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Nasty, Brutish and Short

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From Scotland to Cincinnati: A Journey Through 314 Years of My Lineage

As seminar discussions and their paired primary readings have allowed the members of our class to dive deep into the philosophies and authors of The Enlightenment, we have grown as members of the thinking class who will use our newfound knowledge to shape the next 314 years of our world as it has shaped the previous 314. That being said, our discussions and our research have only provided us the opportunity to understand and assess The Enlightenment for exactly what it was, the readings and ideas of a well-developed thinking class of enlightened individuals. However, we have not had the opportunity to address the impact that The Enlightenment had and continues to have on individual families and individual people in our world.

Entire libraries worth of texts have been written on The Enlightenment and, more importantly, the impact it has had on our world over the course of only a few hundred years. Nonetheless, the ideology of the Enlightenment and its global impact cannot be fully understood without first exploring the changes it made to the daily lives of individuals. With that being said, I shall attempt this endeavor through the tracing of my own family lineage through the Scottish Moore family line.

I will examine the lives of the Moore family line as it moves from Scotland to North America and then throughout the United States through time. During this, there will be several constructs of individual and familial life examined: geography, economic circumstances, material standard of living, health statuses, life expectancies, political milieu, education, religion

and access to culture. Through these observations and extrapolations, parallels will be drawn between The Enlightenment and the direct implications of it on the lives of people across this country and world.

John Moore
Highlands, Scotland (? - ?)

1700

At the turn of the century, the Moore line resided in the countryside of the highlands in Scotland. Without confirmation, it is fair to assume that the family name at the time resembled a more Scottish form, perhaps Mor, Mower, Moir or More. Upon the move to North America, the commonly accepted “Moore” became used. At this time in Scotland, the Moore family likely made its living as farmers. This provided the family a two-sided story when it came to economic security. On one hand, the family, masters of their own land, relied little on the employment of any to survive. They were the arbiters of their own fate as it pertained to economic security and the materials needed to live.

However, the fate of the Moores therefore depended on many elements over which they had little to no control, of which the weather is a key example. But due to the scientific advances of the seed drill and horse-drawn machinery inspired by Enlightenment thinking, agriculture boomed in what became known as the Age of Improvement in Scotland. This Moore line experienced a rather plain lifestyle, common of most subsistence farmers during this period. Their home were built using entirely local materials, they had simple and plain furniture, and rarely enjoyed the luxury of meat.

Life expectancy was low for all during this time period. Disease ran rampant with little-to-no sanitary system in place; the toll of an agricultural lifestyle was apparent on the lives of the Moores.

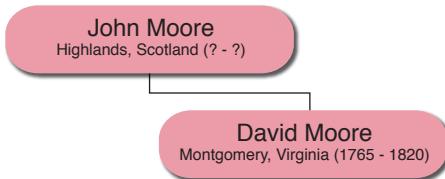
During this time period, and until 1832, Scottish government and politics were controlled mostly by the landowners. There was no national government to speak of, and this provided opportunities for both unchecked authoritarian ruling by the landowners, but also mobility of ordinary people to emigrate. Therefore, the Moore family was likely ruled by a wealthy landowner, but mostly left to fend for itself through subsistence farming. The electorate in Scotland remained under 5,000 people until 1832, and therefore it is quite unlikely that any of the Moores in my direct lineage had voting rights in Scotland, which touted a population of one million people and growing.

It is unlikely that any of these Moores received any formal schooling, or that they could read or write. While a fairly comprehensive school system had been developed for males in the lowlands of Scotland, basic education in the Highlands was left lacking. Literacy rates for men were low in these regions, and the rate for women was abysmal.

During this time, Presbyterianism was most common in Scotland. No records exist to support claims of the Moores to any particular religion or creed, but it is important to note that Presbyterianism had only been recently restored as the main religion of Scotland after the Glorious Revolution in 1688. But as the 18th century progressed, the growing tensions and division in the Church of Scotland could have served as reason for the Moores to immigrate to America, faced with the danger of religious persecution.

