MILDRED DU BOIS BIOGRAPHICAL PROFILE

Including Du Bois Family Genealogy

Henrietta de Veer Updegraff
Volunteer, Gunn Historical Museum
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Contents

Mildred Du Bois Biographical Profile

Born: October 3, 1881, 940 Castleton Avenue, Borough of Richmond, Staten Island, New York
Died: November 23, 1933 (aged 52), New York Hospital, New York, New York
Places of residence: Washington, Connecticut; Staten Island, New York; New York City
Buried: Washington Green Cemetery, Washington, Connecticut
Parents: Cornelius Du Bois III (1851 – 1921), Catherine Barclay Reading (1852 – 1913)
Grandparents: Cornelius Du Bois II (1810 – 1882), Mary Anne Delafield (1813 – 1888)
Great Grandparents: Cornelius Du Bois I (1771 – 1846), Sarah Platt Ogden (1782 – 1836)
Siblings: Floyd Reading Du Bois (1878 - 1952), Delafield Du Bois (1889 – 1965), Eleanor Du Bois (1888 – 1937), Catherine Du Bois (1890 – 1933)
Spouse: None
Children: None

Mildred Du Bois had a long and storied family history and is a direct lineal descendant of French Huguenots who came to this country in the 1600s. They were founders of the communities of Fishkill, Poughkeepsie and New Paltz, active civil and religious leaders and successful business people over many generations. It is not surprising that she led a vital, interesting life committed to her family, friends and the communities in which she was directly involved.

She grew up with her siblings in Old Richmond Town, Staten Island in a wealthy family who were involved with major philanthropic causes as well as had deep involvement in the arts and literary communities of New York City. Both her great grandparents and grandparents were civic-minded and used their wealth and elevated position in society to better those in need across a range of charities. Her father represented a continuation of these efforts and initiatives. This was the context in which Mildred grew up. (See Appendix I for details on the Du Bois and Delafield family histories.)

Mildred's father Cornelius appeared to be very family-oriented, which extended to taking his family on numerous trips abroad, including those he undertook for business. In 1882 and 1887, he took his wife Kate and three children (Floyd, Delafield and Mildred) along with several maids on trips to Europe, returning from Liverpool both times. At that point, all three of the children were young, and Eleanor and Catherine were not yet born. In 1894 he took with him a G. Du Bois who was 18 years his junior, but who that person was has not be established. In 1903, after his son Delafield graduated from Harvard College (his son Floyd had also graduated from Harvard in 1901), he took Delafield, his wife and a servant on a trip to Europe, returning from Southampton, England in October 1903. In the summer of 1904, Cornelius took only Mildred on a trip to Europe, returning from Liverpool, England. (This trip is referenced in a letter in 1918 where she mentions visiting France with her father about 15 years previously.) He traveled alone to England in October 1906 and again in July 1908. Thus, Mildred was already well-traveled as she entered her adulthood.

(As an interesting aside, it appears that members of the Du Bois family were tall. In their passport applications, Cornelius, Floyd and Delafield were all listed around 6'4" tall and Mildred 5"9", which would have been considered tall for a woman then.)

There were two different 1900 Federal Censuses listing the Du Bois family, one at 940 Castleton Avenue, Richmond, Staten Island and the other at 47 W. 76th Street in Manhattan. It would appear that the family made the transition from Staten Island to New York City in that year. Both Floyd are Delafield were already at Harvard in 1900 during the school year, though they were listed as residents in New York; also listed were Kate (Cornelius's wife), Mildred (age 19), Eleanor (age 12), and Catherine (age 10), in addition to four servants. In an obituary published by the Holland Society of New York, of which Cornelius Du Bois was a member, it stated that the home on W. 76th Street was purchased by Cornelius in 1900.

In 1901, 1902 and 1903, there were mentions in various New York papers (found on newspapers.com) of Mildred Du Bois attending cotillions, with either Floyd or Delafield in attendance at two of them. At the turn of the century, it was still traditional that women would be introduced to society through these balls, and Mildred apparently made the rounds at that point in her life.

At the same time, however, young women were being educated in increasing numbers, most particularly in the field of education and teaching. In New York, colleges such as the Normal School (which became Hunter College) and Barnard College had been founded in the latter decades of the 1800s and started expanding quickly after 1900. Mildred attended Barnard College, and in 1913, began teaching English at Brearley School, a private secondary school for girls on the Upper East Side. (While the dates of her attendance have not been confirmed, the archivist at Brearley provided a copy of a 1931 – 1932 school catalog which lists that she attended Barnard College. He also stated that in the early decades of the 20th century, Brearley actively recruited its teachers from Barnard.)

In the 1910 census, Mildred and her two sisters, Eleanor and Catherine, were still living at the West 76th Street address with their father Cornelius, as were an older, widowed sister of Cornelius, her daughter and a grandniece in addition to five servants. As stated above, Mildred started teaching at Brearley in 1913 and continued to do so until she retired in 1932. It was initially thought that Mildred became aware of the town of Washington after her brother Delafield met in 1917 and married in 1918 Theodora Benton McCormick whose aunt, Isabella Abbot, was a summer resident of Washington and had been since the early 1900s.

However, there are several data points which clearly show that Mildred not only knew about the town of Washington but was quite familiar with and knowledgeable about it well before 1917. An oral interview of Winifred Dodd Rouillion by her daughter, Jane Rouillion Boyer, which occurred on September 23, 1985, talks about Winifred's first trip to Washington, CT in the summer of 1914 at the age of 12 (she was born in 1902 on the Upper West Side in Manhattan), to see a play in the barn at the home of Mrs. Katherine Smith, where she put on plays regularly.

Winifred was a student at Brearley School in Manhattan, and she states in the interview that "Miss Mildred Du Bois who used to teach at the Brearley School and who lived up her brought me up to see one of these plays when I was a student in the school." She then goes on to describe driving up to Washington in Mildred's Ford touring car with another Brearley teacher in the front seat and Winifred in the back:

> "Miss Du Bois skidded off the road, the old Bee Brook Road, and without putting on the brakes at all, she went off the road into a meadow, drove on the meadow straight into a tree…The whole top of the car came down on my head but had a pretty tough skull so I wasn't killed and we went to spent the night, oh, I think the other teacher got a broken arm and we all three of us spent the night in Washington and then went down and spent the next night on our way home with Mrs. Auchincloss, the grandmother of the Auchinclosses my daughter used to know….and we spent the night with Mrs. Auchincloss, who was an old Brearley gal."

