

Stories of Old

Catherine C. Shafer; The following stories were researched by Catherine Codington Shafer. They are taken from her life and from her research into her ancestry.

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The following stories were researched by Catherine Codington Shafer. They are taken from her life and from her research into her ancestry. As presented here they appear simply in alphabetical order according to the story title assigned by Catherine. They were scanned from Mamama's (her grandmother-name) typed pages into my computer and edited once; thus, perhaps more work is needed. More stories are yet to be copied from longhand to be accomplished by Barbara.

CRJ

BENEDICT ARNOLD

As I have written, Ann Hawks Hay and his wife Mary Het Smith Hay were living in a small town in the Upper Hudson River Valley. Mary's brother, Joshua Het Smith, occupied a house nearby.

Benedict Arnold, an aspiring attorney, arrived in the little town to read law with Joshua Het Smith. (There were no law schools or law classes in those days and this as the way young men prepared themselves for the legal profession.) Arnold possessed a compelling personality and was very much liked by the entire family.

One day, one of the Hay children - possibly our ancestor - fell down a well and was on the point of drowning. The other children frantically ran to get help, but could find no one but Benedict Arnold, who came immediately to the rescue. He pulled the unhurt child from the well, to the great relief of the brothers and sisters.

I never heard the name of Benedict Arnold - the arch American traitor - without thinking, "Thank heaven that he was in the right place at the right time! Otherwise, I might not be here!"

That little town in New York was not far from West Point and it is possible that Benedict Arnold had more in mind than "law" when he arrived there. He involved Joshua Het Smith in his nefarious plans, with the result that both men were compelled to spend the rest of their lives in England. Joshua Het Smith's guilt or innocence has been a subject for debate ever since.

BIG FOOT

I know that Big Foot exists, or did exist, because I have seen his footprints. This happened many years before people in this country had even heard of the Abominable Snowman, the Yeti, or any such creature.

Around 1920, my Uncle John had heard about gigantic footprints that were imbedded in a rock near Rabun Gap. Uncle John, who at that time was writing feature stories for a Chattanooga Sunday supplement, became wildly excited and persuaded Unc to drive him to the location. The Uncles very kindly allowed Lullah and me to come along.

The closeness of the North Georgia Mountains always lifted my heart, as it still does.

We drove up some steep, narrow roads with dangerous hairpin curves and finally arrived at the place where the footprints were said to be found. Unc, a mathematician and scientist, was openly skeptical, but the rest of us were prepared to believe anything. When we had driven as far as we could go in the car, we got out and walked. And sure enough, under a growth of underbrush, we found the footprints.

There were several of them, I believe, and all were impressions of a foot that was exactly like a human foot, but about twice as large. It was evidently very old since it was fossilized, but every detail showed plainly. Every toe, instep, arch...everything was humanlike and perfect.

John had brought his camera and took pictures of the footprints to go with his story.

"How are you going to explain this?" Unc asked him.

John shrugged. "Oh, I'll make it as sensational and lurid as possible. That's what people want to read."

John did not disappoint us. With liberal use of his imagination, he wrote a fantastic column about giants that had once roamed the Georgia woods.

It was many years before Big Foot became big news again.

CARS

When I was a very small child in Macon, Georgia, my parents acquired their first car. It was a Model T Ford, one of the little "Tin Lizzies" that had taken the country by storm.

How well I remember my mother, who was not very tall, trying desperately to manipulate the pedals of the strange new vehicle...and my father valiantly turning the crank to start the engine! (Cranking up a car was a dangerous business that resulted in many a broken arm.)

Both my parents were intellectuals without an ounce of mechanical knowledge or aptitude. It was very difficult for them to adjust to the new era of automobiles. In fact, I doubt that they ever did. My mother's idea of highway safety was to proceed as slowly as possible. In that way, every car on the road would have to pass her and she would never have to pass anything. Poppie, on the other hand, chose to ignore all the traffic laws and to invent his own. He often drove blithely down the left side of the street.

I am convinced that a guardian angel flew down and rode with us when either of them was behind the wheel!

At that time, there were very few paved roads in the State of Georgia. Outside the large towns there could only be found country lanes that were deeply rutted and were either dusty or muddy, depending on the weather. On both sides of these lanes were ditches or gullies to help with the drainage. As late as 1926 this was a joke: "Why did General Sherman march through Georgia?" Answer: "He couldn't drive through on Georgia roads!"

Mother seldom drove the Model T because my father needed it, especially when he was a U.S. District Attorney and had to travel to the little towns south of Macon. One day as he was driving home, he saw a large opossum on an overhanging branch. "Catzie loves animals," he thought. "I'll take this opossum to her."

With more courage than good sense, he reached up and seized the opossum by the tail. Holding the steering wheel with one hand and the opossum outside the car with the other hand, he somehow managed to get back to Macon.

The opossum made an impossible pet, of course. The cook finally killed it and served it one night for dinner, surrounded by sweet potatoes. None of us could eat a bite or the greasy meat, so she took it home as a special treat for her children.

Oomama had also bought a Model T and Aunt Mar, who had even less mechanical ability than Mother, was elected to drive it. Lullah and I dreaded to go in the car with her since we nearly always landed in a ditch when she tried to turn the Model T around. That meant that we had to walk a considerable distance to find a farmer with a team of mules

who could pull us out! Years later, poor Aunt Mar became rattled when a truck approached; she put her foot on the accelerator instead of the brake, taking us over a steep embankment. Thanks to the guardian angel, nobody was seriously hurt.

Uncle Tom, on the other hand, was a wonderful driver and we loved to ride with him. In those early years, he brought his own cars to Mount Airy. The first of these was a Vealie and the second was a Stuz. He was always telling Lullah and me to pile in and he would take us to Power Mills Falls for a swim, or to Cornelia for an ice cream cone. (Dear, kind Unc! He was an unmarried professor of mathematics and astronomy at the University of Alabama and he undoubtedly had much better things to do with his time than to provide treats for two little girls.) Later, Oomama bought a large Nash touring car, which he drove for her.

My father was very suspicious of gearshift cars and he refused to drive one until he left Miami to return to Atlanta.

COUSIN PHOEBE

She was the terror of our teenage years. For two summers, she descended upon Lullah and me like the plague. She was Phoebe Rhett, our charming debutante cousin from Atlanta. Lullah and I were frightened to death of her and felt ourselves completely outclassed. Perhaps this is why we simply lay down and let her walk all over us.

Phoebe was the child of Mother's favorite cousin, Hallee Ellis, who had died tragically of "galloping consumption" while her husband lay in a coma caused by another disease. Phoebe had been adopted by Hallie's older sister, Phoebe Bishop, who gave her everything money could buy - beautiful clothes, the best schools, trips to Europe, and finally a glittering debut. To say that Phoebe Bishop spoiled her namesake rotten would indeed be an understatement.

Phoebe never waited for us to invite her to stay with us when she came to Coral Gables to see her father. She merely informed us of the date of her arrival and told us that she expected us to provide her with an attractive date for every night of her visit.

Lullah and I were shy, serious-minded young girls. Lullah was preparing herself for a career as a concert pianist and I had just completed my sophomore year in high school. Both of us knew a few boys who would qualify as dates for Phoebe, but we had a hard time getting them to fall into line. The boys were naturally suspicious, fearing that Phoebe must be a real "dog". Of course, they were happily surprised when they met her and they often thanked us profusely for arranging the date.

Cousin Phoebe's first summer visit to us caused some havoc; however, her second visit was pure disaster.

Lullah had unwisely put her boyfriend, Ray, on Phoebe's roster of dates. Phoebe, eager to show her power, promptly annexed him. My poor sister could only stand by helplessly as Phoebe and Ray went out night after night.

Next, our dear cousin went after the boy in whom I was most interested, the University of Miami's first quarterback. He was much too old for me, of course, but after he was injured in football practice, he often came to the house to play bridge with me and my parents. He had given me a few tennis lessons and occasionally he walked me down to the drug store for a coco cola. He had never asked me out, however, for his attitude toward me was that of a protective older brother. Still, I had hopes that this would change, until Phoebe arrived.

Cousin Phoebe was almost good enough to be a professional tennis player (and eventually the Quarterback would coach both state and national champions). They loved tennis and they played almost every afternoon and then, on the nights that she did not go out with Ray, the Quarterback would borrow a car and take her dancing.

On the last night of Cousin Phoebe's visit, we had not arranged a date for her because one of our friends was giving an all-girls bridge party in Phoebe's honor. Phoebe flatly

refused to go to such a dull affair. She called up one of the boys to take her out and flounced out of the house.

For Lullah and me, that was the last straw. We were through with Cousin Phoebe forever and we vowed that we would never let her hurt us again. We heard later that she always referred to us as her "country cousins" and cared only to know whether we were still alive!

THE CRAZY COUSIN

Luther, my husband, had a crazy cousin whose name was Bill Willis. He was the son of my mother-in-law's oldest sister, Aunt Ida Willis, who lived in Arkansas.

