

# THE HOMESTEAD FAMILY

## GAZETTE

Vol. XVI, No. 5 (XVIII/1)

JAMES MILLIKIN HOMESTEAD, INC., DECATUR, ILLINOIS

August 1993

### History — Anna's Ancestors Face Hardships

White, Pettyjohn, Little and Corey: Who are they? The names may not be familiar, but they represent six generations of Anna Millikin's ancestors. The families came together in one descendant, Betsey Corey, Anna's grandmother. Betsey married Henry Bartlett in Pennsylvania in 1792, and one of their children was Hettie (Bartlett) Aston, Anna's mother.

The Bartletts have previously been outlined in detail. Now there is time to tell the story of the inter-connected families. None of the four can be traced back for more than a few generations, but, starting with the Whites, the interwoven line goes into the mid-1600's. It seems likely, if records were found, the trail of all would lead ultimately to the British Isles and probably bespeak a Scotch-Irish ancestry. Information that is available concerning the families comes from the Bartlett family history, *Dawes-Gates Ancestral Lines, Vol. II*, compiled by Anna's cousin, Betsey (Shipman) Gates, with the aid of a professional genealogist.

First known of the combined line is Robert White, found as one of the 80 "Associates" of the town of Elizabeth, N.J., where he took part in its development in 1664. The Associates were a group from Long Island and Connecticut who obtained an immense tract of New Jersey land, 500,000 acres, partly through a grant from the governor, and partly through purchase from the Indians. To the Indians, the Associates paid "20 fathoms of trading cloth, two made coats, two guns, two ket-

bles, ten bars of lead, 20 handfuls of powder, 400 fathoms of white wampum."

The grant was made under the authority of the Duke of York who later reneged and refused to recognize the action of the governor on his behalf. The Associates then had to deal with a new governor and another group given land rights, the Proprietors of New Jersey. The settlers never knew if and when their land would be taken from them, what they would be taxed, nor what would constitute their next form of government. The land even switched back and forth between Dutch and English rule. In their second winter the settlers faced extremes of cold and snow. Two autumns took a toll in fatal illnesses, and in 1674-5 the group bordered on famine, with the export of corn and grain prohibited.

Details of the life of Robert White are scarce. His birthdate is unknown. He probably married as early as 1655 Agatha (surname unknown). He is believed to have died 1684-5. He had a house lot of eight acres at Elizabeth and probably owned several hundred acres more. He and Agatha had five known children, all born before the family came to Elizabeth. Their daughter, Mary, was born probably 1660-2 and died in 1715. She married in 1680 John Little, whose house lot adjoined her father's.

The first record for John Little is at Elizabeth in 1667. He was a carpenter and seems to have been a successful businessman who held many tracts of

land. He had at least one apprentice. This man ran away and John solicited of the Secretary of New Jersey a "hue and cry" to get him back. "Hue and cry" was not just a turn-of-phrase but an English legal procedure dating at least to the Middle Ages which instigated a search and advertisement for the run-away.

John's seven known children were all born at Elizabeth. His will was probated in 1713, and wife Mary survived him by only two years. Their second son was Anthony, born about 1685 and died at Elizabeth between 1731-4. He shared in land which accrued to his father by later division of the original Elizabeth tract. Anthony married, first, Elizabeth (surname unknown), by 1707, and secondly, Mary (perhaps Ladner), probably by 1709. Anthony and his second wife had nine children, all born at Elizabeth, seven of whom had names beginning with the letter "A".

One of these was Absalom, born by 1710, and died ca. 1785. He married about 1745 Esther Pettyjohn of Sussex Co., Del. It is said that there were more intermarriages between the Little and Pettyjohn families than was even common in those early days. Absalom was a millwright and lived near Elizabeth. About 1744 he moved to Sussex Co., Del., and after 1768, to Fayette Co., Pa. Absalom acquired Pennsylvania land by grant from the state. Members of the Little and Pettyjohn families are believed to have traveled to Pennsylvania together, possibly accompanied by the Coreys.

The hardships the families faced in the new country again were many. Only the barest of necessities could be brought on the long trip over the mountains. Unlike New Jersey, in southwestern Pennsylvania Indians were a constant threat, and the residents of that area were taxed by both Virginia and their own state until a boundary dispute could be settled. Virginia then included West Virginia. Facilities such as mills or court houses were often many miles away. Distance was sometimes reckoned in the number of mountains between locations.

The Littles settled on Dunlap's Creek and attended the Dunlap's Creek (Presbyterian) Church, which stood on a hillside slightly west of Merrittstown. Absalom held a home tract of 300 acres, titled on an old map, "Absalom's Oak." In 1776 he moved to Marion Co., Va. Absalom and his wife had ten children, the eldest of whom was Betsey.

Absalom's wife, Esther Pettyjohn, was born probably in 1720 and died ca. 1805. She was the daughter of William Pettyjohn of Sussex Co., Del. To follow the Pettyjohn family we now trace backward instead of forward.

