

SKETCH OF THE BUMGARDNER FAMILY

**Prepared by Rudolph Bumgardner
for his daughter
Mary Margaret Bumgardner**

**Staunton, Virginia.
December 25, 1929**

My dear daughter:

Some time since you expressed the wish that I write out for you a sketch of our Bumgardner antecedents -- that you had come to realize that they were very interesting people, and would like know

more about them.

At odd moments of leisure time during the past six month I have written out the enclosed manuacript, finding much entertainment in the process.

I hope that you will find them, as I have, interesting people.

Devotedly, your father,

Rudolph Bumgardner.

To Mrs. Mary Margaret (Bumgardner) Laing

SKETCH OF THE BUMGARDNER FAMILY

Immigrants:

The family is supposed to have immigrated to this country from Basel in the German province of Switzerland, whither they are thought to have gone from South Germany -- Saxe Weimer, supposedly.

The old German Hymn book published in Germantown, Penn., in 1751, gives the name and account of one Jacob Baumgartner (the Swiss form of the name), who was imprisoned in Zurich in 1645 for non-conformity, he being then "an old man". Gen. Roller, who gave me the book, was under the belief that this was our people.

John (Hans) Bumgardner:

In 1729, Christian Bumgardner landed at Philadelphia, followed in 1732 by John Bumgardner. They spelt the name identically as we do today.

Some years ago, on the occasion of an address at St. John' Church, Mrs. T. M. Smiley, a very old lady, mentioned to me that her grandfather, John Lantz, had come over to this country "in the same boat with Mr. Bumgardner". On looking at the list (Rupp's German Immigrants), I found that, in fact, John Lantz is listed as coming on the same boat with the above-mentioned John Bumgardner, which landed August 11, 1732. This satisfies me that this John Bumgardner is our ancestor.

Christian Bumgardner:

There was an old Christian Bumgardner, a bachelor, living in Shenandoah County after the Revolution, then quite an old man.

The will of John Bumgardner, the original being in the file, is of probate in the Court here. He lived, and owned land, near Port Republic, now in Rockingham County, but then included in Augusta County. The Clerk wrote the name "Hans"; and your cousin Rev. James McClure, in book, "The McClure Family", was under the impression that "Hans" was the name. But "Hans" is the short, familiar abbreviation for Johann, the German form of John, and the will itself shows the name to be John Bumgardner.

In his will he mentions his two minor sons, John and Christian. The will was probated in 1751.

This satisfied me that the above immigrants were brothers, one settiing in what is now Shenandoah County, and the other in what is now Rockingham County; that John followed his brother over to this country, and named his boys one for himself and the other for his old bachelor brother.

II

Christian Bumgardner II:

The younger Christian was the one who settled at Bethel, his son, Jacob, who was very successful in business affairs, adding to the lands and lifting his debts.

This second Christian was with Washington in the first disastrous campaign of the French and Indian War which resulted in the surrender at Fort Neccessity.

French and Indian War:

Chalkley's Records give Christian Bumgardner's name in the return made by Washington of the men who had served him in the 1st Va. Reg't. The bounty lands given the soldiers lay on the Olgio River in the bounds of the present State of Kentucky, The story runs that Christian's allotment included what is now the site of Louisville, and that he sold his Kentucky lands for a cayuse pony and a "rifle gun".

Chalkley does not mention the exact location of the land, the Ohio River, nor the consideration; but he does recite the deed from Christian Bumdardner to one Morgan by which he made conveyance of his bounty land, This story, therefore, has some foundation in fact.

Old Christian used to wagon to Boston twice a year -- trading his mountain rye whiskey for merchandise,

Boston Tea Party:

Waddell, in his "Annals of Augusta County", tells of the old man being there, with his son Jacob Bumgardner, when the Boston Tea Party occurred, and of the boy being drawn into the adventure. The boy was too young and plainly it was the old gentlemen himself who "got his Dutch up" and jumped the reservation. Old Christian was a noted Indian fighter and a great friend of General Daniel Morgan.

War of Revolution:

In 1757, in the Indian Campaigns that followed Braddock's defeat, he was commissioned an ensign in the Virginia line. He was in the Revolution and died just after reaching home from Valley Forge.

He was quite an old man for military service, but when the Revolution came, the son was the mainstay of the family, so the old man went to the war and left the boy to run the farm and support the family. It was this Jacob who assembled the Bethel farm in its present lines.

Christian Bumgardner is the name written on the fly sheet of my old German "Luther" Biblei. Minnie has always insisted that the Bible came from the Waddle side (one of them married a Waddle -- Waddell they spell it now), but I beliuve, with this evidence, that the book came from the Bumgardners, and that this is old Christian's signature. She says it is the signature of a Christian Bumgardner, my grandfather's brothers but she can vouch no authority for this.

Old Christian and his wife are buried at St. John's, which ls about a mile from Bethel.

III

Jacob Bumgardner:

Jacob, his son, was also a soldier in the later part of the Revolution. He became sufficiently rich, successful and ambitious to "pass up" the German Reforms and marry into the Presbyterians; and he and his wife repose peacefully in Bethel Church Yard.

He is the old fellow who, while going down into the cellar for cider to regale company, fell headlong down the steps with the good wife's prized china pitcher in his hand and nearly broke his neck in saving the pitcher from harm. The wife, entirely oblivious of his bruises, but all upset about her pitcher, hailed down in the dark "Jacob: Jacob: Have you broken my pitcher?" The old man yelled back, "No, by damn, but I will!" and crash! He let it slam against the cellar wall.

