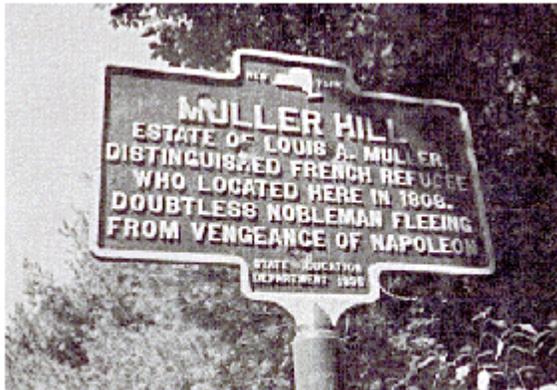


## The History of Muller Hill by Joana Eaton (class of 1996)

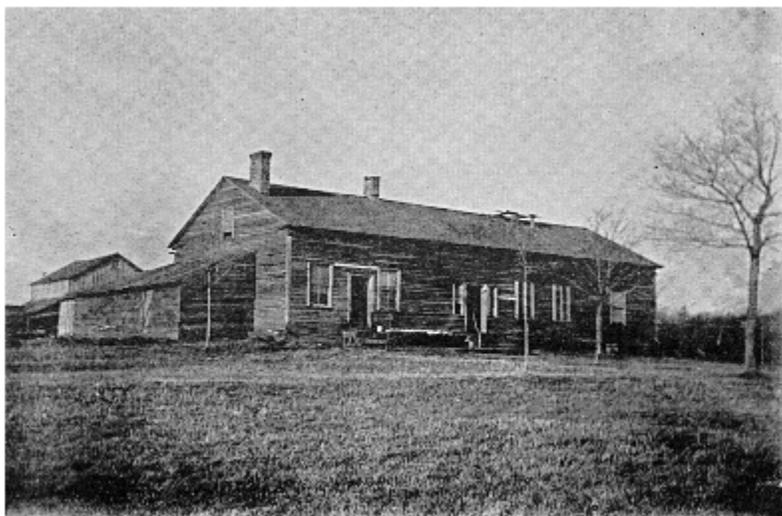


Historic site state marker located on road to Muller Hill, west of Georgetown.

The mystery of Muller Hill lies with Louis Anathe Muller who settled in the town of Georgetown in 1808. Louis Muller purchased a large stretch of land from Daniel Ludlow of New York City that amounted to 2,700 acres. Still people wonder: Who was this man, where did he come from, why was he running, and what happened to him after he left the town forever?

Louis Muller was an extremely wealthy man for his day. "The wealth he brought into this town, it is said, amounted to \$150,000" (Hammond 387).

L.A. Muller was a fine-looking man, about five feet five inches high, well proportioned, possessing a distinguished military bearing. His complexion was of a swarthy color, eyes black and penetrating, features sharply defined, with the forehead of a keen practical intellect, perfectly in keeping with the fine face. He was apparently fifty years of age (Hammond 391).



THE OLD MULLER CHATEAU.

He built the mansion on the land that he had previously purchased and it took two years to construct by a team of 150 men. At its completion, it was seventy feet long and thirty feet wide. The cellar walls were five feet thick and six feet deep. "The sides and ends are all black cherry timber, setting up endwise, each stick one foot wide eight inches thick and is all matched together with groove and tongue so it is perfect bullet proof" (Breed 20). The house was equipped with a trap door that no one could see inside the house or outside of the house. In an interview with Norman Evans, a member of the Georgetown Historical Society, it was stated that characteristics of the house made it impossible to disturb. Mr. Evans tells that the house was built in an ideal location so that no artillery could reach the Muller family. Small lookouts were installed so that his men could fire with the protection of the sealed home around them. He also pointed out that the house was built in the center of a large clearing so the attacker could be seen from the house miles away. Seven marble fireplaces adorned the dwelling and beautiful furniture sent from France decorated every room.

The mansion itself was built in a fashion where

"the timbers all stood upright, and dovetailed into the heavy sills below and the massive girders above with as much care and accuracy as though made by skilled cabinetmakers. The outside was clapboard and the walls of the rooms were covered with lath and plaster" (Clarke 89).

Along with the house he set up a private village that entailed a "grist mill, saw mill, a store house and two stores ministered to the wants of the laborers and others who congregated there" (Smith 589). Muller had about 150 men that worked on his land. He treated them well and was always just. He did not accept falsifications and "any sign of dishonesty or shirking was followed by immediate dismissal" (90). Every night after dinner Muller had his men sit down so that he could read to them. He had a desire for them to pay attention.

He required obedience like a man accustomed to military command. He often brought the latest newspapers into the field among the workman, and, gathering them all about him, read to them the news of the day; but the moment he observed his audience, or any part of it, inattentive, or indulging in any by-play, he immediately folded his paper and commanded them all to their posts of labor (Hammond 389).

After the house was built he paid "his workmen in gold and silver, and when it was finished, the mansion was surrounded by 300 acres of cleared land and gardens" (Solms 38).

