

Abraham Miller, was born July 4, 1786 married May 28, 1813  
Polly Miller was born Jan 10, 1776  
Uncle Lee was 7th child & great uncle of U.S.G.

MEMOIR OF THE LIFE OF LEE CARUTH MILLER, M. D.

Written by himself for his children.

I am now about undertaking a task which I have long since contemplated, and one which my wife Emma often asked me to do. Knowing that you are almost wholly unacquainted with the history of my family I consider it a duty that I owe to you to give you at least a short sketch of my life before you became old enough to remember anything about it yourselves. You must not expect anything like a history of our ancestry, for I know but little about it. You know I shall have to write from memory alone, and you must expect nothing more than a disjointed narrative.

My grandfather was brought from Germany to Pennsylvania when a small boy. He was a soldier during the Revolution, and belonged to Light Horse Harry Lee's command (so you see the guerrilla spirit cropped out away back). My father was a soldier in the war of 1812. Here let me say that my father was born in Pennsylvania, and was taken to Virginia when a small boy, and from there to Kentucky a few years later. He was a Lieutenant in Captain Rule's Company. Captain Rule was his father-in-law. My father had a cousin who was a Colonel in that war, and who gained distinction at the battle of Lundy's Lane in Canada. He had another cousin who was in Congress several years from Boonville, Missouri. A number of our relatives have occupied places of honor and distinction. My oldest brother was in the Indian War in Florida. My second brother was in the so-called Mormon War. My third brother was in the Mexican War. Your uncle Vernile and myself were in the Civil War.

My grandfather's family was composed of nine sons and one daughter, and my father's family the same. My aunt married a man by the name of Lee Caruth, hence my name. He was the father of the noted Congressman David Caruth of Kentucky. By the way, the little town of Millersburg in Callaway County, Missouri, was named for an uncle of mine who died when I was about fifteen years old.

My father married Polly Rule. By the way, again, I had three aunts by the name of Polly; Aunt Polly Sam, Aunt Polly Bill, and Aunt Polly Phillips (How is that for Polly?) My father came to Missouri in 1818. He lived in St. Louis County one year and then moved to Callaway County. He entered land on Miller's Creek ten miles west of Fulton. He being the first settler on this creek it was named for him and still retains the name. His brother Samuel took lands adjoining, their houses being a half mile apart. Their nearest neighbor was a settlement of six families in what is now Boone County, ten miles away. The nearest store and mill were thirty miles away on the Missouri River.

For many years they had a hard struggle to live. At that time the country was full of Indians and all manner of wild vicious animals. I have often heard my aunt and my mother tell of standing in the cabin door and shooting wild deer and turkeys and wolves and all kinds of varmint and game. They had to keep the hogs up in tight pens to prevent the wolves and wild cats getting at them. It was almost a daily business for the women to have to feed the Indians.

The old settlers all took land in the heavy timber. The men would spend the Fall and Winter in felling the timber and cleaning up the ground ready for the plow. My father and my uncle would every Spring go and spend three or four days in helping their neighbors pile the timber in heaps for the purpose of burning it.

For ten years they never had an opportunity of going to church. And there were no schools in reach for many years, so as a matter of course we received but very limited education. After there were children enough to organize a school we had three months of school in the winter. We worked all the balance of the year. But notwithstanding all these things we enjoyed life and had lots of fun.

The women would spin flax and wool and weave it for our clothes. We boys never wore any but homespun clothing until we were grown.

My fourth brother, Noah Miller, was a noted and able Minister in the Christian Church. He was finely educated. He taught school two years and saved money enough to take him through Bethany College in Virginia. One year your uncle T and I worked and furnished him with money to keep him there two years more, at the end of which time he graduated, completing the four years' course in three.

I will now confine myself mainly to my own life. In the spring of 1852 I with five others started across the plains with mule teams. When we got to Fort Larime we left our wagons and packed our provisions on the mules. A few days after we left the wagons one of the men left us because he was afraid to travel with so small a crowd. The Indians were killing men along the road every day, so we had to be on the alert all the time in order to avoid a surprise. We had one man with us who had been on the plains and in the mountains for fifteen years. He was fully up to the Indian tricks and treachery, and that was a great help to us. We would stop in the evening and graze the mules and get supper. Just after dark we would pack up, leave a big fire burning, travel six or eight miles, turn off the road and lie down and go to sleep; thus we eluded the Indians at night. There were no white settlements at that time between the Missouri River and Salt Lake City. There were two Government Forts, that was all.

In crossing what was then known as the Great Sandy Desert (and it had the right name) we did not have vessels enough to carry a sufficient amount of water, so when we got within about twelve miles of Carson River, three of the men gave out and could go no further. The two of us, remaining, made a shade of sagebrush over them and pushed on to the river for water. It was about ten o'clock in the morning when we left them. We got back about five P. M. and found them in a deplorable condition. Two of them had their tongues so badly swollen they could not keep them in their mouths. We had hard work to save their lives. Finally after working with them several hours we got them into a condition so we could tie them on their mules. Then we started for the river and reached it at sunrise the next morning. We rested there several days before we started over the Sierra Nevadas.

After crossing the Sierras we rested at Sacramento City two or three days, and then two of us went up into the mountains, and went to work in the river. The water was as cold as ice. (We heard nothing more of our three companions until we came home five years later. They soon got disgusted and came home).

It would be useless for me to undertake to relate all the ups and downs I had in that country. It would tire me out and prove uninteresting to you, so I will confine myself to a few incidents only. In the first place, you know it rains all winter in that country, and most of the time it pours down. I have known it to rain every day and night for six weeks. Yet in all the five years I was there I never lost half a dozen days on account of rain. In the summer time we generally went to the mountains and worked in the rivers. The water right off the snow was as cold as ice and we had to be in it every day. Mining is the hardest work a man ever undertook to do. That is all changed now. At this time it is all deep mining and done under cover. I went to that country at a time when living was very high; flour \$50 a hundred, and pickled pork about the same; dried beans 25 cents a pound; potatoes 20 cents a pound, and everything else in proportion. So a man was compelled to work or starve. Thousands of men died in that country from scurvy.