Bill came to South Miami to visit the family and for some reason he became very attached to me. He chose to believe that I, not Luther, was related to him by blood.

When he left South Miami and moved to Corpus Christi, Texas, I received a number of letters from him detailing his imaginary exploits as a spy and member of the FBI. Then one night I got a phone call.

"Oh Catherine," Bill cried, "I have wonderful news for you! I have cornered all the sheep manure in the west and I am sending you a barge load of it for your birthday. It should arrive in about two weeks!"

My heart sank as I hung up the phone. Nothing on this earth smells as awful as sheep manure. What would I do if Bill's gift proved to be valid?

Luther was no help; he only laughed. And of course the barge of sheep manure never arrived.

Poor Bill! This was the last the family heard of him. Much later we found out that he had ended his days in an institution.

GLADYS MORGAN

Karl Morgan's sister, Gladys, very much resembled him. She had the same gentle manner and the same hard core of intellect and determination.

At a time when women doctors were barely tolerated, Gladys had earned a medical degree from one of North Carolina's best universities. Having been brought up in a religious home by her minister father and her devout mother, she decided to become a medical missionary for the Lutheran Church. She was promptly sent to India.

When I talked with her, she told me many stories of her work in this fascinating country. Often she would go out in the dead of night to poison the mad dogs that roamed the streets and bit the people. (The region was dominated by Hinduism, with its insistence on the sanctity of all life, and Gladys would have been in serious trouble if she had been discovered.) Also, she worked tirelessly to educate the women in better standards of hygiene. She had seen many a newborn baby die of tetanus because his mother, as a religious rite, had rubbed cow dung into his navel.

While in India, Gladys was married to a British army doctor. When England went to war with Germany, however, he feared for her safety and insisted that she and their two little boys return to her parents' home in North Carolina. The only ship available to take them was an old tramp steamer. They were at sea for more than four months as the ship dodged German submarines and warplanes. The voyage was a nightmare to Gladys. The worst of it was that there was no protective railing around the deck. She lived in constant fear that her two energetic little boys would fall overboard.

They arrived in Salisbury, North Carolina safe and sound, but poor Gladys promptly sat down on a misplaced ashtray and fractured one of her vertebrae.

Her mother, Luther's Aunt Virgie, became very ill and was placed in a nursing home some distance from Salisbury. Gladys made frequent trips to check on her. On one of

these trips she was invoked in a car crash and was instantly killed.

She was a beautiful, caring person and I wish I had been given the opportunity to know her better.

HURRICANE!

On the ninth day of September, 1926, Mother and her three sets of children boarded the Southern Railway train that would take us from Atlanta to Jacksonville, the first half of our journey to Miami where we would join our father. Poppie had been living in South Florida for more than a year and had established a boom-time law practice, and finally he had rented a house.

The three sets of children were 1) the Girls, Lullah and me, 2) the Boys, Arthur and John, and 3) The Babies, Mary and Emily. Lullah was the oldest at fifteen and Emily was the youngest at 11 months - the rest somewhere in between.

What a thrill it was to have our dinner in the dining car, complete with linen napkins and elegant finger bowls! and then to sleep in the heavily curtained berths prepared by the Pullman Porter! Lullah chose a lower berth and I, who had not yet acquired a height phobia, an upper berth.

We arrived at the big, dirty train station in Jacksonville early in the morning. After a good breakfast, we went to the waiting room to endure three dreadful hours before the Florida East Coast train would leave for Miami. Lullah and I, who fancied ourselves as proper young Atlanta Ladies, would gladly have pretended that we were not associated with our embarrassing younger siblings. But poor, dear Mother badly needed our help. We took turns holding Emily and chasing the other three...who seemed determined to run under the wheels of incoming trains; the waiting room had no door, so this required constant vigilance. (That waiting room in the Jacksonville station is still a recurring theme in my nightmares.)

At last we boarded the train and were on our way to Miami. Lullah and I settled back and looked with distaste at the flat Florida scenery. At first there were the "bearded pines" of which Longfellow wrote. Then there were palm trees. And then there were no trees at all. Lullah and I made up our minds that we were going to hate Florida.

Poppie met us in the Model T and there were hugs and kisses all around. Then he drove us to the pleasant, two-storied house that would be our new home, located in a part of Miami called Shenandoah. The windows of the house were shaded by stripped awnings, which were held in place by what looked like sharp-pointed metal spears.

When we got out of the car, we discovered the twin torments of Miami during the twenties - sandspurs and mosquitoes. Sandspurs grew everywhere, in the yards and vacant lots, even in the cracks of sidewalks and streets. They were sharp little burrs that fairly leaped to cover our shoes and stockings. Black clouds of mosquitoes covered the window screens and joyfully attacked our faces and arms.

The house was very attractive inside and our furniture had already arrived. Lullah went immediately to the piano and I set out to explore the house. There was a large bedroom for my father and mother and a bedroom for each of the three sets of children. I liked the house, but I greatly disliked the harsh Florida sunlight and the almost total absence of trees. Everything was so different from our beloved Atlanta! How I longed for its hills and gracious hardwood trees!

Poppie had to get back to his office, but before he left he said in a rather offhand manner, "I understand there is going to be a little tropical blow tonight, but don't worry about it. We have them all the time."

A little tropical blow?! We awoke some time after midnight to find the house shaking and the roof straining to be off! The wind made a thunderous sound, shrieking like a wild

animal, and various unknown objects were crashing around outside. We had no electricity and no water. We felt our way downstairs into the living room where Poppie had lit an oil lamp. We were terrified.

Mother cuddled the frightened Babies and tried to soothe the rest of us. "Go play the piano, Lullah," she said, "and we'll all sing."

We kept this up as long as we could, but the roaring and shrieking of the wind drowned out our pitiful efforts. Fearful gusts shook the house; with every gust we felt that the roof would go. And suddenly there was a new sound...the brightly striped awnings that covered the front windows began loosening and eventually they smashed the glass. Poppie brought us pillows to put over our heads in case we had to leave the house. Buckets of water, mostly saltwater from Biscayne Bay, roared into the house. We could do nothing about this, so we sat in huddled misery.

Finally we became aware that the night had passed and it was growing light. Then the rain and the wind ceased as abruptly as if someone had thrown a switch and turned them off. The absolute quiet was eerie, unnatural.

We went to the front door and looked out upon a scene of devastation. Our yard was littered with strange objects - garbage cans, broken lawn furniture, a child's red wagon. Miraculously, the sun was shining.

Mother had only one idea. "I must have a cup of hot coffee or I can't go on. I'm going out to see if I can find a drug store or a restaurant that's open for business."

Before we could stop her, she went out the door carrying her purse and the keys to the Model T. She started it and backed out of the driveway. But just as she turned from the driveway into the street, the storm struck again. (We knew nothing about hurricanes and had not realized that we were in the eye of the storm. After a brief lull, the storm struck with renewed fury.)

We watched in utter horror as the wind pushed the Model T down the street. We could see poor Mother bent over the steering wheel. We thought she was praying, but she was only trying to put extra pressure on the brakes. We continued watching in horror as she opened the door and got out of the car. Then she got down on the ground and slowly crawled up the street and back into the house. How thankful we were that she made it without being blown away or hit by a flying object!

This second part of the hurricane was worse than the first, but daylight made it easier for us to bear. And finally it was over. We were wet and hungry with no water, no electricity, nothing.

However, suddenly a large, motherly woman entered our living room where we were huddle. "I'm Mrs. Ludlum from next door," she said. "I've got sterno heat and hot coffee. Come on over to my place and I'll fix you some breakfast."

I have never forgotten her kindness. We later found out that she was a pioneer resident of Miami, for whom Ludlum Road, a principle thoroughfare, had been named.

Later, Nancy Fort, the wife of Poppie's law partner, managed to get through the storm to us. Because our house was not to be lived in due to the broken windows and submerged floors, she took us home with her. For some reason, her house had been spared much storm damage.

In time, we could joke about the elements arranging a celebration in honor of our moving to Miami. But we never forgot the terror of that wild and windy night.

IDA CODINGTON'S COW

My father's name was Arthur Henry Codington. He was an attorney, a very bright one, having been admitted to the Georgia Bar at the age of nineteen. For a number of years, he edited and published the decisions of the Superior Courts of Georgia.

Though my dear father, we are descended from many Puritan founders of cities in New England and New Jersey - being descendent from the founder of Yale University as well

as from the first governor of Rhode Island.

At the time of the American Revolution, Ida Codington, a widow, lived on a farm near Morristown, New Jersey, right in the thick of the fighting. One day, as Washington's troops were marching by, they spotted Ida's fat cow and promptly made off with her.

When Ida discovered her loss, she was indignant. She went straight to General George Washington and demanded that her cow be returned. "Three of my sons are marching with you," she said, "and that's enough! You can't have my cow as well!"

