

5100 Asterwood Road,
Knoxville, Tenn. 37918
Sept. 23, 1965

Dear Mr. Iadson:

After hesitating whether this was 1965 or 67-I don't know if I should try to continue this letter, for I want to be my brightest, and heaven knows that that date indicates! Nevertheless, unless I do begin making firm plans, the time for departure will be upon me, and I can take my choice of going unprepared, or waiting another year- and I know which that would be. The truth is I have been waiting to see what will prevent our going- rather than happily thinking positive thoughts!

I don't know where our correspondence picks up. I had a letter from you- no, a phone call after you got so disgusted with Mr. Tengue. At that time you told me you had made an arrangement to send what information you got from him to Mrs. Norton, and she had a friend, of the same line, who would type all of us copies of what he sent. Well, it did not work out that way. Mrs. Norton's daughter, my friend Ginny Black, had photostats made of his letter and the information he sent you at the time I talked to you on the phone. This is the last Norton material I saw. I was particularly interested in deciphering John Norton's will- the one I sent you an abstract of from my Northampton notes. I have improved tremendously in reading early English writing. I have lately done two 1630-1632 wills and in one came out with two blanks and the other only one word- I think correctly deciphered, but I do not understand the sense of it. At any rate, I feel quite cocky- which I definitely did not in London! So in case you think I have got more material and not written you- this is not so!

Ginny gives me very sad reports of her mother. But you know, I get so provoked with people who think they are doing the best thing for their loved ones when they disrupt their lives and tear out their roots and then are disappointed when said person shows signs of not appreciating and understanding the way of life prescribed for them. Being now 61, I can feel the breath on my neck- surely we will come to the place where it will seem foolish for us to have this big old house... and perhaps we too will be relegated to a "REST HOME" or apartment to wait to die. Damn! Anyway, Ginny thinks "Gram" is senile, though she admits Gram's friends do not, the idea is that they are all doddering together. Since I do not know Mrs. Norton, I may be the dodderer but I feel sad for her, and for all the 65 years of accumulated junk (to her children) swept out regardless of her tears. Ginny said she kept telling them it is history you are destroying- but they burned tons of letters, which may or may not have been of value in America. Ginny herself is preparing to destroy everything she does not need, for of her two children, neither is stationary, nor sentimental, and she and her husband, Claude Black, are going to Washington, D.C. to live in a condominium house in that new slum clearance project along the river. As soon as they sell their two houses here (one is a lovely weekend retreat on Clinch Mt. on which Claude has spent much of his time for the past ten years- he is not only a retired Army man but also a landscape architect. Ginny says they will have a postage stamp party here and aft, and he has already planned every item to go in them. Imagine cutting my garden down to that! It is a cinch it would be a landscape architect's nightmare, for I'd have to have some of so many plants They can't leave here till they sell these places.)

Well, that's beside the point. We will miss them both for us, like them.

Maybe you can give me some advice, along with information. In one of your letters you referred to having a correspondent in Barbados

Sorry-didn't know I was at the bottom of the page, but guess you can read that line.

in whom you had confidence. I would like her (?) address. And I would also like any clues you have from her on Norton or other lines. We are pretty definitely going to Bermuda early in November; and if I can work it out, we will Island Hop to several West Indian islands-Barbados, Nevis and St. Kitts particularly. I have been corresponding with several people on Bermuda for two years, and have good clues there to a number of Jack's families. I don't know why I don't get the same for my Davant ancestry. I think I just might find my White line-my grandfather Davant's mother was a White from Philadelphia; and a long time ago, in conversation with an old genealogist who had worked this line, she told me she found they came from the islands-if she was more definite, I do not remember, but have always had that piece of information tucked in my mind, and that one could find all about White and Hellinshead in the Penn. Gen. Sec. in Phila. Mrs. Headman. I couldn't think of her name. I thought she was the stupidest person I ever knew for she completely negated all S.C. records, and refused to let me (or someone who knew S.C. records) act for her. She said she would tell anyone who wanted S.C. ancestry, to forget it; the records were impossible. I remember how furious she was because the records were closed from 2-3 for lunch, and she had to climb the steps twice. She lived in Knoxville and I met her here a few times, and since her death I've tried several times to see her notes, but perhaps she only kept her Tennessee notes. She did offer me my information once for \$100; but that was when I would have been hard put to find ten; and even now wouldn't spend 100 on someone else's information.