I had remarkably good health for nearly three years when I got down with typhoid fever. I was in bed three months and was unconscious for three weeks of that time. No one expected me to live. It was more than three months from the time I got down before I could work.

One spring four of us left the surface diggings, went to the mountains and went to work in the river. We went there with \$2600 each, worked in cold water five months, and came out in debt \$800 each. That winter we paid it all out and had \$800 each the first of June, and lost it that summer in the river. The summer before I left there four of us owned a claim in the river and had about forty men hired. It was neces-

sary to divide the men and work half of them in daytime and the others at night. Two of us had to be on the works all the time. One of the party was an old man and could not work at night. One other was sick for a month. So the third one and myself divided the sick one's time between us; so we had to work eighteen hours out of every twenty-four, not excepting Sunday.

The latter part of December, 1856, I started for home. I took shipping at San Francisco. There were about 700 on board. We came through Central America; along the route there has been talk of building the Nicaraguan Canal. We had but 12 miles of land travel. It was at the time that Walker, the Filibuster, was in there trying to conquer Costa Rica. We spent a day and night with them. We took shipping on Lake Nicaragua on four small open steam boats. It is about eighty miles down the lake and about seventy miles down the River to the Gulf at Greytown. There were about twenty of Walker's men on each of the boats as guards. Shortly after we left the Lake and started down the River we came opposite a battery of four guns and a body of Costa Rican soldiers who ordered us to come to shore. They took Walker's men all prisoners. After a few hours delay we were permitted to go on. Several times we had to get out and walk around the shoals. We reached Greytown the next evening.

At that time there was a steamship from New Orleans and one from New York every two weeks. When we arrived there was no ship. But the one from New Orleans dropped anchor the next morning. We waited until the next day, then got together and appointed a committee to see the American Consul and ask permission for all of us to go aboard the New Orleans steamer. He told us he could not do it. That if he did and the steamer was lost with seven hundred Americans on board he would be responsible for it. We waited two days more and went back. He still refused, but told us if at the end of thirty-six hours the other vessel was not there he would conclude that it was lost, and would then let us all go aboard the New Orleans steamer. But the other steamer came the next day. Just here let me say that I think Lake Nicaragua is the most beautiful body of water on earth; it is as clear as crystal and beautifully dotted with islands which are densely covered with evergreen vegetation. As for Greytown, it is the most God-forsaken hole on earth. It is a little, filthy, dirty, flea village, inhabited by negroes, low down English and Dutch convicts. Excepting the American Consulate, there is not a house that a decent family would live in. There was not a room or a bed to be had. We were compelled to sleep out on the sand, and we almost starved. Before we were allowed to go aboard ship we had to wash and scald our clothes and blankets. The afternoon of the fifth day we went aboard and put to sea. The fare on the boat was simply fine in every particular. Everything was lovely until we got up in the Carribean Sea. There we struck a gale. It was a terrific blow. The waves ran so

high they would often roll over the deck. It lasted for thirty-six hours and of all the sick people I saw the sickest there. But my stomach was like a vulture's and I never missed a meal. Finally it cleared away and the weather and sea were delightful.

On one beautiful morning we were off the Island of Cuba. The city of Havana was in full view. All hands were on deck looking at the city. All at once some one called to the Captain and pointed out a reef of rocks not more than four feet under the water nor more than thirty feet from the ship. The Captain turned as white as a sheet, went to the man at the wheel and abused him at a sounderate. We reached New Orleans in about thirty days from the time we left San Francisco.

We spent two days in New Orleans and then about two hundred of us took steamboat for St. Louis and intermediate points. When we got about sixty miles above Memphis we struck a gorge of ice. This was on Sunday morning. By the time the boat was made fast there were notices stuck up in the cabin "\$2.00 a day board." It was near dinner time. We ate dinner without saying anything to the Captain. After dinner we got together and appointed a committee to wait on the Captain and remonstrate with him for charging us board, as we had bought tickets to St. Louis including board. But we could do nothing with him. The committee was composed of Dixon of Independence, Fly of St. Joseph, and myself. During the talk Fly and the Captain got into a fight. Then came the mates, the clerks, the stewards, the cook, the dockhands, and in fact all the employees on the boat. We cleaned up everything on board. Eight of us then made the Captain give us back eleven dollars each, and we struck out through the country in Tennessee carrying our grips and blankets. The second day after that we reached Trenton, where we hired buggies to bring us to Cairo. We reached there Saturday noon and had to stay until the next morning before we could get a train to San Doule. Cairo at that time was a dirty little hog hole, mud knee deep all over the town, and not a sidewalk in the place. There was but one hotel in the town, and that was full of all kinds of vermin and railroad men. While we were there five men died of small-pox. If you think we were not uneasy you are off. Sunday evening we ran up to San Doule, and had to stay there until the next day. There was no town there really except a lot of miners' and railroad cabins. There was a dirty little hotel with a saloon and gambling house all in one. There were no bed-rooms. Nothing but open berths upstairs. We went to bed about ten o'clock but they kept up such a racket down below we could not sleep. We got up, took our pistols, went downstairs and cleaned out the house. Then we locked the doors and told the landlord if there was any more noise that night we would hold him responsible. So we got some sleep.

The next afternoon we reached St. Louis and found the River frozen over with about three inches of water running over the ice. But

we got over all right. We noticed an ice gorge about a mile above where we crossed. We put up at the Virginia Hotel. After we moved to Knob Noster I found that old man Sparr was running that house at that time. A little before sundown a perfect bedlam broke loose. It seemed that every steam whistle was blowing at once, and every bell in the city was clanging and every person was running toward the river. The gorge had broken loose and was slowly moving down. It was one of the most magnificent sights, and at the same time one of the most awful, I ever beheld. It carried everything before it. Steamboats were torn from their moorings; tugboats and ferryboats were crushed; and some of them were pushed a hundred feet out on shore. It was terrible to behold.

