You are cordially invited to a preview screening and discussion of

**Dalton Got Hit**

A documentary by Mary Dalton

*Wednesday, October 29 at 7 p.m.*
*Pugh Auditorium at Wake Forest University*

This event is sponsored by the Communication Department at Wake Forest as part of its Faculty Colloquium Series.
The name Dalton is Norman French and was originally De Alton as I have learned from various sources, indeed some of the branches retain the name until this day. The English progenitor is said to have come from Normandy with William the Conqueror and there seems to be a legend coming down through every branch of the family, that, for distinguished military service, he was ennobled and endowed with a very large estate. But of that no one can be certain, though the name of Count De Alton does occur in remote English history.

In the course of time the family became numerous in both England and Ireland and now many branches are living in America. Of those in England, some have become distinguished, for instance, Dr. John Dalton, author of the "Atomic Theory." Those in Ireland, being Catholics, have lived for ages in poverty and few have risen above the grade of ordinary labor, but latterly they have risen and have begun to figure in the priesthood. In America there is now Dr. John C. Dalton of New York, the Great Physiologist, who ranks with Carpenter of England, and his father was also a distinguished professor lately in one of the Medical Schools in New York.

In the early part of the last century, my great-grandfather with two of his brothers emigrated to America and settled first in New Jersey leaving their elder brother in possession of a large estate by the law of primogeniture. This estate lay in Yorkshire, not far from Hull, and after the death of this brother, who was a dissolute bachelor and died without issue, it became the object of long litigation, but as far as I have been informed no part of it has ever been recovered by his heirs. In 1860, there was again very great excitement among all who bore the name, or were descended from the Dalton family, in regard to this estate, on account of newspaper items which were going the rounds in regard to it at that time. I received some very amusing letters from various states at that time written by persons I had never heard of before, some of them proposing to contribute to a fund to send me to England to recover the $95,000,000 which, they said, the heirs were entitled to. The idea of this claim must have been universal among the Daltons as indicated by an incident that occurred to me last year in Los Angeles, California. Being incidentally introduced by Col. DeLong of Kansas to Henry Dalton, a wealthy and very intelligent rancher of Los Angeles Valley, and the colonel asking if we were related, I replied that I could answer the question if Mr. Dalton could state whether he had any interest in a very large estate in Yorkshire, England, whereupon he sprang to his feet in great and sudden excitement and swore that his father had bankrupted his family by litigating for it. The old gentleman was fierce in denunciation of the law of primogeniture and corroborated all I had heard about the drunken bachelor, even to his name, John. After that he always came up to see me when he visited the city. He and his brother George went to sea from Hull when they were young and stopped and settled in the valley many years ago, acquiring large tracts of land and became rich in their latter years.

Samuel Dalton, my great-grandfather, lived many years in the vicinity of the elder James Madison and had much to do with that family as I learned by reading a large package of old papers and
documents in possession of my great-aunt Hughes of Patrick County, Virginia, whom I was in the habit of visiting frequently in my boyhood and after I was a physician. From Virginia he removed to Georgia and is said to have settled on the very land which is now occupied by Savannah, but deterred by the Indians, and losing some of his family by sickness of the climate, he started back to Virginia but as he was passing a charming and healthy looking place, on Mayo River, which is now in Rockingham County, North Carolina, and 10 miles above the junction of the Mayo and Dan, he determined to settle there, and soon came into possession of a large body of the land where he lived during the balance of his life. He became the wealthiest man in all that region and raised a very large family of children and a great many negroes. I was born and raised within 5 miles of his residence, and I well remember, not only that large plantation, but the very house in which he lived in his latter days. It was a large frame house overlooking the beautiful Mayo River and the splendid scenery beyond. And now, as I write, my imagination is charmed by the vivid recollection of the glorious panarama as it was want to meet my youthful view. The house was painted a dark Spanish brown and had not lost its color when I saw it though it was not occupied. He died but a short time before my birth, 106 years old. He was said to be active and erect as long as he lived, and in his latter years, walked usually with his hands clutched behind him. For many years in his latter life he refused to ride on horseback or in a vehicle, and sometimes during the year of his death he walked five miles to my father's place on Beaver's Island and back again the next morning. When a child I remember the very great respect and veneration with which the old people spoke of him.

He had several sons, of whom I knew most of David, a rich planter and sock-raiser in Stokes County, North Carolina. I heard much, also when a child, of his sons Robert, William and Charley, whom, I think, lived in Virginia. His son Samuel was my grandfather. He may have had other sons, I think probably, but I am not aware of their names.

He had many daughters and I knew personally only Mary, wife of Colonel Hughes (Archelous) of Patrick, Va., a distinguished man. Lititia, wife of Col. Moore, near the Saura Town Mountains, Stokes County, North Carolina, who was the mother of Gabriel Moore, once governor of Alabama and Senator in Congress; Matilda, wife of Captain Hanny, one of General Marion's right hand men and whose name is honorable mentioned in history; Virginia or Ione (they called her Jinnie) wife of Captain's brother. These were all I ever knew but I am confident there were several others. And I was only permitted to know these because they were all then living to the age of about 100 years. I am unable to explain how I became related to the Hughes family, once living in Rockford, Surry County, North Carolina, the Winstons of Surry County; and many others whom I knew and loved as relations when I was young unless they sprang from the daughters of my grandfather for they were all in the same degree akin to me. And here I may be permitted to pay tribute to the immense and innumerable descendents of Samuel Dalton of Mayo. If one of them has every been arraigned for crime or disgraced by ungentlemanly conduct, it has never come to my knowledge.
My great grandmother, wife of Samuel Dalton of Mayo, I think, was a Galihu of Virginia. I am sure she was a Galihu or a Ewel. I find that her name was Kinner, and that my great-grandmother's name was Ewel or Galihu, most likely the latter. I retain but little remembrance of her except that she was described as a charming old lady.

Samuel Dalton, my grandfather, lived at my old homestead on Beaver Island, and died there, aged 50, from the effects of a snake-bite. He was insane for a year or two before his death and indulged the habit of preaching a sermon at the same hour every day on an elevation 400 yards south of the house by the root of an oak tree, the stump of which was pointed out to me when a child in what was called the "red field". People of the neighborhood, it was said, often came there to hear his eloquence. He had the character of being, as I remember hearing Col. John Hughes, his nephew, say after I was nearly grown, the sprightliest Dalton he ever saw, and that the country lost much by his misfortunes. He died, however, possessed of a snug little estate, by the division of which my father, uncle and aunts were able to make a good start in life.

The sons of my grandfather, Samuel Dalton of Beaver Island, was Nicholas, John, William, Samuel and Ewel; his daughters were Mary, Elizabeth, and Nancy.

Nicholas Dalton, my father, was born at the homestead on Beaver Island, 1770, April 4th, and lived there during his life in very easy circumstances and domestic happiness, where, with my lamented mother, he raised 13 children—8 sons and 5 daughters—all of whom lived and grew up healthily.

When quite young he entered the store of Peter Hairston on the Dan River in Stokes County, North Carolina, where he remained until nearly grown; and there, soon after, while yet young, married my mother and settled down for life in the old homeplace. He was a large, heavy-set man, mostly if not quite, six feet tall, weighing in his prime over 200 pounds. With chestnut brown hair, blue eyes and very fair skin, his high forehead and broad face with symmetrical features, gave him a handsome appearance. His nose was rather long, chin broad and handsomely oval, and lips thin. Between his locks and the summit of his forehead, the naked niche ran back into the hair, strikingly characteristic of the Dalton type. His generous countenance was a benignant, though his gaze was rather stern. He was quiet and passive in disposition and tolerant of annoyance but, when aroused, his determination was terrific. His carriage was erect and graceful, and his gait quiet and measured. His habits were, in all respects, exemplary, and his manners chaste, gentle and unobstructive, in the family he was always so dignified that the elder children feared to approach him unless encouraged to do so. To me this seems to be a fault. If he was ever guilty of any kind of immorality, it never came to my knowledge. All his pleasures were centered in home and he was never away unless called by urgent business. To me he seemed to take little interest in the affairs of the house or plantation, except in the early mornings when he was out giving directions to the hands for the day's work, and he seldom went among the labor-
ers. His custom was to sit about the house reading books or papers when not playing backgammon with one of the older sons or daughters or out in the horse lot in front of the house yard where he always kept his pet horses running on grass in summer. In fact, horses were his specialty and though he cultivated rich land with a number of able hands he always derived more profit from them than from anything else, his knowledge and judgment in regard to horses being remarkable. When first married his father-in-law gave him a fine dark bay mare called 'Gospel' from the price of which, for 15 or 20 years he realized a handsome annual income for those times. One of the last colts was 'Tyrontly' as fine a horse as I ever beheld when sold when four years old for several hundred dollars.

