

April 18, 1965

3119 Vilura Pkwy.  
Des Moines, Iowa 50310

Dear Mrs. Anderson,

I was pleased to receive your letter and appreciate the information and suggestions. I have a lot to learn yet before I could be qualified to be a professional genealogist--don't intend to get into that profession. I was fortunate to be able to attend this past winter a short course given as part of the adult education program on genealogy. Part of this course was conducted by a Dr. Norval Wardle of Ames, a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. I have been purchasing various types of worksheets including family group and pedigree sheets which are rather inexpensive but can't remember the price. I also purchased a book from him entitled "Genealogical Research Standards" published by the Genealogical Society of his church. He also recommended "Doane's" and I will probably acquire it. I imagine you are acquainted with the genealogical research and library of this church--I knew nothing of it before taking this course.

If you will acquaint me with the information that you do or don't have on the Kirby family, I will be glad to attempt to trace down the needed information. Since writing you last, I received a nice letter from a Mrs. Merritt Caviness of Orient, Ia., giving me some information--some of which I suspect was given them by Dr. Leon. Her husband is the grandson of David, son of Kirby. She also gave me the name and address of the only surviving child of David, Mrs. Laura Eggman (past 80). The Historical Library has a wealth of material which I have been getting acquainted with along with census records. There is another such library in Iowa City which contains 98 % of all the federal census. Both of these are rather frustrating, particularly the one only a few blocks away as they are only open from 8 to 4 during the week and closed on Saturdays and Sundays. I am also acquiring maps of counties where ancestors have lived in attempts to pin point where they have lived in hopes of visiting many of these places some day. My family and I like to travel and possess a camping trailer which we intend to make much use. My family consists of besides my wife, Alma, three sons now 10, 14, & 15. I intend to take them on a long weekend to Jefferson Co. and camp at the State Park in that county and give me a little opportunity to prowlaround a little without boring them to death. I also plan to make other such trips throughout the country. My wife's relatives all live in New York so will be making trips that directions.

I must close--will look forward to hearing from you again.

Sincerely,

Loan S. Elliott

P.S. I noted a Fred Caviness in the 1850 Jefferson Census from N.C.  
Do you know any connection?

1120 Lincoln Ave.,  
Ann Arbor, Mich.,  
10 April 1965.

My dear Mr. Elliott;

It is indeed a pleasure to hear from someone connected with the Kirby part of the family - for I had almost given up on being able to get any satisfactory work done on the Iowa members of the Caviness family.

We are related; Kirby and Alfred were cousins who married sisters, Esther and Axsah Osborn, in Indiana. The Osborns were Quakers who left North Carolina in 1832 or 1833 with the youngest four of their daughters, and settled in Hendrix Co., Indiana; the first six of Kirby's children have Indiana birthplaces, the last four were born in Iowa. Alfred was my greatgrandfather; his wife's mother was with them in the 1860 census, and she died in 1861.

The Caviness family history was a hobby of my second cousin, once remove, Dr. Leon Caviness. His widow has put into my keeping, all of his notes and manuscripts, which I am arranging in a proper Genealogy as I clear up the early problems. Dr. Leon collected names and birthdates, names of parents and place of residence, but he never got around to beginning a true genealogy. Since the Caviness family is one that has never been worked out, I am expecting to do this for all of the branches of the family, so that each line can then do just what you are working on - the detailing of one particular line. Dr. Leon's information about Kirby's descendants that I have, ends about the time that your mother was born; I have her name and birthdate, but more recent information about several members of the family, and your mother's married name, I got from Bertha Gloer of Ames, Iowa. She is the daughter of Kirby's youngest daughter, and so is really the end of that era of the family. It will be of great help to me, and to both of us, if you would be willing to work on the Iowa part of the family, and I would appreciate it very much.

