

CHAPTER ELEVEN – VIRGINIA LEE MCGEE FAMILY

Generation No. 3

1. VIRGINIA LEE³ MCGEE (*JOHN SIMPSON², JOHN¹*) was born July 20, 1864 in Bexar County, Texas, and died May 09, 1916 in Erie, Erie County, Pennsylvania. She married **HENRY BASCUM "DOC" GRITTON** in 1884 at Horse Cave, Hart County, Kentucky, son of ROWAN GRITTON and NANCY EVANS. He was born December 1845 in Mercer County, Kentucky, and died May 11, 1928 in Laurens County, South Carolina.

Notes for VIRGINIA LEE MCGEE:

Virginia Lee McGee, called "Virgie" by friends and family, was the thirteenth and youngest child of John S. and Ann McGee. She was born in Bexar County, Texas and was only two years old when her family returned to Kentucky in 1866 after the Civil War. She grew up in Hart County, Kentucky and later attended Logan Female College in Russellville, Kentucky, where she studied nursing and medicine. In 1884, she married Henry Bascum Gritton, a veterinarian from Mercer County, Kentucky, who was twenty years her senior. Virginia's mother, Ann (Hawkins) McGee, came from Mercer County, and it is thought that Virgie became acquainted with "Doc" Gritton during one of her visits to see her Hawkins relatives. In 1889, Doc and Virgie Gritton moved from Mercer County, Kentucky to the town of Laurens in Laurens County, South Carolina, where Dr. Gritton purchased sixty acres of land from J. F. Rynerson for the sum of \$1266.66. On that property, located on South Street between South Harper and Sullivan Streets, he built their house and adjoining livery stable in June of 1892.

Virginia Lee (McGee) Gritton was a woman known and respected by everyone for her intelligence, charm and her industrious nature. A staunch supporter of women's rights, she believed that given the opportunity, women had the ability to be just as successful as men in the business world, and she worked tirelessly to help women achieve that. For many years she taught a Sunday school class for girls at the Methodist Church in Laurens and was one of the founders of the Wednesday Club, a literary organization in Laurens in which membership was restricted to women who were college graduates. She was also a member of the Pierian Club of Lawrenceburg, Kentucky, a women's organization founded in 1905.

A major turning point in her life occurred in the early 1900's when a fire destroyed the Gritton home in Laurens. The adjoining livery stable was also destroyed including the horses that were boarded there. The family was wiped out financially with no place to turn and little resources to fall back on. At the time of this disaster, Virginia would have been around forty years old, and Doc Gritton about sixty. In addition to losing their house and furniture, Doc Gritton lost his place of business, and although he would continue to practice as a veterinarian and "horse doctor," he never fully recovered from this calamity. According to family oral history, "Papa Doc," as he was affectionately known by his family, felt that he could no longer support his family in the style to which they were accustomed, and he began to drink excessively. Virginia found it necessary to take on the roll of the family bread-winner, this at a time when the general feeling among social circles was that "a woman's place was in the home."

Virginia Gritton was able to find employment as a representative of the Stewart Dry Goods Company of New York City, and in this position she traveled extensively throughout the northeastern U.S. and Canada lecturing on women's health including the superior qualities of Bien-Jolie corsets. Her education in nursing and medicine proved a great asset, and combined with her natural charm and intelligence, she became very successful in this new endeavor. Her lectures for women were extremely popular and were scheduled far in advance of her arrival in a city. It became a common practice for doctors to send their women patients to her for corset fittings. With the income provided from her business career, she was soon able to build a new home for her family to replace the one that burned, and she lived part of the time at her new residence in Laurens and the rest of the time in various hotels in New York and other cities. After her death in 1916, a granddaughter, Frankie (Miller) Lee and her family would live in the same house, located at 616 Chestnut Street for the next fifty plus years.

According to Virgie Gritton's granddaughters, she loved books and music and collected quite an extensive library of both for her new home on Chestnut Street. Until her death in 1916, she would return from each business trip laden with books for every member of the family. The following excerpt comes from an article written by Mary Virginia Hellams Moore for "The Scrapbook," a compilation of historical facts about Laurens County:

"Though the Great Depression of the 1920's had left our family as poor as the proverbial "church mouse," we were blessed with the companionship of many of the best books one could find. We really read those books! Not only our family, but also friends and neighbors. We probably operated one of the first lending libraries around and most of the books were returned because each had neatly pasted on the inside cover this label affixed by Grandmother Gritton: "The wicked borroweth and returneth not again."

In a personal note to the author from Laura Wallace Hellams Culbertson, she told about her grandmother's legacy of books and music:

"For a person who died ten years before I was born, it is remarkable how much she influenced my life. Her collection of phonograph records (which we played on a lovely upright "Victrola") ranged from Caruso to Al Jolson; opera to blues. I learned to appreciate all types of music. The books she brought home from her many trips showed just as wide a variety - Little Women to Tom Sawyer; Robert Burns to Robert Service. I love to read everything as long as it is well written and of value. She influenced our taste and values. Raised on a farm during "the Depression," there was little money for anything other than food and clothing. She enriched our lives in so many ways by her appreciation of literature, beauty and culture. I would feel blessed if anything I left behind when I'm gone would influence anyone as much."

In early 1915, Virginia Gritton traveled on business to Montreal, Canada, and while in that city she made the acquaintance of Margaret Currie, a well known women's columnist on the staff of the Montreal Star. The two women had lunch together, and Virgie must have made quite an impression on the journalist because she later wrote a piece about her for her column in the newspaper. In a personal letter to Virginia, dated March 21, 1915, she included a copy of the article which had been published in the Montreal Star and which is now transcribed below. A copy of her letter to Virginia Gritton can be found on page 18.

THE GOSPEL OF WORK

Last week I met an interesting woman who seemed to me a living exponent of the new feminism, the genuine feminism which believes that life is not all a series of charity bridges, but that it is work, serious and real work,

which will mark the future of women. She carries her gospel into everyday life, too, because she is a grandmother, and every day she does hard and exacting work with an indomitable spirit, an irresistible smile, and a love of her fellow-women which comes from the heart and not just from the lips.

