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June 28, 1989

Dear Cousin Barbara,

Let me introduce myself. My name is Paul Joseph Harris, Jr.; I am a third cousin of your late husband, Vance Harris; and I do not need to borrow any money, good news in a letter from a cousin! My father was Paul J. Harris, son of Joseph Hastings Harris, son of John Work Harris, son of Watson Harris. I am an airline pilot with Midway Airlines in Chicago, am divorced, and have two beautiful children who live with their mother in Michigan, but visit often.

Pauline Bierly of Westerville has given me your name and address in the hope I can assist you with information concerning our branch of the Harris family. Apparently, my uncle Richard never got around to responding to your inquiries. I sincerely hope I can be of some help to you and perhaps vice versa.

With Richard's recent passing, I came to realize what a long lost part of our family I had become since losing my father in 1962 when I was fifteen years old. When Pauline Bierly tracked me down after Dick's death, I suddenly realized that she knew more about my family than I did. Since February of this year I have set out to do something about that. It has practically become an obsession with me. In four short months I have compiled a data base of more than one thousand people on my father's side of the family alone. Of course I have a lot of gaps and more questions than answers, but I am persevering.

I actually met you and your family a couple of months ago while I was doing research at the Ohio Historical Society in Columbus. The submissions to the 1987 Athens County Family History book that were made by you and your sons was a wonderful "find" for me. It was some time before I connected those submissions to the person that Pauline had told me about.

I am pleased to be able to give as well as receive in this instance. I will attempt to answer as many of the questions you posed to uncle Dick as I can by sending you what information I have at this time in this regard. Enclosed, please find the following:

Descendancy Chart from Richard Harris with my line of descendancy highlighted in yellow

Individual Information Sheets

Joseph and Bertha (Lambert) Harris
Clifford and Ethel (Harris) Wertz

Family Group Records

Daniel Webster Lambert (Bertha's father)
John Work Harris (Joseph's father)
All of John Work Harris's children who married
All of Joseph Harris's children who married
All of Paul Harris's children who married

Please note that Jordan's wife Ida and Joseph's wife, Bertha were sisters. Yes, the first and seventh brothers married the first and seventh sisters, respectively. Prior to moving to Westerville about 1893, the Lamberts all lived in Athens County. Along with the Harris family they lived on various farms and properties in the vicinity of Plantsville. It appears that Plantsville is very close to the county line between Morgan and Athens Counties and numerous events in that area are indefinite in their county location.

In the 1920's and 30's, Joseph and Bertha were doing a great deal of work on the family history. They collected a lot of information but I don't have any indication of how much of it was disseminated to relatives. I found quite a bit of it among Dick's things and have received other information from Daniel Harris in Florida. In 1926, Joseph Harris had in his possession a handwritten manuscript by Watson Harris, dated and signed in 1865. Joseph's son, James, transcribed Watson's autobiography to a typewriter and several years later many carbon copies were typed and distributed to the family. It is interesting reading and is more than twenty typed pages long. Perhaps you have one of these in your possession. If not, please let me know because I have entered it into my word processor and would be happy to run you off a copy.

Amongst Dick's things I found a Commission to Justice of the Peace of Watson Harris signed by "Governor" Rutherford B. Hayes and dated 13 APR 1869. This appears to be an original document. Perhaps you have others? I also found biographical information on John Work Harris written by Joseph Harris. When I get this copied, I'll be glad to send

it along to you since there is some references to his brother, William.

I fully realize that there are a number of your questions yet unanswered and what I have given you may raise some additional questions. I hope this letter is the beginning of an ongoing dialogue with you and your sons and that you will feel free to write or call with questions or answers. It is also my intention to visit Athens County in the near future. I would like very much if we could get together for a visit when it is convenient. Please let me know if there are any organized family reunions in the area that I might be able to attend. If there are not, then let's get a list of cousins together and start one!

Looking forward to meeting you,