

Pilgram Letter To May, 1921

From: Rev. Robert Pilgram, Lancaster, Pa.
To: Mary (May) Catharine Moore, Redlands, Ca.
Dated: January 27, 1921

Relationship: They were first cousins. Their common grandparents were Dr. William Moore and his wife Mary Ann Doll. May's father Capt. William Moore was the brother of Robert's mother Elizabeth Hester Moore, whose husband was Rev. Frederick Pilgram.

Location: Jeff Moore has two photo copies of the letter: the first with all three pages, the second with only the last two pages, but with the author's full name written in below his signature.

SAINT PETER'S REFORMED CHURCH
LANCASTER, PENNSYLVANIA

Dear Cousin May:-

You wrote to me some months ago. The letter was put in the living-room table drawer by mistake. I was busied with many different things and forgot about it; but not altogether, for the uneasy consciousness of its being unanswered struck in from time to time. Just now, I thought of it especially, and looked for your letter, but I could not find it. I'll write at any rate, while the fever is on me, and before I have to get at something else.

You sent clippings, and also some snap-shots of Paul's children, did you not? Or did Paul send them? I have forgotten, but I, we, appreciated the photographs of that growing family very much indeed. Many thanks for your kindness. Paul's a lucky dad.

How are you now? We hope that you are really well, and getting ready for your trip east, of which you wrote. You have been thru an awful lot of trials and afflictions. I haven't had so many myself, but I can sympathize deeply, on account of Hilda's experiences the past three and a half years. With all our efforts to find the cause of her many symptoms, we have been unsuccessful thus far. The latest diagnosis is bad tonsils, and it's likely that she'll have them out. She suffers miserably, altho she keeps a-going, and keeps the house going too, cooking and everything save washing and ironing. I help a bit. We had a good maid, a colored girl from the West Indies who came up with Mrs. Hark nearly two years ago, for a year, but we couldn't stand the financial strain, and when the doctor said last October that Hilda could try it herself, we let her go. Since then, Dr. and Mrs. Hark have returned from St. Croix, Virgin Islands, where they had again gone for a year. They are now visiting Ann Hark in Philadelphia. She is a reporter on the "Philadelphia Inquirer", and has apartments on S. 20th St.

Hildegarde and "Sonny" have been pretty well this winter, having gone thru most of the infantile diseases last year, measles, whooping-cough and chicken-pox. H. will be promoted from the sixth grade this week, being first, or a close second in her class. Sonny has been going to school since September. Hildegarde went with her aunt, Ann, to St. Croix in August, spending two months there with her grand-parents, the latter staying with Dr. Hugo Hark, the son, who is a dentist.

Once in a while, I see Mrs. Hostetter, and we speak of you. However, I don't get out much socially, what with church work and family cares, except to the Philosophic Society and Fortnightly Club. The church has been doing very well, thank you. We now have 148 members, compared with 69 when I came here in August, 1917. The inclosed "Findings" shows how we have developed financially. We have the plans and specifications for a new church, and will build when we have sufficient funds assured, and the costs are within

reach. This will likely be a year hence. Our congregation has subscribed \$10,000.00, and we are down in our Forward Movement Fund for a good sum, but what it will be depends upon the returns that come in. It should be \$25,000.00. In addition, we are going to make the Church School part of the building a memorial to Dr. Nathan C. Schaeffer, who was the first-named member of our congregation, and have a committee of over seventy-five of the foremost educators and public men of the state at the head of it. This will mean a state-wide enrollment of teachers and others, a big task. I'll inclose a partial list of Honorary Committee. I got Charles M. Schwab on it a couple of months ago, going to see him in N. Y. Perhaps I've told you about this before, if so, excuse the duplication.

I visited Dr. Dieffenbach, a Seminary classmate and frat mate, in Cambridge, Mass., during the Fraternity Grand Chapter meeting in Boston the last of December. He is the editor of "The Christian Register", a leading Unitarian weekly. You may remember that he was my predecessor as pastor of the Church of the Ascension in Pgh, from which he went into the Unitarian Church.