Washington knew how desperately hungry his soldiers were, but he agreed with Ida. He issued orders that her cow should be immediately returned.

COLONEL JAMES FANNIN

You may remember from your studies of the War with Mexico - or from the movies - that the defenders of the Alamo were desperately waiting for Fannin and his men to come from the Goliad River area to relieve them. However, Fannin and his men had been ambushed by Santa Anna, the Mexican general, and every one of them, including Fannin, shot.

James Fannin was a first cousin of my great grandmother, Martha Fannin Fort. He had grown up in the Fannin household with Martha. He was a graduate of West Point and had fought in the Seminole Wars in Florida before going to Texas.

A large picture of James Fannin together with a lengthy write-up of his achievements were sent to me several years ago by Tomlinson Fort. James Fannin's watch and some of his personal effects had been donated by the family to the State of Texas.

The picture shows Fannin in his uniform. He was the handsomest young officer you can imagine, and I know that his death was a great blow to my great grandmother. One of his letters survives, which describes a battle with Osceola in Florida.

KARL MORGAN

On a November day in the 1960's, my husband's cousin, Karl Z. Morgan, arrived in Miami to give a lecture. Karl was a distinguished physicist, head of World Radiation, and the first person to study the effects of a nuclear blast. He had worked with the "Manhattan Project" from its beginning.

My sister-in-law, Alice, and I arrived at Jackson Memorial Hospital where Karl was to speak and we were shown into a lecture room. Karl was already there and we chatted as we waited for the audience to arrive.

But long moments passed and no audience came except two nurses who had only happened to wander in. After more than an hour it became painfully evident that there would be no audience.

Alice and I were furious at this slight to Karl, but he seemed only mildly surprised. At last, someone burst into the room and shouted, "Did you hear the news? Someone shot President Kennedy!"

Now we know why no one had come to hear Karl speak. They were all crowded around their radios, waiting to hear whether the President was alive or dead.

I had invited Karl for dinner at our house the next night. As we were seated at the table, I kept hearing a noise like the chirping of a bird. It seemed to be coming from Karl.

Unable to restrain my curiosity, I finally asked, "Karl, did you bring a canary with you tonight? I keep hearing a bird chirping."

Karl laughed and took a small device from his pocket. "The sound you hear isn't a bird. It's my Geiger counter. Because of my work, I have to take it with me wherever I go." He then explained that there was enough radiation on our roof to set the Geiger counter off!

Karl died during this past year (1999), just before the turn of the Millennium. He was a

gentle, soft-spoken man, greatly loved by all who knew him.

MISS McVICAR

When I was in the eighth grade at Shenandoah Junior High School in Miami, I was summoned one day to the Principal's office. Since I had never been in trouble at school, I had no sense of foreboding.

The Principal, Miss McVicar, was a genuine tyrant, a forbidding person who looked more like a man than a woman. She sat me down and said severely, "I want to know why it is, Catherine, that you make A's in all your subjects, but an F in penmanship. Why?"

I timidly tried to explain to her that I was unable to master the Palmer Method of writing because it was worked out entirely for right-handed people. I, unfortunately, was left-handed.

She gave me an angry look. "Well, I'll tell you this. Either you learn to use your right hand instead of your left or I'll arrange to have you failed in everything! Think about it!"

I left her office in a state of shock. When I told my father about it that night, he was indignant. "Don't worry, Catzie," he said. "I'll go to the school and have a talk with that woman. Everything will be all right."

My dear father, let me say, was far ahead of his time in many ways. He knew a great deal about psychology and the workings of the human brain, and he felt that trying to change me from a left-handed child to a right-handed one would be disastrous.

Evidently, he overpowered Miss McVicar, because from then on, I was excused from penmanship class. This may not have been wise, because my handwriting has always been so terrible that I can barely read it myself!

MORE ABOUT ANNA

Anna Shoup Shafer was the daughter of a Union soldier who had served as one of Jefferson Davis' guards when the former president of the Confederacy was imprisoned at Fortress Monroe.

Jefferson Davis often engaged the soldier in conversation. One day he said to him, "Young man, you seem to be very intelligent. When this war is over, I want you to make something of yourself."

Shoup took these words to heart. When peace finally arrived he enrolled in Muhlenberg College on the Susquehanna River in his native Pennsylvania. He studied to become a Lutheran minister and did so well that he married the daughter of the college president!

Since I can no longer read, I am a little confused about the details of Rev. Shoup's later life. I know that he became a Lutheran circuit rider, traveling many miles on horseback to minister to small groups of church members. I know that he helped to build the little church at Mikesville, Florida, and that he and his family were in Jacksonville, Florida at the time of the yellow fever epidemic. (Anna Sharer suffered from the effects of yellow fever for the rest of her life.) And I know that Pastor Stoup and his family moved to Fitzgerald, Georgia, where Anna grew up and married Emmet Shafer.

(A word about the town of Fitzgerald, about which too little has been written. After the war, the area was set aside as a place where both Union and Confederate veterans could homestead large tracts of land. Although much bitterness remained between North and South, these veterans lived together in peace, even marching together in parades. It has always been my belief that this unique experiment in human relations should have been more widely studied.)

Samuel Shafer, Emmet's father, became very miserly in his old age. He did nothing to help Emmet and Anna when they married. Instead, he required Emmet to work for him without wages. To support his growing family, Emmet had to chop wood at night. During

the Florida land boom, Emmet and Anna moved with their children from Georgia to Miami, Florida.

Although Samuel Shafer had not allowed Emmet to have much schooling, Emmet had done a remarkable job of educating himself. He was widely read and became a popular Bible teacher. Also he was a natural musician and possessed a clear and true singing voice. He loved to sing on the streets of Miami with groups of Salvation Army workers. Later he and his granddaughter, Joan, sang many a duet for the congregation of South Miami Lutheran Church, of which he was the first president.

MR. GOLEITLY

Down the road from my in-laws' house in South Miami lived quite a character, a Mr. Goleitly, who is best classified as a pest. Several times a week, using one excuse or another, he would drop in on Anna and never leave until she had given him some of her freshly baked bread, cookies, a jar of her home-canned fruit, or a fair sample of whatever she was preparing for dinner.

"You ought to get married, Mr. Goleitly," she would say. "Then you'd have someone to cook for you."

"No Ma'ma," he would reply, stamping his foot. "I bin a bachelor all my life and I aim to stay that way!"

But one day Mr. Goleitly was in a strangely excited mood. "Well, Miz Shafer, I done what you asked. I'm gettin me a mail-order bride!"

Anna could hardly believe her ears. "Oh, that's wonderful! I'm sure you'll be very happy...and be sure to bring her around to see me when she comes."

She heard nothing from him for several weeks and she was beginning to think that his matrimonial venture had fallen through, when one morning there was a familiar knock at the door. Mr. Goleitly stood there. And beside him was a mousy little woman in a long-sleeved gingham dress with a hat pulled down over her hair.

"This here is my wife Sallie," Mr. Goleitly said proudly. "You said I should bring her by to see you."

Anna tried to summon enough enthusiasm to congratulate them both. She invited them to lunch and then she raided her pantry to give them a wedding present of preserved vegetables and fruit. Anna was Pennsylvania Dutch to the core. She always had an abundance of provisions.

Sallie, who was as shy as a swamp rabbit, said almost nothing. "You must come to see me again," Anna said politely as they left.

She did not see either of them for almost two months and her curiosity grew. How was this ill-assorted marriage working out?

Then one morning Mr. Goleitly reappeared. There was a scowl on his face and he seemed to be violently upset.

"What on earth is the matter?" Anna asked. "Is something wrong with Sallie?"

"Oh no Ma'ma," he said. "It ain't Sallie. Sallie's fine. It's all them lyin neighbors."

Anna was surprised. "Your neighbors are lying? What are they saying?"

"You won't believe this, Ma'ma," he said earnestly. "They're sayin that Sallie and I ain't really married."

Anna was indignant. "That's terrtible!" she cried. "They shouldn't spread a story like that."

Mr. Goleitly banged on the table. "You're dern right, it's terrible," he said. "One of these days I'm goin to march Sallie right down to the Justice of the Peace, just to show up them neighbors for the liars they are!"

MY PARENTS

I sometimes think that the good Lord allowed me to choose my own parents. If this is true, I showed wonderfully good Judgment!

They were Kate Fort and Arthur Henry Codington - cultured, creative, and compassionate people. Both came from families that had been in this country since the sixteen hundreds.

My father was the son of Augustus Codington and Mary Elizabeth Bonnell Codington, a couple who had come to South Georgia from New Jersey. He was a graduate of Mercer University in Macon and also of George Washington Law School in the nation's capital. A shorthand expert, he had worked his way through the latter by doing court reporting.

Mother had spent her childhood years on a plantation, Coolewahee, near Albany Georgia. When the family moved to Athens, she attended Lucy Cobb Finishing School and then Piedmont College at Demorest.

