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HUGH GRAHAM



# MEMOIRS OF THE GRAHAM FAMILY



By  
ANNIE KENDRICK WALKER

Illustrated



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MRS. FRANCIS PATTERSON

Sister of Hugh Graham



Edition of One Hundred Copies  
of which this is

No. **81** .....

Children of  
Hugh and Catherine (Nenny) Graham

- I. SARAH GRAHAM BLACKBURN
- II. MARGARET GRAHAM NEIL
- III. MARY GRAHAM KYLE
- IV. CORNELIA GRAHAM PATTERSON
- V. LOUISE GRAHAM ROGAN
- VI. LUCY GRAHAM WILLIAMS
- VII. ELLEN GRAHAM PATTON
- VIII. THOMAS GRAHAM

## GENERAL OUTLINE.

### I. FIRST GENERATION—

HUGH GRAHAM.

Family History.  
Coming to America.  
Description of "Castle Rock."  
Innovations Introduced.

### II. SECOND GENERATION—

LUCY GRAHAM WILLIAMS.

Turkey.  
Egypt.  
Schloss Miramar.  
London.

CORNELIA GRAHAM PATTERSON.

Patterson Manuscripts.  
Reminiscences of General Robert  
Patterson.  
Philadelphia Society.

LOUISE GRAHAM ROGAN.

Hayslope.  
History.  
Gardens.

### III. THIRD GENERATION—

BARONESS KAVANAUGH-BALLYANE  
(Austria).

PRINCESS DE LIGUORI DE PDESICCI  
(Italy).

### IV. COLLATERAL BRANCHES.





MEMOIRS OF  
THE GRAHAM FAMILY

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SOME of us cannot hope to escape from our ancestors. I saw a woman one evening at the French opera in New Orleans who was a perfect Diana of Poitiers and who doubtless lived in a dream Chenonceaux. Certain localities are indelibly stamped with an obvious foreign influence. In others, where it may once have expressed itself, it is necessary to trace it by different paths, sometimes forgotten ones. But the obvious foreign influence that came in with the great old families cannot be overlooked. Instead of seeking it in pronounced types, or racial characteris-



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tics, it is more interesting to trace it in memoirs and old manuscripts of an intimate character. It cannot be denied that we owe substantial acknowledgments to what has been called the "secret memoirs" which proved so piquant an entertainment for our grandsires and dames.

Memoirs now in the possession of the descendants of Hugh Graham, the Irish exile and Tennessee pioneer, embrace the latter part of the Eighteenth century and the first of the Nineteenth. They form a most entertaining description of certain old houses and gardens that bloomed in the American wilderness. These memoirs have also an international interest of a political and social nature. Although social life was modelled upon Europe there was always the tendency for individual expression on the part of those not wholly affected by the imitations of the day. The history of some of these old families is, in consequence, impregnated with a strong individuality that made itself felt in