I have become interested in our family tree the past month or so, and have been searching available records to substantiate "Billy" Guilford's data, which I have had for about fifteen years. Somehow, I always neglected them. I have found that they were correct, altho partial, and have been getting additional dates and data. It seems conclusively proved that Sebastian Graff, coming via Rotterdam, either from Switzerland, or from Offenheim, Germany (I have found both facts given), in 1736, at the age of twenty-five, settled in Lancaster County; was naturalized in 1738 by a special act, together with a number of compatriots; and was made one of the two first buggesses of Lancaster, when it was made a borough in 1742. His son, Sebastian, became County Commissioner, was a member of the Com. of Public Safety, attended constitutional convention in Phila., and was one of the first two state senators from Lancaster Co., in 1790. Our ancestor, Andrew Graff, married Catherine Graffort, or Crawford, the daughter of Christopher Graffort, an inn-keeper. Christopher was one of the Board of Trustees of Franklin College, when it was established here in 1787, and a prominent citizen. Andrew Graff was appointed a Justice of the Peace, and later made Associate Judge, 1792 to 1811, when he resigned. The Graffs were of the Maravian Church, whose records are full of their names. Andrew had sixteen children. The Grafforts were of the First Reformed Church. Back of this church today are five flat marble tomb-stones, left from the old grave-yard, presumably because of their good condition. One of them is that of Catherine Graff, inscribed, "In Memory of Catherine Graff, wife of Andrew Graff, born March 19, 1718, died February 6, 1811." Andrew Graff's home, as I suppose you know, was along the Conestoga, just outside of the city limits, with a stone set in its front wall, bearing the inscription, "Andreas and Catarina Graff, 1767". This house was occupied by the family of my classmate Rev. Clayton H. Ranck, and is still owned by them, and in a fine state of preservation. When Fred visited us two years ago, I knew of this, of course, and took him out to see it, also to see the tomb-stone of our great-great-grandmother. Mary Magdalene ^{Graff the daughter of Andrew} called "Polly" in the marriage record of the Reformed Church, was married to Conrad Doll; Nov. 18, 1804, died, June 28, 1813, leaving the two infant children, Catherine Elizabeth (married Simeon Guilford); and Mary Ann (married Dr. William Moore). I haven't been able to find the record of the death of Conrad Doll, nor his birth, but Guilford's

data says that "Owing to the death of their parents, the daughters became orphans at a very early age. The elder, Catherine Elizabeth, was only three and one-half years old when her mother died, and about two and one-quarter years of age at the time of the death of her father. Consequently the children were taken care of by their relatives, the older daughter Catherine lived for some ~~time~~ years with their aunt, Mrs. Tressler, afterwards with her aunt, Mrs. Stoy, and upon completing her education with her aunt, Mrs. William Moore, of Lebanon, Pa., until her marriage to Simeon Guilford. The younger daughter, Mary Ann, lived with her aunt, Mrs. Moore, of Lebanon, from infancy to the time of her marriage to Dr. William Moore, of Womelsdorf, Pa."

I suppose that you have all that data. I am trying to fill in the gaps, and hope to get the story into logical and genealogical shape. Its quite interesting, and contributes to family pride. At least, I have'nt found any ~~regues~~ yet.

But the children have come home from school, and dinner is about ready, so I'll forbear.

This morning, I received Paul's clipping and program of the "Salzedo Harp Ensemble" concert, which must have been very good. I don't know Miss Elsie Schlegelmilch, but from her name she must be from this section.

Oh yes, you'll want to know about the family. Will is still at Delta, Col., where he is working this winter. Fred continues to do well at Oakmont. I visited him, Bert and Ernest, when I was out there last July. Bert is now on the legal staff of the Carnegie Steel Co., and has the prettiest little girl you'd want to see. Ernest is doing wonderfully well for the Babson Statistical Organization. Mary moved last July from Pottstown, to Rutledge, just outside of Swarthmore, her husband having been made the master mechanic at the Sun Ship-building Co., Chester.

I hope that this will make up for my long silence. I don't know whether I owe Paul a letter or not, but please believe that I appreciate very much the occasional clippings and programs, etc., and let this go for a letter to you all. We all send our love, and look forward to the time of seeing you here.

Lovingly your cousin,

912 Buchanan Ave.,
Lancaster, Pa.
Jan. 27, 1921

Bob