

left me, I had promised me to if you

to me hold his watch
and chain as
long as I pleased;



I am afraid I have
tired you by my long
Brush Mountain account,

I thought you might
like
Nittie and Tree

An 1853 Roosevelt Romance

to be in bed. for I have
taken so much exer-
cise to day. Do give
my best love to your
mother and all who
would like to have it.

Thine at good night
yours devotedly
Wm. B. Chase



Martha "Mittie" Bulloch Roosevelt, at age 22, about 1856,
Courtesy of the Theodore Roosevelt Collection, Houghton Library,
Harvard University



Theodore Roosevelt, at age 31, in 1862,
Courtesy of the Theodore Roosevelt Collection, Houghton Library,
Harvard University

Mittie & Thee
An 1853 Roosevelt Romance

Connie M. Huddleston
&
Gwendolyn I. Koehler

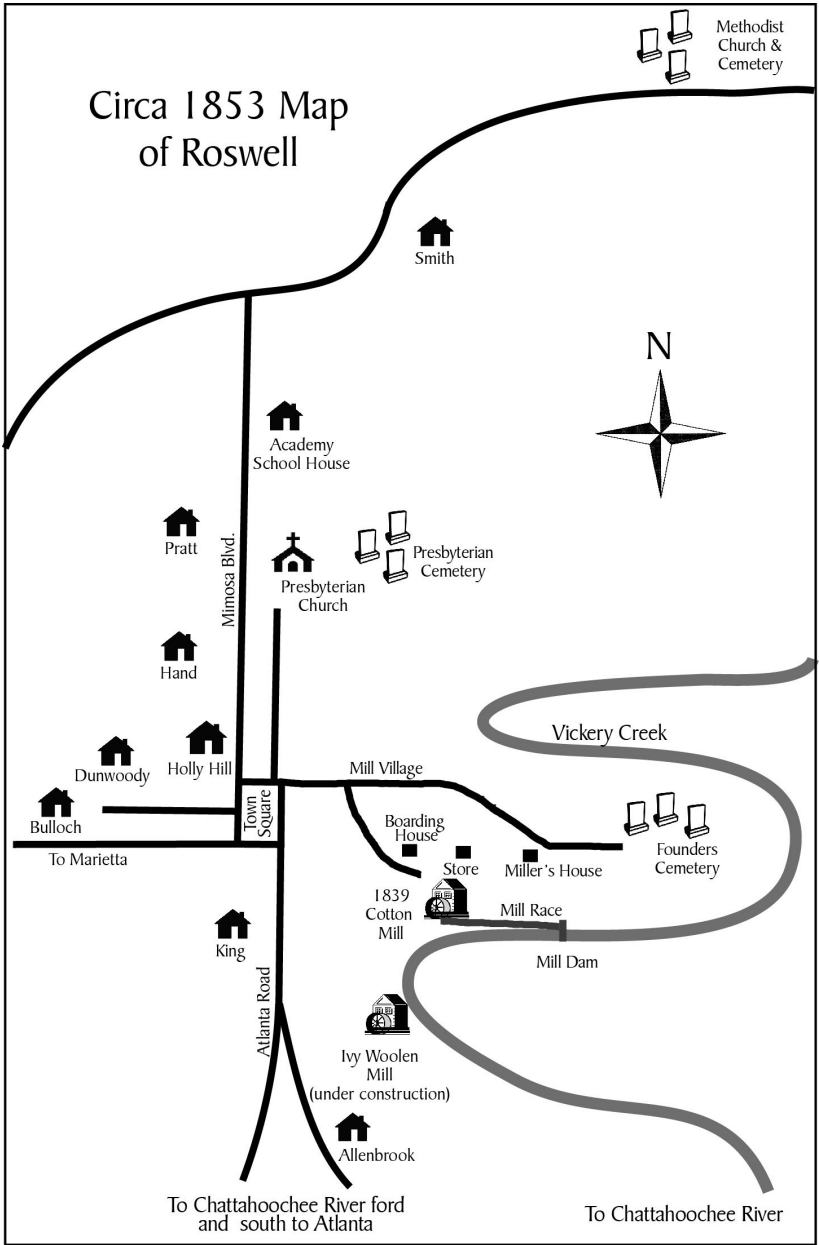
The Bulloch Letters
Volume I
Friends of Bulloch, Inc.
Roswell, Georgia

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1853 Map of Roswell (original courtesy of Michael Hitt)

Roosevelt Family by 1853

(relevant persons only)

