



The Village of Schuylerville is well known for its contributions to industry. Early business leaders built factories along Fish Creek and the Hudson River, and used the waters to power their factories and ship their goods. Many of these mills were contributors to the garment industry; the Village was home to both a linen and cotton mill. It should be no surprise then, that Village of Schuylerville was also the home of fashion designer, entrepreneur, and women’s rights activist, Ellen Curtis Demorest, the woman credited with creating the first mass-marketed paper pattern for the construction of clothing.

Ellen Curtis was born on November 15, 1824 to Chauncey and Mary Curtis. Her father, Chauncey, was a tailor. After completing high school, Ellen Curtis followed in her father’s footsteps, and opened a millinery shop. In 1858, Ellen married William J. Demorest moved with him to New York City. There, she opened Madame Demorest’s Emporium of Fashions. She also started a magazine, *Demorest’s Illustrated Monthly Magazine* and *Madame Demorest’s Mirror of Fashions*, which featured, in addition to color fashion plates, her new creation, a paper pattern, stapled into each copy. The paper pattern proved a huge success, and by the year 1876, sales of the patterns grew to three million.

Using the immensely popular magazine as a platform, Ellen Curtis Demorest advocated for many reform issues including women’s equality. The magazine included columns written by editor, Jane Cunningham Croly, an advocate of women’s rights, to support women’s advancement. Ellen Curtis Demorest employed many women in her many industries, including a large number of African-American women who worked on the same terms as their white coworkers.

In 1887 Demorest sold the pattern business. Ellen Curtis Demorest died in New York City on August 10, 1898.