

CHARLES BECKLEY PLATT. In the northwestern residence portion of Norwich, on elevated ground, amid picturesque surroundings, stands the Platt homestead, the estate, "Rocklawn," of the late Charles B. Platt, one of the founders of, and associated with Isaac H. Bromley and William D. Manning in the publication of, the *Norwich Bulletin*; and here continue to reside Mrs. Olive Worthington (Barslow) Platt, and Mrs. Helen B. P. Huntington, widow and daughter, respectively, of Mr. Platt, and the latter the widow of the late C. M. Huntington. Norwich, as is well known, has long borne the beautiful sobriquet of the "Rose of New England," and as a factor in the town's beauty "Rocklawn" enters largely. From the crown of its eminence is presented a panoramic picture of great charm and picturesqueness. This old estate of some sixteen acres has within a decade or more, through the enterprise, public spirit, taste and ability of Mrs. Platt, been greatly improved and transformed into one of the most charming and inviting residence portions of Norwich, and dotted over with many tasteful cottages of modern design and equipment. Of the family history and lineage of the occupants of the Platt home at "Rocklawn" it is the purpose of this article to treat.

Charles Beckley Platt the youngest son of Ely was born in Utica March 8 1827 In his native place he learned the printer's trade following it at first in that city and later in New York City He came to Norwich early in life and in 1860 two years after the establishment of the Norwich Morning Bulletin became part owner and the business manager of that paper which was conducted under the firm name of Manning Platt & Co Mr Platt sold out his interest and retired from the management of the paper in 1868 After abandoning the newspaper business he conducted a dry goods business and Mrs Platt carried on the largest millinery business in the city for many years Mr Platt retired from business a couple of years before his death having accumulated a competency and spent the remainder of his life at his elegant residence Rocklawn in the northeastern part of the town Mr Platt was an excellent business man and was considered the most skillful printer and publisher in the county He possessed fine literary tastes his knowledge of standard literature was varied and extensive and his remarkable memory served him well in his literary labors Under his nom de plume of Karl Beck he wrote many excellent pieces of Poetry and prose among them Rocklawn which is given below Before his connection with the Bulletin he published the Norwich Tribune a weekly of superior merit in company with Edmund Clarence Stedman the poet who was the editor but the Paper was suspended after a career of little more than a year in 1853 Mr Platt died Sept 8 1883 in the fifty sixth year of his age His death was caused by an abscess in the throat which ended in hemorrhage He was buried in the Yantic cemetery his funeral being largely attended Rev Dr Geisy of Christ Church officiated On Dec 14 1848 Mr Platt married Frances JC Dey and they had two children Allen who died at the age of twenty four years and a daughter who died in infancy On Feb 8 1860 he married Olive Worthington Barstow and to that union came four children Carrie B Helen B Rufus B and George B previously mentioned Of his picturesque home and its environs Mr Platt once wrote as follows O fair Rocklawn thou charming home where now my manhood's prime Is sure and swiftly passing from the golden shores of time Be thou my theme while I essay in melancholy Song TO celebrate the beauties that for aye to thee belong And sing the tender memories of sweet elysian days A defter minstrel's loftier lay can only fitly praise O rare old days They ll dearer grow in all the coming years That fate may have in store for me with smiles or bitter tears And unto them this heart will turn with ever mantling joy TO on all their treasured hours without the least alloy Dear old Rocklawn delightful spot when grim and hoary age Shall bring to me its sorrows dree nor make of me a sage How fond will memory linger on each charm endeared to me The ancient elm the brave old oak and many a spreading tree The cro nest on the craggy rock with tangled wildwood round Where oft at evening's witching hour in reverie profound I ve dared to dream the wildest dreams and in the empty a1 Full many a castle tall with tower and turret fair By magic art have conjured up and seen them grandly rise With pinnacle and graceful spire uppointing to the skies Alas how soon they crumbling fell all toppling to the ground And broken lay a mournful wreck in rueful ruin round The orchard on the sloping green where merry children played And where the scent of apple blossoms all the summer stayed The hemlock hedge that grows beside the wild and rocky glen The rivulet that rippling runs along the reedy fen Where all its laughing waters clear in tiny cascades fell With light and beauty lighting up the weird and silent cell The shining lake anent the hill that shimmers in the light Like diamonds on the helmet of a leal and belted knight Within whose dark and silent depths like gleaming darts of flame The gorgeous goldfish gambol free as if in sportive game How oft I ve tried to lure them from their wat ry realms below But wise as well as beautiful they did not care to go The rustic well where oft at noon in summer's fervent heat I ve gaily quaffed a brimming draught of nectar cold and Sweet As Bacchus sips with burning lips from the ruddy beaker's brim Who cares for wine when drink divine flows o er the bucket's rim Along the wooded valley to the south and far away Slow winds the peerless river by its banks of green and gray Now flashing back each am rous glance the sun so boldly throws On its fair and virgin bosom as pure as polar snows Then holding in its lucent deeps in soft celestial sheen The mirrored moon far down below majestic and serene Its mighty tide of waters from the flume and turbine free Now toils no more with rush and roar but widens to the Sea Amid whose bounding billows capped with combing crests of foam Twill soon be free as it used to be away in its mountain home And so the soul will float away on summer sea of love From tears and toil and turmoil free to realms