I had a draft on the State Bank and I knew I could not get the money without some one to identify me, and for my life I could not think of anyone I knew. Finally old man Sparr told me the Legislature was down there on a spree. I remembered I was acquainted with the member from Callaway County, so I hunted him up and he got the money for me.

The second morning we started for Jefferson City and when we reached there the ice was so soft no one would cross on it. I stayed there until the next morning, and by that time the river was full of cakes of floating ice. I gave an Irishman a dollar to pilot me over and carry my grip. Each of us took a long pole under our arm and started across. The Irishman broke through twice, but by means of our poles got out all right. Then I had to walk to Fulton, twenty-five miles, carrying my grip and blankets. I reached home at sunset. It is not worth while to undertake to describe the scene. I had not notified them of my coming. There was no family except my father and step mother. She was one of the best women in the world and I loved her almost like my own mother.

A few days after I got home there came the news of the death of my brother, N. W. Miller. It was a heavy blow to my father. I immediately started to Independence. There were no railroads at that time, so I had to go horseback. My brother left one son who grew up to be a well educated, fine business man. He now lives somewhere in Texas. I have not met him since he was fifteen years old.

I spent the summer visiting. In the fall I started to school to a cousin of mine in Independence and went two terms. In October I married Everett's mother, Belle Shanks. We moved to Fulton where I was in the hardware business for a year. In November it became necessary for Belle to go to her mother's, where she died, the 22nd of December, 1860, eleven days after Everett was born. His Grandmother took him and kept him the most of the time until your mother and I were married.

### THE WAR.

In the spring of 1861 the war broke out. The whole country was wild. Before hostilities opened Kansas men began raiding the western border of Missouri. As soon as the Southern men started to the Southern part of Missouri to organize, Kansas men came in by the thousand. They drove off all the stock they could find, and hauled off all the furniture from the houses. I will have occasion to speak of this later on.

The first enlistment of Southern men was for nine months. I organized a Company of eighty men and joined Price's Army. I was in all his battles during the first year; Rock Creek, Carthage, Crain Creek, Springfield, Fort Scott, Lexington, Illinois River, and Arkansas, Elkhorn Tavern, and many minor skirmishes. In all the battles Price was victorious, notwithstanding he commanded raw volunteers against the regular soldiers. The fact was the fool volunteers didn't know when they were whipped. The most important battle fought in Missouri was the battle of Springfield. There were more old Regulars than Price had raw troops. That battle was one of the bloodiest and hardest contested of the whole war. A certain ridge (afterward known as Bloody Ridge) was captured and recaptured by each party five times in six hours. The ground was literally strewn with men and horses. We finally succeeded in driving the enemy from the field in the utmost confusion, but we were too much exhausted to pursue him. It was a very hot day and we had been living on nothing but green corn for two weeks. After that battle the Southern men thought that they were invincible. At one time during the battle General McCulloch rode up to General Price and said to him: "General Price, we are whipped". General Price remarked: "I know it, but the men don't. Let them alone. These Missourians will never quit until they succeed."

### JOINS QUANTRELL'S BAND.

When the time of enlistment had expired nearly all of Price's men went into the regular Confederate service. During this time the Kansas men were laying waste our western border. Quantrell with about forty men was trying to hold them in check, but he could only bushwhack them when the opportunity afforded. Before going any further, let me say a word about Quantrell. He was about my height but not quite so heavy. He was straight and well formed. He had light hair, large blue eyes, a Roman nose and fair skin. He had a very pleasant face, and a smooth soft voice except in times of danger, when in giving commands you could hear him above the din of battle at any reasonable distance. He was generous and kind in his disposition; very quiet and unassuming; never boasted of what he had done or what he was going to do. He kept his own counsel until the last moment, and even then he had but few

confidants. When he made up his mind to do a thing, he allowed nothing to stand in his way. In less than three months after he took command of eighty-three of us, there was not a man who would doubt his judgment. He never sought notoriety, but on the contrary was very modest and retiring, especially in the company of ladies. I have heard him time and again say that he would shoot any man in the command who would insult or abuse women or children. Never was a fearless fighter more careful of his men. And while he would often lead us into places that scarcely any other man would dare go, no man in the command ever flinched or refused to follow him.

Quantrell's men were regular Confederate Soldiers. It was, and is, generally believed that Quantrell and his men fought on their own responsibility. But such is not the case. In the first place, he had a Captain's Commission from General Price, and after that he had a Colonel's Commission from the Confederate War Department. So you see he and all his men were regular Confederate Soldiers. His Commission authorized him to operate on the border of Missouri and Kansas as a Partisan Ranger.

I will now in a brief way relate some of our acts and doings on the border. But first let me repeat that the Kansas men were burning and laying waste six counties on the border. At the close of the war you could ride miles and miles through the country that at one time was thickly settled and finely improved without seeing a house or barn; women and children were turned out of doors without sufficient clothing to shelter them from the cold blasts. Lots of this kind of work was done with snow on the ground and the thermometer ten degrees below zero. Then tell me who would not seek revenge even to the death. The man who would not would be a craven and a coward.

#### THE READING OF THE PROCLAMATION.

It will be necessary for me to speak of a general order issued by the Federal authorities, before going any further. In the early part of 1862, the Federal Commander of Missouri issued a general order to all Federal officers and soldiers to kill every man found with arms. We knew very well that it was aimed at us, and that we were the intended victims. We were camped one night in an old log church house near Blue Springs ten miles east of Independence. Next morning one of the neighbors came along and handed Quantrell a newspaper containing the order. He read it but said nothing about it until after breakfast when the men were mounted ready to start. He then called them into line and read the order to them. He then told them that they were at liberty to scatter and go where they pleased, but he advised all who wanted to leave the command to go South. But at the same time he said that he intended to stay in that country and help the Federal authorities carry out that order to the letter. He then told the men if any of them wished to stay with him to ride forward. And then what? Why, every man spurred his



horse forward. There were forty of us. That order and nothing else gave rise to the killing of prisoners, or rather the refusal by either party to take any prisoners. They followed that thing up through the entire war on the border; consequently we were forced to do the same thing. There was no alternative, and I tell you many a thief paid the death penalty on account of that order.

