

153 Gilmore Pl

Edinburgh

May 27th 1923

Mrs. L. du Pont Iving
Sunnyside
Irvington-on-Hudson

SHR

Dear Madam,

Received your letter
of March 27th. for which I thank
you very kindly, also for P.C
enclosed. I was very pleased to
hear that the descendants of Washington
Irving still own and occupy the
ancestral home. It seems a
delightful old dwelling and to be
all that the great author himself
represents it. The web of romantic

and literary association spun round
the place in the past will be
strengthened by the bridge of time
I can imagine no place seemingly
more suited to give habitation to
the airy spirits of the past and
recall distant times when the
great author walked beneath these
self-same trees and soliloquised
in the quietude and loveliness of
his demesne. I feel no small
veneration for the place, for what
it is and has been. Likewise, I feel
a keen sense of pride at being
able to call myself a relative —
though far distant, of the founder.
You will know that the Author's
father came from what Washington

himself called the ends of the earth,
namely, the Orkney Islands. He was
born in a house of small pretensions
called Lulholm in the island of
Shapansay, one of the above-mentioned
group. I may say I am a native
of the same place though at present
a student at Edinburgh University
in the Faculty of Arts. My home in
Shapansay is situated about four
miles or so from the home of
Washington Irving's father during
his early boyhood. The old house
is still standing in which he was
born, and inhabited. The line from
which I am descended comes from
a brother of Washington's father, who
stayed in Lulholm. I may also
mention that there is another branch

of the same stock in the Castle of Drum
Aberdeenshire, Scot.^d This is one of the
older branches and links up with the
original of the family in the person
of Wm de Iowyn, secretary and
armour-bearer of Robert the Bruce,
who received the lands and Castle
of Drum as recompense for his
services and unflinching loyalty
in time of great peril, especially
when he was one of seven faithful
companions who lay with him in
a copse of holly while his pursuers
passed by. Thus you see the family
history is full of interest, personal
and historical, to anyone who takes
a pride in having ancestors of such
worth and renown. Thanking you
once more for your esteemed letter,


SHR

Believe me
Yours sincerely,
William Irvine.