My father could remember his grandmother very well. She spoke very broken English, but had a wonderful mind and memory, and her stories of the Revolution and the Indian wars left a lasting impression on his mind. I regret deeply that he never reduced these narratives of family affairs and local history to writing.

Capt. Tate's Company at the battle of Guilford Court House was made up of men from Bethel and Tinkling Spring congregations. They rendezvoused at Timber Ridge and marched on foot the weary way through unbroken wilderness down through Virginia and Carolina --"measuring the miles with the weary steps of marching soldiers". The Virginia Regiment behaved superbly in the engagement, and the Augusta Company lost terribly. Father tells that, when a lad, his grandmother, walking to the top of Pine Hill on the Bethel Farm, related that after Guilford from the top of that hill, she could see the smoke from seven cottages occupied by the widows of soldier who had been killed in that battle.

IV.

Lewis Bumgardner:

Jacob Bumgardner was the father of James Bumgardner, my mother's father, and of Lewis Bumgardner, my father's father.

Jacob Bumgardner II - War of 1812:

An older son, Jacob, was an ensign in the Virginia line in the War of 1812.

The Halsteads:

Lewis Bumgardner pioneered to Missouri in the early days and married Hetty Ann Halstead, of Lexington, Ky. Another sister married Case, and it is there that you get your relationship to that family - distinguished one, who endowed and founded the Case School of Applied Science at Cleveland, Ohio.

Another sister married General Scantlan of Mexican war service. (I have a picture of the old fellow in full regimentals - looking fierce enough to swallow a cannon. It was in my mother's album and the source of awe and admiration in my boyish days). Another sister married Judge James Harvey Birch, of a family of considerable distinction in Missouri and England.

Your cousin, Eckstein Case, a rich old bachelor, with leisure and taste for such search, has worked out the Halstead genealogy back to the celebrated Aneke Jans. Aunt Hetty, as we called her, was a most remarkable woman. It is primarily to her, according to my theory of heredity that her descendants are indebted for such of cultural intellect and scholarship as they may have attained to.

Amid all the stress and hardships of pioneer life and financial reverses. She educated the children; and, from family letters, had made my father into something of a scholar at the age of three years, I have the old letter written back from Missouri.

Pioneer Days:

The family moved from Fayette, Howard County, to a prairie home near Plattsburg. This place was not far from Westport, now Kansas City. Had they remained there a year longer, your grand father would *(have)* witnessed the scene of the organization of Jesse Wingate's caravan for the Oregon Country - the "Covered Wagon".

Your grandfather had many interesting experiences in the pioneer west. With extraordinary attainments as an English scholar, and unusual gifts as a writer and speaker, he never lost, in every day speech, the vernacular of the rough frontier life, absorbed in childhood.

Daniel Boone:

Daniel Boone moved from Kentucky to Missouri -- a son, Hampton Boone, was the business partner of grandfather for a number of years. The prairie home was near the Kansas line, not far from the center of the Mormon Immigration.

Mormon Prophet:

The Prophet, Joseph Smith, the Messiah of that faith, stopped at their home on different occasions, and father could distinctly remember him. He could recall the troops rendezvousing and marching off for the Mormon war in Missouri and Kansas -- the clerk in Grandfather's store volunteered and went with them. The little town was a center in the mobilization of troops for the Mexican War. His uncle Scantlan was a general of militia and he evolved a plan to go with the Missouri troops as drummer boy, but his mother balked at this program.

Grandfather Lewis was completely wrecked in the terrible panic which swept the country in 1845. So, in 1847, when father was 12 years old, the family moved back to Virginia.

Return to Virginia:

I have always looked on that hejira as an epoch that entitled grandmother to a crown of glory. There were six children, father, the oldest, only twelve years old, Aunt Mary (McClure), Aunt Kate (McClure), Aunt Duck (Tannehill), little Daniel Halstead, and Lewis (who died in infancy) - the latter a baby in arms. It must be 1200 miles by the winding Mississippi River from Kansas City to the mouth of the Ohio. It must be 1500 miles up the Ohio to Pittsburgh. The family had to move by ox cart to the River landing, by flat boat to the head of steamboat navigation at St. Joseph, then the capital of the State; then by River Steamer to the Mississippi. Again by Ohio Steamship to Cincinnati to catch small boats that worked up to Pittsburgh. In those days the boats were of the crudest and roughest design and accommodation. By stage from Pittsburgh to Cumberland, by canal to Harper's Ferry. From there a crude little railroad operated to Winchester. The rails were iron strips nailed down to wooden sleepers. These railends would often get loose and curl up, so that they would thrust themselves through the floor of the moving coach with disastrous results, These were called "snake heads".

From Winchester to Staunton by stage, and then to Greenville. Talking about it to Aunt Kate (who is in her 88th year) the other evening, she told me that she was only six, and father had to carry her nearly all the time they were making the trip. There was no pasteurized milk in those days. How did they manage to find food for the children?

On moving back to Virginia, the family lived for a year or so at Mt. Solon, and then made their home at Greenville. About 1870 grandfather, after grandmother's death, moved to Staunton. In his advanced age he made his home with father.