#### BATTLE AT THE ABSTEN HOUSE.

Shortly after the issuance of the order referred to above, thirty of us were near the line of Kansas in Jackson County, about twenty miles south of Kansas City. It was very cold and we had no idea of anyone going to Kansas City and reporting us. Todd took half of the command to a house to stay all night and Quantrell took the other half to another house. This place was owned by a man named Absten, whose family consisted of himself, his wife and one daughter. About one o'clock at night one hundred and fifty Federals surrounded the house. (The moon was shining.) The Major in command of the Federals ordered Quantrell to surrender. Of course, Quantrell refused to do anything of the kind. Well, the Federals agreed to let the family out of the house, and as soon as they were out we fastened the doors. The major insisted it would be better for us not to make a fight. Quantrell told him that he would never surrender his men to be taken out and shot like dogs. The Major declared we should be treated as prisoners of war. Quantrell told him that he knew he was lying, because he was acting under a general order from headquarters. The Major was standing at the door. He insisted we should surrender without a fight. Finally he told Quantrell that he would begin the fight immediately. Quantrell said to him: "I will open the ball myself", and fired through the door. The major fell dead on the doorstep. Sure enough the ball did open in earnest. The house was of hewn logs, but there was a plank room on the north side of it. We took feather beds and put them up at the windows. At that time there were no rifles that would shoot through a feather bed. It was light enough for us to see them plainly. We fought there for a little over an hour. (I thought it was six hours). They found we were killing them as fast as they showed themselves. So they got a wagon, loaded it with hay, pushed it up to the shed room and set fire to it. We knew our pen was at an end. All eyes were turned to Quantrell. He said: "Never mind, my lads, we will make it warm for them while they are making it hot for us." We could see them forming a line from the door to the fence. The yard fence was made of stone. Now if we could get past that fence we would be safe, for it was not more than twenty steps to the brush. Quantrell said: "Look at the damn fools, they are fixing to kill themselves." (They formed a line on either side of the path to the gate). "We must go out before they see their mistake." He ordered every man to take a pistol in either hand, fire right and left and yell at the top of his voice. He then threw open the door and sprang

out with a yell that would have made a wild Indian ashamed of himself. The first man behind him fell on the doorstep, and he was the only man we had hurt. After getting over the fence we sat down and reloaded our pistols. We afterward learned that the Federals lost a little over half of their command. Todd was about two miles and a half away. We started to where he was, but met him on the road coming to our relief. He wanted to come back and renew the fight, but Quantrell would not consent. Todd's men took us up behind them, and down into the lower part of the county. We lost everything but our arms. It was not long before Todd had all of us furnished with fine Federal horses and rig.

Quantrell was the quickest man to see a mistake on the part of the enemy I ever saw and to take advantage of it. It mattered not how difficult an undertaking might appear he went at it with full confidence of accomplishing it, and he seldom failed.

I may as well tell you here why we were able to whip from four to five times our numbers. We did not carry any long range guns. We could not handle them on horseback, nor could we afford to stand up and make a long range fight. We did not have enough men for that. We were armed with six-shooting pistols, and short six-shooting rifles, that we carried slung over our shoulders. Now every one of us had from twenty-four to thirty-six shots without stopping to reload. Our fighting was all done by charging the enemy and mixing it up with them hand to hand. They generally carried one long range rifle and one pistol. They would discharge their arms at long range, and then we would rush in upon them; no body of men on earth can stand before another body armed in that way; they must break away and run, and when they would start to run we would follow up and put it to them from the back. We always killed more of them by shooting them in the back than we did face to face. We furnished horses and arms for not less than three hundred Southern men who wanted to go south, and we took them all from the Federals.

#### BATTLE OF WELLINGTON.

In June, 1862, we were camped one night about ten miles south of Wellington in Lafayette County. Next morning several of us were ordered out to have breakfast brought to camp. After getting through, I stopped at a house, Bob Kiens', to get my breakfast. I looked all around but saw no one, and supposed I was safe. Just after sitting down to the table I saw eighty soldiers at the gate. They had taken possession of my horse. I thought the time had come when the old man would have to sell his life for all it was worth. I ran back through the kitchen, through the negro cabins, through the garden, through the orchard, and then through an open pasture about a quarter of a mile to a deep gully or washout. It was about two feet deep in mud and it led down to our camp. The Federals were so intent watching the house they never saw me at all. Quantrell saw me coming and came out to meet

me. When I told him what had happened he laughed at me in his good-humored way, told me to take a couple of the boys with me and go over to Jim Robert's and get me a horse. I took your uncle and Johnnie Ross. When we got to Roberts' he was not at home, but Mrs. Roberts told me they had but one animal that would be of any use to me, and that was a wild black mare that nobody on their place could ride, but if I could use her I was perfectly welcome to her. She was wild as a buck, but we got her into the barn and got the bridle and saddle on her. The other boys took my arms, got on their horses, one on either side of me. I got into the saddle and the moment I had my seat I drove both spurs into her flanks with all the force I had. I didn't give her time to buck. We soon overtook the Company which was following the Federals, who had started to Lexington. They had stopped at Wellington and we ran in on them. One of the pickets was riding my horse. The first shot that was fired by one of our boys broke my horse's thigh. We ran them about seven miles, and about half of them were killed. The next day the whole country was alive with soldiers. They kept us on the run until nearly sundown, when we were a few miles north of Pleasant Hill. They made a drive for us and forced the fight. Quantrell drew up his men under the hill in order to force them to come within pistol shot. After lining up the men he galloped along the lines telling us that after the charge was made we were to retreat, every man for himself, and meet the next morning at nine o'clock at White Oak, which was twenty-five miles away. After the charge was made and the Company started to retreat, the black mare had no notion of retreating. She kept right on after the Federals, and in spite of all I could do she was gaining on them at every jump. When I found she could not be stopped I drew a full pistol and intended to lay flat down on her, shooting right and left, and try to outrun them. Just then Quantrell rode up, took her by the bit, turned her around, and laughing, said to me: "You had better go to the brush."

