The acceptance speech made to the Richmond Academy of Medicine by Dr. Wyndham B. Blanton at the presentation of my portrait to the Academy at noon, March 12, 1949.

Mr. Chairman, Dr. Miller, ladies and gentlemen.

"The vivid recollection of an evening some seventeen years ago, when a van from Thomas, West Virginia, unloaded at our doors the boxes which contained the books, silhouette, prints, letters and other medical antiquities which now constitute the collection of the Miller Library. The night was hot, intensely hot, but the three excited men who composed your library committee at that time, with coats off and sleeves rolled up, embarked with enthusiasm on the privileged task of personally unpacking and assembling on these very shelves the books you now look upon. As I now remember it, we kept at it (except for welcome interruptions to admire a binding here or a bookplate there) until every book was in place, and the key turned on the last case. Yes that was a night not to be forgotten. Vesalius, Guy de Chauliac, Paracelsus, Paré, Carbon, Harvey and many other fathers of our profession had come to stay with us forever. It was borne in upon us that for such distinguished company we were now the permanent and responsible hosts.

"The uniqueness and value of this collection is too well known to you for me to recount it to you now. Two weeks ago, I was in the rare book section of the library at the University of Virginia -- The McGregor Collection, and was shown their prized medical items. Their most valuable book, I should say, was a 1555 Vesalius. The famous frontispiece was not perfect, and when by contrast I remembered own own copy, richly adorned with the autograph or bookplate of all its former owners, I experienced a resurgence of pride in the collection which Dr. Miller has given us.

"Shakespeare, you remember, once said "they who reverence too much old times are but a scorn to the new." I am sure he had no reference to old books. Men like Dr. Miller, who do reverence old books have no apology to make. The late Sir William Osler called such men "a small and silent band, but in reality the leaven of the whole lump. The profane call them bibliomanics, and in truth, he continues half humorously they are at all times irresponsible, and do not always know the difference between meum and tuum ... Loving books, partly for their contents, partly for the sake of the authors, they not alone keep alive the sentiment of historical continuity in the profession, but they are the men who make possible such gatherings as the one we are now enjoying. We need more men of this class, particularly in this country, where every one carries in his pocket the tape-measure of utility" (note this quotation was from an address made by Sir William Osler while he was professor of Medicine at Johns Hopkins University).

"In this library we have company of Immortals -- set aside not alone for adoration, but for inspiration and use. John Ruskin in Sesame and Lilies speaks of books as kings and queens -- a royalty however that is not aloof -- with which every lover of good books can associate on terms of friendship and equality. Dr. Miller in every sense has made us a royal gift.

"For years some of us have entertained the hope that he might some day he might come among us; and among his books. But if we are to be denied his living presence, we are assured in this present presentation the next best gift -- his speaking likeness on canvas. For many years to come, from his position up there Dr. Miller will look down approvingly upon generation of students and scholars as the make use of his collection from day to day, and they in turn will look up to him with increasing
gratitude, and perhaps they will find the inspiration to emulate his extraordinary vision, his adventurous spirit and his generous purpose.

"On behalf of the Richmond Academy of Medicine I accept this portrait of our friend and benefactor, Joseph Lyon Miller."
April 16, 1951

Dear Howard:

If Providence had not, often against my will, forced me to the level where I have labored and will labor probably for at least another ten years or so, where I have found, never contemning, or happiness either, but a strange and completely undefinable joy at these rare moments when a thousand devils of doubt didn't have at me with their pitchforks -- if not that, then I would, without hesitation chose, if choice were mine, the very life God saw fit to reward you with. And certainly He, or Lady Luck, which ever one you are at present worshipping, did have very much to do with it. For that wondrous field of yours requires considerable pastures and fencing and a list of expensive things to operate in a manner that doesn't take the sunshine entirely out of it. I still recall vividly one time just before East Texas came in, your coming to my house in the depth of dejection, having been fired from your job, having married, and looking into what looked like a great manure pile of frustrations. And then, Bloopie. And I have never, without an iota of malice, shared with anybody's material good fortune so much satisfaction as I did with yours. For, despite your "limitations" as you modestly say in your letter, you are one most respectable human being, and have always been. Which your father assures me you would turn out to be when he first told me of you.

It is seldom the history of prophets that they are honored in their own country, and much less rewarded with the kind of financial reward as is needed nowadays to enter the ranching business not loaded down with a mind-twisting burden of mortgages to make the usual hazards and problems insupportable. But -- all three of my beautiful and wonderful children, and also my very beautiful wife whom you have never met, long for life away from cities. Even here at Happenstance shotgun houses are hemming us in so much that we can hardly breathe except back on our lovely and blessed little 15 acre patch of postoaks and blackjacks. There is a region north of Silver City, in what they call the Revere section, a quadrangle of mountains and valleys too wild and rough for that polluting tide of tourists which spoils the Santa Fe region. And in that section, watered by the Gila, there is a valley I would love, and I mean LOVE by God, to own. And I would thank God if He would make my son a lover of cows and ranching as he made you such a lover. And that he could attend Texas A&M and then find his delight in raising good fat Herefords and fine horses. My two girls are, even more entranced with ranch life, and the only kind of movie we ever go to at the driveins are cowboy movies, which more and more are nearfilling the realities of ranch life. At least they take us out into the entrancing wilderness, away from the glut of humanity, and into that style of people and custom in which I grew up and where I feel most at home, the 1890 kind of civilization, manners, values and tastes which were Texas when I was a boy in Fayette County. And the New Mexico cattle ranches I visited are practically all owned by that kind of people, dominated by that kind of values, which is why I spend most of my daydreams where I seek rest for my nerves, riding up Turkey Creek Canyon, one of the innumerable lovely tributaries of the Gila.
There will be another child in September and we are grateful.