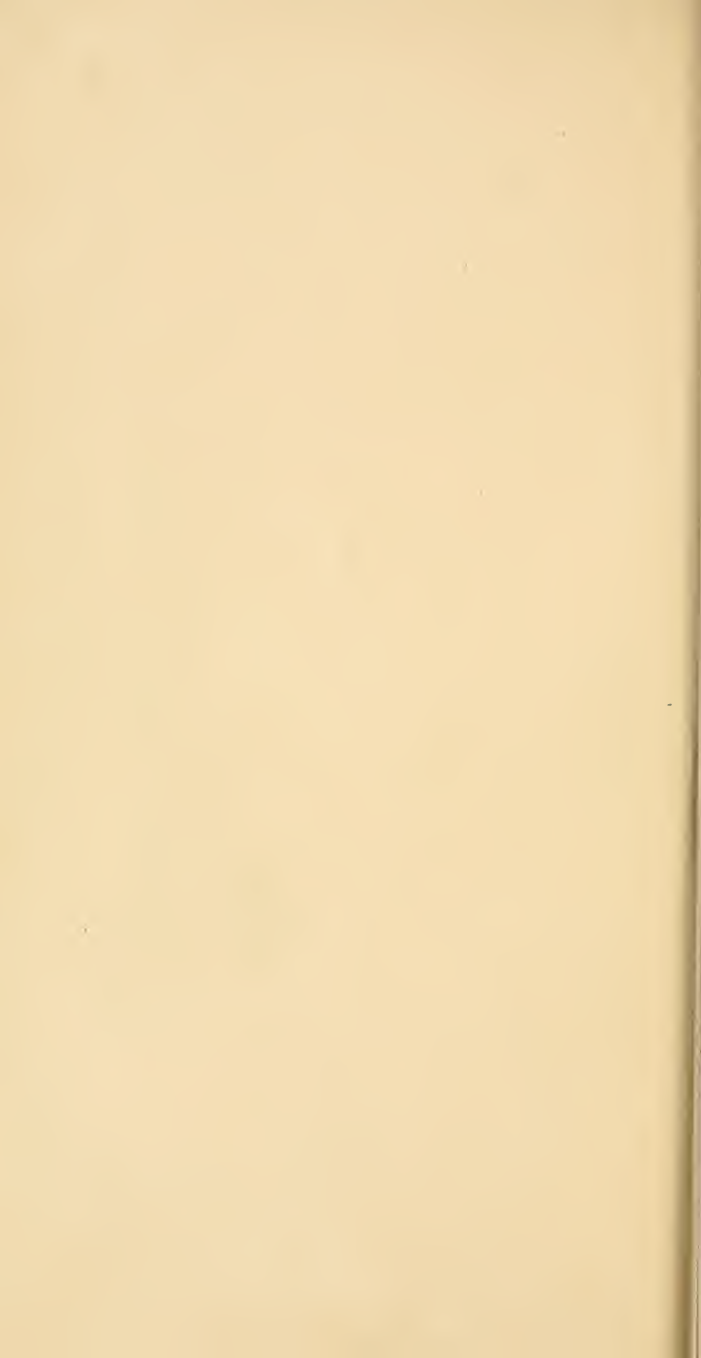


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the Seventeenth and Eighteenth centuries. These memoirs also reveal the elegancies of a period that will never be reproduced.

The Graham records go back to the Crusades. It is something to have followed Richard Coeur de Lion. And who can resist a thrill of proud delight for the remembered glories of an exile, or for the exquisite sufferings of a dear ancestor, who, like Cyrano, broadly swept the azure threshold with his very clean plume. Some of the ancient Irish families faced as beautiful a death in the rebellion of " '98" against England. It was death or banishment. And in the history of the Irish exiles who came to America may be traced the beginning of certain notable families.

One of the most remarkable of the young exiles was Hugh Graham. He was born in Strabam, County Tyrone, Ireland, and came to Tennessee at the age of fourteen. The Graham estates in Ireland had been confiscated and the leaders in the rebellion







CATHERINE NENNY GRAHAM

Wife of Hugh Graham



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were condemned to death. Through the united efforts of a few Grahams who remained loyal, and the powerful influence of the Duke of Abercorn, the death sentence was changed to banishment.

The Graham exiles settled in an American wilderness. The young Hugh Graham went into business with his brother William Graham and with Patrick Nenny, of Bent Creek, Tenn., and the owner of large landed estates. In early life Hugh Graham married Catherine Nenny, of whose beauty and accomplishments I shall speak later. From this union is woven a story that will always be interesting to those whose spirit is properly subservient to the old traditions that early flourished on American soil. From this union was established an American line of succession to the throne of Sicily.

In the old town of Tazewell, founded by the exiles, Hugh Graham, with the beautiful Mrs. Graham presiding over "Castle Rock", lived like a feudal lord, with







"CASTLE ROCK"—At Old Hazewell Town

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England still the glass of fashion. "Castle Rock" with its out-lying houses and slave quarters, formed a village in itself, while the flower gardens and groves in front, and sunken gardens in the rear for vegetables and fruits, made it a place of beauty. A stone wall enclosed the gardens. Beyond the wall was a wide stone pavement, with a double row of blossoming locust trees which made an attractive promenade for the master of the house. "Castle Rock" was the scene of splendid hospitality, guest succeeding guest, all being as welcome as "flowers in May", as the genial host expressed it.