She told me a little about herself, as we sat at luncheon together. She was a trained nurse originally, then she went in for medicine and practiced for some years in both before her marriage. She was happy. She has beautiful children. Life smiled.

Then came the storms. She lost her husband. A fire destroyed all her worldly wealth. Her favorite daughter died. "I was crushed," she said. "My friends watched me because they thought I might commit suicide. Nothing was further from my thoughts. But I just didn't know how I could go on living. It seemed to me I could never be happy again."

"And now?" I queried.

"And now," she said, "I know that every trial, every trouble I have ever had came to me at the right moment. Now I have lived to thank God for every burden, every cross He had made me bear. Now I know that I am part of all that I have been, that I needed every sorrow that I have had. After that fire I thought I would never recover from my financial trouble. I did not know where my next meal would come from. Today, I support four people on my income. I have a beautiful home, and I live again in my children and my grandchildren. Life is, indeed, good.

"I number among my friends some famous women, and I love women. I believe there isn't a thing in the world that a woman can't do. I want to see women filling all the positions possible in business, professions and politics, but I want them most of all to be women, and to be mothers. I believe that every woman who misses motherhood misses the supremest joy in the world. When my son, who is an officer on a battleship, took me up to his captain and said, "Captain, I want you to meet the best little mother in the world," I felt that no queen on her throne ever received a more beautiful crown than that.

"I believe that women should help women. When we see a chance to 'boost some other woman's game,' I believe we should take it. Women need to learn that knocking the other woman in business hurts the knocker as much as the knocked. We should all adopt the motto, 'Don't knock. Boost.' Then we'd be really happy."

And she lives her gospel in that, too. Before she left Montreal, she helped two women to better positions, and she helped many more to a saner, brighter view of life, just by her own sane, bright philosophy of living.

And that's worth while, isn't it?

(Note: When Virginia Gritton was quoted above as saying that she had "lost her husband," she was speaking metaphorically. Doc Gritton outlived her by twelve years even though he was twenty years her senior. According to her granddaughter, Laura Culbertson, "When the stables and horses and house burned, Papa Doc lost the means to support his family as before, and this depressed him greatly. He began to drink, and did so for several years. The "four" she is quoted as supporting would have been herself, her husband, her daughter, Vaughan, and her son, Tom.")

(Note: "Margaret Currie," was a pseudonym for Irene Currie Love, who wrote a popular women's column for many years for the Montreal Star newspaper. Along with several other women journalists, she participated in the founding of the Canadian Women's Press Club in 1904. In 1924, she published "Margaret Currie, Her Book," which was based upon her women's column in the newspaper. She was married to Elfred Archibald of Montreal, Canada.)

The following poem was found written in Virgie Gritton's scrapbook. Although unsigned, it is thought to have been composed by her:

If I can leave behind me, here and there,
A friend or two to say when I am gone
That I had helped to make their pathways fair,
Had brought them smiles when they were bowed with care,
The riches of this world I'll carry on.

If only three or four shall pause to say,
When I have passed beyond this earthly sphere,
That I brought gladness to them on a day
When bitterness was theirs, I'll take away
More riches than a billionaire leaves behind.

Virginia (McGee) Gritton died on May 9, 1916 in Erie, Pennsylvania while in that city on a business trip. She was found dead in her bed at her hotel, and it is believed that she died of a heart attack. She was two months from her 52nd birthday.

MRS. VIRGINIA GRITTON DIED IN ERIE, PENN. (the Laurens Advertiser, Laurens, S. C., May 10, 1916)

Telegram Received Yesterday of her Sudden Death. Body will be Brought Here for Burial.

A telegram was received yesterday by Mrs. Vaughn Miller, from the employers of her mother, Mrs. Virginia Gritton, that Mrs. Gritton had been found dead in her bed at her hotel in Erie, Penn., where she had been engaged for some time demonstrating women's apparel. The telegram was a very brief one, giving merely the fact of her sudden death, so fuller details are lacking, but the presumption is that she died of paralysis of the heart. The news of her death was a great shock to her relatives and many friends in Laurens, which was her home and which she always displayed much interest in. Funeral arrangements have not been perfected, but in all probability she will be buried here either tomorrow or Friday.

Mrs. Gritton is survived by her husband, Dr. H. B. Gritton, a daughter, Mrs. Vaughn Miller, both of this city, and one son, Thomas Lee Gritton, of Boston, Mass. She was born in Texas, her maiden name being Virginia Lee McGee. She was reared in Horse Cave, Ky., and was graduated from Logan Female College. She was married to Dr. Gritton at Horse Cave in 1884 and spent most of her life in Laurens. She was 52 years of age.

Mrs. Gritton was a woman of unusual mental attributes and was an accomplished conversationalist. She was a member of the Wednesday Club, of Laurens, and of the Pierian Club, of Lawrenceburg, Ky., both literary organizations. For many years she taught a class of girls in the Methodist Sunday school here and made many attachments there that she retained throughout her life.

For some years Mrs. Gritton had been traveling for a large manufacturing establishment and was meeting with much success.

MRS. GRITTON BURIED (the Laurens Advertiser, Laurens, S. C., May 17, 1916)

Laid to Rest Friday Evening. Funeral Conducted by Rev. J. R. T. Major

Mrs. Virginia Gritton, wife of Dr. H. B. Gritton, whose death at Erie, Pa., was announced last week, was buried at the Laurens cemetery Friday evening with a large number of people in attendance. The services were conducted by Rev. J. R. T. Major, pastor of the Methodist church. Many beautiful flowers were laid on the grave after the services were ended.

The following gentlemen acted as pall bearers: Active - Reeder Workman, Fowler Childress, Brooks Childress, Edwin Lucas, T. I. Swygert, J. J. Adams, W. R. Richey, Jr., H. L. Moorman, R. H. Eichelberger, John Bolt, Jr., Marvin Wolff, Henry Irby; Honorary - C. W. Tune, Dr. W. D. Ferguson, Dr. W. C. Irby, J. T. Crews, J. Bolt, E. H. Hudgens, W. L. Gray, H. Terry, Aug. Huff, W. A. Watts, Dr. H. K. Aiken, Dr. R. E. Hughes, C. D. Barksdale, J. D. Watts, E. P. Minter, E. H. Wilkes.