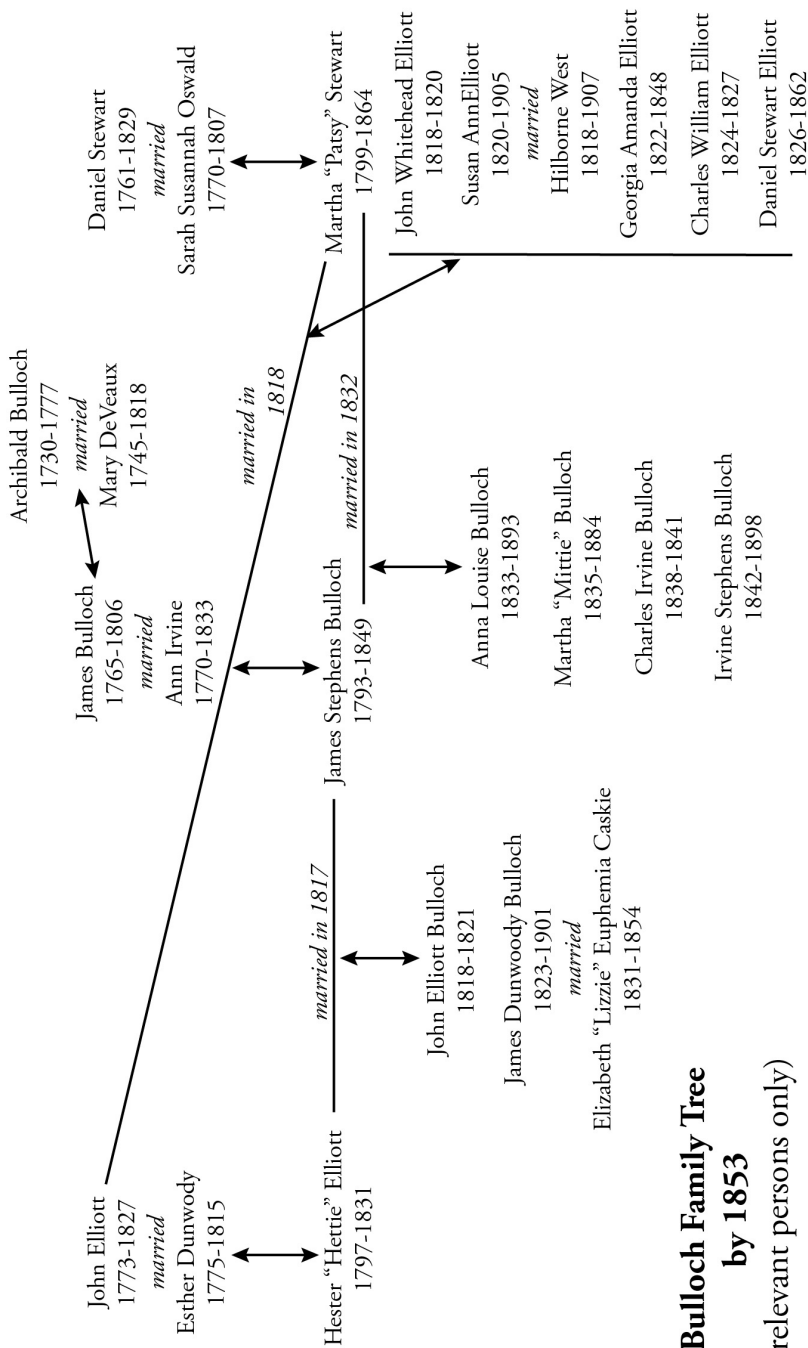
Jamen Jacobus Roosevelt
1759-1840
married
Maria Helena Van Schaack
1773-1845



Nicholas Roosevelt 1767-1854 <i>married</i>	Isaac Roosevelt 1790-1863	Cornelius Van Schaak Roosevelt 1794-1871 <i>married</i>	James John Roosevelt 1795-1875 <i>married</i>	Catherine Angelica Roosevelt 1802-1844	William Henry Roosevelt 1811-1823
Lydia Marie Latrobe ↓		Margaret Barnhill 1799-1861 ↓	Caroline Van Ness 1810-1876 ↓		
Henry Latrobe Roosevelt 1812-1884 ↓		James Nicholas Roosevelt 1836-1856 ↓			

Silas Weir Roosevelt 1823-1870 <i>married in 1845</i>	James Alfred Roosevelt 1825-1890 <i>married in 1847</i>	Cornelius Van Schaak Roosevelt, Jr. 1827-1887	Robert Barnhill Roosevelt 1829-1908 <i>married in 1850</i>	Theodore Roosevelt 1831-1878	
Mary West 1823-1877	Elizabeth Norris Emlen 1825-1912		Elizabeth Thorne Ellis 1833-1877 ↓		

Margaret Barnhill Roosevelt 1851-1927	John Ellis Roosevelt 1853-1939
---	-----------------------------------



Bulloch Family Tree
by 1853
(relevant persons only)

Introduction

Setting the Stage

The Bulloch Family

The year 1853 began just like all those since 1849 for the James Stephens Bulloch family of Roswell, Georgia. Martha “Patsy” Stewart Elliott Bulloch, matriarch and widow, who lost her daughter Georgia Amanda Elliott in 1848 and her husband James Bulloch in February 1849, still dressed each day in the total black of deep mourning. Her eldest daughter Susan Ann Elliott had married Hilborne West of Philadelphia in January 1849 and now resided in that city with her husband’s family. Martha’s son from her first marriage, Daniel Stewart Elliott, traveled in Europe with her former step-son-in-law and family friend Robert Hutchison. Poor Robert tragically lost his wife, and Martha’s step-daughter, Corinne Louisa Elliott and their two small daughters in the June 1838 boiler explosion and sinking of the Steamship *Pulaski* off the coast of Palmetto Bluff, South Carolina.¹ Robert survived, one of only 59 souls to do so, while approximately 100 men, women, and children perished. One other young man called Martha *mother*, the son of James Stephens Bulloch and his first wife Hester. James Dunwoody Bulloch served as Lieutenant on the SS *Georgia*, a ship of the United States Mail Steamship Company while on furlough from the United States Navy.²

[List of Persons, p.223, provides more information on various people mentioned in book.]