As for culture, it is a fair assumption that the Moores did not reap the benefits of a lavish lifestyle. John Moore, who was born about 1730, had six sons and was likely charged to raise

them all in a humble lifestyle. While these men could have likely engaged in the free forms of leisure such as singing, storytelling and dancing, they were most likely not provided the time nor status necessary to enjoy the likes of card games and horse races.



1800

In the latter part of the 18th century, John Moore came with his six sons to America and settled in New York City. This likely took place near or soon after the Revolutionary War, because one piece of confirmed information suggests that John's fourth son, David Moore, was born abroad in 1765. After his last two sons' births, John then moved with all six to New York, where he owned land on Wall Street.

This was a unique and exciting time for the Moores to live in New York City. The city served as the US capital from 1785 to 1790, and Wall Street was the site of the first presidential inauguration in 1789. In 1792, traders formalized the Buttonwood Agreement, creating the New York Stock Exchange.

Before these exciting events that gave business an increasing dominance on Wall Street, the area had been home to both residencies and businesses. It is likely that the Moore family had simply taken up residence in the area, as there is no record of any of the men serving during the Revolutionary War. And given the timing of John's son David's move to Virginia, it seems as though the eldest Moore and his sons lived in New York city during its occupation as a British military base from 1776 until 1783.

In this, it is clear that the Enlightenment thinkers' impact on many of the leaders of the United States and the Revolutionary War had subsequent, and powerful, implications for my direct family lineage.

It seems that John Moore worked on Wall Street and made a decent living doing so. He supported his six sons and eventually provided for them in such a way that allowed each to move on to other states and assist in the building of our nation.

John's son David, who falls under my direct lineage, moved on to Montgomery County, VA, which marks the beginning of my family's long and continued presence in the state today. He married his wife, Elizabeth, and together they had six children: John, William, Jonathan, Isaac, Solomon, and Zeba.

David was a farmer; he owned land on the Little River in the part of Montgomery County that eventually became Floyd County. This, as it did in Scotland for the elder Moore clan, provided a comfortable, subsistence style of living for David, Elizabeth and their six children. They probably lived in a small, several-room home on the countryside in Floyd and enjoyed very few, if any, material luxuries. His son, Isaac, was also a farmer and his assessed value was \$4,800 in 1850, which would have made him pretty well off for that point in history in Floyd. Isaac's wealth marks a point of confirmation in connection between political power, historical wealth, and the economic circumstances of my family today.

The life of a farming family provided several key dynamics as it pertains to health. The daily farm work required the help of all family members, and obviously provided opportunities for a healthy lifestyle. However, it was also a strenuous lifestyle that included many dangerous activities. The Moore family during this time probably had enough wealth to see a family doctor

for small, regular visits and care, but would have endured financial hardships in the face of a medical emergency of great magnitude.

Also around this time in the family history, it became apparent that most in the family lived well past general life expectancies for both men and women. David died younger than any male in the rest of the lineage, at 55 years of age in 1820. Most of the males in this time in my family lived to be about 70, with females living only slightly longer when you take out the single one who died young, presumably during childbirth.

Politically, David seemingly enjoyed a great deal of efficacy, especially as an immigrant to America. He had spent the majority of his life in the new country, and as a white, land-owning male obviously enjoyed the right to vote and hold office.

On the 7th of October in 1799, David took an oath of fidelity to support the Constitution of the United States as the Lieutenant in the 1st Battalion, 75th Regiment of the Virginia Militia. Following this service, David was appointed constable of Montgomery County in 1807, 1811, 1813 and 1815. Presumably, he and his family enjoyed strong political power and were treated with great respect in the Montgomery area.

Furthermore, the most obvious change in political climate comes from the fact that Virginia was no longer a colony subject to the British Crown. Even further, George Washington had died the previous year, imploring the country to hold firm on its isolationist foreign policy. Being an election year, 1800 saw a great deal of politics for that alone. The incumbent Federalist, pro-British alliance President John Adams sought to defend his position against Thomas Jefferson's pro-French alliance Democratic-Republicans.