She and my father met in Mount Airy, where the Forts owned Mountain Hall, and the Codingtons owned an unpretentious summer cottage. They were married there on September 10, 1908.

Mother was something of an heiress, having received a considerable sum of money from the estate of John Fort's unmarried brother, Tomlinson. She and Arthur used part of it to build a beautiful half-timbered house on Vineville Avenue in Macon. They quickly became leaders in Macon society.

Lulah and I were born when Kate and Arthur lived in that house - Lulah in April of 1911 and I in October of 1913. The house may still be standing, as I saw it not too many years ago.

Mother, already a well known poet, wrote a regular column for the old Macon Telegraph, a daily newspaper. Her column always included a story or poem for children. Mother often came into the bedroom, which Lulah and I had together, to try them out on us before writing them down. Her stories were fanciful and delightful. We much preferred them to conventional fairy tales. How beautiful she was as she bent to kiss us goodnight. She always smelled of the violet cologne that my father gave her at Christmas.

As war approached, my father left his position as Assistant United States District Attorney and started a business college to train much-needed stenographers for the war effort. He was well equipped to do this because of his proficiency in shorthand, typing, and bookkeeping.

He and Mother sold the beautiful home on Vineville Avenue and purchased a more modest dwelling on Orange Street. My Uncle Eugene Codington and his wife, Sadie, lived just down the street.

OLD AUNT AGNES

It occurs to me that I may be one of the few persons still living who has known a former black slave!

When my sister, Lullah, and I arrived in Mount Airy to spend the summer with my grandmother, one of the first things we did was to go to the kitchen door to pay our respects to my grandmother's cook, Old Aunt Agnes. We never went beyond the kitchen door. We were deathly afraid of Aunt Agnes, a fierce and formidable old lady.

She was always muttering to herself, and I can remember but two things that she said, "I may be nuttin', but I can cook now. But I was a nuss (nurse) befo' the surrender." Meaning of course, Lee's surrender at Appomattox.

I also remember this - though I never knew what she meant by it, "Two heads is better than one, even if one is a sheep's head." We never dared enter the kitchen while Old Aunt Agnes was cooking one of her sumptuous dinner's on my grandmother's huge wood-burning stove. But when she had left for the day, we often sneaked in to snatch a tea cake or sugar cookie.

It may be due to my imagination or my fond recollection, but no food has ever tasted as good to me as the dishes Aunt Agnes prepared on that wood-burning stove. How well I remember her corn sticks, chicken pie, trembling pudding, and her beaten biscuits!

In order to feed the many summer guests, my grandmother always rented a cow, complete with a milker. And she planted a garden and kept a flock of chickens. My sister and I were quite attached to the chickens and spent much time playing with them.

However, one day I happened to see Old Aunt Agnes stride purposefully into the chicken yard and seize two chickens, one in each hand. While I watched in horror, she simultaneously twisted both their necks.

After this, it was a long time before I was able to swallow a mouth full of chicken. In fact, there are still times when I have difficulty in doing this!

PEACHES

My grandfather, John P. Fort, was a famed naturalist and a great benefactor of his native state. For many years a bronze tablet commemorating his work stood in the Capitol Building in Atlanta.

As one of his many enterprises, John Fort planted two peach orchards in northeast Georgia. One, which he called Bright Hope, lay just outside Mount Airy. The other, Clearview, was situated near the little town of Baldwin.

After John Fort's death, my intrepid grandmother took over the management of the orchards. In this, she was assisted by several of her children. Uncle Bill, who at the time lived in Cornelia, supervised the cultivation of the peach crop; and Aunt Mar and Unc ran the packinghouse where the peaches were graded and prepared for shipment.

With what joy, Lullah and I looked forward to Peach Season, which came about the middle of July! We could then eat our fill of Georgia Belles, an elegant white peach, and luscious Yellow Elbertas. (Peaches are still my favorite fruit, though mangoes run a close second.)

Peach Season also meant that there would be churnfuls of Ooman's fresh peach ice cream, the greatest delicacy on this earth!

In those days before electric refrigeration, ice cream was made in a large wooden churn packed with ice and rock salt. The part that contained the peach mixture was rotated by means of a handheld crank. Lullah and I were always allowed to turn the crank at the start of the proceedings, but we tuned it over to an adult as the ice cream grew hard and the crank difficult to turn. Most important of all... Peach Season meant that, for a few weeks during the summer, Lullah and I would be gainfully employed!

Lullah was taller than I and far more skillful with her hands. Since she could reach the bins, she was put to work packing the peaches in their proper crates. I stood on a box and separated the saleable fruit from the culls, diseased, undersized, and damaged peaches. Lullah was paid fifteen cents an hour and I was paid ten cents...A respectable sums in those long-ago days! One year I actually made enough money to buy myself an Elgin wristwatch, which cost about twelve dollars.

At that time, mountaineers were still a breed apart and a law unto themselves. (The "Beverly Hillbillies" that appeared so successfully on television is an excellent portrayal of them.) A number of such folk came down from the hills every year to work in the packing house, and Lullah and I were fascinated by their strange speech, their strange appearance, and their even stranger ways. Every night after quitting time, they formed a horizontal line and had a contest to see which one could spit the farthest. The men chewed tobacco while the women dipped snuff. An old mountain woman named Samantha nearly always won.

Even before the Great Depression, sadly the orchards had financially fallen into the red. They were gradually abandoned, and after my grandmother's death, the land was sold for real estate.

Through all of my childhood years, I have heard of the many dangers that threatened the peach crops and so often destroyed any chance of reaping a profit. I heard about bacterial diseases, worms, insects, prolonged droughts, heavy rains, and early frosts. This knowledge conditioned me well to become the wife of a tomato grower.

This summer, I have been buying Elberta peaches from the local Publix supermarket. I am delighted to find that they are still luscious and taste just as I remember them!

RATS!

Luther's mother, Anna Shoup Shafer, was the most courageous of women. Very soon after my marriage, I discovered that she was made of far sterner stuff than I.

On our honeymoon, Luther received word that the job on which he was depending had fallen through. Totally without funds, we moved in with Luther's father, mother, and two older brothers, Clyde and Edgar.

The Shafers lived in a large stucco house situated off what is now the Palmetto Expressway. Papa Shafer had built the house in this undeveloped part of Miami because the landowner had assured him that electric power would soon be available.

This proved to be an empty promise. The electric power never materialized. As long as the Shafers lived there, the house was lighted only by large kerosene lamps.

The family had a beloved dog, a brown Boston Bill Terrier named Mickey. Mickey was a feisty little animal that loved to hunt and destroy rats. If you said the word "rats!" to him, he started to growl and quivered all over with excitement.

One night Papa Shafer came in and announced that he had found evidence of rats in the tool shed. Mickey pricked up his ears and we all marched to the tool shed to see the fun. Luther's mother led the way holding aloft a heavy kerosene lamp to give us light.

Papa Shafer was certainly right; there were rats in the tool shed. Little Mickey, growling and snarling, flushed out a large rat, which ran immediately to Anna Shafer. As we watched the horror, the rat ran up her leg, went under her dress, and leaped out at her neck.

Any other woman would have dropped that kerosene lamp or thrown it from her, but not Anna! Her arm remained perfectly steady until Mickey had caught the rat and killed it.

When I asked her how she had managed to do this, she said merely, "I didn't want to burn down the tool shed."

ROBERTSTOWN

My dear father, although he was an extremely wiry and active man, enjoyed only one outdoor sport - fishing. When he had time, which was seldom, he went on one of his little fishing trips.

Until the boys came along, I was the only member of the family that would go with him. He bought me a little pole and we often went fishing in the muddy waters of the Okmulgee River, which is near Macon, Georgia. I don't remember that I ever caught anything but catfish, which were not considered fit to eat in those days. Sometimes my father and I took them home, let them swim in the bathtub for a while and then returned them to the river.

One summer my father decided to spend his two-week vacation in a place called Robertstown, which was situated near the headwaters of the Chattahoochee River. He had heard that the fishing there was glorious and that there were plenty of mountain trout and rainbow trout. So the Codington Family - my father and mother, my two brothers (Author and John), and my sister (Lullah), and I - went to Robertstown and moved into rooms at the local boarding house.

Even now it is hard for me to describe this place without getting sick at my stomach.

The lady who ran the place had never heard of housekeeping. She would open the door and allow her pigs to run freely through the house.

The food tasted like pig slop to Lullah and me, and we could not eat a bite of it. We had saved a little money and every day we went to the general store to buy candy and crackers.

The only redeeming feature of this vacation was the wonderful churns of fresh peach ice cream which were offered on Saturday and Sunday nights. There were contests to see who could eat the greatest number of saucers of this ice cream, and my father always won. I could never understand this since He never ate large quantities of anything else.

Finally, our stay in Robertstown was over and we went to Atlanta where my father had recently taken a job with the Georgia Court of Appeals. Before moving to our new home on Sixth Street, we lived in another boarding house, an elegant one this time.

