

Edna Bond Ripley

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Dear Cousins Robert and Miss Cora:

I am very sorry of the long delay in answering your letter, but we have had serious illness in the family, had house guests and many drop-ins as a result. Also, my pile of unanswered correspondence has been growing higher and higher in the meantime. I try to keep it in order that it is received, but the replies do not work out that way always.

The principal one in the family to be ill was my son, Bill. He had some throat and bronchial irritation since before the first of the year which hampered his work at the church; and after New Years he curtailed all activities that were not absolutely necessary to try to get his voice (and coughing) cleared up. Then on Feb 4th he had a stroke, and was in the local hospital for a week or so having physical therapy and antibiotics for the chest problems. X-Rays showed a spot on his lung, and after this did not clear up with medication, they sent him to St. Mary's Hospital in St. Louis for the balance of February. More X-Rays and two biopsies gave no definite diagnosis (They thought it was cancer) they sent him home to await further developments. Three years ago Bill had a quadruple by-pass of his heart, and is not a good candidate for surgery. But chemo-therapy or radiation was not indicated quite yet.

My granddaughter who is attending the University of Montana flew home between semesters, and it was a joy to have her here.

Bill's wife, Shirley, has had cancer of the lymph glands, diagnosed last June and has been taking chemo-therapy treatments every three weeks until lately when all tests including the CAT Scan showed everything clear. We are so thankful. Now she has to report for tests only every six weeks.

I am the oldest in the family, and the healthiest!

NOW, to get to your letter and the questions you have raised. As to the WHITE family, I have accumulated the same records that you have. Nothing conclusive as to the father of Obediah. According to an old family story, Obediah's father and uncle (and Obediah himself) came to Tenn from Virginia; the uncle and possibly the father continuing on to Kentucky. I have checked all the Whites in KY; and since Robert Mansell Jr was married in KY in 1800, I have often wondered if he could possibly have gotten acquainted with any of the Whites there, and any of them accompanied him back to McMinn Co where Martha (Patsey) married young Obediah. There just may have been a connection there. But we will probably never know. Just a thought.

The main thing I want to explain more fully to you is about Robert Mansell--both Senior and Junior. I do not know when or where Margaret Moore Mansell died, nor where she is buried; or if she and Robert Jr separated. It is a complete blank. If you are referring to that old cemetery in McMinn Co that I think you are....the record which has been published, from no one knows where or the source, is very much in error. I can't put my hand on my copy right now, but I have it. The heading says the cemetery was founded by \_\_\_\_\_ Mansell, one of the earliest settlers and that he had a land grant, etc. etc. First, no one knows or has any record of ANY Mansell being in that area early because until 1819 McMinn Co belonged to the Indians, and until a treaty was signed, etc. no land grants could have been issued. Someone goofed! And also, for the most part, the Mansells were buried on their own land. Exception was Robert Mansell and wife, he was the son of Richard Mansell the oldest brother of Robert Mansell Jr. I have visited his grave and have a picture of it. I have been to McMinn Co and visited about every cemetery there. Reba Boyer is the county historian and has been a big help to all of us. There is also an attorney there by the name of Zeigler who is also related to us----I visited with him one Sunday when there.

Will  
April 1819

A little background so that you will understand the Mansells in McMinn Co TN: Robert Mansell Sr died in the year 1819 in Stokes Co NC near Bethania. This part of Stokes Co is now Forsythe Co, right on the county line almost. Forsythe was created in 1849 from Stokes. Robert Sr's will was made in April 1819 (I have a copy) in which he left his property to his wife Elizabeth, stipulating that after her de- cease that everything was to be sold and divided among his six children, but deducting from each share whatever he had previously given them--it was all down in his book. Son John was to get only \$1. Apparently he had already received his share before his father died. The oldest son Richard (my ancestor) was to receive whatever legacy due the youngest child, Robert Jr, and deal it out to Junior as Richard saw fit. At that time Robert Jr was travelling around in TN and KY (married in 1800) and may have been somewhat of a wastrel. (I have had him pictured as a gambler maybe).

Elisabeth, wife of Robert Sr, died in 1829 and the executors of the estate held a sale beginning on 25 Nov 1829, the proceeds from which totalled about \$3,655.16. There were five children to share in this estate--John with his \$1 having been deducted. This would have given about \$730.10 to each legatee, before deducting whatever amounts they had already received. Executors of the estate were Robert Sr's old friends, Daniel Wolf and Jacob Conrad. Robert Jr's share was held in trust for him by Jacob Conrad---remember this.

