

Thomas, W. Va.
August 12, 1949.

Dear Mrs. Eunsford:

I enjoyed your long interesting letter of the 4th, my but waited to reply until the pictures came which they did yesterday.

I am indeed glad to have them but will wait to put the data on the back until I hear from you again about some details that I wish to get.

First. The outside of the house. Of course I know that the enclosed porch is modern, but am not sure whether the pillared porch at the end that goes out into the lawn or garden is original or added some years later. Also I feel reasonably sure that the present two story was added later, as all the houses of that period that I have seen had only one story wings. Of course the first story may be original and the upper one built on later.

I have always been interested in colonial and early pioneer architecture and have personally visited many houses in Virginia and the Ohio River part of West Virginia. For example in Mason County my grandfather John Miller built in 1809 the first brick house in the county it was a few miles down the river from Gallipolis. It was near the river and the main part was a story and half with dormer windows for the upstairs. A big chimney at each end. There were four rooms, and a hall two rooms down stairs and two above. At each end of the main building there was a one story wing, which with main building gave a long facade. Later he gave it to his eldest son, Christopher Miller as a wedding present, and moved his family to Teas' Valley where he owned a thousand acres of land. A few years later he bought a thousand acres on the south side of The Great Kanawha from the Washington heirs when they were selling off the twenty thousand acre grant that Gen. Washington had gotten in colonial days. This thousand acres was in two tracts five miles apart. My grandfather moved back from Teas' Valley and settled on one four miles up the river from Point Pleasant, and after his death in 1846 my father, then a boy of 17 years and a student at Marshall Academy (now college). Grandfather died in March and grand mother had to send a negro servant with a led horse to bring father home for the funeral.

I neglected to put in above as I intended doing that my father inherited the other place and in 1850 married and moved to it. When he died in 1898 my mother and younger brother inherited the house and main part of the farm. The valley there is a ~~thousand~~ a mile and eight wide. Our home was back at the first rise before going into the hill and creek part of the farm, which had a half mile river front and back line a mile and three quarters back from the river.

Ot.

Coming back to old houses. My gt/grandfather. Lieutenant John Henderson who fought under his brother in law General Andrew Lewis in the bloody battle of Point Pleasant in 1774 against the Indians, received from the State of Virginia a grant of two thousand acres, extending a mile up the Ot. Kanawha and a mile down the Ohio from the point of intersection of the rivers. After his death in 1787 he willed this land to his sons Samuel and John, who moved to it from Greenbrier County in 1800. and settled on. In 1811, Samuel built a two story brick house, with a one story kitchen wing, and a square hall like you see in the Hollenback house. This house is standing opposite Pt. Pleasant, and owned by his descendants. I have visited there many times in my younger days. Coming on up the valley, a first cousin of my father Frances Hannan, married a Mr. Albert Eastman about 1850 and he built a two story brick house--four rooms and square hall in the main part and a one story ell with kitchen and dining room. Then going on up the Valley four miles, another first cousin of father's Katherine Hannan married James long who had a big farm he had bought from the Haffner family. they had built on it a two story with square hall with a one story ell. Another mile farther

was Holmwood the lovely old home of Judge James Couch, one of whose sons married my sister Sarah, who is still living in Raleigh, N.C. past 82 years of age. This Couch house was also a two story with square hall brick house with a one story ell. The next place was Cousin Peter Couch's place a two story frame house with square hall and one story ell. His wife was Katharine Eastham, daughter of the Cousin Frances Eastham that I mentioned before. And her ~~father's~~ brother Henry married my oldest half sister.