He was celebrated for his dry, caustic humor. Of course in the store at Greenville, he had to sell snuff. The old man had no use for tobacco and loathed snuff, which in that day was almost universally used for the women of the country. A woman came into the store one day and called for a package of Pforr's Snuff which he produced, wrapped-up and handed to her - with difficulty concealing his aversion and disgust. "What is it worth, Mr. Bumgardner?" "It isn't worth a damn, Madame, but I charge a quarter for it".

V.

James Bumgardner:

Your "big" grandfather, James, was a man of big heart, but positive in language and convictions. He was the successor in the operation of the old distillery at Bethel, established before the Revolution and had developed the celebrated brand of "Old J. Bumgardner Whiskey" until it attained a nation-wide reputation. "Little" grandfather, after coming back to Augusta, decided to start a distillery and adopted as his brand, "Old L. Bumgardner Whiskey". Big grandfather was far from pleased at the opposition business, and much more displeased at the similarity of trade names, with the consequent likelihood of confusion in the mind of the trade: The following interview is said to have transpired:

"Lewis, I understand you are going to start a distillery?"

"Yes, Jeames".

"They tell me you are going to call it 'Old L. Bumgardner Whiskey.'"

"Yes, Jeemes."

"Well, Lewis, all I have to say to you is, that you want to make that 'L' most damned plain."

(Read Appendix "A")

VI

Bethel:

Big grandfather built the present mansion at Bethel in the early fifties. The old house where his father and grandfather had lived was in the hitching yard, just in front of the present lawn.

The old gentleman's handsome fortune was wrecked in the civil war, but he built it up again; to be wiped away in the bad days of 1889 and 1890 in the disastrous business ventures of Uncle William and Uncle Alex, both of whom were splendid young soldiers, but visionary and impractical in business.

Wm. L. Bumgardner:

Col. William L. Bumgardner, in uniform, and mounted on his superb stallion, was considered by many the handsomest man of his day in Virginia. I have never seen a better horseman, He was your grandmother's favorite brother, and they were closely of the same age. In my album is a quaint boy and girl picture of the two.

At the outbreak of the war he was but 16, but enlisted in the celebrated Company B. of the 1st Virginia Cavalry, first commanded by General Fitzhugh Lee. He was one of the bravest men in a company of picked men, and was offered and declined promotion, Grandfather procured him one of the finest mounts in the army. The horse survived the war to a ripe old age at Bethel.

In the service, man and horse were constant companions - together they ate, slept, fought, worked and played. Many were the stories my grandmother would tell me, as a boy of this old charger. Among them, that it was rarely necessary for Uncle Billy to stay awake on picket post, as he could curl up in his blanket and sleep - knowing the horse would watch and nuzzle him if anything came in sight or hearing.

After the War, Uncle Billy became Captain of the West Augusta Guard, and later, Colonel of the 2nd Regiment of Virginia volunteers. As my father went into the Civil War as a Lieutenant in this old company, it is naturally a matter of some pride that I enlisted in the Spanish War as a private in the West Augusta Guard, and later, when the State troops were re-organized after that war, was elected Colonel of the same Regiment. (Though temporarily designated as the 70th).

Jacob Alexander Bumgardner:

Jacob Alexander Bumgardner could not get his father's permission to go into the army until he had attained the mature age of 16 year. Two years of the war had then passed, but he went in at that age, as the orderly Sergeant of an artillery company, and served two years of hard campaigning, including the battles of New Market, Piedmont and Lynchburg.

It is difficult to visualize our young corporal at V.M.I., now nearly 19, as being at an age when his uncle was a seasoned veteran of two campaigns of the war, responsible for the discipline of conduct of a battery of 200 men in battle and camp, and back home embarked in the serious work of life.

Surely the war must have been a dreadful experience to your grandmother. Her husband and his brother and her two brothers in the service, besides numerous other relations and friends, many of whom never returned -- the Federal army raiding the homestead, where none but the women and servants were left, and burning and destroying the crops and stock and driving away the Negroes.

VIII

James Bumgardner, Jr.:

Your grandfather, (my father) James Bungardner, Jr., you, as a child, can remember. As a very young Miss, you would visit your Grandfather Scott (whom you called "Coolie Grandfather"), and be instructed in your shorter Catechism, and then, perhaps, the same day, visit, your Grandfather Bumgardner (whom you called Captain Grandfather) and be instructed in the "art and mysteries" of Big Casino and Solitaire. I deplored to my friends the fact that my daughter, even at this early age, was leading a double life.

Your "Captain Grandfather" was prepared for college at the old Academy at Brownsburg, Va., and was at the University of Virginia for two sessions. He then taught school for several years at Madison Court House and near Fredericksburg. He read law in the office of the late Judge Hugh W. Sheffey entering into partnership with him in 1858. Except as interrupted by the war, this partnership continued till Judge Sheffey's death in 1889. It is in this wise that I can claim a

continuous operation of my law office back to 1840. His 90-year old office chair is in daily use at my desk.

Your grandfather got home from the war prison at Fort Delaware on the 26th of June, 1865, barely in time to have his friends announce him as candidate for Commonwealth's Attorney in the election being hold early in July. He was elected largely through the aid of the old soldiers, and held that office until he declined re-election in 1885.

Through ill health and financial reverses, the ten years of his life from 1895 to 1905 were in large measure lost to him; but it is, and always will be, one of the most satisfying recollections of my life, that, some years before his death I was able to discharge the last of his debts, and the closing years of his life were spent in leisure, without material cares and worry to cloud them.

