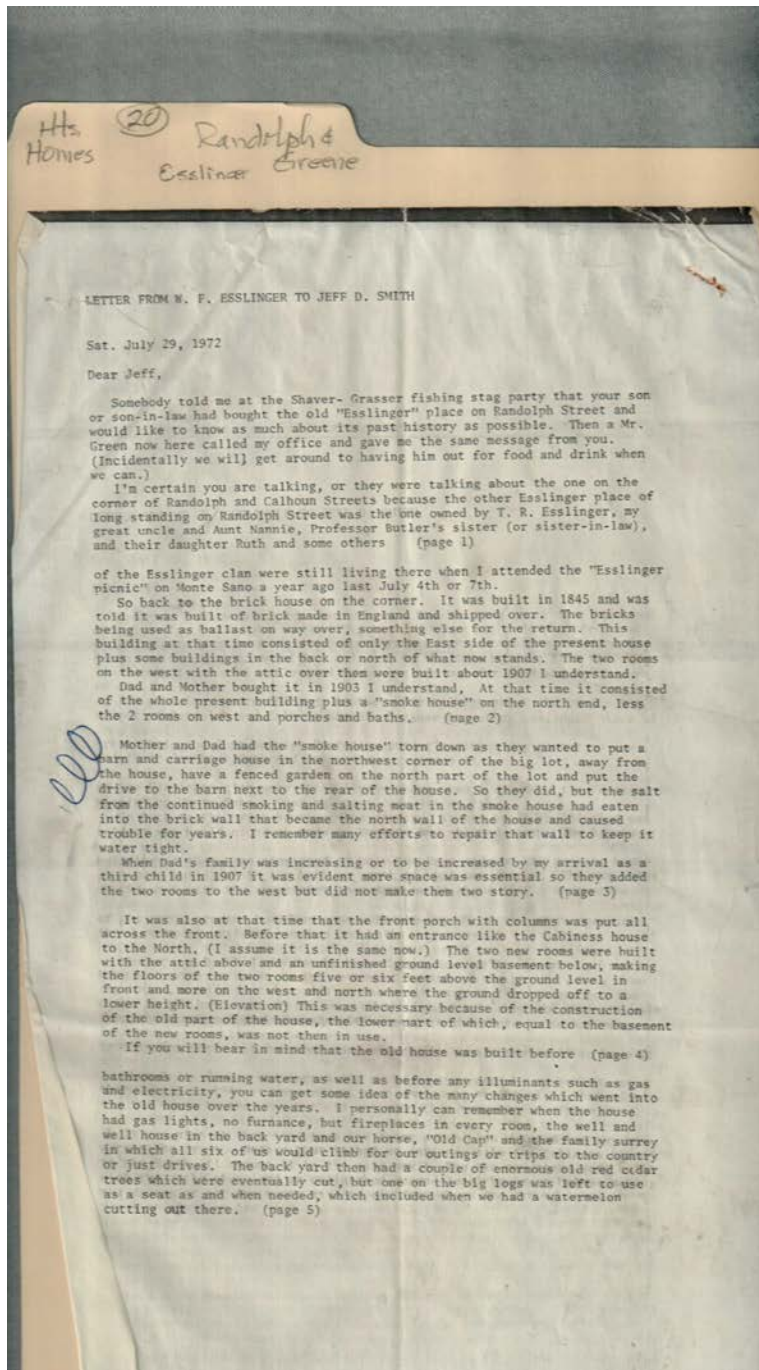


Frances Cabaniss Roberts Collection: Series 4, Subseries A, Box 13, Folder 20  
Randolph (Esslinger Residence), Esslinger, Francis to Smith, Jeff, 1972 - Houses  
Image 1 r04a13-20-000-0143 [Contents](#) [Index](#) [About](#)



**Names:**

Butler, Prof.  
Butler, Ruth  
Cabaniss house

Esslinger House  
Esslinger, T. R. &  
Nannie

Esslinger, W. F.  
Green,  
Smith, Jeff D.

