

THIS IS A TRANSCRIPT OF A HOLOGRAPHIC JOURNAL WRITTEN BY ROBERT HARRISON MILLER, MY GREAT, GREAT GRANDFATHER, IN AUGUST OF 1913 IN BELOIT, KANSAS AT THE AGE OF 76 (BORN IN 1837). THE WRITER WAS THE GRANDSON OF ROBERT HARRISON MILLER, WHO EMIGRATED FROM SCOTLAND TO NORTH CAROLINA BEFORE THE REVOLUTION. HE IS WRITING ABOUT THE FIRST GENERATION AMERICAN IN THE MILLER FAMILY, HIS FATHER, ROBERT HARRISON MILLER, WHO WAS BORN IN RUTHERFORD COUNTY IN SOUTHWESTERN NORTH CAROLINA ON OCTOBER 28, 1777. THERE FOLLOWED ANOTHER TWO GENERATIONS OF ROBERT HARRISON MILLERS, THE LAST OF WHICH WAS MY GREAT GRANDFATHER, THE FATHER OF MY GRANDMOTHER, NELLE MILLER, WHO WAS MY DAD'S MOM. THUS, THIS STORY BEGINS WITH THE LIFE OF MY GREAT GREAT GREAT GRANDFATHER.

I HAVE DELIBERATELY PRESERVED THE PAGINATION OF HIS JOURNAL AND HIS SPELLING, CAPITALIZATION, GRAMMAR, AND PUNCTUATION. IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT WHEN HE IS WRITING ABOUT HIMSELF, HE USUALLY USES THE THIRD PERSON FORM BUT OCCASIONALLY SLIPS INTO THE FIRST PERSON.

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Placitas, New Mexico  
September 8, 2003

Robert Miller the Subject of this Sketch was born in Rutherford County North Carolina October 28<sup>th</sup> 1777 and grew to manhood in the neighborhood where he was born and like most young men do Sought and won the hand of a fair lady by the name of Condrey they lived in the country a few years and being of an industrious & enterprising disposition & after there had been born two or three children and they being of the John Wesley abolition Methodist Stripe did not like to raise their children among the Negroes & their disposition was to be by themselves they determined to find a location in another part of the country their folks trying to persuade them to stay where they were but Robert (as his name means a Rambler) true to the meaning could not be over come by any persuasion and they both wanted the experience of a frontier life. So they had accumulated some money and property and saddled his horse bid his family good bye to live or die or find a place to his own liking so he put his money in his saddle-bags took his gun and tomahawk to mark the trail with & any other use he had for it. He took the trail for the Ohio River for Western Ohio he struck the river below Cincinnati but not finding what he was looking for and after crossing the river he followed down the river to what was then

Western Ohio now Eastern Indiana and when about 100 miles below Cincinnati after encountering many hardships thru rain mud & swollen streams along the way and killing several bear & panthers seeing plenty of other game of turkeys Deer and the kinds that inhabited the woods he seemed to be in the element he had been longing for in the tarheel State, so along his down the river he came to a little Settlement of two families

where the old town of Madison now stands (the place where they sell their terbacker) they had build double log cabins of buckeye logs as that was a very soft wood they could chop it easy, one of the men was named Madison he had his family in one room & his blacksmith shop in the other room the town took its name form this mans name the other mans house was of the same kind his family in one room and a grocery store in the other room he had for his Stock of goods whiskey tar Sugar tobacco Coffee (and it was not browned as it is now) Powder lead & gun-flints they did not have gun caps then but used the flints to fire their guns with, this mans name was Vawter I think but matter not about his name the two families consisted of ten or twelve (mostly boys & girls) the land was still government land at \$1.25 per acre the land was covered with a heavy growth of timber Some the walnut timber in the State the largest Sycamore of any along the river but Mr. Miller

did not like the Situation nor the looks of the Hill & thinking it might be Sickly & the river on one Side and the Hill on the other he climbed the Hill & took a north west course & after wandering through the woods cutting his way with tomahawk & butcher knife and after a few days & nights in the woods his horse living on grass in the woods as they could find it and Miller on game of the kinds he chose to eat but mostly bear meat for it agreed with him better than any other kind of wild meat I have heard him say he could eat all of bear meat he could hold & drink a pint of the oil and not make himself a bit sick, So after looking over the country for a few days he located a place for a home in what after-ward was Jefferson County (then Ohio) and after marking out land and a place to build a house on the hill across the creek north of where the Indian wigwam poles was still standing in one of the finest pieces of timber in the whole country, of walnut poplar beech ash elm hard-maple of which the Indians had made their molases & sugar, some of the largest walnut trees as well as poplar that could be found anywhere, well do I remember the big trees that was still standing when I was a boy one still standing after the war was over, Mr. Miller then took his course on horse-back to the land office I think at Columbus Ohio and after another hard trip he arrived at

the land office and after paying for his land in gold and Silver (we had no paper money then) he took his course for his home in the tar-heel State and after a hard ride of over 200 miles through rain and mud and swollen Streams and several days of hardships he arrived at home to greet his loved ones in the old home to give an account of his adventures in the woods in the north and west during his summer stay in his home State in the Summer he was busy making arrangements to return to the woods to build a house for his family & to make some signs of a settlement and after his crop was matured & he had made arrangements for his wife & children he took his leave of them for the fall & winter not knowing that he ever would see them again he bid them good bye & full of life and vim took the road for his home in the woods of about 300 miles. He rode through again on horse-back carrying his gun, ax and bedding & some other things in the line of cooking utensils & after another hard trip he arrived at the place he had chose for a home in the woods that was some time in the last of Nov 1811. He immediately

