

Gainesville, Ga.

Jan. 5, 1897

Dear Mollie:

Your letter received a week--ago and should have been answered before now. I was truly glad to hear from you, but sorry to hear of your dear father's illness. After saying that we are all as well as could be expected of people in our condition, I will try to comply with your request. I should have asked you to excuse my writing in pencil for I can't use the pen to any advantage. I am very feeble and don't know that I can make myself understood.

Some time during the early part of the last century, my great-grandfather emigrated from Ireland to America and while in voyage upon the deep blue sea and three days before landing at Baltimore, Md., my Grandfather, George Caldwell, was born.

The family settled in Virginia and after grandfather was grown, he left Virginia and went to South Carolina where he married a young lady by the name of Wynn, Winn, of the family of that name after whom Winnsboro was named.

Grandfather settled near Camden, Fairfield District, S. C. and it was here that my father, Garland Caldwell, was born on the 5th day of January, 1770, and one other son, Starling, and one daughter, Agnes.

Grandmother died about the beginning of the Revolutionary War. Grandfather was an officer in General Marion's command, but I do not remember the grade. When grandfather ^{George} went into the army, he got his sister, Jane, to take charge of the family, no other white person being on the place except the three

children. (My only sister was named for these two women, Jane Agnes).

It was here that Aunt Jane was the heroine of the following scene that occurred during the war. There were a number of Tories living in grandfather's neighborhood and one of them knew every nook and corner of the entire premises.

He knew that grandfather kept wine and brandy in his cellar, as well as many other things of value. This man with several of his Tory friends accompanied by a British officer concluded to raid the place. When some hundred yards away, Aunt Jane saw them approaching the house and, calling the Negro woman from the kitchen, she placed in her hands a loaded musket and ordered her to take the children into the cellar, she herself following with a heavily loaded musket in each hand.

After ransacking the house for awhile, the man who knew the place so well and the British Officer, made their way toward the cellar, and while they were descending the steps, Aunt Jane opened fire on them.

At the crack of the gun, one of them fell, then another shot and two men lay dead at the foot of the cellar steps. So sudden and unexpected was all this that the men who were still in the house fled the premises never to return. The neighbors got together and buried the two dead men the next day and thus ended the war on that place.

My father, Garland Caldwell, married a lady named Land in the neighborhood of Camden, and sometime after, I don't know how long, moved to Barrow County, Kentucky.

Some time after this, father was so unfortunate as to go to a men's security for a large amount which he was ~~compelled~~

to pay. I have seen a statement of the whole affair--how his homestead and several Negroes were sold by the Sheriff to pay this security debt. Father at that time was a member of the Baptist Church, and it has been said by some who thought they knew that this misfortune had much to do in shaping his afterlife. The fruits of his marriage with Miss Land were two children, neither of whom I ever saw. Father's first wife died in 1808--he broke up housekeeping, put the two children with an aunt, then living in Barrow County, who kindly cared for them and educated them, after which Benjamin, the half brother became a merchant in Nashville, and my half sister, Mary, married a lawyer by the name of Clark.

This is all I ever knew of my half brother and half sister. My father then engaged in running a flat boat on the Cumberland, Tennessee and Mississippi Rivers, until 1812, when he returned to South Carolina and married my mother, Elizabeth Mathews, in Spartanburg District. She was the daughter of Reuben Matthews, born in Surry County, North Carolina, from whence he moved to Augusta, Ga., where he remained for a few years, and then moved to Spartanburg, S. C. where he lived until his death, which occurred in the year 1820, aged 86 years. Grandmother died in 1821, age 85.

Father was engaged in farming and at work at Nesbit's Iron Works until 1824 when he moved to Columbia County, Georgia, where he spent four years as over-Gainesville (sic), Hall County, Georgia.

Father was one of the best farmers I ever knew. Many have I known to come to him for advice, and he would tell them what to do, and sometimes go and show them how to do it.

During the year 1847, father was, through the mercy of the Lord, reclaimed, converted and joined the Methodist Church,

and lived and suffered for ten years the most excruciating agony from bladder and kidney diseases, until the 3rd of February, 1857, when he died. I stood over him for hours during this last struggle, and from what I saw, I have not the least doubt, but that he went from this world of sin, sorrow, and sickness and death to the brighter and better world where there is no sin, sickness, sorrow, nor death. - -

Mother was one of the most active, industrious, persevering, self-sacrificing women I ever knew. She toiled, labored, and suffered for the comfort and happiness of her children and endeavored to rear them up in the fear of God, and in favor with man. She suffered sorely for many years, often confined to her bed for many weeks, bearing her affliction with patience and Christian resignation. She was converted and joined the Methodist Church when quite a young girl in which she lived a worthy, acceptable member until the day when her worn and emaciated body entered upon that sleep which knows no awakening and her liberated spirit took its flight to the blessed happy world above to enter truly upon that rest that remaineth to the people of God, on the day of September, 1855.

I write this, now in my eighty-third year to the memory of my dear father and precious mother. Father was quite a small boy at the close of the Revolutionary War as he grew up into manhood, he learned the facts I have given from his father, and then as I grew up, I learned them from him.

Father was an eyewitness to the affair in the cellar and could remember what occurred very well, as he must have been some six or seven years old at the time. I never knew the company regiment or Grandfather's grade of office.

You see how long it has been since I began to write this letter. My condition is such that I have to take it up a little

at a time.

I would like so much to see you all once more in this life, but have no hope of ever being able to do so. You must write again and often as you can. All join in much love to you, your dear father and mother, and all the loved ones.

The Lord bless you all is the prayer of

Your old uncle,

A. W. Caldwell

ANDREW W. CALDWELL

SON OF GARLAND + ELIZ. CALDWELL

BROTHER OF JOHN HOLLIS

+

CHARLES M. CALDWELL