Richard, the oldest child, moved to Jackson Co TN between 1807-1808. I know this is true because Richard's son, David, and my ancestor, was born in TN in 1808 and the child just older than David was born in 1807 in NC. Richard was born before 1765, and died some time between 1827-30 in Jackson Co TN. Richard had two sons who moved to McMinn Co TN about 1814-1816. One son, Burrell b-1795 in SC married Martha Billingsley in Jackson Co TN in 1814; and Burrell died in McMinn Co TN in 1830. The other son who went to McMinn Co was Robert (called Robbin) b-1797 in SC married Elizabeth Billingsley in 1816 in McMinn Co. This Robbin was a preacher in the Church of Christ.

Burrell and Robbin Mansell with their families lived neighbors to Obediah White and Patsey (Martha) Mansell White in McMinn Co, and it is inconceivable that they did not know of the kinship. Burrell, Robbin and Patsey were first cousins. And Patsey's father Robert Mansell Jr. must have visited with them all while he was in TN.

As nearly as I can find out, Martha (Patsey) Mansell and Obediah White were married around 1820 evidently in McMinn Co TN. How long she had been in McMinn Co we don't know. Probably Robert Jr took her there. Robert Jr must have heard that his mother had died in 1829, decided to "go home" and claim his inheritance. By November 1831 he had reached Old Town, NC (adjoining Winston-Salem) was sick, and the Moravians took him into their hospital. Word was sent to his brother-in-law William Crosswhite, husband of Robert Jr's sister Elizabeth, in Bethania. Crosswhite went down to Old Town and brought Robert Jr home with him, where he lived 29 days before he died in December, 1831. What his trouble was, no one knows.

Inventory of Robert Jr's possessions was not turned in to the court until the following June 18, 1832. Because he left no will, the court appointed an administrator, Reuben D. Holding. Here is the inventory, which speaks for itself:

1 Bay mare	1 Umbrella	1 Coffee Pot
1 Qt. Cup	1 1/2 Gal Cup	1 Bearskin Cap
2 Old Coats	3 Pr Pantaloons	8 Small Blankets
2 Shirts	1 Pr Stockings	1 Pr Suspenders
1 Bagg	1 Pr Shoes	2 Waistcoats
1 Cloak	1 Blanket Overcoat	1 Saddle C loth
1 Old Saddle	1 Shotgun which Crosswhite and others said Robert Mansell did not claim only as a borrowed gun which he said he had pawned(?)	

a good gun for in Tennessee.

That word "pawnd" concerning the shotgun is the best interpretation anyone could make of the old handwriting. I had some experts look at it, and they agreed.

All of the possessions of Robert Jr were sold by September 1832, which netted \$50.79. The horse was sold for \$38.00. Wm Crosswhite put in his bill for board and room, plus cost of bringing Robert Jr to his home, funeral expenses, coffin \$20, the doctor's bill of \$2, and cost of feeding the mare for 8 months at \$4.50 a month... all for a total of \$128.25 plus \$25 attorney's fees. No further mention was made of the shotgun...wonder what they did with it.

The administrator made his final return to the court of \$1,520.51. The amount of the legacy for Robert Jr from his father's estate was \$1,625.66. There were five heirs of Robert Sr's estate, of which Richard Mansell had died, also John Mansell was deceased. But each one left several children who participated in their father's inheritance. This fouled up the administration, as you can imagine. The administrator would not disperse the final return because he suspected that Robert Jr had a wife and children, or either or both; also as he said "since Robert Jr had not lived in the state until just before he died," the administrator thought there may have been debts against the estate, the payment of which would come out of the estate. Therefore, he held up payment to all, and after two years the brother-in-law Crosswhite brought suit against Mr. Golding, the administrator. The judge agreed with the administrator, and prolonged the settlement awaiting possible word of a family still living somewhere; and said that if and when settlement was made that each of the legatees would have to furnish a bond to the state of NC to make restitution in case a wife and/or family ever showed up. Some of the heirs either couldn't or wouldn't furnish bond; so the administrator just let the money set until they did. Final distribution was made by the year 1836.

You can't tell me that Robert Jr did not speak of his wife and at least Patsey to his sister and husband while he was sick at their house. That Wm Crosswhite was a sort of a sharp one, from what I have learned. So, they all just kept their mouths shut, with greedy eyes on that money. Maybe it looked big to them. In 1831 when Robert Jr died, Patsey was living in McMinn Co TN with several small children. With communications being what they were in those days, she may not have known about her father's death; and even if she did, she could not get away to travel so far from her home and with small children to care for. It seems to me that she was defrauded. The cousins, Robbin and Burrell's children certainly knew about the estate because Richard's children and all the rest of the Mansells gave power of attorney to brother Samuel to go to NC and get their part of the estate for them. With only \$304 for each ~~son~~ son or daughter of Robert Sr (Robert Jr's brothers and sisters) they were not very rich. And for the two brothers, Richard and John's children, they got only a small part each of their father's share of \$304.