So, Mildred was already familiar with Washington well before 1917. (Winifred died in Washington, CT in 1991 at the age of 88 and is buried in the Washington Green Cemetery.)

In addition, Dorothy Abbot Loomis (daughter of Isabella and cousin of Theodora) wrote in April 1930 on behalf of the Women's Club of Washington a paper entitled "The Sister Suzie Society 1914 – 1918" in which she describes the efforts by a group of Washington women, most of whom were summer residents, to support the war effort during World War I. The paper discussed the many events put on to raise funds and showed that, as early as 1915, both Mildred and her sister Catherine were both involved in those efforts and knew various of the women involved and spearheading them, including Dorothy Abbot and Theodora McCormick. (This is further confirmed by letters to her father in 1918, which will be discussed in following paragraphs.)

In July 1917, the United States branch of the YMCA took a bold step and opened its service to females for the first time. While millions of women undertook efforts to support the war as described in the Sister Suzie Society paper, others wanted to do more. Historians of the period have noted that many young women were already supporting themselves during this time as office clerks, teachers and saleswomen and living independently from their families. As a result, hundreds of women volunteered to go to Europe to staff YMCA canteens. Ultimately, the YMCA hired 25,926 workers, 5,145 of them women, to run canteens.

These "canteens" took the form of a tent or wooden hut and provided a range of services: serving food, snacks and non-alcoholic beverages; providing recreational facilities, entertainment and shows; giving out books and newspapers to soldiers to read; giving moral support; and in some cases, providing a variety of classes. However, canteen work was difficult: female staffers had little time off, working sometimes 12 to 18 hours a day. Living conditions were less than ideal, with additional difficulties of walking a fine line between being a friendly face and a potential romantic partner to some of the men. At the conclusion of the war, these

canteens became institutionalized by the military services, serving as the basis of today's exchanges.

After the YMCA opened up the service to women and at the end of the Brearley 1917 - 1918 school year in May 1918, Mildred applied for a passport to be a "canteen aide" in France for the armed services of the YMCA and left on June 12th, 1918 bound for Bordeaux, France, arriving on June 20th. Mildred wrote from France 33 letters (numbered and dated, with each letter generally covering a range of dates) to her "dearest father" and family, and they provide a great deal of insight into Mildred, her personality, and her many capabilities. Each letter (except for one, which is inexplicably handwritten) was typed single-space and were almost all 4 to 6 pages long. She stated frequently that she regretted that she could not talk about the war itself because of censorship issues and that she could only write about "boring" personal things (though they were in fact far from boring!). In a funny note in letter #9, dated July 18th, 1918, she stated that "you might as well expect excitement in New Preston as from Coutres!"

She was an astute observer of people and places around her; she had the ability to place the reader where she was so he or she could experience it as she did. She could be lyrical at times, and at other times bordering on acerbic when she thought a co-worker was lazy; she also did not suffer fools and could not abide people, particularly female workers, who thought they were better than those around them. She had a lively intelligence and a self-deprecating wit; she seemed very empathetic with the soldiers and appeared to develop friendships with many with whom she came into contact; she was fearless in getting things done, even when she was the only woman around hundreds of men at a time; and above all, she was clearly highly energetic, organized and efficient, a problem-solver in the face of considerable adversity and lack of support. In reading the letters, it is quite amazing to think of this woman being raised in a household of wealth and privilege with many servants and yet, pitching in and doing what had to be done to create a "homelike environment" for soldiers in order to improve morale.

Upon landing in Bordeaux, she took a train to Paris where she had her initial training. In addition, she volunteered in her free time while not in training to help the Red Cross who was understaffed as it dealt with hundreds of men arriving in Paris hourly needing medical attention. Miss Ames, a key supervisor in Paris, noted Mildred's efforts and over the next months, inspected Mildred's canteens and greatly approved of what she was accomplishing. When Mildred left Paris, she took a train to Coutres, west of Paris, which was her first assignment. She recounted in one of her early letters that she had purposefully picked a train where she was absolutely on her own because she did not want to travel as a "herd" to her post. As she travelled through the countryside, she mentioned that the area was not "strange" to her since she and her father had travelled in that part of France in an automobile about 15 years before. (This must have been the trip she and her father took in 1904. As a point of information, in 1903, France was the world's leading producer of automobiles, producing 30,124 cars (approximately 50% of the world's total) versus 11,235 cars in the U.S.)

When she arrived at her post, she found that she had responsibility for two canteens, one in and one outside of town, and that both were in disarray: disorganized, dirty, and lacking in supplies. She immediately started washing dishes and cleaning the area and figuring out how she was going to feed the soldiers who were soon to be arriving. In the next letter, dated a week later, things appeared to have settled down a bit. She had even begun to teach French to English-speaking soldiers! She finally got a female helper who was French, and they appeared to hit it off. Mildred described Marie as a hard worker, and the two of them started experimenting with food recipes because of a lack of ingredients. Mildred invented a "cookie" she called "hand grenades" (because that's what they looked like!). Marie had had a tragic backstory, and Mildred described it in detail and with empathy: deaths of multiple family members including her husband and several children, gassings, bombardments, etc., forcing Marie to leave with two of her children and relocate to Coutres.

She also talked about a bicycle being her only means of transportation in Coutres: "…a bicycle which is much too small with a broken spring, a perpetually flat tire and a caster brake which doesn't brake!"

There are so many observations and experiences worth exploring, which are illustrative of Mildred's character. While too long to go into detail here, they are emblematic of a woman who jumped into whatever she had to do and made things happen. In fact, it is really startling and impressive exactly how much she accomplished. By early August, she was cooking, washing dishes, cleaning, and stocking supplies. She was even responsible for selling the items they made and doing the supplies inventory and balancing the books every month.

Additionally, she taught French classes and ultimately, Bible classes (which she told her family not to laugh about: "It's another "show," which in my mind is my Bible class. Don't laugh – I had to start one. You see, the Chaplain isn't any good (as a Chaplain), and he's Catholic and only half of the boys are Catholic. I felt there ought to be something for the others if they wanted it." At another point, she again mentioned the Chaplain: "He means well I think, but he folds his hands trinitarily before him and drops into an artificial voice and delivers commonplaces. It's always trying but last night I felt I couldn't bear it."). In fact, at one point, the Education Department wanted her to transfer to be under its supervision, and she was adamantly opposed: "It's a very different matter teaching nice little girls something you know by heart than teaching full-grown men something you're pretty shaky about. I'd rather put my energies into trying to put something homelike into the likes of these homesick boys."

