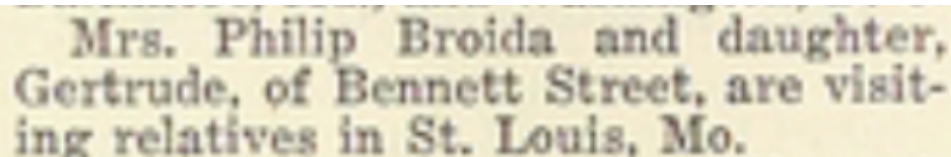


# Travel Tuesday: Gertrude Broida and Mother Visiting St. Louis in 1919



Mrs. Philip Broida and daughter, Gertrude, of Bennett Street, are visiting relatives in St. Louis, Mo.

Gertrude Broida (later Cooper) visiting St. Louis, Missouri with her mother, Bess Dorothy (Green) Broida, 25 July 1919. From the *Pittsburgh Jewish Criterion* of that date, with kind permission to publish.

[Broida Family](#) (Click for Family Tree)

Gertrude Belle Broida was not quite eight years old when her mother, Bess Dorothy (Green) Broida, took her to St. Louis, Missouri, on a visit from their home in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. They most likely took the train to St. Louis, and arrived at beautiful Union Station. We can imagine that Gertrude and her mother would have stepped down from the train and walked from the dozens of tracks inside the station toward the Grand Hall. Family may have met them at the train- back then, one could actually go all the way to the train even if not a passenger- or waited patiently in the Grand Hall for them to arrive. All were probably dressed beautifully- back then, one dressed up to travel, and since both families worked mostly in the clothing industry, their clothes were likely the latest fashion and impeccably tailored.

Bess and Gertrude might have been met by their Broida family. Bess' husband and Gertrude's father, Phillip E. Broida, had quite a few family members in St. Louis. His father, John "Zelig" Broida was 62 in 1919, but had been listed in the St.

Louis City Directory in 1917. We don't know if he was still in St. Louis or had already immigrated to Israel, but perhaps Bessie and Gertrude visited to see him before he left. There were quite a few Broida cousins in St. Louis, too.

Bessie's Green family may have met them at the station as well. Bessie's father, Abraham Green, and her mother, Rose (Brave) Green, made St. Louis their home. Additionally, Bessie's sisters lived in St. Louis, and two of the three had families of their own, as did her brother Herman Green.

We can only imagine the joy Bessie would have felt as she hugged her sisters, Estelle (Green) Ledwidge, Ann (Green) Stampfer (or had she married Charles White by that date?), and Mary Green. They all would have commented how big each of the children had grown since their last visit.

Gertrude would have been thrilled to see her older cousin (Sarah) Jane Ledwidge, who would have been 12 in 1909. Jane's little sister Helen D. Ledwidge, lovingly known as "Sis" her whole life, was only about three months older than Gertrude. Esther S. Stampfer would have been 11. The four cousins would probably have linked arms and marched down the walkway to the Grand Hall, probably giggling and skipping all the way. The family was always very close.

Union Station was, at one time, the busiest and largest train station in the *world*, and once they all reached the Grand Hall, it would have been quite impressive to a little girl. (It was impressive even into the 1960s and 1970s.)



1909 Postcard of the Grand Hall of Union Station in St. Louis, Missouri.

As the group exited the station, they would have waited for a streetcar if one of the St. Louis families did not have their own car. Looking back, Union Station was as beautiful from the outside as the inside:



Postcard of exterior of Union Station in St. Louis, Missouri.

Herman L. Green was the lone brother in the family, and he had a son, Preston M. Green, who would have been just 4 that year.

(His son Harold Green would be born in 1921.) Abraham and Rose Green, Bessie's parents, would most probably thoroughly enjoyed having all their children and grandchildren around them. The families likely had a wonderful visit. Parting when Bessie and Gertrude were scheduled to return to Pittsburgh must have been painful for all.

Of course, we do not know if all the details described above are totally true. But this little snippet in the Society section of the *Pittsburgh Jewish Criterion* allows us to imagine what life was like for Bess (Green) Broida and Gertrude Broida as they travelled to St. Louis for a treasured visit.

#### **Notes, Sources, and References:**

1. *Jewish Criterion*, 25 July 1919, Society Section, Pittsburgh Pennsylvania, Vol. 51, No. 22, Page 16. The Pittsburgh Jewish Newspaper Project, posted with kind permission. [http://doi.library.cmu.edu/10.1184/pmc/CRI/CRI\\_1919\\_051\\_022\\_07251919](http://doi.library.cmu.edu/10.1184/pmc/CRI/CRI_1919_051_022_07251919).