Cultivating rich low lands, which seldom if ever failed, he made large crops of provender and corn so that he was always prepared to feed them well. His habit was, in addition to raising colts, to buy or swap for poor horses, and after fattening and polishing them up to swap them off for poor ones again, and so on, always making a handsome profit. I once knew him to trade for a poor little mare which he fattened and polished into a very fine little animal. The Deputy Sheriff came along with another poor young mare for which he traded getting $50.00 to boot. Six months afterwards the man came by with the same mare for which he traded so worsted that she could hardly be recognized. They exchanged again with $50.00 to boot and, within six months this original mare was a larger, finer and better nag than she ever was.

When one of eldest sons was not over the plantation hands, he always kept a humane overseer of good judgment, giving him a share of the crops, by which he bore but little care of the management; thus he was thought by some to be rather lazy or indolent, but, if so, his laziness did not seem to injure him though he did lie down and sleep an hour every day after dinner.

My father conversed with only tolerable ease and fluency, being a man of only ordinary education and seeming to fear failure in expressing his ideas. Though usually taciturn, he was sometimes quite humorous and fond of a joke and when much amused, he would laugh immoderately and shake all over. He was fond of company and hospitable to a fault. He would even entertain a Yankee peddler for days without any pay, only for the pleasure of hearing his talk about the peculiar institutions and affairs of the far-off Yankeedom. Our house was a place of refuge and pleasure for a very large circle of relations who lived in different parts of the surrounding country, and whenever they came in numbers, especially at Christmas, music and dancing were then in order in the large west room where my father always sat in a corner by a blazing log-fire, and, as my beautiful sisters and lovely cousins went whirling around the splendid music of brother James' fine violin, the fine old gentleman would seem to be transfigured with delight. He was not inclined often to engage in argument, but on politics, which were running high in those days (not long after the Revolution) he would sometimes dispute very vehemently with his brothers and brothers-in-law, all of whom were Democrats, he, like his father-in-law, being a Republican. I have known him to argue with Aunt Nancy’s husband, Absolum Scales, who was a very intelligent man, so vociferously that, being alarmed,
I would run out, but on occasions my mother would walk in and soon the gentlemen would be all smiling and polite. Soon after marrying he was appointed Justice of the Peace and held the office during his life. For many years before his death he was the Senior Magistrate for Rockingham; hence, he always presided in the County courts, and I have often seen the most distinguished lawyers trying important and interesting cases before him. His decisions were seldom reversed by a higher court. The Bar was then very strong, composed of such men as Yancey, the Moreheads, Settle, Swaim, Jones, and lastly, Carr, Graham and Boyden. He was punctual in attendance on the "law days" or the monthly neighborhood courts where he would go riding a fine, fat horse, likely to be swapped off after adjournment of court for a poor one "a bag of bones" as my mother always called them but the bag of bones soon took on fat and polished hair and some poor fellow had to pay dearly for the corn and fodder that produced it. He was always temperate. As to his religious sentiments, my impression was that he was partial to no particular creed while he practiced the charity of all. Whenever one of the negroes died he would have the funeral preached by old "Johnnie Wilson" a good old "Hardshell", who, standing in the south door of our house overlooking the grassy shady yard, where all the negroes were congregated, the white people seated in the house, would deliver to my youthful ears, most elegant and effective sermons. He never failed to lie down and sleep an hour after dinner when at home. He chewed tobacco and sometimes smoked a pipe with a long stem.

On my return from the lectures in the spring of 1827 he was complaining of slight symptoms of paralysis in one leg, and a strange sensation in some part of the brain. I supposed it was owing to want of exercise, and I advised him to walk over the high hills every day to his mill, a mile distant. From that time till 1835, when I saw him last, I heard no more of it, but he died, after a long and painful illness of that disease, in 1838, aged 68 years. He left a fine estate, but left none of it but a pittance to me, for one reason, he had educated me and spent more money on me than any of the other children; and that I was engaged, during my stay in my neighborhood, in helping myself, while they were at home helping him. The bequest was satisfactory to me and I never complained. My father never held much money, but he was never extravagant. He dressed plainly but was always clean and neat. So kind, respectful and just was he to all, that I may truly say that he had no enemies. He was loath to speak evil of anyone, and often chided others for doing so in his presence. I will close this account of my father by declaring, in all candor and the truth, that I never beheld a man of more upright and noble traits than he possessed.

John Dalton, my father's brother, lived one mile northwest of my father when I was a child but removed to Tennessee within my recollection. I remember that he was taller than my father and I never forgot his features though I was only a little child when I last saw him, when I saw and traveled with General Scott in 1831
I thought he was a facsimile of my uncle when I saw him. He married the sister of the once celebrated Meredith Gentry of Tennessee who was also born and raised partly in Rockingham, and, by his intelligent wife he had one son, Madison, and several daughters of whom I remember only one, Theodosia, who, as a child, I loved. The family were very respectable in Tennessee though my uncle was said to have been subject to spells of intemperance.

William Dalton, my father's next brother, I never saw, but he removed to the Mississippi at an early date and had the reputation of being wild when a young man, but married and raised a respectable family there, as I have heard, and, while the late war was progressing, I travelled from Corinth to Huntersville with one of his grandsons—a nice young man who had never seen his grandfather.

Samuel Dalton, the next brother, was a small, bulky, athletic man, of whom my sons, Hunter and Clay, both reminded me. He married Mary Scales, daughter of James Scales. They lived two and one-half miles above Madison on the road to my father's until the death of his wife and some years afterwards, one mile south of Scales, across the creek. He was very energetic and intelligent and a successful trader and manager, though he was subject to hard spells of intemperance once or twice a year at which times he often indulged in regular set fisticuffs and always came off victorious, his adversary sometimes crying "enough" when Uncle Sam was underneath. Before he quit liquor he had whipped most of the bullies of the country. He married again when near fifty years old but died a few years later. He never drank any more whiskey after the age of 48. His son, Madison, became a physician and lived and practiced in Louisiana. My uncle lost his property before he died.

Ewel Dalton, my father's youngest brother, went to the Mississippi with his brother William, married, made a considerable fortune and died without children. His brothers and sisters were entitled to a large share of his estate, but, in those times, the Mississippi was more inaccessible than Europe is now, and they took no steps to claim it.

Mary Dalton, my father's eldest sister, married a man named Harbor, whose father married my grandmother Dalton. They moved off to Louisiana together where my aunt grew very rich and had a large family of children, some of whom I have heard of but never met them. Two of the sons were educated at Harvard, but their light has not reached me since. Perhaps they had too much money. The old lady once sent me an invitation to visit her while I was living in Livingston, but it never came in my way to go.