of peace above O fair Rocklawn I'll not forget among thy many charms The birds that fill thy leafy groves with music's
soft alarms And gaily greet in song so sweet the footsteps of the morn Whose golden light on mountain height
proclaimed a new day born The meadow lark in blithesome strain then pipes his greeting high And boldly wings his dizzy
flight far upward to the sky The phoebe's soft and tender song so mournful and so low Now joins the flaming oriole's in
the meadow down below Anon the cheery bobolink in notes full clear and strong Fills all the air with melody in blissful
matin song While every merry warbler in the orchard and the grove Swells high the joyful symphony of praise to God
above The flowers I will ever love that in thy garden bloom Its roses rare and lilies fair all breathe a rich perfume That
haunts the brain like dying strain of ancient runic rhyme The ivy on the crumbled wall the aromatic thyme With modest
violets on the ground carnations in their pride And orange blossoms golden hued to deck the blushing bride There's
rosemary for remembrance sad of loves of auld lang syne While pansies sweet wake tender thoughts of present love
divine O every heart a kingdom is where Love despotic reigns In age and youth or joy or ruth it bears the tyrant's chains
The white and crimson columbine that tells of broken VOWS Close by the patient ox eye blooms and laurel for the brows
Beside a funeral cypress grows whose branches sadly wave He who the path of glory treads but marches to the grave
Such berries red and purple grapes ne'er grew on bush or vine Nor in such tempting clusters hung as grow and hang on
the tree No tasselled corn on summer mom ever waved so tall and grand To cheer the patient toiler for the labor of his
hand The apple and the apricot the luscious peach and pear As low the loaded branches bend with burdens rich and rare
Seem better sweeter choicer far than ever in garden grew Since roses bloomed or water ran or softly fell in dew And
Eden mist that fabled spot its ancient glories share With this more modern paradise so blooming and so fair When night
lets fall her sable pal on all the world around And shrouds the vale the hill and dale in darkness most profound Ten
thousand tiny lamps are lit and brightly gleam and glance From evening gray to break of day to light the mystic dance Of
fay and fairy winsome airy tripping light and free From dusk to dawn on grassy lawn beneath the greenwood tree Then
many a mystic sound falls soft on fancy's listening ear And wraps the soul in wonder oft impels it oft to fear The moaning
breeze in lofty trees takes up the weird refrain And fills the mind with nameless dread the heart with haunting pain
Lover home thou hast a dearer charm and more exalted art Than rarest beauty nature gives or art can make or mar Its
gracious presence brightens joy it lightens every grief And in the fall of life's treasured things the choicest and the chief The
lowly cot the lordly hall with wealth and beauty crowned Nor peace nor happiness can know if this do not abound Take
from my home all nature gave all art has deftly one I'll never grieve if fate will leave this gem this priceless one This pearl
so fair this jewel rare all else so far above The poor man's wealth the rich man's bliss is sweet domestic love Dear spot I
love to linger long on all thy pleasing charms Thy deep sequestered by ways lone untroubled by wild alarms Amid whose
loved and lovely scenes from stormy passions free My world worn wan and weary soul would ever like to be Exempt
from bicker toil and strife for riches or for fame No wish to join the madding crowd no thought of praise or blame I'd
calmly bide that fateful hour which soon must come to me To break all earthly prison doors and set my spirit free And
then at last when life is passed its litful fever over Dear old Rocklawn my charining home good bye forevermore This
poem appeared in the Geneva NY Gasvill and the editor appended the following note Rocklawn is the name given to one
of the most beautiful in the world in Norwich in the history of the former city That ancient and beautiful city delightfully
located among lofty hills at the confluence of three rivers the Yantic and Thames has won the sobriquet of the
Rose of England on account of its unrivalled natural beauties its fine churches and elegant private residences
and villas

Mrs Platt since becoming the owner of Rocklawn has made some very extensive improvements to the estate
and has built more than twentyfive houses and cottages thereon opening up streets etc She is largely interested
in real estate and has proved herself a business woman