



The Vanderbilt Country Estates and Town Houses

A Brief Description as to their Present State

"The Breakers", Newport, Rhode Island. The Cornelius Vanderbilt estate designed by Richard Morris Hunt and occupied by the family in 1895. Building replaces frame structure purchased from Louis Lorrillard in 1885 and which was destroyed by fire in 1892. Acquired by purchase by The Preservation Society of Newport County in 1972.

"Marble House", Newport, Rhode Island, designed in 1888 by Richard Hunt for William K. Vanderbilt. Purchased by Frederick H. Prince of Boston in 1933 and in 1963 by The Preservation Society of Newport County.

Frederick Vanderbilt's estate in Hyde Park, N. Y. — designed by McKim, Mead and White is now a house-museum and a N. Y. State Historic Site.

Margaret Vanderbilt Shepard's "Woodlea" estate, Scarsborough, N. Y., also designed by McKim, Mead and White, ready for occupancy in 1894 — sold about 1920 to the Sleepy Hollow Country Club, that still owns the place today.

Frederick's "Rough Point" estate in Newport designed by Boston architects Peabody & Stearns — later bought by James B. Duke who had it remodeled by architect Horace Trumbauer. Now the summer home of Doris Duke.

"Biltmore", Ashville, N. C., is another house museum and National Historical Site — one of the few houses still in the family, being owned by George Vanderbilt's grandsons, the Cecils.

"Vinland" — now used as Library building by Salve Regina College was purchased by the Twomblys in 1896 from the Lorillard family. During the winter of 1907-08 it was enlarged and remodeled by the original architects, Peabody & Stearns.

"Florham" in Convent Station, N. J. (the name being a combination of the owners first names — Florence and Hamilton Twombly) was designed by McKim, Mead and White and ready for occupancy in 1897. Remaining in the family until 1955 it was, perhaps, the most complete of Vanderbilt estates. Later sold to Fairleigh Dickinson University who now occupy a portion of the original 2000 acres and use the Mansion as Administration Building.

"Idle Hour", William K. Vanderbilt's country house on Long Island was designed by Hunt & Hunt architects — sons of R. M. Hunt who designed the original house that burned in 1899. Sold out of the family in the early 1920's it is now the campus of Dowling College of Suffolk County. William K. could dock his yacht, Valiant, directly in front of the mansion on the Connetquot River that ran in from South L. I. Sound.

"Shelbourne House", south of Burlington, Vermont, was built as a simple shingle mansion by architect Robert Henderson Robertson — who also designed Hammersmith Farm — greatly enlarged by him for the Webb family who still own the estate. It is utilized as a "community resource" and run as a setting for concerts, boyscout programs, etc. The original 4000 acres are divided up between the present generation and still remains much as Eliza Vanderbilt Webb and her husband left it.

"Elm Court", at Lenox (the "Inland Newport") another house built in the shingle style in 1886 — later enlarged by a series of additions until it became a huge Victorian Mansion. Unoccupied at the present, it still remains in the family, being owned by Emily Vanderbilt White's granddaughter — who lives on a nearby estate. The vast greenhouses are run commercially. Elm Court is the last of the Lenox mansions with its original furnishings and decorations intact.

Across the bottom of the painting are the Town Houses along 5th Avenue that have all been demolished.

640 — being a portion of the "Triple Palace" built by William H. Vanderbilt for himself but enjoyed only four years until his death in 1885, passing to his youngest son George, who owned it for thirty years.

642 — built for eldest daughter Margaret Shepard — later sold to sister Emily V. Sloane-White who lived in the corner house on 52nd Street.

680 — built by William Henry Vanderbilt for daughter Eliza V. Webb and designed by architect John Butler Snook who also designed the "Triple Palace" with Herter Brothers.

684 — built likewise for daughter Florence V. Twombly also by architect Snook and decorators Herter Brothers. Sold in the 1920's to John D. Rockefeller who lived around the corner on West 54th St.

1 West 57th Street — built for Cornelius Vanderbilt II by architect George B. Post in 1882. Later enlarged by Post who collaborated with Richard M. Hunt to make this the most flamboyant of the Vanderbilt Town Houses and largest private home in New York City. Sold by Mrs. Vanderbilt in 1925 — demolished in 1927.