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LETTER TO H.E. STEPTOE, 10 JANUARY 1944

Lady Nancy Astor writes to her cousin, Hampden E. Steptoe, thanking him for sending a little book of carols. She also mentions hearing “that southern accent on every street over here!” At this time she was the unofficial hostess to American troops stationed in Plymouth prior to the invasion of Normandy.

ASTOR, NANCY WITCHER LANGHORNE ASTOR, VISCOUNTESS, 1879-1964

Nancy Witcher Langhorne was born in Danville, Virginia, 19 May 1879, the daughter of Chiswell Dabney Langhorne and Nancy Witcher Keene. She became the wife of Waldorf Astor and was the first woman seated in the British Parliament. In Parliament, she championed temperance, women’s rights and benefits for children. During World War II, she worked with her husband to boost public morale. She retired from office in 1945.

Nancy Witcher Langhorne Astor died on 2 May 1964 and is buried at Cliveden on the Thames.

HAMPDEN EARLY STEPTOE, 1885-1963

Hampden Early Steptoe, son of John Marshall Steptoe and Lucy Landonia Cobbs, was born in Bedford County in 1885. He attended Piedmont Business College in Lynchburg, Virginia. He left Lynchburg to run a commissary in the coal fields of Logan County, West Virginia. In 1912, he married Mary Lowe of Logan County.

Steptoe returned to Lynchburg in 1910 and became associated with the real estate firm of Armstead and Steptoe. In 1911 he formed a partnership with Charles P. Patteson and the firm was incorporated as Steptoe and Patteson. He served as president of the Lynchburg Real Estate Board and in 1930 was elected president of the Virginia Real Estate Association. He helped form the city-manager plan for Lynchburg and worked for its adoption. He served as vice chairman of the City Planning Commission for ten years and was a director of the Lynchburg Chamber of Commerce. He also served on the board of the Family Welfare Society and was a director of Lynchburg Associated Charities.

Steptoe was the first to propose and obtain approval for night illumination of the Court House and Monument Terrace.

A member of St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, Hampden Early Steptoe died 3 April 1963 in Lynchburg and is buried in Presbyterian Cemetery.