More About VIRGINIA LEE MCGEE:

Burial: Laurens City Cemetery, Laurens County, South Carolina

Education: Graduate of Logan Female College, Russellville, Kentucky

Occupation: 1910, Women's Apparel Representative for Stewart's Dry Goods Company

Notes for HENRY BASCUM "DOC" GRITTON:

The 1900 census for Laurens Township, Laurens County, South Carolina lists Henry Gritton, age 45, head of the household, a dealer in horses, his wife, Virginia, age 35, a daughter, Vaughan R., age 15, a daughter, Frank P., age 13, and a son, Thomas L., age 11. The couple had been married for approximately 17 years, and all three of their children were still living.

The 1910 census for Laurens City, Laurens County, South Carolina lists Henry B. Gritton, age 63, head of the household, a surgeon in a veterinarian office, his wife, Virginia, age 45, employed as a commercial traveler in ladies hats, also Charles Miller, age 32, a commercial traveler in groceries, and his wife, Vaughan Miller, age 25.

The 1920 census for Laurens City, Laurens County, South Carolina lists Henry B. Gritton, age 74, head of the household, a widower, retired veterinary surgeon, his daughter, Vaughan Miller, age 34, a widow, employed as a bookkeeper in a grocery store, and his granddaughter, Frankie B. Miller, age 8.

H. B. GRITTON DIES AT HOME OF DAUGHTER (the Laurensville Herald, Laurens, S. C., May 18, 1928.)

H. Bascomb Gritton, 82, died Friday night at the home of his son-in-law and daughter, Mr. and Mrs. B. M. Hellams, three miles from the city on the Laurens-Greenville road. Funeral services were held Saturday, conducted by the Rev. L. P. McGee, and interment was in the Laurens cemetery.

Mr. Gritton was a native of Kentucky and came to Laurens more than forty years ago to engage in the livestock business which he continued for many years. Later he practiced veterinary surgery until failing health caused him to retire from active business. The deceased is survived by two children, Mrs. Hellams and Thomas Gritton, both of Laurens. Mrs. Gritton died several years ago.

More About HENRY BASCUM "DOC" GRITTON:

Burial: Laurens City Cemetery, Laurens County, South Carolina

Occupation: Horse Doctor/Surgeon

Children of VIRGINIA MCGEE and HENRY GRITTON are:

2. i. **REMINTA VAUGHAN⁴ GRITTON**, b. August 15, 1884, state of Kentucky; d. February 1969, Laurens County, South Carolina.
- ii. **FRANKIE BASCUM GRITTON**, b. April 1887, state of Kentucky; d. abt. 1903, Laurens County, South Carolina.

More About FRANKIE BASCUM GRITTON:

Burial: Laurens City Cemetery, Laurens County, South Carolina

Cause of Death: Appendicitis

- iii. **THOMAS LEE GRITTON**, b. May 17, 1889, Salvisa, Mercer County, Kentucky; d. May 30, 1949, New York.

Notes for THOMAS LEE GRITTON:

The 1910 census taken aboard the U. S. Navy ship, U. S. S. Tennessee lists Thomas L. Gritton, age 22, single, a sailor.

"Thomas Lee Gritton, after finishing school in Laurens, attended Annapolis, remaining through football season of his freshman year. During World War I he joined the Army, serving in the famed "Rainbow Division." He later enlisted in the Navy. Upon leaving the Navy he made his home in New York where he remained until his death in 1949." (taken from an article published in "The Scrapbook," a compilation of historical facts about Laurens County, South Carolina.)

THOMAS L. GRITTON FUNERAL RITES ARE HELD TUESDAY (from the Laurens Advertiser, Laurens, S. C., June 9th, 1949)

Funeral services for Thomas Lee Gritton of New York, formerly of Laurens, were held Tuesday morning in the chapel of the Kennedy Mortuary. The Rev. Francis T. Cunningham of the First Methodist church and the Rev. J. E. Rouse of the First Baptist church, conducted the service. Interment was in Forest Lawn cemetery.

Serving as pallbearers were Don Hellams, Sidney Lee, J. W. Moore, Jr., John Gatlin, Lester Epting and Harley Culbertson.

Mr. Gritton died in New York as the result of a railway accident which occurred May 30.

He was born in Kentucky, a son of the late Henry Bascom Gritton and Virginia Lee McGee Gritton. The family later moved to Laurens where they were prominent in civic and social activities.

Mr. Gritton is survived by one sister, Mrs. Vaughn G. Hellams, and several nieces.

More About THOMAS LEE GRITTON:

Burial: Forest Lawn Cemetery, Laurens, South Carolina

Military service: U.S. Army, U.S. Navy

Generation No. 4

2. REMINTA VAUGHAN⁴ GRITTON (*VIRGINIA LEE³ MCGEE, JOHN SIMPSON², JOHN¹*) was born August 15, 1884 in state of Kentucky, and died February 1969 in Laurens County, South Carolina. She married **(1) CHARLES LINDSEY MILLER** in 1906 in Laurens County, South Carolina. He was born abt. 1878 in the state of South Carolina, and died in 1918 in Bennettsville, Marlboro County, South Carolina. She married **(2) BENJAMIN WILLIS HELLAMS** August 20, 1920 prob. in Laurens County, South Carolina, son of JOHN HELLAMS and LAURA WALLACE. He was born December 12, 1880 in Comanche County, Texas, and died November 23, 1946 in Laurens County, South Carolina.

More About REMINTA VAUGHAN GRITTON:

Burial: Forest Lawn Cemetery, Laurens, Laurens County, South Carolina

Occupation: School Teacher at Bennettsville, South Carolina

More About CHARLES LINDSEY MILLER:

Burial: Bennettsville, Marlboro County, South Carolina

Cause of Death: Flu epidemic

Notes for BENJAMIN WILLIS HELLAMS:

Benjamin W. Hellams did not like his first name, which was originally "Martin," and he legally changed it to Benjamin.

The 1930 census for Laurens Township, Laurens County, South Carolina lists Ben W. Hellams, age 48, a farmer, b. in TX; his wife, Vaughan T., age 46; a daughter, Mary V., age 6; a daughter, Laura W., age 4; and a step-daughter, Frankie B. Miller, age 18. All children born in SC.

