

The Importance of Third Cousins and Pen Pals

By Nancy McNabb

In the early 1920s, a young couple met somewhere in Brooklyn and fell in love. Perhaps in their Borough Park neighborhood, in church or at a political event. They married August 11, 1920 at the Church of St. Catherine of Alexandria in Brooklyn. They soon left on their month long honeymoon, described as an extensive motor trip which will take them to the Berkshires, White Mountains and the Adirondacks. They traveled in a wonderful car.

Giegengack—Morrison.
 Miss Margaret Morrison, daughter of Mrs. James J. Morrison, of 4712 Fort Hamilton Parkway, was married on August 11th to Augustus Giegengack, son of Mrs. Augustus E. Giegengack, of 1146 Fifty-fourth street.
 The ceremony was performed at 8.15 at a nuptial mass in the Church of St. Catherine of Alexandria, Fort Hamilton Parkway and Forty-first street, by the rector the Rev. John J. O'Neill. Miss Jane Geiegengack, a sister of the groom, was bridesmaid and Hugh Geiegengack, a brother of the groom, acted as best man.
 After the ceremony a wedding breakfast, attended by the members of the immediate families, was served at the bride's home. The young couple then left on an extensive motor trip which will take them to the Berkshires, White Mountains and the Adirondacks. They will be at home to their friends after September 15 at 4712 Fort Hamilton Parkway.
 The bride is a teacher in Public School 160 and is a member of the Women's Regular Democratic Organization of the Ninth Assembly District and of St. Catherine's Civic League. Mr. Giegengack is a member of John Hughes Council, Knights of Columbus, the Holy Name Society of St. Frances de Chantal Church, and Borough Park Post, American Legion. He is a graduate of St. Francis College on Butler street. For eighteen months Mr. Giegengack served in the A. E. F. in France. During most of that period, he was in charge of the mechanical department of Stars and Stripes, the official newspaper published by the boys in the American Army.

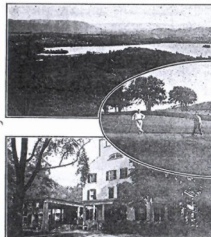


Perhaps they read the advertisement for the Maplewood while planning their trip as well as receiving a recommendation from a friend. They spent at least one night at the Maplewood which I learned from the letter the bride wrote to her Mother from there.

On the Grounds THE MAPLEWOOD Maplewood Avenue Front



PITTSFIELD is celebrated as one of the most wholesome and beautiful towns of New England. It has all the conveniences and accommodations that modern life requires: good walks, good roads, water, light and sewer systems of the best.
 There are churches of all denominations, a grand library, the Crane Museum, theatres, first-class book stores, and it is the shopping centre for a wide section.
 There are no homes in the country more charming than the homes of Berkshire, of which famed region Pittsfield is the very heart.
 It is the centre of a superb circumference of drive and view, of automobile touring or other journeying. Pittsfield is about midway between Williamstown on the north, and Sheffield on the south, while Lenox, Lee, Stockbridge, Great Barrington, Dalton, Lanesborough and New Lebanon are towns of note, and easily reached in pleasant morning or afternoon drives from Maplewood. Being the official, social and geographical centre of Berkshire—the most famous county in the United States, and known from Maine to California—Pittsfield and the Maplewood offer to guests the advantages of superior accommodations, and the best of all possible Berkshire attractions.
 Altitude of Pittsfield 1050 to 1400 feet.
 The Maplewood is situated three-quarters of a mile from the railway station. It has the most attractive grounds of any resort in New England. It has a southern exposure of 550 feet.
 In Recreation Hall, which is a building admirably adapted for such uses, attached to the office building by a short corridor.
 Open from May 27 to November 1.



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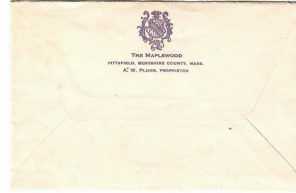
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The Importance of Third Cousins and Pen Pals Cont.


What a treasure to find a letter, written from Pittsfield in 1920 so well preserved. It takes us back to a simpler time. Imagine a modern bride communicating with her Mother while on her honeymoon! Today, it would be a text message or a call from a cell phone which would be lost or deleted. Even the groom added a message.




THE MAPLEWOOD
PITTSFIELD, BERKSHIRE COUNTY, MASS.
A. W. PLUM, PROPRIETOR

Tuesday, Aug. 17, 1920.
Dearest Mother,
We sure did some traveling to-day. 100 miles is our record. Left Keene after breakfast - rode 50 miles until dinner time then we stoped off at "Sweet - heart Tea Room" (I sent post) and had the sweetest chicken dinner. Traveled another 50 this afternoon and are to put up here for the night. Miss Curran recommended this hotel and we had to try it. We reached here about

6 o'clock washed and dressed for supper and paraded to the dining room. On the way we had to pass thru the lobby, and whom should I meet but Marguerite Halsted, one of the teachers in our school. We were both terribly surprised - It seemed so funny when she introduced me to her friend as Mrs. G. I'm not used to my new name. I got all balled up in introducing my husband.
We walked to-night some distance down the road to see Helen Dailey, and Daddy only to find they had returned to city - Stayed only a week - had intended


THE MAPLEWOOD
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staying three weeks. We'll have to find out more about this.
We rode for 38 miles to-day along the Mohawk Trail - it is wild - rode on side of mountain - with water rushing alongside down in the valley. What wonderful ride and view of whole trip.
Car is fine - faithful to the end - not even a blow out -
Remembers me to all
Love from Margart.

