

“Oh Lordy!”

is most fond of that type of pie “*especially if they are of Mary Ann’s cooking.*” We will see that this is not the first time we will hear of Mary Hitch’s excellent cooking skills in the various correspondences in the Mowbray collection.

There is one letter in the collection from Lafayette Brown to Young Hitch, dated Jun 25 1861 from Moulton, AL⁵⁰. The main body of the letter is preaching as one might expect from a preacher but he does exchange other family pleasantries as well:

“Moulton Ala June 25th 1861

To Yong Hitch

Dear brother

I have writen to you several times and hav received now answer what is the matter are you yet in the land of the living or not. Hav you forgot G.L. Brown or are you determind never to write to me again. I wrote to you last fall. Shortly after I was married. And I forgit where I said for you to address me at. If you hav writen to me at Guntersville I supos that some of fathers family would hav forwarded the letter to me. I now write to let you know whare I am my address etc and if you do not write me you never expect to git another line from me.

Yours till death with out an answer

G.L. Brown

Well young I hav not an angel for a wif but as near so as any human being on earth but She is a good little wife I am devoting the energies of my life to the building up of a kingdom that can not be moved If you think worth while to write to me mark your letters to G.L. Brown Moulton Ala”

Evidently, Young has not written to Lafayette since Brown had written him in the fall of 1860. In the interim, Lafayette has gotten married to an “angel for a wife.” He finally closes his letter, after a long-winded discourse of preaching with, “*But I have spun this out longer than I thought I would at the start. So God bless you a your family. Let me know how your boys are growing off.*”

In other early letters in the Mowbray collection, we are introduced to “Aunt Sally” Hitch. Sarah Hitch (1794-1871) was a daughter of Louthier Hitch and a “spinster”, meaning she never married. Like one might perhaps expect of any matriarchal aunt, even in the modern day, she related the feelings of family in a way that only a sage and elder family member could. She held no punches and expressed her thoughts and opinions at face value. These authors have grown to love and respect Sarah Hitch for her prolific correspondence and detail of her letters. In the letters that survive in the Mowbray collection, there are seven (7) composed by Aunt Sarah and they contain a great amount of detail about the family not present among the other letters therein.

Her first letter comes dated Apr 25 1856 and Sarah focuses primarily on the health of the family and the slaves and, from her report we get to hear about many in the extended Hitch family of the area⁵¹. She refers to Young Hitch’s “*Uncle Pitts family*” as being “*greatly afflicted*” with health problems. She is

⁵⁰ Appendix, Item XVIII.

⁵¹ Appendix, Item VII.

referring here to the family of Henry Pitts (1792-1861) who married Mary Hitch (1794-1863), the daughter of Louthier Hitch, Aunt Sally Hitch's sister and the twin sister to Young Hitch's father, Joseph N. Hitch. The Pitts family lived in Laurens County and had ten known children; four sons and six daughters. Three of the sons (and a grandson) served in the War with various South Carolina military units. Sally Hitch began living in the Pitts household sometime in the early 1850s and stayed there throughout most of the rest of her life.

Sarah Hitch offers that John W. Pitts, Young's cousin, had been sick, *"His son John first took down and had a severe attack of the winter disease that's so prevalent in the country."* She then mentions that *"And before he was able to see to the business out, the negroes all took down. That is the men, four of them. Pretty much the same disease. His old negro Jo had a spell before Christmas sometime. He has never got so he can labour yet and his oldest boy he raised, Jack, died of a lingering disease, something like a consumption."* Here we find the names of two of the Pitts slaves⁵², *"old negro, Jo"* who was recovering from his illness and, his son named Jack, who had died of a *"lingering disease"* similar to tuberculosis.

Aunt Sarah then turns to the family of Sarah Ann Milam (1871-1896), who is a daughter of Henry and Mary Pitts, and who married Diatrephus M. Milam⁵³ (1820-1895) in 1842. We know of eight children in the Milam family, of which SEVEN were girls. By the time the letter was written, six of the girls had been born and Sarah Milam must have been pregnant, for their son Robert Preston Milam was born just two months later in Jun 1856.

Isaac Boyd's family is next to be mentioned in the letter. He is Isaac Preston Boyd (1819-1905) who married another daughter of Henry and Mary Pitts, Matilda Angeline Pitts (1826-1896). The six known children in this family were four girls and two boys. All but one of the girls were born by the time of the letter in 1856. John Cooper's family is simply stated in the letter with no other explanation. He is John Anderson Cooper⁵⁴ (1824-1900) who married another Pitts daughter, Louisa Jane Pitts (1827-1913).