Freedom from tyranny as well as individual rights were ideas set forth in the Enlightenment that could be clearly seen. Unlike the previous elections in the 1700s, the people

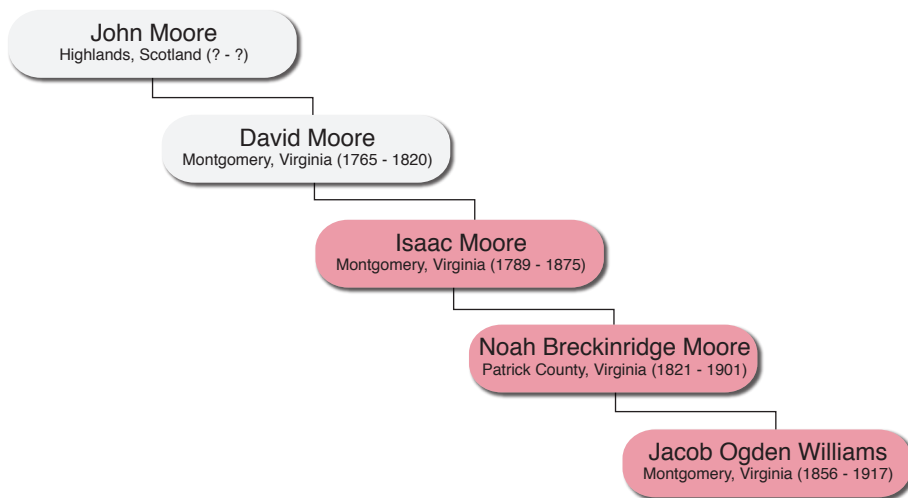
voting in the 1800 general election voted knowing that they would have an impact. Now, the top public officials would be elected by (some of) the people, rather than appointed by a king. All white male property owners, including David, were free to participate in this process. While this is far from the universal suffrage enjoyed today, it was a massive step in that direction, and the Moore family lived in the most free and democratic environment present on the Earth at the time.

Another important change that the Moore family experienced over the course of the 18th century and into the 19th was an increased emphasis placed on education. The Moores who grew up around 1800 grew up in an environment that touted education as seemingly infinitely more important than the culture of Scotland in 1700 had. Moores who grew up around this time and after would have likely been taught to read, write and do arithmetic. But as a middle class agricultural family, it is very unlikely that any of the children at this time would have any additional education.

In 1800, the Moore family line had and continued to move toward the Baptist denomination. After leaving Scotland during a time of religious uncertainty, it was not surprising that David and his children were drawn to the Baptist faith, a much more democratic religion that aligned with the political culture of the colonies and subsequently, the new country. This was a product of the First Great Awakening, which proved to be quite influential in its conversions of Presbyterians to the Baptist faith. This new Baptist faith allowed the Moore family to participate in a religion that made Christianity feel personal to the ordinary man, apart from the ritual and hierarchy that the First Great Awakening fought against.

Between 1700 and 1800 not very much would have changed for the Moore line as far as access to culture goes. Living in rural, southwest Virginia has just as much, if not more, to do with this as does the middle class economic status of Moores. The Moores would likely not have

had enough wealth to commission a portrait by an artist, and the only music or theater that they might have been exposed to would have originated in the church. This is not to say that culture had not been built elsewhere in the world, or that new and exciting art forms weren't being explored; these opportunities simply were not an option for a family living in such a rural area.



1900

The next two members of the Moore lineage spent the majority of their lives in the latter part of the 19th century. Isaac Moore was the son of David, and Noah Breckinridge Moore was Isaac's son. Noah Breckinridge Moore was born and bred in Floyd County, Virginia, which is also where he passed away in 1901.

He continued the agricultural ways of the Moore line, and was a farmer who owned several hundred acres and made a good living as the owner of an orchard. This provided him a good deal of stability as his own employer, but he was subject to the will of the weather, among other natural occurrences over which he had little control.

Nonetheless, he was well off and experienced more economic freedom than had any of his ancestors. He, his wife Artemesia, and their seven children enjoyed a comfortable lifestyle in

a large country home. Artemesia actually was killed at 28 in their home by lightning strike. She was holding one of their children, newborn James David, who was unhurt in the accident.

Noah went on to remarry to Jane Harbour Pillaman, with whom he had another eight children. With a total of 15 children, it is clear that Noah Breckinridge was financially stable and most likely of the middle to upper income class, but practiced a middle class lifestyle (having so many children to care for.)

