

September 20, 1944

Dr. J. Russel Wickey
Belleville, Illinois

Dear Russel:

It has fallen upon my lot to finally pass upon the collection of letter, papers, keepsakes, etc., belonging to three generations --that of my grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Collins Cowdy, my parents, and my sister, and in the lot I also find some correspondence from your family--only a letter or two from Aunt Julia, but several letters from Mary Lane who was your stepmother. She must have been a splendid woman and certainly experienced more grief and sadness than usually falls to the lot of anyone person. She married your father not a great while after the death of your mother and her cousin. From the letters, I think she was very fond of your father and was ~~almost~~ like a real mother to the children.

A letter I read last night told of the man for whom your father worked having sold his business to go elsewhere, I think to Iowa, and that Mr. Wickey, being without a job, decided it was best to go with him to the new location. While he was gone sickness fell upon the family in very severe form. Jennie had diphtheria from which she recovered. Mary died. You were ver seriously sick and your stepmother also went thru a siege of sickness. I think I have asked you before just how Mary Lane happened to be a cousin or second cousin of your mother. It may have been thru the Mason line as I know of no relatives in the Simons line to whom she could have been related.

If I find anything that I think you would like to have, I shall send it to you.

Love to you and yours,

Your Cousin