**Places:**

Huntsville, AL

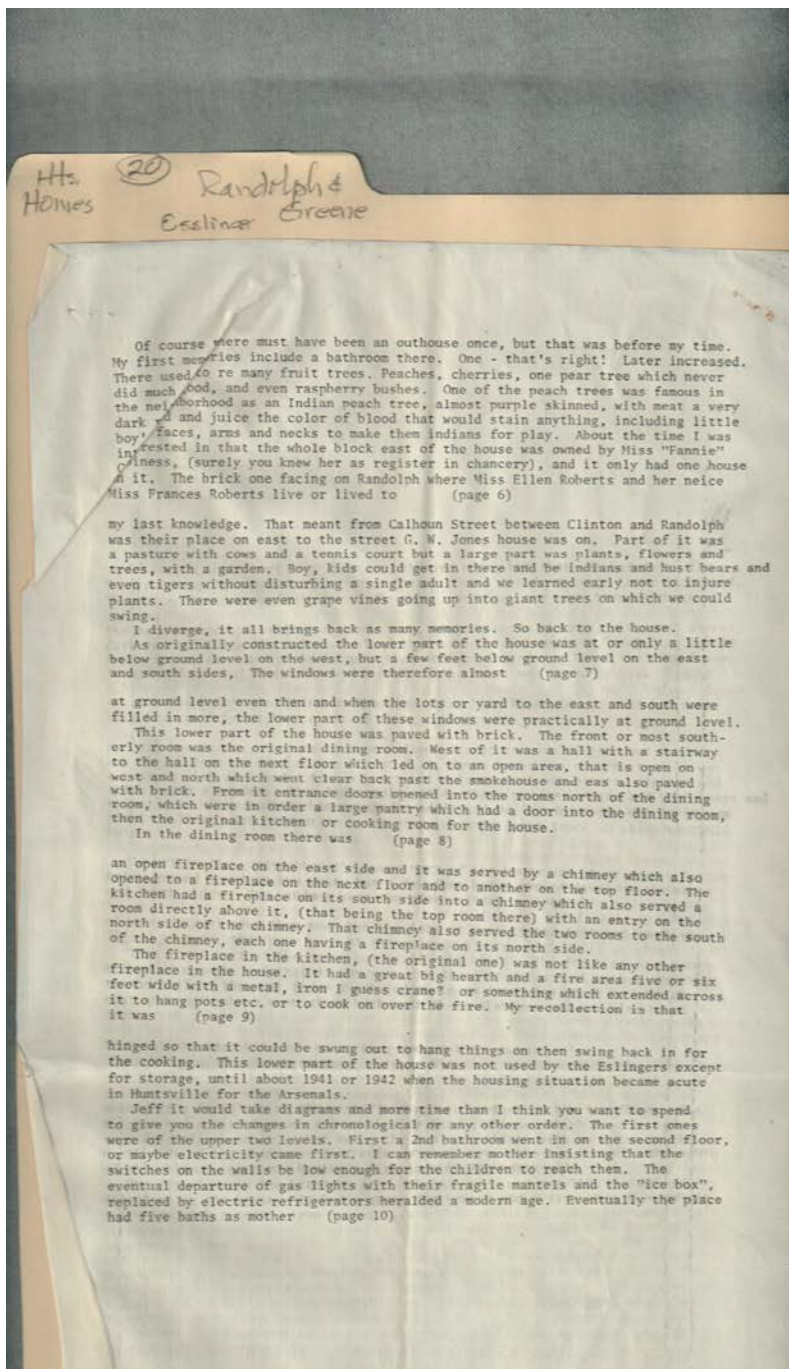
**Types:**

correspondence

**Dates:**

July 29, 1972

Frances Cabaniss Roberts Collection: Series 4, Subseries A, Box 13, Folder 20  
Randolph (Esslinger Residence), Esslinger, Francis to Smith, Jeff, 1972 - Houses  
Image 2 r04a13-20-000-0144 [Contents](#) [Index](#) [About](#)



**Names:**

Cabaniss, Fannie

Jones, G. W.

Roberts, Ellen, Miss

Smith, Jeff D.

**Places:**

Huntsville, AL

**Types:**

correspondence

**Dates:**

July 29, 1972

Frances Cabaniss Roberts Collection: Series 4, Subseries A, Box 13, Folder 20  
Randolph (Esslinger Residence), Esslinger, Francis to Smith, Jeff, 1972 - Houses  
Image 3 r04a13-20-000-0145 [Contents](#) [Index](#) [About](#)

Hts. (20) Randolph & Esslinger Greene Homes

converted it into four apartments after we were all gone, then I added a fifth for war time demands.

For quite a spell the house was heated by six grates, open fireplaces, plus the big coal range in the kitchen which was located above the old kitchen and was therefore the most northerly of the rooms in use. For years my job was to chop the kindling and haul the coal up for those grates and the kitchen stove. I can remember chopping overtime for weeks before Xmas holidays so I wouldn't have to chop kindling during vacation.

