

COPY

9503 Meadowbrook Lane
Philadelphia 18, Pa.
December 16, 1950

Mrs. Frank R. Lillie*
5801 Kenwood Avenue
Chicago, Illinois

Dear Mrs. Lillie:

Last August I had the pleasure of visiting the stone bell-tower, lending library and Lady-garden at Woods Hole, - of which I understand you are the donor. The tower first came to my attention through an article by J. J. Galvin in Perpetual Help magazine, reprinted in Our Lady's Digest in the October, 1946, issue; but it was only last summer that I had an opportunity to visit Woods Hole.

Please accept my congratulations on the conception of the tower and garden, and on the fine taste used in executing the details.

My particular interest, about which I am writing this letter, lies in the Lady-garden. It was a great surprise to me to learn that the flowers had lost the names originally given to them in honor of our Lady, and I am eager to learn more about the names and about the circumstances of the change which took place in their usage.

I would be most appreciative of receiving any information or references you could give me on this subject, such as a listing of the former and present names, documentation, etc.. (I understand there was formerly a listing of the names on a placque at the garden, but that it was worn away by the weather. Perhaps it has been replaced by now.) Also, do you have any color photographs of the tower and garden which I could purchase?

All of my friends whom I've told about them have been highly enthused over the conception and execution, but the few black-and-white snap shots I took hardly do them justice.

Hoping that you will favor me with a reply, I remain,

Yours in Christ,

John S. Stokes Jr.

* 2/13/51 - Phone (June '50 Directory) HYde Park 3-6956

February 14, 1951

MEMO

Phoned Mrs. Frank R. Lillie this evening as a follow-up of my letter of December 16th, which was unanswered to date.

Mrs. Lillie explained that because of her extreme age and because she was an invalide she had been forced to give up all correspondence: - hence her failure to answer my letter.

After identifying myself and receiving the foregoing explanation, I told my story as follows:

1. My reading of the J. J. Galvin article in Our Lady's Digest
2. My visit to the Tower and Garden in August of 1950
3. My thought that many people, as yet unreached, would be interested in the story of our Lady's flowers
4. My proposed project of spreading the story through;
 - a) Publicity
 - b) Advertising
 - c) Sale of seeds (10 or 12 flower garden to start)

Mrs. Lillie received the news of the proposed project extremely warmly and gave me her blessing. I assured her that in any publicity which might be forthcoming she would receive proper credit as the occasion for my inspiration. She evidenced extreme humility in this respect and stated that it never had occurred to her that she had done anything original, as there were hundreds of convent gardens, etc.. I asked her where she had first conceived the idea of the Wood's Hole garden; in reply to which she stated that she couldn't remember just where it started.

In answer to my further questions about the historical material, sources of the Lady names, etc., and about the present responsibility for the maintenance of the garden, she stated that due to her age and illness she had for some time been out of touch with the garden and that many of her papers had been lost or misplaced through the years. She did however make a note of my name and address and promised to send me the list of flowers in the garden, if she could find one.

I thanked her for her kindness and praised her once again for her wonderful tower and garden. Also I promised to forward to her any publicity which we might obtain.

J.S.

5801 KENWOOD AVENUE
CHICAGO 37

Mrs. Lillie is an elderly 82 y old
body does not write letter except
to her family ^(daughters) with difficulty.

Hence the delay —
Hope this list will help you —
we have no subs.

Sincerely

Jm: (RH)

For Mrs. Lillie.

(Addressed to J.S.
rec'd 2/17/51)

3 copies of Mrs. Lillie's
list, & photo of Bell
Tower enclosed.

J.S.

COPY

9503 Meadowbrook Lane
Philadelphia 18, Pa.
April 4, 1951

Mrs. Frank R. Lillie
5801 Kenwood Ave.
Chicago, Illinois

Dear Mrs. Lillie,

I am enclosing a copy of the acknowledgement card we send to those who order our "Mary's Garden" seeds. We hope you like the little quotation on the back.

Also enclosed is a copy of a letter written by me this evening to Rev. James J. Galvin, C. SS. R., who wrote the wonderful article which first brought your Tower and Garden to my attention.