BEN W. HELLAMS DIED SATURDAY, BURIAL AT DIALS (the Laurens Advertiser, Laurens, S. C., November 28, 1946)

Benjamin Willis Hellams, 65, prominent Laurens County farmer, died at the Laurens hospital Saturday night after a few hours illness and a year of declining health.

Funeral services were held Monday morning in the chapel at Kennedy Mortuary, conducted by the Rev. Francis T. Cunningham, pastor of the First Methodist Church, and the Rev. J. H. Kyzar of the First Baptist Church. Interment was in the Dials Methodist church cemetery.

Serving as active pallbearers were Don Hellams, Fred Owings, David Snipes, Bill Todd, Lester Epting and Teague Hellams.

The escort of honor was composed of H. F. Owings, B. R. T. Todd, C. M. Babb, R. E. Babb, R. A. Babb, Dr. C. P. Vincent, Dr. J. F. Dusenberry, Dr. M. B. Nickles, M. G. Feins, T. M. Watson, W. T. Putman, Steve Saulters, Gene Crutchfield, Tommy Durham, Clarence Raney, G. E. Hensley, R. H. Cooper, R. T. Wilson, Allen Barksdale, F. W. Little, T. J. Lee, J. H. Sullivan, H. S. Blackwell, L. G. Balle, Homer Owings, Floyd Hellams, Boyd Crisp, R. R. Finkbeiner, and L. H. Taylor.

Mr. Hellams was the son of the late John Tyler and Laura Wallace Hellams. He was a member of the First Methodist church, Knights of Pythias and a Mason. For the past three years, he had been associated with the Laurens Hosiery Mill.

Survivors include his wife, Mrs. Vaughn Gritton Hellams, and three daughters, Mrs. Mary H. Moore, Miss Laura W. Hellams and Mrs. Sidney Lee; one brother, M. W. Hellams; and one sister, Miss Martha Hellams. Also three grandchildren.

More About BENJAMIN WILLIS HELLAMS:

Burial: Dials Methodist Church Cemetery, Laurens County, South Carolina

Occupation: Farmer

Child of REMINTA GRITTON and CHARLES MILLER is:

3. i. **FRANKIE BASCUM⁵ MILLER**, b. July 10, 1911, Laurens County, South Carolina.

Children of REMINTA GRITTON and BENJAMIN HELLAMS are:

4. ii. **MARY VIRGINIA⁵ HELLAMS**, b. February 11, 1924, Laurens County, South Carolina; d. June 04, 1995, Laurens County, South Carolina.
5. iii. **LAURA WALLACE HELLAMS**, b. January 01, 1926, Laurens County, South Carolina.

Generation No. 5

3. FRANKIE BASCUM⁵ MILLER (*REMINTA VAUGHAN⁴ GRITTON, VIRGINIA LEE³ MCGEE, JOHN SIMPSON², JOHN¹*) was born July 10, 1911 in Laurens County, South Carolina.

She married **SIDNEY ALBERT LEE** December 24, 1933, son of **HIRAM LEE** and **LAURA DILLARD**. He was born 1906 in Greenville County, South Carolina, and died December 19, 1985 in Laurens, Laurens County, South Carolina.

Notes for **FRANKIE BASCUM MILLER**:

The following excerpt, written by Mrs. Frankie Bascum Miller Lee, was taken from an article in "The Scrapbook," a compilation of historical facts about Laurens County, South Carolina:

"My Laurens County roots go back nearly one hundred years. It was in the year 1889, on the 29th day of April, that my grandfather, Dr. Henry Bascum Gritton, of Kentucky, purchased sixty acres of land from J. F. Rynerson for the sum of \$1266.66.

"On this property, fronting on South Street and lying between South Harper and Sullivan Streets, Dr. Gritton, a veterinarian, built a house and a livery stable in June of 1892. He then moved his family from Macon County, Kentucky, to Laurens County.

"The Gritton family consisted of the doctor's wife, the former Virginia Lee McGee, and their three children, Reminta Vaughan Gritton, my mother, Frankie Bascum Gritton and Thomas Lee Gritton. I will tell you more about my mother later. Frankie Bascum Gritton died at the age of fifteen from appendicitis. Thomas Lee Gritton, after finishing school in Laurens, attended Annapolis, remaining through football season of his freshman year. During World War I he joined the Army, serving in the famed "Rainbow Division." He later enlisted in the Navy. Upon leaving the Navy he made his home in New York where he remained until his death in 1949.

"Shortly after Dr. Gritton moved his family to Laurens, the home on South Street burned, and "Papa Doc" rebuilt at 616 Chestnut Street. My husband, Sidney Albert Lee, and I, Frankie Bascum Miller Lee, have lived here for forty-nine years. It is here that we have reared our family.

"First let me tell you how I came into possession of the Chestnut Street property. My mother, Reminta Vaughan Gritton, taught school in Bennettsville, where she met and married Charles Lindsey Miller in 1906. I was born on July 10th, 1911 and was named for my mother's sister Frankie Bascum Gritton. My father died during the flu epidemic of 1918 when I was only seven years old. My mother and I then returned to 616 Chestnut Street where my grandfather was still living.

"My grandmother, one of the few women of her day to receive a college degree, wrote for the Laurensville Herald and traveled extensively as a representative of Stewart Dry Goods Company of New York lecturing on health and the superior qualities of Bien-Jolie corsets. The house on Chestnut Street had a large library, and grandmother, until her death in 1916, returned from each trip laden with books for every member of the family.

"In 1921, when my mother, Vaughan Gritton Miller, married Benjamin Willis Hellams we went to live at the Hellams' homeplace on the Greenville Road. Grandfather Gritton, or "Doc" Gritton as he was known county wide, went along to make his home with us. The property on Chestnut Street, which had been willed to me by my grandmother, remained empty for some years and was then rented until I married.

"While I was living with my mother and step-father, my two Hellams sisters were born - Mary Virginia and Laura Wallace. Pleasant memories of a happy childhood remain with me although we were "Depression Children." Never having known better times, we were quite content with "hand-me-down" clothes and a complete lack of the "spending money" that seems so necessary today. Mama was a talented seamstress and quite often Laura, my youngest sister, wore dresses covered with beautiful embroidery and applique that hid the worn spots and rips left by the previous owner.