William Pettyjohn was born probably in 1691 in either Virginia or Delaware. He died in Sussex Co., Del., in 1749. His wife's name is uncertain, but there was a tradition in the family that he married an Elizabeth Claypoole, related to Oliver Cromwell through the marriage of Cromwell's favorite daughter Elizabeth to a John Claypoole of England. A brother of John's came to America and became a neighbor of the Pettyjohn family. He had a daughter Elizabeth of the right age to marry William, but no record of the marriage has been found. It was supposed that from the Claypoole family came the name "Betty" or "Betsey" so often used among William's descendants.

William dealt heavily in land. An interesting comparison between land and cattle values is seen when a relative of his traded 340 acres of land for two cows and their calves. William and his wife had six known children, all born in Delaware. The family lived on a 200-acre plantation called "Whatsons" and were slave-owners. In his will William called himself a "yeoman". His wife probably died before him.

William was the third son of John Pettyjohn, who was born ca. 1658-62 in Hungar's Parish, Northampton Co., Va., and died in 1733 in Sussex Co., Del. John married ca. 1685, but his wife's name is unknown. About 1691 John's was among six to ten families who left Virginia for Delaware where they received land from the Pennsylvania Proprietors. The land, however, was also claimed by Maryland, which harrassed the settlers for payment of taxes. On one occasion, a neighbor of John's was carried off to jail, and John himself had cattle taken away until he paid.

John had settled at Broadkill Hundred in the Sussex Co. forest. His family attended the Church of St. John the Baptist. John held considerable land and also described himself as a "yeoman" in his will. His wife's death probably took place before his. They had seven children.

John is believed to have been the son of James Pettyjohn of Hungar's Parish. The only record for James shows the baptism of a daughter in 1660. John referred to his parents in a deposition, regarding a boundry dispute between Delaware and Maryland, in which he testified to his birth in the Colony of Virginia but said he had been taken by his parents to Delaware when two years old. With this information, the story of the Pettyjohns come to a close.

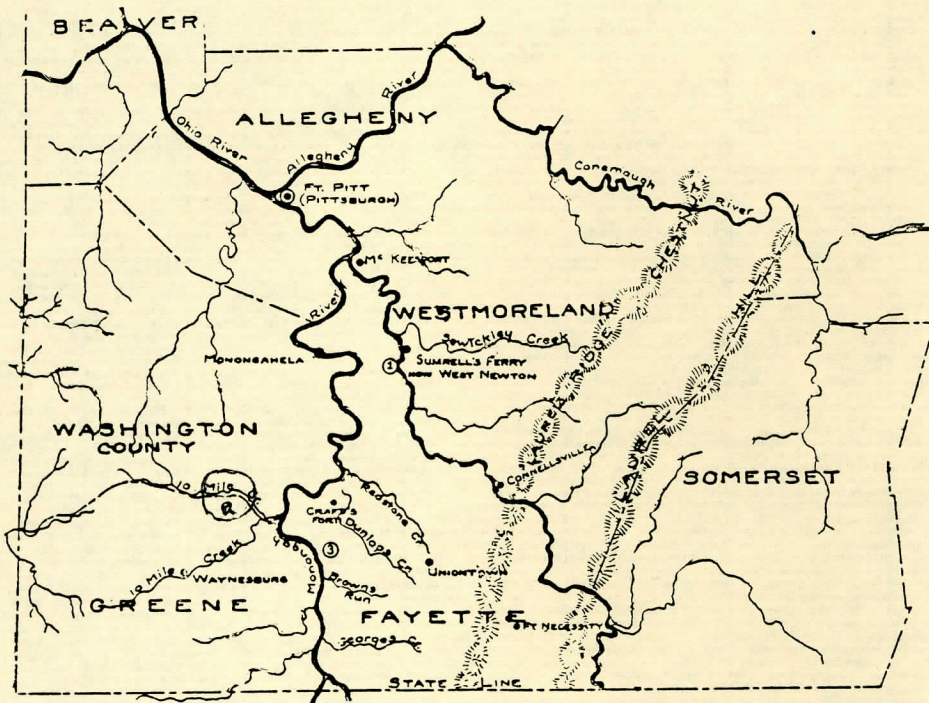
To move forward again, we take up the last of the four families, the Coreys. John Corey is discovered for the first time in Springhill Township, Fayette Co., Pa., and is little later, at the Dunlap Creek Settlement where the Littles also dwelt. Betsey Little became his wife ca. 1765-70. Littles, Pettyjohns and Coreys were all found in Pennsylvania by 1772, living among Scotch-Irish settlers.

John Corey seldom appears in land or business records. His family affiliated with the Dunlap Creek Church, also the church of the Littles, and is said to have been very religious. A descendant also said she had always been told the Coreys were a handsome family.