In speaking of the old Henderson grant of my great great grandfather John Henderson, his son John who moved to the grant with his brother Sam ~~uck~~ about 1800, was my gt. grandfather as grandfather John Miller married his daughter Sarah as his second wife. By this marriage there were six daughters and one son my father, who was born in 1829. This John became very prominent in Mason county. He was a member of the first county court when the county was organized in 1809. He was a major in the county militia from that date on, and in the War of 1812 a Colonel. I have some of his old muster rolls and letters. From 1811 until his death in 1824 he was a member of the Virginia Legislature. His house about a mile up the Kanawha River was a two story hewn log house, later covered with weather boarding, and one story wing I have heard my father say. When the government built Look 11 on the Kanawha the south side end was on the old Henderson land and the old house was torn down.

So you see that by marriage among the descendants of the old pioneer families in The Kanawha Valley I am kin to most of them. With all of this intermarriage I have never heard of but one case of marriage between first cousins, that was years ago between two of the Long families--there were three of the Long Brothers who came to the Valley from Page county Va.

I could go on for pages yet about old houses and my first cousins and uncles in Cabell County, Boyd Co., Ky. and other places. Owing to the fact that my grandfather John Miller had six sons and one daughter by his first wife Sophia Glendenning, daughter of Major Glendenning of what is now Mason County, when they grew up and spread out and had big families, who married well it has made me related to a lot of people, like the Thaxtons, Beuhrings and other in Huntington, Barboursville, Catlettsburg, etc.

This letter so far looks as though it is all about my own family and old houses, so after I rest a while later on today or tomorrow I will hold forth on the Hamptons and their homes.

Monday morning.

My office is a corner room and gets all of the afternoon sun on both side and front, and even with windows and doors open it is terribly hot in the afternoon. Sunday I am not in the office but spend the day reading and listening to the radio. A heavy rain all night and still falling this morning has made the day very comfortable. In all my nearly fifty years up here (50 next May) on this mountain top three thousand feet above sea level I have never seen a summer like this one. In other years we have had a week or ten days of hot weather, but never more than two months of it with terrible humidity as it has been this year.

Coming back to the pictures of the Hollenback house interiors. I am sure that the floors, baseboards, panneling in the hall, and upstairs wooden mantel are original. I feel sure that behind the iron front upstairs that after coal was brought to Huntington, that the old wooden fireplace was replaced with brick and a coal grate put in. As to the white mantel in the living room I am not sure. It looks like an iron mantel that became fashionable in the 1870ties, but a careful study of the moulding finishing the bottom of the upright pillars, and the moulding under the top part under the shelf there seems to be cracks where the different parts were put together. However the top mantel board seems to be iron, which was fashionable with the white iron mantels to have the top board black iron.

No doubt the tiling was put in much later when gas came to Huntington, or may have had a coal or wood basket for use in the winter.

I am of the opinion that the stair railing and newel post are not the ones put in when the house was built in 1811, as at that time the uprights on the steps and the newel post were square. The rails and newel post shown are of the style used in good houses after the War between the States, and were bought direct from some manufacturer of architectural supplies.

I hope some time you may be able to consult some good architect in Huntington and see how near right I am.

I am like you about the old house at 16th. street that it is the old home of Dr. Hampton himself. It is true that after shooting Col. Shortridge the court coats etc. ate up most of his fortune. However your uncle is wrong as to where the shooting occurred. It was not at his office but at his home. After the bitter quarrel between the two, Col. S. told a good many people that he was going to shoot Dr. Hampton on sight. Some of them told Dr. Hampton, so a week or so later, after Col. Shortridge had cooled off he took his gun and told his family that he was going to see Dr. Hampton, apologize and ask him to go squirrel hunting with him that day. Dr. Hampton was sitting on his porch when he saw the Colonel with his gun open the yard gate and start up the path to the house. The Doctor stepped inside his door picked his gun and shot the Colonel before he got close to the house. This account of the shooting I had from my father-in-law, Mr. John W. Hampton, who had it from his father, who was a grandson of both Dr. Hampton and Col. Shortridge, and was a grown man when the shooting occurred.

