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Dues- \$7.00 per year

THE MILLER SCHOOL

Born 30 June 1792 in Albemarle County, Virginia, in a log cabin with a dirt floor and a single glassless window, Samuel Miller was the second son in a poor mountain family. Growing up, he and his brother, John, dreamed of riches. Their vision was not simply to earn a large sum of money, but to see that money used to build a grand school near their home. Because education in rural areas was minimal, the Millers wished to see a school which would benefit the less fortunate of the area; those who would otherwise have little or no education. It was to this end that they dedicated their lives.

After obtaining their formal educations at the one-room school in Batesville, Virginia, John moved to Lynchburg to work in a mercantile store, and Samuel stayed on to teach in the school until joining John. There, through their business acumen and commitment to their dream, the brothers amassed a small fortune in the mercantile, tobacco and hemp trade.

When John died in 1841, he left his entire estate, valued at \$100,000, to Samuel. With this additional capital, Samuel began trading in agricultural commodities and continued to increase his financial worth. At the time of the Civil War, he had cornered the international trade in tobacco and hemp on the London exchange.

In 1859, in declining health, Samuel wrote his will and provided for the fruition of the dream he and John had shared. One clause of his will provided for the establishment of a boarding school near his former home in Albermarle County for the deserving youth of the area. At the time this will was written, there was no public education system in Virginia.

When Samuel Miller died 6 April 1869, his estate was estimated to be \$1,250,000. Five years of litigation held up construction of the school, and finally in 1878, the boys' dream was fulfilled, and The Miller Manual Labor School opened its doors with three instructors and twenty-one students.

The school's original purpose, as stated in Samuel Miller's will, was that residents of Albermarle County "shall be fed, clothed, and instructed in all the branches of a good, plain, sound English education, the various languages, both ancient and modern, agriculture, and the useful arts, and wholly free of expense to the pupils, as many poor orphan children...whose parents shall be unable to educate them." And Miller School has attempted to develop in its students the value of hard work and the self-satisfaction gained from a job well done.

The original endowment from Samuel Miller's will provided food, clothing, shelter, medical expenses, and education for students who were under-privileged from 1878 until 1949. At that time, rising costs made it necessary for the school to charge tuition fees and accept students from outside the environs of Albermarle County. Through the years there have been necessary changes in student population and curriculum.

THE VAWTER CONNECTION WITH THE MILLER SCHOOL

Robert L. Vawter, of Middletown, Delaware, is an officer in the Civil Air Patrol, and one of his duties is helping to train cadets. This past July, Bob flew his Commander to Waynesboro, Virginia, for the presentation of awards to cadets at The Miller School. Upon being introduced to the president of the school, Bob heard the president say, "Vawter! That's a famous name around here!" He then went on to say that the first president of The Miller School was Charles Erastus Vawter. For the remainder of the visit, Bob received considerable attention.

Volume Two of Miller Memories is dedicated to Charles Erastus Vawter. The dedication reads: "To Charles Erastus Vawter, Builder of the Miller School, who, with a fixed and steadfast purpose, gave of his mature manhood that the best might result from the generous gift of Samuel Miller to the youth of Albemarle County, Virginia."

On pages 385-6 of The Vawter Family in America, we find, "Charles Erastus Vawter, son of John Henderson and Clara Peck Vawter, at the close of the war returned to Emory and Henry from which he was graduated in 1866. He then taught in Chattanooga till 1868, when he entered the University of Virginia for a special course in mathematics. In the same year he was elected professor of mathematics at his alma mater, where he taught until he was made president of the famous Miller Manuel Training School in Albermarle County, in 1878. He married July 24, 1866, Virginia Longley, of Tennessee."

Charles Erastus Vawter died 27 October 1905, and is buried in the cemetery on the school grounds. This cemetery is in need of repair and a fund has been established for the upkeep. At the VVV Reunion in August, a free-will offering in the amount of \$352.00 was given for this fund.

The movie, "Toy Soldiers" (1991), was filmed at The Miller School, and is available on video.

A "THANK YOU"

Mr. Charles E. Burt, Sr.
Treasurer, VVV Family Association
Route 5, Box 5475
Dawsonville, GA 30534

Dear Mr. Burt,

On behalf of the Miller School board of Trustees, thank you for your gift of \$352.00 to the Cemetery Fund.

The generosity of our Miller School Friends is greatly appreciated. Your ties to Miller School through Captain Vawter mean that you're also kin to the Miller School. As in the past, we are continuing to provide quality in our programs while keeping tuition and fees at the lowest possible level for our boys and girls.