Elizabeth Dalton, the youngest sister of my father, married Samuel Martin of Surry County and raised a large family of sons and daughters. They were a clever family and my sister Mary once spent some time among them when I was a small boy.
The Daltons, I mean the original type were remarkable for health and vigor as well as for longevity. They were generally of medium size and very low, but heavy and muscular with tapering limbs, small hands and feet; and they were active and powerful in physical feats. Their chests were round and stature always erect. Sometimes however, one would grow up tall and portly like Uncle John, or like Isaac of Stokes or brother James to be mentioned hereafter. The women were remarkably beautiful and often above their grade. As a race, the Daltons were characterized for propriety of conduct generally and obedience to law and usages of good society. Though peacable and unobtrusive, they would not brook an insult, and when insulted, they would assail a man most desperately. They were industrious and energetic and seldom failed to see "the main chance" hence few of them were ever very poor. In politics they were strong partisans and generally Democrats but few of them ever pursued it as a calling as it promised but small thrift. Yet Isaac of Stokes was sometimes a member of the Legislature. He was a son of David, my father's uncle, to whom I have alluded, and a splendid noble man he was. I remember him well. He was very large and over six feet high, and bore a most commanding appearance. He was the possessor of large wealth and was an extensive amateur stock raiser, and was noted for keeping the finest and most approved breeds. I remember seeing his extensive stalls curiously arranged, so that, when one of his cattle went in at night to feed, a hickory hoop or yoke fell spontaneously around the neck to retain the animal in its place and out of the weather and exempt from injury from the other cattle. He died about 1812 without issue and his widow married a schoolmaster named Arnold in whose family I once practiced. He also had a young brother David who lived in Stokes, and raised a large family, many of whom, I suppose, live there yet. I practiced considerably among them from 1831 to 1835. The daughters were far superior to the sons. Another brother, Johnathon, a clever man, whom I knew as a child, settled in middle Tennessee and had a family of children, none of whom I ever saw. The other uncles of my father, Robert, William and Charles, I have no positive knowledge of, but have reason to believe that they lived, at least for a while, in Virginia, but I am sure that one or more of them went to Kentucky, whose descendents I have known. In fact, I was a pallbearer at the funeral of Dr. Samuel Dalton at St. Louis in 1868, he was once surgeon in the United States Navy, and a large, fine looking man like my father, Uncle John or Isaac of Stokes, and I knew his brother, William, a commission merchant in New Orleans.

But I cannot close this imperfect sketch of the ancient Daltons without special allusion to my father's Aunt Mary (Molly) Hughes, the most talented and beautiful octogenarian I ever knew, the most queenly of all the elder daughters of the Dalton race, the paragon whom I worshipped as a superhuman being. When a little boy I was often there chaperoning my sisters on a visit to her and her noble protector, Colonel Samuel, the bachelor gentleman and politician who was more like Chesterfield than Chesterfield himself. The old place bore all the marks of antiquity, and every object and all the arrangements afforded the strongest evidence of cultivated taste.
And when I was a man, a practitioner of medicine, I was often there in the way of my profession. She was then in her nineties, and talked and moved about in the pursuit of her business like a woman of forty. Her mind was certainly unimpaired and her conversation was interesting, bright and cheering, and her face bore the lineaments of lingering beauty, all the more lovely because it was hallowed by the wearing of time. Not a wrinkle in the face could be seen, or a blemish of time, except the Orcus senilis, which gave her more the gaze of an angel than that of a mortal. And she was more interesting to me as a man, because she could tell me of her father, my great progenitor, and all that concerned him so many years ago. She showed me a large bundle of old papers and documents involving his business with the elder James Madison, which I, and Col. Sam, both failed to fully understand but it was evident from their meaning that while living in Virginia he was a man of no mean pretensions. But, finally, as I was reading a Richmond paper one day I saw the name of Samuel Dalton, with 39 others, composing the "Loyal Company" to whom had been granted by the King of England an extensive body of land across the mountains of Virginia, embracing a number of counties. Wythe among the rest, in consideration of 100 pounds paid by each, which the King had done for the purpose of raising money for some East Indian government enterprise. I carried the paper to my father who carried it to Col. Sam Hughes, then they went together to Richmond and brought suit for the Dalton interest (one-fortieth) of the whole which was worth an immense sum if recovered. The trial took place and the interest of Samuel Dalton was proven, but the Madison heirs produced a receipt from Samuel Dalton to James Madison, the elder, about the time he emigrated to Savannah. So they were non-suited. But there were papers and letters in possession of Aunt Hughes showing correspondence in relation to the Company after the removal to Savannah which made it evident that the claim had been transferred only to enable Madison to act as agent, but this proof, resting on the plaintiffs, the case was lost. When I learned that lawyer Oilmore had compromised the lands for a vast sum of money for the claimants from the occupants of the land, I realized the heirs of Samuel Dalton had lost a principality.

We come now to the late and last generation of the Daltons, broken and mutilated by the last Civil War, but, thank God, not dishonored, for, when local self-government was endangered, when the sacred Constitution for which our fathers bled was being supplanted by the "higher law", when southern armies marched to the fields to maintain our liberties, the Daltons were not left behind.

As stated before, my father and mother had 13 children, 8 sons and 5 daughters.

Samuel Dalton, my oldest brother, was born May the 14th, 1724, and died, if I mistake not, in 1874, aged 80 years. At my earliest recollection, he was grown and was overseeing the plantation lands for my father. He was an active, vigorous, fine-looking man, and his habits were good and exemplary. He was very fond of dress and fine horses and was of quite a social disposition. I am sure that
he was an excellent example for the guidance of his younger brothers. After farming with my father for a year or two, and being generally known as an upright, honorable man, he was aided by Stephen and Edward Moore, merchants of Madison, in obtaining a stock of goods which he carried to Surrey County, and by the robbery and running away of his clerk in his absence, he was compelled to close up in order to save his creditors, which he did, retaining not a dollar. He then turned his attention to a lost claim of about $1,000 which he had on James Dearing of Tuscaloosa, his cousin, who several years before, while his brother James was living at my father's, and before he went into merchandising, had bought a lot of manufactured tobacco for him, promising to pay for it as soon as he could carry it off and sell it for him. This was just after the war of 1812, say 1813--Buc Dearing, having gone with the tobacco to Norfolk and thence to Mobile, sold it there for a very high price and built the first steamboat for the Warrior and had run, while, with a stock of goods in St. Stephen and another in Tuscaloosa he went on growing rich for several years, while defrauding my brother. At that time Alabama was inaccessible to North Carolina except by way of Tennessee or horseback, the Creek Indians being warlike. He wrote several times to Dearing but received no reply. Finally, when he found himself being penniless, and still snubbed by Dearing, he rode over to Uncle William Dearing's and got up a general row in the family, threatening to sue, publish, fight and disgrace the whole concern. It was an angry affair and excited considerable gossip in the neighborhood, very much to the prejudice of the Dearings. But they, being a proud family, the news of insult soon reached Tuscaloosa, and forthwith, not James himself, but Wiley, the largest and bulliest of the family was dispatched from Tuscaloosa to avenge the insult. I will here suggest that it is not in good taste to indulge in matters of the "Ring" while writing a family history, but as the want of that money was probably the foundation of my brother's lifetime troubles (a thousand dollars then being equal to more than five thousand now) my pen will write it in spite of my moral sentiment. He challenged my brother, and they were about to fight with deadly weapons, when they were arrested by the Mayor of Madison. The arrest was withdrawn upon condition that they would eschew such weapons and go beyond the town-limits to settle their difficulty. Being a student at the Academy, I made it my business to see what was going on. This turn of the affair seemed to place my brother in an awkward light, for Dearing was a large and powerful man, weighing at least 175 pounds, while my brother weighed only 135 pounds, and then was under treatment for supposed liver ailment. Sometime after the arrest was withdrawn, the two Dearings, who had been consulting at a distance, approached, and Wiley proposed to take a "hiding" as he called it. The crowd standing by cried out "for shame" and brother James standing by, a stalwart, powerful man, exclaimed "no sir I will fight you myself". You know very well that my brother is too small and weak to contend with you in that way. And now, Mr. Dearing, I am ready to fight you or anyone of your dishonored family in any Way you may choose." Then come on" said Dearing, turning with his brother and second, Aleck. "Not so fast" said Phillip, my brother is second, I cannot stand by and witness such an unequal contest. Yes you can said brother Sam, 'I am sure I can whip him. After some further parley and settling of terms the crowd was notified not to follow, and then
the parties walked off together to the end of the street. Dr. Lovell, brother James and myself following closely by permission. Crossing a little ravine just outside of the town, they took their positions and at it they went. In an instance Brother Sam was knocked back a number of feet but did not fall. Again they met and back he went by a heavy blow. But at the third approach he was felled to the ground and I thought he was done for. Dearing pounced upon him, and after a long struggle, my brother began to squirm out from under him, and they both gained their feet at the same time. Then, for sometime they seemed to be holding each other by their left hands and pouncing with the right till Dearing threw him down and pounced upon him; then it seemed evident that it would soon be over. But not so. They remained for a very long time struggling on the ground, while Phillip and Aleck both were busy directing, each his man, how to maneuver, as Phillip himself was a skillful fighter. Be that as it may, Dearing, after a while rose partly up and attempted to sit on my brother and beat him in the face; but by a quick movement he threw him off and sprang to his feet, kicking Dearing in the side as he was rising several times very heavily. And I have thought those kicks turned the issue; for after that they stood for sometime striking with apparent equal force. But presently they clinched and they fell side by side but they rose immediately and went to striking again and soon they went side by side again. This time they were both evidently exhausted and they both grasped the same little hickory bush by which to rise and they were both erect at the same time. Dearing held on the bush with his left hand while brother Sam squared himself and summoning all his strength, struck a powerful blow in Dearing's eye which brought him to the ground falling on his face, and then fell on him. The next moment Dearing yelled out "I protest the fight" "On what grounds," said Phillip. "He bit me" said Wiley. "You are a liar" said brother Sam and then Phillip laughed aloud while they were being pulled apart which was not hard to do. They were both lifted to the shade while water was brought. I ran over to brother San, and looking at him, thought he was dead, but Phillip laughed and said that he was only resting. Then I went off to see Dearing and found him fainting and they really thought he would die, and were throwing cold water on him and giving him brandy which he could not swallow while I was there. They hauled him over to Duke Scales, his brother-in-law and he lay in bed for sometime. We soon walked to Mr. Phillip's where brother Sam waited until evening, and then walked seven miles home to show that he was not injured. His face was very little mutilated, while Dearing's was beaten like a mush. Dr. Lovel held a watch and declared that the fight lasted three-quarters of an hour. Soon after this Wiley returned to Tuscaloosa, and the money was sent to my brother-in-law, about $1,000 without interest, and that was all he got.