Suddenly, without warning, Tallullah and I began to scratch. We scratched harder and harder until my poor mother took us to the doctor. In a hushed voice, he diagnosed our ailment as "ITCH".

(We had probably acquired it from the Roberstown pigs that sometimes got up on our bed.)

SAMUEL SHAFER

Samuel Shafer, the father of Emmet Shafer and the paternal grandfather of my husband, Luther, was born in Butternut, Ohio, a small town that no longer exists. He was an orphan who followed the trade of shoemaker and he had a younger brother whom he supported.

He was nineteen, I think, when the Civil War broke out. Filled with patriotism, he enlisted in the Union Army when President Lincoln called for volunteers. He fought through most of this terrible conflict, making daily entries of his activities in a small black book that he always carried with him. He most likely fought at Shiloh and then took part in the Kentucky and Tennessee campaigns. The march through Tennessee was a frightful ordeal since it seemed to have rained every day. Samuel Shafer hated the mud far more than he hated the enemy.

He was an accomplished fiddler and often played for the officers' dances. How he managed to keep his fiddle dry on those rain-soaked marches is a mystery.

Like all foot soldiers from time immemorial, he had not the least idea of what was really going on. He wrote that he and members of his company had lined up in a corn field and fired their guns. When he heard some days later that a great battle had taken place, he did not know that he had been in it!

He was wounded at Chickamaugua and sent to a hospital. When I was translating the little black diary, an Army Colonel friend of mine suggested that I write to the Pentagon and ask for Samuel Shafer's war record. I could not believe that the Pentagon would have kept such a thing, but one day a fat manila envelope arrived for me. It contained complete records of Samuel Shafer's movements during the war and it was the greatest help to me.

After he was mustered out, he married his longtime sweetheart, Siren Smith, a young lady of Dutch descent. They had four children: Alfred, Etta, and Mae. Emmet was their baby.

When the Government offered free tracts of land in Southwest Georgia to both Union and Confederate veterans, Samuel Shafer moved his family to what is now Fitzgerald.

Too little has been written about the town of Fitzgerald, which was a shining example of successful, human relations. Men who had faced each other on the battlefields now lived and worked side by side. On special occasions, blue and gray uniforms marched peaceably together.

Samuel Shafer became the most famous old-time fiddler in the State of Georgia. It was said that he could play steadily for a week without repeating a single tune!

In his later years, some illness caught up with him and he became a notorious miser,

forcing his sons to work for him without pay. He is buried in the cemetery at Fitzgerald.

SWEET CHARITY

During the first seven years of our marriage, Luther and I spent two months of every summer in Salisbury, Maryland where Luther had a job buying and packing tomatoes for shipment to the New York market. When our own crop in Miami failed, which was more often than not, this job was a Godsend to us.

Among the workers at the packinghouse that Luther ran was a seedy individual named John Hogan. He was a diligent worker, but hostile and uncooperative. None of the others liked him.

John Hogan did not come to work one day. We heard that he had broken his leg and would be unable to work for the rest of the summer. Nobody seemed to care very much, but I thought of John's wife and his brood of children. I resolved to help them.

In those days, I had more heart than good sense. I went to each of the packinghouse employees and asked them to contribute to a fund for John Hogan. This was in the lean years of the 1930's. No one had any extra money, but they grudgingly gave what they could.

When I had gathered a respectable sum, I set out for the broken-down old house where John and his family lived. I had placed the money and a get-well card in a large manila envelope.

John was sitting on the front porch with his broken leg propped up on the railing. He gave me an unfriendly look, "So it's you, Miz Shafer. What do you want?"

As tactfully as I could, I explained to him that the people at the packinghouse had been very sorry to hear of his accident. They had all contributed to the gift I had brought.

He fairly snatched the envelope from my hand, tore it open and counted the money. Then he said, "I'll want a list of all them that done give to this."

I told him that would not be necessary. None of the workers expected thanks.

Down came the broken leg from the porch railing. "Thanks, Hell!" he exclaimed. "I just want to ask all them people how much they gave. That way I'll know what you're holding out on me!"

I fled without a word.

SWEET POTATOES

My grandfather, John Porter Fort, and Tallulah Hay Ellis were married during the Reconstruction Years following the Civil War. John was practicing law at the time and attempting to manage the six South Georgia plantations left by his sister, Julia Huguenin. Tallulah was teaching school in Atlanta.

As a member of the "southern landed gentry", John socially knew some of the generals that had been in the Confederacy. Once, when he and Tallulah were visiting in New Orleans, she entered a social dinner upon the arm of the celebrated General Beauregard, which would have been a great honor for any woman.

Another time, John received a letter from General Longstreet advising that he would be in their city and would like to see John and his wife. Tallulah, the very soul of Southern Hospitality, promptly invited the General to dinner.

But what to feed him? Those times were very hard for the South and luxuries were nearly non-existent. Most families lived mainly on sweet potatoes, which were filling, nutritious, and easy to grow. However, Tallulah felt that to serve the General sweet potatoes would be an insult.

John was a hunter and fisherman, and I suppose he provided quail, venison, and trout for the dinner. And by begging and borrowing, Tallulah obtained white sugar and white

flour to make up something of a feast. General Longstreet expressed himself as being very pleased at the food that was set before him.

Shortly, my grandmother Tallulah received a note from the General, thanking her for the wonderful dinner she had given him. "I missed but one thing," he wrote wistfully, "my favorite dish is sweet potatoes. You must have had none or surely you would have served them. I am therefore sending you a crate of sweet potatoes from my own garden. Again, thank you so much."

Poor Tallulah! She was still upset as she told me this story...nearly fifty years later.

A TERRIFYING EXPERIENCE

One summer, when I was about eight and Lulah about eleven, Aunt Susan and her husband, Don Redfearn, came to Mount Airy to pick us up and take us with them to North Carolina. We would spend several days with them, then they would put us on the bus and send us back to Mount Airy.

Lulah and I were utterly thrilled at the prospect of such a treat and spent hours deciding what clothes we should take and how we should pack our suitcase.

After three fabulous days at Grove Park Inn in Asheville, Uncle Dan took us to the bus station. He gave us each two dollars and kissed us goodbye. "Someone will meet you at Cornelia," he said, "Everything will be fine."

But everything wasn't fine. We had been on the bus only a short time when the Driver stopped and set our suitcase out on the ground. "Your tickets only take you to Silva," he said, "and this is Silva. Get off the bus." He paid no attention to our protests and held the door open until we had climbed down. I have sometimes wondered how any man could have left two tearful, frightened little girls stranded in a strange town. Perhaps he had been drinking or was some kind of a sadist.

I know that Uncle Dan, careful and caring person that he was, would never have made a mistake about our tickets.

As the bus pulled out, Lulah and I looked at each other in blind panic. But my older sister soon took control of the situation. "Its getting late in the afternoon," she said. "We had better find a hotel and get a room for the night. Then we'll try to reach the family in Mount Airy and tell them where we are."

There was a hotel near the bus stop and the desk clerk actually rented us a room after Lulah explained that we needed a place to stay until our family came to get us. We had no money but the four dollars Uncle Dan had given us.

After freshening up a bit, we went down to the lobby and set about notifying our grandmother of our plight. Since there would be no telephone at Mount Airy for a number of years, we decided to call the railroad station at Mount Airy. But Sam Flint, the stationmaster and telegraph operator, had evidently left for the day. We tried several times, but there was no answer.

My resourceful sister then decided to send a telegram to our grandmother through the depot at Cornelia. (Cornelia is a small town that almost adjoins Mount Airy.) She sent the telegram with the help of the Desk Clerk. Then, being young and hungry, we each bought a candy bar and a movie magazine and went up to our room to wait. It never occurred to us to appeal to the police; no child would have done such a thing in those days!

Later that night there was a knock at our door. We were told that the family had received our telegram. Uncle Tom, on whom we always depended, was out of town, but Aunt Martha and Hartley Anderson would drive up in the morning to take us home.

It is impossible to describe our relief!

True to their word, Aunt Mar and Uncle Hartley arrived about ten o'clock the next morning. They paid our hotel bill, bought us breakfast, and took us back to Mount Airy.

I have never forgotten this experience, which became a recurring nightmare to me. But neither Lulah nor I ever told Aunt Susan or Uncle Dan what had happened.

THE BONNELLS

My grandmother Codington's maiden name was Mary Elizabeth Bonnell. Like Augustus Codington, she was descended from the strictest of Puritans.

I don't remember whether Nathaniel Bunnell arrived in John Winthrop's fleet, but I know that he was here in the sixteen-thirties. He had been a general in the army of King Charles I, and had probably gotten into trouble because of his religious beliefs.

He and his followers found that morals in the Massachusetts Bay Colony were too lax to suit them. Accordingly, they left, going first to Long Island and then to what is now New Jersey. They founded Elizabethtown, now known as Elizabeth.