I read aloud a lot to my three children who are aged six, eight and ten and are named Sylvia, a platinum blonde who reminds me much of my wonderful mother; Larry who is supposed to look like me but I think he looks like my wife’s people, and Beth whose who is a blonde with red, white and tailed pony horse has thrown her so many times he finally got tired and has tamed down considerably. She broke him barebacked. And loves him nearly as much as I love her, our first born.

I have eaten frustrations like no man who ever lived and tried to live up to a high goal which his forefathers, some of them, had struggled toward. But I have been also unusually fortunate in my wife and children, as in my parents and sisters and my grandparents on the maternal side and my father’s mother also, and my mother’s grandfather Wuerpel who was the source of the courage which has helped me be mad enough to believe I could do the impossible. And this home of mine has been an essential to my doing what I have done, for it provided sanctuary when I most needed it.

I said I read a lot to my children, and then wandered into that pleasant field of my great wealth in love which God has given me to overflowing. Do you know what I read? I read the wonderful stories of Will James about horses, illustrated with his wonderful drawing. Beth and especially Sylvia have no horses and you should see how great their talent for this is. Larry is as ardent a hunter as I used to be when I was his age. And we read the very good stories of Larry and ranch life which a chap named Thomas G. Hinkle. You are certainly to know them both for they are realistic stories of ranch life and are written by men who love and know horses with that fanatical affection which lives particularly in the two girls.

I thought your ranch was near Lubbock? And how is Val and how many children did you finally bring into your home? And, if you still have hands that don’t cramp when working a typewriter, and if the screw worms and horn flies don’t take up all your spare time, sit down and let yourself go a little about your ranch life and experiences, for the audience of younger ones as well as me and my Lelia. And you might include a few snapshots of the ranch, your ranch, your horses, your ranch help, and what gladdens the hearts of those who must live in the noise and dreary dust of cities or their environs, instead of in the sweet and delightful desolation of plains and valleys where dwell the raisers of our beef. Which we wish to the long we weren’t too poor to eat, except for an occasional pound of hamburger meat. We haven’t tasted steak, I guess, in over a year. Especially not the kind of steak I would be eating regularly if I had that chunk of green valley north of Silver.

One thing I shall have, if I can also have a ranch some day in the Revere section, that is a pond jumper. And then, if it is not too far across the mountains to your spread, it would be a lot of fun to fly over to see the “ampons now and then. And ask Howard what in the hell to do about the various cow problems we would be stubbing our greenhorned ignorance against.

My sincere regards to you and yours,

Carl Mosig
715-16 St. Ashland, Ky. Oct 15-54
Dear Howard:

I am enclosing an invitation to uncle John's and attend wedding and reception. I received in from a friend whose father lived in the house. Judge Ireland and said they made the thing. Mr. Mullan they were good friends so I have been told. I did not know if you had one of these invitations or not, it is maybe Irishman's son worked like it. She told me to mail it or give it to the night newspaper for a small paper book 2 x 4. I will mail in the next letter. I am afraid one might get lost. I hope all are well. All your own decide
Stop blank space
Main Rare House

Park Garde

14th Street
Dear Howard:

When I finished the report you wanted regarding the gold mesh bracelet that I sent your father with the request that from him it should go to Marian I want out and mailed it so you would get as soon as possible and I am happy that you got it at last when you had to attend to burying Hallie and carrying out the settlement of her estate.

I am happy that you have at last gotten the bracelet and think you did right in not turning it over to her Mexican maid with the residue of the little she had left.

I hope the paper I sent you covers the subject as you wanted it but if not write me at once what you want and I will make out a new paper as you would rather have it and if necessary have it notarized. I did not have the one I made out notarized because my druggist who is a notary public was in Parkersburg visiting his sister. He and his wife came back last night.

Friday when I was writing it the Hurricane Hazel was pouring water by the tub full from 6 A.M. till late that night on us, but fortunately not much wind. However the great fall of water fill all creeks and rivers in this part of West Va. until the roads were covered and in Elkins and Parsons our county seat all streets were 2 or 3 feet deep in water and many families in both towns had to be moved to higher ground and some houses as well as out buildings washed away.

The Western Maryland RR was so damaged by track washed away, undermined in some places, and big slides from overhanging hills that this morning the first tran went through--it was the passenger from Elkins to Cumberland, and as yet no freight trains as we use to get four or five every day seven diesels pulling and pushing them--two engines in front and five hooked together in the middle of the train.

After the big rain stopped Friday night it got very cold and have had to have fire in the stoves and extra blankets on the bed. Temperature from 30 to 40 above each day. Also some rain Saturday and yesterday and a heavy one early this morning.

No doubt your papers have carried accounts of the terrible damage that "Hazel" did from the Carolinas up through Virginia, Maryland, the City of Washington, and Pennsylvania, New York, and Canada on its way to Hudson Bay and Alaska. The last report I have heard is 105 persons dead besides many injured. None of the other Hurricanes that we have had ahead of Hazel did so much damage or killed so many people.

Had Hallie already given the watch that your great grandfather had given you father to your brother Ireland's son or still had it.

It will always be a mystery to me why your father, a lawyer, left no will or if he did what happened to it.

Repeating that I am indeed happy that Marian now has her great grandmother Hampton's graduation bracelet as was understood by your father when I sent it to him that Marian was to have it eventually. It's mate of course will eventually be "Dusty's" wife when he marries.

He was 14 years old last April and his father tells me he is now five feet ten inches tall and will evidently be when grown six feet and four or five inches tall. John is 6ft.2 inches.

With best wishes and love to you Hamptons,

Uncle Joe.