Hugh Graham was never better pleased than when at the foot of a well-laden table he dispensed gracious hospitality to relatives, friends and casual guests. Nor was he less thoughtful in providing pleasures for his family. He made life delightful to his children, providing both indoor and outdoor games. To his young children he gave books, and to each a little flower garden, and a big



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house with a second story, in which to play dolls, to read and to give tea parties in whiling away the summer days. In winter they had big rooms with great fire places. They had games, maps, globes, microscopes and a telescope and orrery. In the grove near the house were swings and joggling boards and flying horses. In the fruit gardens were low swinging muscadine vines that the children might gather their own supply, or like Pope at Strawberry Hill, gather the fruit in their mouths.

It was in his books that the Irish exile found his greatest delight. Reading with him was not a pastime, but a passion. From his earliest childhood he collected books and his library was the largest in the south. Books were sent him regularly from Europe as well as from the American publishers and many of his rare first editions are now worth their weight in gold. Books with his name are still found in East Tennessee, and a collector





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discovered some of his first editions in Leary's old book store in Philadelphia.

As a subscriber to magazines and newspapers he was equally remarkable. A partial list included the North British Review, Edinburgh Review, Blackwoods, Littell's Living Age, Bentley's Miscellany, London Art Journal, Godey's Lady's Book, Sartain's Magazine, Graham's Magazine, Gleason's Pictorial, Harper's Magazine, Missionary Magazine, Calvinistic Magazine, Peter Parley's Magazine, Lady's Magazine, The Rosebud and Merry's Museum. Among the newspapers were the Boston Recorder, Youth's Companion, Youth's Medallion, Youth's Cabinet, The Albion, The New York Tribune, New York Observer, Philadelphia Times, Baltimore Sun, Washington <sup>North</sup> Intelligence, <sup>Richmond</sup> Richmond Dispatch, Nashville American, Charleston Courier, Augusta Chronicle, Savannah <sup>News</sup> News, Mobile Register, Memphis Appeal, Louisville Courier and the Washington Post.



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In one corner of his sitting room was a large rosewood bookcase which was kept filled with Bibles. They were distributed among the poor. But the tastes of the young exile were expressed in other ways besides his love of books. His visits to Richmond, to Baltimore and to Boston meant the introduction into East Tennessee of several innovations.

He brought the first grand square piano, paying one thousand dollars for it in Boston, and hauling this rosewood Chickering in a wagon to Tazewell. He also introduced the first zinc-lined bath tub, which created intense excitement, as the natives thought it was a new style in coffins. Four pronged forks, instead of the customary three pronged, was another innovation, as was the first sewing machine and cooking stove, the first reaping and mowing machine and the first blooded stock.

Hugh Graham was also a great flower lover. He always brought home some new



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bulb, some rare flowering shrub for his gardens famed far and wide for their extent and beauty, and which were a replica of the gardens of the Duke of Abercorn, whose son, the young marquis, and Hugh Graham had the same tutor, studied the same lessons and received the same punishments. In his journeys he carried a sword cane, the body of the cane being a hollow tube in which the sword was inserted. In case of attack it could be speedily drawn and used in defense by its wearer. They were much in use by the gentlemen of that day. Another cane which he prized very highly was given him by President Jackson. It was made from a hickory tree on the Hermitage grounds. The knobs were covered with silver upon which were engraved the names of General Jackson's battles.

The Graham families lived an ideal life at Tazewell, reproducing as far as possible the old life in Ireland. There in the wilderness they formed a nucleus of wealth and



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refinement. They built churches and founded schools. On Sundays the Irish brothers and sisters with their wives and husbands gathered about the sacramental table and partook of the "Lord's Supper." On week days they would assemble at each other's houses for gay supper parties. Before supper was served they would drink sangaru, the brothers sang Irish songs, the sisters knitted, the children danced. When the parting goodnights were said, they were always followed by "I wish you well" from each one.

