Patsy M. Gauldin

459 Williamson Road

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Patsy,

Thank you for your lovely letter. I received it today. I am typing my reply because my handwriting has become so bad and truly typing is easier for me. It has taken me 11 years to put together a profile for Molly Reynolds, my grandmother. I always felt akin to her, somehow; I think we share the 'rebel gene'. Nevertheless, I have accumulated records and stories about her, and have woven a tapestry of her life.

Mary Lou was the 3rd child of Bart and Nannie Reynolds, b. 19 Jan 1879. She married George Abel Dunn 10 Mar 1897 in Pittsylvania County. It seems to me from the Census Records I surmised they lived with his parents for some length of time. They were married for about 8 years, during which time all of her cousins and siblings were having babies every two years, but no baby for Molly. I think she had Sam [my father] in Callands but soon moved to Danville, where I find them in Danville in the 1910 Census where she says she is a widow [she is not]. The Court Records for Henry County (B14/313) show her divorce where she is the Defendant 24 Oct 1905. [Sam is born 14 Jan 1906] The divorce is granted to Dunn; she is ordered to pay costs and cannot remarry without the permission of the court, which she obtains in 1910. She then married 12 Oct 1910, Fitzhugh Lee Harrell and divorced him 28 Jun 1921. They had no children. [I did find the divorce record which is granted to him, with the cause stated as Desertion. [in Suffock, VA] I have photo's of them in Norfolk, but my Father never mentioned him.

I have been asking questions about her since I was 20 years old? Ruth, her sister would tell me nothing. I asked her once if Molly was married, [I suspected she was not] Ruth said yes, she was married but refused to elaborate. I later begged Sammy Marlowe to tell me what he knew. His reply was 'all I ever knew, Mary Frances, 'was Old Man Eanes'. I despaired of ever finding out who 'Old Man Eanes' was. But I persisted. Then, I think after Charles and Nancy were married, while we were talking about this, Charles said 'he [Dunn] couldn't have children, because of a gun accident while he and his brother were playing with a gun' and that was why he divorced her; he knew the child was not his. Anyway, at some point I visited the graveyard of Nannie and Bart and was told about the little cemetery across the street where I find the graves of the family of Oscar Starling Eanes. And I just knew. It is always a neighbor. Too far to walk. Then the DNA test matched me to Sam Eanes at Bassett and then we knew what we knew.

My father did talk about another of her suitors. Mr. William Welch Clark of Danville, Virginia. He was with Molly in a hospital in Norfolk or Suffolk and signed her death certificate. He took charge of my 15 year old father and took him back to Danville and looked after him for a number of years. Daddy was told by Mr. Clark that his mother had appendicitis and it had ruptured and she went septic and died. I found the hospital and the potter's field where she is buried. Her death certificate is suspicious. It looks like she had a tubal pregnancy which ruptured. She suffered for 11 days before she died. From what my father said of Mr. Clark, he adored him and named his only son, Joseph Welch Reynolds.

I have amassed records for all of this, including her sister's Bible. I will gladly give you copies of anything you may want. I also have a newspaper clipping showing Buddy and Johnny Jefferson, Ralph Adkins, William Neal Adkins (foreman), Hubbard Kendrick and Will Adkins. They were the road maintenance crew who worked the county dirt roads. I do have a few photos of her. She reminds me of Aunt Ruth Marlowe; they had great posture. I will print a few things to send you and you can let me know if you want more.

Sammy also said she ran a 'boarding house' in Norfolk. [Could have been a bordello] No one knows now, but the house where she lived in Norfolk was vacant in the next year's city directory. Daddy didn't talk much about her; one day when I was 6, he took me to the cemetery where she is buried, but I did not remember where it was, and later found it on the internet. Sammy said she was a beautiful, well dressed woman; and she came to visit in an automobile. He remembered daddy coming to stay in the summers and Sammy said daddy always had 'shot' to spare. The would go into the cow pastures and find yellow-jacket holes and pile broom-straw on top of them and set the broom-straw on fire and then stomp on the ground to make the bees come out and then these naughty kids delighted in seeing the yellow-jackets burn. Of course, inevitably the pile of straw did not light; and the yellow-jackets were mad, and the boys went running down the hill, ripping off their clothes and screaming like little girls. I can picture this.

If you will send me an e-mail address for one of your children, you can then see about all of the Reynolds. I mean ALL of THEM. I will send some links and they can then just 'click on' them and you can see a lot more than Molly; though I don't have much on the Dunns. I have spent 12 years now, working 8-12 hours almost every day to compile every bit of information I can find. Almost everyone around the Reynolds is documented with death certificates, newspaper clippings, obituaries, photographs. I have to admit, I may seem a little OCD. Thanks to Ardie and Cecelia and Sandra Reynolds and Wesley who gave up his dna, and Molly's nieces and nephews, Brenda Holley, James Hankins, we have a clearer picture of who these people were. I have ravaged the resources of Bassett History Center, Danville Historical Society and family members who have been so very generous with their histories.

I could use some info about the Giles girls who married William David Marlowe and any family photos would be so very welcomed. My phone # is 703/823-8738. Please feel free to call me. There is nothing I love more than talking about our ‘dead people’. Also, I am planning a trip to Danville and surrounding area sometime in February. Perhaps we can get together and I’ll show you what I have, in person.

Kindest Regards,

Mary Frances Eggleston