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began to make signs of a Settlement cutting down the timber & keeping both ears open for anything that might happen & one eye for danger from wild animals or Indians he worked with might and main to open his place of habitation when one night a light snow fell & the next night more snow fell but nothing discouraged Miller & not knowing there was anyone closer than the ones at the river supposed to be 20 miles or more a man hailed from a short distance in the timber the man came to him he said there was eight families of them away across through the woods that settled close together & had build a block for protection he could not tell how far it was going through the woods seemed a long ways if it was only a few miles their houses were all built of round logs & daubed with mud. So they called their settlement dobbins-ville but it is called Kent now. This mans name was Chitwood a Dr. I believe (as it took a Dr. to complete a colony) but he said one of their number had gone out the first snow to kill some meat for the Settlement after the first snow & had been gone three or four days and they was afraid he had froze to death or some Indians had killed him he got Mr. Miller to help find him if he was in them woods he said the man had a small dog with him and he

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said if he found him to fire his gun or even found any tracks & so he took his gun (as he always did) & went up the creek a mile & a small dog come of a big log and barked at him so Mr. Miller went & looked in & sure enough there he was froze stiff in the log then after the Signal the man come and they stopped him in the log till they got a conveyance to take him to Dobbinsville his name was Neil & they called the creek Neils-Creek so that is how the creek got its name. Well do I remember the old Sycamore Stump for the tree was a Sycamore so by the Death of Mr. Neil they become neighbors of only 8 miles apart but going through the woods those days seemed along ways if it was only a few miles, so Mr. Miller was there to stay or die so he cut the logs for his first house 18 x 20 feet square and raised it himself built of round logs one Story high with one door about 4 feet wide in the east side and two small windows in it with a large fireplace built in with the House up to the mantle or Cofren as they called it then it was drawn in after the fashion of a partridge trap and built up above the house with sticks and clay the bottom or large part was was lined with Stone with the crane put in the jam to hang the kettles on for cooking such things a greens cabbage beans hogs jaw or ham and a good deal of what they called.

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7.

So after finishing the raising of his house and thanking himself that he did not get killed he split what they called clapboards and put a roof on the house and weighted them down with poles not putting a nail in the roof then he done like his neighbors daubed it with mud then the floor was to be put in and no plank in sight so he being the man for the emergency Split-out some very nice poplar fuchcons they hewed the to a smoothe face & laid a very nice floor in the House but there was no Shutter to the door, but of the same kind of stuff he made the Shutter to the door, so after chopping down some more timber for to protect his house and make it look more comfortable & home-like he fastened the door and done a little fixing he took the trail for his home again in the tar-heel State to

bring his loved ones to the Home in the woods & after a short stay to settle up his business he put his family which consisted of wife & two children in his big scoop wagon bid his relatives good bye hitched his 4 horses to his wagon & left for his home in the West he rode one horse & drove the rest with a Jerk line all the way through with a small bell on the leader.

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His load consisted of his wife one girl & one boy a few clothes for the family (all home made) & bedding of a limited amount provisions such as they had in those days two good rifle guns plenty of Powder & lead & camp kettle full of sprouts from his neighbors orchard he hung them on the coupling pole of his wagon in front of the tar bucket then after a long & wearisome journey through the big woods over all kinds of roads through mud rain and swollen creeks hills rocks & etc he arrived at what they called home in the far west weary worn and tired but full of life & energy & grit they went to work to make the home attractive in the woods.

Mr. Miller was the man for the occasion every time & place he never failed to fit exactly to the occasion he could make anything he needed in his business his tools consisted of a broad and narrow axes a hand and cross cut saws three augers  $\frac{1}{2}$   $\frac{3}{4}$  and inch the same number and size

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chisels two gouges one pack & pointer julanes a coopers pointer crose and round shave (I have it yet) he stocked the first-cradle and made the first hay-rake in that country except one old Abram Walton brought from Ohio. He could make anything for the farm that was made or could make the shoes for the family as well as tan the leather they were made of he could even make the last to make the shoe over and make a very neat powder horn then make the powder to fill it with he was certainly the man for the new country. Always ready for the occasion no matter what that was was quite a horse doctor always ready to trade horses on a barter never knowed him to get beat in a trade but once. He would always tell the truth in a trade or on any other line he always kept the best of horses for them times. He was surely the man for the day & times. Mr. Miller had a limited Education could read write & calculate as well as the common people. He was a Methodist of the John Wesley Stripe his house was the Preaching place

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of that part of the circuit which was a very large one people coming twenty miles or more to every meeting camping around his house in their wagons always bringing their guns with them. I have heard him say there had been more than twenty guns Standing in the corners of his house at every meet while the Elder Preached they never fired a gun those days unless it was really necessary for protection or meat. Mr. Miller had chopped off a small piece of timber for an acre or more for his house Stable orchard & garden and then begun the clearing of the timber for the farm & to make the home for the rest of his life, which was no small job Some of the largest poplar trees being close to the house & Stable which were build of round beech and poplar logs & covered with oak boards 4 ft long & weighted down with other poles, his wife & children performing their part nobly

in making he home his family consisted of wife & two girls & one boy John the oldest boy. Mary the oldest child. Mary died at about the age of 18 years The children dressed in summer in a loose garment something like what they call night-gowns now made of