I omitted to explain the whereabouts of brother Sam during the time which intervened between his failure in Surry and the advent of Wiley Dearing which was a year or two. From Surry he came to my father's house and was idle for a time, not knowing what to do for some time, and my father being in pecuniary trouble, at that
time, as he supposed, declined any assistance. Becoming very restless and being a man of very remarkable mechanical genius, he went to the woods, cut and prepared timber with his own hands, seasoned it and actually wrought it into a handsome one-horse carryall, all complete and without any assistance, and then, having purchased from Hugh Martin a large blind sorrel horse on a credit, and making himself a nice harness, he drove down to Moore's store in Madison and purchased on credit again a load of goods, principally tin, and then scoured the country for trade. And he was engaged in this way when Wiley arrived and threatened in the streets of Madison to cow-hide "the Peddler," if he could ever lay his eyes on him. This came to the ears of my mother in my father's absence and she dispatched a messenger to pursue brother Sam into Henry County, Va., and bring him home. And when he arrived she urged him to go out and look for Dearing and give him satisfaction. And he did obey his mother.

After this he was engaged for some time by the Moores of Madison as a clerk and salesman, while they lived in Germantown, conducting a store there, but after a year or two he carried a stock of goods to the mountains, near Ward's Gap, where he remained until 1824 when he married Mary Scales, daughter of James Scales of Mayo, a most charming and beautiful creature, with whom, I, myself, a schoolboy, was desperately in love but nobody but myself ever knew it.

I had once danced all night until broad daylight and went home with her in the morning. He soon settled on a farm three or four miles from Leakesville, where he manufactured tobacco until the death of his wife in 1835, I think. About this time he had become quite celebrated as a military man and was elected by the Legislature, Manager General of the Western Division of North Carolina, which proved to be his ruin for he gave almost his exclusive attention to this business, in which there was no money, and after several years he was forced to resign for self-preservation. But he seemed never to have recovered his business energy, at least he never was prosperous again. After several years, however, he concluded to marry again and had a number of sprightly children by his second wife who was a woman of some culture, Miss Clemens of North Carolina. Not long after the death of my father he became bankrupt with a large young family on his hands, and, leaving his family, he came to me at Anderson, Mississippi, broken in health as well as in fortune. We nursed him and kept him with us until his health was restored, and learned all about his troubles which deeply wrought upon my sympathies. I gave him money to return to his family, and six hundred dollars by way of Power of Attorney to collect and use the pittance which my father left me of his estate. That pittance brought him back to me with his family, and I assisted him in settling on a small farm in Pontotoc, where they lived several years. They afterward broke up and settled in Verona on the Rail Road, and while the war was going on, I heard that they were all likely to suffer, and I had all of them removed to my house at Anderson, I being all the time in Danville, Va. But after being there for some time and being badly treated, as I have understood, my poor old brother carried his family into a little house in town, and set up a harness shop by which he and his two little boys
made out to support the family until the war closed. By this time he was too old and infirm to work, and his wife flew to the needle, by which, and the help of her noble and industrious daughters, they not only supported themselves but soon began to fix up in some style. And when the boys began to grow up and work as printers, the whole family became prosperous in a short time, and my dear old brother was well cared for by his own loved ones till death called for him, and death never called for a more noble, honest and upright man.

By his first wife my brother had two sons and two daughters—Robert, James, and Mary and one whose name I have forgotten. Robert was a clever boy, but not so sprightly as James. Robert died in Texas before the war. James was a favorite with me. The two girls married in North Carolina, one Mr. Irvin and the other Mr. Ellington, both highly respected men and in good circumstances.

Children by the last marriage were Nicholas, Mattie, Rachel, Samuel, Henry, Sallie and Susan. Henry died at Memphis before he was grown, but was contributing money freely to the family in Aberdeen before his death. And poor, dear Rachel died just as she had grown up, Jan. 2nd, the loveliest and most 'angelic creature that Aberdeen ever had to mourn. The son, Samuel, a very smart and popular young man is now associate editor of the Aberdeen Examiner. James was a colonel in the war and lives in Rockingham. The widow, with the balance of the children, lives in good circumstances in Aberdeen, Miss.

James Hunter Dalton, the next brother, was born Feb. 19, 1796, and, if living now, resides in Patrick County, Va., near the Alleghany Mountains, and at the base of a mountain called "No Business". In appearance he was all Hunter and not like the Daltons, except that his hair was black. He was six feet high, lean and muscular, and one of the most powerful and active men I ever knew. Kind and gentle in his manners, he was yet a terror when aroused. He was not, by any means, as fond of work as he was of play, and he was very inclined to athletic amusements, as well as social enjoyments. He was a fine fiddler and kept the running of all the neighborhood frolics as they were called in those days. He was not a favorite with his father, but his mother always defended him, and they were great friends. When he brought home the graceful and beautiful Miss Nancy Critz, daughter of Col. Critz of the Revolution, my father said Jim's fiddle had fooled the poor girl. She made him an excellent wife and proved to be the best manager of a family I ever saw. After living near father's until they had two or three children, they went to a place in the mountains, inherited by her, where they raised a large and respectable family, several of whom I have seen, and I think they have always been well to do. I knew him until I was half-grown, and I always loved him, for he possessed some noble traits and was always fond of me. His wife was the most graceful dancer I ever saw upon the floor, and, when young, she was a paragon of beauty.
I dislike to speak so often of the fine looks of the Daltons, it savors to egotism, but I cannot refrain from saying that my eldest sister, Mary MacFarland Dalton was a perfect beauty, and as gentle and as amiable as she was beautiful. She made me nice clothes and took me as her escort when she visited the kin in the country around. And even now as I am writing and thinking about her 60 years or more since we were separated forever, my worn and wearied old heart cherishes the same emotion of love for that dear sister, which bound her to me then.

She married the brother of brother James' wife, Gabriel Critz, a good, clever and very thrifty man, and lived all her life at the base of the "No Business" mountain, where they raised a number of children, none of whom I have ever seen but two infants. My sister was named after her grandmother Hunter who was a MacFarland of Virginia, and was born February 14, 1798. I know not when she died.