Staring me in the eye Barbados and St. Kitts. I know better. I have a half contact on St. Kitts. For all the years we've lived here I know, and loved a bright, saucy old lady who was from there. She died this past spring, but her daughter told me there was a niece living there, when they met on a trip a few years ago. I am going to write her and see if she can tell me what records there are available. I think Bermuda is the logical starting place; though I know more Barbadian lines. I have just finished reading Dr. Wilkenson's "The Bermuda Adventurers" and one thing, among a number, which I digested, was the closeness not only with the West Indies, but especially with New England and Virginia. The book closes, soon after the contact with South Carolina opens. It took me a long time to read, but I thoroughly enjoyed it and get some material on John Semersall from it-and if my hunches prove out-three other lines from Semersall. I had a little correspondence with Dr. W. soon after I came to Knoxville-he wanted me to work on Chief Justice Trett, and I recommended Sally Trett to do the work. I've also read Wm. Zuill's Guide to Bermuda and Mrs. Tucker's History of Bermuda. Mr. Zuill is a descendant of John Semersall. He lives in the original grant to Semersall, and part of his house is the original house. So there I will see one origin. He sent me a lot of material-rather Mrs. Tucker did.

Let me go back a little, and leave this trip idea. I don't think I have written you since Jack was so ill, but perhaps the indefatigable Emmott did mention it to you. (Another child, and what a name!) Three days before he was to retire, the end of December, Jack was taken desperately sick with a grand combination-I've happily about forgotten this time, but seems to me the diagnosis was pulmonary edema complicated by emphysema, coronary failure, and finally pneumonia. You see I forget one, but I'd really like to forget all. It was nip and tuck for awhile, but he has made a fine recovery. If it were not for the retirement, I think he would be remarkably well, but he does get terribly bored, and the chores I think up for him are seldom to his liking. At the moment we are embarked on one of his chagins-we are scraping the porch (not having painted it for 2 years) and fortunately before this rain began we had primed the scraped areas on the biggest area-the front porch is at least 12' x 20'-maybe considerably more, then it narrows in front of the dining room and the other side is about 8' x 30'. So you see, Jack is remarkably able. Nevertheless, this about had us both peeped. I am a good painter, and that part I look forward to. But scraping involves use of my hands, and gripping is murder for my arthritis-and so also is standing in an u to scrape or paint, for I have a very bad knee. Considering our disabilities, if we finish our little chore, I shall think we are doing pretty well.

So, you can see, we may or may not complete our plans for this trip. I think it has advantages, in change of scene and new contacts. There is one other thing- we have a young dog, he will be about 6 months when we leave. I dread putting him in a kennel. He's such a gay, dashing young blade, I knew he would hate the confinement. We lost our dear Little Jee. He went out one night at 2 AM and never returned. I all but went nuts imagining what might have happened to this pet. One thing is for sure he would have returned had he been able. After six weeks, we went to the Shelter and brought home Cergi. Not that he in any way resembles a Cergi; but because Jack liked that breed, as we saw dogs in England, and said his next dog would be a cergi. Not in name only. His mother was a small nondescript, long haired dog, but Cergi is already 30 pounds, and has a sleek, shining black coat, with tan and white markings. Where Jack had no identifying marks, just a tan dog with beautiful eyes, Cergi is very nicely marked, but what breed he most resembles is not so clear. Even for a hound, he is built large. Mr. Seater at first thought he was mest beagle, but I never thought this. He's just a galloping gallumpus, and I hate to leave him, even with Dinah Mite, who is my daughter's staid-maiden-beaglash-dog. We are a family to whom the comfort of our dogs is important. Of course we have a son who lives a couple of blocks from here- they have their own dog and I don't know that Cergi wouldn't be better off in a kennel with Dinah. Then I wouldn't feel worried over how they behaved! It is like leaving a child who is too young to understand you will be back. If Mary were here nights it would be different- Little Jee and Dinah survived our trip to England alright, with some attention from the neighbours and Mary here at night- and he went over every day and stayed at my son's part of the day- he was elder than Cergi, too. But Mary wants to go a long- has saved her vacation to go.

I think we are in for a change of weather. It has been very hot for ever a week. About all we get of Betsy was one good, solid rain, which was much needed. In desperation (the only way I ever water) I watered all the flower beds yesterday. This takes about 2-2½ hours steady standing, and I leathe the job. We have had two heavy showers, and it is markedly cooler, and still heavy clouds. I am sure the garden will prosper, and it will help the chrysanthemums- a few big marigolds fare about all else to say.

I must close and start dinner. I should tell you that although I remember telling you I would contact Stanyarne Stevens, I have never done so. We were in Charlestown for a week in February and I hoped to see him then, but Jack showed no inclination to go (Stiek has been in precarious health for several years, and it always depresses Jack to see the old friends he has not seen in many years. They do look pitiful! Ed Perry was dying of cancer, and one of our very good friends of long age- but Jack never found time to stop by the hospital, though we passed it daily. Well, I should say, he not only had just get well himself, and still pretty weak, and this spring we had 6 or 8 friends who died- I know for three Mondays in a row we went to funerals. This makes it hard. I knew I should do it. I did leave a copy with Billy Carter, of the notes I made in England, but whether he delivered them or not, I knew not! I mean for Stiek.

I hope great things have happened in Northampton since I last heard from you. Perhaps there would be some sale of land- something to indicate leaving the country. but apparently young men did not own property at this period. No wonder they loved the colonies! Land. Of their very own!

And so, farewell!

Sincerely,