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home-made home spun & wove at home they raised their own flax wool & cotton & made their own cloth cut & made their own garments the boys & girls of 10 or 12 years old wore these loose garments in summer with only one button it was on the collar & it was made from the Shell of a gourd & covered with some kind of the garmen reached about half way from the knee to the ankle that was all they wore in summer time the cloth was about as fine as our grain sack only not so heavy. Their shoes was only one pair a year & the leather was tanned at home & shoes home made on a home-made last Just think how would the boys & girls look going to our common schools in that kind of a dress, I call to mind some things I have heard him relate in early settling of his farm there had been a very large poplar tree blown in the clearing & hired Mary (his oldest girl) to burn (or nigger it off) as they called it So it could be rolled to-gether to be bust off of the ground SO she went out with her father after dinner to fix her niggers on the log So they work the rest of the day & lay the largest rattle-snake She ever saw So she called her father to come & kill that snake So he soon dispatched his Snake ship & on counting the

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rattles there was 28 the largest rattler he ever saw & the last one he ever killed his oldest boy John got to be quite an expert with his gun he could not reach the trigger with out putting the breach of the gun under his arm & could load his gun unless he got on a log or Stump but he was a dead shot at deer or turkeys on one occasion he & his father went to get the horses John in his shirt tail (as they called it) John took his gun as he always did unless his father did and he kill two very fine deer before they got their horses the game that got in the range of John's gun always went down at the crack of his gun, he was an exception of a boy never indulged in the use of the filthy weed as did all the rest of the family both boys & girls, John never indulged in anything profane or vulgar but was fond of good humor he was a man that was always ready to help another if he needed it on any line was ready to care for the sick or give a word of comfort or cheer to those that were cast down or discouraged was a man that could be depended on any time day or night he enlisted for the Mexican War his company honored him by electing him Captain of his company but they were not called into the service so he did not have to go to war.

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John was a great worker prefering to help his father to spending his time hunting or fishing, Mr. Miller had several narrow chances for his life from wild animals one I will relate as I have heard him relate on several occasions he was going as his horses along the path that led to where the were grazing in the woods. There had been a storm that twisted a hickory down and lay on the ground & the stump was about 10 or 12 feet high He was 40 steps from the stump and he look up towards the top of the stump & there lay a very large yellow panther looking strait at him and patting his tail on the log Mr. Miller being a man of steady nerve and use to the woods & always looking for something to

happen drew his gun off of shoulder & took good aim at the head send a bullet crashing through his brain that brought him down a dead panther He said he did feel a bit timid when he saw the size of his game, and many other dangers he encountered with wild animals of different kinds while the country was new and settling up. On the north of his place about 2 miles was a piece of very heavy timber some of the poplar trees was as much as 7 or 8 feet in diameter & small creek running through there that was kept running by the springs that came

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out of the cliffs & banks for miles along its course the forests was full of game of he kinds that roamed the woods the Scream or the howl of the wolf was no uncommon sound in the woods in those times the forests abounded with bear in that part of the woods so Mr. Miller and others went in that part of the woods to get their bear meat so they called that Bear-Creek & it is bear yet about the first settler on the creek was a man by the name of Nolton he was an enterprising man he build the first brick-house in all that country he planted an orchard of seedling apples & sold trees to his neighbors of the same kind they planted orchards of the same kind the old brick house is in good shape yet one of his neighbors was named Nichols he planted an orchard of Nolton's kind another was Dixon another Byfield & others Dixon build a brick-house another build a brick-house another built a brick-house his name was McCaslin perhaps the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> generations are living in those houses yet. Then there was the Halls and the Stidmans & Moses Wilson his father & a few others that had settled along the creek till bear had left or been killed but bear-creek was settling up & developing its resources Neils Creek was not behind in settling up, it not long till Mr. Miller wanting a place to educate the children So leader that he was in most everything it was not till there was a School-

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house built of logs in the most convenient place close to a spring for there was where their houses was all build in pioneer days and for miles around the boys & girls come to School about 60 or 90 days was all the school they had & was in winter time they only had a limited amount of books but they knew all that was in them before they got any more. They were not dressed like children are nowadays with their fancy shoes dresses & hats with feathers crow-wings & dead birds on their hats & such foolishness as they wear nowadays, the work home-made stuff every man was a shoe-maker & every wife a carder Spinner weaver tailoress & every boy a hero & every girls was fit for some of the work either in the house or out of Doors, when a young man wanted a wife he knew she was of some account & not a butter-fly to Sail around among the flowers & afraid she would soil her little white hands that had 3 or 4 or more brass rings on it that some little dude had got at some chance game that had cost him a week or two wages while he played some game of Chance & blow tobacco smoke through his nose & she thought he was a bully good fellow. Mr. Miller's family consisted of 5 boys and 4 girls by his first Mary the oldest she died at about 18 years old. Jane lived to be about 40 years old & died after raising