Next, Aunt Sally mentions Leroy Pitts' family. He is Edwin Leroy Pitts (1818-1882) who married Catherine Harris Boyd (1824-1909), sister of Isaac P. Boyd who married Leroy's sister, Angeline Hitch. Eunice Duvall's family consists of herself, Eunice Elizabeth Pitts (1821-aft 1880), another Pitts daughter, and William L. Duvall (c1821-1856), son of James and Letitia (Hitch) Duvall. At the time of the 1850 census, William and Eunice Duvall and family were living adjacent to the Pitts family in Laurens County. Finally, Young Pitts' family is mentioned, he being Young Joseph Harrington Pitts (1829-1911) who married

⁵² The 1850 Slave Schedule for Laurens County, SC shows Henry Pitts as owning eight slaves, ages 40 down to 10 months comprised of six males and two females.

⁵³ Diatrephus M. Milam enlisted as a Private in Company A, 9th South Carolina Reserves for 90 days on Nov 17 1862. However, his file states that he was "discharged before reporting". He then enlisted in 1864 with Company D, 4th South Carolina Battalion Reserves and his file states, for Nov/Dec 1864, "Detailed by Advisory Board before reporting".

⁵⁴ John Anderson Cooper (1824-1900) enlisted Dec 2 1861 for 12 months as a Private with Company C, 3rd South Carolina (Laurens) Battalion. In a muster roll for Dec 1861, it indicates that he was furloughed on Dec 15 1861 for 30 days due to sickness. In the muster for Dec 1861 to Feb 1862, it indicates that he was discharged from service on Jan 20 1862 at Camp Brooks due to disability. He became a reverend and he and his wife are buried in Union Baptist Church Cemetery, Laurens, SC.

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Figure 4 - 1883 section of the Kyzer & Hellams map of Laurens County showing the location of the Hitch and Pitts households. Note that north on this map is at about two o'clock; north is to the right and about 30 degrees toward the top. (Michael G. Hitch collection adapted from an original map by Kyzer and Hellams, 1883, in the Library of Congress, Washington, DC)

Martha A. Anderson (1831-1907). All of the Pitts men, and those men who married Pitts daughters, seem to have some record of service in the War except of course, William Duvall who died in 1856.

The final family introduced in Aunt Sally's letter is Young Hitch's "uncle Louther". This would be Louther Douglas Hitch (1798-1886), Aunt Sally's brother, who married Catherine Lucinda Motes (1801-1857) in about 1818. The rest of Sarah Hitch's letter is devoted to preaching to Young about her opinion that he must turn his sins over to God and proclaim his faith. We will see this to be a common theme in her letters to Young Hitch in the times to come. Near the close of her letter, Sarah states, "Your aunt Mary says she would be very glad to see you... As your father and her were it seems nearer to each other or felt as being twins than the rest of us, you therefore feel particular near to her". This seems to imply that Sarah Hitch was living with the Henry and Mary Pitts family at the time she wrote this letter.

It is interesting that she relates the fact that Young's Aunt Mary (Hitch) Pitts was very close in age to Young's father Joseph N. Hitch. We recall that Joseph died in 1827, not long after Young Hitch's second birthday. We know from bible records that Mary Hitch was born Oct 10 1794 and, we did not know for sure when Joseph Hitch was born until the Mowbray collection revealed the line in his 1806-1814 school book notes, "Joseph Hitch was born October 10th Anno Domini 1794." They were indeed twins as Aunt Sally's letter indicates. Since Young really never knew his father because of his early death, Sarah Hitch is relating that Young's Aunt Mary is very much like Young's missing father in both age and temperament and she urges him to see her more often.



Figure 5 - 1820/25 map of Laurens County with the location of Young Hitch's farm shown in comparison with his uncles Henry Pitts and Louthier Douglas Hitch. (Michael G. Hitch map adapted from an original map by Robert Mills, 1820, in the Library of Congress, Washington, DC)

Sarah Hitch writes to Young again on Mar 20 1857 with more news of the family⁵⁵. Eleven months had passed since her previous letter and it seems that most of the family is doing much better health-wise than the year before. Sarah is still living with her sister Mary Pitts' family and tells Young that his Uncle Henry Pitts' family is doing well. However, there is some tragic news that Pinkney Hitch has died in a rather sudden and unexpected way due to a "pimple" on the side of his face that grew larger and worse over a period of five days. It is not known exactly what the "affliction" was but quite possibly a bite of an insect or spider or maybe a bacterial infection. Presley Pinkney Hitch (1831-1856) was only 25 years old at his death on Dec 12 1856, he being Young Hitch's first cousin and son of Louthier D. and Catherine Hitch. Pinkney Hitch married Emily Duvall (1833-1913)⁵⁶, daughter of James and Letitia (Hitch) Duvall and had two sons, William Leander Hitch (1854-1918) and Luther David Hitch (1856-1940). Both sons were very young when their father died. Sarah Hitch indicates that "...spent the winter or the most of it

⁵⁵ Appendix, Item X.

⁵⁶ Emily (Duvall) Hitch appears to be the household shown as "Mrs. E. Hitch" in the Scuffletown Township of Laurens County on the 1883 Hellams map of the area, adjacent to the household of "J.W. Duvall."

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with Pinkneys widow and two little children whose names are William Leander and Luther David, two lovely promising little boys”.

