

Sept. 8, 1955

Route 4,

Sevierville, Tenn.

Mr. R.L. Maples

New Gatlinburg Inn,

Gatlinburg, Tennessee

Dear Rel:

I told Mr. Hunter that I would get him the name and address of a direct descendant of John Sevier. She is Mrs. Mary Hoss Headman, 400 Cumberland Ave., S.W., Knoxville. Her telephone number is 3-4755. Mrs. Headman is a g.g. grand daughter of Sevier by his first marriage to Sarah Hawkins; her father was the late and well-known Methodist Bishop Hoss, who was born and raised at old Jonesboro, Tennessee. She tells me that her father started research on his g. grand father Sevier before 1890, and that she continued the work after her father's death and has the data collected by both.

Mrs. Headman is now 81, but her mind is still quite alert. I asked her what she thought about Mr. Hunter's proposed title, and she immediately said there could be no title more appropriate. She insists, however, that the spelling should be "Nelachucky" rather than "Nelichucky" Jack since that was the old spelling and that the "e" should be pronounced as in "no." I think most Tennessee historians will bear her out in this.

Mrs. Headman claims that Sevier's second wife, Catherine Sherrill, better known as "Bonnie Kate", has been glamorized too much and that she actually was a large, ugly and over grown girl when Sevier married her in 1780, shortly after the untimely death of Sarah Hawkins and not long before King's Mountain. He was left with ten young children and his second marriage, so states Mrs. Headman, was one of convenience to provide him with a house keeper and mother for his children.

I did not ask her how she would feel if Mr. Hunter saw fit to include in the drama the story of "Bonnie Kate" jumping into Sevier's arms to escape the Indians at the Watauga fort in 1776 when the Cherokee made their first major attack on Tennessee's first settlers. I do not think this story is well founded on historic fact, but it is one of our oldest traditions and lends itself well to drama- I doubt if Mr. Hunter will consider it his job to correct our traditions.

Mrs. Headman said she would be delighted to talk to Mr. Hunter at any time. You might warn him, however, that he will have to allow her to do most of the talking and that he may find it difficult to stop her. I think he may get from her some clearer insight into Sevier's personality and character which would enable him to portray the man better. She has an

address delivered by her father, Bishop Hess, to the Rockingham County, Virginia (Sevier's birth place) historical society in the 1890's- she calls it Sevier's best biography.

Mr. Hunter also asked about the date of the annual meeting and banquet of the East Tennessee Historical Society. Tentative plans calls for the evening of October 1st, but if there are changes I shall let him know. I imagine he would like to attend and announce the drama- all members will be very much interested. It would nice if a Gatlinburg group also attended. The public is always welcome.

I am also including notes from a Revolutionary War pension file which I copied in the National Archives in 1953. I was not too interested at the time because I was obtaining data from the Revolutionary files of Sevier County ~~men~~ men. I regret now that I did not get a more complete abstract because the affidavit of James Sevier seems to confirm Mrs. Headman's statement that Sevier's second marriage was rather sudden. However, I doubt if Mr. Hunter will be too interested in this anyway- if he is he can obtain a photostatic copy from the National Archives.

Sincerely yours,