In the 1660's, Nathaniel built a house, which has been restored and is maintained by the New Jersey Historical Society. When I was writing my book on my father's family, I corresponded with the mayor of Elizabeth and obtained pictures of the house. It is a charming little colonial place with a Huguenot Cross built into the front door. This was a secret sign with which the persecuted Protestants used to identify themselves to each other. You cannot have seen it unless you knew where to look.

In a history of New Jersey, the Bonnells are described as industrious, public-spirited men, very skilled workers in metal. They were ardent patriots and many of them fought in the Revolution. There were over one hundred men in one battle alone!

Before I went to New Mexico, in my possession, I had copies of two of their commissions as officers in the Continental Army. Another of our ancestors, Captain "Sock" Oliver, was a hero at the Battle of Brandywine.

THE CHRISTENING

For some reason Mother did not get around to having my brothers Christened until Arthur was about four and John was two. The deed was finally done in the little gray Episcopal Church that stood near Mountain Hall.

I loved that church with its atmosphere of quietness and sanctity. Mother played the organ, which she pumped with her feet to make it produce music. Lulah and I (the entire choir) would march down the aisle at the beginning of every service singing "Holy, Holy, Holy" or "The Church's One Foundation" as loudly as we could.

The minister was old Mr. Duck who came from Atlanta once or twice a month. He had white hair and a small, pointed white beard that wagged up and down as he preached. Until I was much older, I believed that he had received his name because he so closely resembled a duck.

This particular service proceeded without incident until it was time for the Christening. Lulah and I, who were to act as godparents, managed to get our little brothers up to the font in front of the Church, though not without a struggle. Old Mr. Duck gravely christened Arthur, sprinkling him; whereupon he prepared to christen John who was resisting salvation with all his might.

It was a hot summer day. The doors of the church had been left wide open for coolness. Suddenly a large gray cat entered and strolled down the center aisle. This was too much for my little brothers. With a Whoop of Joy, Arthur ran after the cat and John, breaking away from poor Mr. Duck, followed him.

Lulah and I were not yet teenagers, but we were old enough to feel utterly mortified by our siblings' behavior. We watched in horror as the boys chased the cat around the church. We felt that we were disgraced for life.

At last one of the men of the congregation, which consisted of no more than a dozen people, caught the cat, put it out of the church, and firmly shut the door. Then he grabbed the two boys and brought them back to the Baptismal Font.

Old Mr. Duck, for once speechless, took John in his arms and finished the Rite of Christening. Mother sat down at the organ and played a final hymn.

Much too tactful to say anything to us, the congregation made their way out the door.

THE CROCHET HOOK

I have never cared very much for arts and crafts, preferring to spend my free time in more intellectual pursuits. But one year, in the hope of impressing my mother-in-law, I asked her to teach me how to crochet.

She found it very hard going since she was right-handed and liked the show-and-tell method, whereas I was left-handed and worked better from written directions. But I finally mastered the art of crochet and even started a spread for my bed, a project that might have taken me twenty years to finish!

Crocheted purses were all the rage that year, so I decided to make four of them as Christmas gifts for my mother and three sisters. I finished three of them, and very pretty they were. I had used black silk cord and had bought tortoise shell handles to give them class.

The deadline for Christmas mailing was fast approaching and I still had not finished the fourth purse. One morning I sat on the porch, took out my crocheting, and worked feverishly for three or four hours. Then, not realizing that both my feet had gone to sleep, I got up...and fell heavily to the floor.

I did not think I was hurt, but I suddenly felt a strange sensation in my right hand. I looked, and with horror saw that I had fallen on my crochet hook. Several inches of it were sticking from my palm.

I don't often go into a panic, but on this occasion I did. I screamed wildly and my next door neighbor came running to see what on earth was the matter with me. She took one look at the crochet hook and said, "You need to see a doctor. I'll drive you to the hospital emergency room."

We went to the County Hospital, which at that time was located at Kendall. The waiting room was not crowded and very soon a nice young doctor came in to see me. Seeing that I was in a state of near shock, he suggested that I lie down.

I lay down on the examining table and closed my eyes while he carefully looked at my hand. "Oh, Mrs. Shafer," he said. "I'm so sorry!"

I thought wildly, "He's going to amputate my hand," and I tried to brace myself for the bad news.

He continued, "You understand that this is exactly like a fish hook. There's no way that I can pull it out the way it went in without tearing your hand to pieces. I'll have to push it all the way through, break it off, and then remove it. I'm sorry that this will destroy your crochet hook."

I could have cried with relief. The crochet hook had cost me about twenty-five cents and I was tired of it anyway. "Please, go ahead," I said.

I felt no pain at all. He numbed my hand and performed the suggested procedure. As we left, I thanked him profusely, and thanked my kind neighbor for driving me.

I never finished the fourth purse and sent my sister another gift instead. And never, in all my long life, have I touched another crochet hook!

THE DANCE

My sister, Lullah, was a beautiful and graceful young girl. She studied piano and dance and was greatly talented in both.

She loved to perform in public. Once, I remember, she was in some kind of show performing in a large auditorium. She did a spirited Spanish dance and the audience went wild, calling her back on stage to take a number of bows.

When I went backstage to congratulate her, I was amazed to find her in tears. "Why on earth are you crying?" I asked. "Your dance was wonderful and the audience loved it."

"I know," she said tearfully, "and that's fine. But why don't people applaud that way when I play Bach? Boo Hoo!"

Lullah and I both studied dance, but she was much better at it than I. At one time, together, we were pupils of Author Murray when he had a studio in Atlanta. What a thrill it was to have the famed dancer whirl us around the ballroom floor!

THE FANNINS

The Fannies are the Irish branch of our family. We are related to them through my great grandmother, Martha Fannin Fort.

Some of you may have noticed the heavy rubbing that hangs high on the wall of David Shafer's living room. This rubbing was made for me by my niece Dory Codington who tramped through all the cemeteries of Long Island to find it.

The rubbing, which is somewhat hard to read, tells the story of our ancestor, Dominic Fannin, who was mayor of a city in Ireland in the sixteen-hundreds. When Oliver Cromwell laid siege to the city, Dominic refused to surrender it unless Cromwell guaranteed to the people their property rights and freedom of religion. Cromwell was a very nasty character, and refused to do this. He cut off Dominic's head and stuck it on the city gate.

Dominic's son, Edmund, naturally took alarm at this. He, his wife Catherine, the daughter of the Earl of Connaught, and their two sons quickly fled Ireland for the New World.

The sons grew up to fight in the King William's War, in which one of them was scalped by King Phillip himself. The other survived and had sons of his own.

As tensions with England increased, and the Revolution approached, these two Fannin brothers reached a parting of the ways. One remained a Loyalist. He eventually went to Canada and became governor of Nova Scotia. The other, James, was a passionate patriot. He settled in Georgia and became our ancestor.

My great grandmother says of the Fannin men that they were high-spirited Irishmen who were always ready for a fight. One of her uncles got into a brawl with the town bully and actually bit off his nose. For the rest of his life, the bully had to wear a black silk nose piece!

James Fannin became so disgusted with his brother's Loyalist sympathies that he refused to be identified with him. Therefore, he dropped the final "g" from his name. This is the reason the family has both "Fannings" and "Fannins".

THE HOLY LAUGH

One summer at Mount Airy when I was a silly young teenager, a group of us decided to visit a Holy Roller revival meeting that was being held in a large tent on the road to Cornelia. There were three boys in the group, I remember, and two girls.

We entered the tent and found seats about halfway to the front. I enjoyed the music, which was lively and had a strong beat, and for a while I listened respectfully to the preaching. But the behavior of the congregation struck me as ridiculous. I had been brought up in a dignified, liturgical church and I had never seen people carry on like this before.

I began to laugh. In a few minutes I was totally out of control. I was very ashamed of

myself; but, try as I would, I could not stop. Several times, an usher came up and gave me a stern look. Even that had no effect.

At last, two men approached and said to me, "If you can't be quiet, you will have to leave. You're disrupting the service."

One of the boys, I think his name was Robert, had more presence of mind than the rest of us. Looking at the men with an innocent expression, he said, "O please, Sirs, don't talk to her like that. Can't you see that she has the Holy Laugh?"

They were impressed, "The Holy Laugh?"

"Yes Sirs, the Holy Laugh. She sometimes gets it."

The men were completely mollified. "Well, in that case, it's all right. God bless you Sister, and your Holy Laugh."

I had the grace to feel utterly humbled by that...and actually was able to stop laughing!

THE MEDIUM

After Oomama died, my Aunt Susan became morbidly interred in spiritualism. She began attending a church devoted to such matters and I worried about the influence the Medium had upon her.

She was always urging me to accompany her to one of the spiritualist meetings and one night I consented to go. As we walked into the so-called church, a young man handed each of us a piece of paper and a pencil. "Write a question for one of your dear departed," he said. "Perhaps the Medium will be able to get you an answer."