#### BATTLE OF MAGEE'S LANE.

In July, 1862, we were up on the border hunting a fight. Quantrell sent out scouts trying to locate any band of Federals that might be in the neighborhood. The scout saw one hundred and sixty of the enemy coming up from the south on the line road. We had to run our horses four miles to get in ahead of them before they got to Westport, south of Kansas City. We knew pretty well where they were, but they did not know we were in the country. We planned to meet them in a lane with a high stone fence on either side. We took a position which would force them to come within close pistol shot before they could see us. They got within forty steps of us when the order was given to charge. With a yell, every man tried to see who should be the first to mix it up with them. Of course they could not form a line of battle so they tried to get out of the way. We followed on their heels and slaughtered them by the dozen. We lost three good men there. They lost

seventy-four. Many more would have been killed but for the dust in the road. It was so dusty we could not tell one man from another until we got up almost by his side. We had run our horses so far we could follow them only about two miles.

It was a common thing for us to fight two or three times a week, and very often two or three times a day. I will tell you a little thing that happened to one of our men during the battle just spoken of. There was a little slim fellow in the Company by the name of Ram Benable. He was a splendid soldier. He was riding a little slim race horse, and during the fight the horse got unmanageable and ran away with him and went clear through the whole crowd of Federals and beat them out to the end of the lane. They shot at him several times. He would bawl out to them and curse them for trying to shoot one of their own men. Ram never heard the last of it. He said that when he found he could not control his horse he put spurs to him in order to keep out of our reach. He was more afraid of us than of the Federals.

#### BATTLE OF LONE JACK.

In May, 1862, there were three companies of Federals stationed at Lone Jack, a little town in the southeastern part of Jackson County. There were about eighty recruits for Price's Army that we had outfitted to go South. They, with about forty of our command, attacked the Federals. The Union companies were commanded by Major Foster, who was a soldier and a gentleman from the ground up.

This was one of the hardest contested and bloodiest battles fought in Missouri, taking into consideration the numbers engaged. For three solid hours the conflict raged, and it was almost a hand to hand fight most of the time. Both parties had to fight on foot, there were so many hedge fences we could not use our horses. Finally the enemy withdrew, but very sullenly. I want to tell you we were as glad as they were. Quantrell sent the Major word to come and take care of his dead and wounded. He did the same and each side furnished a surgeon to attend the wounded. The loss was severe on both sides. We never knew the exact number. We lost seven out of the forty, which was hard on us. We ran off as soon as we could, knowing the Federals would return with reinforcements.

#### THE BATTLE OF INDEPENDENCE.

Only three days before the battle of Lone Jack, we had a house to house fight in Independence. A portion of the Federals were in houses and a portion in camp. We expected to find them all in camp, but I think they got word we were coming so they got into the houses, as many as could conveniently. We soon cleaned up the ones in camp, but we were unable to get those in the houses, so we had to withdraw, after getting ten volunteers killed and four of our own men.

That fall we went south to spend the winter. On the way we came across a Federal train of freight wagons about ten miles east of Harrisonville, which had a guard of fifty men. We killed about half of the men, burned all the wagons and stampeded the cattle. We went on and stopped about sundown to get supper, but before we got through about five hundred Federals came on us. We kept up a running fight until midnight, when the Federals withdrew. We never stopped until we crossed the Osage River, about sun-up next morning, and took up a position from which they could hardly have dislodged us, - but they did not follow.

That winter we were with Price at the battle of Oak Grove, Arkansas, where we literally cut a regiment of Federal Cavalry to pieces, and prevented them from turning Price's flank and forcing him from his position.

(It was not until very recently that I learned what regiment this was. It was the famous Kansas Regiment, known as Gennison's Red Legs. This Regiment was so called because in the beginning of their service they wore bright red leggings. I gained this information quite by accident, in the course of a conversation I had with a young man who called in Knob Noster on business in the Summer of 1906. It developed that he was a grandson of old Colonel Gennison. And he told me that it was Gennison's Regiment we cut up so badly at Oak Grove, and that Gennison's men knew at the time that they were fighting Quantrell's command.)

#### BATTLE OF BLUE SPRINGS.

In the latter part of February, 1863, George Todd, with twenty-three men, came back to Jackson County. In the early part of March Colonel Penick of Independence sent his crack company down to "bring us up to Independence with our hands tied behind our back". There were eighty-four of them and twenty-four of us. It didn't take them long to find us. We were expecting them. We all had on Federal overcoats, and they thought we were Federals. We let them get within thirty steps of us before we fired on them. Of course they were not prepared for such an onslaught, and the first volley threw them into the utmost confusion. We pressed them so closely they broke and tried to run. We headed off about half of them and drove them into a bend of the creek where the banks were twelve feet high. They forced their horses down the bank into the creek. In the bottom of the creek the mud was two or three feet deep and not one of those who rode into it escaped. Their horses could not get up the bank on the opposite side.

We then reloaded our arms and took a narrow trail just wide enough for one man, which cut off about a mile and a half, and by hard riding came into the big road just behind the remainder of the Federal party. Then it was a race for five miles. Just twenty-six of the

eighty-four got back to town. We had two men slightly wounded.

There is both a sad and a funny side to this story. The funny part is this: My old and dear friend, Doctor Warren, God bless him, was surgeon of Penick's Regiment. I know he has told me a dozen times of the fight which I have just described, and he always told it straight. But the funny part is he does not know to this day that I was in it. The saddest feature to me is that there are only three of us left, Hopkins, Welch and myself. All the rest have passed away, and we must soon follow. I am proud to know that we are still permitted to meet yearly and shake each other's hands and talk over old times.