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a family of 1 girl & 5 boys She married a man by the name of Thomas Sarah married a man by the name of Zenon & raised a family of boys & girls Rhoda never married on account of being disappointed in her first love but helped raise Janes children & made a very good mother for them & died of a broken heart I think So fathers be careful about breaking up a love affair with your Daughters, John I think was named after the beloved disciple as he seemed to be the favorite with the father he bought 80 acres close to his father & was very industrious in clearing up his land He married a girl by the name of Whisitt They raised a family of 5 girls & 4 boys all gone but one girl & one boy how time does go, while Mr. Miller was raising his family they were all busy making the home chopping down the timber making rails rolling logs & building fences & well do I remember some of the big old stumps that was in the fields when I was a boy Father & I was hoeing around a big poplar Stump in the corn field when he told me he made all the rails that was in that fence along he south side of the ten acre field that was 40 rods across the field So you may know it took a long time to put such woods into cornfields there was a man by the name of Miller (no relation of his) bought 80 acres of land & two his nephews come with him He as a

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german one was a married man the other married Sally Miller their name was Zenon then Mr. Millers wifes brother come & bought the land where Mr. Neil froze to Death his name was Condrey then a Mr. Winchester bought and settled on the farm joining him on the east then over South there was another Small creek that two brothers settled on by the name of Walton So of course that was called Walton Creek then the MacClanahans come & settled there & built a horse mill & a still-house to make whiskey but it soon went down & Wells family come in & the country was settling pretty fast then away over north there was two brothers settled on another creek by the name of Graham so that is Graham Creek then south of him there was another creak that run clear across the county and they called that big creek on account of the length & size & about 5 miles below Millers big creek and Graham came together and they called Muscatatack I think it was some Indian tribe, so while the country was developing Mr. Millers family was also doing the same His first child that was born in Indiana was born in the block-house that was after-ward settled by a Mr. Loyd close to a cave spring. I Saw the cave & Spring while visiting in Indiana in the latter part of 1911 where the block-house Stood, while visiting

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one of the boys that lives there on the farm the cave & spring still remains there yet Mr. Miller's first child that was born in that country was born in the block-house & they called him Alexander because he conquered the whole house when he raised his voice (I suppose) his next one as well as all the rest was born in the house of round logs 18 x 20 feet Square & after the children began to be able to help with the duties of the home Sorrow & Sadness came to the home in the sickness & death of the wife & mother She was the one they all look to to guide the affairs of the household but the grim monster always claims his victim, but the girls took hold & done the things their mother had learned them to do, making their own clothes form the raw material of wool cotton or

flax of their own raising carding spinning coloring & weaving & cutting and making their own garments even spinning their own sewing thread & coloring their goods of different colors as they chose indigo madder or even walnut bark or shoe-make berries as the were not particular

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about the color, just so the cloth was good & they always knew how much wool was in their cloth & whether it was 3, 4 or 5 quarters wide, there was three girls & four boys yet at home they stayed with the father until two or three of them were married. Then Mr. Miller thought it best to take another help-mate to guide the house & he married a widow by the name of Patton & she not being a very Stout woman & she had two girls of her own She & her girls gave way to the dread disease consumption & all died within a short time and again his home was broken & left without any guide to the house, but after a few years living with the grown up children Aleck Samuel Jane & Sally married leaving the three youngest children James Jonathan & Rhoda with the Father. Rhoda the girl in her teens to do the work & guide the house & there being lots of work of different kinds to do & Rhoda not being very Stout she could not do the spinning coloring weaving cutting & making & do the cooking & other housework besides, Mr. Miller saw the condition as he always

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did as he always was a man for the emergency Sought for another help-mate & being led by the Spirit as the Methodists believed they were he was married to a widow by the name of Kinney she lived with her Father about six or eight miles from Millers Her father's name was Chapman he was one of the pioneers of Clark County Indiana he had raised a large family of Stalwart men & women they were all married & had small houses & homes of their own. Mr. Chapman & his boys helped to dig the canal around the falls of the Ohio River at New Albany, Indiana but the grim monster entered his home & claimed the mother & broke up his home & Hannah had buried her husband So her and her father set up house keeping at her fathers home and lived happily together for some time and they being of the John Wesley Methodist order & Mr. Miller's house was the place of Preaching Mr. Chapman & Mrs. Kinney was frequently at the services for worship, Mrs. Kinney's sister had died a few years before and left a little boy baby by name of Rounder & his father had a large family he gave Mrs. Kinney the baby So the little boy grew to quite a bright little pet to her & her father So Mr. Miller

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was needing a woman to help develop his daughter into a useful woman and his quick eyes saw in Mrs. Kinney the woman for the situation and took her & her father with the little boy to his home and adopted the boy for his own & gave her Father a home at his house while he lived. However, Mr. Chapman had another daughter that lived a few miles from Millers that he Spent a part of his time with her as well as with some of his other children but his home was at Mr. Millers he died at Millers in 1842 or 3, he was the first & last to be buried at old Bethel Church on Bear-Creek on grand-daddy Wilson's farm (Mosey Wilson's father) his grave is marked with two cedar trees, he is waiting for the trump of God to call him in the first resurrection when the dead in Christ shall rise



first. Mr. Millers boys (Jonathan & James) & Rhoda the girl & the new mother lived happily together all doing their part nobly in the things of the household & farm until the boys became men and the boys got married They were all Methodists of the kind that have Salvation the boys married sisters by the name of Thomas & raised families of their own