Speaking of the Buffingtons, a sister of my father married Captain James Robert Buffington, and after living for a short time in an old brick house on the Big Sandy River near the mouth of the river, they then moved to St. Louis, where she died the next July at the birth of a son. According to the family records she died of "Cholera Morbus", but I am reasonably sure that instead it child bed fever. In spite of the heat in July. She and her infant son were brought back by boat to my grandfather's home place on Kanawha to bury in the family graveyard there. They were in a hermetical seal iron casket I have heard my father say. I have seen the monument many times which unlike the other plain marble ones had a marble angel on top. I have a fine daguerrotype of Capt. Robert and Aunt. Lyde taken at the time of their marriage.

Also speaking of the Buffingtons. When my father, James Henderson Miller, was attending Marshall Academy in 1845-46 he and his roommate and class mate Albert Galletin Jenkins boarded with the Buffington family. Later this room mate was father's groomsmen when he married his first wife, and still later became a famous general in the Confederate army.

When speaking of the woodwork in the picture of the hall I am sure that if the paint is scraped off you will find the wood walnut if I am right about it not being the original stair railing, if it is the original it is more likely to be cherry, if not then I native black walnut. I am also of the opinion that the door at the back of the hall going in the ell wing is not the original door, as at the time of the house was built, doors were not made with two upright panels in the top part of the door, and two shorter upright panels in the lower half of the door. The panels always extended crossways of the door. The number of panels above and below the center part of the door frame depended upon the height of the door.

Of course I would like very much to have a picture of the old house at 16th. street, but I do not feel like paying the expense of having it taken, if there has been one taken I would like to have a print of and will send you the money for it when ever you let me know.

With kindest regards to you and yours, I am,
Sincerely,

517 Fourth Street
Huntington 1 West Va.



Dr. J. L. Miller

Thomas West Va.

Keep Hampton Data.



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Maysville, Ky., 190.....

I read Cousin Luttie. "Agree with thine adversary &c"
write while in the mood. write so tonight I have dashed
down a short synopsis of the family who lost their original
name by the theft of a sheep. I will not have an
opportunity to have it typed for you for some time, as
our boy is so busy in the office so send it in hieroglyphics
thinking it will give you more elaborate entertainment,
if your early education was not so sadly neglected you
may be able to read it, if it was you can hit the high
places. I have left out many amusing incidents I could
relate, haugt "deceased EDWARD" as you see
but will here relate one incident. when our worthy Grand Pa
were crossing the Alleghany Mountains, in what recently were termed
Paradise Schooners. Grand Ma got out of the Schooner to walk &
rest herself with my uncle David in his arms. This a babe a few
months old, she fell behind the train, & got lost by taking a wrong
road at a fork, & staid all night on the roots of a tree babe in
arms, with wolves snapping & snarling around her & was not
found until 10 A.M. next day I dare say none of her descendants
have that amt of nerve. She you know was the McGugin lost off the
tree,

Your doz. Will H. Robb

this was in 1802



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Traditional history of Robb family
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Robb given name not known emigrated from Scotland to America during first 1/2 of the 18th Century & located on Laurel Hill Pa. soon embraced in the city of Philadelphia subsequently moved to Washington Co Pa. & reared large family. 10 sons & 3 daughters. from this head so far as known to the writer the entire Robb family of America sprang. the majority of these sons if not all, emigrated westward. two David & Joshua located at Washington court house Ohio both were lawyers & politicians David was personal friend of Andrew Jackson & was by him appointed Indian agent for all the North West tribes after having been beaten for congress by Judge Bermed. by 1 vote, had no children. Joshua reared family & either son or grandson William commanded a regiment during the war between the States & was subsequently Sheriff of the county where he lived (known nothing of the rest of the family.) Major Robt Robb eldest son & William youngest son located in Lewis Co Ky. Robt was appointed Judge of the court under the old constitution. both were Presbyterian Elders & organized & built the Ebenezer church on Cabin creek Ky. from which church the Presbyterians both North & South took their

