

March 12th, 1916.

Mr. James H. Fanner,  
Ullanoe, Essex Co., Virginia.

My dear Sir:

I have your very interesting letter of the 6th inst. advising me that Mr. W. L. Dishman is dead and that his widow is old and not capable of attending to her business and that her sons don't seem to be interested in her affairs and that Mrs. Dishman asked you to correspond with me regarding the estate of Slaughter Dishman.

I also note that you are an old confederate soldier and that you are well acquainted with the Dishman family of Essex Co., Va. and that there are two old negroes that live there that belonged to the Dishman family and that they are from 80 to 100 years old and that you can give me all the information needed about the Dishman family.

You will no doubt be somewhat surprised when I tell you that I am a son of an old confederate soldier myself. My father Addison Thornton Dishman lived in King George Co., Va. where his progenitors have lived for some 250 years. I was born in that county in 1871 and have been to that county many times. I have many relations in Essex County. My grandfathers were a John Jones, The Hale family, and the ...

... related to me.

For your information I might say that I am in correspondence with another family of Dishmans in Virginia that have ~~built~~ built up just about the same kind of a claim as your family of Dishmans have built up.

I would suggest that you take the matter up with these two negroes you speak of and see if they can remember this man Slaughter Dishman and see if affidavits can be secured from them regarding their acquaintanceship with this man Slaughter Dishman. Also see if they will make affidavits as to the time of his departure for the west as you speak of and so forth. In fact I would try and get out of them any kind of a legitimate affidavit that can be procured regarding the kinship of Slaughter Dishman to other Dishmans in Virginia and elsewhere. I would do this right away. It better be done in a legal way. I would have them state their ages and also affirm that Slaughter Dishman was the son of David Dishman and his wife----- and that Slaughter Dishmans brothers and sisters were so and so. And that his brothers and sisters are now living at certain places and that they married certain individuals and that they now have certian children.

I donot know that we will ever need these affidavits but it might be well to have them in readiness.

I wish you would find out from Mrs. Dishman as to where the David Dishman you speak of as being the father of Slaughter died and if he left a will and if a copy of the will can be had. It may be that the will of David will show that Slaughter was his son. You must always bear in mind that to recover the estate of Slaughter we will have to make a show down as to the present relations. You donot appear to know whether or now Slaughter Dishman had a family of his own or now. How do you know that he didnot marry somewhere and raise a family of his own? If he had a family of his own you will see his own children will come in for the estate. I have been working on this matter and also the estate of one Slaughter Dishman Pinkard for upwards of twenty years. I have spent many dollars and much of my time in trying to get this matter straightened out. I donot want to discourage you, but I am free to say to you that I dont believe that W.L. Dishmans' family will come in for any portion of the estate. However, I would like for you to work on it and see if you cannot help me in adjusting matters. I will be willing to compensate you for your trouble even if the family should not be entitle to any portion of the estate, provided I am succesful in satisfying the courts of the legal heirs to the estate.

I would like for you to write to me at once and tell me all you know and all you can find out from the Dishman boys and girls and also Mrs. Dishman and the two old negroes.

The distance between us is great and it takes a long time to write across the continent and get answers. Therefore, I hope you will write me at great length so as to save all the time possible time.

I would suggest that you visit Tappahannock and personally examine all the wills, deeds, marriages and agreements that connect the Dishman family, and see if you cannot connect the name Slaughter up in some manner. I have had much correspondence with Mr. Southworth, the Clerk of the Court at Tappahannock and he has given me much information, but I do not feel that I should ask him for additional information.

There are many wills at Tappahannock of many Dishmans and it may be that upon examination you will find something. You did not say in your letter if David Dishman the father of Slaughter Dishman had any additional sons and daughters. I would like for you to find out at once whether this be true or not. It may be that the two old negroes will know all the members of the family. I fail to find out from your letter as to whether or not W.L. Dishman was a brother or not of Slaughter. There is a family of Dishmans that advise me that Slaughter had two brothers, namely: David and James. I have never heard that he had any other brother. If W.L. Dishman deceased is a brother of Slaughter, or otherwise related to him, I would like to know very much indeed.

Be sure to get together all the facts you can.  
Write me without delay. I have no intention to do other than  
to be fair with all parties concerned. I will not lend myself  
to assist any family that is not rightly entitle to their  
portion of this estate.

I might say to you that I am in possession of the  
situation and if anything is done from any angle that I am the  
man that will have to do it.

I want to treat all property and do no injustice  
to any one.

I hope you will co-operate with me fully and will  
tell me all you can find out and I promise if I am successful  
in this matter with information that you may furnish I will see  
that you are properly compensated.

Yours very truly,