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James died in the Spring of the latter part of the fortys with lung-fever after a Sever cold Jonathan lived to a tolerable old age he raised quite a large family his children are in Missouri, Illinois and Kansas he died in Missouri shortly after the war. Rhoda never married (as spoken before but left home & lived with Jane till she died then Stayed with James children and made a very good mother to the children & died at good old age of a broken heart I think), Mr. Miller's family now began to increase by his last wife the first were a pair of twin boys & as he did with the other boys he gave them Scripture names calling Caleb & Joshua but Caleb died in infancy Joshua is still living past the allotted time of three score & ten years *the next was also a boy of the usual size he was named and Christened for his Father to preserve the family name his name was Robert* the next was a girl they named her Mary Ann I think for his first wife the next was a girl they called Harriet Hoyt for a friend & neighbor. Mr. Miller being a cripple from a cut of an ax & being to old to follow the plow very good built a house on another part of the farm for his youngest boy (Jonathan) & rented most all

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of the cleared land for him things went very well for two or three years but Jonathan being of an unsettled disposition (& like the Preacher's horse could not Stand good treatment) moved away just as Spring begin to open & through his persuasion he got he adopted boy to come & live with him by telling him of a great many things that sounded good to a boy of 14 So Mr. Miller was left with the two little boys & the farm, but as it always had been he was the man for the occasion he got a man & his wife to move into the house he had built for Jonathan & things went on as before, he only stayed one year & moved away he was not much of a farmer & she was too lazy for any use So we all felt that he had done us a kindness & was all very well suited, then there was a man by the name of Dunekey hunting a place to work & a house to live so he was hired & he come on but I don't think he ever done a days work till he left between two days I think the little boys went over Sunday morning to see them not knowing they were gone and their dog had come & he was very glad to see them so boy like they took him home with them & they had

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heard that if you clip the hair off of a dog's tail & put it under the door step he never would leave so they tried the charm & sure enough he never left but lay by the step most of the time so the boys were firm believers in he charm, but it was not long before Mr. Dunekey (for that was their name) come after the Dog but he said if he come back we might have him So in a few days Ring come home then the boys were firm believers that Ring had come to stay with the hair of his tail. So Mr. Miller rented some of the ground to one of the neighbors & hired a man to do some plowing & the oldest boy was quite an

expert with a horse & plow so he managed to plow some of the weeds out of the middle of the row & him and the youngest boy hoed the rest out with the hoe so the farm was worked by him & the little boys for a few years but it was not long before the boys were experts on all lines with men they were men in their teens they could handle the ax maul & wedge mowing Scythe or any of the farm implements with men. Johsua being the oldest was given charge of the team which he liked very well as he liked to work with horses and soon learned to use them as well as a man he had

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the reputation of being the best plow man for a boy in that neighborhood if there was any one wanted any team work done they come to see if Josh could go and do it & he being of a conceity disposition was always ready to go if there was a chance he was of a very exciteable turn of mind but on the second thought was equal to the occasion he did not like a joke unless it was on the other fellow but was a very good man in the neighborhood he was a very determined man in matters of his own when his mind was made up on any matter was always ready to let others attend to their own business & he attended to his. It was a hard matter to change his mind when it was made up until he saw his mistake himself then he was ready to give the other fellow the benefit of the argument. Was an average Scholar in the things they learned in those days of Spelling reading & writing &etc. he never was a great reader not having any news papers them days the practice of reading was neglected but he was always interested in the affairs of the farm & home money making was not the object in view them days but Josh always had some of it when the man got it

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of him he got value received he was a contented man with his own affairs was like every other man he had his faults same as the rest of us but was not a fault finder he was not a boy or man that spent his time in a way that brought nothing in he did not indulge in fishing or hunting but would rather cut wood or hoe than to have a little fun along the creek or in the woods with a gun he was always afraid of deep water never learning to be much of a swimmer or fisher he would rather be with men than boys early learning to chew tobacco. Working with it seemed to be his delight picking the worms off as big as a man's finger and biting their heads off for a past time if he under took to knock an apple off of a tree by throwing apples at it he would hit every one he did not throw at he was an expert at peeling apples with the old peeler it took all of us to keep up with him coring the apples he peeled he was a lover of Paw Paws he was fond of rambling in the woods with the boys & men coon & possum hunting but was a natural coward after dark when a boy, would run to kill him-self from a hen with a bunch of chickens when a boy

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and was an all round cautious boy and man on most all sides & corners he lived at home with mother & two sisters and was always depended on to do things at home & was ready to help his neighbors in any way he could never was very much of a hand to be with the girls when a boy & young man was above the average young man for good looks was easily plagued by the girls but rather like to be plagued by them had very red hair when a young man which rather added to the beadity of his face. He was a drafted man in the

army of the rebellion having chosen to stay at home and help take care of the things at home and do for those women & children of those that did go he done his big share nobly but when he was called to go (by draft) without a word or murmer he left all for his country & done his duty with his regiment (the 40 Indiana) taking part in Several battles only being Stunned slightly once by the bursting of a Shell at the battle of Franklin, Tenn. He was a good Soldier being honorably discharged he returned home and took up the duties of home life on the old farm & after about a year or so he married a very industrious girl