The records that I have prepared so far of the Caviness family, tell of a Huguenot immigrant, Henri Cabanis, his wife, Marie, and infant son who came to the Richmond area of Virginia in the summer of 1700, in a boatload of Huguenots that had sailed from Gravesend, England. I can account for the lifetime of Henri, part of the life, and the wife, of the son, Henry Cavinis; I cannot yet prove beyond a doubt the facts about the next generation. A couple of years ago, my husband and I went to the North Carolina area, where a descendant of another member of the family was working on his genealogy, and we cleared up almost all of the problems. I now have a retired president of the American Genealogical Society working on this one unknown link; when we put together all that can be found, we will then be in a position to say that the family can be traced from 1700 down to the present. Dr. Leon was made a member of the Huguenot Society of the descendants of Manakintowne, (I have his certificate) but as of now, I do not believe that the evidence that he submitted for membership was properly documented; for that reason, I have not pressed application for my membership in the present national Huguenot Society. I do believe that the time is near when those doors will be opened by the presentation of unquestionable evidence - but I don't want to try and be turned down.

*E. M. Elliott*

It may be presumptuous, but I am inclosing one of the 'worksheets' that I use as I search through the families. You probably have something that is satisfactory for you; I would only suggest that you make sure that you have notations regarding the sources of all of your information; most of the time, we can collect conflicting data about almost every individual, it is then that the source of each piece of information becomes important in helping to determine the accuracy of each part. On the reverse of the sheet, I have made notes that can be used to amplify the 'story' of the individual and help to have them become real persons for those of their descendants who are interested enough to read about them.

There is much help, and an excellent bibliography, in Doane's Searching for Your Ancestors, published by the University of Minnesota Press. He is properly specific in the chapter on "How to Arrange a Genealogy,"<sup>20</sup> that I try to follow exactly the order and information that he says is necessary.

As I reread the first page of this letter, I am afraid that I may have created the impression that I was taking upon myself this responsibility of producing a Caviness Genealogy complete. This I would not wish to do, for my plans are to assemble as accurately as possible, all of the information that I can, and then leave it to each line of the family to add to it as much as they wished to do. My plans include using good rag paper of typing size, assembled in a three-hole folder, and with a cataloguing system so arranged that the numbering will not be interrupted as new members are added in each generation.

If there is anything that I can do to be helpful in your work, please feel free to ask, and I will surely appreciate the help that you can give me in checking the accuracy of the data that I have about the Kirby part of the family. Do you have any large amount of information about him?

Hoping to hear from you again,  
I am sincerely,

*Alloa C. Anderson*

(Mrs. Leigh C. Anderson)

If all information is from  
one source, use this

born at \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_

ref. \_\_\_\_\_

Died at \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_

ref. \_\_\_\_\_

Married at \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_

ref. \_\_\_\_\_

Names

born of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

ref. \_\_\_\_\_

Born at \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_

ref. \_\_\_\_\_

Died at \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_

ref. \_\_\_\_\_

Family residence \_\_\_\_\_

ref. \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation \_\_\_\_\_ ref. \_\_\_\_\_

Children born where died where

ref. if all info. on children is  
from one source, use this

TO

Mrs. L. C. ...  
1120 Lincoln  
Ann Arbor, Michigan

3119 Vilura Pkwy.  
Des Moines, Iowa 50310  
April 8, 1965

Dear Mrs. Anderson,

I am attempting to compile information on my family genealogy to write our family history and am very much interested in obtaining additional information on the Caviness branch. Gladys Merritt Halden gave my Mother, Mrs. Mark Elliott, your name and address and suggested I contact you. She said you were related to Leon Caviness who was writing the family history.

I do not know who you or Leon are but presume we are relatives. My Great Great Grandfather was Kirby Caviness who resided a fair portion of his life in Jefferson Co., Iowa. One of my Great Grandmothers was his daughter Rachel who married Hosea Long. About the only information I have on the Caviness family is what I have found while digging through Iowa census records of 1856, '60, & '70, which give property owned, state of birth, occupation, names, of members of the household and age in years. Besides biographical information on them. In going through the census records looking for Kirby, I discovered an Alfred Caviness living close by that also came from North Carolina and three years younger than Kirby. Alfred had a 70 year old lady by the name of Rachel Osburn or Osborn that I imagine was his mother in law. As Kirby's wife was Esther Osborn and they named their first daughter Rachel, I am wondering if Alfred and Kirby married sisters, and the two men are brothers.

I will appreciate very much if you can assist me with additional information. I also will be glad to exchange any information with you that I might dig up on the family.

Sincerely,  
*Loren S. Elliott*  
Loren S. Elliott