#### JIM TUCKER CAPTURED.

I will relate a little incident that illustrates the devotion which existed between Quantrell and the men of his command. In the summer of '63 we were camped in the lower part of Jackson County. Most of the men were out scouting. Jim Tucker was off by himself at a house about six miles from camp, when the Federals slipped up and captured him. There were eighty-five of them, and we learned that they intended to shoot Tucker the next morning at sunrise. Now Tucker was one of our best men. He was not only a gallant fighter but one of those social jolly fellows that every one loved. We sat around until about ten o'clock lamenting Jim's fate. All at once Quantrell sprang to his feet and ordered us into line. He told the men there were but thirty of us and eighty-five of the Federals and that in all probability they would be looking for us and prepared for us. "But," said he, "I cannot sleep, knowing that Jim is to be shot in the morning." He told us it was a desperate undertaking to attempt his rescue but that he for one was willing to undertake it. He said that if any of the men were unwilling to undertake so desperate an enterprise they should not be considered cowards, nor would they lower themselves in his estimation. He said, "Let every man that is willing to risk his life trying to rescue Tucker step forward." Every man tried to be the first to step out. He then ordered us to be ready to march at twelve o'clock. He ordered Todd to select nine men to take the lead and he would follow close behind with the balance of the command ready to support him. Todd selected Cole Younger, John Ross, Warren Welch, Jack Liddil, Jim Lilly, John Coyer, Plutch Taylor, your uncle and myself. We knew where the pickets were. Todd's orders were to try to capture the pickets, but if we failed to follow them into camp at full speed. We started at the appointed time and when we were about half way we heard some one out in the brush shout "Hold up there! hold up there!" and to our surprise every one recognized Tucker's voice. Todd took him up behind and carried him to camp. There was great rejoicing. I never felt so good in my life. It appears to me that we were all being led to the slaughter. About midnight Tucker made a pretense of wanting to go out, and a guard of four men went out with him. He took the chances and broke and run.

In connection with what I have just said I wish to say a few

words about the close friendship that existed among the men. We made it a rule never to leave a wounded comrade behind. Often have I seen a redhot hand to hand fight over a wounded man. On one occasion four of us stood off about twenty Federals while two of our men took up a wounded comrade, tied him on his horse and escaped with him. He was a big Irishman by the name of Pat O'Donnell and a splendid soldier. The bloody Pat got well and in about four months came back to us, and lived through the war.

Speaking of Jim Tucker reminds me of what the boys called the nine of us whom Todd selected to take the lead with him that night. They called us Todd's bloody nine. When there was more than one company present the old company under Todd always had to take the lead. If we were going into battle we were always in the van, but if we were in retreat we were in the rear.

#### THE LAWRENCE RAID.

I will now say a few words about the much talked of Lawrence Raid. In the first place it must be remembered that all the time since hostilities broke out Kansas men had been robbing and laying waste the border of Missouri. They had almost devastated six of the finest counties in the State. You could ride for miles and miles through what was once a densely populated country without seeing a house or a person, or a hoof of stock.

On the twentieth of August, 1863, Quantrell, with two hundred and ninety-seven men, left the head of Grand River in Cass County, Missouri, for Lawrence. He started about five P. M. The route we had to travel to Lawrence was about eighty miles. We stopped two or three times during the night to let our horses graze for a short time. We reached Lawrence at five o'clock the next morning, thus having made the trip in twelve hours. We fully understood the situation. We had had one of our men out there for ten days, and we started out two or three days after his return. There were about three hundred and fifty Federals in town. One company was quartered in a large hotel and the rest in camp. The men in camp were just beginning to get up when we struck them. We made short work of them, but some of them escaped by swimming in the river. We then turned our attention to those in the hotel. Sheltered behind the houses we kept up a continual fire into the windows, so they were helpless. At the same time some of our men set fire to the hotel and adjacent houses. Of course this drove the Federals out, and they were shot as fast as they came in sight. The officers in the hotel begged to be taken prisoners, but Quantrell reminded them of General Halleck's, and of the hundreds of old men they had killed in Missouri.

We left the town in ashes at ten o'clock.

We had not got more than four miles from town till the whole prairie was black with soldiers. The word had gone to Kansas City the night before that we were in Kansas, and the news was telegraphed all over the country. We were not more than six miles from town when they commenced firing on our rear. Sometimes they would force the rear guard up into the main command. They would not tackle the whole command nor could we get them to close quarters. This was kept up for thirty miles. Our horses were so jaded we could not ride out of a walk. There were not less than 2500 soldiers pursuing us. At one time when we were forced up to the command, I rode to Quantrell's side and said, "Don't you think there is danger of their getting in front of us and cutting us off from the line?" He very deliberately replied, "No. They know we are going to Missouri timber, and they know if they get in front of us we will cut them to pieces. They are no more anxious to die than we are." Just before night we were near Bull Creek timber, near Paola, Kansas. They saw we were about to elude them, so they collected about a thousand men into a compact body and made a rush for us. The placing of their men into a close mass was just what suited us. Quantrell saw the move and drew up his men under the hill in order to make them come within pistol range, and before they had any thought of our charging them we were in among them and in less than ten minutes must have killed not less than fifty men. We then moved on to the timber. They gave up the chase for that night. At about ten o'clock the next day we struck Grand River timber, near where we started from.

The route we traveled to Lawrence, as I said before, was about eighty miles. So we had traveled one hundred and sixty miles, without eating, sleeping or feeding our horses. We scarcely had time to eat breakfast and feed our horses until there were not less than three thousand soldiers in sight. We scattered out in small squads and rested for two weeks.

Your uncle and I went to your uncle Jim's and hid in a cornfield until we got rested. That trip to Lawrence cost the Federals three hundred men, and it cost us just five. We lost one in Lawrence; one on the road home. We had three wounded and brought them in and hid them in the brush, but the Federals found them and killed them.

But this raid stopped the burning in Missouri for a while.