*Click to enlarge any image. Please contact us if you would like an image in higher resolution.*

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## [Family Recipe Friday: The Cooper Family Oatmeal Cookies](#)



[Lee Family, Cooper Family, Green Family, Broida Family](#) (Click for Family Tree)

The 'new' tradition of brides to have a dessert table with favorite family recipes is just lovely! For those who are privileged to contribute a dessert, baking becomes another chance to contemplate the new life of the dear bride and groom. The sweet becomes more than just flour, sugar, and vanilla- it is full of love, hopes, and dreams for the new couple. And maybe a few tears add just a touch of salt...

Following is the recipe for oatmeal cookies made by Bess Dorothy (Green) Broida (1891-1978) and passed down to her daughter Gertrude (Broida) Cooper (1911-2011), who passed it to her children; they passed it down to their own progeny and married-ins. It is a delicious cooky that can have added flavors as desired: nuts (cashews are very good and unexpected), chocolate chips, peanut butter chips, toffee, raisins, even butterscotch chips (a definite favorite). The recipe makes at least 4 dozen cookies, or up to 7 dozen, depending on the size of dough dropped onto the cooky sheet. (Using scoops or "dishers"- sometimes known as 'ice cream scoops' with their spring-loaded sweeper- will make cooky size consistent.)

Cookies can be baked for as little or as long as desired- if you prefer just barely baked and chewy, bake for less time; hard and crunchy might take another minute or two.

A bonus of this recipe is that the dough can be frozen. Lay some dough across the bottom of a resealable bag and form into a roll. Roll up the bag and label; freeze. Rolls can also be made on wax paper and then multiple rolls put in a bag. Small amounts can be cut from a roll to have just a few fresh-baked cookies quickly- 7 dozen fresh-baked oatmeal cookies can be dangerous to have in the house! And we won't talk about the friends in college who headed straight for our freezer to cut off chunks of this dough and eat it still frozen... Definitely not recommended because of the raw eggs but hey, we were all immortal then!

Enjoy this beloved family recipe!

### **The Cooper Family Oatmeal Cookies**

2 cups granulated sugar

2 cups brown sugar, packed

1 cup solid white shortening

1 cup butter or margarine, softened

4 eggs

2-3 teaspoons vanilla

2 teaspoons baking soda

$\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon salt

3 cups all-purpose flour

6 cups old-fashioned oats/oatmeal

Optional:  $\frac{1}{2}$  – 2 cups of

chopped nuts OR

raisins OR

candies such as M & Ms OR

chips: chocolate, peanut butter, butterscotch, or Heath toffee OR

any combination you desire!

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.

2. Cream together sugars, shortening, and butter until no

granules of sugar can be seen and color lightens slightly.

3. Add eggs and mix well; add vanilla and mix in thoroughly.
4. Combine baking soda, salt, and flour.
5. Add flour mixture to creamed ingredients and mix thoroughly.
6. Stir in oatmeal.
7. Dough may be divided and optional ingredients added as desired.
8. Drop by teaspoonfuls onto ungreased cooky sheet or parchment paper.
9. Bake about 13 minutes for a #50 scoop, depending on how crispy or chewy one desires the cookies.

#### NOTES:

Dough may be rolled into logs and frozen. Slice while still frozen for baking, which may take a few minutes longer than thawed dough.

*Makes 4-7 dozen cookies depending on size*

#### **Notes, Sources, and References:**

1. Photo from our favorite flower girl, and recipe passed down through the family.



*Click to enlarge any image. Please contact us if you would like an image in higher resolution.*