Their material standard of living was comfortable, and would have been considered luxurious by his ancestors. Noah Breckinridge lived to be 80 years old, and remained in good health for his lifetime, likely due to the increased opportunity for medical care both financially and through the growth of Floyd and its resource base during this period. Noah Breckinridge served in the Virginia Legislature from 1865-1867, which demonstrates an even greater political influence than any other in the Moore line. He was, as a white, land-owning and wealthy male, of prime demographics for a spot in politics.

Noah Breckinridge was most definitely literate, and undoubtedly stressed the importance of education to his children, who most likely attended school that amounted to that of a primary education today in reading, writing and arithmetic. Some of his sons may have gone to complete a higher level of education than his daughters.

The next step in my direct family lineage is where the Moore family name becomes Williams. One of Noah Breckinridge Moore's daughters, Julia Ann Clementine Moore, married Jacob Ogden Williams.

Together, these two had nine children. Jacob Ogden Williams was also a farmer, and farmed the same land his father-in-law had on the property known in my family as the "Mattie 67," in addition to several hundred additional acres.

Jacob and his family lived comfortably in a small house on the Christiansburg Turnpike in Floyd, Virginia., today referred to as “The Homeplace.” This property was more than enough to provide a comfortable lifestyle for the family, but they did not live in excess of any sort. Floyd is a very humble town and county, and while Jacob was very economically secure, it was more due to a low cost of living than a high income. Their standard of living was most likely quite comparable to that of those around them, with the only caveat to that being that Jacob and Julia Ann’s family was always economically secure and able to provide for their children.

All of Julia Ann’s siblings lived to be over 70 years old, which aligns with the growing life expectancy over the course of history. This is a product of several factors; the family was able to support its medical and lifestyle needs financially as well as an increased emphasis placed on (medical) science from the Enlightenment had increased life expectancies across the world and continues to do so.

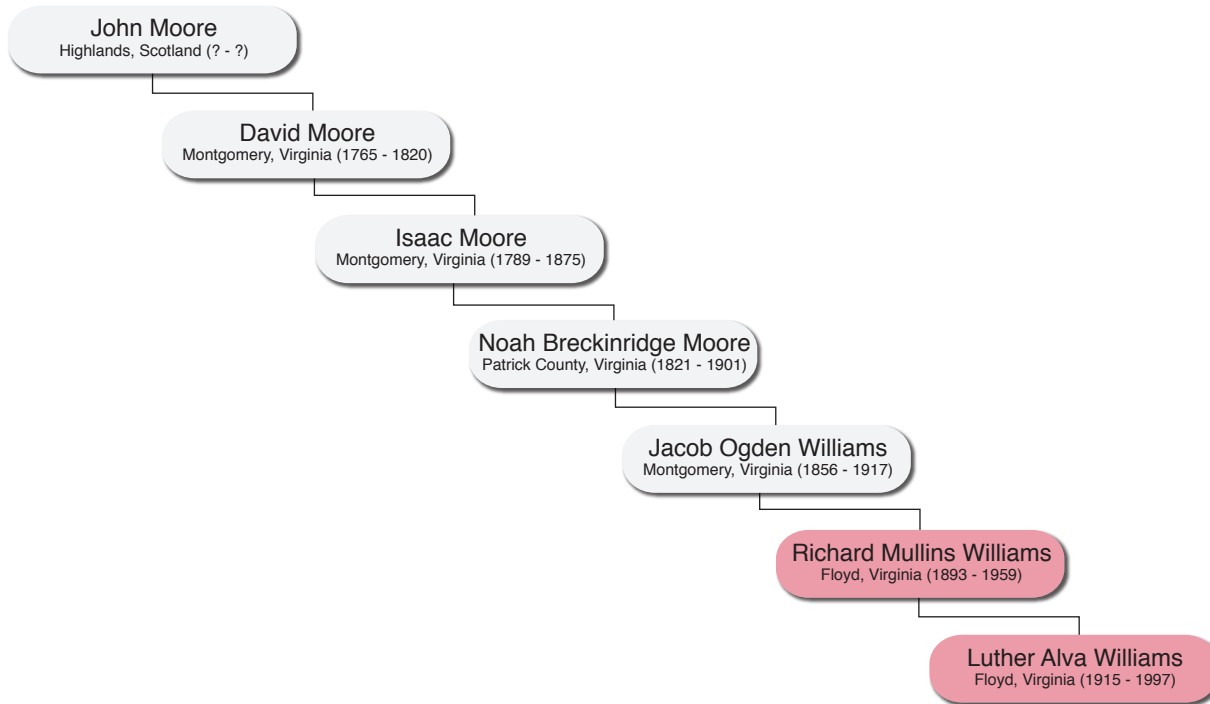
At this point, the family withdrew itself from political service, but remained at the level of privilege it had always enjoyed in that realm. Obviously in 1900 it was still only men who had the right to vote, and the inclusion of other races in the electorate had no impact on my family directly as it pertains to suffrage.