No body of men on earth ever performed any such feat, and had I not been one of the number I could not have believed it. There were two hundred and ninety-seven men who rode one hundred and sixty miles through the enemy's country in forty hours without sleeping, eating or feeding; fought twelve hours of that time; yet sustained a loss of but five men, and spread death and destruction in their track. It sounds like a fable, but nevertheless it is true to the letter.



That fall we went South and had several fights on the road. There were about three hundred of us. Near Baxter Springs we cut up two regiments of Federal soldiers. They were Kansas men under General Blunt.

There has always been a great howl about the Lawrence raid. But the howlers do not stop to remember that Kansas men killed more old and helpless men in Jackson County alone than we killed soldiers in Lawrence. An honest man could not at that time live in Lawrence. Kansas men stole and burned more property in Jackson County alone than we burned in Lawrence. We had two objects in view in going to Lawrence. One was to seek revenge - which we did to the best of our ability. The other was to let Kansas know that fire would burn on the west side of the line - and I am of the opinion we convinced them of that fact. Kansas men at the time swore up and down that we killed women and children. That was done with the expectation that the Confederate Government would have us withdrawn from the border. But Jeff Davis knew all the time what was taking place on the border. The fact is, there was one boy killed and one woman wounded, and that was all there was to it.

In the spring of 1864 we returned to Missouri.

#### THE BATTLE OF CENTRALIA.

That summer we fought the noted battle of Centralia. There were sixty-five of us under Todd killed all but seven out of one hundred and sixty. The battle was fought on the prairie, and several of them were killed six or seven miles from where the fight began. Your uncle Zach was raised and went to school with a number of them.

That fall your uncle and I concluded it was useless to fight any longer, as the Confederate flag must go down soon. So we did not go south that fall.

I must tell you of the sad fate of the black mare. On several occasions she was the means of saving my life. In the spring of 1864 I was running from the Federals, and in jumping a high fence with me she broke her ankle and I had to shoot her. I could not help crying; she seemed like a bird and could almost fly.

I will now quit fighting, as I am tired of it and I know you are. The few battles I have described are but samples of a hundred and one we fought.

I wish to say something about Quantrell's physical make-up. I knew him several months before the war began. He was twenty-four years old when the war opened. He very seldom got out of humor; seldom spoke a cross word to his men; he had a bewitching influence over his men. They all loved him and were ready to obey him in all things. I

suppose you think I am cranky about Quantrell. I am ready to acknowledge that I am. There is no period of my life that I am so proud of as I am of the time that I followed that noble, daring man. It does me good to think over those times, and recall the deeds of those days. The only sad thought is that the flag for which we fought had to go down. But, thank God, it was never trailed in the dust, but went down in a blaze of glory, laved in the blood of the grandest, noblest band of heroes who ever struggled and bled for a God-given right.

I will now speak of a few little personal incidents, and then draw this to a close.

Perhaps you know that Everett's grandmother kept him until your mother and I were married. I would go to see him occasionally in spite of all the Federals in the country. I went there on one occasion in the night. I tied my horse about a hundred yards from the house in a cornfield. I had not been in the house two hours until the yard was full of Federals. The back door was clear, so I jerked up a feather bed, threw it over my shoulder and started to run. I would bet that not less than fifty bullets struck that bed. But I soon got into the corn and they did not follow me because Mrs. Shanks told them there were twenty of us, when in fact I was alone. They left immediately. I could see and hear them leaving. So I went back to the house and stayed two hours longer.

#### CAUGHT AT SANFORD'S.

At another time I was there and went to a neighbor's and put my horse in the barn and was in the house when fifteen soldiers rode up to the fence, called me out and ordered dinner. Before I left the house I told Mrs. Sanford my name was Bill McKinney from Calloway County and that I was there to drive a team across the plains with government freight. The Lieutenant sent the men to the barn with the horses. He came in and began questioning me as to my business. Mrs. Sanford called to me to come and get her some wood and help get dinner. You may believe I was glad of the chance. I waited on the table and was very handy when I was not too badly scared. The Lieutenant tried to catch me in a lie, but I stuck to the first lie. He wanted to know if I knew the the Miller boys and Dick Yager and Dan Vaugh. I told him I knew Lee Miller and Dick Yager. I had crossed the plains with them. They were on the hunt of us four because we had been out in Kansas a few nights before that and had broken up a Federal dance and killed a Lieutenant and five men. And these very fellows had been in that crowd. After dinner they left and you bet they were no more than out of sight until I was in the brush. Todd was about six miles away with his men. We headed them off and killed all but two of them.

Shortly after that I was at a cousin's of mine by the name of Rule, who was a Government freighter. All at once the yard was full of soldiers. I had to do some hard lying that time and my cousin helped me by telling them I was one of his teamsters.

Just such things were almost daily occurrences during the whole war on the border. The Lieutenant in command of the squad I have just spoken of was an own cousin of mine. His name was Miller, too. He was from Indiana, son of my uncle Joseph. I could fill a volume relating such escapes, but it is too tiresome.

The citizens had signals by which they could alarm their neighbors. Sometimes it would be by hanging out a white sheet or something of that kind. At other times it would be by calling the dogs at the top of the voice as though they were going to put them after the stock.

I must tell you of a little funny trick we played on the Federals. One evening just before night we camped on a high hill overlooking a fine prairie plain. It is just where Jackson, Johnson, Lafayette and Cass Counties corner, near a little town called Chappell Hill. There was a large farmhouse with large barns belonging to a man by the name of McCormack, only a half mile from where we were camped. We were in the brush, but near a bluff from which we could have a full view of McCormack's place. Just before it got dark we saw a command of soldiers stop there for the night. As soon as it got dark Quantrell told Todd to take John Ross, Jim Lilly, Cole Younger and myself and two good horses and to go over to old man Ridley's and get his two girls and go with them to Lexington. We were to send the girls to Colonel McFerren's headquarters and tell him there was a company of men in McCormack's house and that they supposed they were Quantrell's men, as Quantrell was known to be in the neighborhood that evening. We knew about where the pickets were stationed and just before we reached that place we stopped and sent the girls on ahead. We told them they would soon come to the pickets and instructed them how to answer the challenge. We told them the gaurd would escort them to headquarters. We told them also that after they had delivered their message, the Federal officers would want to send an escort home with them, but for them to refuse it, and we would wait for them. Well, Colonel McFerren was very thankful for the information and congratulated the girls on their bravery. In due time the girls came back. Sure enough the Federals had wanted to escort them home, but the girls told them they were afraid Quantrell's men would find it out and burn their house, and that they were not afraid anyway. They heard the Colonel order the Major to take three companies and go out and surround the house and not to let a man escape. Well, in about an hour after we got to camp they surrounded the house and they fought there for two hours before they found out their mistake.