Hugh Graham was a secessionist. His wife and daughter, visiting Philadelphia at the beginning of the war, were taken down to the wharf to see a whale in the Delaware. The whale had a United States flag in its mouth, and as soon as the ladies beheld that they turned their backs on both whale and flag.

During the battle of Tazewell Hugh Graham surveyed the fight from a third-story window, while his family, neighbors and





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slaves took refuge in the cellar from the flying bullets and bursting shells. That night he gave the shelter of his barn to Colonel Ashby's men. Upon opening the barn door the following morning he was surprised to be greeted by federals, who plundered "Castle Rock" and hunted for concealed rebels. The smoke of battle had hardly cleared away when the master of "Castle Rock" was seized with a fatal illness. Surrounded by family and friends he passed away in the spring of 1865. While the war had devastated his domains he yet left a large estate at Tazewell and many out-lying plantations. Very methodical in his business habits, he left receipts to show all business transactions and moneys paid from fourteen years of age to the limit of his life—eighty-four. He had never known a day's illness, nor employed a physician. His was the first death at "Castle Rock" during an occupancy of nearly half a century.

Owing to the sorrowful fortunes of war,



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his coffin was made by one of his slaves from the walnut pew where he had so long worshipped God. He, whose wealth was a proverb in that section, was taken to his last resting place by one of the freed slaves of his brother. The aged exile was laid to rest in the old Irish graveyard while the thunder of the federal cannon at Cumberland Gap sounded a forewarning of the doom of the Lost Cause which he loved so well.

The traditions which have been handed down of the graces and beauty of Mrs. Hugh Graham show that she must have been a most admirable mistress of "Castle Rock." Her great beauty was an inheritance from her mother, Lucy Bramlette, of Bedford County, Virginia, whose father, a Revolutionary soldier, went with Daniel Boone to Kentucky, entered land there and was shortly afterward murdered. It was said that he was shot while hunting in the forest, being mistaken for an Indian, but these memoirs insist that he was killed in order to get pos-



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session of his land. With two of his comrades he was buried at Cumberland Gap, and years afterward a huge stone rolled down the mountain and rested on this triple grave, marking that and also the boundary line where Kentucky, Tennessee and Virginia come together. Mrs. Graham was a noted housekeeper and lover of china. When she gave dinner parties there was always a spirited discussion as to which set of china to use, the blue set with the landing of La-Fayette, or the Valentine pink one, or the brown "Warwick Castle," or the "willow ware" set. With amusing inconsistency Mrs. Graham advocated the abolition of slavery, and was never known to wait on herself in the course of a long life. Even when sitting in her room, knitting or reading, a slave stood at her back. After "freedom" came the old slaves clung to their beloved mistress.

In her old age Mrs. Graham liked to recall the visits of her girlhood to Virginia



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where she was taken at the age of twelve to be educated, there being too many Indian wigwams in the neighborhood of her father's estate for schools to be thought of. She visited Monticello, then in course of erection, and often spoke of the subterranean passage by which Jefferson could escape in the event of an attack.

No further extracts from these private memoirs can be made without introducing the famous Lucy Graham, a daughter of Hugh and Catherine and the eldest of several beautiful sisters. By her marriage to James Williams of Nashville, who was Minister to Turkey under President Buchanan, she was accorded distinguished honors at European courts. She was presented at the court of Louis Napoleon by the American minister to France, who afterward, with Slidell, presented the claims of the southern confederacy to the same court for recognition. A letter describes how the ladies had to kneel





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on the front seats of the carriage to give room to their voluminous skirts.

In Constantinople the American embassy became famous for its southern hospitality. Mr. Williams was a man of cultured tastes, and Mrs. Williams had been admirably trained for her position by her life at "Castle Rock," where her father had insisted upon European etiquette and training for his daughters.