So, when Lillie Ruth said he had a "rich inheritance" that is the under state-<sup>ever</sup>ment of the year. You know, things never get smaller in repeating. I told Lillie Ruth the story because she did not know it; but possibly I did not go into details like I have with you. I have copied of the entire probate proceedings in both of the estates of Robert Sr and Robert Jr.

About Bill Guffey.....he was a very mixed-up person so far as stories were concerned. As they say: He remembered BIG. He was no newspaper journalist by any stretch of the imagination. Bill was a nice guy, lived there in McMinn Co all of his life and the rest of the family always took him with a grain of salt. Bill never owned a car, nor did he ever learn to drive. Bill told me one time that he thought the White's had an ancestor who had been governor of Virginia; and when I pressed him for details he backed off of the subject completely. So, I think it was only hearsay. I gave him the benefit of the doubt and checked into any Governor White with no success. I thought from what he said that he meant the JOHN WHITE, governor of the Lost Colony of Roanoke...you know the story. But there was a generation gap of several descendants, indeed if there were descendants of the famous John White of Roanoke fame.

Bill made notes of his yarns, wrote them up as besthe could, then the re-write person at the newspaper office edited them for publication. I never met Bill Guffey personally, but he kept up quite a correspondence with me, and one time he sent me a bottle of Chanel No. 5. He was very lonesome after his wife died, and they had no children. One time he got involved with a woman Jehovah's Witness and was going to marry her; so I called him up and gave him some motherly advice. The romance fell through, then he wanted ME to marry him!!! Then I knew he was crazy! But Bill did not live long after that, God Rest His Soul. He tried hard.

The Guffey brothers decided to put up a stone at the graves of Obediah and Patsy and Bill wrote and told me it was costing more than they could afford; so I sent a check to apply on the headstone, and I believe he said that Lillie Ruth did also. (Maybe Bill asked Lillie Ruth to marry him, too) HA.

I certainly would not believe the story, and it is a story, that James B. Shell who married Lucinda White was the son of a "Cherokee Indian Chief". Did you ever notice in these Indian stories that they ALWAYS say son or daughter of an Indian Chief? Where were the braves and the squaws? I'll check into the story, but I would not believe it for a minute without real proof. I thought the Shells were of German descent. I do not believe there were any Cherokees around McMinn Co at all. There were some other tribes in the early days before the USGov't bought their land and moved them togreener pastures. Please tell Miss Cora to ignore the tale.

Speaking of Miss Cora, I was mighty proud to see her article in the DAR March magazine on JOHN RUTLEDGE. She writes beautifully. I was so surprised to see her name as author, and cut the article out of the magazine and put it in my files to keep. I have a Mansell cousin in Dallas whose mother was a Rutledge, and now must ask her about John Rutledge. This cousin is a wonderful genealogist, and she will know of John Rutledge without a doubt.

Thank you for the article on CHARLES MOORE from Fairfield Co SC. I'll have to go through the history of Fairfield Co and see what I can find to supplement this.

I have a new book entitled COLONIAL SOLDIERS OF THE SOUTH 1732-1774 by Clark which lists all of the early militias which preceded the Rev War. It is priceless. And I will look up all of the McKenzies. And anyone else that you would like me to.

About the Episcopal Church: I was confirmed in what they call "high church" or the Anglo-Catholic persuasion, and I certainly do not like this so-called modern liturgy; women priests, etc. Here in Ironton, Bill has to follow what the Bishop says in the diocese but he uses Rite I which seems to be the least offensive. Bill never says anything, but I know that he prefers the old 1928 Prayer Book, and uses quite a bit of it from the altar when the audience does not participate. With this new prayer book, I do not feel like I have been to church. Somehow I do not feel the reverence that the old prayer book brings out. I have a copy of the old, old prayer book and hymnal that was re-established in the English Church when Elizabeth I ascended the throne and made the Anglican Church again the church of state. The print is so small that even a handglass makes it difficult to read. I don't see how people in those old days, without glasses, ever read the service or knew words to the hymns.

I am awfully proud of both you and Miss Cora, and proud that you are "kinfolks". And congratulate you on your wonderful connections and affiliations. I do hope that Miss Cora makes it into the DAR. I am working with four new prospective members to our Chapter right now. They will be approved I am sure, because their lineage is right and I will sign my approval on their applications.

With Cousinly Love,

*Eena B. Ripley*