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near his own age by the name of Byfield they settled down between the two old homes on a piece of land her father gave her & made their home as pleasant as possible they were both very industrious & got along very well financially they afterward added to their farm another eighty acres of land & then another until they had quite a tract of land & by close economy they were very well to do for people in that country, they were unfortunate in raising their family only raising one of four he made a very industrious young man and married a very nice industrious girl and are living and own 100 acres of the farm & getting along with the average farmers in that country. Joshua & his father divided the farm after the death of the wife & mother & he married another lady & worked his part of the farm with the help of the boy for a few years then sold out & moved to North Vernon & is spending his last days in enjoying what he has earned in the Sweat of his face he is past the allotted time of three score & ten he is in his 78<sup>th</sup> year and enjoying very good health for a man of that age he is a pensioner & has enough to keep him in comfort for the rest of his days or years he is not a Christian but once knew the way & is very

30.

hopeful of entering in through the gates in the City. AMEN. Robert the younger brother was named for his father to preserve the family name & it means Rambler & surely the Father was a rambler and Robert was of the same disposition for he was always hunting something new & was not very well settled on anything unless he could see the why & where-fore of this or that but a very good boy at home or abroad. He was when a boy always throwing (or his father said) flingin at something & woe to the bird or anything that got in his range of rocks he was left-handed but not as accurate as the left-handed folks that were read of in Judges 20.16. but if there was a particular apple to be knocked out of the top of a tree, Big (for that was the name everyone knew him by) was the Boy that could knock it off. He was seemingly an awkward boy but was the boy for the occasion his mother could always depend on him to help her with her work especially the churning & getting wood & etc & etc but if Father wanted a nail Big always had a supply in his pocket & ready to supply the deficiency He never carried Strings, but Josh always had some

31.

in his pockets there was a great difference in the boys as well as when they became men Joshua done the work with the team & Big done the other work on the farm such as cutting chopping cutting briers setting fence & etc & etc, but he done it and did not think it

was more than his duty or filling his place on the farm. Big always spent his noon hours at the creek with hook & line or bow & arrow killing fish or frogs or in the orchard eating apples or throwing at birds or bullfrogs around the pond but was always ready to go to the field when time came to work him and his Father always done the hoeing in the field or garden Big was an expert with a hoe became the man behind the hoe but never was behind with hoeing, he did not like School very well but never was behind with his Lessons, Big Miller was one of the Champion Spellers of the School most always on limited time or Spelled everyone down unless limited, he was very Shy of the girls when in company. Was very awkward, when around where the girls were although he was somewhat of a favorite in the neighborhood with the ones of his Schoolmates, but he could not Stand

32.

to be joked about the girls which seemed to be the delight of the men of the neighborhood to carry on a joke of most any kind he was not a boy of very many words for the men made a joke of most anything he mentioned therefore that made him the more cautious, he learned to chew the filthy weed through influence of others that were older, but did not learn it till he was 16 or 17 years old then he ought to have known better or had more sense; all the rest of the family used it Big thought he should do like the rest, his father raised it same as any other crop, & did not care for the rest of us to use it, but as time went on developing as well as Joshua into a robust young man yet in his teens able to cope with most of the men in the work of the farm except to cut wheat with the Sickle then his fingers was always in the way of the Sickle Mowing was his delight with the Scythe but not any more the pitching the hay with the fork, did not like to cut wheat with the cradle (there was no machines then) for they were too heavy for boys they built for men those days and not for boys to ride on like they do now.

33.

The father being an old man that had always worked very hard and had passed the allotted time looked to the boys to do the work as he explained it but Big done the heavy work while Josh handled the team which was his delight, Josh would always put the bridle on old Charley for Big to ride old Charley to water. Big was always ready to let him do it, but we agreed very well on all lines if Josh could have his way & he most always had it, so got along very well for boys, father always told us how to do things & we knew enough to do as he told us if we could & we done our best. He would praise us or laugh at us & we would feel either good or bad, we always tried our best to do things as he Said the boys were about 18 & 20 years when the father took a severe cold in March 1857 & it terminated in lung fever and not being a very Stout old man he gave to the disease Death came to him in a few days & he crossed the river to the other Shore. His grave is in the old Mt. Olive Cemetery awaiting the call to Judgement. The mother and children remained at home on the farm untill they were all grown. They all Sought & found the with many other while they were all home with the mother.

Robert Miller's  
grave in  
old  
Mt Olive  
Cemetery

34.

Robert (or Big as he was called) went out among the neighbors to earn his own living (as the farm was not large enough for both of us to work on) and money, Joshua preferring

rather to stay at home than to work for other people and to have what surplus he could make above a living. Robert always had a home at home when not at work or it was necessary to help at home but Robert never was much for horses but chose the rest of the Stock as his favorites could not ride a horse on the trot with out falling off till about 14 yrs old. He knew the face of all as well as he did the neighbors or family. He knew the bawling or voice of nearly all the Stock on the farm could imitate the voice of most of the neighbors & knew the bark of all the dogs in the country & was always barefooted in the Spring before any of the boys on the creek and was always first to have the tooth ache in the Spring & the ague in the fall. Big was a fine Sheep-shearer for a boy in those days If it rained too hard to work in the field Big was either hunting or fishing

35.

