

Washington, D.C.  
Dec. 4, 1934.

To  
Helen Vaughan Eller.  
Donald Temple Eller.  
Temple Lawrence Eller.

There is coming a time when you are going to want to know something about your ancestors.

I have prepared this family history, altho far from complete, still will give you some idea of those from whom you descend.

Your ancestors on my fathers' side trace back to the early pioneer days of Kentucky, Indiana and Virginia from a direct German ancestry. My Great grandfather Eller came to America with the Hessians during the Revolution to fight the colonies but refused to fight and took up arms against the British. The name Eller is not an extraction and there are families in Germany today of the same name.

Your ancestors on my mothers side were Dutch. They settled in New York and the name Hager is well established in and around Schenectady and closely connected by marriage with the Westinghouse and Moore families of that neighborhood.

Thru your mother you inherit the real blue blood of Virginia and the true southern aristocracy.

The Temples of Knoxville, Tenn. and the Vaughans of Greenville, Tenn. both first families of Virginia, pass on to you the sterling qualities of their earlier English ancestry. Thru the Temple family the line has been traced definitely to the Revolution and you are truly sons and daughter of the American Revolution.

If you ever wish to establish yourselves as such you will find the information at the Congressional Library and D.A.R. Headquarters in Washington, D.C. furnished by Miss Mary Temple, your mothers second cousin, who was a member and leader for many years in Washington.

We can not leave you any money but thru us you are endowed with a wealth which even money can not buy. With this endowment you should be able to "Carry On" and pass to your children a true and tried heritage of a noble ancestry.

The attached maps will give you details which I shall not try to cover by this writing but will confine myself to facts which should be of a more personal interest to you.

According to information in hand at present time your great grand-father Henry Eller was born in Kentucky. He married Elizabeth Schreve from Virginia. Sometime prior to 1846 he moved to Indiana where your grandfather, James William Eller, my father, was born at Kenton, May 29, 1846. At the age of 18 years my father joined the 10th Indiana Volunteer Cavalry, Troup I, Nov. 26, 1863, as a private, and served until Aug. 31, 1865, receiving his discharge at Bloomington, Ind. See Pension Claim S.C. 509509 Veterans Bureau, Wash. D.C.

After graduating in Law from the University of Indiana at Bloomington he went to Nebraska to practice and settled at Fairmont where he married Frances Hager from Exeter, Nebr. about 1874. To them was born ten children. The first two, a boy and a girl died in infancy. Donald the eighth child died at the age of 12 years at Omaha, Nebr. about 1903. I was the fifth child. There are seven of us living at present time. Harley M. Somewhere in the far west. Leone, Frances, Ida and Mildred in Omaha, Nebr. Bayard in Chicago, Ill.

In 1885 the family moved to Omaha where <sup>my father</sup> the practice of law was continued. Retired 1905 and took up homestead near Tryon, Nebr. where he died Sept 1, 1923 at age of 77 years.

My mother, Frances Hager Eller, died Dec 25, 1898. The dead are all burried at Exeter, Nebr.

Your Uncle Harley, my oldest brother, graduated from the Omaha High school, having studied subjects which would qualify him for a position with the Westing house Electrical Company which he did not accept. Shortly after my mothers death he decided to go west. He was given a ticket to Butte, Mont. and some cash and started on his own. From Butte he went to Seattle, Washington. From there he shipped to Limerick, Ireland on a four masted schooner and made several trips up the Medeteranian Sea and returned to Washington, D.C. where he met and married Edith Cook from Boston, Mass. They lived in Boston and raised a large family. Separated late in life and is now living somewhere in the west, Colorado or Wyoming. His wife and family are living in Boston at present.

Your Aunt Leone, my oldest sister, graduated from the Omaha High School in the same class with Harley. She went to Teachers Normal and afterward received an appointment as teacher in the public school of Omaha. She rated Model Teacher for her grades. Spent a year teaching in Hawaii having been selected from a list of several hundred other other applicants on account of her record. She has traveled extensively in Europe and United States and is at present time teaching in the Omaha schools. She never married.

Your Dad comes next. I was born at Fairmont, Nebr. Sept 28, 1881, and was four or five years old when we moved to Omaha. We lived for a short time in what was known as the Burke House on Cummings St. Moved into our own new home at 923 Sp. 40th St where the family remained until 1905. Like all the rest of the children I went to the West Omaha graded school in the neighborhood and afterward to the High School which was in the heart of the city, four miles from our home. We always walked winter and summer. While attending high school I worked in my fathers law office after school and on Saturdays.