Then, in the first half of August, she is asked to move to St. Aignan to be in charge of a much larger canteen, which Mildred had heard was in bad shape. She described in a letter being against the move: "I just got things going here. The tent is the prettiest in the Division (they all said today), the kitchen is in splendid order and so are the supplies. The electric lights go on tonight for the first time. My shelves, cupboards and counters are all fixed up with linoleum and arranged in order. I've just made arrangements with a patisserie here in town to let me use the ovens and pans twice a week – and I've just successfully solved the problem of turning out

enough lemonade at short notice. In fact, this evening for the first minute since I arrived, there are no pressing problems, and there is a fair stretch of double work ahead and now they want to move me!"

Another big issue for her was that at St. Aignan, the regional headquarters' city, she would simply be a cook and general "tidier" rather than a "friend-in-general" to the soldiers: "Here I'm a not very big toad in a middle-sized pond – but I'm all the toad there is. There, I'll be a very little toad in a pretty good-sized puddle. It's more fun running even a small canteen entirely on your own than being one of a lot in a big one; and it's more satisfactory to come in personal contact with the soldiers than just to stay in the kitchen and cook for them. Oh well, c'est la guerre!" Ultimately, under some pressure from Mildred, the decision was made to keep her in Coutres, which she welcomed.

In early August, she wrote of being homesick and missing Washington: "It's hard to believe it is September and that you're getting ready to leave Washington already. And the next time you go up I'll be with you! I've really been surprised myself to find how I've missed Washington this year. I keep seeing bits of road – Nettleton Hollow, and the River Road, bits of the New Milford Road, the Dark Valley, and the big beech tree behind the Knoll – there's nothing as lovely over here! I don't suppose you want a letter from over here about home scenery but you have to have it a little, if you want to keep track of things I'm thinking." So, here was a clear indication that the Du Bois family were summer residents in Washington and had been for quite a while.

In the middle of September, she received orders from the Regional Office that she would be moving to manage two canteens in the villages of St. Romain and Conddes, which were four miles apart. She stated in a letter that "St. Romain is to Coutres what New Preston is to Litchfield" in another reference to the town of Washington. She was faced with the same issues she had at Coutres but had no help whatsoever. She was quite reluctant to ask for help ("It's such a lottery -who you get to work with – that I'd hesitated about trying it. It would be a lot pleasanter to be alone than to work with many of the people I've come in contact with.") She ended up requesting help from Paris, though it was a long time in coming.

In the meantime, because she had a high level of skills at this point, she was able to organize and get the canteens into shape even on her own. She became more fearless in solving problems, and as the only woman among hundreds of men, it is notable that she was able to enlist help from the soldiers directly; get on a platform she had constructed to make announcements; read newspapers when there were few to go around; and go to regional headquarters in St. Aignan to get supplies (e.g., they were down to 6 candles when they went through two dozen a night, so she rode her bicycle to St. Aignan to press the regional secretary to supply them immediately; they delivered 80 pounds of them by the end of the afternoon of the same day.)

In addition, to her obvious delight, she began to organize and set up entertainment nights for the first time. Her letters described amusingly what she had to do to get the soldiers to

participate in amateur nights, which she did successfully. Following is a description of one of those nights:

"Wed. 9 Oct.

Now I'll finish this while I wait for my room to get warm enough to dress. I've just started a fire – French faggots with a candle end underneath to start it, and now I'm all bundled up in blankets in bed.

"We had a gorgeous time last night. At least I did, for I staged my second absolutely responsible show and it was a real success. The last one I tried fizzled out at the lasat moment because that very afternoon most of the performers had to leave. Luckily an unexpected professional trio appeared at the last moment and saved the day so I think I was the only one disappointed. However, I believe now I know how to put a show through without any regular performers, and have it fine. The answer is: stunts.

"I had announced this show on Sunday and asked for volunteers but the men are shy and I got very little response. So on Monday I went to H.Q. and found our Divisional Entertainment Secretary, I put it to him and…"How can you give a show if no one wants to perform and you haven't anyone to lead singing?" Some question! He was equal to it though and gave me a long list of stunts – cock fighting (not real cocks, men), Indian wrestling, etc., etc. So last night I was all ready for them. The tent filled a little beyond capacity, as usual, and I must admit I was nervous. At 8 I closed the canteen and got some men to rip up a section of the floor for the stage. We laid it across some tables and it made a good one though rather high. That was O.K. but the men sat around and apparently wondered where the performance was coming in. Then I got up on the stage and told them it was just a homemade party – more intimate than a real show – and I expected them all to take part. I called first for six volunteers for a relay cracker-eating race. After a lot of laughing and some jeering at each other I got six of them on the platform. I gave them two hard dry crackers apiece. The leader on each side started and the second man ha to wait until the first could whistle before he could begin. I offered a prize of cigarettes to the winning team. It was screamingly funny – the tent fairly rocked with the laughter and shouts and then – as hope of hearing the whistle grew – it became almost breathless.

"Next we had a string-eating contest. Six pieces of heavy thread with a piece of chocolate on each end of each. The man who got to his chocolate first got the rest of the bar as prize.

"By that time everyone was in the best of humors, so I got up on the stage again and called for volunteers – for songs or anything – not a soul moved. It just couldn't fall flat so I said "Boys I'll call your bluff, I'm just as scared as you are but I'm going to speak a piece" and I have them Browning's 'Incident of the French Camp." Then I said "Is there anyone now who'll do something" A voice from the back lines said "Here's one who

will" and a boy climbed up on the stage and spouted. He was a dear; he got stuck several times but he didn't get rattled and was a grand success. He gave us "The Cremation of San McGee" and "The Shooting of Dan McGrew" and another endless one about a train wreck and a dying baby! Then another man came forward and said he'd sing. He was fine. He just sat on the edge of the platform and sang funny songs. Once a "damn" came in and he left it blank and turned to look at me – you ought to have heard the boys shout. After a few songs he began "K-K-K-Katy" and everyone came in on the chorus. There was a funny fat man from the "Y" H.Q. her that night and he has a voice as big as himself. He bellowed about them all, then came forward and sang some other things and told funny stories.