By the beginning of May, spring resided in all its southern glory. Trees and flowers bloomed as the days warmed easily to the mid-70s. The hustle and bustle of life could be heard in this small, upcountry mill village. Each day the large white-columned Greek Revival home at the end of Bulloch Avenue filled with the sounds of her children's gaiety and the subdued noises made by their enslaved African-Americans as they carried out their chores. Martha enjoyed the company of her two daughters still at home, Anna Louise, age 20, and Mittie, age 18, and son Irvine Stephens, a boy of only 11, the remaining children of her marriage to James Bulloch.

It was here that our story of an enduring love and the birth of a president truly began. To understand the many characters in this story, one must travel a bit further back in time and examine the intertwining roots of the family tree that brought about the events of 1853.

Mittie's story began with the complicated tale of her parent's romance, oft told, yet undocumented. According to family lore, in 1817, in Liberty County, Georgia, twenty-year-old James Stephens Bulloch, business man, planter, and veteran of the War of 1812 proposed to eighteen-year-old Martha "Patsy" Stewart, daughter of Revolutionary War General Daniel Stewart. Despite her reputed love for this man she had known since early childhood, she did as the fashion of the time dictated and refused his offer. Tradition indicated she could expect another offer. However, much to her dismay, James instead proposed to her friend, Hester Elliott (1797-1831), daughter of neighbor John Elliott. Hester readily accepted his offer and made wedding plans. Meanwhile, Martha, a noted beauty, received an offer of marriage from that same John Elliot, age 44, a Yale graduate, some 26 years her senior.

James and Hester (Hettie) married on 31 December 1817, followed quickly by the marriage of Martha and John on 6 January. Both weddings took place in the Midway Congregational Church in Liberty County. Thus Martha became James' stepmother-in-law. The community saw Martha's marriage as one of prestige and advantage for the couple. As one local resident remarked:

Mr. Elliott was a remarkably handsome man of high order of intellect and education and most courtly manners. During his senatorial term, he located his family in Philadelphia; a few years before the date of this note, he had married his second wife, Miss Patsy Stewart of Liberty County, daughter of General Stewart, leaving out in the cold many younger aspirants for the hand of the truly beautiful and accomplished lady.³

History has not revealed the nature of James and Hettie's relationship; however, it was not uncommon for young women to marry for status instead of love. James was quite a catch. The residents of Liberty County and Savannah (Chatham County) already recognized this young man for his family connections. His grandfather was the first *president* of Georgia, Archibald Bulloch, the man who first read the Declaration of Independence to the citizens of the state. Additionally, James had by this time established himself as a gentleman investor, public servant, and factor in Savannah.

James and Hettie resided in Savannah on Broughton Street. Hettie bore James at least two children, of whom sadly only one lived to maturity, James Dunwoody Bulloch (1823-1901). Their first son, named John Elliott for her father, died at age two years and 10 months in Burke County, Georgia, in late September 1821.⁴

Though marrying a man old enough to be her father, Martha relished the role of stepmother to John's three daughters who remained at home, Caroline Matilda (a 22 year-old spinster, who died before 1827), Jane Elizabeth (age 9), and Corinne Louisa (age 5). Perhaps an added attraction was the anticipation that John Elliott was a likely candidate for the United States Senate. Martha's first child, John Whitehead Elliott, was born on 7 November 1818. Her life changed greatly when the Georgia legislature elected John to the U.S. Senate in 1819. John took his young wife to Washington where she charmed residents with her stylish and gracious ways. Tragedy struck the family in November 1820 when her first-born son died. Another son, Charles William, born in 1824, would survive a mere three years. The infant mortality rate was high in the 1820's. Only three children from this union would live to maturity; Susan Ann (1820-1895), Georgia Amanda (1822-1848), and Daniel Stewart (1826-1862).⁵

Historical records show that the two families were much entwined, with James, John, and their wives often traveling together for business and pleasure. Years passed with James and Hettie residing in Savannah, while John and Martha split their time between his Liberty County plantation, their new expansive Savannah home, and Washington, D.C. and Philadelphia.

In 1824 with John's term of office completed, they returned south and rejoiced at the birth of son Daniel Stewart (1826). Unexpectedly, on 9 August 1827, John Elliott died in Savannah. His obituary in the *Savannah Georgian* stated:

On Thursday morning the 9th inst. the Hon, JOHN ELLIOTT, late a Senator in the Congress of the U. S. from the State of Georgia.

This estimable man had but recently determined to make this city [Savannah] his future home; his friends were about realizing the pleasures they had promised themselves from this agreeable society, when alas! he has been summoned hence, possessed of every thing calculated to attach him to the world, and the world to him.