I was very skeptical and for a Moment could not think of any departed friend or relative that I wished to contact. I certainly didn't wish to disturb dear Oomama! But suddenly I remembered that the year before a boy named Jack had died after giving me a book of poetry. I think my question to was, "Do you recall the volume of Swinbourne you gave me?" I then handed the piece of paper to the young man.

We took our seats in the auditorium and after some delay the Medium came out on the stage. She was a placid woman who looked something like a fat white cow. Seated in a comfortable armchair, she began giving messages from the dead to members of the audience. Her voice was perfectly expressionless and matter-of-fact. She might have been reciting a grocery list.

"Joe, I have a message from your brother. He says not to sell your car at this time." And, "Madeline your mother says that you will get over that cough if you stop smoking." She must have given messages to a dozen people before suddenly she said, "Is somebody named Catherine here?"

I looked around the auditorium, but nobody stood up. At last, it dawned on me that I was the Catherine she meant. Hesitantly, I stood up.

"Catherine," said the Medium, "I have contacted your grandmother. She says that you are a very sweet girl, but what a great pity it is that you're left-handed!"

I was dumbfounded because I knew at once that she was talking about my grandmother Codington. Grandma was the only person in the family who had objected to my being left-handed. She considered it a deformity and a disgrace. Often when she came to visit, she would tie my left hand behind my back and force me to use my right."

I had few memories of her, and mentioning the left hand was really the only way she might have to identify herself to me. I began to think that the fat white Medium had really received a message from her.

After I had arrived at home, I began thinking more clearly. Mediums, I had read, were usually clever charlatans, masters at sizing up their victims and drawing shrewd conclusions. The young man who had met us at the door and had handed me a pencil and paper had observed that I wrote with my left hand. And he had seen that I was not very old (in my mid-thirties, I think) and had probably not lost a husband or parent. But the chances were good that I had lost at least one grandmother. Such a grandmother, born far

back in the Victorian era, would have been greatly prejudiced against left-handedness. I can explain it all rationally, but I still get an eerie feeling when I think of it!

A VISIT TO THE VANDERBILTS

My mother...I do not know exactly how...was distantly related to the Cornelius Vanderbilts, the richest family in the United States. As budding young women, Mother and her sister, Susan, were invited to visit Mrs. Vanderbilt at her palatial home on Fifth Avenue. This was their introduction to the glittering social scene that existed in New York around the turn of the century. I never heard Mother say that she was impressed by it.

After their first night at the mansion, she and Aunt Susan faced a dilemma. Would it be proper for them to make their own bed and hang up their clothes, as they did at home, or should they leave such mundane tasks to the army of servants that worked in the Vanderbilt household? After much debate, they decided that performing household chores would brand them as "tacky" and "countrified". So, for the rest of their visit, they left the bed unmade and the clothes unhung.

After they had gone home and had written their thank-you "bread-and-butter" letters, my grandmother received a note from Mrs. Vanderbilt, "Susan and Kate are very sweet girls," the Lady wrote, "but so UNTIDY! You should have brought them up better!"

For years after this, my mother received a large box from Mrs. Vanderbilt. Inside, there were always only many pairs of long white gloves, of the sort that she wore at balls. Lullah and I had great fun dressing up in them.

UNCLE AL

Al Stanton lived with his sister's family in a house near the Shafers. The Manship children called him "Uncle Al" and so did the other residents of our small farming community.

In his late sixties, Uncle Al was still vigorous and able to do a hard day's work. He became Luther's foreman, and mentor, during the first years that we grew tomatoes. According to Luther, Uncle Al had led a highly adventurous life and had been a bit of a womanizer in his day. There was yet a gleam of pure devilment in his faded blue eyes.

Uncle Al was almost stone deaf, but he could not...or would not...wear a hearing device of any kind. Sometimes when Luther had shouted at him all day, my husband would come home and shout at me. "I'm not Uncle Al," I would say.

We could not afford mechanized farming equipment in those early days, but Luther had found a broken-down old mule that we called "Bones". Uncle Al tenderly cared for Bones and taught the poor old animal to plow a straight furrow and to pull the cultivator. Uncle Al grieved when Bones accidentally choked to death.

Our first child, Tatty, was born in Atlanta where I had gone to be near my mother for the birth. Tatty was desperately ill for weeks afterward and we did not know from day to day if she would survive.

When we finally brought our baby back to Miami, Uncle Al came immediately to see her. As he looked at Tatty, his old eyes clouded with tears.

He said soberly, "That child got well because I prayed for her. I prayed for her, and the Lord listened to me. I know He listened to me because I pray so seldom!"

UNCLE HERBERT

With all my heart I loved my father's younger brother, Dr. Herbert Codington. I seldom

saw him, for we never lived in the same town, but I always looked forward to his visits. He was a warm, outgoing person with a wonderful sense of humor. Sometimes he and I simply looked at each other and laughed until the tears came to our eyes.

Uncle Herbert was a surgeon that had spent time in France during World War I, and he brought Lullah and me wonderful beaded bags that he had purchased in Paris. For years they were our greatest treasures.

One summer when he and Aunt Jessie came to Mount Airy to vacation in the Codington cottage, he managed to procure a jackass for the children to ride. That was an unforgettable experience!

When I was five or six, it was Uncle Herbert who insisted that my fractured right arm be x-rayed and placed in a cast after the family doctor had dismissed it as a trivial injury. I had jumped off the back of the fence, caught my dress on a nail, and fallen heavily to the ground. I remember that I broke out with chickenpox a few days later and that the worst of the pox was on my broken arm...beneath the cast where I couldn't scratch!

On the occasion of my last visit with him, Uncle Herbert told me this amusing story:

In the days when doctors still made house calls, he had gone out at night into the country to attend a difficult case. It was not yet light when he started for home.

As he drove down a country road, he saw a young woman who was apparently in great distress. He stopped to ask her the cause of her trouble and she said that she had to get into Wilmington for a job appointment. Her car had something the matter with it and would not start.

My kindhearted uncle offered her a lift and she climbed in beside him. Dawn was just breaking as they rode into Wilmington, but already people were about.

The young woman suddenly said, "All right, Dr. Codington. I know who you are. Give me fifty dollars or I'll tear my clothes and start screaming. You know what people will think."

Poor Uncle Herbert knew very well what people would think. He handed over the fifty dollars and never, as far as I know, picked up another hitchhiker!

His oldest son, also a doctor, became a medical missionary for the Presbyterian Church. He was head of a tubercular hospital in Korea. He usually arranged to give each departing patient a milk cow and a few chickens to insure their continued health.

I never knew Uncle Herbert's other children, but one of my friends in Miami was the daughter of the pastor of the church where Uncle Herbert was an elder. My friend described Helen Codington as one of the most beautiful girls she had ever seen.

UNCLE PETER

On one of my summer visits to Atlanta to visit my parents, I think in 1936, I became acquainted with a family that lived a few doors down the street from my parents. They were Dr. Hal Davison, his Russian-born wife Natasha, and their two sons.

Dr. Hal was an allergy specialist and Natasha was a beautiful and fascinating woman. They had met in France during World War I when he was stationed at an Army hospital and she was driving an ambulance.

Herself an exile from the Soviet Union, Natasha made her Atlanta home a gathering place for aristocratic "white" Russians that had fled the terrors of the Bolshevik Revolution. Such Russian folk were always about the place and more Russian than English was spoken in the house. Both of the sons became fluent bilinguals.

Because of their great love of music, the Davisons had cultivated my sister, Lullah. In the course of events, it was through them that she met and then married her husband, dear Fred Reed. They made their home in Atlanta.

A permanent live-in guest at the Davison house was a fiery elderly gentleman whom everyone called Uncle Peter. He was a genuine dignitary, having been a secretary to the Czar and judge of the Imperial Court in Moscow. But his chief claim to distinction, as far

as we were concerned, was that he was the uncle of the famed Russian composer, Tschaikovsky. His sister was the composer's mother and she was still living in the Soviet Union at the time.

Uncle Peter was a linguist and scholar. At the time that I knew him, he was a professor of Shakespeare at Oglethorpe University. He had written a book, which presented the Earl of Rutland as the genuine author of Shakespeare's plays.

I had studied to be a Shakespearean actress, so we had much in common. Uncle Peter was fond of me because I volunteered to type his manuscripts and because I was the only person in the neighborhood who would willingly be his partner at contract bridge. Let me say that he was a very erratic player!

"What a magnificent woman you are, Catherine!" he would say, rolling his eyes up to heaven. "And you have never even realized it!"

One night, against my better judgment, Uncle Peter persuaded me to go to the movies with him and a group of wild Russians. They argued excitedly in their native language as we drove to the theater and their argument continued as we went into the lobby.

The Russians bought their tickets and went in to see the movie. Uncle Peter, forgetting the young woman he had brought with him, went in with them.

I didn't know what on earth to do. I had come without my purse or a cent of money. My parents were out for the evening and I could not call them.