Charlotte Galihu Dalton, was born October 27, 1799, and, if living, is living in possession of the place where my great-grandfather Hunter lived and died. She was not as handsome as some of my other sisters, being somewhat freckled in the face, but she was comely, a fine figure, and so accomplished in all the business of housekeeping, and domestic work, that all the family, and neighbors too, esteemed her with admiration. At needlework she was a genius and could make as nice a broadcloth coat as a tailor. She was much courted but seemed loath to marry for a long time. At last, by my persuasion, she married Robert Dalton, her second cousin, son of Thomas, my father's cousin. He was a fine young man of considerable means and very enterprising. They lived on Mayo until 1832, when he died, leaving her with one child, Robert, who grew up and died early with consumption, inherited from his grandmother's family, the Deatheridges. She then married James Scales of Mayo, brother Sam's father-in-law, a rich man and widower, by whom she had several children. When a little boy I was her companion, horseback, visiting relatives in Virginia and elsewhere, and she seemed always proud of her little champion, whom she took pains to dress up for such occasions. I have ever felt something like filial love and gratitude toward that dear sister.

Ewell Galihu Dalton was born December 9th, 1801 and lives one mile from the old homeplace where we were all born. When about ten years old he had white swelling, a serofulpus disease, of the Tibia or main leg bone, for a long time, which was finally taken out entirely from the knee to the ankle by Dr. White of Virginia at my father's home. Dr. White was a celebrated surgeon who never attended a course of lectures but then had no superior in America. The whole leg was hollowed out, largely in front, but filled up with callus, resembling bone, and in a few years he walked as well as ever, but always with a limp and slight stoop. Ewell has been a man of excellent common sense and judgment, and accumulated considerable property before the war, and was raising a nice family of nine children, but several were lost in that terrible struggle. My father used every effort to give him a liberal
education, and he stubbornly refused the offer from time to time, till I had to take his place as my father had entered him at Madison Academy, he being a trustee and feeling that he could not withdraw the entry with honor; and that explains how I happened to be educated. He married Sallie Strong, a very comely, strong-minded woman of good family, living at that time of the river just above Leaksville, I have heard her praised much as a wife and housekeeper.

Leander Hughes Dalton was born Sept. 25, 1803 and now lives on and owns the entire homestead where we all born, and raised. He was my constant associate and play-mate until I was 13 years old and went to the "Old Field School" with me all of the time. We were very much attached during that period, but afterwards had but little communication, my attention being taken up with books and study, for which he had no taste. He was an apt scholar, however, and was very proficient in figures. He grew to manhood a heavyset, awkward looking man of strong mind, but with no facility of expression; in fact, he was scarcely able to express his ideas, and, therefore, seldom talked, and when he did, he lisped badly. When he grew up he remained at my father's, his mother's pet, where for many years, he manufactured tobacco with the help of numerous young negroes, for whose services he paid nothing, and was at no expense; hence, he soon became fulhanded and gained predominance in the family. Soon after the death of my father he married a Miss Stovall of Patrick, a granddaughter of Aunt Hughes, and settled down the possessor of the homestead. They had only one child, a daughter who is married.

Nancy Kinner Dalton, my companion sister was born July 7, 1808, and is yet living, in bad health, two or three miles north of Madison, Rockingham. She was a sprightly, strong-minded girl and grew up well-proportioned. She was not pretty but very commanding and captivating. At school she was a genius and it was all I could do to keep up with her in grammar and geography. She exhibited a strong disposition to cultivate her mind when a girl, and if she had met with an opportunity she would have been a remarkable woman—as it was, she did highly improve her mind by reading. She has always been my model of a well balanced, sensible woman. She was a favorite with all of the young ladies who knew her, and much admired by young and old men, but young men were shy of her wit and repartee. Yet this most promising sister has been most unfortunate of all. She married John Julius Martin, son of Hugh Martin of Snow Creek, a young man well educated and accomplished, about my age, who, at school, had been my classmate; and it was through my influence that she married him, for she was shy of the family on account of their character for wildness and frolics; and my mother and father objected because they said the Martins arrogated too much to themselves on account of honors bourn by their ancestors, and the high positions which many of the older ones held. For a year or two after they were married they lived on Snow Creek, and he was doing very well. But in 1832, not long before I removed to Alabama, he was forced to leave the country to evade a prosecution for forgery of his uncle's
name on a note which he offered in a bank in Raleigh, and he never returned. It is evident to me that there were some extenuating circumstances in the matter, and the next year I had an opportunity of convincing Judge Martin, whose name he forged, of the fact. And this is it: in December 1834, he came down to my house at Madison and two of his neighbors as security, and wished me to sign it also on account of my influence with Senator Bob Martin, who had been at Raleigh a senator from Rockingham, and a large stockholder of the bank. At which time, he promptly and unhesitatingly told me that he had written his uncle’s name, as the judge was then at Wilmington holding court and he knew it would be alright with him as soon as he returned and he could explain to him the reason why he had done so. The fact was the Judge had signed a note for him the year before by which John had $1700, in three or four weeks by buying negroes and selling them to a trader who held a market at Germantown once or twice a year. The same trader was to be there in a week or two and he was under promise to furnish a certain number of negroes again, he being a stockholder also in the bank, and was unable to comply without bank aid which he was doubtful of obtaining without the Judge’s name again, he being a stockholder in the bank. He went down with the note and put it in for discount and returned home, expecting to draw the money in eight or ten days as he said upon his return. But not so. For some reason the note was held at the bank until the Judge came to hold court in Raleigh shortly after; and when the note was shown him, he denounced it as a forgery, and, after some delay, a writ for forgery was issued, learning which, John promptly made his escape to Tennessee.

My sister, with two little daughters and near the time of having another, if I remember correctly, was sent for by my father where she remained for several years. Some months after, he went off he returned as far as Abington, Va. and sent a carriage for her and the children, but she refused to go. He returned to West Tennessee, married again, went to Council Bluff, near Omaha, and soon joined the emigrant train for California, where he made a considerable fortune and raised a very respectable family and they are living at Gilroy on the Rail Road. He has been totally blind for the last eight or ten years. While at Los Angeles I mailed him my card, but of course, his family kept it from him.

My sister obtained a divorce, after a number of years, and married Dr. Roseborough of Madison and has had a number of children since. I have often thought of writing to this poor, dear sister, the very memory of whom brings tears to my eyes, but I deemed it best to spare both her and myself the agony of mind which the writing and reading of the correspondence would inflict.

Elizabeth Dalton was born March 7th, 1811, grew up a fine, tall handsome woman but was not so sprightly as Nancy. She was a gentle, lovely creature, and very dear to all the family. She married Richard Cardwell, a full handed, thrifty man, who was several times a member of the Legislature, lived at Madison, where she raised a large family of children after the death of her husband who died early. He was six and one-half feet high and a showy man. One of the sons was killed in the war. My sister died in 1864.
Susan Dalton, born March 3rd, 1815, was one of the dearest, sweetest creatures I ever knew. She was mild, gentle, sensitive, and very affectionate, and most graceful, and her voice was clear and sweet as music. For a back-woods girl, her manners were really elegant and captivating, and she took pains to render her mind equally so. She spent most of the time by with my wife and myself after we were married, and we almost worshipped her as an angel. To part with her was one of our chief regrets in leaving North Carolina in 1835. She afterwards married Alexander Searcy of Rockingham, one of the best men I ever knew, who was to her a devoted husband as long as he lived. But poor dear Sue; she died in a few years, leaving a sweet little daughter who also died before she was grown.

John Hunter Dalton was born Feb.1, 1813. By mistake I have placed him here as younger than Susan. He was a fine, handsome boy, and grew up a comely boy, with a gentle quiet disposition. He was just grown up when I went to Alabama in 1835 and had little expectation of his ever arriving at such success in any kind of business. But he soon engaged in manufacturing at my father's, like his brother Lee, and hauling and selling the tobacco in the south, by which he soon became prosperous; and then, having married Miss Mary Houston of Iredell County, a fine Intellectual lady of a wealthy and highly respectable family, he settled there, where he now lives, and accumulated a very large fortune. His touch seems to have turned everything into gold. And before the war he had become one of the richest men in North Carolina and said to be the largest landowner in the state; and he is yet a man of very large means. I have seen his wife, and regarded her as a woman of unusual intelligence. They have but one child, Bettie, who remains unmarried.