"When I married Sidney Albert Lee, son of Hiram Fitzhugh and Laura Dillard Lee, on December 24, 1933, we came to make our permanent home at 616 Chestnut Street and there to rear our family. Next door I own and operate Frankie's Beauty Salon."

Notes for SIDNEY ALBERT LEE:

Obituary of SIDNEY A. LEE (the Laurens County Advertiser, Laurens, S. C., December 23, 1985)

Sidney Albert Lee, 79, of 616 Chestnut St., Laurens, died early Thursday, Dec. 19, at his home.

He was born in Greenville County, and a son of the late Hiram Fitzhugh and Laura Elizabeth Dillard Lee. He was retired from the State Game Department. He was a member of the S. C. Law Enforcement Officers Association, S. C. State Employees Association, and an honorary member of the S. C. Sheriff's Association. He was a member of the First Baptist Church and the Baraca Sunday School Class.

Surviving are his wife, Frankie Miller Lee of the home; two sons, Hiram Sidney Lee of Waterloo and Henry Miller Lee of Germantown, Tenn.; two daughters, Mrs. Stanhope (Betty) Ligon and Mrs. Steve (Mary) Pate, both of Lawrenceville, Ga.; 13 grandchildren and seven great grandchildren.

Services were conducted Saturday at First Baptist Church with burial in New Prospect Baptist Church Cemetery. Memorials may be made to Laurens Memorial Home for the Aged, P.O. Box 638, Laurens, S. C. 29360. - Kennedy Mortuary, Laurens.

More About SIDNEY ALBERT LEE:

Burial: New Prospect Cemetery, Laurens County, South Carolina

Occupation: Employed by the South Carolina State Game Department

Children of FRANKIE MILLER and SIDNEY LEE are:

6. i. **ELIZABETH ANN⁶ LEE.**
7. ii. **SIDNEY HIRAM LEE.**
8. iii. **HENRY MILLER LEE.**
9. iv. **MARY VIRGINIA LEE.**

4. MARY VIRGINIA⁵ HELLAMS (*REMINTA VAUGHAN⁴ GRITTON, VIRGINIA LEE³ MCGEE, JOHN SIMPSON², JOHN¹*) was born February 11, 1924 in Laurens County, South Carolina, and died June 04, 1995 in Laurens County, South Carolina. She married **JOHN WALTER "DUB" MOORE, JR.** August 15, 1946, son of JOHN MOORE and LILLIAN PROFFITT. He was born 1917 in Laurens County, South Carolina, and died October 22, 1989 in Clinton, Laurens County, South Carolina.

Notes for MARY VIRGINIA HELLAMS:

The following excerpt was taken from an article written by Mary Virginia Hellams for "The Scrapbook," a compilation of historical facts about Laurens County, South Carolina:

"...On August 20, 1920, Benjamin Willis Hellams married Vaughan Gritton Miller, the widow of Charles Lindsey Miller. Our mother, the former Reminta Vaughan Gritton, daughter of Dr. Henry Bascum Gritton, a veterinarian from Kentucky who moved to Laurens in 1889, taught school in Hampton County where she met and married Charles Lindsey Miller in Bennettsville in 1906.

"When Benjamin Hellams brought his bride to his home on the Greenville Highway where he and his widowed mother lived, he brought with him his wife's eight year old daughter, Frankie Bascum Miller and his father-in-law, "Papa Doc" Gritton, as we affectionately called him.

"Grandmother Gritton's books were included in the move. Though the Great Depression of the 1920's had left our family as poor as the proverbial "church mouse," we were blessed with the companionship of many of the best books

one could find. We really read those books! Not only our family but friends and neighbors. We probably operated one of the first lending libraries around and most of the books were returned because each had neatly pasted on the inside cover this label affixed by Grandmother Gritton: "The wicked borroweth and returneth not again."

"Our family consisted of three daughters. I, Mary Virginia Hellams, was born on February 11, 1924; my sister, Laura Wallace Hellams was born on January 1, 1926, and our older sister Frankie B. Miller was born on July 10, 1911.

"As young girls we were taught to work. Nobody owed us anything, we were told. We were personally obligated to promote ourselves - an assignment that proved helpful when we entered the work force during World War II. I was engaged in mapping and drafting with the post engineers at Greenville Army Air Base, and Laura worked for the Duke Power Company office located here in Laurens. As the 1940's got underway Laura and I both were married....."

Obituary of MARY HELLAMS MOORE

Mary Hellams Moore, 71, of Route 3, S.C. 14, Laurens, and the widow of John Walter "Dub" Moore, Jr., died June 4 at her home.

Born in Laurens, she was the daughter of the late Ben and Vaughn Gritton Hellams.

She was retired from Century 21, Gresham Company, and a member of Laurens First United Methodist Church, where she taught Sunday School. Very active in community affairs, she was a volunteer with Meals on Wheels and Senior Options; was the former news director of WLBG Radio in Laurens; was a member of Laurens County Council for eight years; was a member of the Business and Professional Woman's Club; a board member of the Laurens County Division of the American Heart Association; and a charter member of the Henry Laurens Chapter NSDAR.

Surviving are two sons and daughters-in-law, John Walter Moore, III and Paula of Spartanburg and James Hellams Moore and Diane of Laurens; two sisters, Frankie M. Lee and Laura Culbertson, both of Laurens; and a granddaughter, Mary Katherine Moore.

Services were conducted Tuesday at the Laurens First United Methodist Church with burial in New Prospect Baptist Church Cemetery."

More About MARY VIRGINIA HELLAMS:

Burial: New Prospect Cemetery, Laurens County, South Carolina

Notes for JOHN WALTER "DUB" MOORE, JR.:

Obituary of JOHN W. MOORE JR.

John Walter "Dub" Moore Jr., 72, of Rt. 3, Laurens, died Sunday in Bailey Memorial Hospital in Clinton.

Born in Laurens County, he was a son of the late John W. and Lillian Proffitt Moore Sr. He was a U.S. Coast Guard veteran, served in the South Pacific, a retired deputy tax collector, a member of Laurens First United Methodist Church and charter member of the Men's Club, a former Mason and member of Palmetto Lodge # 19 and a past member of the Hejaz Shrine Temple.