"Right in the middle of the festivities the call to quarters blew! I'd no idea it was so late. It was better though to snap it off in a whirl than to have it peter out. It was a good show!"

As a result of her obvious, successful efforts, by the middle of October, the Division Secretary for the region was ordered to the front and expressed a desire to have Mildred join him. In addition, a major of a regiment being deployed to the front expressed interest in "adopting" her to go with them: "Wouldn't that be interesting to be adopted by a regiment!" However, Miss Ely, the regional secretary who managed the canteen women, resisted the moves and would not allow her to leave. Mildred was highly disappointed and signed the letter with the news: "Mildred – who's stuck in the same place indefinitely!"

At the end of October, Mildred and others in St. Romain received news that the Germans had accepted the terms of an armistice. In a letter, Mildred described being disgusted that the Chaplain did not even mention it in his sermon. So, after the service, she "jumped on the platform" and said "Boys, I want you to do something for me – sing Glory Hallelujah! I'm surprised you didn't hear us all the way back home!" She also put up a map she had made which showed, using pins, the forward lines of the Allieds and Germans since September 1917 as well as the current front and kept it up to date for the "boys." At another point, she wrote about a group of men singing "revival songs" with others standing around jeering at them. Mildred became angry, and while she stated to her father that she was afraid, she stood up on a stool and said that there was no need for their presence there if they did not have Christian charity. They became silent as a result.

When November 11th finally arrived and the armistice signed, Mildred described the joy in the streets, including all of the singing and dancing. In celebration, she put together chocolate and sandwiches for the soldiers at her canteen and paid for it herself in spite of the YMCA's prohibition of such a practice. She described how she used some subterfuge to do it by claiming it was a present from the little girls of Brearley School. She said that she felt the armistice was so important and had to be celebrated.)

In her next letter, she described two exciting experiences she had just had: throwing grenades and leading a religious service. A Captain Grant had become a regular presence around Mildred – helping with KP duty, washing dishes, and helping to make hot chocolate and lemonade. He offered to teach her to throw a grenade, and she provided an excellent description of the process: "I pulled the spring and slung the grenade over the top very much as we use to bowl cricket balls. My! How it did explode! It was lots of fun and frightfully exciting. I threw three, I'm glad I did it, but I don't think I will do it again." Then, afterwards, the two of them walked in the woods and had a "gorgeous walk." Nothing seemed to have come of it, it is interesting to speculate if there were some potential love interest between them.

Later in the day, Mildred offered to do a religious service celebrating the Allied victory. She described getting on a bench and calling for attention, though she stated to the men that she was just going to do a short service and if anyone wanted to leave, they could. "Not a man budged! And my! What a crowd there was. Of course I was the only woman in the tent." She then led the soldiers in the song Onward Christian Soldiers and read the armistice. She then called for three cheers and said that, although they had all sorts of celebrations, but there had not been one to thank God. She felt it was hard to realize all that peace meant.

Mildred was finally sent a helper in early December, a woman about her age but described as pretty and a bit flirtatious. There was a hint of jealousy in her comments to her family: "I have awfully good friends among the boys and they laugh and talk and apparently like me, but they jolly her – there's a difference." By the end of the month, she noted "After a month's trial, she has hotter friends but fewer of them."

Mildred then threw herself into organizing Thanksgiving and Christmas celebrations, and seemingly created out of almost nothing successes. For Christmas, she made decorations from all sorts of found objects, and she wrote a play that her friend Captain Grant had typed up for her. She worked hard to get people involved and to take parts in the play. But "oh my, how poor the rehearsals were!" The description of the rehearsals is really quite funny, and the detail she provided on all of the preparations for Christmas Day makes for quite a story. Mildred wanted to give both sides of Christmas to the boys: "Santa Claus and hurrah boys in the afternoon and the Bible story at night."

"Now it's all over. Movement orders have come and the whole Division clears out next week. These boys are all from the Far West, I'll probably never see them again but I know neither they nor I will ever forget our Christmas at St. Romain."

For the first time, her letter in early January 1919 showed signs of depression and being let down and that she felt that Christmas was the climax of all of her efforts. She still wanted to go to the front and help with the demobilization efforts but was still stymied by Regional Headquarters, which said she was needed where she was. She expressed extreme disappointment and regret she had never been to the front, but by the next letter, had returned to her normal good humor. It was as if she said to stop feeling sorry for herself and get

on with it. New troops started arriving, generally "casuals," those "waifs and strays" from various regiments who had lost them through being in the hospital a long time or were released prisoners of war. However, it proved to be difficult because casuals "are always broke" and are difficult to deal with – they are more restless, homesick and discontented. However, Mildred was still confident she made a difference in their lives and to their well-being.

During her final time in France, Mrs. Mead, who she knew from both New York and Paris, got in touch with Mildred and wanted her to extend her contract (which ended April 1st) for 4 – 6 months to go to Germany and help with demobilization efforts. After struggling with the decision, Mildred decided to decline the request because it would entail her missing another school year. Her last letter described a vacation in Nantes and a visit to Coutres to see Marie, who was still there managing the canteen. Mildred left from Brest, France on April 8th, 1919 and arrived in Hoboken, New Jersey on April 17th, having spent 10 months working for the YMCA. It was an experience she would undoubtedly never forgot.

Mildred returned to teaching at Brearley for the 1919 – 1920 school year. On August 26th, 1920, the female right to vote was ratified by the US Congress. So, Mildred truly lived during a time of great change. The 1920 Federal Census had her still living on West 76th Street with her father Cornelius, her sister Eleanor and five servants. On May 22nd, 1921 her father died at home of pneumonia at 70 years of age. It was bound to be a hard blow for Mildred given her close relationship with and deep affection for her father. We surmise that Cornelius had a large estate, but New York County probate record requests are currently backlogged and unavailable.

However, we do know that, the following year, Mildred was able to purchase from the estate of Cornelius Gold, a Washington and New York City resident who had also died in 1921, her home at 18 Old North Road. Given we now know that the Du Bois family were summer residents who had been visiting for years, it is likely that she already knew of the property. Given there are no property records for her father Cornelius himself prior to 1921, it is highly likely that the family rented a home there. It may very well have been the home Mildred ultimately purchased.