Mr. Elliott had received intelligence from his plantation situated about 40 miles from this place, of uncommon sickness and mortality among his negroes, by the prevalence of the Dysentery - he visited them to administer to their comforts and extend to them all the assistance which an enlightened and humane master could afford in their distress; but unfortunately, he remained there too long, and contracted the disease, of which he died, on his return to Savannah after an illness about ten days.⁶

John's death left a grieving 28-year-old Martha with four small children from their union, including nine-month-old Daniel, and two stepdaughters, Jane Elizabeth, age 18, and Corinne Louisa, age 14, to raise. Compounding the family's grief was the death of three-year-old Charles in early September.⁷

It seems this shared grief brought James, Hettie, and Martha even closer together. At age 55 and in robust health, no doubt expecting to live many more years, John Elliott died intestate. James became the executor of John's estate. Managing, John's extensive plantation and other business holdings occupied a tremendous amount of his time in the coming years. That first year, both families lived in *full mourning*. Then, for half a year, the families continued in *half mourning*, attending only small social events and traveling little.

On 1 May 1828 following her father's death by not quite nine months, Jane Elizabeth Elliott married John Stevens Law, a physician from Liberty County.⁸ Sadly, Jane enjoyed only eleven months of marital bliss. The *Savannah Georgian* on 18 April 1829 carried the following notice:

A Card: Dr. Jno. S. Law tenders his warmest thanks to his friends and fellow citizens for their unremitted exertions for his welfare during the fire of yesterday April 17.

On 30 April, the *Georgian* posted Jane's death notice, documenting her death only three days after the fire. Jane's death, falling so soon after the fire, presumably at their home, leaves the nature of her death to speculation.

It seemed Martha's period of mourning would never end, as one month later on 27 May 1829, Martha's father General Daniel Stewart died at his plantation in Liberty County. Within a two year period, Martha lost her husband and young son, her stepdaughter, and her father. Daniel's obituary in the *Daily Georgian* read:

Obituary. General Daniel Stewart, a Patriot of 1776, died at his residence in Liberty County on the 27th ult. aged 69 years. In the Revolutionary War, although but 16 years of age, such was his love of country and military ardor, increased by the aggressions of Great Britain, and the depreciations of the Tories in his neighborhood, he joined the standard of his country and was frequently in the battle under Generals Sumpter, Marion, and Col. Wm. Harden, at Pocotaligo, was taken prisoner near Charleston, and put on board the English Prison Ship in that harbor: and probably no man suffered more or went

through more perils and hardships during the whole war and the different Indian deprecations afterwards, on the Georgia frontier. General Stewart enjoyed the confidence and esteem of his fellow citizens, to a great degree. He filled in his native county every public office in the gift of the people, and to his death was honored and respected by them, and from his retiring and unostentatious manners and love of the society of his family and friends, refused many offices tendered him. We have indeed few such men to spare!⁹

Life went on. Martha inherited a substantial amount from her father's estate and her personal wealth increased with her inheritance from the estate of her husband insuring a comfortable life style. Steamship records of the times show that Martha traveled, sometimes with only her children and a few servants, to the North during the South's hottest months of summer and often to Charleston, South Carolina. At other times she was accompanied by James, Hettie, and their small son, Martha's stepgrandson.

Hettie's health deteriorated, and at some point in 1830, James, Hettie, and their seven-year-old son moved in with Martha at her Savannah home. On 21 February 1831, Hettie died of what was described as a "protracted and painful" illness.¹⁰ Life now found Martha and James, living as *brother and sister*¹¹ while raising children from three marriages. On 12 January 1832, her stepdaughter Corinne Elliott married family friend Robert Hutchison.

One year and two months after Hettie's death, on 8 May 1832, James and Martha married. Savannah resident Mary Telfair wrote to her friend Mary Few of Virginia that a good deal of buzzing was taking place over a match among members of the church. It was said that "the church would

weep over such a marriage.” She described Mrs. John Elliott as a woman of exalted piety. But clearly she had misgivings about this upcoming marriage:

. . . she married in the first instance a Man old enough to for her father and no doubt sacrificed feeling to ambition. She made a most exemplary Wife & (hardest of all duties) an excellent Step Mother. For four years she has acted the part of a dignified Widow which of all characters (Step Mother excepted) is the most difficult to support, and now she is about marrying her husband’s daughter’s husband — he has been living in the house with her ever since the death of his wife and I thought viewed by her with sisterly regard. I begin to think with Miss Edgeworth that propinquity is dangerous and beyond the relationship of Brother and Sister mutual dependence is apt to create sentiment more tender than platonic. . . It does not strike me as a criminal connection, but one highly revolting to delicacy. . . ¹²

Mary Telfair went on to expound that the late Mr. Elliott’s surviving daughter’s feelings “were very much enraged.” Telfair stated that this daughter, Corinne Louisa, was devotedly attached to her stepmother, but now refused to have any interaction with her brother-in-law.¹³ Mary Telfair ended with “I feel sorry for Mrs. Elliott, she had in her first marriage to practice an Apprenticeship to self denial, in order to conciliate the good will of daughters as old as herself — by a noble and disinterested course of conduct she received their confidence and affection and fulfilled her duties as a wife as faithfully as if she had married from Love.”¹⁴

This marriage brought about Mittie’s birth, then the move to Roswell, and finally to the year 1853. In the

intervening years, Martha and James lived in Savannah, on Liberty County plantations, and in Hartford, Connecticut. Their first child Anna, born in 1833, joined the family while in one of their southern residences. It was during their extended stay in Hartford, where James Dunwoody Bulloch, age 14, Susan Elliott, age 15, Georgia Elliott, age 13, and Daniel Elliott, age 9, were attending school that Mittie was born on 8 July 1835.