One thing that would have improved for the Moores (now Williamses) over their ancestors was quality of education. While the Moores in the year 1800 would have been primarily the responsibility of the family or small, local community, most or all of the 1900 Williamses would have gone to public school. The quality of their education had increased as well; there was now an established curriculum for the children to study that extended beyond subjectively authored reading and writing textbooks. There is still no evidence to suggest that

any of the Williamses would have received any further education past primary school in the year 1900, or that they needed to in order to continue the family's agricultural ways.

Cultural expression had changed around the world significantly by 1900, but not much had changed for the Williamses. They lived in rural, southwestern Virginia, which was hardly a venue for the high arts. Nonetheless, music could have played a role in the lives of the 1900 Williamses. Not only would they have sung together as a family for leisure, but also the Floyd Country store began to provide the Friday Night Jamboree, one of the most attended weekly events in the county. At the Jamboree, local musicians come to play inside the country store for crowds every Friday evening, which is something that the whole family could have attended; the event operates on "Granny's Rules:" no smoking, no drinking alcohol, no bad language, and no conduct unbecoming to a lady or a gentleman. This would have been one of the only organized cultural events in Floyd in 1900; simply put, there wasn't a whole lot of time for a farming family to absorb much outside culture.

The Williamses in the year 1900 were living in the middle of the Third Great Awakening. Religious freedom was being expressed in many different ways across the country. The Temperance Movement campaigned to ban the sale of alcohol, while Social Gospel preachers condemned the oppression of the poor under the wealthy Gilded Age industrialists. While they were almost certainly still Baptists, it's entirely possible that the Williamses may have participated in one of these movements. Also, like their ancestors, they would have been almost completely free from persecution due to the protections offered by the US Constitution.



1950

The two Williamses that grew into adulthood during this time period were Richard Mullins Williams Sr. and Luther Alva Williams. Only Luther Alva, henceforth referred to as Al, will be detailed in depth during this section, but it is important to note that Richard marks the first known descendent in the line to work outside of agriculture as a primary occupation. During World War II, Richard worked at the Hercules Powder Plant in Dublin, Virginia, to produce munitions for the war effort.

Al also spurred the greatest geographic migration of this line in nearly 200 years, taking it from Virginia to West Virginia to Ohio. Additionally, he worked for JC Penney Co. for 40 years in retail management, the longest running career in the line that moved away from agricultural work. This economic move coincided with a cultural shift in the United States that saw many blue-collar workers turn to white-collar jobs in the period following industrialization. This career and succession of positions provided Al's family a great deal of economic security, but at the

cost of geographic stability. Where the past 200 years of this lineage had remained, for all intents and purposes, in the southwest corner of Virginia (even on the same land for multiple generations,) Al saw transfers take him and his family to Parkersburg and Charleston, West Virginia, Covington, Virginia, Lancaster, Ohio, and Forestville, Maryland. Al's family lived a wealthy, middle class life, and his job was secure, as long as he wanted it. A strong societal notion that aligns with this period is the notion of staying with a single company for an entire career.

The material standard of living for Al's family was significantly better than that of any former family in the line, and this was consistent with the growth of consumerism and technological advances within society. They enjoyed the luxuries of a radio, television and microwave. They had a car, and were able to provide cars for their two children, Ron and Sara Sue (my mother) when they were able to drive.