Mildred continued to teach at Brearley and go to Washington for her summers. On the 1924 Manhattan voting list, Mildred's address was 130 East 57th Street, so the home on West 76th Street must had been sold, likely as part of the probate settlement. 130 East 57th Street was the address for the Allerton Hotel for Women, one of a new breed of hotels catering to single, working women. New York City was actually the birthplace of the first hotel for women, the Stewart Hotel, opening in 1878, but ultimately was sold a year later out of bankruptcy and renamed the Park Avenue Hotel that catered to a well-heeled and largely male clientele.

As a result of this failure, it wasn't until the 1903 that the next all-women hotel was built, The Hotel Martha Washington. However, it was not until 1920 that the market for all-women accommodations took off. The Allerton was intended to accommodate six hundred business and professional women and also shelter young girls. When completed in 1923, the hotel had room for four hundred tenants. Its occupancy was filled prior to completion, and there was a

long waiting list. Mildred must have been one of the first residents of the hotel. The stock market crash in late 1929 and the Great Depression that followed are thought to have put an end to the construction of women's hotels in Manhattan and to precipitate the shrinkage and disappearance of those that existed at the time. At the 1930 Federal Census, we find Mildred living alone in a rented apartment at 45 Prospect Place in Manhattan. So, at some point between 1924 and 1930, she downsized her New York accommodations while maintaining her residence in Washington.

After her father's death and until her own in 1933, she travelled to Europe fairly frequently. She made trips in 1924, 1929 (returning a month before the Stock Market Crash), 1931 and 1933 (3 months before her death). It is regrettable that there were no letters preserved from her trips to Europe or of her experiences during a decade of immense change in general and for women in particular. She was an acute observer of events and people around her, and we would have benefited from her thoughts, experiences and feelings. Mildred apparently knew she was dying when she returned from Genoa, Italy in August 1933 and likely the year before when she retired prematurely from Brearley. In the Brearley Bulletin published in December 1933, the school reproduced a poem Mildred had written:

Pity

Written in August, 1933

If you are sorry for me; if you care
That I am ill in every aching bone;
Then, even from your own mind, drive out fear;
You must not pity me; let me alone.

If you would really help, use common sense
And casual gaiety. Seem hard as stone
If I should cry out, if you see me wince;
It soon will pass – if I am let alone.

Give me the comfort of the commonplace;
Of your usual careless tone;
A hope so matter-of-fact it shows no trace;
Oh, give me these, or else let me alone.

Each time you look at me with wistful eyes;
Each time your fear is, even dimly, shown:
You sap my strength. You cannot realize
How hard you make my task; let me alone.

I need each ounce of faith, all down the line,
To keep my flag up; panic to disown
I cannot fight your fight as well as mine.
You must stop pitying me! Let me alone.

Mildred died of breast cancer on November 23rd, 1933 at New York Hospital (New York Presbyterian Hospital, ironically the institution which merged in 1934 with the Nursery and Children's Hospital of New York, founded and operated for 35 years by Mildred's grandmother, Mary Ann Delafield Du Bois, for 34 years.) While her parents, brothers and wives were buried in the family plot in the Moravian Cemetery on Staten Island, Mildred chose the Washington Green Cemetery in Washington, CT. The inscription on her gravestone is simple; Fortitude. Yes, Mildred had fortitude but she was so much more than that as evidenced in her letters written home during World War I and in her life in toto.

Mildred was a wealthy woman when she died in 1933, which was during the Great Depression. She shared her wealth, and her will is testament to her generosity to her family and friends. We were able to obtain her Last Will and Testament and the probate records for both her assets in Connecticut, namely, her home, property and possessions in Washington, which she stated in her will was known as "Greenleaf" as well as her assets in New York State. The value of her CT property was approximately $9,000, $7,500 of which was her home in Washington, assessed at the same value it was upon its purchase in 1922. Her New York estate was assessed at a gross estimated value of almost $44,000, $10, 200 of which was real estate property on Staten Island. There does not appear to be a residence on any of the real estate.

The will left significant gifts of both cash and heirlooms to various family members as well as several friends. She left her brother Floyd, Floyd's daughter, and Eleanor's daughter and son heirlooms, some of which had been in the family for generations. She left her brother-in-law Harold W. Rudolph, Eleanor's husband, works of sculpture she had modelled, giving the first indication that Mildred was a sculptress as her grandmother, Mary Ann Delafield, had been.

She left two friends, Elizabeth Copley Singleton and Priscilla Lockwood Loomis, some personal items. She also left her sister Catherine an antique rug and $1,000 in cash, with no other mention of her in the will. (Catherine died in August 1933 at 43, at an even younger age than Mildred three months before Mildred died, and was not written out of the will before Mildred

died. A 41,000 settlement was made with her husband that their adopted son would receive the bequests.

Cash awards were a significant part of the estate. Maria Perrin and Serena M. Weld were apparently both close friends of Mildred, and Maria received $3,000 cash. It is unclear if she taught at Brearley, but she is mentioned in her World War I letters home to her family. Serena had been a student of hers at Brearley. (She is also mentioned frequently in the letters home to family during World War I.) Serena had died by the time Mildred had written her will, so Mildred left $1,000 to each of Serena's five children. In addition, Mildred left $3,000 to Brearley School, and while she did not set conditions for the receipt of the monies, she requested that the school set up a fund, called the Serena Marshall Weld Fund, to support teachers during sabbatical years.

She left her remaining asset, her home and property in Washington, Connecticut, to her niece, Theodora Delafield Du Bois, Delafield and Theodora's daughter. Since Theodora was only 14 years old at the time of Mildred's death, her parents were custodians of the property until she came of age. Any residuary assets of the estate were to be divided equally between her sister Eleanor, her brother Delafield, and her sister-in-law (Delafield's wife) Theodora. The value of the residual assets appears to have been $9,000.

Appendix I – Du Bois and Delafield Family Histories

Du Bois Family Lineage

Mildred Du Bois had a long and storied family history. Her lineage can be directly traced back to Chretien Du Bois (1597 – 1655) and Francoise Poivre (unknown). The father was a prosperous, middle-class linen merchant and devout Protestant from the village of Wicres near Lille in Artois Province, Pas de Calais, France (French Flanders). They were the parents of seven children – Francoise, Anne, Louis, Jacques, Antoine, Philippe and Toussaint, all born in Wicres. In 1659, the area was over by the more tolerant Catholic Spanish Netherlands to the Catholic regime of Louis XIV, who imposed high taxes on the residents and cruelly persecuted the Protestant Huguenots, considered to be dissidents. The lines of most interest here are those of Louis and Jacques.