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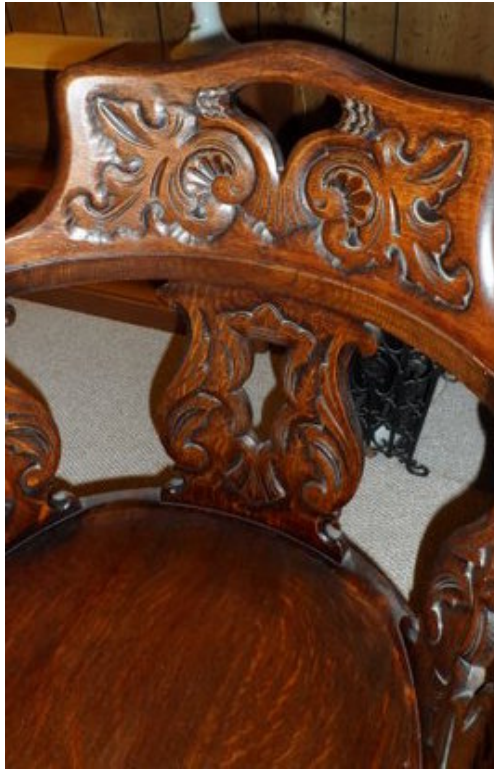
**[Sentimental Sunday: John Broida's Chair?](#)**



Likely John Broida's  
chair, brought to US  
from Eastern Europe.

[Broida Family](#) *(Click for Family Tree)*

This chair, thought to have belonged to John/Zelig Broida, has been passed down in the family, and it is now needing a new home. The current owners are downsizing, and need to find a new family member to appreciate its history- ASAP. Are you a descendant of John Broida (1857-1938)? Please contact us through the blog if you are interested in owning this chair.



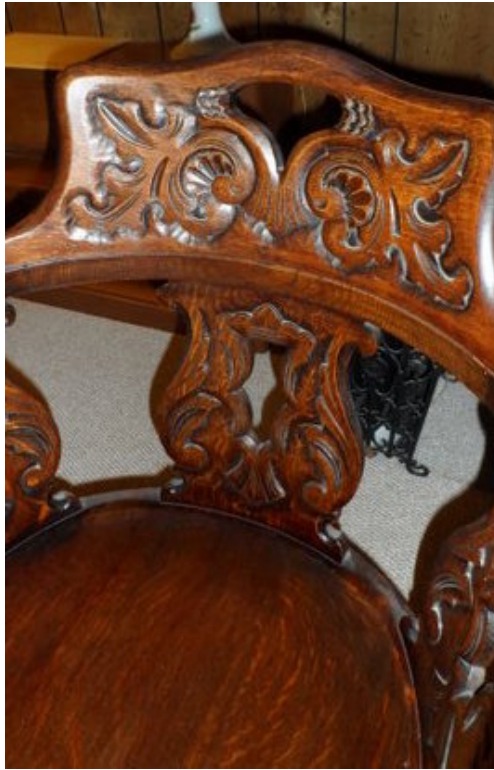
Likely John Broida's chair, brought to US from Eastern Europe; close-up of carved backrest.

The story is that the chair was given to a non-Broida family member, and Bess Dorothy (Green) Broida (1891-1901), married to Philip E. Broida (1887-1952), one of John's sons, took it back and gave it to the current owner, a Broida descendant. She was adamant that the chair needed to stay in the Broida family. Unfortunately we do not know much more about the history.



Likely John Broida's chair, brought to US from Eastern Europe; detail of carved backrest.

John Jacob or Zelig, whose surname originally was Karklinsky, changed his name to Broida after arriving in the United States about 1874. John and his wife Sarah Gitel Frank (1859-1901) were originally born in Lithuania. At that time, Lithuania was a part of Russia, and the town he came from was called Eišiškės  
(AKA [Polish](#): *Ejszyszki*, [Russian](#): Эйшиўки/Eishishki, [Belarusian](#) : Эйшыўкі/Eishyshki, [Yiddish](#): עישישוק/Eyshishok). The Jews were the largest percentage of the population, and it was a thriving town, or Jewish 'shetyl.'



Likely John Broida's chair, brought to US from Eastern Europe; close-up of carved backrest.

It has been suggested that this chair came from Eastern Europe with John Broida, so this chair may have originally come from Eišiškės. If he immigrated to the US about 1874, the chair would be at least 142 years old!

Please do let us know if you have an interest in this chair- it would be a shame for it to go outside the family.

#### **Notes, Sources, and References:**

1. Eišiškės– <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eišiškės>
2. See Eliach, Yaffa. *There Once Was A World: A 900-Year Chronicle of the Shtetl of Eishyshok*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1999 for more information about the town and

population through the years before WWII.

3. We have quite a few posts about the Broida family published in the past- just click on "Broida" under the "Families" heading on the left side of the blog, or use the search box to learn more about John and Gitel and their children.