In the spring of 1838, Martha, James, and four of their children (Susan, Georgia, Anna, and Mittie) left Savannah for the “colony” at Roswell, Georgia.¹⁵ Fifteen-year-old, James Dunwoody Bulloch and eleven-year-old Daniel did not make the trip with the rest of the family, as both still attended boarding school in Middletown, Connecticut. James Bulloch had invested in the Roswell Manufacturing Company, newly established in the town, and had received acreage for a home as part of the deal. Located in Georgia’s Piedmont region, Roswell sprang into being due to the efforts of Roswell King and his son Barrington. In the early 1830s, Roswell King had initiated a plan to build a cotton mill on Vickery Creek in what was then Cherokee land. He and his son purchased land lots, started recruiting investors, and began building the mill and other business concerns. James Bulloch invested in the company early in its conception.

It is believed that six slaves joined James and Martha and the children on the journey. These were most likely *Daddy* Luke Moumar, the butler and handyman whom Martha had taught to read and write, and his wife *Maum* Charlotte, the housekeeper, along with *Daddy* Stephen, the coachman, *Maum* Rose, the cook, *Daddy* William, and *Maum* Grace the nursemaid.¹⁶ Taking along oxcarts of belongings, the family traveled first by sloop or steamship to Augusta, and then

across eastern Georgia to the Chattahoochee River, and finally on to Roswell.

At first, the family lived in a small cabin, called Clifton Farm, while their new home was under construction. Located approximately four miles east from their new home site, this cabin had likely recently housed a Cherokee family. Willis Ball, a Connecticut skilled builder, designed and built their new Roswell house. Historic architects agree he based his work on the widely-used Asher Benjamin books such as *The Architect, or Practical House Carpenter* and *The American Builder's Companion*. With Tuscan columns across its wide verandah, the lovely home sat at the end of a long lane leading to the town square. At one time a captain's or widow's walk may have graced the roof.¹⁷

In late 1838 or early 1839, their family expanded with the birth of Charles Irvine. He was baptized by the visiting Reverend Nathaniel A. Pratt during his first visit to the colony on 20 October 1839, the same day the Roswell Presbyterian Church was organized. Two years later, in 1841, Charles Irvine Bulloch died at age two years and nine months. The family buried him in the new town cemetery, now known as Founders Cemetery. In 1842, Martha delivered her ninth and last child Irvine Stephens Bulloch.

The family worshiped at the Presbyterian Church, only a short walk down present day Mimosa Boulevard. Anna, Mittie, and Irvine attended the Academy, Roswell's school, built directly north of the church. They socialized with the Colony's other prominent founders, the Barrington King family, the Archibald Smith family, the Reverend Nathaniel A. Pratt family, and their cousins, the family of John Dunwoody. John had married James Stephens Bulloch's sister Jane in 1808. They raised five sons and one daughter. The

Dunwoodys occupied Phoenix Hall (now called Mimosa¹⁸) directly adjoining the Bulloch property. The family frequently traveled to the coast to visit friends and relatives. The Bullochs were wealthy, well educated, and well traveled.

As Anna and Mittie grew to be young women, Martha sent them to Barhamville, South Carolina, to Dr. Marks' South Carolina Female Academy to further their education. Dr. Marks located his academy near Columbia, South Carolina, and named the area Barhamville. A physician by training but educator by choice, Dr. Humphrey Marks opened the academy on 1 October 1828. His original idea was a place with "scale of economy" that would be make it affordable to those of moderate circumstances.¹⁹ The school offered four years of studies built on a collegiate basis and soon attracted the daughters of many of central South Carolina's wealthiest planters. The girls studied the ornamental arts, the Classics, music, dancing, and languages such as French, Italian, Spanish, and Latin. Marks and his wife, fellow educator Jane Barham (1788-1827), the school's namesake, thought studying these subjects would make an so called *accomplished lady*. After the death of Jane Barham, Marks hired and later married Julia Pierpont Warne, head of the flourishing girls' school at Sparta, Georgia.²⁰

Mittie and Anna lived at the school for two terms each year. They were well attended with servants to draw baths, tend fires, and see to their needs.²¹ School rules required them to write home on the first day of each month. The staff inspected all incoming letters, and those deemed of a "trifling nature" were frowned upon. The girls were not even permitted to converse with a young man without the written permission of their parents. By the early 1850s, the school had well over 100 young ladies in attendance and bookkeeping had been added as a new course.²² It is not clear how long the girls

attended the Academy; however, the girls were in attendance in the fall of 1849.