P.S. We're only 7 miles from Lenox - where Agnes and Jane are stoping - will see them in the morning.
I hope you're taking good care of our belongings - Any rain come in. Pack the comfortable away and cover our selves.
Lovingly,
The Newlyweds.
Margart says so much that she leaves nothing for me to say. I can only say we are both enjoying every minute of the trip & appreciate the wedding present you so cheerfully & generously donated. Making the trip just what it is. Take good care of yourself as Margart is afraid and not of Margart's love.

MISS GIEGENGACK WEDS
Miss Ruth Elizabeth Giegegack, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. David E. Giegegack of Furman street, and William Tindall George, son of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas H. George sr., of Lake Placid, were married Saturday afternoon in St. George's Episcopal Church. Rev. S. T. Ruck of Lake Placid performed the ceremony, assisted by Rev. George F. Bambach. The bride was given in marriage by her father.
Mrs. Fred Roberts Ingalls of Scotia was matron of honor. The bridesmaids were Miss Hazel Fawthrop of Jonesville and Miss Dorothy Harnischfeger of this city.
Thomas H. George jr. of Lake Placid was best man for his brother. The ushers were Henry J. Foster and Eugene E. Ryon of this city. Fred R. Ingalls of Scotia and John Mudry of Albany.
Following a reception at the General Electric Woman's Club for the families, Mr. and Mrs. George left for a wedding trip to New England and Canada. After June 25 they will be at home at 503 Union street. The bride is a graduate of Nott Terrace High School and Albany Business College. Mr. George is a graduate of Union College and is a member of Beta Theta Pi Fraternity. He is employed by A. Wayne Merriam, Inc. in this city.

Washington Girl Weds Mr. Ayling
The marriage of Miss Margret Mary Giegegack, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Augustus E. Giegegack of Washington, D. C., and formerly of Brooklyn, to Robert William Ayling, son of Mr. and Mrs. Robert de Castro Ayling of Brooklyn, took place yesterday morning at the Shrine of the Most Blessed Sacrament, Chevy Chase, Washington. The Rev. E. Carl Lyon performed the ceremony. A reception was held at the Shoreham, Washington.
The bride was attired in an ivory satin dress trimmed with imported Swiss embroidered organdy. Her fingertip veil fell from a satin cap with organdy embroidery. She carried a white satin prayer book, white roses and lilies of the valley. Miss Helen L. Scott attended as the maid of honor. Bridesmaids were the Misses Rita E. Murnane, Peggy A. Judge, Joan M. Laughlin and Ann L. Selinger. Miss Mary E. Giegegack served as junior bridesmaid for her cousin.
All the attendants wore aqua faille. Miss Scott wore a large net hat and carried tallman roses. The bridesmaids carried Brandywine roses and wore similar flowers in their hair. The junior bridesmaid had a band of tallman roses in her hair and carried the same kind of flowers.
Kenneth J. Ayling was best man for his brother. Ushering were Robert F. Carty, cousin of the bride; Robert A. Edwards, John J. Fedder and Henry J. Goubeaud.
Mrs. Ayling's father is the former Public Printer of the United States. The bride is a graduate of Georgetown Visitation Convent, Washington, and the College of New Rochelle. The bridegroom was graduated from Fordham University.
After a motor trip to St. Island, Ga., the couple will live in Bellerose.

The Importance of Third Cousins and Pen Pals Cont.

So, how did I come to possess this wonderful letter? From my third cousin, Patti, the granddaughter of the letter writer. She found it among her great grandmother's precious papers. So, how does one even know their third cousin? Through relationships between first cousins and second cousins.

First, let's look at how the family came to America. Johann Martin Giegengack and his family landed at Castle Garden in New York on September 14, 1872 aboard the Deutschland sailing from Bremen, Germany.

NAME	AGE		SEX	OCCUPATION	The Country to which they are really going	The Country of which they intend to return to	D. OF THE VOYAGE
	Yrs.	Months					
Adrian Schaefer	16		M	Barber	Germany	U. S.	
Mr. Hiltberg	26		M				
John	17		M				
August Cordes	31		M				
Carl	26		M				
John Giegengack	25		M	Barber			
Wilhelm Giegengack	19		M				
Ab. Hiltberg	17		M				
Paul Giegengack	57		M				
W. Giegengack	18		M				
Walter Giegengack	187		M				
Ed	50		M				
Carl	33		M				
Christina	21		F				
Christina	19		F				
Walter	14		M				
Christina	14		F				
Christina	16		F				
Ed	19		M				
Henry Wagner	47		M	Barber			
Carl	33		M				
Mr.	9		M				
John	16		M	Printer			
Richard Giegengack	19		M				
Richard Giegengack	20		M	Butcher			
Richard Giegengack	5		M				
Anna Schaefer	56		F				
Mr.	4		M				
Oliver Rose Giegengack	19		M				
Carl	16		M				
Mr. Fischer	18		M	Barber			
Carl Giegengack	31		M				
August	25		M				
Carl	3		M				
Mr.	21		M				
Carl	3		M				
Anna Giegengack	57		F	Barber	U. S.		
Mr. Giegengack	48		M				
John Giegengack	19		M				
Carl Giegengack	18		M				
August Giegengack	48		M				

