Mary Louise Miller - A Really Interesting *Miller* Cousin

By Burks Oakley II 4 January 2025

I recently wrote about the members of the *Quincy Oakley* family who have DNA matches with Frank Paton, who is a descendant of Ezra Marvin Miller (1812-1874) and his second wife, Louise (or Louisa) Snider (born in 1834) – see:

 $http://www.burksoakley.com/QuincyOakleyGenealogy/DNA-match-with-FrankPaton_1Jan25.pdf$

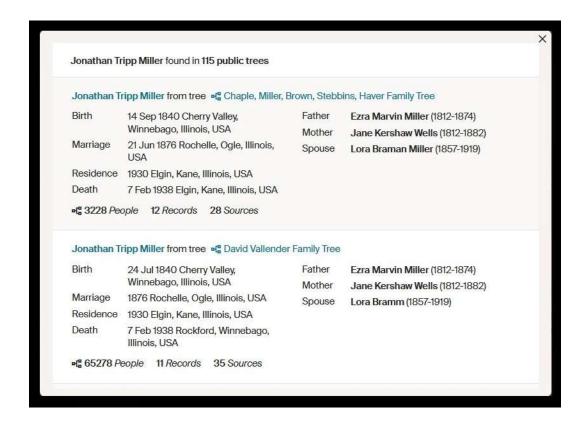
In that narrative, I mentioned that I have DNA matches with five of the eight children from Ezra Marvin Miller's first marriage:

- Mary Jane Miller (1935-1919)
- Ezra Allen Miller (1836-1917)
- Hannah Mariah Miller (1838-1926)
- James F. Miller (1842-1926)
- Julia Fidelia Miller (1852-1902)

However, I do not have any DNA matches with descendants of the remaining three children from Ezra Marvin Miller's first marriage. One of these children was Ellen Amelia Miller (1854-1855), but she died when she was just 13 months old. Another was Charles Lamartine Miller (1848-1921), and I now am convinced that he and his wife Agnes May Wilson did not have any children.

And that leaves Jonathan Tripp Miller (1840-1938). This man was the fourth child of Ezra Marvin Miller and his first wife, Jane Kershaw Wells. Did Jonathan Tripp Miller have any descendants? I have to admit that I hadn't looked into his branch of the family previously. I have a RootsMagic database on my Windows PC, and much of the information in this file came from my father's research and from Hal Oakley's research. This database didn't have the name of Jonathan Tripp Miller's wife, but it did include their son, who was named Sumner Miller (1877-1949).

I decided I should look into this branch of our family tree. I began by searching for Jonathan Tripp Miller in family trees on Ancestry.com. He appears in 115 public trees. Here are the first two:

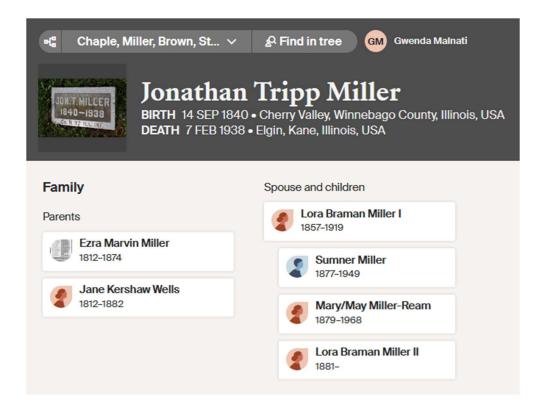


The second profile for Jonathan Tripp Miller is in the family tree owned by David Vallender, who also is descended from Ezra Marvin Miller and Jane Kershaw Wells (through their son Ezra Allen Miller). Several of us have DNA matches with David:

- Burks 27 cM
- Mark Eidem 22 cM
- Tim Oakley 21 cM

But I digress....

Here is the first profile for Jonathan Tripp Miller:



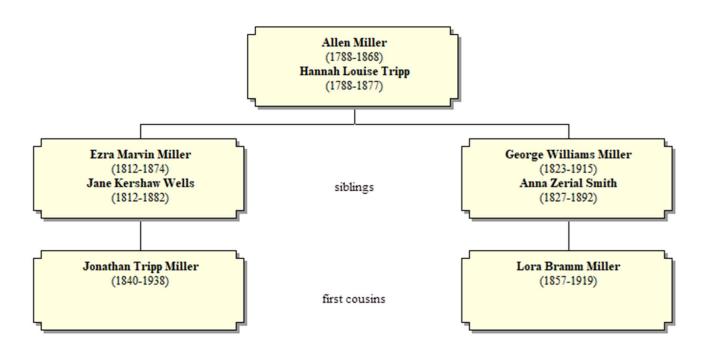
Jonathan Tripp Miller's wife was Lora Braman Miller (1857-1919). Other family trees have her middle name as "Bramm". According to this profile, Jonathan and Lora had a son, Sumner Miller (1877-1949), a daughter, May Miller (1879-1968),

and a second daughter named Lora Braman Miller (born 1881 – with the exact same name as her mother).