Thank you for supporting a part of the past, the present and the future of Miller School.

Sincerely,

Bruce B. Barclay
Director of Development

THE VAWTER FAMILY IN AMERICA

As told in the last newsletter, the reprint edition (1969) of The Vawter Family in America now available from the VVV Association. This book was written in 1905 by Grace Vawter Bicknell, and republished in 1969 by Edna Reynolds and her sister, Vera Wheatly, with a supplement update of their O'Conner family.

Due to the generous interest-free loan from a VVV member, we were able to purchase the remainder of the books from Walter and Edna Reynolds. However, none of these books are in perfect condition. Many of the books have entire sections out of place or upside down, or have several pages or much of the index missing. They will need to be repaired before being sold and that will add to the cost.

For some of them, it is just a matter of one or two pages missing or having faint print, and those are the books being sold at this time. We will send the best available, and enclose replacement pages for you to insert.

The books are softbound and have 442 pages including an index, plus the supplement. Cost is \$20.00 plus \$2.00 shipping. Order from: Bonita Welch, 4145 N 900 W, Scipio, IN 47273.

TAPPAHANNOCK. VIRGINIA

Contributed by Sally Brown, Associate Editor

Tappahannock, Virginia, is the area where Bartholomew and Winnifred Vawter lived in the late 1600's. Vauter's Church, built in 1731 is but a few miles from there.

Tappahannock was born out of the economic problems of the late 1600's. The tobacco market had declined sharply because many more people were raising tobacco. Many white indentured men, when they had completed their indenture time, applied for a land grant and began to raise their own tobacco. Virginia raised virtually only one crop at that time and it was tobacco. So, the General Assembly passed a law in 1680 requiring every Virginia county to establish a town in the hope that towns would diversify the economy away from tobacco. They thought towns would provide markets for immigrant shopkeepers and craftsmen and be a center for schools, churches, and social life.

On March 25, 1682, the Rappahannock County General Assembly bought 50 acres of land on the Rappahannock River between two creeks for a future town site. A small settlement was already there. The land was purchased for 10,000 pounds of tobacco.

Hobb's Hole was the first name given Tappahannock and the new town struggled for years to stay in existence. A 'hole' usually meant an area of deep water that provided anchorage for sea going ships. There were several other 'holes' on the Rappahannock.

The town fathers soon tried to change the name to the more dignified name of New Plymouth, but people refused to use the new name. In 1705, the Assembly approved the name of Tappahannock. The name came from the Indian community that Captain John Smith had visited at this place in 1607. People were slow to change the name, especially the sea captains. Tappahannock was greatly helped when, in 1729, the Essex County courthouse was permanently located there. After that, the town became the thriving center of trade and society that the General Assembly had envisioned.

Information from: Settlers, Southerners, Americans - The History of Essex County, Virginia by James B. Slaughter.

1995 REUNION

As is the custom every five years, the 1995 VVV Reunion will be held in Virginia. The site chosen is Ashland, Virginia, at the Comfort Inn, and the dates are August 3-6. Ashland is located 20 miles north of the Richmond Airport on I-95. The town is the home of historic Randolph Macon College, and is near the boyhood home of Patrick Henry. Watch for more information in the next newsletter.

QUERIES

From: Karen Bowman, 3900 W 126th Street, Leawood, KS 66209

W.T. Vawter wrote the article, "I Descend From Some of the Planters of Old Rappahannock, Virginia" and it was published in The Northeast Texas Genealogical Society Quarterly, Vol. V, June 1974. The address of W.T. Vawter at the time this article was written was 702 Wigley St., Mineola, TX 75773. In this article are stated some comments:

1. "Stokely Towles, son of Henry Towles and Ann Stokely, born 1687, married 1708, Ann Vallott..." What is the reference for the stated date of birth, 1687, for Stokely Towles?

2. "Claude Vallott (alias Claude Champagne), A French Huguenot Immigrant and Planter, married Ann Jenkinson of Cumberland England." What is the reference for the statement, "A French Huguenot Immigrant"? Also, what is the reference for "Ann Jenkinson of Cumberland England"?

3. "Thomas Page married Elizabeth Allen, emigrated from England to Virginia in 1652..." What is the reference for the maiden name of Elizabeth Allen?