The years abroad were delightful. In the voyage of the Nile, into lower Egypt, Mr. and Mrs. Williams were accompanied by Lord Dufferin and his mother, Lady Dufferin, a daughter of the famous English actor, Richard Brinsley Sheridan, and sister of the Hon. Caroline Norton. They were also accompanied by a young French nobleman, who took with him a corps of photographers, whose pictures of pyramids, temples and objects of interest were bound in four volumes. One of these volumes was presented to the Empress Eugenie, another volume to the



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Empress of Austria, a third volume to Mrs. Williams, the young nobleman keeping the fourth for his chateau treasures.

Lady Dufferin was very gifted, and among Mrs. Williams' valued possessions was a portrait of herself and two daughters, painted by Lady Dufferin, who accompanied the gift with charming verses. Another member of the party was Frederika Bremer, the Swedish novelist. Lord Bulwer and Sir Richard Jackson traveled with Mr. and Mrs. Williams through Turkey. More exalted still were Maxmilian and Carlotta whom they visited at Schloss Miramar, Maxmilian's beautiful palace at the head of the Adriatic. There, while the ladies gazed entranced upon Carlotta's art treasures, Maxmilian and Mr. Williams paced back and forth in that famous garden, talking of Mexico, Mr. Williams vainly endeavoring to dissuade Maxmilian from that ill-fated expedition, he offering Mr. Williams many inducements to accompany him.



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During Mr. Williams' residence in London, no remittances came from the south at its war period, and he supported his family by writing for the London Times, and by publishing two books on slavery and other American questions. He also edited a paper in the interest of the confederacy and it was said that he was assisted in that enterprise by Henry Watterson. Mr. Williams died in Gratz, Austria. A few years later, while on a visit to America, Mrs. Williams passed away. Few women of that day were more celebrated. Her beauty and wonderful charm of manner made her a favorite at court. She was extensively entertained on the continent as well as in England. These memoirs allude to frequent visits to "Castle Clanebry," Lady Dufferin's country seat.

But while one of the Graham women was gracing European courts, the social position of the younger sisters of Mrs. Williams had placed them as mistresses of historic houses. By the marriage of Cornelia Graham to





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William Patterson of Philadelphia, an historical alliance was formed. The young Mrs. Patterson was immediately called upon to assist in maintaining the glories of the old Patterson mansion, and this brings us to the interesting memoirs of that time.

The Patterson manuscripts are written in a delightfully reminiscent vein. It is doubtful if any private memoirs recall with greater charm the social life of Philadelphia in the first half of the nineteenth century and also that period when the youthful Mrs. Patterson graced society.

General Robert Patterson, father of William Houston Patterson, was one of the military idols of that day. He bore a striking resemblance to the Duke of Wellington and his appearance on the streets of Philadelphia inspired to the day of his death the expressive salutes of soldiers who had fought with him in the Confederate war, in the Mexican and in the war of 1812. About the



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General and his fine old mansion cluster historical memories.

Born in 1792 in Strabane, Country Tyrone, Ireland, Robert Patterson shared the fate of his father, Francis Patterson, exiled by the British government for his loyalty to Ireland. The family came to America, and Robert Patterson, then fifteen years of age, began life in the counting room of a merchant in the East India trade. It is interesting to follow the fortunes of the two youthful exiles, whose families were banished for the same cause. Hugh Graham, at the age of fourteen, started upon a career in the American Wilderness: his kinsman, Robert Patterson, but fifteen years old, taking up his life in the New World. Coincident as were the fortunes of these two families the ties were more closely cemented by this marriage of Cornelia Graham to William Patterson.

Robert Patterson was not only a distinguished soldier, but one of the most remarkable financiers in the early history of



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this country. As an organizer of railroads and steamship lines between southern ports and Europe his work has already been recorded. He was largely interested in the sugar industry of Louisiana and in the cotton manufacturies. In 1835, according to a diary now in the possession of his granddaughter, Mrs. Lindsay Patterson, General Patterson made a journey from Philadelphia to the upper Mississippi, his route being through Virginia and following the old Wilderness Road through East Tennessee which went through Cumberland Gap. His observations of the country and his descriptions of incidents of that memorable trip fill two volumes, which are in the private collection of his family.