I next looked at Lora Bramm Miller (the wife of Jonathan Tripp Miller) – and I sure was surprised!!! Here is her profile:

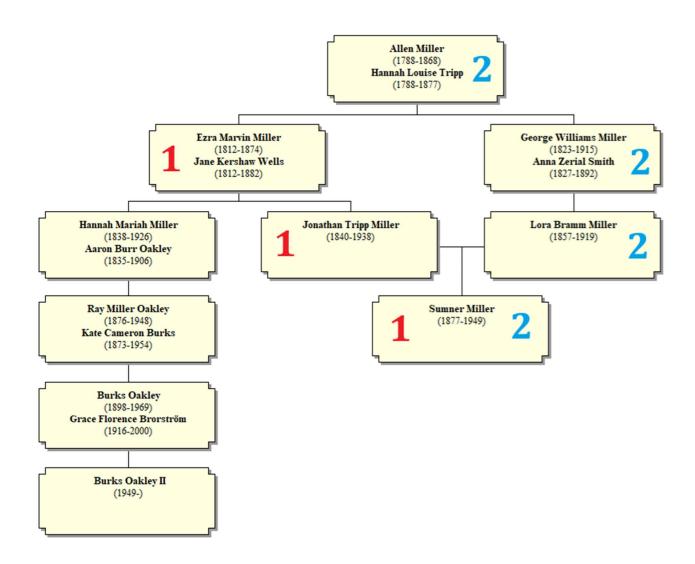


Lora was the daughter of George Williams Miller (1823-1915) – and George was a younger brother of Ezra Marvin Miller!!!! That means that Lora and her husband Jonathan Tripp Miller were first-cousins:



Note that Jonathan Tripp Miller was seventeen years older than his wife (and first-cousin), Lora Bramm Miller.

From the profile shown at the top of this page, Jonathan and Lora had a son named Sumner Miller. Since I am related to Sumner's father and also to his mother, I thought I should make a chart showing these relationships – and here it is:



I am related to Sumner through his paternal grandparents, Ezra Marvin Miller and Jane Kershaw Wells (line marked with red 1's). And I am related to Sumner through his mother's paternal grandparents, Allen Miller and Hannah Louise Tripp (line marked with blue 2's).

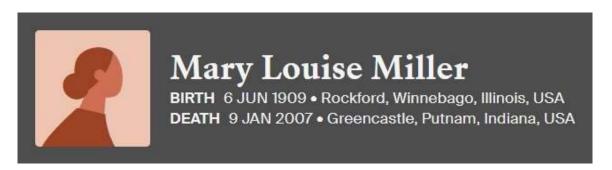
Moving on now, Sumner appears in 72 family trees on the Ancestry.com website:



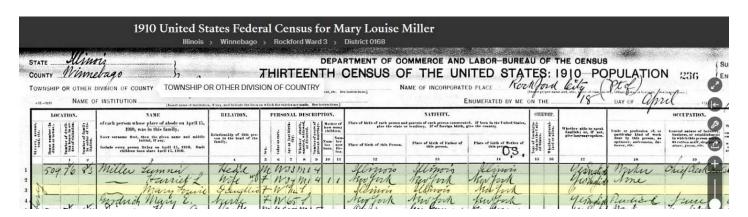
Here is one of those profiles:



According to this profile, Sumner and his wife Harriet had a daughter named Mary Louise Miller (1909-2007):

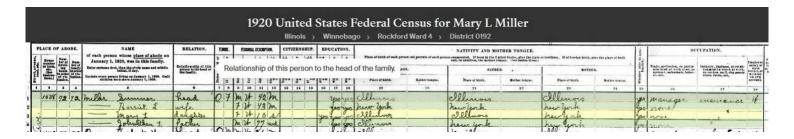


Mary Louise was born in 1909, and she appeared in the 1910 US Census (I'll put all of the census records in landscape view in an appendix):



From this record, a woman named Mary Goodrich, who was a nurse, was living with the Sumner Miller family.

Mary Louise appeared in the 1920 US Census as a 10-year-old:

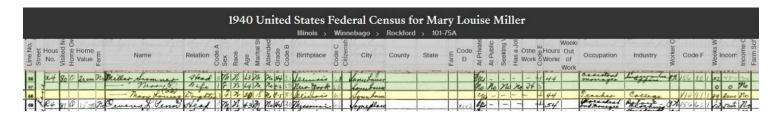


At this time, Sumner's father, Jonathan Tripp Miller, was living with them.