He seemed to be a boy that loved his own company more than that of other boys He had one particular friend in the person of George Whittem (although the boys were all his friends) but he confided in George most of all. In Sugar making Big was the main hand to carry the sap from the nearest trees & when not at that he was hunting turkey or looking for birds or throwing rocks & seemed to be taken up with the things of nature in a general way of his own not caring to be with any one. So after he was about 22 years old & got over being bashful he took a notion to see some more of the country So he took his clothes & bid the folks good-bye & started to his Uncle in the western part of the State walking all the way through to see the country which was a wonder in a great many ways but had a very good time seeing things as we went along & after the fourth got to the end of the way in Green County, Indiana. My but things looked different to what I left at home. So he hired to his uncles for a year at thirteen dollars per month for a year and Stayed 3 years & worked for him & making

36.

several visits home during the time, he had some very good times & some not so good, he got over being afraid of the girls he had quite an experience with one girl come very near marrying her only did not for good luck then had some experience in the Porkhouse in 60 & 61 & went to School in the winter with some young ladies had quite a time with Some new Studies & the girls, worked for the same man till August then enlisted for the war in Company A, 82<sup>nd</sup> Indiana Regiment, W.Y. Monroe Captain. Saw lots of Service & heard the Scream of Shot & Shell in a good many Battles, he made a very good Soldier till the close of the war then returned home & took up citizenship for awhile doing different kinds of work during the rest of the Summer then chopped during the winter & having a good time enjoying different kinds of company but note of the tough class only going to one dance during the winter but mingled with the better classes of Society till April 12, 1866 he then chose a partner in the

37.

person of Miss Huldah Nay of a very respectable family they of the Baptist faith & practice. Her Father & Mother died during the war leaving the children alone or under the care of the oldest girls & boys. We settled in the old neighborhood for a few years and enjoyed the society of our old friends living happily together & after a few more years we took a rambling notion & in September 1870 moved to Southern Iowa

Appanoose County & after the usual course of Sickness & farming among Chintz-bugs wet weather the loss of two children and most every other thing that the human flesh is heir to we gave up the Struggle & bid the Country and people good-bye & Started for Kansas to live in the Sun-shine . So we found everything heart could wish SO in God we trusted & in Kansas we busted. We found everything plentiful Corn 15 cts per bushel, flour \$1.50 per 100 lbs, potatoes 15 cts per bushel all kinds of field & garden products plenty & cheap. We were well pleased with the change so things went very well for a few years till crops began to fail, dry weather, Chintz-bugs hot winds potato bugs Sickness &etc &etc began to come to us in double measure & we had nothing to go to not even wife's folks SO we had to Stay with the rest and

38.

we got along... was over how glad we was that we had to Stay so we raised our family of nine children and saw the Elephant at most every cross roads but we never look back not that we expected to turn to a pillar of Salt for took all our time and talent to go forward, but the people saw our determination to win So they gave us their sympathy (for that was all they could Spare) & we finished & the children was good like their mother & we looked or one more rain to make the corn & hay but it hardly ever come so we buckled the Armor a little tighter and said well we will Stay & next we will make it all right, so it was always one more rain or next year, so we went for a few years & we turned to do our first work in the vineyard of the Lord & he accepted our offering gave us an abundant entrance into the Kingdom of his grace & we Spent the last 25 yrs working for Him among the Wesleyan Methodists & the Free Methodists enjoying (not enduring) Salvation we gave up the farm & retired to Beloit, Kansas to enjoy the fellowship & communion of the Saints in the Free Methodist Church that we took an active part in erecting with might & main & means AMEN.

39.

And we lived & enjoyed the good things we had longed for so many years, but after about 3 years of retired life the grim monster Death claimed the wife & mother on the 27<sup>th</sup> of March 1911 leaving the father & husband & youngest girl alone to await the Summons to the beyond & after a few months we broke up the home & the girl went to live with her sister north of Omaha, Nebraska & the father lives with the oldest girl in Beloit, Kansas.

August 29<sup>th</sup>, 1913.

Now the reason I have written so much more about myself than any of the rest of the family is because I know more about myself than the rest of them So if you will excuse this Biography of myself I will say I am 76 years old now & enjoying the very best of health & expect to live the few days or years that I live in the Service of him that came to save his people from their Sins Amen. So hoping you will endeavor to all enter in through the gates into the City whose builder & maker is God. I leave it with you,

Yours affectionately,

Robert Miller

40.

There was two girls in the family sisters of the two boys younger than the boys the oldest one Mary Ann, she was not very Stout when in her girlhood, being afflicted with the phthisie until she was about 10 or 12 years old, the old family Dr. (Dr. Gerrish) told our father & mother if she could learn to Smoke he thought it would cure her of the phthisie so she learned to Smoke it cured her of the tisie (as the old women said) but she got to be a stout hearty girl before she was grown & made a very stout woman She did not marry until about thirty years old She was always a home girl & woman preferring home to any other place. She married a widower by the name of Hill, with three children. He was a carpenter, I think he lived in Johnson County. I think she did marry very rich but we though could have done better or worse either one, but was her choice. She married in a hurry & repented at her leisure, they did not live together very long.