I have before me an unsigned and undated sheet, written by him in pencil, endorsed in your Aunt Eugenia's hand. "Papa's War Record -- to be saved". This was evidently written out, at the request of some one, to be typed; and written about the year 1907, as it was at that time Eugenia was helping in the office,

I shall let the old warrior speak for himself: "Was born in Fayette, Howard County, Missouri, February 18th, 1835. Moved with my father's family to Augusta County, Virginia, in April 1847 -- "was educated at Brownsburg Academy and the University of Virginia -- was admitted to the Bar by order of the Circuit Court of Augusta Co. in September, 1858. Entered the Confederate service as Adjutant of the 5th Regiment of Va. Infantry, April 17, 1861 -- was with the 5th Regiment in the battles of Hainesville, First Manassas and Kernstown. Was transferred to the 52nd Reg't Va. Infantry, May 5th, 1862 - was with the 52nd Reg't as a Second Lieutenant of Co. A during General Jackson's Valley Campaign, (This included the battles of McDowell, Front Royal, Winchester, Harrisonburg, Cross Keys and Port 'Republic) and in the battles of Cedar Mountain, Second Manassas and Sharpsburg. Was made Captain of Company F., 52nd Reg't, in September 1862. Was with the Regiment in all the battles fought by the Army of Northern Virginia (among others, Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, Winchester (again) Gettysburg, Mine Run, Wilderness, Spottsylvania, Cold Harbor, Bethesda Church) until Early's Corps was detached to repel the advance of Hunter on Lynchburg in June 1864, Was in command of the 52nd Reg't as senior Captain in the march of General Early to Lynchburg - in the engagement at Lynchburg - in the engagement with Hunter's rear guard at Liberty (now Bedford City) -- and the march of Early from Salem to Washington City, and in the battle of the Monocacy. Was captured at the battle of Winchester (again), September 17, 1864, and was a prisoner at Fort Delaware until the close of the war. Resumed practice of law after the close of the war -- was elected Attorney for the Commonwealth for Augusta County in August 1865, and served continuously, on successive elections for twenty years -- am still practicing law, as a member of the firm of Bumgardner and Bumgardner."

Lee to War:

He was engaged in over fifty battles, engagements and skirmishes, but, strange to say, was never struck. It was through his Company that General Lee was led to the rear by the men at the battle of Spottsylvania in May 1864, when the General sought to lead the desperate charge at the Bloody Angle, and his soldiers refused to advance until he had been conducted back to a place of safety.

John Brown:

Father was a charter member of the old West Augusta guard, which was organized in 1858, and was with the Company as one of its Lieutenants when it was called on duty both on the occasions of the John Brown Raid and of his hanging. The Company in going to the execution, went by train to Alexandria, from there to Harper's Ferry by canal boat, and by train from there to Charlestown. It fell to his lot to carry the rope from Alexandria that Brown was hung with, and he passed some words with the old "hellion" just before he mounted the scaffold. It may be of interest to you to know, and to remember, that he was within ten feet of Brown from the time he emerged from the jail door and during the march to the gallows so that he would necessarily see the incident had it occurred and he always asserted that the "touching" episode of "Old Osawatimie" tenderly kissing the near baby presented by its proud mother, as he was leaving the jail on the death march, which incident is the subject of a celebrated painting and has been used to illustrate the school readers -- positively did not happen.

Barbara F. Fritchie:

Whittier's poem, "Barbara Fritchie", was anathema to his soul and he was in a position to testify personally to its falsehood, being with the head of Jackson's column as it marched through Frederick town. He was immediately behind Stonewall and bound to see the affair, had it occurred. The column did not march through the street where she lived.

There are two incidents that I love to recall as, perhaps, more fully reflecting the character of the man than a volume of description-- the irrepressible conflict between a stern exterior shell and the streams of a deep, a most poetically emotional nature, underneath.

Hugh W. Sheffey:

His reverence and deference for Judge Sheffey was more than of a son to a father. Judge Sheffey was the most learned lawyer, I think, of his day in Virginia. He was a close friend, and nearly the same age, of grandfather. Father read law under him and then entered into partnership with him. The Judge had been a leader in civil life and was speaker of the House of Delegates during the arduous days of the Civil War. He was a man of delicate health and of a most nervous temperament, but father's loyalty to the old soldiers who had faced fire to the bitter end, exceeded any sense of filial duty and respect.

There was an old chap, named Jake Carrison, of the 5th Reg't. who had been a capital soldier but was a ne'er-do-well in civil life. He was a blacksmith by trade, a giant in stature, with a voice like a foghorn. Jacke would come to town every court-day, and as regularly get boiling drunk. Court-day was the busiest and most distracting day of the month in a busy law office. Old Jake was a life-long client of Major Bell's firm. In the morning, before becoming soused, he would call at that office and transact business and pay substantial fees -- then, as he warmed up and became a perfect nuisance, he would wander into Sheffey and Bumgardner's office to be entertained and talk war. When Jake's voice and laugh boomed through the rooms, business stopped. The Judge's private office was in the back room. One day, after standing it until his nerves cracked, the old Judge came into the front

office and called father out-- "Jeemes, I cannot stand this any longer: You must put Jake Garrison out of here:" The clerk, who tells the anecdote, says that father's eyes fairly flashed-- it was the only occasion he ever knew him to beard the Judge-- bristling up and shaking his finger in his senior's face, he snapped out, "Judge Sheffey, if you had seen that man where I have seen him. You would think he is worthy to sit at the footstool of the God Almighty: You shall not put him out of here:" The old Judge visualized the situation and smiled. He walked slowly back into his own room, rubbing his hands and muttering-- "Jeemes and his soldiers: Jeemes and his soldiers".