While young, Louis and several other siblings and other Wicres Huguenots left Wicres and took up residence in Mannheim in the Palatinate which had at the time an evangelical Portestant prince in power who welcomed the Huguenot dissidents. It is where he met and married Catherine Blanchan in 1655, daughter of a burgher of the city, and had his first two sons. In 1660, he, his wife and two sons journeyed to New Netherland (New York City) and traveled up the Hudson River ninety miles to the Kingston/Hurley area where he obtained a land grant in 1663. At one point, his wife and three children were captured by the Esopus Indians, and on a successful expedition to bring them home, he discovered the beautiful Walkill Valley, which became his home.

Jacques Du Bois and his sister Francoise moved from Wicres to Leiden, Holland. Francoise married a Pierre Billiou in Leiden in 1649, had four children and emigrated to Staten Island in 1661. Jacques married Pierronne Bentyn in 1663 and had five children from 1665 to 1674. Jacques then emigrated to America in 1675 where another son, Christian, was born, and he journeyed up the Hudson River in Kingston, NY where he and his family settled. However, Jacques did not live long and died there in 1676. This is the line from which Mildred is a direct lineal descendant.

It is worth mentioning Louis and his descendants because, ultimately, a direct lineal descendant of his ended up in Washington, CT, Arthur Jonathan Du Bois (1917 – 2009), who is buried in Judea Cemetery. His father, Henry Cornelius Du Bois from Watertown, CT, married Jennet Hine (daughter of Henry Hudson Hine and Harriet Whitehead) in Washington, CT in 1912. The Hines and Whiteheads are old families of the town, going back a number of generations. So, it is interesting that descendants of the two lines of the Du Bois family should end up buried in two different Washington Green cemeteries!

In 1677 Louis, his two sons and nine other Huguenots, called the 12 patentees or “The Twelve Men,” obtained a large tract of land in the Valley of the Walkill in the town of New Paltz and left

Kingston to settle in New Paltz and help build the town. Louis was in the first Court of Sessions in Kingston; he was a leader in demanding of the English Government under the Duke of York an assembly and taxation-by-consent and was put out of his commission for his daring! There is a wonderful history to the town, and there still remains an outstanding, fully restored, original village built by these patentees. Louis returned to Kingston in 1689 where he died in 1695. The full story is worth telling but not for these pages.

Jacques' line is the one of current interest because Mildred is a direct lineal descendant of him through Jacques' son Pierre (Pieter, Peter). Pierre, born in Leiden, Holland, married Jannetje Burhans (born in Brabant, a designation of a part of the old town of Kingston, New York) in Kingston in October 1697. Peter and his family lived in Kingston until 1707 when they became the first settlers in Dutchess County where he founded two Dutch Reformed Churches in Fishkill and Poughkeepsie. He built a stone house in 1709 which still stands 3 ½ miles from the village of Fishkill. He died in 1737 and is buried in the Rural Fishkill Cemetery. There is a Dutch inscription on his gravestone: "This Dutch inscription is to ever remind his descendants that he claimed Holland, under who protection he was born, as his fatherland. The sons of Huguenots have no portion in the lands of their forefathers, and no right of inheritance in France. Driven from her soil, they took away with them nothing but their names."

Jonathen Du Bois, fifth child of Peter and Jannetje Du Bois, married Ariantje Ousterhout and had eight children. Petrus (Peter) was their first son born in 1734 in Kingston, who married Maria Van Voorhis and had five children. He died in 1773 at 39 from an accident when he was thrown from a horse. His wife remarried Dr. Theodorus Van Wyck, who became a stepfather to her children. They lived in Fishkill, which played an important role in the Revolutionary War and was where the 4th New York Provincial Congress was held and where part of the New York Constitution was written.

Cornelius Du Bois I (born May 20, 1771 in Fishkill, New York and died September 8, 1846 in Saratoga Springs, New York)**, Mildred's great grandfather,** was the youngest child of Petrus and Maria Van Voorhis Du Bois and was 2 years old (born in 1771) when his father died. Apparently, Cornelius did not get along with his stepfather, and in 1784 at 13 years of age, his mother arranged for him to leave home and gave him money from the sale of her father's property. He moved to New York City and entered the merchandise business, working in the firm of Sebring and Van Wyck (a relative of his stepfather) until the age of 22. This is the first Du Bois to live away from the Fishkill area and reside in New York City. He was also the first generation after the Revolutionary War and the establishment of the United States.

After he left Sebring and Van Wyck, he established his own business with Isaac Kip and ran a wholesale grocery, tobacco importer and cigar maker that grew into a sizeable, profitable business. He married **Sarah Platt Ogden** on April 11, 1803. Cornelius was one of the earliest founders and supporters of various benevolent institutions in New York City including the

"House of Refuge for Juvenile Delinquents" of which he was the Treasurer to the time of his death; the "Bank of Savings for the Benefit of the Poor" of which he was the Director; and "The Humane Society" of which, in 1840, he was the only surviving member (As Treasurer, he obtained an act of the Legislature, authorizing him to distribute the funds which accumulated among various charitable institutions). In addition, he was one of the founders of the University of New York and the Governor of New York Hospital.

Sarah Platt Ogden (1782 – 1836) was the fifth child of Sarah Platt and Robert Ogden III, who was a successful lawyer in both New York and New Jersey and served as quartermaster during the Revolutionary War. The Ogdens have a long and storied lineage as a wealthy, politically powerful family with a number of members, including Sarah's father, in significant positions during the Revolutionary War. It is also through the Ogdens, that the Du Bois family can trace its lineage to Cornelius Melyn (1600 – 1674), who owned Staten Island in 1639. It is a fascinating story, too long to describe here, but suffice it to say, the roots of the Du Bois family run deep in American history.

Cornelius and Sarah had five children who survived between 1805 and 1822: Mary Elizabeth, Henry Augustus, **Cornelius II (Mildred's grandfather)**, Sarah Platt, and George Washington. Each one of the children married into significant families but Cornelius Du Bois II (1810 – 1882), the grandfather of Mildred, is the area of focus in this summary. Cornelius received his early education at Louis Baucel's French Boarding School. He graduated from Columbia University in 1828. Apparently, in October 1828, he traveled to the West Indies "for his health" and returned in 1829.