On 11 July 1849, their half-brother, James Dunwoody Bulloch, “Brother Jimmie,” a midshipman in the United States Navy, wrote of his stepmother and half-sisters:

Mother bears her weight of years most stoutly & with the meekness woman only knows, regards her cares & sorrows as the will of her maker. With my two little sisters I am delighted. They have grown up fine full graceful girls, intelligent & full of loving kindness. Though differing in many respects, they are each quite perfect in their peculiar style. “Mitty” as we call the younger is a black haired bright eyed lassie lively in her disposition with a ready tongue, she does everything by impulse and with an air of perfect self confidence, but she is a warm hearted little darling. Annie is a sensitive confiding little creature, all heart & soul with large soft slowly winking eyes & great long lashes. She does every thing with gentleness & has a way of nestling by her brothers side which is truly touching.

Another glimpse of Mittie’s character can be seen in her correspondence with Miss Sarah Green of nearby Marietta. Although neither the writer or recipient noted the year, Sarah Elizabeth Green likely wrote this letter in 1848 as the accompanying envelope is postmarked 24 July, a Monday. Sarah notes on the bottom of her letter that she wrote it on a Monday and would send it by “return mail.” Sarah attended the Kennesaw Institute (Kennesaw Female Seminary).²³

My dearest Mittie

Thank you for your affectionate and most welcome note. I received it late Saturday night and I answer it early

this morning and will send my letter by return of mail as I promised. I fear you have already thought me guilty of breach of promise for I hear Carrie [Shackleford] returned from Roswell last Wednesday but you see I am entirely free from that offense.

It was indeed tantalizing to be with you only for a few moments, after a separation for years indeed - it seems as a dream that I have seen you at all. I can scarcely believe that tall, dignified, young lady, the same little, mischievous Mittie, who I knew in "days of yore." My companion in all fun and mischief and the sharer of my escapades into which I was led by my wild thoughtlessness in "the merry days, which my childhood knew." I love to recall the memories of "bygone days." I am very old now. Eh Mittie! But indeed I do feel very ancient, do you? Have you changed at all? And has Anna? Kiss dear Anna for me, and tell her she must write to me. Sister says you may call her anything you fancy, so you do not put a Miss on to it. She hopes never to be so much a young lady, as to forget her old friends and among that precious few, we are too happy to remember yourself and Anna.

It would give us both, much pleasure, dear Mitt to visit you in Roswell, but I do not think we shall be able to do so. We have set our hearts on having you with us. Ma [Martha E. Marvin Green] expects to go up to Murray County, this week to see Aunt Esther. She will "remain till she comes back," during which time Sister will be left Mistress of the mansion. Her principal duties will be to preside over the family wide, and keep me out of mischief. You and Anna must positively come over, and help me laugh at her dignity. I will hear of no excuses take no denial. You will come, won't you my darling? You have spent about ten days with Carrie, and I will be jealous if you do not spend two weeks at least with me. You know very well I love you

twice as much as Carrie does. To which of the Northern schools do you and Anna think of going? How long do you expect to remain?

I saw Carrie when she was spending the summer here, two years ago. Don't you think she has changed a great deal since then? I don't mean in her looks. Do tell me, was she not dreadfully smitten with Horace Pratt at that time. I am sure she talked and seemed to think of no one else. When I saw her this Summer, I commenced quizzing her about him, but she denied any sort of partiality for him. At that I was not at all surprised for I knew and told her that her fancy for him was to sudden to last - "too like the lightning, which is come and gone ere we can say it lightens." But she was wounded at my doubts of her, and evaded by the shades of all former loves. A ___ constancy to this most excellent ___ (as I thought, most ugly) being. But "___ light as ___, was never meant to last. I was a moments phantasy, and as such it has passed."

She says she never loved him (I believe it, though I am sure she thought she did) and ridiculed me for being so green as to believe her. I thank her most sincerely for the compliment and hope even to be as green. I should not like to become so much of the world, as to doubt what a friend in all seriousness told me. Should you? How miserable life would be, if there was no one whom we could trust - how more than miserable if there was no one whom we would trust. I would not have mentioned this affair de coeur of Carrie's if I did not know that you knew all about it. Ma and Sister desire their love to you. Do dear Mittie write me soon and frequently. If you thought it needful to apologize for your writing, what must you think of mine? I have no excuse to offer, but Mittie dear please

"Don't view it with a contrite eye,
But pass its imperfections by."

What day shall we expect you? Ma and Sister unite with me in much love to yourself, your Mother, and Anna, and also to Miss Matilda.

Be sure, now, and let me hear from you very soon, and you will find a prompt correspondent in your devotedly attached friend.

S. E. G.

Kennesaw Institute -

Miss Marthy Bulloch -

Monday -

The Roosevelt Family

Now that we have set the scene in Roswell, the much less confusing New York side of this love story needs to be told. Wealthy New York businessman, Cornelius Van Schaak Roosevelt (1794-1871) and his wife Margaret Barnhill (1790-1861) raised five sons, Silas Weir (1823-1870), James Alfred (1825-1898), Cornelius Van Schaak, Jr. (1827-1887), Robert Barnwell (1829-1906), and Theodore (1831-1878). By 1853, James, Robert, and Silas had married, however, only Robert had children. Theodore, who had just returned from the *Grand Tour of Europe* on the United States Mail Steam Ship *Arctic* on 19 April 1852, worked for Roosevelt & Son, the family business.

