

to a string of similar novels, including *Queenie's Terrible Secret*, *All for Love*, *A Crushed Lily*, *The Fatal Kiss*, *A Married Flirt*, *Pretty Madcap Lucy*, *The Strength of Love*, and *The Senator's Bride*. As her writing career became increasingly lucrative, Mittie devoted herself to producing the stories that eventually brought her undreamed of wealth and fame.

The money from Mittie's writing continued to flow in, and Alex Miller found himself increasingly bored with life as a country schoolmaster. Equally uninspired by the exhausting work of farm life, he was at a loss for something to do. The couple moved to Alderson, where Mittie offered to finance Alex in the mercantile trade, but he disliked the idea of being tied to any business that called for routine work. So it was decided that he would look after their home and invest the considerable sums that the New York story papers were now paying for Mittie's romance novels.

Describing this period as one of the healthiest, most successful, and most happy chapters of her life, Mittie's joy seemed complete. From the despair and illness after the deaths of her first husband and child, she had now entered into a life of comfort and fulfillment. Her marriage to Alex Miller resulted in the birth of three healthy children, and the money from her writing enabled her to build an elegant estate in Alderson and to give her husband the financial freedom to do as he pleased. Now a wealthy country squire, Alex finally found his calling in politics, winning election to the West Virginia State Senate for eight terms.

The Millers rode this wave of success in high style, taking trips to such far flung places as Cuba, and socializing with the rich and famous from the Roosevelts to Nellie Sartoris, the daughter of Ulysses S. Grant. Occasionally spending the winter in Washington, D.C., Mittie joined a writer's group that included such notables as Edward Eggleston, the author of *The Hoosier Schoolmaster*, and Frances Hodgson Burnett, who wrote such classics as *The Secret Garden* and *Little Lord Fauntleroy*.

Mittie's stories remained popular with the reading public, and the money kept pouring in. Whereas she had been thrilled to receive \$220 for *The Bride of the Tomb*, her works now commanded as much as \$1200 per story. Writing an average of five novels per year, her annual salary was an incredible, for that era, \$6,000, and the name of Mrs. Alex. McVeigh Miller, which she used for all eighty of her novels, became one of the best-known names in the American dime novel industry. Along with Laura Jean Libbey, Charlotte M. Stanley, Hiram P. Halsey and a few others, Mrs. Miller's "sensational" stories were among the most popular in the genre.

While she continued her writing, which was the financial backbone of the family, Mittie also devoted herself to raising her three children in the elegant house her earnings had built in Alderson, a house considered locally to be a mansion. A visiting friend from England christened the house "The