Karen Bowman is descended from Adam and Tabatha Vawter Rouse. Tabatha was the daughter of Richard and Frances Towles Vawter; Richard was the son of John and Margaret Noel Vawter; Margaret was the daughter of Daniel and Elizabeth Elliott Noel; Daniel was the son of Cornelius and Elizabeth Page Noel; Elizabeth was the daughter of Thomas and Elizabeth Page.

From: Mary Frances Bridges, 529 Oriole Ln., Shreveport, LA 71105 (appeared in the November/December 1994 NGS Newsletter)

Seek information on ancestors/descendants of Elizabeth Vawter who married Thomas Newman 28 December 1747, probably Essex County, Virginia. He was one of eleven children born to Elias and Ann Moseley Newman. Thomas and Elizabeth Vawter Newman had seven children, including Rev. War Sgt. Edmund Newman, who married Mary Conquest Wyatt.

THANK YOU

"The family of Mary Vaughter Carlson will hold in grateful remembrance your kind expression of sympathy.

John Carlson, Jr.

IN THE NEWS

Eric Stoltz was pictured in the 3 October 1994 issue of People magazine with his co-star in "Sleep with Me," Meg Tilly. Eric can also be seen in "Pulp Fiction" (Lance), "Little Women" (John Brooke), and "Killing Zoe" (Zed). Watch for him, too, in "Fluke" and "Rob Roy." He is the son of Jack Stoltz of Santa Barbara, California, and the late Evelyn Vawter Stoltz, and is descended from William and Frances Vawter, pioneer Indiana settlers. William and Frances were first cousins, he being the son of Jesse and Elizabeth Watts Vawter, and she the daughter of Philemon and Anna Vawter.

Congratulations to Roger Wicker who won a seat in the U.S. House of Representatives. He represents the First Congressional District in Mississippi, and his victory ended the Democratic party's 122-year hold on the seat. Democrat Jamie Whitten retired after 53 years in office. Roger has been an attorney in Tupelo and had served in the state Senate for two terms. He is the son of Fred and Wordna Wicker of Pontotoc, Mississippi, who attended the swearing-in ceremony in Washington. He and his wife, Gayle, have three children, Margaret, Caroline and McDaniel.

The "Club Spotlight" column in the 2 October 1994 issue of The Tennessean mentioned the band, "Thicket Grove," and stated it is "an alternative group on the brink of being pretty good" and "catch 'em while they're nothing." Drummer for this group is Joshua Taylor, son of Thomas and Diana Taylor of Nairobi, Kenya, and nephew of VVV news editor, Bonita Welch. He is a graduate of the International School of Kenya, and moved to Smyrna, Tennessee, after graduating from Earlham College in Richmond, Indiana, in 1993.

WEDDING ANNOUNCEMENTS

Angela Evans and Eddy DeCoursey were married 12 November 1994 at First Baptist Church in Dawsonville, Georgia. She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Cleve Evans and granddaughter of Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd Vaughters of Dawsonville, and is employed by Meadowbrook Manor of Lanier. The groom is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Edd DeCoursey of Hindman, Kentucky, and is employed by D. D. P. Enterprises of Dawsonville.

Melissa Jo Waters and Patrick Darren McDougal were married 19 November 1994 at Cross of Life Lutheran Church in Dawsonville, Georgia. She is the daughter of Johnny and Eva Jo Waters and granddaughter of Flara Vaughters Waters and Mr. and Mrs. W.E. Garrett, Jr., all of Dawsonville. She is a 1994 graduate of Georgia State University and is employed by Author Andersen L.L.P. The groom is the son of Valerie McDougal of Decatur, Georgia, and the late Raymond McDougal. He is a graduate of Georgia Tech, and is employed by Resource Application, Inc.

DEACON ORDINATION

Deacon ordination was held 6 November 1994 at Bethel Baptist Church in Dawsonville, Georgia, and three of those ordained are members of the Vaughters family. They are:

Gary Vaughters

son of Clayton and Mahala Vaughters
grandson of Rev. Boyd and Wilma Vaughters
great-grandson of Homer and Emmer Vaughters
great-great-grandson of Rev. George Robeson and Epsy Catherine Bennett Vaughters.

Lloyd Harben

son of Herbert and Luna Vaughters Harben
grandson of Homer and Emmer Vaughters
great-grandson of Rev. George Robeson and Epsy Catherine Bennett Vaughters.