He then studied law from 1830 to 1832 first in the office of William Slosson of New York City and then at Litchfield Law School (Tapping Reeve) in Litchfield, CT, where he studied under the then-famous Judge Gould. He was then admitted to the bar in New York City in 1833. At that time, he formed a partnership with Edgar Van Winkle (Van Winkle & Du Bois) for four years; however, because of his father's desire for him to join his firm so he could eventually retire, Du Bois gave up his law practice in 1836 and joined his father's firm, Cornelius Du Bois & Co. When his father retired in 1840, he and his father's business partner, Isaac A. Storm, formed a new partnership. Du Bois would later take a new partner, and the firm then became known as Du Bois & Vandervoot.

He met in New York City his wife Mary Ann Delafield (1813 – 1888), the sister of fellow Litchfield Law School student John Delafield, and grandmother of Mildred. The two of them took the stagecoach back to Litchfield together where he was still attending the Litchfield Law School and she the Litchfield Female Academy in 1825. They married in 1832 and had 10 children: Cornelius (1833 – 1834); John Delafield (!835 – 1856); Mary Delafield; Cornelia A. (1839 -); Eugene (1841 – 1891); Charles H. (1843 – 1843); Julia Floyd (1844 -); Henrietta Rosalie (1849 – 1850)); and **Cornelius III (1851 – 1921)**; and Arthur (1852 – 1855). For over 30

years, they resided at 80 Gramercy Park In New York City; both are buried, along with four children who died young, in the New York Marble Cemetery on the Lower East Side, established in 1830 as the first non-sectarian burial place in the city.

Delafield Family Lineage

Mary Ann's grandfather, John Delafield III (the third John in the Delafield line), left London in 1783 and settled in New York City. Within 15 years, he was one of the founders of the Mutual Insurance Company of New York, the first fire insurance company in the city; one of the directors of the New York branch of the United States Bank; and a director and President of the United Insurance Company. He married Ann Hallett, a co-heiress whose parents settled on Queens, Long Island as the grantee of the patent of Hallett's Point. In the summer of 1791, he purchased from his father-in-law, Joseph Hallett, the Blackwell Farm on the east bank of the East River, opposite Blackwells Island, where he built a large country residence. John and Ann had 12 children. He died at his home at 9 Pearl Street in the city.

Their oldest child, **John Delafield IV, Mary Ann's father**, was born in 1786 at his father's home and died in 1853 at his farm Oaklands, near Geneva, Seneca County, New York. He grew up in New York City and graduated from Columbia College in 1802. Through his father's friends, he was given commercial experience in shipping various commodities to both the West Indies and Europe and ultimately, as a merchant for the West Indies Company. In 1807 he left Havana, Cuba for England with a load of sugar but because of bad weather, was forced to take the ship into the harbor of Carunna, Spain. The ship, after being ordered to leave carrying its cargo and a family of noble Spanish refugees, was fired upon by French ships near the harbor, and after being severely damaged, barely made it back to London where he settled as a banker and remained there from 1808 – 1820.

He was twice married, first in London, England in 1812 to Mary Roberts, his cousin (1786 – 1818) where she died and second to Harriot Wadsworth Talmadge (1797 - 1856) in November 1821 in Litchfield, CT. He had two sons and two daughters, His daughter Mary Ann Delafield (1813 - 1888), and her brother John (1812 – 1866), the children of Mary Roberts, were born in London during the War of 1812.

Early in 1820 he returned with his family to New York after his first wife's death. He was named Treasurer of the Phoenix Bank, retaining that office until he was elected President in 1838. He was also a large holder of real estate in Poughkeepsie and one of the founders and principal financial backers of the Poughkeepsie Improvement Society. He was one of the incorporators of the Collegiate School and owned a carpet factory in Poughkeepsie in 1828. About this time, he purchased a home at 32 Varick Street, New York City. He was greatly interested in agriculture and developed a small farm along the East River. In 1850 he was elected the first President of the New York Agricultural Society and after he retired to his farm near Geneva, New York, he was recognized as having the most unique model farm in the state.

John actively supported the arts throughout his adult life. He was the first President of the New York Philharmonic Society and one of the founders of the Musical Fund Society. In 1828, he revived, chiefly at his own expense, the New York Historical Society. In addition, in 1828, Mary Ann's brother John (who attended Litchfield Law School when Mary Ann attended Litchfield Female Academy and where Cornelius Du Bois was also a student) took over as Librarian of the New York Historical Society after his father took a position of leadership on the Society's board. Mary and her father personally organized 9,000 volumes alphabetically over the course of three months in preparation for John's tenure as librarian.

In 1831 John Delafield Senior was one of the active promoters of the National Literary and Scientific Convention. In 1831, he was also one of the most active promoters and founders of New York University. He obtained large subscriptions on behalf of the institution and insisted that it should be free of sectarian influence. He was frequently urged to run for public office but always declined.

Mary Ann Delafield clearly came from a family steeped in both public and private service. Before attending the Litchfield Female Academy ("LFA") to receive her training in writing, communication and organizational leadership, her familial exposures already had laid a foundation of teaching the importance of giving back to the community when blessed with material and financial means. Her family approached public service from a point of financial privilege: her family had long engaged in mercantile pursuits, contributing their impressive wealth, supplemented by her husband Cornelius Du Bois' personal fortune as well.

The first few decades of the nineteenth century have often been referred to as Litchfield's "Golden Age:" During this time, the Litchfield Female Academy's doors were open to young ladies seeking to improve themselves academically and morally; the Litchfield Law School was training hundreds of future legislators and political leaders; local doctors and apothecaries were training apprentices from far and wide in hard scientific pursuits; and the town was a commercial center known across New England for its prosperity. The optimistic spirit of the new nation was tangible in a town that seemed to offer an entryway for aspiring members of both sexes of the middle and upper class to the sphere of public influence and personal prosperity. A convergence of ideal factors allowed Litchfield to thrive during these years.

LFA was considered one of the best of the female academies that were established in the early decades of the new nation to prepare young women for improving their intellect and comportment and to put their education to good use. The LFA educated girls in geography, arithmetic, English grammar, history (both modern and ancient), and letter writing. Additional courses included rhetoric, philosophy, logic and chemistry. In fact, many observed at the time that the education the girls received while at the LFA rivalled their male institutions in quality. In general, the cause of advancing women out of domesticity and into the public sphere was

helped through these academies and that women with female academy educations were prepared to take on careers for the public good, despite being blocked from male vocations.