*Please contact us if you would like higher resolution images. Click to enlarge images.*

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## **[Veteran's Day: V-Mail from Gerald Broida](#)**



Ray (Rachelle Cordova) and Jerry (Gerald) Broida, probably mid-1940s. Family photo.

[Broida Family](#) *(Click for Family Tree)*

Today is Veteran's Day, a day to honor and appreciate the sacrifice of our veterans (and their families). Those who put their life on the line in the military allow us to wake up every morning in a free country and with freedoms that much of the world can only dream about. We need to shake the hands of our service members and say "thank you" to them whenever we meet them, and our country needs to take care of them when they come back home. (Today would be a good day to write your representatives in Congress and tell them you want better health care, pay, and benefits like the GI Bill-an improved version- for our military.)

Gerald D. Broida, son of Theodore "Dave" Broida and Lucy M.

Shatzke, enlisted 4 November 1941 in the Air Corps, Regular Army at Camp Roberts in California. Jerry Broida had worked at a Skelly gas station as a teen in Colorado, so he worked in a transportation group as a Lieutenant. Jerry was 23 years old when he enlisted, and he may not have been overseas before. World War II was a far-ranging war, and Gerald got to see quite a bit of the world during his tour of duty.

Jerry corresponded with his aunt and uncle, Bess Dorothy Green and Phillip Edwin Broida while he served in World War II. He travelled to quite a few countries, and wrote about China and Italy in the two surviving V-Mails we are posting today in honor of Jerry's service.

The notes are an interesting glimpse into life in the 1940s, and during war. Of course, they were censored, so he couldn't say much about strategic events, but he did manage to tell a bit about his impressions of people and countries to his aunt and uncle who had not travelled out of the country (as far as we know).

A bit of background:

"V-mail" is short for "Victory Mail." Traditionally, a soldier, sailor, or airman would write a letter, post it via air mail, and it would have to take up valuable military cargo space on an airplane to get back to the US. This process was expensive, ended up taking quite a bit of time, and was therefore not useful for urgent messages. There was also the security risk of a note containing sensitive military information that would put our troops in danger.

Eastman Kodak had developed the British "Airgraph" system in the 1930s to reduce weight and size for mail transported by air. It was realized that the Airgraph was a faster, better way for our military to send letters home. The thumb-nail sized images on light-weight film saved thousands of cubic feet of shipping space, and literally tons of weight. Just one

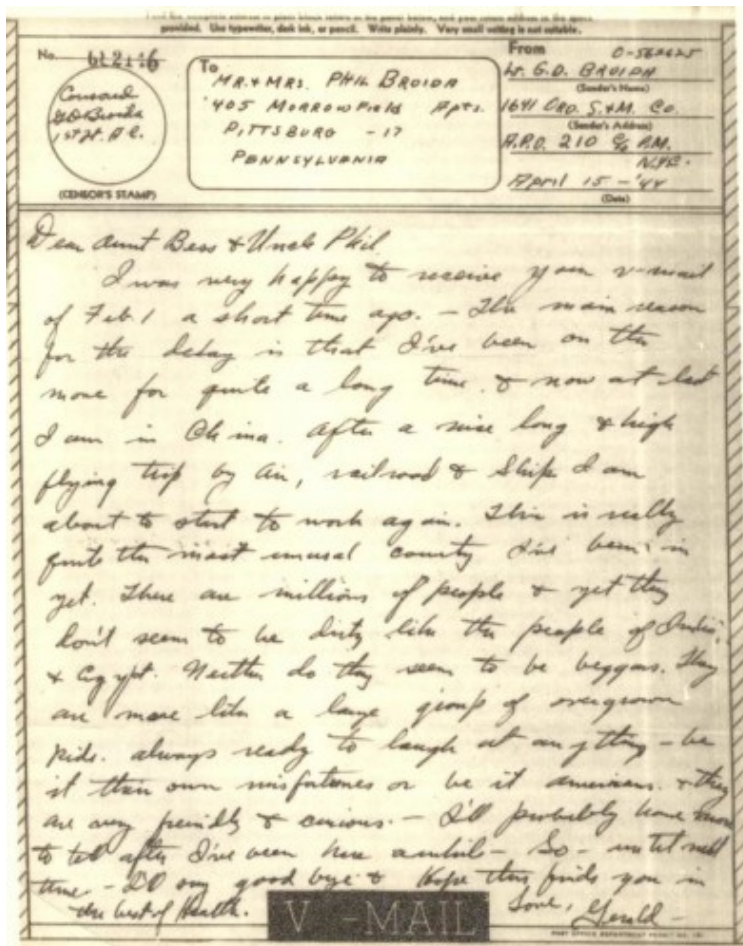


mail bag of microfilm could hold the equivalent of 37 mail bags, or about 150,000 one-page regular letters! The weight went from over 2,500 lbs. down to just 45! That would save fuel as well.