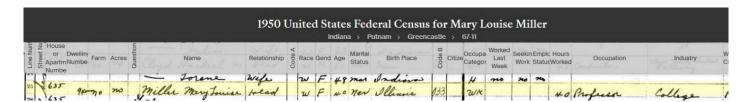
Next was the 1930 US Census:

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In the 1940 US Census, Mary Louise was 30 years old, still living at home, and her occupation was "college teacher":

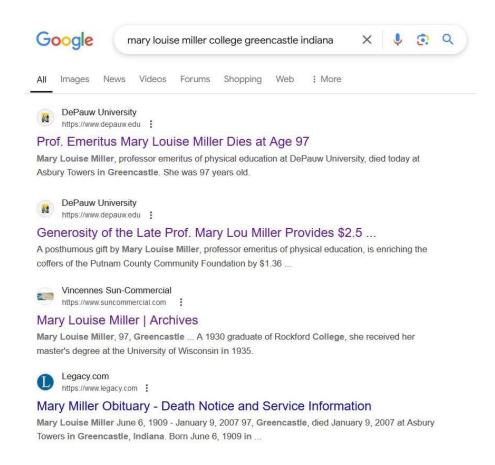


Finally, in the 1950 US Census, Mary was living in Greencastle, Indiana:



Her occupation was "Professor" at a college. Her marital status was "Nev" (Never).

Of course, I immediately Googled her, using the search terms "mary louise miller college greencastle indiana" (no quotes). This turned up:



OMG! At the time of her death in 2007, Mary Louise Miller was a professor emeritus of physical education at DePauw University. She was a 1930 graduate of Rockford College, and she received a master's degree from the University of Wisconsin in 1935.

Here are several of the articles about her:

https://www.depauw.edu/news-media/latest-news/details/20608/

PROF. EMERITUS MARY LOUISE MILLER DIES AT AGE 97

JANUARY 9, 2007



1959 until her retirement in 1974.

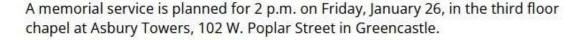
January 9, 2007, Greencastle, Ind. - Mary Louise Miller, professor emeritus of physical education at DePauw University, died today at Asbury Towers in Greencastle. She was 97 years old. A member of the DePauw Athletic Hall of Fame, Miller served on the University's faculty for 32 years.

Born June 6, 1909 in Rockford, Illinois, Miller graduated from Rockford College in 1930 and received her master's degree from the University of Wisconsin in 1935. She taught physical education and chemistry at Heidelberg College from 1935-42.

Miller joined the DePauw University faculty in 1942, and during her tenure she achieved the rank of full professor and headed the women's physical education department from

She was nationally known in the area of aquatics and held offices in the Women's National Aquatic Forum. She served on the executive committee of the Association of Synchronized Swimming from 1956-60. Miller also authored a number of articles which were published in the American Journal of Physiology, Soccer Guide and the Aquatic Guide. In 1972 life honorary membership was bestowed on her by the Women's National Aquatics Forum. She also was a recipient of the Rockford College Annual Alumni Award of Distinction in 1990.

In 1993, Professor Miller was inducted into the DePauw University Athletic Hall of Fame. In 1996, the longtime supporter and board member of the Putnam County Community Foundation received the organization's Spirit of Philanthropy Award.





GENEROSITY OF THE LATE PROF. MARY LOU MILLER PROVIDES \$2.5 MILLION TO COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

DECEMBER 26, 2007



December 26, 2007, Greencastle, Ind. - A posthumous gift by Mary Louise Miller, professor emeritus of physical education, is enriching the coffers of the Putnam County Community Foundation by \$1.36 million. The funds are being placed in a "charitable remainder trust that will help nine groups," notes Greencastle's **Banner-Graphic**, which refers to Miller as "Putnam County's First Lady of Philanthropy." A longtime supporter and board member of the Foundation, she died in January 2007 at age 97.

"Almost 20 years ago, a single woman began a legacy of generosity that has put more than \$2.5 million into the Putnam County Community Foundation, and the organizations it supports," begins the newspaper article.

Miller's estate presented the PCCF with a check for \$1,359,316 this month. "During her life, she gave nearly \$1.2 million of direct gifts through some 77 separate donations to the foundation. Most notable was her recognition of the need to help the Community Foundation become independent and self-sustaining," writes Lisa Meyer Trigg.