There has been a great deal written about the depth of social connections developed between students at the LFA and the Litchfield Law School and the opportunity for extensive network connections. The Litchfield Law School had an impressive list of graduates, and even after other law schools began to operate (e.g., William & Mary, Harvard and Yale), it still outstripped other proprietary schools in the number of students it trained and in its wider influence. Research has also noted the important role that such networks played in the lives of LFA graduates.

Students attending the Law School did so, in part, not just for a lucrative career in law, but for the socio-economic mobility that was possible in the new nation through a quality education and exposure to members of high society. A key element of this mobility was marriage to a "genteel, well educated, well disposed, sensible young lady from a respectable family," which was another unique Litchfield benefit of a legal education at the Litchfield Law School. In fact, various researchers describe the men arriving to the Law School as planning to "divide their attention between the studies of the law and studies of the pretty pupils of the female academy."

While students at both schools were drawn disproportionately from the upper echelons of society, the expansion of these female graduates' role into the public realm began to shift the focus on the skills and expertise women could bring to bear in the management of charitable organizations and to undertake women's work at a "grand scale," going beyond influencing just her own children and attempting to make a greater difference within her community. Altogether, the religious education, academic training, and social exposures of the Litchfield Female Academy provided Litchfield girls with a solid foundation for leadership throughout their lives. Mary Ann Delafield certainly took advantage of that training to aid, improve and fully participate in the public spheres of society.

Mary Ann had an interesting and varied life. She was involved in many benevolent societies during her life as well as being an accomplished artist. During the Panic of 1837, seeing the increasing number of homeless growing. She appealed to her father-in-law to house some of them in his empty warehouses, and he agreed to do so. Later, a former housemaid appeared at her door, distraught; she was pregnant and had nowhere to turn to. There were few existing homes at that time for poor, unwed mothers. Mary had suffered her own loss of her first child, which affected her greatly. While poverty was not the cause of her loss, in a letter to her brother-in-law, she talks about this experience as driving her to save other women from the all-too-common despair of losing a child.

As a result, in May 1854, she and Anna R. Emmett (the wife of a specialist in women's and children's diseases) founded the Nursery and Children's Hospital of New York, and Mary Ann

served as its First Directress for thirty five years until her death in 1889. The two original services provided by the hospital were as follows: 1) it served as a safe and secure nursery for children of working mothers; and 2) it provided employment opportunities as nurses and wet nurses for poor women with their own infants who needed care as well. Over time, services expanded to include job placement for young women, service training for children, nurse training, and medical services through a dispensary that served the general public.

An operation with such broad and expanding goals needed the on-going support of generous amounts of funding. Initially, Mary Ann funded it with their own and her husband's money. She also appealed to her network of friends, and then, to widen the circle of donors, she began to hold charity balls, perhaps the first of their kind. In fact, they were considered to be the highlight of the social season. In addition, after trips to Albany, she convinced the New York Legislature to help. Nursery and Children's Hospital grew and flourished until, in 1934, it became a part of New York – Presbyterian Hospital/Weill Cornell Medical Center.

The Nursery and Children's Hospital was an effort to create a place where women could professionalize and enlarge on a much greater scale "maternal services:" "This modernization came directly from the organizational and managerial skills of Many Ann Delafield Du Bois and her ability to harness financial resources in pursuit of her goal. The organizational skills, discipline, recognition of the importance of clear and prompt communication, and the ability to hear and grow from criticism inside the male medical establishment were all essential for her success, and all were important lessons of the Litchfield Female Academy.

Amazingly, in addition to her management of the Hospital as well as significant familial responsibilities, Mary Ann's interests and expertise also stretched beyond her benevolent work. She became an accomplished sculptress and cameo cutter and was elected a member of the National Academy of Design, one of only eleven women elected, as well as of the Brooklyn Art Association. She also taught art to young ladies.

Cornelius Du Bois III, the youngest living son of Cornelius Du Bois II and Mary Ann Delafield Du Bois, was born at 770 Broadway on March 27, 1851. Soon after his birth, his father purchased a large tract of property known as Manor Farm, near the Four Corners on Staten Island, and his boyhood, along with his siblings, was spent there. When he was young, Cornelius was sent to a boarding school, Churchill's Military Academy, in Sing Sing, New York. After a few years, he went to Columbia Grammar School and at seventeen, graduated at the head of his class. His family took him to Europe, and for several months, he attended the University of Leipzig. When he returned to the country, he entered the employ of his father's firm, Du Bois & Vandervoort. During that time, he saw a chance to develop a new business, Insurance Brokerage; in 1873, he formed a partnership with Sutherland Irving, under the name of Du Bois & Irving, and was an insurance broker continuously until the time of his death.

On April 22, 1874, he married Katharine (Kate) Reading of Staten Island, New York, and they purchased a house on Trinity Place, West New Brighton, Staten Island, New York. On May 1, 1874, the firm of Du Bois & Irving consolidated with the firm of Irving (A. Duer) & Frank (Emil H.), with the new firm called Irving, Frank & Du Bois until Sutherland Irving died and A. Duer Irving resigned to become an underwriter rather than a broker. Mr. Du Bois and Mr. Frank continued under the name of Frank & Du Bois, with Cornelius the senior partner in that firm when he died.

Cornelius and Kate had eight children. His oldest child, Frederic, and his third child, Bertha, died as infants and his second son, Cornelius, when he was eleven years old. His remaining children were: Floyd Reading (1878 – 1952); Delafield (1880 – 1965); **Mildred (1881 – 1933)**; Eleanor (1888 – 1937); and Katherine (1890 – 1933). In 1877, Cornelius and his family moved from Trinity Place, Staten Island, to a much larger house he built at 940 Castleton Avenue, West New Brighton, Staten Island. Later, he began spending his winters in New York and finally purchased a permanent home at 47 West 76th Street, New York City. The 1900 Federal Census has him, his wife and all of his children living with him at that address. His business continued to prosper over the next two decades, with his son Floyd working in the business. His wife died in 1913, and he died on May 22, 1921 of pneumonia at his home on 76th Street.

An obituary found in a Bulletin of the Holland Society of New York, of which Cornelius was a member, stated that he was a man of many, quiet charities: “no needy and deserving cause ever appealed to him in vain.” Cornelius was also a member of the Kane Society, Free and Accepted Masons, and of the Downtown Association of New York. Cornelius, his wife Kate, his son Floyd, and his son Delafield and wife Theodora are all buried at the Moravian Cemetery on Staten Island, New York.

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