Surviving are his wife, Mary Hellams Moore of the home; two sons, John Walter Moore III of Spartanburg, James Hellams Moore of Laurens; one sister, Mrs. C. W. (Margaret) Babb of Rock Hill, and one granddaughter.

Funeral services were held Tuesday at Laurens First Methodist Church conducted by the Rev. J. B. Abercrombie with burial in New Prospect Baptist Church Cemetery.

Memorials may be made to Laurens First United Methodist Church Foundation, P.O. Box 203, Laurens, S. C. 29360 Kennedy Mortuary.

More About JOHN WALTER "DUB" MOORE, JR.:

Burial: New Prospect Cemetery, Laurens County, South Carolina

Military service: Veteran of the U.S. Coast Guard, served in the South Pacific during WW II

Occupation: Deputy Tax Collector

Children of MARY HELLAMS and JOHN MOORE are:

- i. **JOHN WALTER⁶ MOORE III**, b. December 25, 1951; m. PAULA ?.

More About JOHN WALTER MOORE III:

Education: Graduate of Erskine College, Due West, South Carolina

10. ii. **JAMES HELLAMS MOORE**, b. March 24, 1955.

5. LAURA WALLACE⁵ HELLAMS (*REMINTA VAUGHAN⁴ GRITTON, VIRGINIA LEE³ MCGEE, JOHN SIMPSON², JOHN¹*) was born January 01, 1926 in Laurens County, South Carolina. She married **HARLEY CALVIN CULBERTSON** May 01, 1948 in Laurens, South Carolina, son of JAMES CULBERTSON and GEORGIA TRANTHAM. He was born August 20, 1925 in Fletcher, North Carolina, and died April 2001 in Laurens, South Carolina.

More About HARLEY CALVIN CULBERTSON:

Burial: Union Baptist Church Cemetery, Laurens County, South Carolina

Occupation: Proprietor of a service station; Proprietor of an auto tire store

Children of LAURA HELLAMS and HARLEY CULBERTSON are:

11. i. **JAMES CALVIN⁶ CULBERTSON**, b. January 28, 1957, Laurens, Laurens County, South Carolina.
12. ii. **BENJAMIN HELLAMS CULBERTSON**, b. February 24, 1959, Laurens, Laurens County, South Carolina.
13. iii. **THOMAS EARVIN CULBERTSON**, b. April 20, 1961, Greenwood, Laurens County, South Carolina.

Generation No. 6

6. ELIZABETH ANN⁶ LEE (*FRANKIE BASCUM⁵ MILLER, REMINTA VAUGHAN⁴ GRITTON, VIRGINIA LEE³ MCGEE, JOHN SIMPSON², JOHN¹*) She married **STANHOPE ALEXANDER LIGON, JR.**, son of STANHOPE ALEXANDER LIGON.

Children of ELIZABETH LEE and STANHOPE LIGON are:

- i. **STANHOPE ALEXANDER⁷ LIGON III**.
- ii. **LEE ANN LIGON**.
- iii. **SIDNEY MILLER LIGON**.

7. SIDNEY HIRAM⁶ LEE (*FRANKIE BASCUM⁵ MILLER, REMINTA VAUGHAN⁴ GRITTON, VIRGINIA LEE³ MCGEE, JOHN SIMPSON², JOHN¹*) He married **PATRICIA ANN RITCHEY**.

Children of SIDNEY LEE and PATRICIA RITCHEY are:

14. i. **FRANKIE BEA⁷ LEE**.
- ii. **SIDNEY HIRAM LEE, JR.**.
- iii. **PATRICIA VAUGHAN LEE**.

8. HENRY MILLER⁶ LEE (*FRANKIE BASCUM⁵ MILLER, REMINTA VAUGHAN⁴ GRITTON, VIRGINIA LEE³ MCGEE, JOHN SIMPSON², JOHN¹*) He married **PATRICIA LENORD FULLER.**

Children of HENRY LEE and PATRICIA FULLER are:

15. i. **MARY KATHERINE⁷ LEE.**
16. ii. **HENRY MILLER LEE, JR..**
- iii. **ASHLEY SUSANNE LEE.**

9. MARY VIRGINIA⁶ LEE (*FRANKIE BASCUM⁵ MILLER, REMINTA VAUGHAN⁴ GRITTON, VIRGINIA LEE³ MCGEE, JOHN SIMPSON², JOHN¹*) She married **WILLIAM STEVEN PATE.**

Children of MARY LEE and WILLIAM PATE are:

- i. **THOMAS ANDREW⁷ PATE.**
- ii. **MATHEW LEE PATE.**

10. JAMES HELLAMS⁶ MOORE (*MARY VIRGINIA⁵ HELLAMS, REMINTA VAUGHAN⁴ GRITTON, VIRGINIA LEE³ MCGEE, JOHN SIMPSON², JOHN¹*) was born March 24, 1955. He married **DIANE ?.**

More About JAMES HELLAMS MOORE:

Education: Graduate of Erskine College, Due West, South Carolina

Children of JAMES MOORE and DIANE ? are:

- i. **MARY KATHRYN⁷ MOORE.**
- ii. **TIMOTHY JAMES MOORE.**

11. JAMES CALVIN⁶ CULBERTSON (*LAURA WALLACE⁵ HELLAMS, REMINTA VAUGHAN⁴ GRITTON, VIRGINIA LEE³ MCGEE, JOHN SIMPSON², JOHN¹*) was born January 28, 1957 in Laurens, Laurens County, South Carolina. He married **VICKY DIANE TAYLOR** August 02, 1979, daughter of TED TAYLOR and DORIS SMITH. She was born June 02, 1957.

More About JAMES CALVIN CULBERTSON:

Education: 1979, Graduate of The Citadel Military College in South Carolina

Children of JAMES CULBERTSON and VICKY TAYLOR are:

- i. **ROY CALVIN⁷ CULBERTSON**, b. June 20, 1985.
- ii. **CARLA VAUGHAN CULBERTSON**, b. February 14, 1989.
- iii. **GRITTON TAYLOR CULBERTSON**, b. November 18, 1991.

