merrimacport, where she bought the river-overlooking house which had formerly belonged to the manufacturer of carriages, once the occupation of the village; but her house there (which she bought for complicated reasons) was a kind of extension of Auburndale, even grander by virtue of its being the one mansion of the village. Spending a week there each summer in my early teens, I delighted in the spaciousness of the long drawing room looking out over garden and river, the summer-shuttered dim room, with a stuffed peacock on a pedestal in the bay window, the crimson peonies in a shallow bowl on the mahogany table, the quiet.

The 'note' of Auburndale was spaciousness, a luxury early necessary to me. Thoreau rightly speaks of the need to keep a wide margin of time around oneself and his activities: there is no spiritual dignity in a hurried life. But space, too, is necessary: human beings must not too closely and too constantly impinge on each other. There should be rooms, as Orientals maintain, for different moods and different times of day. There must be rooms suitable to gatherings of different sizes and degrees of sociability and formality (it is a pity that every room should be a room for undress). And there should be rooms for one's own solitude. Leisure and space are requisite for all save a purely ethical or spiritual grandeur—for holiness; and, even for it, they have a certain at least symbolic or accompanimental suitability: so at least I read the 'devout Humanists.'

Between 'Waltham' and 'Auburndale' I, always between worlds, early learned to play their claims against each other and to mediate between them. On the whole, and obviously, I preferred the world of the Dillinghams, Butlers, and Bishops. It was a world of dignity and at least seeming stability, the upper-middle class world of the Victorians. It was a class-conscious world: but that class-consciousness was not one merely of money but of standards of living and social behavior and social responsibility. And it did not doubt its own world-views.

In another, and important, sense both sets of grandparents stood together in my mind as against my parents and their generation; and here I was clearly on the side of my grandparents. It was that older generation to which I looked for standards, for something firm and fixed upon which to pattern myself, by which I might measure myself. My parents and their friends seemed weak and ineffectual, without beliefs of their own—their religion and their politics taken on trust from their parents—their rebellion no more than a dilution of what they had inherited.