

315-South Lake St. Leokstad, N. M.  
February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1960

Mr. Ralph Hardee Riner,  
Enfield, N. C.

Dear Mr. Riner:

Your letter to our mutual friend and my distant cousin, Virginia Mills, was sent to me and furnished much interesting news, especially of your step-mother.

I had learned in several letters from different members of the Leppidge clan, that a brilliant young man from Enfield had delivered a most impressive speech at Norfolk last year. I did not learn until very recently, that you are the nephew and step-son of my friend, the former Blanche Hardee.

Yes, I was a country doctor at Aurelian Springs, awaiting appointment as a medical missionary to the Belgian Congo. The Board of World Missions wanted a man of more experience and maturity than I then possessed and advised that I practice in the country where I would be thrown almost entirely on my own resources.

My station was to be 1200 miles from the West Coast of Africa and the doctor nearest to me, 200 miles away.

At the time I was sent out it was not the policy of the Mission Board to send out white women as missionaries. The mortality had been very heavy, especially among the women.

For a while I gave up hope of marrying but in the years that followed, conditions improved and on my furlough five or six years later

I wooed and won the hand of a beautiful blond from Mississippi.

We have four children, two sons and two daughters and eight grand children.

Our younger daughter lives here and teaches Spanish in the public schools of the city.

My wife and I are with her to help with the care of her two children and to enjoy the sunshine of the South.

I forgot to state that in World War I, I was in the armed forces and for some months was surgeon of the 16 Cavalry Regiment, stationed in the Valley of the Rio Grande.

Later I was asked to open a mission hospital in Mexico, which I did. Here our three younger children were born and learned Spanish before learning English.

My elder son had a brilliant career at Davidson and earned enough credits for both an A.B. and B.S. when he was twenty.

He followed me in my profession and was in the faculty of the Medical School of Tulane University when he was drafted for the army.

He now holds the rank of major and is Surgeon of the 8<sup>th</sup> Airborne Division.

The younger son, just your age, won the Woodrow Wilson scholarship at Princeton and later a Rhodes scholarship and spent three years at Oxford.

He now teaches English literature at Alabama College.

When I meet old friends who express surprise, I explain "You see I married a very bright woman." I have heard that you are also a Rhodes scholar and perhaps have a Ph.D.

So your father also married a very bright woman, in fact two very bright women.

I remember your mother well.

One summer she helped nurse one of my typhoid patients, Miss Eliza Lemia.

Your mother was a happy, cheerful person who no doubt helped the morale of anyone whom she nursed.

I appreciate very much your invitation to visit you if I have an opportunity.

I am now seventy-seven years old, have suffered a coronary occlusion and have cataracts developing in both eyes. I have not yet reached the white cane and seeing eye dog stage, but I can no longer drive a car.

My wife would like to meet your step-mother and I would greatly enjoy seeing her again and renewing our acquaintance. Much has happened in the nearly fifty-four years since I saw her.

With warmest greetings to you and to your charming step-mother, I am

Sincerely yours

Llewellyn J. Cabbidge