12. BENJAMIN HELLAMS⁶ CULBERTSON (*LAURA WALLACE⁵ HELLAMS, REMINTA VAUGHAN⁴ GRITTON, VIRGINIA LEE³ MCGEE, JOHN SIMPSON², JOHN¹*) was born February 24, 1959 in Laurens, Laurens County, South Carolina. He married **LEATHA RENEE KINSEY.**

More About BENJAMIN HELLAMS CULBERTSON:

Education 1: 1981, Graduate of The Citadel Military College in South Carolina and the University of South Carolina Law School

Children of BENJAMIN CULBERTSON and LEATHA KINSEY are:

- i. **BENJAMIN HELLAMS "JAY"⁷ CULBERTSON, JR..**
- ii. **MAXWELL KINSEY CULBERTSON.**
- iii. **MAGGIE ENGLISH CULBERTSON.**

13. THOMAS EARVIN⁶ CULBERTSON (*LAURA WALLACE⁵ HELLAMS, REMINTA VAUGHAN⁴ GRITTON, VIRGINIA LEE³ MCGEE, JOHN SIMPSON², JOHN¹*) was born April 20, 1961 in Greenwood, Laurens County, South Carolina. He married (1) **KRISTI JONES**. He married (2) **CAROLYN SPEARS**.

More About THOMAS EARVIN CULBERTSON:

Education: 1983, Graduate of The Citadel Military College in South Carolina

Child of THOMAS CULBERTSON and KRISTI JONES is:

- i. **ABIGALE TRAYTHAM⁷ CULBERTSON.**

Children of THOMAS CULBERTSON and CAROLYN SPEARS are:

- ii. **JAMES THOMAS⁷ CULBERTSON**, b. May 31, 1989.
- iii. **BLAKE SPEARS CULBERTSON.**

Generation No. 7

14. FRANKIE BEA⁷ LEE (*SIDNEY HIRAM⁶, FRANKIE BASCUM⁵ MILLER, REMINTA VAUGHAN⁴ GRITTON, VIRGINIA LEE³ MCGEE, JOHN SIMPSON², JOHN¹*) She married **JACK WALKER**.

Child of FRANKIE LEE and JACK WALKER is:

- i. **RYAN PATRICK⁸ WALKER.**

15. MARY KATHERINE⁷ LEE (*HENRY MILLER⁶, FRANKIE BASCUM⁵ MILLER, REMINTA VAUGHAN⁴ GRITTON, VIRGINIA LEE³ MCGEE, JOHN SIMPSON², JOHN¹*) She married **JOHN L. VANHOY**.

Children of MARY LEE and JOHN VANHOY are:

- i. **JOHN L.⁸ VANHOY, JR..**
- ii. **KRISTIN LEE VANHOY.**

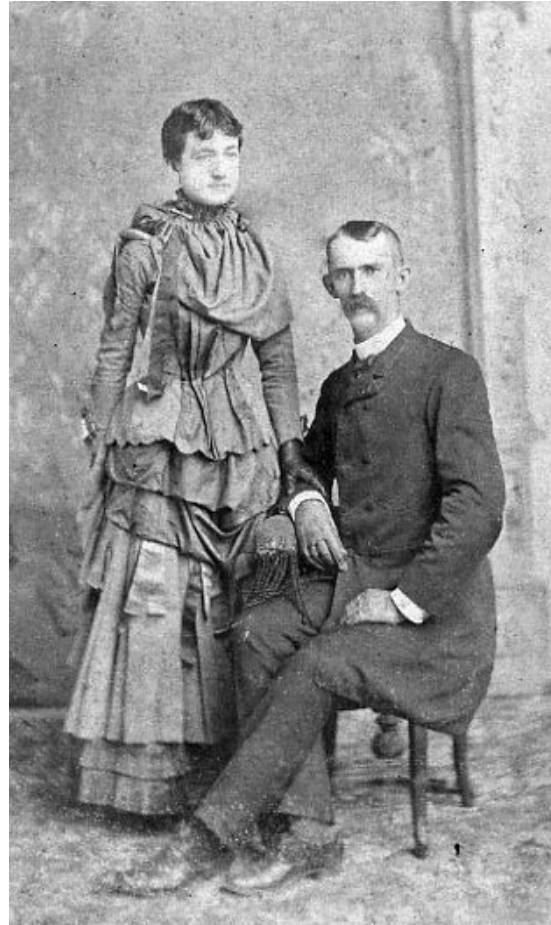
16. HENRY MILLER⁷ LEE, JR. (*HENRY MILLER⁶, FRANKIE BASCUM⁵ MILLER, REMINTA VAUGHAN⁴ GRITTON, VIRGINIA LEE³ MCGEE, JOHN SIMPSON², JOHN¹*) He married **JOAN HUDSON**.

Child of HENRY LEE and JOAN HUDSON is:

- i. **JOE⁸ LEE.**



1. Virginia Lee McGee (1864-1916)



2. Wedding picture of Virgie McGee and "Doc" Bascum Gritton - 1884.



3. Virginia (McGee) Gritton



4. Virginia (McGee) Gritton



5. Henry Bascum Gritton (1845-1928)



6. Frankie Bascum Gritton (left) and her sister, Reminta Vaughan Gritton. Frankie died of appendicitis at age 15.



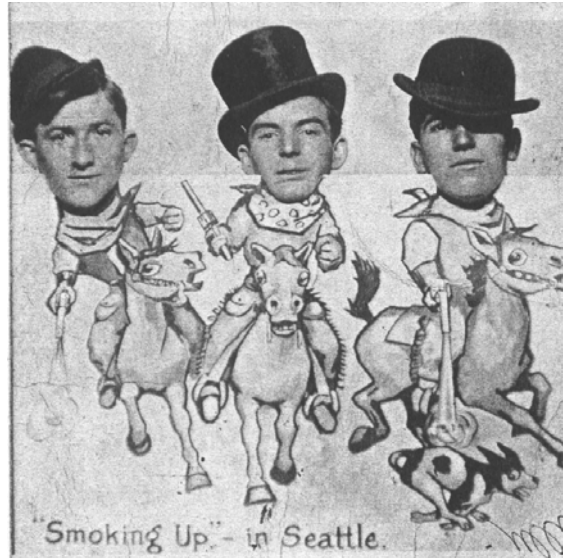
7. Vaughan Gritton (1884-1969)



8. Three McGee sisters visiting their Gritton cousin in Laurens, S.C. – 1961 (l to r) Katherine (McGee) Bolt, Pricie (McGee) Marshall, Vaughan (Gritton) Hellams, and Minta (McGee) Nichols.