Professor Miller's newest gift will benefit the American Red Cross of Putnam County, the Humane Society of Putnam County, DePauw University, Putnam County Hospice Fund, Second Congregational Church of Christ in Rockford, Ill., United Church of Christ (Congregational) in Williams Bay, Wis., Heidelberg College in Ohio and Rockford College in Illinois.

Read more at the Banner-Graphic's Web site.

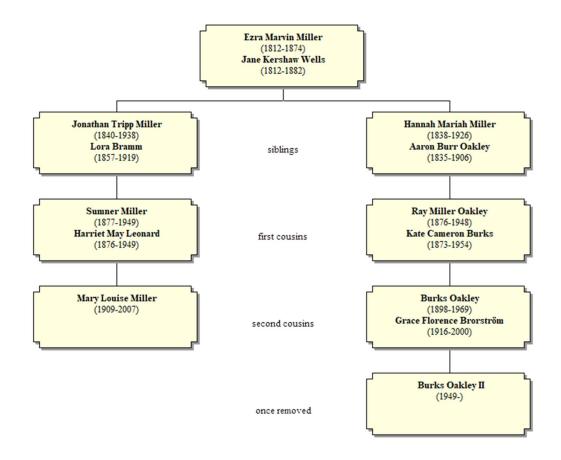
Mary L. Miller joined the DePauw faculty in 1942 and retired in 1974. She was <u>named director of women's physical education in 1959</u>.

Mary Lou Miller was a member of the DePauw faculty from 1942 to 1974. She also served as general chair of the Women's National Aquatic Forum.

One has to wonder about the source of her wealth. From the US Census records, it appears that her father, Sumner Miller, was an assistant manager in an insurance company. I'm sure we'll never know – maybe she was a very knowledgeable investor in the stock market. At any rate, what an incredible person!



Here is a chart showing how Mary Louise Miller and I were related:



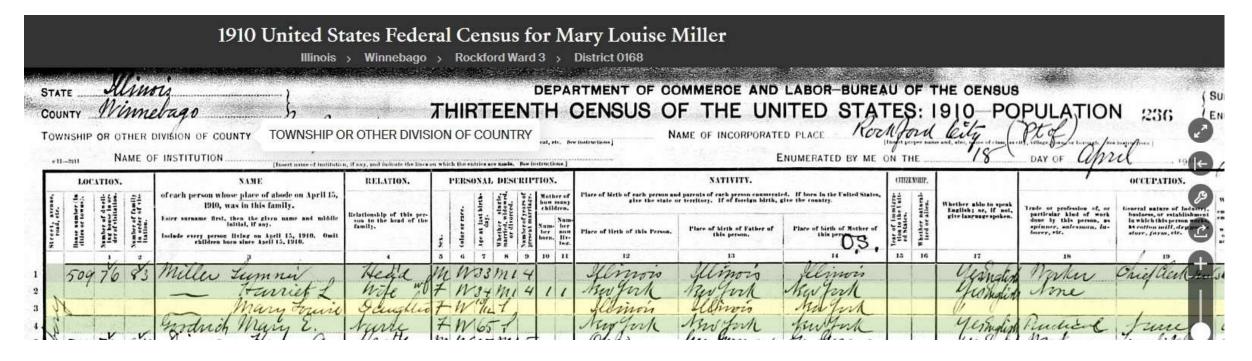
Mary Louise Miller was a second-cousin of my father, Burks Oakley. And Mary Louise Miller's father, Sumner Miller, was a first-cousin of my paternal grandfather, Ray Miller Oakley. How cool!

OK, this was Sumner's line. And Mary Louise Miller was a great find! But Sumner had two sisters. I guess I need to look at them, to see if any of them had offspring. However, right now, I'm too tired to look at this anymore. For now....

Appendix - US Census records for Mary Louise Miller

Hopefully, these images will be a little more legible than the smaller versions in the main part of the narrative.

1910:



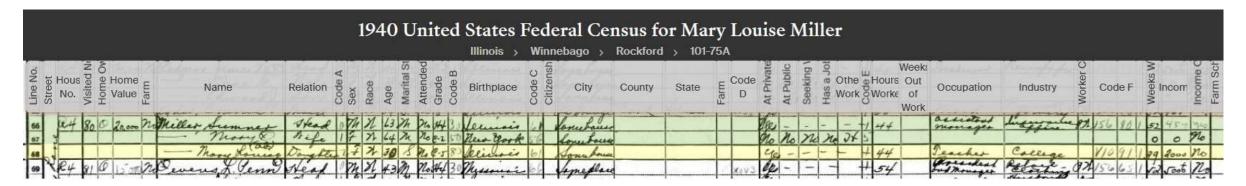
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