In several days we will send you a sample of Our Lady's Garden seed package, containing seed packets for ten different flowers and also an instruction leaflet. May I direct your attention to the paragraph entitled "Inspiration", in which we tell how your Tower and Garden were responsible for our undertaking this apostolic work. This paragraph is on the back of the instruction leaflet enclosed with the seed packets.

Once again may I express to you what a joy it is to work for our Lady's flowers!

Yours sincerely in Christ,

John S. Stokes Jr.

February 8, 1952

Mrs. Frank R. Lillie
6801 Kenwood Avenue
Chicago 37, Illinois

Dear Mrs. Lillie:

I am happy to enclose herewith a copy of the February issue of PERPETUAL HELP Magazine which has as its feature article, "My Garden Prays", by Rev. James J. Calvin, Editor. This article tells about our first year of attempting to interest Catholics and others throughout the United States in growing Our Lady's Flowers.

This year we are able to offer a larger garden package including packets of seeds for 25 of Our Lady's Flowers; and also a larger Stewardship booklet which gives more information about the origin of the old "Our Lady" names.

In all our work we remain constantly thankful to you for the original inspiration received from your Mary's Garden at Woods Hole. In fact, my associate in this work, Mr. McTague, and I are offering to send seeds, bulbs and plants to the Pastor and caretaker of your garden, for the purpose of restoring some of the original varieties which have died out.

We will send you samples of our new materials as soon as they are received from the printer. We also have extra reprints of the enclosed article if you would like to have some.

Sincerely yours,

May 12, 1952

Mrs. Frank R. Lillie
5801 Kenwood Avenue
Chicago 37, Illinois

Dear Mrs. Lillie:

As we understand that you do not write letters, we hope that someone in your household can help us with the following request:

Our request relates to your "Garden of Our Lady" in Woods Hole, which, as we wrote you last year, was the inspiration for our MARY'S GARDENS project which has called attention of thousands of people to the Flowers of Our Lady originally included in your garden. In addition to the PERPETUAL HELP and AMERICA articles which we sent you earlier this year, our project has been written up in OUR LADY'S DIGEST, THE LITTLE MISSIONARY, THE JOSEPHIMUM REVIEW and the Worcester Mass. CATHOLIC FREE PRESS; and all these articles give credit to your garden as our original inspiration. Another article is to appear in THE BENEDICTINE REVIEW.

In view of the proportions which MARY'S GARDENS is assuming, you can understand how valuable it would be to us if we could locate and gain access to the complete listing of flowers which is mentioned at the bottom of the smaller printed list of flowers in the Woods Hole garden, which you sent us last year. At the bottom of this list it is stated: "This is a small list of the flowers named after Our Lady and the Saints, and plants of various religious significance. They were made from English sources, because of course Catholic England inspired the interest. We found about five hundred plants named after Her, three hundred and fifty after the Saints, and about one hundred others...."

If you could lend us any research notes, correspondence, lists of flower names, lists of English religious communities from which information was obtained, etc., we would be everlastingly grateful to you, as would be many thousands of Mary-Gardeners throughout the country. (We have corresponded with Miss Dorothea Harrison of Concord, Mass. and Mr. Alfred Emerson of Chicago, but they have been unable to help us.)

Sincerely yours for MARY'S GARDENS,

John S. Stokes Jr.

May 15, 1952

Dear Mr. Stokes:

Being Mrs. Lillie's nurse for over 7 yr.
and seeing her file many times I don't
believe those flowers are listed here any place.
We have seen several articles about your
"Mary's Garden". The lists sent you several
months ago are the only ones we have of flowers.
(I will enclose 1 copy of them)

I don't know of any address in England
or any community that can furnish more
information. Mrs. Lillie at the age of 82 doesn't
remember much about this garden & has no
file about it.

Her garden is still planted each year
but by professional people & the flowers
are their contribution of beauty towards
the Bell Tower grounds.

Sincerely

Tom Cullough R.N.

Please address any correspondence to me!

May 18, 1952

Miss F. McCullough, R. N.
c/o Mrs. Frank R. Lillie
5801 Kenwood Avenue
Chicago 37, Ill.

Dear Miss McCullough:

Thank you for your letter of May 15th in answer to my recent inquiry concerning the 950 flowers of religious significance mentioned at the bottom of Mrs. Lillie's 1937 printed shorter list. Thanks also for the copy of her earlier 1932 list.