Nicholas Dalton was born August 26, 1817, and was always a good boy and grew up the largest and best looking man of the whole family. In fact, I have seen General Scott Houston of Texas and many, large, fine looking men, but none presented a finer form and appearance than Nick when I was with him in 1861. I had left him in 1835 a small, clumsy looking lad, and I was astonished when I beheld him in 1861, one of the noblest, and most imposing and agreeable gentleman I ever saw. He was really courtly and fascinating. He first married his second cousin, Miss Scales, a grand-daughter of uncle Samuel Dalton, who died early, and then remarried a Mrs. Patrick by whom he had several children. He was very prosperous before the war, and was so when I was with him, but soon after the war he became involved, and during the struggle fell paralysed, and, though living yet, is said to be much impaired. He lives now with his family very near brother John.

Pleasant Hunter Dalton, the youngest, was born March 21, 1821. He was a sweet little boy and I loved him very dearly. I used all my influence in directing his education, and corresponded long and freely with him while he was growing up at school. When I left him he was rather small, as he is now, but his face was fine and expressive, and his head large. He was for several years a student with my old classical teacher, Mr. Samuel Smith, at Shady Grove, near Mayo, and afterwards at the Greensboro Academy, from which place he went to Chapel Hill where he graduated. He professed
religion at college under Mr. Baker, the Presbyterian revivalist, who I have heard and admired, and immediately joined the church. He then went to Princetown, New Jersey, and graduated, and then to an institution in Virginia where they taught the Sanscrit and graduated there; after which he took orders and has become an eminent divine.

He married a Miss Carter, of Lincolnton, N.C., a wealthy young lady of fine accomplishments, whom I have seen and much admired and by whom he had several sprightly children, one of whom has lately died at college. He is now living at High Point, N.C.

Here closes a very imperfect sketch of the Dalton family, and all except myself, and my dear lamented mother, who, though not a Dalton, has mingled the blood of a pure and honorable race with that of the Daltons. May that blood ever maintain its purity.

Rachel Hunter, our mother, was born Nov. 30, 1774, on Beaver Island Creek one mile below the Dalton homestead. She was a tall, well proportioned, graceful woman when in her prime, and always enjoyed excellent health. Her hair was a beautiful, dark, auburn, and as fine as silk; skin fair and rosy, corresponding beautifully with her hair; eyes blue, grave and piercing; lips rather thin and mouth well cut of ordinary size; chin broad but not prominent; features symmetrical and comely, but well marked and expressive firmness, emotion and great sincerity. In other words, she had a strong face. Though of Scotch-Irish family, she had no blarney. There was nothing in her character that bordered on deceit, nor was she, in the least, inclined to jest. She was a quick and sometime irascible, but never violent or outbreaking; and when she was wounded in her feelings she was apt to find relief in tears. Her heart was as tender as possible, and she was kind, benevolent and charitable to a fault. Her features always betrayed her emotions, and it was easy to know when her sensibility was disturbed. She was utterly devoted to domestic duties and her industry and rapid manipulation were remarkable.

Having so large a family and a lazy husband, as she used to call my father, she labored from break of day until late at night in keeping up the work for the household, and was always the last to retire for sleep; and though tolerant and indulgent, she managed to have everything done to suit herself, and without noise or excitement. She was never idle a moment when awake. Though very much devoted to her children, she was not as demonstrative in her affections and carresses as many others. She was exceedingly sensitive and modest. Life with her, seemed to be a task, the labor of which was so pleasant and agreeable, that she seldom sought any other recreation, for it was all recreation with her. Her happiness and contentment really consisted in her family, her own enjoyment being derived from the care and labor of rendering them comfortable and happy.

In early life she was not a member of any church, but for some years before her death she was a pious member of the Presbyterian Church. On my way to join the Army at Harper's Ferry, Va., in the spring of 1861, I reached brother Nick's house at midnight, where she was staying; and soon after gaining entrance into the house I asked for her, and the room was pointed out. I ran in and found her just awakening from sleep; and as I approached, she clasped me in her arms, and kissing me for a moment, exclaimed 'Oh, is this my
child - my child gone so long? No, it can't be. Yes, it must be so, and how is it? I'm dreaming. No, speak my child and let me hear your voice. Though light was in the room by this time, she passed her hand over my face several times as though she wished to feel as well as see my features. She then sobbed and wept and began to pet me as though I had been a child and holding me a little distance from her face, and looking straight at me, she said "Oh, Bob, it took a war to bring you to me; God bless the war."

I left her to dress while I was talking to the family in the next room, and when she came up she was silent, and gazed at me earnestly for some time, seeming to be almost stupefied and not able to realize my presence. As I was then several days behind my orders, I had to leave Madison the next afternoon, by 2 o'clock, messengers were sent forthwith to notify the kin for miles around, and by 7 o'clock a.m. they began to arrive. And such a scene! Poor sister Nancy fainted as I met her, and remained unconscious for some time, and I really feared she would die. By 9 o'clock they were all in, with a number of my friends of Auld Lang Syne, none of whom had I seen for 28 years. It was the most joyful day of my life. At dinner I sat beside my mother and observed that she partook of substantial food, though she was then 87 years old. At the table she was quite cheerful and told on me the notorious anecdote relating to the destruction of my crop of tobacco by an old sow when I was a small boy; and she described my agony and raving when I came to the house and was informed of the great calamity and concluded by saying "And Bob said he would never work again; and he never did."

When the time approached for me to leave a gloom seemed to settle over her countenance and when I embraced her to go, she was silent and motionless as a statue, but exhibited features of agony that I can never forget. From the time of my leaving her in 1835, she had fallen in height several inches, and seemed to be greatly reduced in size; but yet she had easy use of her limbs and walked well. Her mind was little impaired. At 2 o'clock I left and never beheld my mother again. Sometime that year she fell and fractured her thigh in the hip joint and her health declined for the want of exercise, I suppose. She died in 1863, aged 89 years.

And now to conclude this notice of the Dalton family, I have to speak of myself - a subject by no means pleasant for me to discuss; but it would be incomplete without some allusion to my life, I will give a simple outline of it.

ROBERT HUNTER DALTON

The writer was born Feb. 21, 1805. My name in the old family register being mutilated, it has always been doubtful whether the date was 1805 or 1806; but brother Samuel was of the opinion it was 1805, in which he would seem to be substantiated by the wide gap which would be between the ages of brother Lee and myself, if 1806 is correct. But as the figure 5 had no dash, and I made it when only 11 years old for the purpose of gaining a year, it is impossible to decide the matter, as though the figure without the dash was a fair 6, yet my father may have failed to make it.
Being the 7th child of a family of 13 children, I was much crowded and it may be supposed that I had a poor chance; but such was not the case, for as far back as I can remember I clamored for my rights, and if anything good was at hand, I was apt to get my share. I never regarded myself as a favorite child so far as my father and mother were concerned; and yet I am sure that I was the pet of my sisters. Prior to the age of six I doubtless encountered many startling incidents in spits and diapers, in the kitchen, in the house and in the yard as well as the fields, some of which I now well remember; but the 6th year was the first real epoch of my life, that being the age that I first learned to chew tobacco and was entered at school. At that time Ewel, Lee and myself began to walk 2½ miles to a school on Henderson branch, south of my father's where Col. Henderson (the gg Granduncle of my children had lived before he moved to Tennessee long before I was born.) The old house was still standing. The school was taught by Thomas Piner, a routine Methodist preacher, whose head was red, the very looks of whom, when I first entered the school room was near throwing me into fits; but he proved to be kind to me during three years pupilage there. Our grandfather Hunter presented us each with a new Testament, and our first reading was in that, which I have often regretted, as it was not only hard to read, but gave me a horror of the Holy book for many years afterward. It was a long and fatiguing walk for one so young, and the path being full of grubs and stones, the end of my second toe was off, generally, all of the summer. My progress must have been very slow at that school, for after three years I was able only to read and write indifferently. Mr. Piner having gone to Indiana, we were sent two miles north east to an old pedagogue 72 years old, whose name was Nehemiah Vernon. He was tall, stooped and very lean, his face wearing a perpetual sardonic grin. He was the real Orge I ever say, and if I were a painter I could draw an exact likeness of him, so indelible was the impression he made on me. He never laughed in his life; I suppose because he was so grim. I was so shy of him that he never had a chance to strike me but once and then when I had my arm around the beautiful Miss Deatheridge, as we were sitting at the large writing desk. The first I know of it was when a long hickory switch had struck across my back and was wrapped up right around me. After a year or two he was succeeded by Samuel Lewellyn, one of his pupils, who assayed to teach me arithmetic for one year. I was then about 12 years old, and stayed at home for about a year, spending part of my time at my grandfather's with my cousin, James Hunter, orphan son of Dr. Robert Hunter, and sometimes riding on errands for our family. During that time I read religious books and others which I found in my grandfather's fine library, which laid the foundation of a strong religious sentiment, which I never lost, and inspired me with a fondness for books, which may have led to my subsequent education. About this time, an accomplished young man, Dr. John Robertson from Virginia, opened a grammar school on my father's land in an old overseer's house, and sister Nancy, some of the smaller
children and myself, were entered. My darling sister and myself were classed in grammar and geography, and it was all I could do to keep up with her. We progressed very rapidly and were the teacher's pets.