They were from Kleinschmalkalden, which is located in the former East Germany. They belonged to the Lutheran church there. Karl Augustus age 16 on the ships' log remained in New York. He married Mary Fitzgerald, and converted to Catholicism. They had 9 children. Gus, their second child was born in 1890.

David, named Ed on the ships' log married Katharina Kalbert in NY in 1874. They left the city before 1876 to try their hand at farming, moving to Schodack, NY where they had 8 children. David, their 5th child was born in 1884. They belonged to a Dutch Reformed church. Obviously, the brothers stayed in touch so at some point, Gus and David, first cousins connected.

Now, back to the newlyweds and a bit more about the groom. His name was Augustus or Gus Giegengack. You can Google him to learn more about his very successful career in printing. In 1934, He was named United States Public Printer by President Franklin Roosevelt. He was in charge of the Bureau of Printing and Engraving. How fitting to have a letter from the person who managed the printing of US stamps and money. Although he and my Grandfather grew up in very different circumstances, (See WWI Draft cards), Gus in the city, Dave on a farm in Schodack, they were close cousins often visiting each other through the years.

The Importance of Third Cousins and Pen Pals Cont.

During World War I, Gus served in Paris, France on the staff of the Stars and Stripes newspaper. David worked at General Electric in Schenectady. He was considered an essential worker in the Motor Department so was not drafted in the Army. They were too old to serve in World War II as you can see from their draft cards.

REGISTRATION CARD—(Men born on or after April 28, 1877 and on or before February 16, 1897)

SERIAL NUMBER 1. NAME (Print) ORDER NUMBER
 U 1130 Maria E Giegengack

2. PLACE OF RESIDENCE (Print)
 39 Surman St. Schenectady N.Y.

3. MAILING ADDRESS
 39 Surman St. Schenectady N.Y.

4. TELEPHONE 6-4307 5. AGE IN YEARS 57 6. PLACE OF BIRTH Pennsylvania

7. NAME AND ADDRESS OF PERSON WHO WILL ALWAYS KNOW YOUR ADDRESS
 Mrs. Tracy A. Giegengack (Dona) Wife

8. EMPLOYER'S NAME AND ADDRESS
 Gen. Elec. Co.

9. PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT OR BUSINESS
 1 River Rd. Schenectady N.Y.

I AFFIRM THAT I HAVE VERIFIED ABOVE ANSWERS AND THAT THEY ARE TRUE.

D. S. S. FORM 1 (Revised 4-1-42) 16-21630-2 David E. Giegengack

REGISTRATION CARD—(Men born on or after April 28, 1877 and on or before February 16, 1897)

SERIAL NUMBER 1. NAME (Print) ORDER NUMBER
 U 3243 Augustus Edward Giegengack

2. PLACE OF RESIDENCE (Print)
 3016 Tilden ST NW Washington DC.

3. MAILING ADDRESS
 Same

4. TELEPHONE Wo 7147 5. AGE IN YEARS 52 6. PLACE OF BIRTH New York City

7. NAME AND ADDRESS OF PERSON WHO WILL ALWAYS KNOW YOUR ADDRESS
 Mrs. Margaret Giegengack

8. EMPLOYER'S NAME AND ADDRESS
 U.S. Government Printing Office

9. PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT OR BUSINESS
 North Capital and G St NW

I AFFIRM THAT I HAVE VERIFIED ABOVE ANSWERS AND THAT THEY ARE TRUE.

D. S. S. FORM 1 (Revised 4-1-42) 16-21630-2 A. E. Giegengack

Both had only daughters. Margaret Mary, named after her mother but called Gig and Ruth, my mother. Gig grew up in Washington, DC attending private school. My mother grew up in Schenectady, attending public school. They referred to each other as favorite second cousins.

Patti and I became pen pals via Christmas cards. Neither of us have children, so we have that in common. We have not seen each other too often over the years, but we feel a closeness to each other.

We can learn so much from all of this. If you try, you can always find common ground with another person, be it a friend or relative. Different socio-economic circumstances, different political parties, different churches and different educational backgrounds. None of that mattered. How refreshing in this day and age when only differences seem to matter. Of course, when you share the name of Giegengack, that alone will draw you closer to others with the same name.

Through genealogy, both in the US and Europe, it has been established that everyone named Giegengack or Gigengack in the entire world is related.. This was proven after the wall came down and research was conducted in the former East Germany. For more information about the family go to: <https://history.giegengack.nl/>

Also see pictures of Gus and Margaret, perhaps at the political event and Dave and Tracy's 50th wedding anniversary picture.