These facts are given in the history written by Dale



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names. One of the sons located in Indiana name not known
Two of whose sons became Presbyterian preachers. One
of the Sons located in Tenn. Two of whose sons
became lawyers. one Albert was a col & commanded a
confederate regiment & was killed in the battle of
fort Donelson, Joseph lived through the war &
lived in Nashville, nothing further is known of the Tenn
branch. one of the sons Samuel located in Mississippi
& writer supposes that Jas W. Robb noted as financier
& Banker of New Orleans & prior to the war one of the
wealthy men in the South. after the war moved to
Cincinnati & became prominent in the affairs of that
city. it is known to the writer that he claimed to have
descended from the Pa family. was said to have had the
most elegant & finely appointed homes in N.O. & was
said to have been a most elegant gentleman in his
bearing & manners nothing is known about his family
nothing is known of the daughters except one married a man
by the name of Butler, & at one time in the early history lived
in Maysville. & Butler St was named for her. now to revert
back to the Ky sons Robert had quite a family. little is known



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by the writer of the family of only two sons John & Joseph
& one daughter, who married a McIlvane who was Grandmother
to J. M. Rea, at one time of Mississippi now of Cabin Creek, who
was wounded at Shilo on Confederate side. John Robb moved
to Ohio, & Joseph, located in Denver, & during the days of the
old constitution, was county clerk by appointment, & after the
adoption of the new constitution was successively elected to
the office during the remainder of his life, holding the office
35 years & was said to be the best clerk in the State of Ky.
was married 3 times, his first wife was a Miss Cooper or (Cooper)
Scotch, a daughter of Murdoch Cooper, who was only heir to
an enormous estate of a bachelor brother, of Scotland, which
was never collected by the heirs & was sequestered to the British
Government. This was said to be due to the fact that Joseph
Robb (who was the only one interested, competent to handle
the business) becoming offended at some insinuating remark
made by some of the heirs, after having collected a large
sum for rents. He dropped the whole matter, & said he would
never have anything more to do with it. & thereby the estate
was lost. the above writer is conversant with this, is due to the
fact that some ~~some~~ Legacy agency in England, wrote a



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number of letters to his father in regard to the matter, thinking he was one of the heirs. (for the party interested, you doubtless know better than I the remainder of the history of this branch of the family). William the youngest son & Bro to Robert had two sons David & William & two daughters Mary & Eliza Mary married a Mr. Gearis, had one son who now lives in Clay Co Mo. Eliza never married, David eldest son married a Miss McHutt, had one son Joseph still living in Lewis Co & several daughters all married & moved to Ohio David died early in life. William youngest son went to Mississippi when a boy of 17 as clerk in cotton commission & shipping business for a man named Sumner, who practically adopted him, & the second year gave him a 1/2 interest in the business & they together opened & mapped big Black river & established a cotton commission business at Merend Bluff 200 miles from the mouth of the river. The 3rd year Robt acquired the whole business & made quite a fortune out of it. running it 9 years or until the failure of the Brandon Bank of Mississippi in which failure he lost the bulk of his estate. Then married a Miss Pipes (also Scotch by extraction) & bought a farm in Mason Co Ky where he spent

Established 1879



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the bulk of his remaining days. 4 children were the result of this union, one daughter Eliza. married Capt. Johnston of Ill, one children, 3 sons William James, & John. William the eldest son entered the confederate service at 18 years of age & served through the war, with Morgan & Forrest. married Miss Annie E. Willett. & located in Mo City Mo. but subsequently returned to Ky. & has since lived on a farm at Helena Sta Messen Co Ky. has 3 sons William, Lillman & Virgil. 4 daughters Mary, Margaret, Florence & Lurise. William married Miss Piper of Colick, Mary a Mr. Hopper of Maryland. & Margaret a Mr. Rhodes of Washington. James 2nd son married Miss Hedges & lives at Liberty Mo as also does John who married Miss Foster. James had 8 & John 6 children. both have been successful business men & are in fine circumstances