

Letter from John Brinkley to Minerva Jones

July 21, 1941

KHS BrinkleyJ-to-BrinkleyM-1941-Jul21



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For ENGL-618: Research Methods in English

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Introduction to the Series

This transcription and its attendant annotations, explanatory material, and bibliography was prepared by students in ENGL 618: Research Methods in English, the required gateway class for the MA in English degree program at Western Carolina University (WCU). The learning outcomes for this class include the following:

1. Conduct appropriate effective and ethical scholarship.
 - a. Effectively find and use advanced research tools (handbooks, databases, guides, bibliographies, etc.) appropriate to a subject.
 - Students will be able to use a wide variety of such tools and evaluate those tools.
 - b. Find appropriate advanced research (print and electronic scholarship) and apply that research to specific disciplinary questions or issues.
 - Students will be able to find a variety of scholarship, evaluate both the appropriateness and rigor of that scholarship, and incorporate that scholarship correct and effectively.
 - c. Develop accurate bibliographies and reference citations.
 - Students will be able to annotate, abstract, and cite materials following standard MLA format.
2. Understand the process by which the texts we use are made available.
 - Students will be able to conduct basic editorial work and evaluate the editorial work of others.

All work is present as submitted by the graduate students. While they take great care with their transcriptions and annotations, errors are possible. As they learn throughout this class, good scholarship requires meticulous research and corroboration by authoritative sources. Our objective is to provide transcriptions and annotations of WCU's Special Collections materials that will be useful to the institution, students, scholars, patrons, and all users of our library's resources.

If you wish to submit an emendation or correction for this document, please email Dr. Brian Gastle (bgastle@wcu.edu)

Introduction

John R. Brinkley II, a self-proclaimed doctor, was born July 8, 1885. While he is best known for his practice of xenotransplantation of goat testicles in an attempt to cure issues he claimed were in relation to the prostate or sexual rejuvenation, that is not where his list of self-proclaimed achievements stop. Brinkley was the founder of his own radio station, KFKB. His radio station spanned everything from gospel readings, to music, and even comedy. Brinkley also had his hat in the political scene in Kansas where he attempted to claim office as governor. While he was unsuccessful in these attempts, he nearly won twice. He would go on to have a book written about him in his lifetime by Clement Wood named *The Life of a Man: A Biography of John R. Brinkley*.

This letter covers the end of the XERA station. John writes to Minnie on how sad he is to have learned of the radio station's demise. He also mentions KFKB and the wattage for the radio stations that the Mexican government authorized.

At the end of his life, John Brinkley's luck ran out. He was eventually stripped of his fraudulent medical license in multiple states, lost his radio stations, and began to have multiple lawsuits filed against him due to his medical malpractice. He, along with his wife and six other associates, were sued for mail fraud by the federal government. Brinkley would never see a trial for his mail fraud, however, as his health was in rapid decline. After suffering three heart attacks, two of which were critical, and a leg amputation, John R. Brinkley passed away on May 26, 1942 in San Antonio, Texas.

Minerva Telitha Jones was born in Memphis, Tennessee on June 14th, 1892. Jones was the second wife of John Brinkley. Jones and Brinkley were married the first time in Memphis on August 23rd, 1913 when Minerva was 21 years old and John was 28 years old. Their second marriage occurred on February 21st, 1916 in Clay, Missouri when Minerva was 23 years old and John was 30 years old. Minerva died in 1980 in Del Rio, Texas at the age of 87.

Editorial Statement

This transcription is a diplomatic edition maintaining all original spelling, punctuation, abbreviations, errors, and special characters presented in the original postcard. The transcription includes page breaks to signify the front and back of the page. This transcription has maintained the original layout by keeping the transcription on the left margin of the page.

Manuscript Description

The letter is a 1 page 7.25x10.5 inch letterhead bearing the image of the Hotel Bellerive in Kansas City, Missouri. The letter is written in pen on both the front and back of the letter.

Transcription

[MS Page 1]

Hotel Bellerive¹
A Transient and Residential
Hotel of Distinctiveness
and Refinement

July 21 - 1941

ARMOUR AND WARWICK BLVDS
Kansas City, MO.

Honey:² it seems my heart will
break since you phoned XERA³ was
being torn down. As long as
this did not happen I had a
faint hope Mallory for selfish
reasons would get it going.
But now the patient is dead.
“The Sunshine Station between the
nations is gone”.⁴
The world’s most powerful⁵
Broadcasting station is silent.
Your only hope to make a

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living would be to increase the
power of Carlos station to 5000
watts which was the power of
KFKB.⁶ I do not know his
wavelength it may be worthless.
If its above 1200 its no good.

¹ Hotel Bellrive in Kansas City, Missouri (Opened in 1922).

² Minerva Telitha Jones (1892-1980).

³ John Brinkley’s radio station based out of Del Rio, Texas.

⁴ Nickname given by Brinkley to the XERA radio station.

⁵ XERA was authorized to output up to 500,000 watts of power by Mexico in 1932.

⁶ Brinkley’s first radio station, based in Milford, Kansas

My health is gone.⁷ I am ready
for the bed and out.

If I was healthy and could do
surgery in private Practice.

Rice⁸ promises Helvering⁹ will
send an auditor to audit
and settle our 1940 Taxes.

This is July 21st. It was
February 21st that KFKB
was closed to us.

Love

Daddy.¹⁰

⁷ Brinkley had multiple heart attacks as well as an amputation in the lead up to his death in May of 1942

⁸ Carl Venton Rice (1898-1989)

⁹ Guy Tresillian Helvering (1878-1946)

¹⁰ John Romulus Brinkley (1885-1942)

References

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