Health and life expectancy were at a new all-time high during this time period, with little surprise. World averages were equally on the rise. Al and his wife lived to be 82 and 92 years old, respectively. They were able to receive healthcare that far surpassed anything available to the generations that preceded them, even so to provide dental braces for their children's orthodontic needs. The 1940s had seen significant reforms in health care, and many companies now offered health benefits to their employees. It's possible that the Williamses could have taken advantage of one of those plans, making quality health care easier for them to access.

In the realm of political milieu, 1950 was a terribly interesting time in America. Following World War II, the United States found itself in the beginnings of the Cold War, subject to McCarthyism, and in the early workings of the Civil Rights Movement. Women had been given suffrage, which marked a piece of political power that had been a long time coming

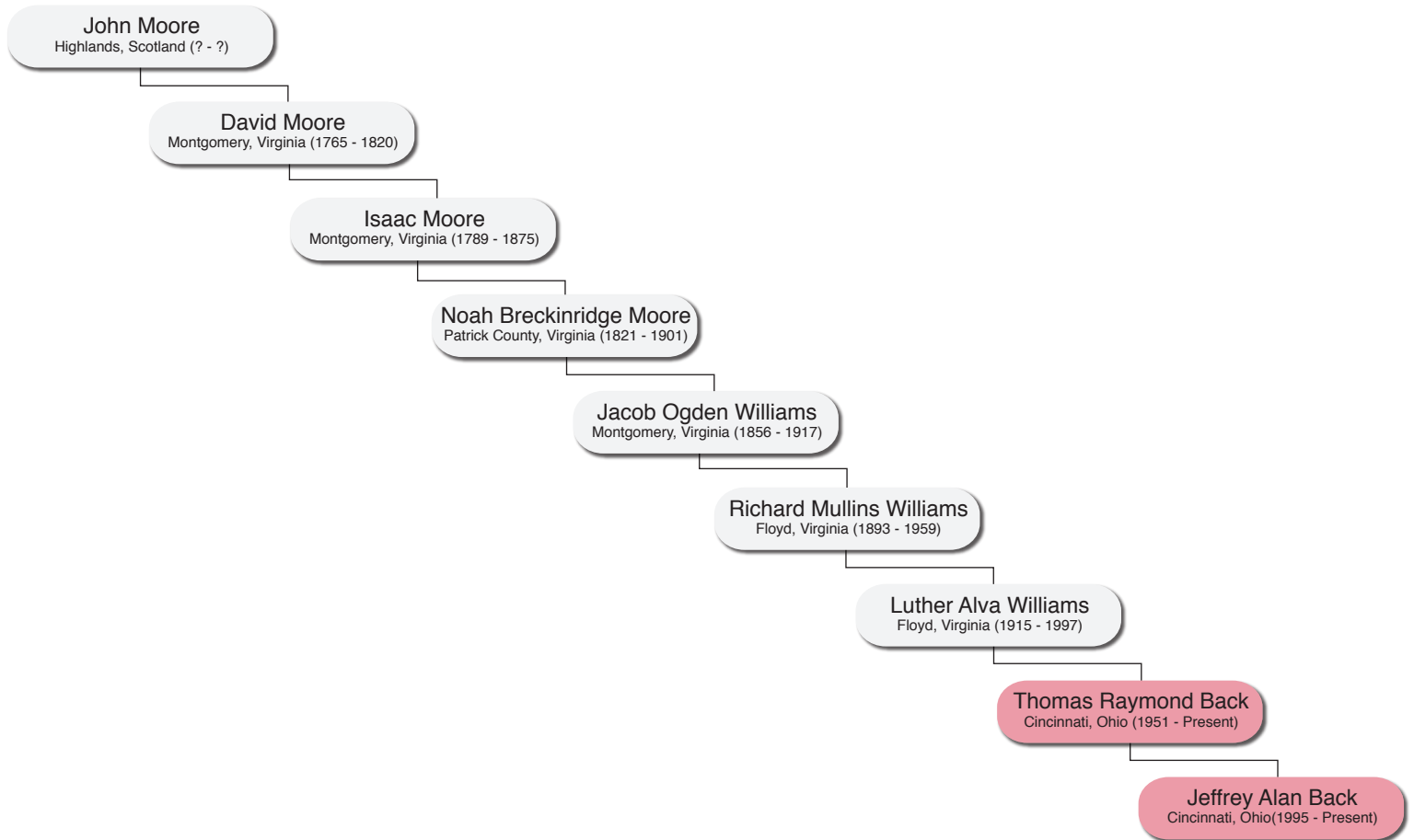
for political equality in the United States. It seems as though it took the rise of a middle class within US society to finally demand the right for women to vote, almost in the way that the middle class had sparked the French Revolution; revolutions and change come from the middle class, not the wealthy or poor.