Soon after his soldierly achievements had won him the gratitude of the republic General Patterson became known as a princely entertainer. He was an intimate friend of all of the presidents of the United States, beginning with Jefferson and on through his



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long career. At his old mansion the most distinguished Americans as well as guests from Europe were entertained with a sumptuousness not surpassed in that day. It was said that more than one thousand dinners and receptions were given by this bountiful entertainer.

It was at the Patterson mansion that the Aztec Club was founded. There, too, gathered many a veteran of the war of 1812, together with young officers from West Point. Indeed the "Military Parties" given by General Patterson were attended by distinguished soldiers from all sections of the country and abroad. In the list of names that have been preserved in connection with the guest chambers of the mansion is seen that of Commodore Jesse D. Elliott, John Mercer Brooke, who planned the Merrimac, for the Confederacy, Adjutant-General Seth Williams, Mrs. Henry R. Schoolcraft, the Chippewa wife of the Mississippi River explorer, General Fitzjohn Porter, Major





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Croghan of Sandusky fame, General Scott, General Sir Charles Wyndham, the hero of the Crimean, Captain Francis Marryatt. In the long list showing the varied character of the company entertained at some of the noted dinners and receptions are the names of General Grant, General George A. H. Blake, General Z. B. Town, General Babcock, General Barry, General Wilcox, Surgeon General John M. Cuyler, and Major-General Alexander, while still other distinguished guests were La Fayette, the Duke of Saxe-Weimar, Joseph Bonaparte, Charles Dickens, Thomas H. Benton, du Chaillu, Webster, Clay, Lord Houghton, Keokuk and Black Hawk, chiefs of the Sac and Fox nations. In the visit too, of President Andrew Jackson to Philadelphia General Patterson received him in his fine old mansion, and also on that memorable visit of President James K. Polk was the interior of the house ablaze with lights on the occasion of



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General Patterson's dinner and ball in honor of the president.

In the long list of illustrious names appears that of Joseph Bonaparte, the elder brother of Napoleon, who was made King of Spain. The beautiful Elizabeth Patterson of Baltimore, who married Jerome Bonaparte, King of Westphalia, was a kinswoman of General Patterson. Some of the old treasures in the Patterson family originally belonged to the Bonapartes. The marble mantles in the mansion were once owned by Joseph Bonaparte, while the mirrors in the drawing room belonged to Washington before purchased by General Patterson.

The Patterson memoirs describe at length the apartments and their massive furniture, the chandeliers and mirrors and candelabra. The frescoes were done by Uberti and Marchesi, and the armorial decorations together with the statuary were in keeping with the general character of the old mansion.

Mrs. Patterson is mentioned frequently



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in these memoirs as a most agreeable hostess, a beauty, a musician and a woman of brilliant mental attainments. On one occasion she is described as wearing a gown of ruby velvet, a turban of black and orange silk over which were the feathers of a bird of paradise.

The position of the youthful Mrs. Patterson was doubtless similar to that of her sister at the American embassy. The splendid social regime into which she entered in the heyday of her beauty was as dazzling as any court. When years afterward the old mansion became the property of the Historical society Mrs. Patterson retained many treasures in the way of portraits and candelabra and porcelains. With her husband, she made frequent visits to East Tennessee, and it was at the summer home of the Pattersons at Russellville that Colonel Patterson passed away a few years ago.

One of the most brilliant of the Graham women was Louise, who married Theophilus



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Rogan. She was the only one of the sisters who remained in Tennessee, where only a few years ago, she celebrated her golden wedding anniversary at the quaint country seat, "Hayslope," given her by her father over half a century ago. It was purchased from its founder, Colonel Thomas Roddy, who obtained his commission at the battle of King's mountain. The old house is one of the quaintest in East Tennessee. It is built of great logs, hewn by ax, ceiled inside and out with heavy oak planks put on endwise with nails wrought by hand. The walnut shingles were hung onto the flattened poles beneath with wooden pegs. A small box porch occupied the front of the house, and one of the original benches is still there, while the old porch in the rear with a half story and sloping roof is a perfect example of the old houses that sprung up on American soil a century and a half ago.