The other incident relates to my enlistment for the Spanish War. I was anxious to here father's expressed approbation of my course. Several times the matter had been broached by direct question, but with no satisfactory result. His answer was, "That is a question for you to decide for yourself, Sir, I have nothing to say".

In truth, it might be said that my presence in the office was essential. He was well advanced in years, and our business affairs were in a critical situation -- all this aside from the risks of war service. I decided to approach from another angle. As we were leaving the office in the evening after the days' work, I said, "Father what would you do if you were a young chap of 25, your country was at war, and the old military company which your father had helped to organize and had served in through the Civil War, was called into service-- if all the chums you went with were volunteering; and the folks some day might hold you up as a skulker if you stayed out--" Caught off his guard, and without waiting for me to finish, he snapped out -- "Why, boy, all hell couldn't keep me!"

Perhaps another anecdote would not be amiss. The late Hon. Allen Caperton Braxton used to relate the story with great delight and to vouch for its absolute verity.

The case was this -- The reform element in the United Brethren Church, which composed a large majority of the membership, had made changes in the ritual and canons. There was a substantial minority, however. In one of our country churches the congregation refused to accept the change and seceded from the church at large, The main body claimed ownership of the church property; the seceding congregation that their church belonged to them. Father represented the local congregation in the suit contesting the ownership of the church. He had been brought up in the strict Presbyterian school -- though anything but a pietist -- and had learned his Westminster Catechism from cover to cover. In fact, at the age of 80, he pridefully marched down the aisle of the First Church, along with the childhood and youth of the congregation to claim the certificate awarded by Dr. Frazer to all who could qualify to having recited that catechism from memory.

The late Judge William McLaughlin was of the same ilk. The Judge was not even a member of the church, and was more than worldly in some of his proclivities. However, he was of the purest covenanter Scotch strain, born and raised in the hills of old Rockbridge, and would have shed the last drop of his blood for the faith. The Judge had been one of the most gallant and distinguished artillery officers in the Confederate Army, and was a jurist of outstanding distinction and ability-- but underlying it all, he was the Scotsman and Presbyterian.

You know who the venerable Addison Waddell was, the "auld blue light Elder"... and, of course, Miss Mary Julia Baldwin, the head of the Seminary. Their rule of the First Church was as unquestioned as was once a ukase of the Russian Czar.

Mr. Braxton used to declaim father's closing peroration to the judge thus: "Your Honor let us suppose that these Infernal Northern Presbyterians were to come down here and attempt to make us change the doctrines of John Calvin, and to emasculate the beautiful lines of our beloved Westminster Catechism-- of the Lord's Prayer, which in childhood we learned to lisp at our mothers' knees. What would that Venerable and godly patriarch, Uncle Addie Waddell, say? What

would that saintly mother in Israel, Miss Mary Julia Baldwin, say? Why, sir, they would come down into this court-room and shout in trumpet tones, 'We'll be damned if we do:' "

He was not only deeply read in law, but was wonderfully well grounded in its underlying principles, and had remarkable aptitude in making a forcible presentation of the case to a jury. Judge Sheffey, on the other hand, was of the deepest erudition, and was at his best in developing an abstruse point before an appellate court. He was not particularly effective with a jury. Father was well read in the classical literature, and, with a marvelous memory, had at command a vast quantity of Shakespeare, Macaulay, the Bible and the Poets. He had an unlimited fund of timely anecdote, and pointed jokes with which to illustrate and bring home his argument to a jury, or on the hustings. His emotional nature carried his whole being into the cause he advocated. With him, when enlisted in a cause, there was no other side, and neither personal nor financial considerations had any place. With these qualities he was a talented speaker and a terrible opponent when a case reached the point of a contest before the jury,

Whatever may be the world's verdict, he rated high with his mother. In a letter to the Grandmother in Virginia, dated Fayette, Mo., Dec., 1935, she says: "Our little son has always been a very healthy child, grows very fast at this time and is very sprightly, and is generally called a very handsome child."

I will give you a description of his features, as I expect you feel some interest in him. He has large, black, expressive eyes high, arched forehead, large mouth, well formed nose, promises to be pretty large as well as his father, dark but clear complexion, and as much hair as you generally see at two years of age (he was then 9-1/2 months old). He has four teeth, and can stand and step with a little pains, and is a favorite with us all.

Tell James he has reason to be proud of his namesake. Tell him also if he remains an old bachelor that I shall hold him bound to remember him in all the exertions he may make to acquire wealth."

Aunt Hettie (as we called that Grandmother) had her own idea of the responsibilities and obligations falling to the bachelor uncle who had the honor of being the namesake of her first born. Within the next year or so, "Uncle James" was to marry and raise a family of his own to inherit the results of his exertions "to acquire wealth". Little James, however, not to be out-done, when he grew up, married "Uncle James" second daughter. Nearly a year later, Oct. 23, 1836, she writes to the grandmother:

"James is less trouble than most boys of his age. He is a fine, sprightly boy, and is sensible beyond any description I can give of him".