From all we could learn they killed thirty men. We lay on the bluff where we could see and hear nearly everything that took place. They never suspected the girls of playing a trick on them.

In the latter part of the Summer of '64 I went to Salt Lake as wagon master with a train of mule teams loaded with freight. In the Spring of '65 I took another train to Salt Lake, stayed three months, then came home and loaded the train and made a winter trip to Denver. Coming home a heavy snowstorm overtook us about three hundred miles from the Missouri River. It snowed for four days, and the wind blew such a perfect gale from the northwest that for four days after it quit snowing the air was so full of snow the lead teamster could not follow the road; so for eight days I never got on my saddle mule, but had to walk ahead of the teams and I was in the snowdrifts up to my shoulder twenty times a day. There were twenty-five men in the train, and when we got to Atchison there were but eight men who could get their boots on. Several of them had to have their toes and ears taken off.

The next Spring I went to Philadelphia and stayed there until I graduated in medicine. Shortly after I came home your mother and I were married.

I have related many of these personal incidents to give you some idea of the hardships and exposures I have endured in life. In spite of them I possess a reasonable amount of vigor for one of my age. Had I been possessed of only an ordinary physical constitution I would have been worn out long since. In my younger days I was certainly possessed of an iron constitution. Few men have taken less care of themselves than I have. Never in my life have I allowed exposure or hardships to deter me from doing anything I had made up my mind to do.

When you read of the tight places I was in, and the narrow escapes I had, I do not want you to think that I was either more fortunate or more unfortunate than my companions, for such was not the case. We all had about the same experiences along that line. Nor must you think I mentioned one tenth part of our battles or adventures. I simply tried to mention enough to give you some little idea of what we passed through during that bloody conflict.

Let me say that the average person of today is laboring under a mistaken impression of what the south really fought for. The generally received opinion is that the South fought to perpetuate slavery. But that is a grand mistake. We fought for a constitutional right; the right of local self-government and states rights. Notwithstanding the fact that that question was settled by the sword at that time, it did not change the principle. The surroundings, circumstances and man may change; but principles never do. They are as enduring as the everlasting hills. Under like circumstances and surroundings every ex-confederate would do the same thing all over again. There was this difference between the two sections: While the South fought for constitutional

rights, the North fought solely to free the negro. This is an undeniable fact.

I find I have not mentioned the death of my mother or father. My mother died in 1846 of bronchitis; she was sixty-six. My father died in October, 1862, of congestion of the brain at the age of eighty-two. My father married again in 1854 at the age of seventy-four. He was stout and well preserved until his last sickness. Up to that time he could get on a horse and ride all day. He was just about the size and build of your uncle Jim.

KNOB NOSTER, MISSOURI - October 29, 1903.

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## Abraham Miller

Birth: Jul. 4, 1786  
 Death: Dec. 22, 1862  
 Fulton  
 Callaway County  
 Missouri, USA

Abraham Miller married Mary Rule on May 25, 1813.

### Family links:

Spouse:  
 Mary Polly *Rule* Miller (1795 - 1848)\*

### Children:

William. Byrum Miller (1817 - 1876)\*  
 Noah Worcester Miller (1821 - 1857)\*  
 James Walker Miller (1821 - 1901)\*  
 Minerva Miller Chick (1821 - 1867)\*  
 Ulysses Telemachus Miller (1826 - 1890)\*  
 Leander Caruth Miller (1828 - 1913)\*  
 Lycurgus Miller (1832 - 1917)\*

\*[Calculated relationship](#)

Burial:  
[Callaway County Courthouse](#)  
 Fulton  
 Callaway County  
 Missouri, USA

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Created by: [Yvette Aune](#)  
 Record added: Jan 10, 2011  
 Find A Grave Memorial# 64010178



Added by: [David Streets](#)



You are remembered and honored.  
 Your 3rd great-grandson.  
 - [David Streets](#)

Added: Mar. 12, 2017



- [Marsha Williams Byrd of Missouri](#)

Added: Dec. 18, 2015



- [Marsha Williams Byrd of Missouri](#)

Added: Feb. 3, 2011

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## Mary Ellen Nesbit Miller

Birth: 1843  
Death: 1881

### Family links:

Spouse:  
Leander Caruth Miller (1828 - 1913)

### Children:

Minnie B. Miller (1868 - 1952)\*  
John W. Miller (1870 - 1944)\*

\*[Calculated relationship](#)

### Burial:

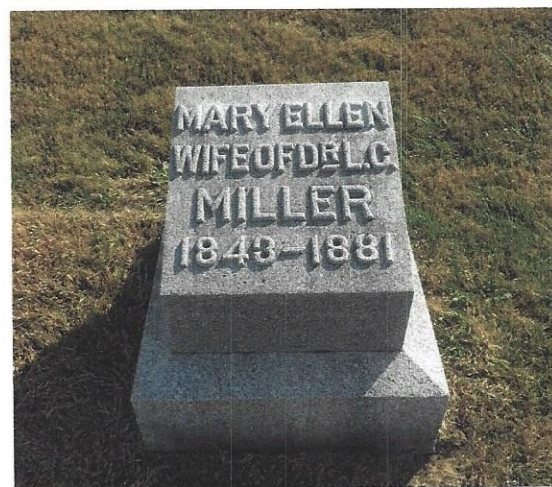
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