Sarah Hitch then implores Young to visit his aunt and Uncle Pitts with his “little family one time at least.” By this time in early 1857, Young and Mary Hitch had their two sons who were ages 9 and 3 by then. She continues her writing in this regard, “It might be possible you might not lose anything by it. The old people and myself cannot be here many more days according to the course of nature. Its an old saying. The young may die but the old must die. Your uncle and aunt pitts wishes to see Mary-ann and the children one time as neither of them has ever seen them and in all probability if you do not visit them soon they never will see them. I myself would be so glad to see you all one time here on Reedy River.”

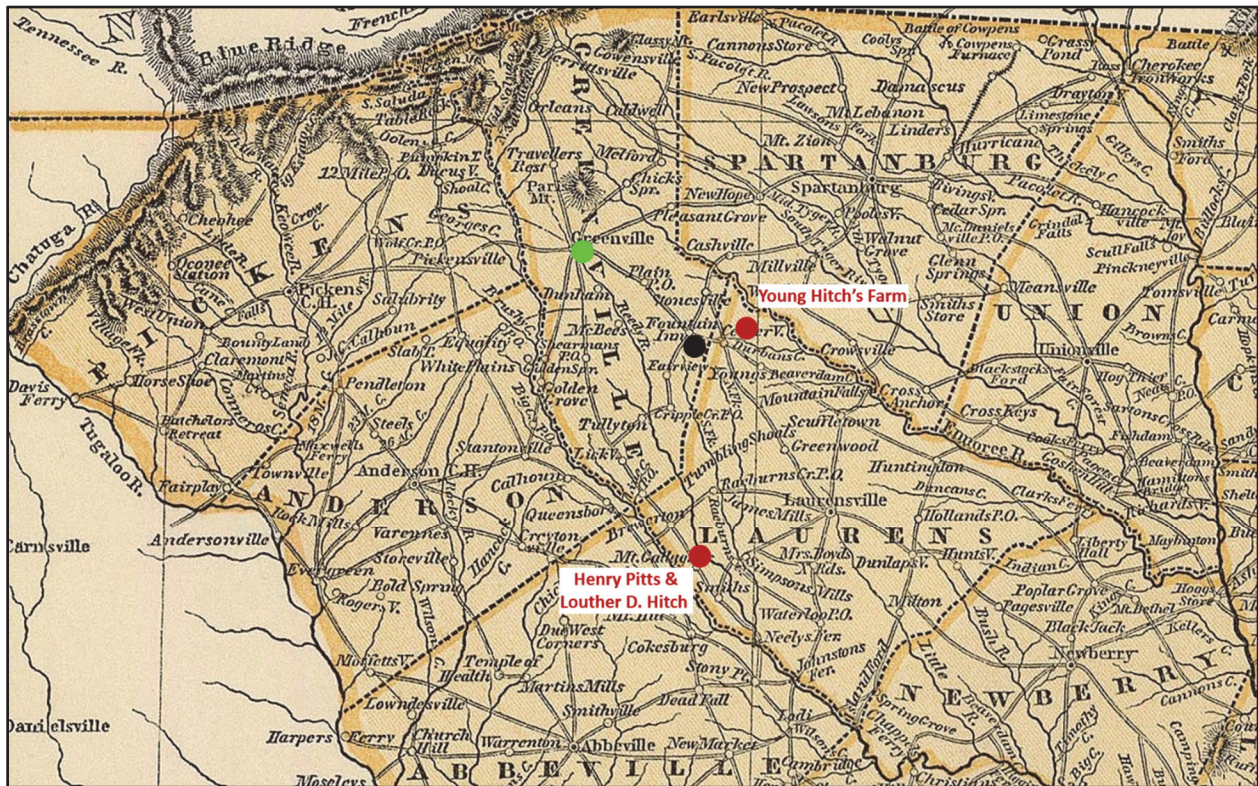


Figure 6 - Portion of an 1843 Map of South Carolina showing the "Upstate" counties. Note the approximate location of Young Hitch's farm in comparison to the Pitts and Louther D. Hitch homesteads. Also marked are Greenville (green) where Young Hitch went to barter goods and Fountain Inn (black) where the Mowbray collection of documents was found. (Michael G. Hitch map adapted from scanned copy of an original full map of South Carolina by Morse and Breese, New York, 1843)

From this passage, we get an idea of where the Pitts family was living, near the Reedy River, and, from the previous letter we know that Louther Douglas Hitch was nearby. To put this in perspective, and to show their relative location when compared to Young Hitch, we can use period maps to estimate their proximity.

Figure 4 is a map from 26 years later than the letter (1883) but it gives us a nice indication of where the Pitts and Hitch families were located that were near where Sally Hitch lived. In the figure, we see they are located near the Reedy River. E. Pitts is Edwin Leroy Pitts and J.Y. Pitts is his son James Young Pitts. We also see illustrated Joseph Allen Hitch and Louther Douglas Hitch's homesteads. Boyd's Mills is circled as two of the Boyd children married Pitts children and this is probably where the Boyd