

6836 South Kedvale Avenue
Chicago, IL 60629-5711

March 29, 1999

Dear Lee:

Wow! Thanks for taking the time to put together the pile of information that you sent me! And thanks for the compliment that you find my letters interesting. I guess that's the repressed author in me finally shining forth!

Now, this is going to be a VERY long letter, because I thought I'd tell you something about myself and my branch of the Fulkrod family - and how we all got this way. SO....find a nice, comfortable chair and set a spell!

I am the only child of Wesley Henry Fulkrod (1902-1975) and Marcella Doyle Fulkrod (1901-1973). My father was born on a farm just outside Fargo, North Dakota on January 19, 1902, and died in a nursing home in Janesville, Wisconsin on January 15, 1975. My mother was born in Williams, Hamilton County, Iowa, on July 24, 1901 and died here in Chicago on June 1, 1973. Both my parents are buried in Holy Sepulchre Cemetery, a Catholic cemetery in the south suburban village of Chicago Ridge, Illinois. I came into the world at Woodlawn Hospital, in Chicago on October 18, 1933 (which means I should be old enough to know better, but I don't!) and I am employed at the downtown Chicago law firm of Kroll & Rubin, Ltd., where I work for four lawyers.

I studied voice for twelve years in my salad days, and I sing the mass parts (the term is "cantor") and lead the singing at two masses a week at the suburban church of St. James at Sag Bridge, which is a 140 year old church in the middle of one of the Cook County forest preserves about 13 miles southwest of Chicago, in Lemont, Illinois. I can be found in the choir loft for the Saturday afternoon mass at 5:30 PM and on Sunday morning at the 8:30 AM mass. Well, this past weekend's been sort of a disaster because I came down with a sinus infection and a first-rate cough, which makes singing a little rough. Hopefully, I'll be in good shape for Palm Sunday this weekend and Easter, next weekend. I'd better be! We are VERY short of cantors in our parish!

I've always had a great interest in history - both American and European. For the past two years I have been very active in the sesquicentennial programs for the Illinois & Michigan Canal, (1848-1998) which opened back in 1848 and brought thousands of settlers to what is now Northern Illinois. I write scripts for a living historian group called "Canalers & Company" and we've put on several shows over the past two years and people seem to like what they see because they're always ready for more. Of course, they could like our shows because they're free! I did a President's Day

show on Sunday February 21, with a large cast, and we had an audience of about 70 people.

Right now, I'm getting three singers together to do a 15-minute musical presentation for the opening of the 1856 Robert Vial house in suburban Burr Ridge, Illinois, about 14 miles west of Chicago. This program will be sponsored by the Flagg Creek Historical Society and will feature well-known music from the 19th Century. Besides singing, I have to play the accompaniment on my synthesizer, so it looks like I'm in for a busy three weeks!

I'm also very interested in the American Civil War, - and opera. Now THERE's a strange combination! I often wish I lived in Pennsylvania because of the close proximity of the battlefields and all the Civil War shows that go on all year in Pennsylvania and Virginia. I know that you have a large battle field in your area that's often used for Civil War re-enactments: New Town near Elmira.

I own my own home (it was my parents), a six-room yellow brick Cape Cod, on the southwest side of Chicago near Midway Airport. At the moment, I have a young couple and their two children living with me. Rents being what they are in Chicago, it's pretty tough to find a decent place to live when you have two lively children, a girl of four, and a live-wire little boy of fifteen months.

I got started on the family genealogy back in 1991 when a family friend told me that I should go to the Newberry Research Library (here in Chicago, and one of the most famous in the U.S.A.,) and start working on my family history. Now, to be quite truthful, it appeared to be a daunting task. But when I opened Sexton's HISTORY OF TIOGA COUNTY, PA., I found a number of Foulkrods who turned out to be distant cousins of mine. Granted, they all stemmed from the Jacob Foulkrod who fought in the American Revolution. Jakey's sons, Isaac Foulkrod and Jacob B. Foulkrod came west, first to Lycoming and then to Tioga County, Pa. (I have a copy of Jacob B's Will, from Jackson Township, Lycoming Co.) I had to fight my way along, trying to identify my line as I went. However, I did have something to start with: My father had the tattered statistical pages of Great Grandpa Abram Foulkrod's bible, listing his marriage date to Catherine Cox, her death date, and the births and first marriage dates of my grandfather and his four sisters. This was at least something to go on. Then I made contact with Leonard and Margaret Brion in Carlisle, Pa. Leonard is a 5th cousin through his great-grandmother, Sarah Foulkrod Ostrom, my grandfather's second oldest sister. Sarah married David Ostrom, and is the only daughter of Abram Foulkrod who did NOT eventually emigrate to the Middle West. There are a large number of Ostroms still in the Liberty, Pa., area.

My biggest "find" came in 1993 when I made contact with Leroy Foulkrod in Gillett, Pa.. Roy sent me his genealogy on Philip and Barbara Page Foulkrod. This thing was a treasure trove! It was Roy who identified Michael Foulkrod and his wife, Sarah Coleman Wolliver, Margaret Foulkrod Dunlap, and Jacob and Mary Jane Welty Foulkrod. Over time, it turned out that there were a few mistakes, (Roy knew nothing about my Great Grandpa Abram, and he had an Elizabeth Musquette as Great Grandpa Abram's sister, instead of Elizabeth Foulkrod Casselberry) but the mistakes were miniscule compared to the correct information that Roy had compiled. Roy is a direct descendant of Great Grandpa Abram's brother, the Philip Foulkrod (1816-1901) who is buried in Barbours Cemetery. If you want Roy's address and/or phone number, just let me know.

