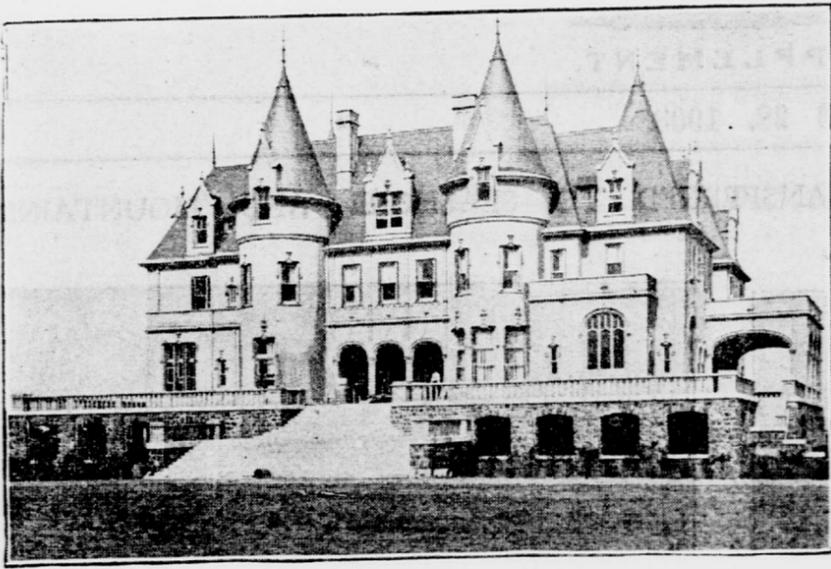


BIRNAM, F. ROBERT SCHELL'S FINE NEW HOME AT NORTHFIELD, MASS., CONTAINS SOME UNIQUE FEATURES



EXTERIOR OF BIRNAM HOUSE

SUMMER EMBASSIES.

Resorts Where Representatives of Foreign Countries Will Be.

The next few weeks will witness the transfer of all the principal embassies and legations from Washington to seashore and mountain resorts. This year will witness no great departure from the usual custom of ambassadors and ministers of taking advantage of the lull in the round of official life during the heated term to hurry home, make reports to their foreign offices and receive instructions for the ensuing Washington season. However, the accession of the United States to the position of a world power has multiplied the interests which must be looked after by the various diplomatic establishments to such an extent that it is necessary to leave efficient secretaries in charge during the vacation term. These secretaries are not always compelled, however, to await the departure of the envoy before transferring their official headquarters to some summer abiding place.

The present season will be remarkable in that an exceptional number of envoys will remain in the United States and personally direct affairs at the summer diplomatic establishments. Among the ambassadors those representing Austria and Russia are the only dignitaries who have yet hastened away from our shores. The British Ambassador, Sir Michael Herbert, has waited to superintend personally the settling of the embassy in its new quarters at Newport, and Signor Mayor des Planches, the Italian Ambassador, has spent some time at the summer headquarters of his embassy at Manchester-by-the-Sea, and will sail for Italy this week. The Mexican, German and French ambassadors will remain in this country throughout the summer.

From a diplomatic standpoint the pretty little resort Manchester-by-the-Sea, Mass., is the summer capital of the United States. In Washington in the winter the European diplomats rather hold themselves aloof from their brethren of the Spanish-American republics, and likewise in summer they flock to a "colony" of their own. At Manchester, the resort of the Continental diplomats, will be located this season the French, Italian and Austro-Hungarian embassies and the Turkish Legation. The German Ambassador, who is possessed of a certain independence of spirit, has chosen to spend the summer at a little resort in the White Mountains, where he will have none of his diplomatic colleagues for neighbors. The Mexican Embassy will be located in a handsome cottage at Deal Beach, N. J., and the British diplomats will be quartered in the Stone cottage, Greenough Place, Newport, R. I. The hostess of the British Embassy will be Mrs. Sidney Waterlow, the wife of one of the secretaries of the embassy. Mrs. Waterlow will have as her guests during the summer her parents, Sir Frederick and Lady Pollock.