In the spring of 1899 I did my first real work for money. I was one of ten men on a surveying party. We went from Omaha to Pierre, South Dakota. From there we traveled seventy five miles by wagon to the Cheyenne Indian Reservation where our work started. We surveyed over the Cheyenne and Standing Rock Reservations for six months. Lived in tents the whole time and were from seventy five to one hundred and fifty miles from a railroad. We had some very exciting times with wild cattle and horses. While the Indians were well under control, Jack, my buddy, and I came near losing our scalps one day when we robbed an Indian grave. We returned to Omaha in the late fall of the same year.

In June of the following year I left school just before graduation to accept a position as clerk in the U.S. Census Bureau at Washington D.C. having received the appointment thru Dave Mercer, the then U.S. Congressman from Omaha. The government job was accepted in preference to an appointment to the Naval Academy. It was at the Census Office that I met your mother who at that time was living with her mother and sister, Nellie, at 1323 Q st N.W. After leaving the Census Bureau I worked at the Capitol for a short time and then went to Philadelphia to work as electrician with Brother Harley who was living there with his wife.

Shortly after this I sent for your mother and we were married at Philadelphia where we lived for a little more than a year. Helen was born in Philadelphia. We returned to Washington and for the most part lived at 70 V St N.W. with the Wadsworths. Donald was born at Sibley Memorial Hospital June 28 1906.

In 1909 I secured a position as salesman with the National Biscuit Company. Was transferred to Hagerstown, Md. as Sales Manager in 1911 where we lived for about a year. Temple was born at the Hagerstown Hospital, Oct 12 1912. We then moved to Norfolk, Va. as I had been promoted to Sales Manager of the Norfolk Branch of the National Biscuit Company. While living in Norfolk I was quite active in Boy Scout work and had a Troup at the Park Place Baptist Church where I was also a member.

In 1917 I was sent to Petersburg Va. and took charge of the National Biscuit Company Branch in November of the same year. The family followed me in the spring of 1918. Shortly after this time we bot a nice little home at 310 Glenweed Court which of course all you children well remember.

During the time we lived at Petersburg I was much interested in politics and civic activities. We joined the First Baptist Church. I was a member of the Seward Mens Bible Class and President and took an active part in all church matter. I was President of the Y.M.C.A. member of the Young Business Mens Club, Kiwanis Club, Chamber of Commerce. Conducted campaigns for all the civic organizations and was Managing Director of the Community Chest and President of the Chamber of Commerce.

About 1924 I resigned from the National Biscuit Company to become Manager of the Morris Plan Bank where I remained about two years and then went with the Virginia National Bank for several years.

After that time you will recall the changes which have been made and in Sept 1931 I took active charge of the Jennings Estate, a suit which had been instituted by A.L. Jordan, Atty, Norfolk Va. which was tried in London, England and decided against us in Jan 1932. In Feb. 1932 we moved to Washington and you know the rest.

Your Aunt Frances, my sister just younger than I, went to Teachers Normal School in Nebraska and was appointed as teacher in the Public Schools of Omaha. She became a model teacher and raised very high. She married a man named Crawford and had one son Jack, who is now attending Northwestern University, Chicago. Your Aunt Frances is teaching in Omaha at present time.

Your Uncle Bayard I know very little about. He married and as far as I know is living happily somewhere in Chicago.

Your Aunt Ida married twice. Both husbands are dead and she is living in Omaha.

Donald my ungest brother, after whom our own Donald is named died at the age of about 12 Years.

Your Aunt Mildred, my baby sister, also taught in the Omaha School and married a man by name Eddy or Eddie. They have several children and are living in Omaha.

Your mothers sister Nellie married William E Broders of Franconia, Va. Of course you know this but as a matter of record will say that they had three children. Evelyn., Dorothy and a boy who died. Dorothy married Sam Lawhorn and Evelyn is single.

At this writing Aunt Nellie and Uncle Billy are still living at Franconia.

So-- OO--OOO this ends the little family history to which some day you may rewrite and add to according to travels thru life.

I am having a genealogical map of the family prepared which some day I will present to each of you. As a matter of record and in event that I should never complete these maps you can get the whol history of my side of the family from a cousin of mine, Miss Roxy Ammerman, York, Nebraska. who proves back to the Revolution and also the War of 1812.

Therefore on both sides of the family you are entitled to membership in the D.A.R. and S.A.R.

Take good care of this record as I may never have energy to write it over and I have not made a copy for myself.

Editors Note: July 14, 2018 by Harvey W. Powers

This letter was written in 1934 to my mother, Helen, and her two brothers by their father Wayne McVeigh Eller. I have been told of it's existence but could not locate a copy until 2018 when I made contact with Steven Stacey Sweet (davisweets@msn.com) thru Ancestry.com. Mr. Sweet is the Great-Grandson of Wayne Eller's brother, Harley. He had a copy and made it available to me. I was able to clean it up a bit (the copy he had was a negative image) and produce this document.