41.

They raised one little girl. Mary Ann left him & went home & lived with our Mother till she died then the home was broke up & Mary Ann was left alone to battle with her circumstances till death came to her relief. Mary Ann lived around neighbors & relatives a few years & by exposure of different kinds & in different ways & not have very Stout in her lungs & having heavy colds different times consumption set in & she only lasted a few months & died at her Bro. Joshua's near where she was born on Neils-Creek She was buried in the Bear Creek Cemetery beside our Mother to await the call to Judgement when the dead shall come out of their graves to the Judgement some to everlasting life & some to everlasting contempt. Her little girl drifted away into Society no one knows where but trust she is leading a pure life. AMEN. Harriet was the youngest of the Family she was the first of the family to marry She married a man by the name of Newkirk he was like the most of the young men those days was poor but a good worker...trade he was not much of a financier

42.

but made as good a living as most any of his neighbors & that was about all any of them cared to make, he never owned any land of his won but depended on renting land & the farms that was for rent was none the best & limited to a few acres & their family was large & they were always poor they moved around a good deal to different localities finally his health failed him & he depended on the boys to do the farming & it was not the best of the ground with a poor quality in a poor country & it was hard to make both ends meet (as the saying is) & they finally moved back to the House he first built in the woods on his brother in laws place & in a few Short years he Died in the same House of one room & a shed kitchen that he began the battle of life in, leaving his wife & 4 or 5 grown children to follow on to the beyond, and after a few Short years the wife & Mother died in the same room where they began housekeeping & her husband died thus they lived together & died in the same room they began in Something that hardly ever occurs Two boys & two girls were left at home in the house they were born in but the girls soon found

43.

partners for life & one of the boys found him a wife & got homes of their own The other boy lives with his sisters & works by the Day week or month to be to be enjoying himself in this world spending his money as he earns it.

One of the girls lived 3 or 4 years & the consumption followed her from her father's side of the house & she went over to join those in the beyond the youngest girl married a very industrious man by the name of Stout He looks out for no one He bought his fathers old home & is getting ahead some Bill is an old batchelor boy a jolly fellow of the kind that has a good time as he goes along he numbers his friends by the size of the town or township he seems to enjoy life Single blessed or cussedness, there was 8 or 9 children of the Newkirk family 3 boys & 3 girls still live but like other families are some what Scattered they all seem to enjoy themselves as they go along as well as most any one else but we are all poor as far as this world's goods goes but we have enough to eat & wear & we are contented. Paul said if we have food & raiment let us therewith be content.

44.

There could be much more Said about Mr. Miller's Family that has come to the writer's mind since beginning this Sketch but this will answer for the present, but if you will bear with me a little longer I will say a little more. Mr. Miller was a true & devoted Methodist and they believed those days in being led by the Spirit to do & say things. So in nameing his children he chose Scripture names for the oldest he called John, the beloved disciple was John & John seemed to be the beloved boy of the boys, then there was Alexander he was named after the copper-smith but was not of that disposition but thought his way was the best (for himself) then there was Samuel ready to go at the call of his father (he was the child of Promise) as Samuel did when the Lord called him & he thought it was Eli then there was James the Lord's Brother & James the less that was a prominent man in day then there was Jonathan that was the friend of David, no doubt but David would have been killed if had not of been for Jonathan

45.

Then there was Caleb he was a man of great courage he did not develop in manhood but died in infancy. No doubt but he would have made his mark in the world but like Enoch & Elijah the Lord took him. The there is Joshua that is still living He is a leader of the people in his vicinity in some things but as Joshua was at least on the same line, but the youngest Boy he named for himself to Preserve the family name his name is just Robert & the interpretation of that is Rambler & sure he is one like his Father.

So he named the girls Scripture names as well the oldest was Mary that was the name of the Mother of the Savior the next was Sarah that was for Abrahams wife then came Elizabeth Jane the mother of John the baptist then there Rhoda her name means forsaken then Mary Ann & Harriet I don't remember what he called that only Harriet was for one of his friends by that name.



46.

So now by your leave & thanking you for your patience & for bearance while I have been reading this Sketch to you do not call it an idle tale but to remember they are facts as stated by one of first pioneers of Neils-Creek, they are as vivid in my mind as when I first heart them as related to me as we worked in the woods fields garden or tobacco patch as my Father raised his tobacco same as any other crop. Some that read this Sketch of the pioneers of that part of the country may think Strange of the things that are related here but they are true altogether with a little coloring So by your permission I will leave it with you You will excuse the mistakes I have made in leaving out so many words & that some day we will meet again if not in this world we will meet in the Sweet by & by face to face on the Sunny banks of the eternal shore there to dwell with our loved that are gone on before There we shall see Jesus and dwell with him at our Fathers

47.

right hand forever more. So the Apostle said to give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard lest at any time we let them Slip. So give heed to the old Prophet that said set thine house in order for thou shalt die & not live.

But the Apostle said it is appointed unto men once to die but after this the Judgement.

So now I bid you all adieu till we meet again and Sign my name as Sincerely your Loving & True Friend & Well wisher.

ROBERT MILLER BELOIT KANSAS

At 76 years old & 2 months

With malice toward none but charity for all