The interest in the "summer embassies" will be enhanced from the fact that several of them will be in charge of diplomats of rank who will arrive in this country just in time to take up their duties at the summer establishments. In the case of the French Embassy there are several newcomers on the ambassador's staff, but probably the most interesting is Vicomte Charles de Chambrun, the youngest son of the late Marquis de Chambrun, for many years a resident of Washington and a direct descendant of Lafayette. His second brother, Count Albert de Chambrun, the noted African traveller, is the husband of Clara, daughter of Mrs. Nicholas Longworth, of Cincinnati.

The Austro-Hungarian summer embassy is to be presided over by the new first secretary, Baron Karl von Giskra, and his American wife. He will be assisted by another newcomer, Count Frederick Hoyos, who is the son of a former Austrian Minister, and was born in Washington while his father was serving at his post there. The Italian Embassy will have a notable host in the person of Count de Cellere, the new first secretary of the embassy, who was appointed last autumn, but has been deterred by ill health from assuming his new duties. The count is wealthy, and he expects to maintain at

Manchester the reputation for hospitality which the ambassador has established at Washington. Most of the South and Central American diplomats will spend the summer in the Alleghanies or on the Jersey coast, and the Chinese Minister expects to seek one of the latter resorts, probably Atlantic City.

WHAT WASHINGTON MIGHT ASK.

Admiral Dewey and General Miles are the best of friends, but they don't mind "knocking" each other good naturedly. They went down to Mount Vernon together on some holiday when, naturally, there were hundreds of visitors to the old home and burial place of the "Father of His Country." General Miles seemed much impressed. He silently contemplated the crowd for a few moments and then said, with feeling:

"What, I wonder, would Washington say if he were suddenly to appear here in the flesh?"

"You mean just at this moment?" asked the admiral, with a suspicious twinkle in his eye.

"Yes, certainly," answered Miles, a trifle annoyed that his companion had failed to catch the inspiration of his thought.

"I really don't know," said the admiral, whose twinkle by this time had become really malicious, "unless he asked how the blazes you ever succeeded in getting the job he used to hold."

THE CUSTOMS O' THE COUNTRY.

There was once a Newfoundland fisherman—he chanced to be a Catholic—who, in old age, came to die. He had lived in debt all his life, and, no doubt, had never once given his whole catch to the dealer who supplied him, but had wrongfully slipped many a quintal over the side of a rival schooner and traded it out on the spot.

"Send for Fawther Rafferty," he said. "Send immediate!"

He wanted to confess his sins, to be shriven, and to depart in peace; but his old priest had been transferred to Trinity Bay—a young man, just back from Rome, was now the spiritual head of the parish.

"Sure, 'tis Fawther Codlin," they told him. "Noa, noa!" the old man protested. "Fawther

Codlin's a fine young man—a clever young man. I doubt me not; but 'tis old Fawther Rafferty I wants t' hear me confession."

"An' why?" they asked.

"Sure," the dying man gasped, "he knows the customs o' the country."—(Norman Duncan, in *The World's Work*.)

A FINE COUNTRY SEAT.

French Chateau of F. Robert Schell at Northfield, Mass.

Birnam House, at Northfield, Mass., the country residence of F. Robert Schell, of New-York, adds one more to the list of fine homes owned by prominent citizens of New-York.

Situated on high land in the heart of the historic Connecticut River Valley, it commands views for fifty miles of the Green Mountains of Vermont and the lower White Mountain range in the Granite State. Following the wishes of Mr. Schell, Bruce Price, the architect, who died recently, designed a French chateau, which was considered by him among his finest architectu-

ral creations. The home is surrounded by 140 acres of undulating land, and through a glen on the estate a brook winds its way, while at a short distance the placid waters of a miniature lake reflect tall trees known to those Revolutionary inhabitants whose fathers waged active war with the Indians of the region.