In 1950, the education of the Williamses reached new heights as well. Al was the first in my direct line to attend college, and he went to school at the West Virginia Business College. His wife, Gerene, also attended the State Teacher's College, where she obtained her teacher's license before going on to teach school for many years. And while it took until 1950 for members of my direct family line to gain an education higher than that of a public school, this importance placed upon education is a direct product of The Enlightenment and the ideals it holds on education. Moreover, Al's children both were a part of a public school system that kept students until they were 18 and graduated from high school. This era marked the first time that educational opportunities were at least comparable, if not equal, between men and women and provided each the chance to obtain a collegiate degree in my family. There were certainly others before this time that had fought for and achieved educational rights for women, but this is the first experience my family had with that concept.

The Williamses were still Baptist at this point, and attended church each week at a Baptist ministry in whatever location they presently resided. Religion also held more weight with Al and Gerene's generation than it did with Ron and Sue's. Like their ancestors, the Williamses could trust the Constitution to protect their freedom of worship, and they could trust their church to not be subject to any form of persecution without penalty. In fact, the Williamses of the 1950s were, if anything, freer to worship openly than they had been in the past, as the aftermath of World War II saw a growing conviction in the US that the intolerance of Nazism

could be prevented if different faiths cooperated with each other. Many people now believed that no one form of religion was more or less “American” than any other and religious tolerance was spreading throughout the United States. That being said, there still was and is a great deal of room for growth in this regard.

As it pertains to access to culture, the Williamses of the 1950 time period had significantly more options available to them in all aspects of culture: music, art and theater. This increased access is the product of several developments. For one, the geographic mobility of these Williamses spans well beyond that of any other member of the line, and therefore there are more options available for culture in the cities that this family lived in than those who lived in Floyd, Virginia. Secondly, as previously mentioned, the overall consumption of those during the 1950 time period had increased greatly through the development of new technologies, new art forms, and new music styles. Not only was the “culture” becoming more diverse in its content, it became more accessible in its delivery; thanks are in order for both of these items due to The Enlightenment, which provided more value to the pursuits of art and technology.



Present

Today, the Back family has geographic roots that span the country, but the direct line to me only takes a few steps. The line that I've traced through the course of history until the present was through my mother's side of the family, as she is the daughter of Al Williams. In 1981, my father, Tom Back, married my mother, Sue Williams Back. And, in 1995, I was born in Cincinnati, Ohio. Sue had moved around for her father's work and graduated high school in Lancaster, Ohio. She then attended Miami University in Oxford, Ohio and settled in the greater Cincinnati area before meeting my father. Since that time, they lived in the same house for more than 30 years, including the entirety of my childhood. I have since chosen to attend the University of Cincinnati, and declare Cincinnati as my permanent residence. But, just this last

summer, my parents sold their longtime home and moved back to the Moore and Williams' old stomping grounds, Floyd, Virginia. They actually built their new home on the "Mattie 67," land that has been in my family for hundreds of years. And that is where the geographic tale of my family lineage stands today.

One of the interesting economic developments of my family's circumstances between 1950 and today is that both my mother and my father had full-time careers in their early adult lives. My father worked in information technology roles for the better part of 40 years, and my mother was a rising corporate star in accounting at a paper company. Both did well financially—well enough that they decided as a married couple that my mother would quit her job and stay home to take care of the family once they had kids. My father is now retired and they recently built their own house and are living comfortably. In the entirety of my lifetime, I always had everything I needed to live a comfortable life, and most of the things that I wanted, too.