John Corey was born ca. 1740, and no record of him is found after 1775. He apparently died young, leaving wife Betsey with six small children. There is evidence of a first marriage for John to a Johanna Hand at Cape May, N.J., in 1762. He married Betsey between 1765-70. After his death, she married Roger Roberts and had one more child.

Among the children of John and Betsey (Little) Corey was daughter Betsey, who married Henry Bartlett of Merrittstown, Pa., a native of Massachusetts. With this marriage the tale of the four families comes full circle. Betsey and husband Henry, and, in fact, all the children of the Coreys moved after 1795 to Ohio, where life is said to have taken at last a gentler turn for Anna Millikin's White-Little-Pettyjohn-Corey line.

— Marilyn Loofburrow  
Historian



COUNTIES OF SOUTHWESTERN PENNSYLVANIA  
BARTLETT, COREY, LITTLE

1. Anna Millikin's grandfather, Henry Bartlett, came from Sumrell's Ferry, Westmoreland Co.
2. The Millikin family home, where James grew up, was near the upper branch of Ten Mile Creek in Washington Co., northwest of Waynesburg.
3. Anna's ancestors, the Coreys and Littles, settled near Dunlap's Creek, Fayette County. Betsey Little married John Corey. Their daughter Betsey married Henry Bartlett to become Anna's grandmother. Anna and James Millikin would not meet, however, until each had come to Illinois.



## Homestead Represented at Tabletops

The Homestead was beautifully represented at the 1993 Tabletops Benefit, by a Victorian Hunt Breakfast table setting. Board members, Joanna Ploeger-Tsoulos and Betty Ploeger designed and executed the table setting which consisted of antique Royal Doulton hunt plates, pewter serving pieces and flatware and an-

tique silver goblets. The floral centerpiece was a spring bouquet of daffodils, pussy willows and other naturals. The setting was displayed on a dark green cloth edged in dark green silk roping, which was over a floor length cloth of contrasting fabric. We thank Joanna and Betty for their fine efforts.



## Mr. and Mrs. Millikin Days at the Homestead

It has become a tradition for the Homestead to offer Mr. and Mrs. Millikin Days to the third graders of the Decatur schools. This program was started in the late 1970s by Adele Glenn who was a board member at that time. Adele is (and always has been) an advocate for children's developmental enrichment and creating this program must have been "natural" to her.

What is the program? Once a year, traditionally in spring, the Homestead invites all third graders of our area to come and visit the Millikins at the Homestead. With the help of Mrs. Eve Shade at the Keil building, letters of invitation are sent out, and the individual school classes are scheduled to come to the Homestead for a half hour visit. Homestead volunteers dress up in period clothing and enact the lifestyle of the late 1880s. The children meet the Millikins and their staff; they listen to their stories, ask questions; they

sing old fashioned songs accompanied by a pump organ; they are "appalled" at the lack of modern household machines (no electrical gadgets), and finally they are sent off with a cookie from the kitchen maid. Depending on the schedule, this half hour "show" is repeated 5-9 times daily for 4 days. Is it fun? You bet! Is it exhausting? You bet! Is it a rewarding experience for the volunteers? All those smiling and intrigued little faces are worth it.

This year 41 volunteers helped make this program a success once again. Nearly all children wrote thank-you letters to Mrs. Millikin, and it was very difficult to select three winning letters. Those three children, their families and teachers, are invited back to the Homestead in early June and book awards were presented to them. The winners were:

Jodie Marshall — Dennis School

Sara Jones — French Academy

Amy Taylor — Parsons School

## Passport Program Includes Homestead

The James Millikin Homestead is one of ten area museums and attractions participating in the new Summer Passport program for children sponsored by the Heritage Network of Decatur and Macon County.

In the program libraries distributed the passports to children to encourage them to visit the listed sites over the summer. On August 8 the passports were scheduled to be returned in exchange for invitations to an August 15 ice cream social at

the Macon County Historical Society, where certificates and prizes are to be awarded.

Other participating sites were: Birks Museum of Millikin University, Children's Museum of Illinois, Gov. Ogelsby Mansion, Monticello Railway Museum, Moweaqua Cole Mine Museum, Lincoln Square Theatre, Macon County Corviation District, Macon County Historical Society Museum and Scovill Children's Zoo.



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## Homestead Subject of History Fair Display

Julie Holthaus of Decatur chose the Millikin Homestead as the subject of her History Fair display. She earned a superior rating at Holy Family School which entitled her to move on to the Regional Competition at Eastern Illinois University where she earned a Superior ribbon. The superior rating opened the door to the State History Fair held in Springfield at the Prairie Convention Center. Once again Julie earned an Excellent ribbon competing against many, many entries.

Julie's display consisted of a display of photographs and articles on the Homestead and a scale model of the Homestead. In addition to her research, Julie spent a great deal of time with Dorothy Smethers who was of great assistance to Julie. Julie and her display were present at the last board meeting where the board members had the pleasure of meeting Julie and her father and seeing the display.