The old road from Charleston to Lexington passed through the Hayslope gardens,





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following the track of Boone on his way to the dark and bloody ground of the Kentucky wilderness. The slave quarters were in the rear. Colonel Roddy was a devout Baptist, and when at meals, he said "grace," the kitchen doors were always opened that the blessing might reach black as well as white. There being no place of worship in the neighborhood, he offered his house for the purpose, and there in the large living room Richard Rice, a colleague of Judson, the first missionary to India, addressed a large audience. The house had an interesting history when Hugh Graham purchased it for his daughter, and it was destined to play a conspicuous part in war, and in the social life of the south. During the Confederate war it was occupied alternately by Confederate and Federal troops. General Longstreet and his corps made "Hayslope" their headquarters in the winter of '63 and '64. Three soldiers were assigned to the house for protection, one acted as nurse, one milked



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and cut wood, while a third cooked. All three were killed at Cold Harbor.

Major Fairfax granted protection to "Hayslope" cows on condition he was to receive one gallon of milk daily for his egg-nog. The federals having taken all supplies of grain and also stock, the milk from the cows furnished all the means of living, as it could be exchanged with the soldiers for bread and meat. The last winter of the war it was no unusual sight to see ragged, barefooted soldiers huddling together for warmth in the big "Hayslope" barn, living on a ration of one ear of corn a day which was parched and soaked in water. During the famous retreat of the federals from Bulls' Gap the Confederates formed a line of attack in front of the house and charged on Gran Yard Hill. The wounded were brought to "Hayslope" and it became a hospital and a prison. On more than one occasion mass was said in the living room by Father Ryan, the poet-priest, the candle-



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sticks holding the tapers having been used on Hugh Graham's wedding table. And there, where Father Ryan had erected a small private chapel, took place a quaint revival of a wedding feast to which Pope Leo XIII sent his blessing.

The gardens about the old place are still unchanged. The clematis covered summer houses have fallen to decay only within recent years. The rose trees, the phlox and the altheas are blooming. The morning glories are riotous. There is a little garden gate through which you enter: there is the scent of lavender and rosemary. And into this garden have wandered the great ones of earth: into its fragrant recesses have come the lowly. Soldiers, priests, exiles: a strange procession has wound its way outside the garden: its gateway has opened to receive a pageant: pretty women have idled among the drowsing poppies: the garden has witnessed many loves.

These memoirs, leaving the memories of







BARONESS KAVANAUGH-BALLYANE.

(Austria)



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old gardens as they bloomed in the American Wilderness, recall an interesting romance, when international marriages were less frequent than they are today. The brilliant life of the American embassy at Constantinople where the lovely Lucy Williams, as the wife of the American minister, maintained social traditions with dignity and grace, has been alluded to in preceding pages. While the Williams' were abroad, the wedding of their eldest daughter, Kate, to the young Austrian nobleman, Baron Harry Kavanaugh-Ballyane, was celebrated with great brilliancy. The Baroness became mistress of a castle in Hungary "Kis Tabor," which these memoirs describe as one of the most interesting castles of Europe, its date going back to Roman times. In letters to Tennessee relatives Baroness Kavanaugh-Ballyane described her private apartments in the "Round Tower." She alluded to the magnificence of the furnishings, and particularly, to the number of silver articles in her







GENERAL VIEW OF "AL-FARSI"



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of social activity. The prince and princess divided their time between their favored cities. The Princess de Liguori embraced the Catholic religion. Her children, with the proudest blood of Sicily in their veins, were reared with strict etiquette.

These memoirs allude briefly to the political strifes of Sicily: to its incorporation into the Italian Kingdom: to the changes affecting it politically. The princess maintained her position with dignity: to her the etiquette inseparable from the royal marriage was not one of chance: neither was she fated to become entangled with any of the scandals of Sicilian political life.

From the pages of the memoirs an attempt has been made to present the different periods of social, political and military activity without disturbing the chain of narrative.

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