Two years later, under date October 21, 1838, his father says in a letter to a grandfather in Virginia, little James being then 3 years and 8 months old, with three days to spare: "James is going to school and can spell very well."

When he was still a month short of his 5th year, on Nov. 24, 1839, the mother writes to the bachelor uncle, congratulating him on his approaching marriage and has this to say of the namesake: "James has been going to school all summer, but his school was out a week ago, and we will not start him again this winter. He has learned to read well indeed, and spells as accurately as any one I have ever heard. He has also commenced the study of Parley's Geography."

Chief Keokuck:

On the long boat trip down the Missouri River, the noted old Indian Chief, Keokuck, with his retinue of squaws, children and braves, were fellow passengers. Father and one of the Chief's sons of the same age, became boon companions. He tells of the passengers making a shore visit to go through the State Penitentiary. Old Keokuck went to the enclosure gate, but refused to enter, grunting, "No let Indian out again". No protestations could reassure the old brave.

John Lowlow:

While a lad at Greenville. Va., father contracted a lifelong acquaintance and friendship with John Lowlow, who afterwards became the most celebrated circus clown of all times. The boy had left his home in South Carolina to join John Robinson's Circus, which in that day was a small affair, traveling by road. Lowlow traveled with John Robinson until past 80 years old, and would often call on father at our home when the circus came to Staunton.

Needless to say, it was a rare treat to us youngsters to hear the old veteran of the main top relate his experiences, and Robinson's Circus has been a Bumgardner family tradition for three generations.

Rudolph Bumgardner:

This brings the sketch down to your own father.

He was born at Sandy Hollow, the old place on the Pike, just a mile north of Staunton, on June 11, 1872. In boy hood there were no companions save the young darkies of the neighborhood. Perhaps this sense of loneliness was the occasion of his inveterate habit of running away, which persisted from the time he could walk until cowhided out of him at about the age of 10. On at least one occasion he was brought back by a neighbor who picked him up nearly frozen down below the Harman place. Once while the family was visiting at the Sprouls, he essayed to get back home, and had trudged as far as Arbor Hill, where one of the teamsters recognized the mud-spattered derelict, and bundled him back on the wagon to Locust Grove.

Perhaps the only trait the youngster had worthy of mention was an exaggerated sense of duty. Playing out in the yard one bitter cold winter day, a gentleman drove up to the house and asked him to hold his horse while he went in for a few minutes on some mission. By a comfortable fire and with entertaining conversation, the minutes lengthened into hours. To let that horse go-- for which he has assumed responsibility-- was unthinkable. The youngster's voice could not reach within the closed rooms of the house. When the gentleman finally concluded his visit and came out to mount his horse, the lad was still holding the horse, but frozen into insensibility; had to be carried into the house and brought around. Maybe that lad's mother -- gentle as an angel under ordinary circumstances-- didn't lace out that gentleman for his heartless carelessness.

From a crude talent for moulding from clay the Images of men and animals that served for playthings, as well as a fondness drawing, his doting grandmother predicted a future artist;

The old colored mammy, Aunt Ellen, who lived to a great age, In fact, till the boy was beyond middle life, went into her grave carrying the conviction that he was to become a Methodist Minister; the boy himself pictured the Army--circumstances made him a lawyer.

One joke that his father relished and never tired of telling on him: In his youth, the Civil War was a very fresh memory -- the days of reconstruction were just closing. From his father he imbibed

stories that reflected the glory and excitement of war. From his mother he absorbed the other side of the picture -- the hideousness of it and the suffering of the ones at home. The result was a puzzle to the young mind, and raised sad doubts. One day he met the soldier father at the stile and walked with him to the house. "Father, what do they call it when they don't have any war?"

"That is time of peace, son."

"Well, then, father, I am going to be a soldier and have peace."

Father used to say and laugh that in my wise selection of the particular war I did my soldiering in; I had followed my childhood motto.

One other vivid recollection of Sandy Hollow: Father would ride home in the evening from town on his horse, "Sue". The colored boy had shown me how to make a rabbit trap. After weeks of patient waiting and myriads of visits to the sinkhole where it rested, one day I found it contained a rabbit. The colored boy advised immediate execution; but my pride demanded that I show my conquest, alive, and in its full glory, to father. The hours seemed endless waiting for the gray mare to appear in sight over the tollgate hill. Finally I spied the familiar figure, and, drawing the rabbit from the trap,

I started to hail him, and running at full speed, holding the quarry aloft. My childish feet stumbled on some obstruction in the path, and the rabbit slipped from my hands and vanished through the grass. Never was a keener tragedy.

Perhaps it would not be amiss to relate an incident of life at Sandy Hollow that is indelibly impressed on any memory. The writer had attained the innocent age of nine. He had come into the proprietorship of an old muzzle-loading rifle, whose barrel was some feet longer than its owner and much too heavy for him to hold in firing position; but with a friendly stump or beam to rest it on, he was a deadly shot with the ancient firelock. She was christened "Melviny". Shot, powder and caps were supplied from the bounty that father paid for the scalps of the rats that infested the stable.

The family cook was Aunt Ellen; the manservant was Uncle Charlie--then well advanced in years. Old Charles was a giant in stature, and, though much bent from age and rheumatism, was still of powerful frame. He was very surly and stern, with an aversion for children, and I stood in wholesome fear of him.