Obviously I don't know the entire story as it pertains to my family's finances, but to the best of my knowledge, we were never in any financial trouble. My dad always had a job and my mother found part-time work when she wanted to after I had grown older and required less care. That being said, the career and financial choices that my parents made provided for a high level of economic security, that I believe is probably higher than any other point in my family's known history.

Today, the material standard of living of my family is at an above average level. I am not positive to what degree it is higher than the average comparison in today's day and age, but I do know that absolutely all of material needs are met, and that I have been provided a significant number of luxuries such as a car, laptop, phone, choice clothing, etc. Even in the sense of shelter, my family's material standard of living provides the financial flexibility for my parents, siblings

and myself to all live independently of one another in cities across the country. This differs greatly from members of my family in the past, where several generations would live underneath one roof. One final note to this point is that I believe my family today is much more able to make significant purchases without threat of ability to survive than in the past.

I have no reason to believe that the health standards and life expectancies of my family today have not continued to increase with the expansion and improvement of healthcare availability to myself. Modern medicine is better than ever, and it's also publicly available. My family and I do have healthcare plans either provided through employers or school, but if those options were to fall through, there are government options for health insurance that did not exist 64 years ago. If we are to continue to live without major accidents or illnesses, it would not be out of the question to suggest that my family members and I alive today will live into our eighties or nineties. It does seem to be a trend that females live slightly longer than males throughout my family's history.

In the political realm, my family today is blessed with more freedom than any before us, and I believe this freedom shares a direct correlation to the Enlightenment ideas that proposed it to be not only acceptable, but encouraged, for the people of a government to challenge it when something needs to be done. In today's world, there is little fear of persecution for presenting qualms, frustrations and even new ideas to the government about its policies and procedures. Of course there will be those who disagree with your ideas, but that is perfectly acceptable as well. Questioning the government is a much more widely accepted practice today than it was 64 years ago.

As far as the field of education goes, my family has experienced increased opportunity in that as well. Both of my parents and both of my siblings have bachelor's degrees, and I am

working on a bachelor's degree myself. I also believe that my two siblings and I will all go on to receive at least one higher degree as we work to become the best educated professionals in our field as possible. Our world is no longer one in which education is reserved for the elite few, but rather something that each and every person is entitled to receive and empowered to achieve. A further notable construct of today's world that pertains to all aspects, but at its core, education, is the Internet. The Internet has provided an avenue for all types of information to be distributed instantaneously: economic, health, politics, education, religion and culture. More than any other time in history, information on all of these constructs is available to nearly anyone at any time.

Today, my sister is the only member of my immediate family that regularly practices a religion. As children I was never raised in a religious environment by my parents, and have explored Christianity on my own but no other religions. I will say that in today's world there is still a level of religious persecution, but it is on an individual, rather than institutional, level. Religious freedom is still protected by the Constitution, and I feel comfortable in saying that I could practice any religion I please without fear of persecution.

Touching on the internet once more, I firmly believe that culture is wildly more available today than it was 64 years ago, and I recognize that there will be a large contingency of people who argue that point against me. However, I believe that the Internet and increased availability of information and communication have provided for the creation and expansion of new and old forms of culture. I think the line of what is and what is not culture is become more blurred because of old definitions and traditions clashing with new ideas and art forms.

A Change over 314 Years

It is an understatement to say that my family's circumstances have changed drastically and dramatically over the course of the last 314 years. We began as farmers in Scotland and

having since become professionals working in the United States in fields that didn't exist in the year 1700. We enjoy an infinitely better standard of living, from food to clothing to luxuries that include cars, electronics and vacations. Our life expectancy can, at times, triple that of people who lived 314 years ago, and our political and religious freedom provide for protection against persecution that would have been scoffed at in 1700. Education is no longer a privilege, but a right, and today serves as the base for a fulfilling and prosperous life. Each of these ideas holds a direct correlation to The Enlightenment. Its ideas of championing science and experimentation have contributed to advancements in all walks of life that allow us to enjoy these improved liberties, technologies and medicines. The Enlightenment trumpeted principles of individual rights, the power of the common people, and freedom from tyranny. I firmly believe that the great minds of the Enlightenment would rest easily for having known what progress has been made at the hands of their creation.