It is regrettable that Mrs. Lillie's research which uncovered the 950 flowers should be seemingly lost, and that her Woods Hole garden has been permitted to fall into the hands of persons who, although they are paid to maintain it, have little interest in maintaining the flowers called for in the original planting scheme. Certainly this is not a fitting tribute to such a noble woman! The following is typical of the comment we receive:

"I hope to get some good photos of a Mary-Garden. No, alas, not Lillie garden at Woods Hole. I was there two weeks ago (summer of 51 - J.S.) armed with color camera and others, intent on getting some really good photos. The garden has about 3 varieties of flowers, and the bell tower nearby is empty of all books. I don't know what's happened. It's a shame."

(This was from one who knew the garden in the late 30's and early 40's)

From Miss Dorothea K. Harrison of Concord, Mass., landscape architect, who spent 5 years working on the garden planting plan, and from Mr. Alfred Emerson of Chicago, whose wife (now deceased) did some of the original research for the garden, I have obtained enough information to piece together the following probable sequence of events: In the late 20's and early 30's Mrs. Lillie, Mrs. Emerson and Miss Harrison conducted ~~some~~ the original research which uncovered the 60 or so varieties of flowers incorporated in Miss Harrison's planting plan. After the garden was planted and publicised, and also as a result of further correspondence with and visits to English religious communities, Mrs. Lillie accumulated the longer list of 950 varieties which were referred to at the bottom of her 1937 printed list, but which were never actually incorporated in her garden.

I realize, of course, that all this took place some years before you joined Mrs. Lillie's household; but if you could offer me any additional "clues", hints or suggestions as to any of Mrs. Lillie's family or friends who could throw additional light on this matter, my associate, Mr. McTague, and I would be most deeply grateful to you. Miss Harrison is not able to help us, as she was familiar with only the original research. Mr. Emerson has agreed to look through his wife's papers in the attic "if he has time".

As for the garden itself, we have urged Mr. Wheeler, the professional caretaker (whom we understand is Mrs. Lillie's relative), to restore the flower varieties called for in Miss Harrison's planting plan (of which we have a copy). Mr. Wheeler has agreed, as a token recognition of the concept behind the garden, to restore five or six varieties this year; but he is at present unwilling to do more than this because it takes more thought, effort and time than the present path of least resistance of maintaining the more ordinary type of petunias and phlox colorful display. We hope that as a result of the interest we are creating in the garden, there will eventually appear on the scene a "loving caretaker" who will undertake the work devotedly, rather than on a merely professional basis with no interest in the idea behind the garden. In any case, the restoration of Mrs. Lillie's garden is one of our objectives; and with over 1,000 people growing small Mary-Gardens and several hundred thousand people informed of the Mary-Garden idea, we hope the pressure brought to bear on Woods Hole will contribute toward this objective.

In all our work we have publically stated our thanks to Mrs. Lillie for providing the inspiration for our work, and we hope that even at her advance age the thought that her garden has borne fruit all over the United States (albeit not at Woods Hole) will bring her happiness.

Sincerely, for MARY'S GARDENS

John S. Stokes Jr.

P.S. - Attached hereto is a copy of the Worcester, Mass. CATHOLIC FREE PRESS which carries on page 8 an article on Mrs. Lillie's Garden and our project, typical of those appearing throughout the country. (The photo was provided by Miss Harrison, and was taken shortly after the original planting in the 30's). J.S.

June 28, 1952

Miss F. McCullough, R. N.
c/o Mrs Frank R. Lillie
5801 Kenwood Avenue
Chicago 37, Illinois

Dear Miss McCullough:

On the weekend of July 12th and 13th my MARY'S GARDENS associate, Mr. McTague, and I plant to be in Woods Hole and Boston for the purpose of visiting Mrs. Lillie's Garden and making the acquaintance of several people in the Massachusetts area who have been intimately associated with or interested in Mrs. Lillie's Garden and/or our work.