David Parker

husband of Marty Vaughters
Marty's parents - Lloyd and Louise Vaughters
Marty's grandparents - Rev. George Robeson and Minnie McClure Vaughters

For more on this Vaughters family see the cousin chart contributed by Charles Burt in the Fall 1991 newsletter.

DUES AND ASSOCIATION INFORMATION

Membership in the VVV Family Association is \$7.00 per year. Dues paid at the reunion in August is for the coming year. If you do not attend the reunion, please remember to send your dues in January. A renewal form is usually enclosed with the newsletter if you owe dues.

At this time, the newsletter is sent to about 250 families, and another 25 go to various libraries and societies throughout the United States. The newsletter is listed in several genealogy publications.

News and other information is always needed, and should be sent to the news editor. See the Fall 1994 newsletter for a list of suggestions.

IN REMEMBRANCE

Alan S. Vaughters, 29, of Lithonia, Georgia, died 24 October 1994. Surviving are his father, Brice Vaughters of Redan, Georgia; mother and stepfather, Dorothy and Ron Timbs of Conley, Georgia; grandparents, Silvey Brice and Rebecca Vaughters of Lithonia; brothers Tim Vaughters of Jonesboro, Georgia, Ronald Timbs, Jr. and Benny Timbs of Conley, an aunt, Carol V. Sellers of Lithonia; and two uncles, Steve and Wendell Vaughters of Lithonia.

Silvey Brice Vaughters spoke at the 1988 VVV reunion in Gainesville, Georgia, telling of his early life in Dawson County.

IN REMEMBRANCE

Leon Dale Goldsmith, 77, of Olney, Illinois, died 3 April 1994 in Olney. He was born 8 March 1917 in Jasper County, Illinois, the son of Lowell and Lela Michels Goldsmith. He married Elizabeth Lesso on 16 April 1944 in Washington, D.C.

He attended Eastern Illinois University, where he obtained a BA; received a Masters from the University of Illinois; and a Meteorological Degree from M. I. T. Before entering the Air Force in 1941, he was a teacher. After retiring from the military as a Lt. Col. in 1968, he returned to Jasper County and farmed. He was a member of the American Legion Post No. 30 in Olney, and attended Calvary Baptist Church.

Surviving with his wife, Elizabeth, are a son, George Goldsmith of Diamond Bar, California; a daughter, Gwen Goldsmith of Minneapolis, Minnesota; a brother, Lowell Goldsmith of West Salem, Illinois; two sisters, Jennie Cox of Edwardsville, Illinois, and Naomi Welsh of Belleville, Illinois; two grandchildren and several nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by a grandson. Burial was at Hankins Cemetery in Jasper County.

Leon Goldsmith was a descendant of James Crawford Vawter, son of Beverly Vawter.

* * * * *

Frank O. Vawter, 55, of Cathedral City, California, formerly of Indianapolis, died 16 August 1994. Services were held in Wilson St. Pierre Chapel of the Chimes in Indianapolis.

He was a Navy veteran, and owned and operated Vawter Equipment and Repair in Cathedral City.

Surviving are his wife, Rafacia Pinion Vawter, sons, George and Marshall Vawter and Romeo, Gilbert and Charlie Rodea; daughters, Allyson Woodside, Lori Yamanaka, and Arsilia and Lori Rodea; mother, Velma Powell; father and stepmother, Orville and Elizabeth Vawter; brothers, Orville Vawter, Jr., Fred, Richard and John Vawter, and Pete Powell; sisters, Ruth Ann Daily, Sharon England, Debbie Byard and Eva Trusley; 17 grandchildren.

Can someone help place this Vawter family on our family tree?

* * * * *

Wilfred Clarkson, 91, of Greensburg, Indiana, died 8 March 1994 in Columbus, Indiana. He was born 4 August 1902 in Vernon, Indiana, the son of Jess and Elizabeth Leahigh Clarkson. He was a member of Weston Baptist Church, and was a retired farmer.

Surviving are three sons, Raymond Clarkson of North Vernon, Indiana, Roy Clarkson of Seymour, Indiana, and Marvin Clarkson of Shelbyville, Indiana; two daughters, Mary Barnes of Elizabethtown, Indiana, and Janet Langerin of Fairfield, Ohio; a sister, Florence Fitch of North Vernon; 14 grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren; and one great-great-grandchild. He was preceded in death by his wife, Mabel L. Engle Clarkson, 27 August 1985.

Wilfred's grandmother was Elizabeth Vawter Clarkson, the daughter of Jesse R. and Sarah Parks Vawter.

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