The Roosevelts lived on the corner of 14th Street and Broadway in Manhattan. Theodore's father, Cornelius, was a glass merchant, an ultraconservative abolitionist, and a Quaker by birth. Cornelius' forefather, Claes Martenszen van Rosenvelt arrived in the New York area in 1644. Claes' son Nicholas' two sons established the two branches of the family. Johannes (1689-1750) established the Oyster Bay Roosevelts

while Jacobus (1692-1776) established the line known as the Hyde Park Roosevelts.²⁴ Each line would later produce an American president. During the intervening years, family members married into Welsh, English Quaker, Scottish, Irish, and even German families, creating an all-American blood line by the time of the American Revolution.

Two historic texts detail Theodore's character. The first is from his son, President Theodore Roosevelt, and was taken from his personal letters:

I was fortunate enough in having a father whom I have always been able to regard as an ideal man. It sounds a little like cant to say what I am going to say, but he really did combine the strength and courage and will and energy of the strongest man with the tenderness, cleanness and purity of a woman. I was a sickly and timid boy. He not only took great and untiring care of me—some of my earliest remembrances are of nights when he would walk up and down with me for an hour at a time in his arms when I was a wretched mite suffering acutely with asthma—but he also most wisely refused to coddle me, and made me feel that I must force myself to hold my own with other boys and prepare to do the rough work of the world. I cannot say that he ever put it into words, but he certainly gave me the feeling that I was always to be both decent and manly, and that if I were manly nobody would laugh at my being decent. In all my childhood he never laid hand on me but once, but I always knew perfectly well that in case it became necessary he would not have the slightest hesitancy in doing so again, and alike from my love and respect, and in a certain sense, my fear of him, I would have hated and dreaded beyond measure to have him know that I had been guilty of a

lie, or of cruelty, or of bullying, or of uncleanness or of cowardice. Gradually I grew to have the feeling on my own account, and not merely on his.²⁵

The second character assessment is from his daughter Corinne Roosevelt Robinson in *My Brother Theodore Roosevelt*. This family story also demonstrates the frugal nature of Cornelius and Margaret despite their wealth:

The youngest, my father, Theodore Roosevelt, often told us himself how he deplored the fate of being the “fifth wheel to the coach,” and how many a mortification he had to endure by wearing clothes cut down from the different shapes of his older brother, and much depleted shoes about which, once, on overhearing his mother say, “These were Robert’s, but will be a good change for Theodore,” he protested vigorously, crying out that he was “tired of changes.”

As the first Theodore grew older he developed into one of the most enchanting characters with whom I, personally, have ever come in contact; sunny, gay, dominant, unselfish, forceful, and versatile, he yet had the extraordinary power of being a focused individual, although an “all-round” man.²⁶

Theodore’s 1851 passport application gave an accurate description of him as a 19-year-old man. The description stated he stood 6 feet tall, had a high forehead, blue eyes, and a thick nose on a long face. His mouth and chin are listed as large with lighter hair and a light complexion.²⁷

Beginnings of the Romance

How these two such different people came to meet is an intriguing story of nineteenth century connections. Two early twentieth century books give us what may be conflicting stories. Yet, like many oft repeated tales, they may just be variations of one story. Corinne, their daughter wrote:

[speaking of Roswell] . . . There the beautiful half-sister of my mother, Susan Elliott, brought her Northern lover, Hilborne West, of Philadelphia, whose sister, Mary West, had shortly before married Weir Roosevelt, of New York, the older brother of my father, Theodore Roosevelt. This same Hilborne West, a young physician, of brilliant promise, adored the informal, fascinating plantation life, and loved the companionship of the two dainty, pretty girls of fourteen and sixteen, Martha and Anna Bulloch, his fiancée's young half-sisters.

Many were the private theatricals and riding-parties, and during that first gay visit Doctor West constantly spoke of his young connection by marriage, Theodore Roosevelt, who he felt would love Roswell as he did.

A year afterward, inspired by the stories of Doctor West, my father, a young man of nineteen, asked if he might pay a visit at the old plantation, and there began the love-affair with a black-haired girl of fifteen which later was to develop into so deep a devotion that when the young Roosevelt, two years later, returned from a trip abroad and found this same young girl visiting her sister in Philadelphia, he succumbed at once to the fascination from which he had never fully recovered,

and later travelled [sp] once more to the old pillared house on the sandhills of Georgia to carry Martha Bulloch away from her Southern-home forever.²⁸

Silas Weir Roosevelt and Mary West married in 1845. Susan Elliott and Hilborne West married in January of 1849. If as Corinne stated, Theodore was 19 when he met Mittie, then this would have been in 1850. Historic records show that Theodore visited Roswell in February of 1851 and was introduced as a friend of Mr. West.²⁹ Yet in *The Boys' Life of Theodore Roosevelt*, Hermann Hagedorn stated that Mittie and Theodore met at the wedding of Susan and Hilborne.³⁰ Despite this discrepancy over their initial meeting, it seems that Mittie and Thee met several times between their first meeting and the winter of 1852 in Philadelphia. The story continued in early 1853 with Anna Bulloch returning South while Mittie visited Thee's family in New York.