On Saturday the 12th we will be in Woods Hole attending to the practical tasks of our trip: namely seeing Mr. Wheeler re. the possibility of setting up a program for the restoration of Mrs. Lillie's Garden according to Miss Harrison's original planting plan. Sunday morning and afternoon, the 13th, we will be in the Boston area making several visits

I am writing to ask if there is any chance that we could pay a brief visit to Mrs. Lillie in Woods Hole on the 12th (assuming that you and she are in Woods Hole at that time). We of course understand about her condition and advance age; but we assure you that the purpose of our visit would be entirely that of expressing gratitude and appreciation, and that practical details such as what is or isn't being grown in the garden at the present time would not be mentioned. Or if it isn't possible to see Mrs. Lillie, perhaps we could nevertheless make your acquaintance, thereby perhaps saving future correspondence, etc..

May I hear from you?

Cordially,

John S. Stokes Jr.

cc: Woods Hole P. O.

July 21, 1952

Miss F. McCullough, R.N.
c/o Mrs. Frank R. Lillie
Woods Hole, Massachusetts

Dear Miss McCullough:

On Saturday July 12th Mr. McTague and I had a most enjoyable and instructive visit with Father Stapleton, Mr. Wheeler and Miss Harrison in Woods Hole.

Our personal meeting cleared up a number of matters in connection with the garden which were difficult to do justice by correspondence and we were happy to find that by the end of the day we all were in complete understanding and accord.

We would like to have visited Mrs. Lillie, but we respected Mr. Wheeler's counsel against a visit at this time. We did enjoy an hour or so at Mr. Wheeler's farm.

After talking with Miss Harrason, it became clear to us that the list of old flower names about which I wrote you should be among the late Mrs. Emerson's papers. I have written Mr. Emerson again about this matter.

We wish to thank you again for sending us copies of the printed lists of flower names, and we hope you will overlook any of our misunderstandings about the garden . . . which have now been cleared up as a result of ~~per~~ trip.

Ouy

Cordially,

John S. Stokes Jr.

MARY'S GARDENS JOURNAL of John S. Stokes Jr.

August 27, 1954 meeting with Mrs. Frank R. Lillie (two days before her birthday)

Today it was our privilege to have tea with Mrs. Frank R. Lillie of Chicago, founder of the first public Mary Garden in the United States at St. Joseph's Church, Woods Hole, Massachusetts.

As Mrs. Lillie, who is in her eighties, is able to receive very few visitors, this meeting was something we had hoped and waited for since the founding of Mary's Gardens in Philadelphia in 1951.

Upon arrival at her summer home in Woods Hole, we were told by members of her family that the day after next was to be her birthday. Happily we had come bearing gifts, including a colored Swiss postcard we had found the day before in Falmouth: an illustration of the flower commonly known in the U. S. as Bleeding Heart, but known in Germany as Our Lady's Heart (Frauenherz) and in France as Mary's Heart (Coeur de Marie), according to the legend on the card. We were overjoyed to see her face light up as she asked: "Can I keep this? Are you sure you can let me have it?"

When we thanked her for the vision and her love of Mary which went into the making of the first Mary Garden, at St. Joseph's Church, she insisted, "It never occurred to me that I was doing anything unusual." As we pressed our thanks - telling her of the growth of the Mary Garden movement - she replied with equal humility, "Each of us has his opportunities."

She then reported her historical understanding that before the invention of printing the people of the countryside had no books or pictures telling of Mary. "The flowers were all they had." She believed, as our Mary's Gardens experience has borne out, that today, too, the Mary-named flowers could be a potent means of instruction . . . "especially for the children."

After a parting "God bless you" an hour later, we left with the joyous knowledge that the last gap of continuity between the founding of the first U. S. Mary Garden and the founding of the Mary's Gardens movement had been closed. Once again we turned to the future.

Undated note added later

While it was with a sense of regret that we learned the Woods Hole Garden of Our Lady was destroyed three days later by the hurricane "Cora" - the third such destruction in the 22 years since the Garden was laid out in 1932 - we were nevertheless reassured by the knowledge that the idea behind it was bearing fruit in other Mary Gardens throughout the world.

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The purpose of the Woods Hole Angelus Tower and Garden of Our Lady is to confront the average individual of the modern, secular world, who visits Woods Hole, with the impact of Tradition and the teaching in such a manner as to still him and bring him to heart, mind and soul in the hope that he will be naturally predisposed to receive, and that God will be pleased to give, the supernatural grace of conversion which will move him to visit St. Joseph's Church across the street as a first step to dedicating his life to the greater glory of God and the restoration of all things in Christ.