At this period, town of Madison had been laid off and an academy built an in operation under the charge of Mr. Samuel Smith, an eminent teacher. My father had been down to a trustee meeting, being a trustee, and had been prevailed upon to prescribe a scholar, and Ewel, of course, was to be the choice; but he pretested so throughly agaist that, as a last resort, I had to fill the place, for someone had to comply with the engagement, so, on the first Monday in February 1821, I started, riding to school in Madison which was sever miles distant, and continued to go for three years, lacking one month, during which time I became a fine Latin and Greek scholar. The school was very large and many of the students were of the best family in the county, among whom I became emulous and carried off first honors at examinations, which were always crowded with first class visitors. On one occasion, 'the first examination' in my class of 11 in number, I obtained the first honor, and very unexpectedly when all the honors had been read out to the assemblage, Judge Thomas Lacy, one of the committee of examinations, rose and read out a most complimentary honor in my favor over the whole school. And is was true that I had made remarkable progress.

At the end of three years, when many of my companions were going to enter college at Chapel Hill, I besought my father to let me go to; but he was unwilling to bear the expense; so I was at the end of my row, but not of education. It so happened that four of my second cousins from Western Patrick and Surry counties, had been boarding and going to school at Madison, three Moore's and one Carter, all near my age. These had spoke so highly to their parents of me, that, at that time I recieved a pressing invitation to come up and take a school at Mount Airy at a salary of $200 and board for one year. I seized the opportunity and opened the school of 42 scholars on the first Monday in January, 1824; many of my scholars were much older than I was; but they behaved very respectfully to me, and I had a very agreeable time, and with very hard study and application for one year and one-half. I engaged for the second year for the sum of $300 but begged off at the end of the third session to engage in the study of medicine, which then was much more honorable profession than it is now, and fully equal to that of law and theology. But when I began to teach, I had with me a number of elementary law books obtained from Cousin Nathan Moore of Stokes, then an eminent lawyer, which I studied at nights and Sundays, during the first year of my reaching, with a view of making an early start in the practice of law, after my term of teaching was out. But hard study in reading these books at night, and reviewing before my classes, impaired my health, so that my mind became turned to the choice of medicine, so that I might preserve my own health, I so calculated.
I went at once to study medicine with Dr. WM. Hereford, of Leatherwood, Henrico County, Va., in company with my cousin, Leander Hughes, who had returned from Chapel Hill, and James Inge of Pittsylvania, where he remained only four months, during which time we not only studied hard, but had an opportunity of seeing and associating with the young ladies whom we met every week at social dinings, given every week, first at one house, then at another. They were elite, and many of them descendants of Patrick Henry. And near the close of my term there, I had the pleasure of attending a camp-meeting on Horsepasture, near the residence of Gen. John Dillard, who married a daughter of Aunt Hughes, and when I first beheld the lovely creature who was to be the partner of the best part of my life, and the mother of all my children—a blushing beauty of 16 years. She had come up from New Bern, the metropolis then of North Carolina, to spend the summer with her relations at Snow Creek and, in company with her cousins, Edmund, Bettie, and Martha Martin, and Ruth Rogers, with her beau, Alex Dearing, who married her, she was the guest of Mrs. Gen. Dillard. Dearing introduced her to me awkwardly on the camp ground by saying "Let me introduce you to cousin Robert." I saluted and bowed as much like Col. Sam Hughes as I could, and quickly after recognizing me, she turned to Bettie Martin and blushing said something in a low tone. As soon as I had an opportunity I asked Bettie what she said, learned that it was "Oh, I dreamed about that young man last night."

It is no poetry to say that she was as fair as a lily, for she was really so, and every feature was a charm by itself. Of course, I was deeply smitten, having spent nearly a week in her presence, and through she treated me with respect, I was never aware that I had made any impression on her until 6 years afterwards, when we were married, and then she declared she had dreamed about me, and when she was suddenly introduced to me the shock embossed her and she asked who I was and told Bettie of the dream. But I saw her no more, and really tried to forget her supposing she was soon to be a belle in a fashionable city far away and beyond my reach—the daughter of a banker while I was only a poor student of dry bones. But I could not forget her. That beautiful head of dark waving hair; those deep-set dark, lustrous, blue eyes; those smiling, vermilion lips, tender and sweet as a budding rose; that lily-fresh complexion reflecting the charms of virgin purity; those peaceful attitudes and motions; these were stamped indelibly upon my mind. I returned to Leatherwood, wringing more than ever under my sense of humble position and resolved to elevate myself if labor could accomplish it.

Nov. 1825 found me at my father's house not knowing what to do nor where to go. But in a few days I received a kind invitation from Dr. Edward T. Broadnax of Saura Town to come to his house and study medicine free of charge, which I promptly did. The residence was beautiful and picturesque, overlooking the Dan, with its wide and extensive low grounds and much of the surrounding country. There was a fine library and I made good use of it until next fall when I went to the lectures at Transylvania, which was then a first class school. My father held the notes for $350, on my school employer, in Surry which had not yet been paid, and furnished me
with a fine horse and $200, which carried me through on course of lectures and brought me home. My employers who gave the notes were Mr. Slade, Gallihus Moore, Wm. McGraw and Machak Franklin. The money I had was currency, not current in Lexington, Ky. and my father instructed me to change it at the bank in Rogerville, Tenn. for silver, which I did, and on the way, at Renfro's, in Kentucky, where I stayed all night, a thief robbed the saddle bags of two horse drivers who stayed there that night, and came very near getting all of my money. Next morning, when the men were frustrated by the robbery, I flew to my saddle bags, which I found still locked, but the leather strap which interlocked the edges pulled up so that they had had their hands down in among my clothes; but they had not reached the Mexican dollars rolled up and at the bottom. I have often thought of this morning's escape from ruin...I found Dudly, Drake and Caldwell lecturing there; and soon after taking my room upstairs in a boarding house, my dear cousin and old classmate, Leander Hughes, had arrived from Tennessee, where his father, Col. John Hughes, had settled, and came rushing up the steps and flew into my arms. I had not seen him since we parted in Leatherwood in 1825, this being the fall of 1826. He was a gifted scholar and young orator of the academy, my classmate and my rival for distinction. We roomed together during the winter, and we rivalled one another again. But my poor dear friend and cousin, though he remained there until he graduated, he died before he practiced and death never claimed a nobler victim. I, too, expected to stay there for graduation, and my father had written, promising to send me money; but I never received his letter, and finding myself almost out of money, at the close of the session, I mounted my fine horse, Charlie, and returned to my father's.

I should have gone back at once, but my cousin, Dr. James Hunter of Guilford, was at that time about to leave his location, at the Big Oak, now Hillsdale, to remove to Tennessee, and I decided to take his place till fall, and then return to graduate; but falling into a fine practice, I held the position for three and one-half years - and then closed up and went to Philadelphia where I graduated. One of my friends and admirers, Maj. Mason Wall, a merchant near Madison, loaned me, without solicitation, the money, $400, to buy books, instruments and a little stock of medicine to begin with and he purchased them at Philadelphia when he was there buying his goods. I paid the debt and interest the next year.