My grandfather and grandmother lived with us from the time I was born until they both died. My grandmother (Eliza Rogers Fulkrod) was born in Carnbrae, Cornwall, England March 1, 1863 and died in Chicago in July, 1945. My grandfather, of course, was born in Liberty, Pa., on August 6, 1856 and died in Chicago on August 3, 1946. (Isn't that incredible? Here's a man who was born at the height of the Slavery Question that finally erupted into Civil War and died one year after the dropping of the atomic bomb in 1945!)

As to Grandpa's first wife, Agnes McPhail, I never knew she existed until I was about 11 years old. One day when Grandpa and I were talking, he suddenly said that he'd been married before in Iowa to a girl named "Aggie" and that they had a baby son named "Ray" but both Aggie and the baby died. I suppose there was no real reason for him to talk about her, but it certainly surprised me.

Grandpa didn't get along with his father, Abram, but he thought the world of his mother's brother, Robert Corson Cox. Bob Cox served in the Civil War - first as major in the 171st Pennsylvania Volunteers and then as Colonel of the 207th Pennsylvania Volunteers. His Civil War record is now well known in Tioga County. The Tioga Historical Society just had a Civil War exhibit and there was a big article in the society's newsletter about Uncle Bob. He subsequently became prothonotary (oh, nuts! County Clerk!) of Tioga County, a position he held from about 1873 to 1893. The more I read about Uncle Bob Cox the more he reminds me of my own father. Uncle Bob did something that will endear him to me forever. It seems that when the 207th Pennsylvania was mustered out in 1865, his men presented Uncle Bob with a horse (named "Banks") as a token of their esteem. Banks lived for more than 30 years and is now buried in the family plot in the Wellsboro Cemetery - along with Uncle Bob and Aunt Lydia Wheeland Cox. I'll bet Aunt Lyd just LOVED that one!

As for talking about Pennsylvania - Grandpa didn't! Except, of course, for Uncle Bob. I've got two or three Civil War yarns about him! My grandfather left Pennsylvania, with his family, when he was about 12 years old. And, after Grandpa's first wife Aggie, died he

left Iowa for the new land opening up in the North Dakota territory. He didn't get along with his stepmother, Sophia Fulkrod. (It had to be Sophia.) AND YOU'LL SEE WHY!!

My grandfather managed farms for large farmers in North Dakota. It was there that he met my grandmother, Eliza Rogers. She was coming off a bad marriage with a bounder named Dan McGregor who had deserted her and left her with a baby in arms - my Uncle Garfield. Grandpa and Grandmother were married in the Territory of North Dakota in 1884, and Uncle Gar took the last name of Fulkrod since he never knew his own father. Uncle Gar married quite late in life and fathered two sons, one of whom, Paul Fulkrod, lives with his wife, Leah, up in Janesville, Wisconsin, some 120 miles north of Chicago. Paul and Leah have two married children, and now their son, Jim, at the age of 40, is now starting his own family, so the Fulkrod name (if not the actual bloodline) goes marching on. Actually, my grandfather's true line ends with me, because my Dad's brother, Fred Fulkrod, (1890-1970) and their sister, Edith Fulkrod Lieberman (1888-1960), both married, but had no children.

Farming was in my grandfather's blood but North Dakota was a tough place to farm. Finally, after a bumper crop in 1909, Grandpa bought his own spread in Towner County, up near the Manitoba border. But then six years of drought hit the land and he lost everything in 1915, and the family moved to St. Paul, Minnesota, where my grandmother opened a rooming house and Grandpa went to work for a teaming company.

If my grandfather was all farm, my Dad was all automobiles. He loved motorcycles and cars. He told me that he once tried to teach Grandpa how to drive a car and when the steering got away from Grandpa Gramps started yelling: "WHOA! WHOA!" (My grandfather never learned how to drive a motor vehicle!) My Father ran away to the army in 1918 at the age of 16. He looked mature enough to pass for 20. He took the name of a North Dakota friend of his named Lloyd Olmstead. He knew that Lloyd would never be drafted because Lloyd had only one eye. Daddy said that the sergeant could yell "Olmstead" day or night in the barracks and Dad would snap to attention. He really wanted to remain in the service (in fact, he was slated to go to the balloon school at Wright-Patterson Field, in Ohio) when it was discovered that he was well below the legal age limit for service. But they didn't muster him out until the armistice!

Daddy married my mother in St. Paul, Minnesota on October 21, 1925. My mother, Marcella Doyle, came from a pioneer Irish family in Hamilton Co., Iowa. Her parents were Stephen and Catherine Ahern Doyle, and in the 1870's Great Grandpa Patrick Doyle was the first section foreman for the Illinois-Central RR., in Hamilton County, Iowa. Dad and Mother and Grandpa and Grandma came down to Chicago and my Dad latched on with the New York Central Railroad. He began work as a power plant fireman and worked up to chief engineer. IF YOU ARE NOT SOUND ASLEEP BY NOW, PLEASE SEE ATTACHMENTS!!