You must be acquainted with the loathing the old field darkies had for certain forms animal and reptile life--a throwback, doubtless, to some atavistic jungle taboo. The starving Confederate soldiers imprisoned in Ft. Delaware would welcome a rat as a dainty morsel, but the Negro teamster would have died the death rather than so pollute himself. In Colonial days the House of Burgesses by way of preventing cruelty to the slaves, was constrained to enact a statute forbidding the feeding of Potomac Shad and Diamond Back Terrapin to the Negroes (in place of the wholesome diet of bacon and hominy) more than twice in the same week.

One summer evening, watching a favorite rat hole with the muzzle of old Melviny resting on a beam of the stable. I popped the head off the granddaddy of all the rats. He was a whopper. He looked like a full-grown squirrel. Only a week before, Aunt Ellen had refused to cook some choice frog legs for me, and with an air of horror and disgust, had thrown my prized trophy into the slop barrel. The devil suggested the thought to my young mind: wouldn't it be fine to get even with Aunt Ellen by having her cook Mr. Rat for a squirrel, and then give her the merry laugh when she came to serve it. Never was there such a cook as Aunt Ellen, nor one who took more pride in her gorgeous viands.

The rat was quickly skinned and dressed, and the evidence of his genus deeply buried beneath the stable. So prepared, he did look like a tid-bit for a gourmand. Uncle Charles, at the same time, was ill, and I took the carcass to the kitchen, with a tale about killing the squirrel in the woods, and how I thought it would be so nice for her to cook it for Uncle Charlie, who hadn't been able to find his appetite for several days.

I fully expected to watch around and spring the joke on her when she had cooked the varmint, but something diverted me to the woods, and it was night when I got back to the house.

After supper, Aunt Ellen knocked at the sitting-room door with the message that Uncle Charles wanted to see me. The tragedy of the thing flashing on my mind with the force of a thunder bolt -- "My God! I forgot-- Uncle Charles has eaten that rat -- I will be murdered!" Oh, how I wished that the floor would open and swallow me.

There was no escape, and like a trembling, condemned criminal I followed Aunt Ellen to Uncle Charlie's cabin. The old darky welcomed me with tears of gratitude. God had told me to remember the sick old man, he said, and would bless me for it. He thought the squirrel which Aunt Ellen had cooked, so fine; it had saved his life-- for his insides had revolted at any food for days, and this was the first bite he had been able to eat. "God bless you, young Marster!"

Fear yielded to remorse, but to disclaim the deserts was to avow the guilt. Never was a more unwilling hypocrite. But Uncle Charlie did mend from that day. His whole demeanor towards me changed. Never would he meet me without some kindly action and an avowal of his deathless gratitude, and how I would dodge him. I was firmly persuaded that he was bound to discover my guilt in my looks, and that he would murder me if he found me out.

Time and again, in the night, I waked in terror with the phantom of Uncle Charlie's giant form creeping to my beside with a gleaming butcher knife in his hand, ready to strike, and Aunt Ellen with reproachful eyes following him, a skillet in her hands to catch the blood. Not one word of that burning secret ever passed my lips until Aunt Ellen and Uncle Charlie had been for many years under the sod-- In fact, I never breathed an easy until the High Mass was said over old Charlie's remains. Both the faithful souls, I am sure, have found their reward on that better shore where "all things are revealed"; but it is my abiding hope that they can find it in their hearts to forgive the innocent mistake of a well intentioned boy.

Returning from the digression.

About 1883, when I was about 11 years old, the family moved from Sandy Hollow to the home on North Augusta Street. Your father received his diploma as graduate of' the Staunton High School a few days before his 16th birthday. His mother considered him too young to enter College so an extra year was devoted to the public schools. Entering Washington and Lee University in the fall of 1889, he completed the six years course for A.B. and B.L. degrees in four years and three months-- interrupting the course for a session, teaching as principal of Schools at Clarksburg, Mecklenburg County, Virginia.

Admitted to the Bar in January 1895, he entered as junior member of the firm of J., J.L. & R. Bumgardner,

In April, 1898, he enlisted as a private in the old West Augusta Guard (Co, K. 2nd Reg't Infy., Va. Vols.).

We moved to Richmond and then to Jacksonville, Fla. In Augusta was discharged as private, and commissioned 2nd Lieutenant, Co. F, 3rd Reg. U. S. Vol. Engrs. It was at this time, while home on sick leave, that I first met your mother, then visiting at the Sprouls at Locust Grove. By a strange freak of fate, her father was later called to Staunton to the Second Church. It was a complete

surprise to me. Walking down the street one day some five years after to meet the young lady who had completely vanished from my life in the intervening years, and to find that she was now a fellow Stauntonian, the daughter of the new Minister. Frankly, up to that time, I hadn't realized that a new Minister had come to town. Of course, politeness required a call and one thing led to another. Such was your father's love romance. After the expiration of sick leave, I joined my new Regiment at Lexington, Ky., whence we moved south to camp in Macon, Ga. There I was detached from line duty and served as acting Quartermaster, Commissary of Subsistence and Ordnance Officer of a provisional battalion on duty down in the City, From there we moved to Charleston, S. C. and from there to Cienfuegos, Cuba, with the Army of Occupation. There was plenty of exciting service on the Island. In April 1899, we were brought back to Savannah, Ga., and from there moved to Fort McPherson, near Atlanta, Ga., where the Regiment was disbanded on May 17, 1899.