Working with v-mail was one of the many ways that women at home provided support for our military during war.

V-mail stationery was available for the folks back home to use too. It was not used as much by civilians, because, as one writer said, "You can't smell the perfume..."

Here are the two v-mails we have from Gerald Broida, and transcriptions:



V-mail from Lt. Gerald D. Broida, 15 April 1944, to Phillip and Bess (Green) Broida of Pittsburg, Pennsylvania.

Transcription:

Censored

G D Broida

[1st Lt?] A. C.

To Mr. & Mrs. Phil Broida

405 Morrowfield Apt. 3

Pittsburg -17

Pennsylvania

From

0-562625

Lt. G. D. Broida

1641 Ord. S. & M. Co.

A.P.O. 210 c/o P.M.

N.Y.C.

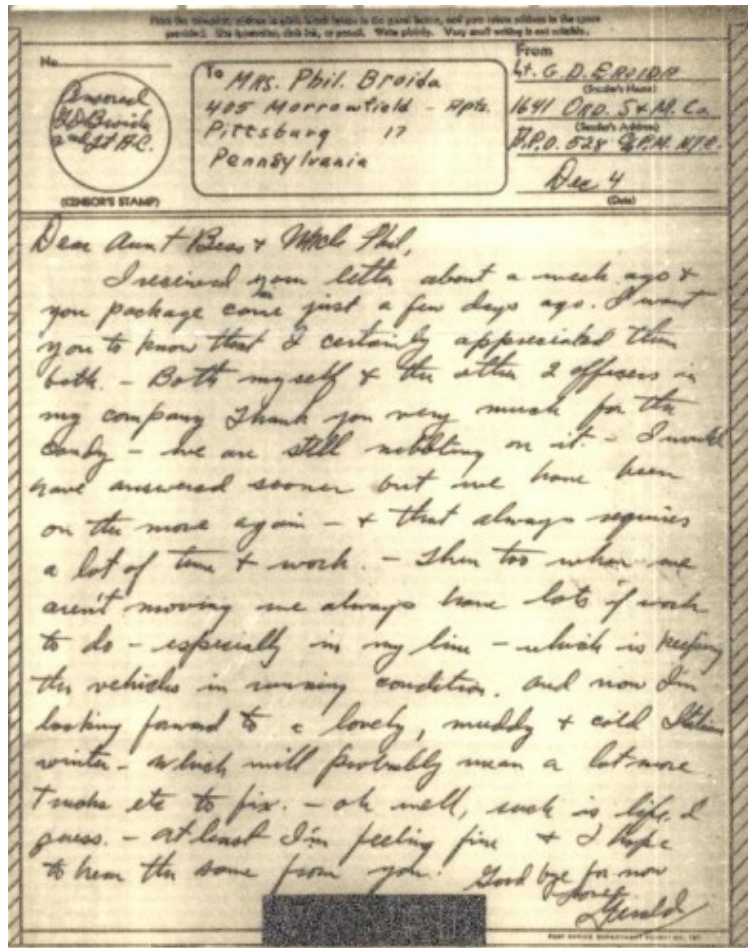
April 15- '44

Dear Aunt Bess & Uncle Phil,

I was very happy to receive your v-mail of Feb. 1 a short time ago. -The main reason for the delay is that I've been on the move for quite a long time & now at last I am in China. After a nice long & high flying trip by air, railroad & ship I am about to start to work again. This is really quite the most unusual country I've been in yet. There are millions of people & yet they don't seem to be dirty like the people of India & Egypt. Neither do they seem to be beggars. They are more like a large group of overgrown kids, always ready to laugh at anything- be it their own misfortunes or be it Americans & they are very friendly & curious.-I'll probably have more to tell after I've been here awhile- So- until next time- I'll say good bye & Hope this finds you in

the best of health. [V-MAIL] Love, Gerald

The following letter does not include a year, but was sent on 4 December; it could have been 1942 or after, as that was when v-mail use began for our troops.



V-mail from Lt. Gerald D. Broida, 4 December 194?, to Phillip and Bess (Green) Broida of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Censored  
G D Broida  
[2nd Lt ?] A. C.