I waited in the lobby for more than an hour, thinking that surely Uncle Peter would miss me and come looking to see where I was. At last, one of the Russian women emerged from the movie and looked vaguely around the lobby.

I was by no means sure that she spoke English, so I tried out on her the few words of Russian that Uncle Peter had taught me. Her eyes widened and she threw her arms around me. "Oh, my dear!" she cried ecstatically. "You are Russian! You are Russian!"

I shook my head in negation, so she abruptly went back into the movie. Not wanting to wait any longer for those crazy people, I persuaded the theater manager to let me use his telephone. Finally I reached my dear father who came and got me.

As I have said, the two boys, Peter and Aloysha, were fluent in Russian. During the Cold War with Russia, they were hotly pursued by the Diplomatic Service. Peter resisted their blandishments, but poor young Aloysha finally succumbed. We understood that he was serving somewhere in Europe as a kind of spy when the Soviets spotted him. He narrowly escaped with his life. When I saw him at a party a few years after this, I made the mistake of asking him about his experience. He turned white as a sheet and fairly ran from the room.

UNCLE WILLIE

My dear Grandmother Tallulah had two older brothers, Dr. Daniel Ellis and Judge William D. Ellis.

Uncle Dan lived in Charleston and I knew him only slightly, but Uncle Willie lived in Atlanta and I remember him well. He sometimes came to Mount Airy when my sister and I still lived there. I think of him sitting in a rocking chair on the front porch. He was always enveloped in a shawl with a hat pulled down over his ears. He was a frail old man when I knew him, though he had been Chief Justice of the Georgia Supreme Court. And he still looked every inch the part.

In the evenings at Mount Airy, the adults all gathered in a circle around the oil lamp in the large front hall. My grandmother always required my sister and me to plant a kiss on every adult forehead before we went to bed. I was happy to kiss Grandmother, Aunt Martha, Uncle Tom, but I always dreaded kissing Uncle Willie!

At the outbreak of the Civil War, Great Grandmother Ellis was living on a plantation

near Barnwell, South Carolina. Her husband, a physician, had died and left her with a number of children.

Willie, though still a very young teenager, was desperately anxious to join the Confederate Army, but his mother refused him permission. Willie suffered badly from croup (probably asthma) and she feared that he would not survive the rigors of army life. However, as the fortunes of the Southern States declined, the local family doctor organized a company to go and fight. Great Grandmother then allowed Willie to go "...because if he gets the croup, the doctor will know what to do for him."

Willie went to war. But soon he was captured and spent some time in a Yankee prison. Therefore, he was not present when Sherman burned the family home at Barnwell or when the family fled to Atlanta. After the war, however, he joined the family in Atlanta and started a day-school for refugee children. My grandmother took over the school when she was but thirteen years of age!

Uncle Willie married Miss Phoebe Prioleau, a descendant of the first Huguenot minister to come to Charleston.

Their youngest daughter, Hallie, my mother's favorite cousin, died tragically of pneumonia even as her husband, Will Rhett, lay in a comma with another disease. Uncle Willie's older daughter, Phoebe Bishop, was very dear to me and was one of Tatty's godmothers.

GEORGE WASHINGTON'S HORSE

Ann Hawks Hay was my grandfather five generations back. I am descended from him through my grandmother, Tallulah Hay Ellis Fort.

When Ann Hawks Hay was a young man, he developed a great sympathy for the American Colonies in their struggle for independence. He had little cause to love the British since his father, a Scottish Highlander, had fled to Jamaica after the disastrous Battle of Culloden Moor; he would have lost his life had he remained.

Ann Hawks Hay arrived in the City of New York where he met and married Mary Het Smith, the daughter of William (later Judge) Smith. Smith, who had been disbarred by the British, was the original counsel in the John Peter Zenger Case, which established the principle of Freedom of the Press. He was also a founder of Columbia University.

Ann and Mary Hay moved to a small town near what is now Syracuse, New York. They had a number of children, one of whom was our direct ancestor, Lewis Scott Hay.

Ann Hawks Hay joined the Continental Army with the rank of colonel. He became an aid to Washington and was made quartermaster for the entire region of the Upper Hudson River Valley.

Washington sometimes came to the Hay House to confer with his quartermaster. On one such occasion, the Hay children, who passionately adored the General, resolved to do something to honor him.

Washington had spent the night in the Hay house. When he came out the next morning and mounted his horse, the children were waiting for him. They loaded the cannon and proudly fired a salute.

The frightened horse reared high in the air. If Washington had not been an expert horseman, he would have been thrown and perhaps seriously injured. However, he quickly brought the horse under control and quietly dismounted...whereupon he gravely thanked the Hay children for the honor they had tried to give him.

Yet, to demonstrate that the General's judgment was not infallible, he wrote for the children an order to the Commissary for them to acquire more gunpowder for the cannon.

WHITTLE SCHOOL

When my sister Lulah started to school, I cried so violently that Mother took me to a private kindergarten. I remember little of it, however, since I became a victim of the Great Flu Epidemic that hit the country in 1918. Mother was in the hospital giving birth to my brother John and she was not allowed to return home until I had recovered. I was told later that I had nearly died.

Pills were not in general use at the time and the only medicines available were raw quinine and castor oil administered in a tablespoon. I fought against taking the horrid stuff so violently that the nurse hired by my father threatened many times to walk off the case.

I entered Whittle School in Macon, Georgia just two months before the signing of the Armistice that ended World War I. Whittle School lay at the foot of nearby Coleman Hill, and Lulah and I walked to it every day. I enjoyed that first year because I had somehow learned to read and the work was very easy for me. What I remember most is trying to exchange, at lunch recess, my boring sandwich for some peanut butter crackers that my father, for some reason, refused to allow in our house. (Because of his real or fancied allergies, shrimp, hot dogs, onions, and tomato ketchup were forbidden as well.)

In the second grade, I had a dreadful teacher named Miss Thornton who scared me to death. She mistook my shyness for good behavior and, to my horror, made me her pet.

One day she called me up to the front of the room and made me face the class. "All of you children have been very noisy today," she said in a disagreeable voice, "so I am making you stay an hour after school. But not Catherine. Catherine has been VERY GOOD! I am letting her go home...and see now that I am giving her a bag of candy for a reward." She reached into her desk and took out a paper bag. Handing it to me she said, "Take out a piece of candy and eat it. RIGHT NOW!"

With the outraged looks of my classmates upon me, I could scarcely swallow the fudgelike stuff. I was sure that some of the boys longed to dip my hair into one of the inkwells that adorned each desk. Fortunately, this would have been difficult as, unlike most of the girls, I did not have pigtails; rather, I wore my hair in a "dutch bob".

I recall only one other incident regarding Miss Thornton. One day the County Superintendent of Schools came to visit and she wanted to show off for him. In preparation for his visit, she had assigned the class each to write a composition; but I had been absent the day of the assignment and knew nothing of it. For the Superintendent the next day, Miss Thornton beamed, "Each of the children has written a composition, but Catherine writes especially well. Stand up now Cathrine and read your composition for the Superintendent."

My heart sank into my shoes. Not daring to confess that I had been absent the day before and had written no composition, I took a sheet of perfectly blank paper from my notebook and held it in front of me. Pretending to read from it, I made up something that sounded like a composition.

"Very nice," said the Superintendent. Miss Thornton beamed. I still regard it as one of the worst moments of my life. Often my shyness resulted in creativity.

What else? Let me say that during the lean years of the Depression, when my husband Luther and I experienced crop failure after failure, I was able to augment the family income by writing for the various newspapers and magazines about some of my embarrassing moments. (Embarrassing moments, at the time, were very much in vogue.) As such little stories demonstrate, I had no lack of material.

WILLIAM CODINGTON

Almost all the Puritans from whom we are descended on my father's side of the family had arrived in this country well before the mid-sixteen hundreds. Many of them had arrived in John Winthrop's fleet that reached Massachusetts in 1630.

Among the passengers was Peter Pruden, a minister. He is a common ancestor of my daughter, Barbara Shafer Johnson, and of her husband, Carl Ronald Johnson. When I suggested that they name their son for this common ancestor, they turned me down flat. However, Barbara did name one of her goats after him!

Also arriving in John Winthrop's fleet was a prestigious and ambitious man named William Codrington. He built the first brick house in Boston and made himself conspicuous by siding with Roger Williams and Anna Bradstreet in the religious dispute that rocked the Colony.

Later, William Codrington went with Roger Williams to found the Colony of Rhode Island. He managed to have himself appointed governor of the new territory, but he failed in his efforts to keep his position for life, probably because Roger Williams actively worked against him.

Roger Williams wrote, "Governor Codrington is the meanest person I have ever known. He will make a starving man do a day's work before he gives him a crust of bread!"

Later, William Codrington obtained title to a large tract of land in New Jersey for his son John...from whom we are descended. The John Codrington house survived for many years and may still be standing.