9. "Papa Doc" Gritton with granddaughter, Frankie Miller ca 1913



10. Tom Gritton (far left) with friends.



11. The Gritton home located on Chestnut Street in Lorens, South Carolina

"The Montreal Star"

STAR BUILDING
MONTREAL, CAN.

March 21, 1915

Dear Peter Pan Lady:-

You who will never grow up, greetings! Thank you for your very dear and prompt letter to me. Believe me, I thank you for all your cheeriness and your sane philosophy of life and, in short, for being YOU. I write a piece about you, which I'm enclosing herewith. "The Gospel of Work" has you for its heroine, and the other stuff, the Answers to Correspondence, Economy Corner, and Children's page are all mine also.

I met your little friend, Webster, on the street the other day, and we had a chat about the lonely working-girl in Montreal. She wrote me when she got home, and asked me if I could dope out a scheme for a working-girl's club. I am now trying to scheme it out. I have the idea. All I need is the money. You probably know that your protegee of the basement has been promoted by Mr. Goodwin on his personal service scheme. My friend, Mrs Foss, whom you met at luncheon the first day, has also been engaged for the personal service. I saw Mr. G. a couple of times on the advertising suggestion, and he seemed very much interested. Their idea of salary was somewhat lower than I had expected, and of course the chief charm of my present work is that I am absolutely my own mistress, and can do all my work at home, if I choose. Also I am still feeling very punk and husband says he thinks the confinement of the store, bad air, and long hours, would be ill stoned for by an increase in salary. Of course Husband is not a money-maker, and thinks as long as we can get along allright and are fairly comfortable, that I should be satisfied. I'm the hustler of the team, and I'm one of those people who are never satisfied. The matter has remained in abeyance, pending my writing two or three sample ads for Goodwin, to show what I can do. I have not been able to see Stacey yet but will make a strong effort to do so this week.

Again let me tell you, dear lady, how very, very glad I am to have met you. Sorry it didnot happen earlier in your visit. It would have done so if I were not the Queen of Procrastinators. Lesson #999 for me. I hope our ships will meet again soon. Here's to us. You know the old Scotch toast? Dammed few like us. Thank God!

Always sincerely yours,

"Margaret Currie"
Anelivale

12. A personal letter to Virginia Gritton from Margaret Currie, a well known columnist for the Montreal Star newspaper. The two women became acquainted when Virgie visited Montreal on business, and Margaret Currie later used Virgie as the subject of one of her columns.

IF YOU BUY IT AT **KENNY'S** IT IS ALWAYS GOOD

WEDNESDAY
3:30 P. M.

**A LIVING MODEL DEMONSTRATION OF
BIEN JOLIE CORSETS**

(Grecian Treco)

UNDER DIRECTION
OF

—**MME. GRITTON**—



second floor

A mere statement of facts—that heading—but it means much to Canton women—because on living models will Mme. Gritton point out ways and means to health and beauty for it is an accepted fact that the Corset is the foundation of both. And in no hands could an exhibition be better placed than Mme. Gritton's, named truly, "The Woman's Friend."

AS TO THE CORSETS

The woman who insists upon wearing a Bien-Jolie Corset, thereby declares her appreciation of a corset in which is embodied beauty of design, integrity in make, and the use of materials best calculated to emphasize with charm and distinction the prevailing mode.

The fuller figures and the matronly types have been specially considered, the petite girlish forms have also been carefully provided for and different models prepared for each varying need.

WE SHALL BE DELIGHTED TO WELCOME YOU TO THIS MOST INTERESTING DEMONSTRATION TOMORROW AFTER-NOON AT 3:30 O'CLOCK.

—QUALITY—

KENNY'S

—ECONOMY—

13. Virginia (McGee) Gritton represented Bien Jolie corsets for the Stewart Dry Goods Company.



MME. GRITTON
AN AUTHORITY
WILL LECTURE TO WOMEN STUDENTS
OF SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY
ON
CONSERVATION OF HEALTH
AND THE
RELATION OF THE CORSET TO THE WOMEN
NEXT WEDNESDAY AT 4 O'CLOCK
WOMEN'S GYMNASIUM, SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY
WOMEN ARE INVITED

MME. GRITTON TO SPEAK TO WOMEN

TO LECTURE ON "CONSERVATION
OF HEALTH" WEDNESDAY
IN WOMEN'S GYMNA-
SIUM.

Mme. Virginia Gritton, a graduate nurse and physician, will lecture to the women students on "Conservation of Health and the Relation of the Corset to the Woman," Wednesday after-



Mme. Virginia Gritton.

noon at four o'clock in the Women's Gymnasium.

Mme. Gritton is spending some time in Syracuse, and states that her mission is to make women think seriously about treating the body intelligently.

Mme. Gritton is particularly interested in the subject of getting women and girls properly corseted. The body, she declares, of any woman is no stronger than its weakest part. She also believes that if women were more careful of their bodies when young, there would not be so many operations necessary.

Having been a graduate nurse and a practicing physician in South Carolina and Kentucky, Mme. Gritton is an authority on this subject and believes that the modern woman is too sensible to surrender comfort to the old style corset.

Mme. Gritton, of South Carolina and New York, is a member of the National Federation of Women's Clubs and an enthusiastic horse-taming woman. She has been a newspaper woman, and hopes to return to this profession. Every woman is invited to attend the lecture on Wednesday.

14. Virginia Gritton traveled extensively throughout the northeastern United States and Canada lecturing on women's health and the benefits of properly fitted, scientific corsetry.



15. Frankie Bascum (Miller) Lee (b. 1911)
daughter of Vaughan Gritton and Charles
Miller.



16. Mary Virginia (Hellams) Moore (1924-1995)
daughter of Vaughan Gritton and Benjamin
Hellams.



17. Laura Wallace (Hellams) Culbertson,
daughter of Vaughan Gritton and Benjamin
Hellams.