The ground dimensions of the house are 150 by 130 feet. At the south is an Italian terraced garden, the land sloping gradually to the river at the west, where against the sky line a chain of rugged hills stands in bold relief. Rich lawns greet the eye at the eastern or main approach. Tall towers flank the entrance hall, which is 80 feet long and 23 feet wide. Here are full-length family portraits, and fireplaces 7 by 7 feet, permitting open log fires.

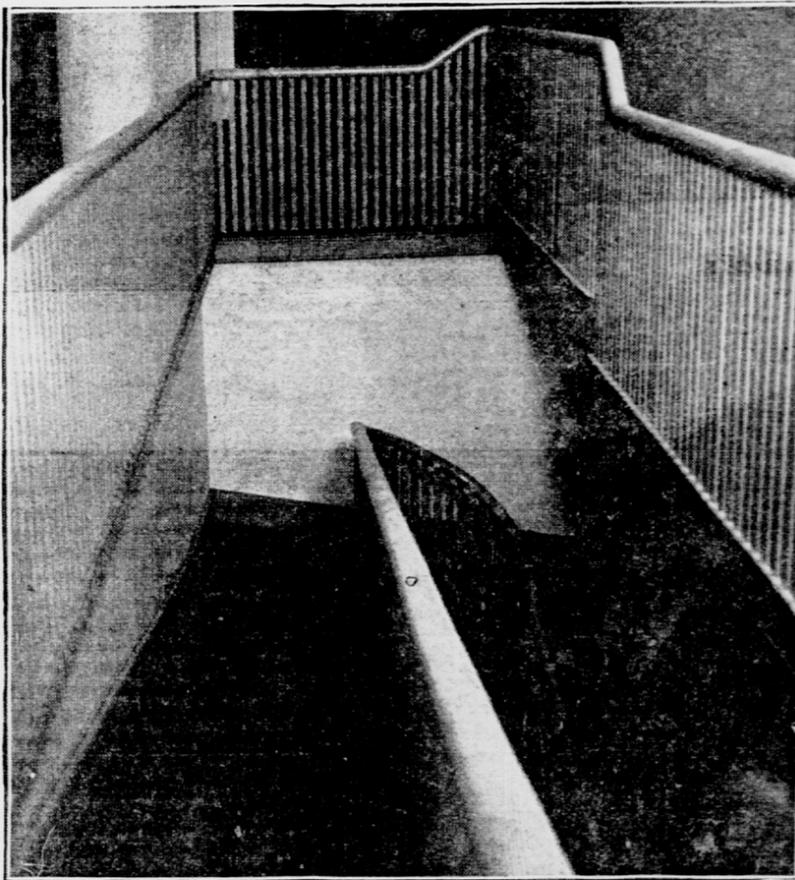
Another wide hall intersects this, leading on the south to the Charles I library, which has panels of oak and is hung with choice engravings, souvenirs of England's monarch, and where there is a collection of some two thousand books.

At the north is the wide white marble and wrought iron stairway, the railings covered with crimson velvet, which leads to the second floor. Besides this, there are also an electric elevator and two winding stairs, one within the other, so that two persons ascending at the same time do not see one another until the top is reached, while for an invalid chair an inclined plane has been constructed which goes to the second floor. Mr. Schell's family chapel, cruciform in design, occupies the northeastern corner of the main floor. It is finished in oak, the windows of cathedral glass. Those in the chancel show the Schell family crest, with the rose of England and the blue cornflower of Germany on either side, indicating Mr. Schell's line of descent from those countries. In the north transept is placed the family crest of Mrs. Schell, with the Scotch thistle and English rose of her ancestors. A small gallery is at the west end, and an organ, with other accessories for private or semi-public devotional exercises, completes the chapel.