The country being poor, I made no great deal of money but enough to keep me dressed very finely and enable me to sport fine horses and sulkeys while there I became engaged to Miss Alphia Taylor, rich heiress of Chatham, whose father had been a leading man in that country, and throughout the state; but quarreling with her mother when I asked for her, I quit in disgust when she urged that I was not a graduate and was trying to marry her daughter for money, and went immediately to Philadelphia where I did graduate and afterwards marry a woman far superior. I was
very busy during those three and one-half years and performed several capital operations in surgery, some of which I had never seen performed by others. I declined no professional responsibility, though I was not a graduate.

At Philadelphia I remained six months. Sometime after the course was completed, attending the Alms House and studying in the Great Wistar Museum, I heard the last lectures of the celebrated Drs. Physick and James, and their names are on my diploma. While there I was the classmate and intimate associate of the celebrated Arctic voyager, Dr. Kane, a small eccentric, learned man with whom I visited some charming French ladies on Spruce St. several times; also a strong intimacy with the now celebrated Mutter & Bernard, the young millionaire of Savannah who insisted upon furnishing me with the means of taking a curriculum in Paris where they were then about to accomplish themselves in their profession, but I, like a sensitive simpleton, declined the obligation, and after equipping myself with a $100 suite from Watkins and Shellerine and a fine set of surgical instruments from Doser's, I returned to my father's. But before I left I had formed a copartnership with a fellow graduate, Dr. Wharton of Virginia, a most talented young man, with the prospect of settling together in St. Louis, Mo. in the following November, where we were to make money for the purpose of taking a course in Paris, which plan failed for a reason to be explained later. St. Louis was then a village of 10,000 persons.

Returning from Philadelphia, and settling in my old business for the means of complying with this arrangement, I had formed a temporary copartnership with Dr. Currie of Madison until the time to go should arrive. But riding up to Currie's House, after a trip to Surry County, I was told that Miss Henderson was at the house to dine with the family, in company with her brother. I knew nothing of this Henderson having left New Bern and settling in Mt. Pleasant, and really did not suspect who the Miss Henderson was. But after brushing off the dust, we all walked to the house, and Mrs. Currie introduced me to Miss Jane Henderson. I was dazed and confounded, realizing at once that she was the same beautiful, budding flower I had seen in its freshness 6 years earlier. And now the holy passion which had slumbered so long in despair, was kindled up like lightening in my ear, and there it is as I am writing these lines. Suffice it to say that I soon made my passion known, and at the moment of our engagement, we went together like children. She had remembered me and heard of my success and accepted Mrs. Currie's invitation that she might see me again.

We were married on Old Christmas Day, Jan. 6, 1832 at 3 o'clock p.m. at Mt. Pleasant, and soon settled in Madison where I was engaged in a large practice until December, 1834, where we broke up and remained at Mt. Pleasant, with our little son, Alexander, until the following March, when, in company with my brother-in-law, J.W. Chambers, and his family who were going
to Tennessee, I started to Alabama by way of Tennessee, The Creek Indians being hostile on the direct route. During the Sojourn at Mt. Pleasant, which was then the hospitable roof for the fine people of all the country were much entertained, the time was spent most agreeably and pleasantly in the delightful society of the queenly Mrs. Henderson, and her dear, precious, lovely daughters, Sarah and Eliza, who charmed me with music, and all the family of Maj. Chambers who was in Halifax arranging his affairs to leave the country. That short period is one of the brightest spots in my calendar. My wife was not in a situation to travel, and I went on horseback and was much exhausted by the long and weary trip.

Having business for Mr. Henderson in his new plantation in Sumter County, I was detained there for several weeks until it was too late to risk myself in Mobile, where it was my purpose to settle, in the hot weather, where yellow fever prevailed, and boats stopped, temporarily, as I thought, at Livingston, but falling into a very large practice at once, I stayed there for ten years, coining money all of the time, but losing it again by securityship; as was incident, in these flush times of Alabama to almost everybody. But yet I came off well enough to settle my family in Aberdeen, Miss., the first of 1845. While living at Livingston, my children Luisa, Robert who died at Capt. Wallace's on Henterbish, and Jane who died in Aberdeen in 1845 and William were all born, Hamilton having been born at Mt. Pleasant in the spring of 1835, and brought in the fall with his mother and Alexander by Wallace Henderson. And while we were there my wife built a beautiful Episcopal church which stands there now as a monument to her memory. She raised contributions by subscriptions there, where no Episcopalians lived but herself, and obtained donations from liberal persons whom she knew, and some whom she did not know, from all parts of the country. She took up out of our yard a beautiful mimose tree and planted it in the church yard, before the door, where I learned, it is still flourishing. At one period of the time I thought she was far-gone in consumption, and her mother and one of her sisters having died with that disease, but she was fortunately saved by adopting the habit of taking a sponge or towel cold bath or friction, every morning, which she continued throughout her life, and soon grew to be a large, healthy, fleshy woman, and even more comely the larger she grew.

In January 1845, I removed to Aberdeen, Miss. where I remained til the last of April 1867, struggling for 20 years under the impress of all the elements of misfortune which could afflict a man, the end of which was the loss of my wife, the mother of my dear children, on the very day, to the hour which we had been united in matrimony, 20 years before. My life had been one of arduous labor, and though I have suffered much and seen great troubles, I have enjoyed much in this beautiful world, where the pleasures are though, the charms that greet the eye, and all the social and domestic associations, comprise, in my estimation a Heaven on Earth.

And now in conclusion of this imperfect view of my past life, I may be permitted to say that, though I have failed to achieve as much success as I once expected, yet I have done my full part in contributing to the comfort and happiness for all whom I have
ever been responsible.

And here I had dropped the curtain to rise no more in view of my life; but a few more words may not be out of place to throw some light on what has happened to my career. When I lost my wife in 1853 I was prosperous and in possession of a fine estate, and engaged in a profitable practice; but it soon appeared that fate was unpropitious. The wand of Ethurieiel had dropped from my hand and Fortune smiled no more. The balance wheel which held in poise the plan of my affairs was 'gone; and though under the guidance of a darling, brilliant child, my mansion for years was the focus of fashion and the scene of all the joys of youthful life. I admired and approved but failed to participate. I struggled to restore equilibrium by business and enterprise, but misfortune came. At one fell swoop $14,000 were swept away by the burning of my steam saw-mill, and $4,000 had to be expended in buying another to saw up a vast number of socks rafted up the river 20 miles during the preceding summer. But after all I held my own until the beginning of the war in 1861. In the meantime I had deemed it wise to marry again, and did select the most gifted and charming woman in the South for my companion, but the act proved the greatest blunder of my life. With all my exertions, there was a separation. Nature cried aloud in condemnation of the measure, and there was no help. I fled to the war at the age of 56, camped and slept for a year in the forests and fields of Virginia and mingled with scenes of sickness, bloodshed, and courage. And then in control of a vast hospital, I labored nearly incessantly through the war; but yet, there was no relief, and when I returned to my home in 1864, I found my condition still the same, even worse. And then after two years of futile preparation I determined to escape from the scene of my troubles and plunge into a vast city where I might find a field commensurate with my large experience and recover all that had been lost. And so I was likely to do, had I been sustained at home. I remained 8 years at St. Louis, and just as I had taken a commanding position, as I thought, and began to be rewarded for my perseverance, I fell from a street-car and fractured my hip joint as my mother had done; and there ended my business and domestic career, on the dissolution of which I had nothing to say, but drifted under the protection of my younger sons, who have heaped upon me all the kindness and attention fillial love could inspire. I fully recovered from my terrible injuries and am now here with my son, Clay, in South West Missouri, after spending two and one-half years with my son, Robert Hunter, in the elysian climate of Southern California in distant view of the boundless Pacific. And the future--I know now what is in it for me.
Received from Jack Jones who is related to Dalton family and doing genealogy research. Will add to the Dalton Family Papers (Ms 215).
2-21-11