I resumed the practice of law in June 1899, and have followed it without interruption since. Your Uncle Lewis withdrew from the firm and moved to West Virginia in 1904. The firm then became Bumgardner and Bumgardner (your grandfather and myself) and continued until his death in September 1917, since when I have practiced alone. It may be that Bud will enter some day and the firm again be Bumgardner and Bumgardner. My only legal office has been that of a Master Commissioner in Chancery of the Circuit Court of Augusta County, by appointment some ten years since.

In college my fraternities were Sigma Nu and T.N.E. In after life my affiliations have been with the Masons and the Elks.

On the reorganization of the State Troops after the Spanish War, I was appointed Adjutant in the 71st Reg't, Va. Vols, (the old 1st) later elected Captain of Co. A of the 70th Reg't. (the old 2nd) and later, in 1905, elected Colonel of the Regiment,

The exigencies of business soon required me to resign from the military, following my marriage on June 1, 1905. Company A had two strenuous and creditable turns of duty while I commanded it-- six weeks in the Richmond Street Car Strikes, June-July, 1903, and guarding the trial of a Negro murderer of Lynchburg.

During the World War, the best service I can boast of, is as Captain of a company of State Volunteers (Reserves), the Valley Riflemen.

Your dear mother's sudden and untimely death in June 1915 left me with two motherless children to raise and provide for -- a girl nine and a boy of four. I have devoted the best of my ability to meet that responsibility. The result is on the knees of the gods but certainly as respects one half of the achievement, it does not lie in the mouth of the young woman for whose eyes I write these lines to disparage the product.

Such are the Bumgardners -- I trust that you will find them interesting acquaintances-- as I have.

"Forsitan, haec olim meminisse juvabit".

APPENDIX "A"

Since writing the above, I recalled an incident related me by your great-aunt, Mrs. Betty W. Murphy. I might add that it was only in the last few years that I was considered old enough to be admitted into such a secret involving the intimate affairs of the preceding generation. However, it seems to me too good to keep.

Up to the time of Big Grandfather's death in the winter of 1889, there were still several of the old Negroes about Bethel who had been there in the days of slavery, among them, old Mose Perkins. Mose was as black as the ace of spades and in the days of his prime, had been the leading cradler. He was the most original character I have ever known, accumulated quite a little property, and made a substantial bequest to Uncle Alex in his will.

It was a sight to see Mose take a drink. He would throw back his head, open wide his cavernous jaws, lift up his glass, and pour the entire contents down his throat without touching his lips and the ceremony ended with a single gulp and a contented sigh.

Morning, noon and night, he would tip up on the back porch at Bethel and tap at the sitting room door. Grandmother would open the door and Mose would say, "Marse Jimmie, may I have my dram": Grandfather, without looking up, would say, "Ma, give Mose a drink." And Grandmother poured out a guarded but substantial ration, which Mose would gulp down, make a flourishing bow and retire.

In Grandfather's last illness, when supposed to be in extremis, Mother, Aunt Eugenia Sproul and Aunt Betty Murphy had been summoned to be bedside. For some days the old gentleman had been lying in a coma, apparently unconscious, barely breathing. Mother approached the bedside a number of times in an endeavor to see whether he was conscious or to arouse him. She would ask, "Pa, do you know me?" but had been unable to get any response or any sign of recognition. While thus quietly waiting for the end to come, old Mose tipped gently up on the porch and beckoned mother out and asked if he could see Marse Jimmie before he died. Mother assented, and the old darkey approached the bedside with tears streaming down his cheeks. To all appearances, life had departed. In an agony of grief, Mose exclaimed in a strident whisper, "Oh, Marse Jimmie, Marse Jimmie, don't you know me?" Some reflex action called the spirit back for an instant. The eyelids opened, the lids distinctly framed the words, Ma, give Mose a drink". The eyelids dropped shut-- that was the end.

The old gentleman would never argue a proposition. He was firm in his convictions, and, if he thought, he was right, would invariably back his judgment with his money. If anyone challenged his opinion, his answer was, "I'll bet you ten dollars", and it was put up or shut up. He owned several celebrated racehorses and was a devoted lover of horseflesh. It might be said of him, as of another old Virginia gentleman, that "he had good horses, and he run 'em; he had good lick and he drunk it; he had good cocks and he fit 'em; for of such, my friends, is the Kingdom of Heaven".

The old gentleman attained a ripe old age and died in his 90th year. He was passionately fond of company and liked to have young people around him. In his lifetime Bethel was a cheerful place with its large gathering around the blazing hickory-wood fire in the living room. Grandfather occupied the big horsehair chair in the center, his tall, gold-headed staff in his hand or in easy reach, and his favorite dog old "Tige" slumbering peacefully at his side. In the last few years of his life the old Gentleman developed a physical infirmity that evidenced itself in a very audible and embarrassing fashion. It was his wont, the instant trouble occurred, to jump up and give poor old Tige a vigorous whack with the stick, and indignantly order him out of the house-- following this

with the direction to someone to open the door and let Tige out. Apparently the old gentleman had persuaded himself that poor Tige was the offender.

Tige, however, was not a believer in vicarious atonement. He cultivated the art of sleeping with one ear open for trouble, and learned to forestall it. At the first ominous sound, old Tige would make a made dash for the door, and, safely beyond the reach of the stick, would be eagerly waiting for the door to be opened for him to dash out into the friendly safety of the back lawn.