At the northwest corner of the main floor is a spacious oval dining room, the breakfast room, in green, being at the southeastern corner; a billiard room nearly fifty feet in length is also on the main floor. Suites of rooms on the second and third floors and in the towers provide accommodation for a large number of persons. The housekeeper and servants have rooms in the basement. From every window in the house a beautiful view is obtained.

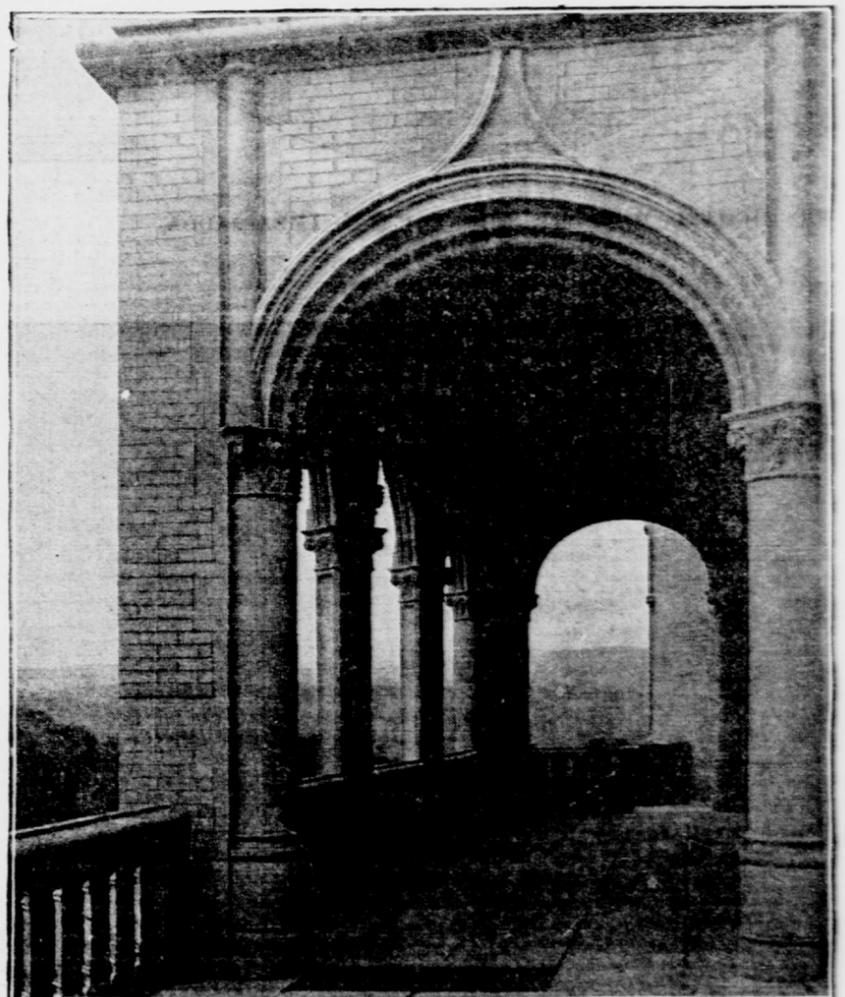
Mr. Schell's father, Robert Schell, was one of four brothers, the others being Augustus, Edward and Richard, each of whom was well known to the older generation of New-Yorkers. Robert Schell was for nearly thirty years president of the Bank of the Metropolis and identified with financial, religious and philanthropic interests. His son is at present erecting an iron and granite bridge at Northfield over the Connecticut River, as a memorial to his father and mother.

Northfield's need of this bridge was first brought to Mr. Schell's attention by Ambert G. Moody, nephew of D. L. Moody, who, with Mrs. Schell, has spent many months in designing and preparing the granite approaches. Indeed, the present chateau is in large measure due to



THE INCLINED PLANE.

For wheeling an invalid's chair up and down stairs in Birnam House.



ONE OF BIRNAM'S ATTRACTIVE BALCONIES.