Later on we put in a Cahill "pipeless furnace" in the front hall which served to heat downstairs and upstairs too, when doors were opened. It also kept the hall too hot.

Later it was taken out and I (page 11)

had a Holland forced air furnace with stoker put in about 1940-41-42? It was contracted for by the Birmingham branch office of the firm and I can remember the craftsmen mechanic who installed it grumbling about the people telling him it was a brick house but not that it had walls like a fort to cut through.

It would take a diagram and many sheets to go into details on the changes of the house. Sometime I may sit down & show them to you or your children if you really want them. However, the material in the old part of the house needs comment. The floors on top and main level were virgin native pine, about six inches wide, thicker than usual today and aged so hard that carpenters complained about trying to cut through them. Some of the floors which were originally in the open were of red cedar and had been walked on so much (page 12)

that the soft parts of the cedar had been worn down and the knots were left at a higher level making it quite uneven. (This floor was recovered by another floor but not removed.)

Many of the supporting timbers were re cedar too. I remember one under the open hall on west above the brick floor at ground level that was about six inches thick by twelve inches high with adze marks all on it where it had been hand hewed. The wood trim, I don't know what you call it, that went along the stairway in the front hall, was made from one piece of blue poplar, beaded as a (page 13)

decoration at the lower edge, which with indentation for the risers and steps must have been cut and shaped from one board 2 1/2 feet wide. No such poplar was available even in 1915, some years ago.

To the north of the driveway behind the house were a row of peonies. Miss Fanny Cabaniss gave them to me and told me they would always bloom on our birthday, right we had the same birthday, May 20th - and she claimed I was half-way named for her. She and her niece Miss Ellen (Roberts) were always good to me and Miss Ellen made the best caramel candy and cake in the world.

The yard had a picket fence on most of the east and all of the south, with front gate, then a plank fence on some of the Clinton Street side to rear of lot with back gates.

The sidewalks were all brick for years. No good for skating, as result I never learned to roller skate and nearly broke my neck when my good wife took me out to skate later.

Guess that's it.

Regards,  
Francis

**Names:**

Cabaniss, Fannie

Esslinger House

Esslinger, W. Francis

Roberts, Ellen, Miss

**Places:**

Huntsville, AL

**Types:**

correspondence

**Dates:**

July 29, 1972

**Frances Cabaniss Roberts Collection: Series 4, Subseries A, Box 13, Folder 20  
Randolph (Esslinger Residence), Esslinger, Francis to Smith, Jeff, 1972 - Houses**  
[Contents](#)   [Index](#)   [About](#)

## **Table of Contents**

[Image 1](#) (r04a13-20-000-0143)

[Image 2](#) (r04a13-20-000-0144)

[Image 3](#) (r04a13-20-000-0145)

[Table of Contents](#)

[Name & Place Index](#)

[About the Collection](#)

**Frances Cabaniss Roberts Collection: Series 4, Subseries A, Box 13, Folder 20  
Randolph (Esslinger Residence), Esslinger, Francis to Smith, Jeff, 1972 - Houses**

[Contents](#)   [Index](#)   [About](#)

**Name & Place Index**

Butler, Prof. [1](#)

Butler, Ruth [1](#)

Cabaniss house [1](#)

Cabaniss, Fannie [2](#), [3](#)

Esslinger House [1](#), [3](#)

Esslinger, T. R. & Nannie [1](#)

Esslinger, W. F. [1](#)

Esslinger, W. Francis [3](#)

Green, [1](#)

Huntsville, AL [1](#), [2](#), [3](#)

Jones, G. W. [2](#)

Roberts, Ellen, Miss [2](#), [3](#)

Smith, Jeff D. [1](#), [2](#)

# Frances Cabaniss Roberts Collection

**Preferred Citation:** Frances Cabaniss Roberts Collection, Archives and Special Collections, M. Louis Salmon Library, University of Alabama in Huntsville, Huntsville, AL.

**Collection Scope and Content:** The Collection of 114 Linear ft. includes a total of 156 Archival Boxes. The Frances Cabaniss Roberts collection covers the historical records of the Cabaniss Roberts family. This collection contains extensive correspondence records of the Cabaniss Roberts family circa 1830 to 1930.

**Archives/Special Collections Access Restrictions:** None

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M. Louis Salmon Library**