To  
Mrs. Phil Broida  
405 Morrowfield Apt. 3

Pittsburg -17  
Pennsylvania

From  
Lt. G. D. Broida  
1641 Ord. S. & M. Co.  
A.P.O. 528 c/o P.M. N.Y.C.

Dec 4

Dear Aunt Bess & Uncle Phil,  
I received your letter about a week ago & your package came just a few days ago. I want you to know that I certainly appreciated them both. – Both myself & the other 2 officers in my company Thank you very much for the candy- we are still nibbling on it. I would have answered sooner but we have been on the move again- & that always requires lot of time & work. Then too when we aren't moving we always have lots of work to do- especially in my line- whihc is keepong the vehicles in running condition. And now I'm looking forward to a lovely, muddy & cold Italian winter- which will probably mean a lot more trucks etc to fix.- oh well, such is life, I guess. – at least I'm feeling fine & I hope to hear the same from you. Good bye for now  
Love Gerald

#### **Notes, Sources, and References:**

1. "How V-mail Changed War Communication" from the National World War II Museum in New Orleans- <http://www.nationalww2museum.org/learn/education/for-students/ww2-history/take-a-closer-look/v-mail.html>

2. "Before Email, There Was V-mail" by Jesse Rhodes, 2008-  
<http://www.smithsonianmag.com/smithsonian-institution/before-email-there-was-v-mail-31784014/?no-ist=>
3. "You'll write, he'll fight!" Victory mail online exhibit with some interesting sidenotes -  
<http://postalmuseum.si.edu/victorymail/> (Check out "Operating v-mail.")
4. V-mail from Family Treasure Chest.

*Please contact us if you would like higher resolution images. Click to enlarge images.*

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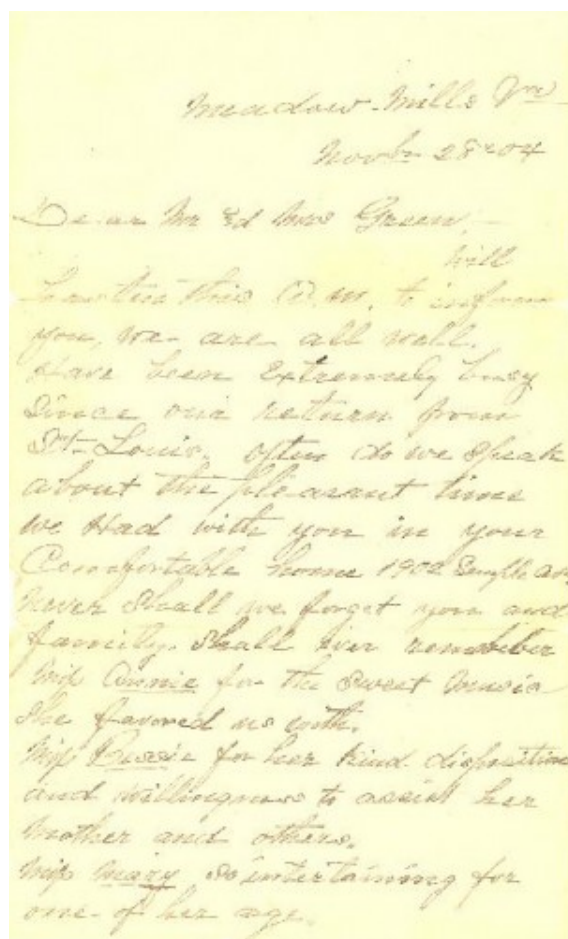
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# Amanuensis Monday: 1904 World's Fair Visit- W. H. Spiggle Letter to Abraham and Rose Green



