

Mehitable Higginbotham & C.P.G.'s

Thank you, Cousin Annie May. I'm beholden to you to let me come talk to these nice people again.

It plumb pleased me to get to speak to you last year about this time.

Now I might as well tell you, it makes me a mite nervous to be on the same platform with a handsome feller as Dr. Gracey – and all that knowledge cousin Carol has – all that smart just boggles my brain.

I just listened this morning with all the rapt I had. You done good, Cousins.

Them Texas archives. They's something else again – ain't they?

Now, if you remember I talked to you about How to Write to Courthouses and letters I received at the County Clerk's office. Well, they's done been added some this year. They just keep coming in. And since I don't want you to miss out on nothing, I brung them along:

Here they are:

1. "I need my marriage certificate. I'm forwarding my form and six children, I have seven but one died; which was baptized on a half sheet of paper. Thank you"
2. "I'm glad to report that my husband who is missing is dead. Please send me his death certificate as the man I'm living with can't eat or do nothing 'til he knows for sure."
3. "In accordance with your instructions, I have given birth to twins in the enclosed envelope."

But that ain't why I'm here. I got something else I want to talk to you about today.

I just got me a report from one of the C.P.G.'s. That's a Certified Professional Genealogists. That's one of them persons you pay your good money to to dig up your roots. I ain't gonna mention what I PAID that professional feller, but I'll tell you one thing – I ain't gonna be buying me no new BONNET next year.

I know you're just a-dying to know why I hired this feller in the first place. Well, I'll let you in on a secret. I figured if that HALEY feller could make a million or several just writing a book tracing his ancestors back to the African JUNGLES – just think how much money I could make – going back to ROYALTY! Why, I bet you couldn't beat them movie producers off with a pole.

When I come up with this brilliant idea, I just happened to be in Beaumont at a County Clerk's Convention – so on a coffee break, I hired myself Mrs. Mable Li-de, I think her name was – she had something to do with genealogy. Well, anyways, I told her my name was

Mehitable Higgenbotham and when I asked her, real polite-like, to get the book down so's I could see who my ancestors is – she commenced to laugh like nothing I ever heered before.

She either thought that was one of the funniest things she ever heerd – or she had a FLY in her corset. Why, I thought for sure they'd have to give her some spirits to calm her down.

Then that libeerian commenced to bring out ALL kings of FORMS. Lordee, I'd have to have a college dee-gree in FORM-FILLING-OUT if'n I wanted to cipher them things. Said made "proving out" easier – whatever that is. The whole time she was a-telling me that ancestor hunting was a long complicated process. I kept eyeing all them books. Law, I ain't never seen so many books – I bet you somewheres in there she was hiding my pedigree.

Now you know a county clerk ain't got no time to do much research. I'm too busy finding all them records for all you people. And I figured the sooner I got my book rote, the sooner I'd be riding around in CADILLACS, so I guessed I could afford to hire me one of them professional persons that Mrs. Li-de done heerd about.

Well, I went straight to the horse's mouth to find one of them C.P.G.'s. I rote direct to the Board of Certification down there in Washington and told them I wanted one of them fellers that was CERTIFIED. I wanted somebody good. Somebody that knowed what they was a-doin'. I had to have the best for my kinfolks. One can't be too careful when you're dealing with ROYALTY.

Well, me and this feller got together. I knowed it wouldn't take him long cause all he needed was a ROAD MAP – and go straight to PLYMOUTH ROCK – cause my Aunt Hattie always said our ancestors done come over on the MAYFLOWER...with PONCE DeLEON!

Well, right away, I found out them professionals was the nosiest critters I ever set eyes on. He had the audacity to ask where I was borned. – Now how old I am ain't nobodys business but mine. He asked when I told him I ain't never been married, he said, "Oh, I'm so sorry." HE'S SORRY!!!

Well, anyways, he pumped me for everything in the world. But I was REAL SMART – I figures that's what I was paying him for - and I wasn't gonna tell him NOTHING!

Law, he asked the questions – like where my Papa and Mama was married. Now, I didn't know where they was married, but I knowed they was – cause my grandma always said my Mama married beneath her.

And all them questions – well, if'n I'd knowed 'em, I wouldn't have to hire him, now would I?

I will have to say he was a real nice man though. He just looked at me as I talked and SMILED a lot!

While I was a-waitin for that feller to come up with my pedigree, I got to dreaming about the D.A.R. - I knowed some women that was members of them Daughter of the American Revolution. Some of them was kinda snooty, but I figured if'n I had a Revolutionary hero, I could learn how to look like I was smelling something bad too.

Why I rushed right out and got me one of them coats of ARMS. I paid twelve dollars and fifty cents for it too. It looks right nice hanging on my wall next to my picture of Grant's tomb.

Then, even thought they'd tried to hush it up in my family, I suspected that there was some INDIAN BLOOD cause when I was little and Aunt Hattie got to talking about the relations she'd nearly always end up with "I betcha there was an Indian in the woodpile somewheres." And Lordy, I could sure use some of them government benefits that those who descend from INDIANS get.

Then there's the Magnum Charter Organization. Now, I wouldn't want to ad-mit to any of my family having a drinking problem, but they has been known to throw a magnum or two around in days past. And if that's what it took to be one of them members, I'd admit to a couple of fingers worth.

All my family, far back as I can remember ... was always animal lovers. Why, I wouldn't have been one bit surprised if'n one of my ancesters wasn't on Noah's Ark. And, Mercy, if'n that professional person could get Higginbothams back to the Ark, it was just a short hop to Adam & Eve.

Well, a bunch of time past by – about six months, I guess. I was losing money all the time not getting my book rote. I figured he'd probably lost his way to Plymouth Rock, when in come this package this C.P.G.

DROP "PACKAGE"