According to Henry Breed, Muller had set large orchards west of the house, built three barns, east of the house was a trout pond, and constructed a deer park. "A large park, in which deer, rabbits and other game abounded, was enclosed with a strong stockade, for hunting was a sport in which he greatly delighted. He was an expert marksman, but would not attack game while at rest" (Smith 588). He grew corn and wheat on his farm and was well known as an admirable hunter. Upon the completion of the house in the spring of 1809, he moved his wife and two children from Hamilton into the modernistic residence. Muller married Adaline Stuyvesant, who was said to be exceedingly beautiful, in New York City and brought her to Hamilton to live until the mansion was completed. His wife was said to be:

. . . a fair-haired, beautiful blonde, of only medium height—a graceful and finely-formed girlish creature. Gay and affectionate with her maids, she and her two pretty children, Charley and Carlos, (one of whom was born at Georgetown) were very much beloved by all, and were the center of the deepest solicitude on the part of the husband and father (Courtright 16).

Muller was always on guard in anticipation of something threatening to take place. Outside of his property he kept two loaded pistols in his holsters and he was accompanied by uniformed, armed, and mounted bodyguards. His men say that he was always extremely interested in the activities of Napoleon and he gave the impression that he was in deadly dismay of the Frenchman. He was afraid of what the emperor could do to Europe and of what the emissaries might do to him. "When in 1812 he learned that Napoleon, was marching into Russia, he became greatly elated and said that was the beginning of his end" (Clarke 92). Muller was exceedingly cautious about what he let people know about his identity. "While Muller was friendly and cordial with those whom he met, he made no effort to make friends. In fact, he seemed to take great pains to avoid doing so" (Clarke 91). It is known that Louis Anathe Muller was living under an assumed name but even those he brought from France did not know of his identity.

Only once during the six years of residence in Madison County did Mr. Muller say a word in regard to his past life. This one break of silence was under the stress of anger. It was in the year 1812. War with England had been declared and preparations were being made. The militia captain at Hamilton sent orders to all able-bodied men to report for training. This order infuriated the Frenchman. When the message arrived he was talking with one of his employees. For a moment his self-restraint succumbed to his anger and he burst out: 'Mr. Bierce, it is too bad - too bad! Captain Hurd sends his corporal to warn

me out to train. He ought to be ashamed! I have been general of a division five years. I have signed three treaties. I-' Here suddenly remembering himself, he ended with, 'Bierce it is too bad!' (Clarke 92).

Muller was mysteriously excused from training, but more importantly, he let a piece of himself out for the world. If he had only told what division in the army that he had been general, or what treaties he had signed, his identity could be explained, but he did not.

As the tide turned definitely against Napoleon, Muller became more and more agitated, and when it became evident that Bonaparte's downfall was imminent he packed his bags, and with wife and children, headed for New York. Here is supposed to have left his family and sailed for Europe (Clarke 95).

Muller stayed in France for a period of two years and found his dream in shambles upon his return in 1816. He left everything in the hands of a tenant, Jean P. Bernard, in which he trusted and took as an honest man but was deceived and deserted.

The steep road up the hill was washed into gullies by two years of rain and was overgrown with under bush. The clearing had become a mass of entangled weeds, the dam had broken, and the fish pond was no more. The beautiful statuary which had adorned the lawn was gone, and the bronze lion that had guarded the door had deserted his post. The door itself hung open and the inside of the house, stripped furniture and hangings, stood gaunt and bare. . . (Clarke 95).

After observing his house in its despair, with sadness and madness, he sold his farm and left home forever.

He returned to New York and promptly offered the land for any sum. He sold to Mr. Abijah Weston, merchant of New York City, for the sum of \$10,500, fifteen lots and parts of lots, which include those lots of the present Muller estate, with house and barn, out-houses, grist mill and saw mill. The deed was executed April 9, 1816, Cornelius Bogart and Jacob Radcliffe, attest. Mr. Muller then returned to France, it is said, leaving his family in New York City (Hammond 393).

No one knows what may have happened to Louis Anathe Muller after he disappeared from his beautiful home in Georgetown, New York. Through careless tenants and little upkeeping the mansion stood until 1907 when it burned to the ground leaving only the foundation. Few pictures of the residence remain and little is left for those whom are interested to appreciate. No one will ever know who this man was that came into the modest town and lead it to its prosperity but. . .

All agree that Muller was a man of high rank in France who had fled the vengeance of Napoleon. Some think that he was involved in the plot of the emperor's life for when the Duc d'Enghien was executed. Most agree that he was some member of the Bourbon family. On one occasion Dr. Pietrow [one whom Muller confided in] let it slip the remark that Muller was 'cousingerman to the Duc d'Angouleme.' As the duke was the eldest son of King Charles X and husband of the Princess Royal, the only daughter of the martyred Louis XVI, this statement, if true, would certainly make him at least closely related to the royal family of France (Clarke 96).

Some also say that he was King Charles X himself because facts point in that direction. He was the correct age and had the same descriptive appearance but letters prove that Charles X was at a wedding in England when Muller was in America. Whom ever he was he brought great fame and affluence to the insignificant town of Georgetown. The town has acquired a name and a place in history for all to treasure, giving credit to Louis Anathe Muller.

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