

Letter Written in 1856 by Deborah Autry Johnston

Jerry Long, Owensboro, Ky. transcribed the following letter from the "Underwood Papers, 1838-1894", found in the manuscript collection of the Margaret I. King Library, University of Kentucky, Lexington, Ky. In 1959 the original letter was in the possession of Bernice Underwood, of Livia, Ky.

Ohio County, Ky. March the 14th 1856:

Dear sister

I take the present opportunity of letting you know that we are all well at present hoping these few lines will find you and your family enjoying the same good blessing the relations are all in reasonable health at this time. We have .moved from the place we lived on when you came to see us. We now live in one mile of Uncle Jacob Awtry. Martha Ann Canan is married, she married Nathaniel Boswell, a son of old Henry Boswell. Tell mother Net and Arty that we are all well and would be glad to see them, tell John there is plenty of girls here that wants to marry and I think he had better come up here and court them some as they want courting very much. I want you to write to me as soon as you get this letter and let me know how you are all comein on. Give my best love and respects to all inquiring friends and dont forget to take a portion to your self. No more at present but remains your affectionate sister until death

Deborah Johnston

Additional notes by Jerry Long:

Deborah Autry Johnston wrote the above letter to her sister, Eleanor (Ellen) Autry Underwood., The former resided near Rosine, Ohio County, Ky., and the latter resided in the Livermore Precinct, McLean County, Ky. about 1½ miles north of the junction of Highways 250 & 431). The sisters were the daughters of John Autry & Nancy Canon, who were married in Ohio County, Ky. on 20 Sept. 1821. John Autry was enumerated in the 1830 & 1840 censuses of Ohio County, Ky. His widow, Nancy (age 50) and five children (Debby 24, Artemisa 22, Ellen 20, Janette 18, & John W. 13) were listed in the 1850 Daviess County, Ky. census.

Deborah Johnston in her letter refers to her sisters, Arty & Net, and brother, John. Nancy Autry & her son, John W. were listed in the household of her daughter, Atimissa Heady in the 1860 Daviess County, Ky. census, their name was spelled "Otley". Artimissa Autry married George W. Heady 27 Feb. 1854 in Daviess County, Ky. Deborah Autry married John Johnston 9 June 1853 in Ohio County, Ky. and she died between 1856-1865. Janette Autry married Augustine Pean 29 Oct. 1850 in Daviess County, Ky. and she died between 1864-1870. Eleanor Autry married Granville Underwood 14 July 1853 in Daviess County, Ky., she was still living at the time of the 1880 McLean County, Ky. census. Martha Ann Canon referred to in the letter was a cousin of the writer. The daughter of Charles S. Canon & Malinda Braxdale, she was born in

what is now Boyle County, Ky. on 28 Aug. 1838; she married Nathaniel P. Boswell in Ohio County, Ky. on 14 Jan. 1856. Martha Canon Boswell died 13 March 1916 and was buried in the Boswell Cemetery, near Rosine, Ohio County, Ky.

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