Savannah February 9th 1853

My Own Dear Mittie

I have been away from Savannah for a week paying a visit in Carolina to Mrs Hegers. This is the reason I have not answered your letter before. Mother sends me the description of your reception. How very splendid it must have been. I also think Mrs. McAllister as a ridiculous woman. The idea of being now so devoted to you. On yesterday the boy with my band and Thee's beautiful present arrived. You cannot think how much obliged I am to you both. Tell Thee I rather think he won the philoprena – I think the handkerchief perfectly lovely, it is so fine. I went round to the Pavilion to a small party on last evening. Mr Noble Hander sent his carriage around for Lila and me. We had a very lovely time. Miss Fannie Livingstone asked me all about you said she knew Mr and Mrs James Hodge are in Savannah on their way to visit Roswell. Tell Thee I think

he would like to write to one sometime to remind him of his Roswell correspondents. Love and remembrances to all.

Good bye my darling sister –

Yours truly

Anna.

Philopena is a game in which a man and woman who have shared the twin kernels of a nut each try to claim a gift from the other as a forfeit at their next meeting by fulfilling certain conditions such as being the first to exclaim “philopena.” Another tidbit from the letter showed Anna spending time with the “Hugers” in Carolina. This was possibly Daniel Elliott (1778-1854) and Isabella Huger (1780-1865). Daniel served as a Senator for South Carolina from 1843 to 1845. None of the other individuals mentioned in Anna’s letter have been identified.

In the spring of 1853, Mittie and Thee began eight months of correspondence before their wedding, interrupted by Thee’s visit to Roswell in July. Interspersed, as appropriate, are letters from other family correspondence.

America in 1853

In 1853, Roswell was a small but growing mill village with a few significant Greek Revival style homes, a church and school, and residences for the mill workers. The Roswell Manufacturing Company (RMC), a cotton mill, provided a place of employment and fueled the growth of the community. The RMC also ran a company store which contained the Roswell post office. The Roswell Presbyterian Church served as the physical center of the village and the focus of much

of the community's social life. Children whose parents could afford the tuition attended the Academy.

The Bullochs traveled to Marietta, a village about fourteen miles away, for more detailed shopping than the local shops offered. Trips to Savannah and Charleston kept the Roswell's women and girls in the height of fashion. Fashion dictated floor-length, full-skirted dresses with tight bodices. Ladies wore corsets, never showed their bare arms during the day, and covered their heads with hats or bonnets while outdoors. Up to fourteen pounds of petticoats might be worn to achieve the style of the day. Corded petticoats helped support the weight of the skirts as hoops were not yet in fashion.

Everyone eagerly awaited the next issue of *Harper's Monthly Magazine* with its serialized novels such as *Bleak House* by Charles Dickens. By 1853, *David Copperfield*, *House of Seven Gables*, and *Moby Dick* had been published along with the controversial *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Women read *Godey's Ladies Book* a primary reference for fashion of the day. Popular music of the day included *Farewell My Lilly Dear* and *My Old Kentucky Home* by Stephen Foster. Brahms published his *Piano Sonatas No. 1*.

The family's social life centered around the church and family entertainments held at the house. The youth of the village enjoyed tableaux, theatricals, musicals, picnics, bowling, and horseback riding. Letter writing, reading aloud, returning calls, and afternoon teas occupied much of a lady's afternoon. Correspondence dwelt heavily on health and family issues.

In New York City, Thee lived in a world of mansions versus tenements. The city held little available housing for the

middle class. More than one half of New York's residents were foreign born. Dance halls, bars, gambling, and prostitutes made the nearby Five Points district of lower Manhattan dangerous and infamous. Transportation proved chaotic in New York City, with streets choked with wagons and carriages. City leaders considered both pedestrian bridges and elevated trains as solutions, but improvements were costly.

The financially successful members of the Roosevelt family occupied a brownstone in Manhattan, suiting their social standing and income. The women of the family could afford the luxuries and goods available in A.T. Stewart's Emporium and Lord & Taylor's Department stores. They moved among the elite and wealthy of the city, spent holidays in the country. They traveled to Europe.

The United States Stars and Stripes held 31 stars, and Franklin Pierce served as President. The approval of the United States Congress for the survey for the Continental Railroad was well received. The Treaty of Guadalupe Hildage in 1848 greatly increased the size of the country and when rail connections to Chicago were completed, westward expansion increased. Many in the country strongly disapproved of the 4th National Women's Rights Convention held in Cleveland, Ohio, which focused on gaining the right to vote for women. The issue of abolition loomed over the country.

People greatly feared outbreaks of yellow fever and malaria, diseases spread by the bite of the female mosquito. Little could be done to prevent outbreaks of these and other contagious diseases, such as tuberculosis (consumption), cholera, whooping cough, scarlet and typhoid fever.