Meadow Mills Pa  
Nov 28 1904

Dear Mr & Mrs Green,

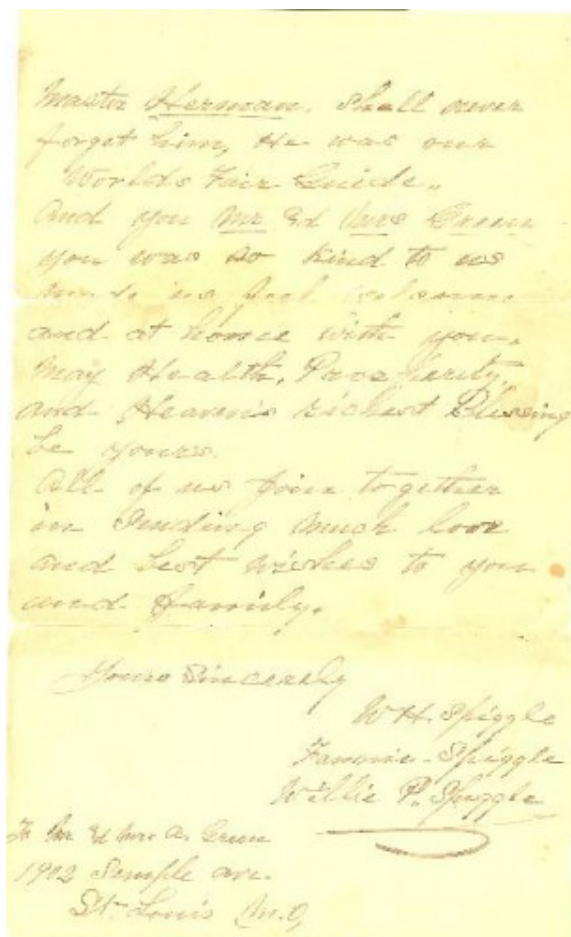
Will  
Ladies this P.M. to inform  
you we are all well,  
I have been extremely busy  
since our return from  
St. Louis, often do we speak  
about the pleasant times  
we had with you in your  
Comfortable Home 1902  
I shall never forget you and  
family, shall ever remember  
Miss Annie for the sweet music  
she favored us with.  
Miss Annie for her kind disposition  
and willingness to assist her  
brother and others.  
Miss Mary so interesting for  
one of her age.

November 28, 1904 Letter to  
Abraham and Bessie Green  
from W. H., Fannie, and  
Willie P. Spiggle, page 1  
of 2. (Click to enlarge.)

[Green Family, Broida Family](#) (Click for Family Tree)

There were probably many thank you notes such as this one written in 1904- many families journeyed to St. Louis, Missouri, to stay with family and friends so they could visit

the Louisiana Purchase Exposition. This letter, from W. H. Spiggle, Fannie Spiggle, and Willie P. Spiggle of Meadow Mills, Virginia, to the Abraham Green family, gives us a glimpse into the personalities of the Green family children.



Master Herman, shall never  
forget him, he was our  
World's Fair Guide.  
And you Mr Ed (Mrs Green)  
you was so kind to see  
me in a hotel, in a room  
and at home with you.  
May the health, Peace, purity,  
and Heaven's richest Blessing  
be yours.  
All of us join together  
in sending much love  
and best wishes to you  
and family.

Yours sincerely  
W. H. Spiggle  
Fannie Spiggle  
Willie P. Spiggle

To the W. H. Green  
1904 Sample card.  
St. Louis Mo.

November 28, 1904 Letter to  
Abraham and Bessie Green  
from W. H., Fannie, and  
Willie P. Spiggle, page 2 of  
2. (Click to enlarge.)

Miss Annie Green was 19, Miss Bessie Green 12, Miss Mary Green 8, and Master Herman Green, the Spiggle's World's Fair Guide, just 10, in 1904. Abraham Green and his wife, Rose Brave Green were both 38.

We have been unable to learn much about the Spiggle family, and how they were friends of the Greens, but have only done some cursory searches.

Transcription (spacing has been added for clarity):

Meadow Mills Va

Novbr 28th -04

Dear Mr and Mrs Green-

Will

hasten this A.M. to inform

you, we are all well.

Have been extremely busy

since our return from

St. Louis. Often do we speak

about the pleasant time

we had with you in your

Comfortable home 1902 Semple ave.

Never shall we forget you and

family. Shall ever remember

Miss Annie for the Sweet Music

She favored us with.

Miss Bessie for her kind disposition



and willingness to assist her  
Mother and others.

Miss Mary So entertaining for  
one of her age.

Master Herman. Shall never  
forget him, He was our  
Worlds Fair Guide.

And you Mr and Mrs Green  
you was so kind to us  
made us feel [pleasure?]  
and at home with you.

May Health, Prosperity,  
and Heaven's richest Blessing  
be yours.

All of us join together in Sending much love  
and best wishes to you  
and family.

Yours sincerely

W H. Spiggle

Fannie Spiggle

### **Notes, Sources, and References:**

- 1) Family Treasure Chest.
- 2) Transcription by post author.

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