

*This is better than original.
Save - good family history
from first-hand witness.*

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Dear "Applegate Girls" and William Patten:

I have written this letter in my head a dozen times and discarded every idea. By all rights this should go to Bill, but I have unintentionally offended him in some way, and he no longer returns acknowledgement of my notes to him. I don't know what I did wrong, and it hurts to loose an old friend, especially now that I am so old myself, and most of my friends gone.

Further, it is so hard for me to write a letter of condolences. I have spent 50 years in the Nursing Profession and while I can very kindly and gently help families to adjust to a forthcoming loss or the final act, I am finding I can't manage myself. I lost my (2nd.) husband in the fall of 1980; he was so dear and kind, and my loss is so appalling to me that at times I just feel I can't shape up.

Your mother, Margaret was my friend. Julia Ann (Gordon) Tracy sent me your letter. She is a relative of yours, and my long time friend, although she is 7 years older than I and was 7 years younger than Margaret. When I was "home" in 1979 for my 50th. Alumni celebration, I asked about Margaret and Marian. I asked the wrong people; no one knew. I should have asked Julia Ann when I visited her in the hospital, but it was so distressing to me to see her that I made my visit short. I did, however, make a special trip to Hanover Cemetery to see Dr. Patten's grave.

All my family were close to the Pattens. Dad was a farmer and carpenter, but the two men were good friends. Mother was a friend of Julia (she always called her "chums" by their maiden names, and it was hard for me to learn they had another name when I met them.) To this day when I write Julia Ann, I throw a fit when I can't find her name under the "Gs". Mother also dated Hiram Patten. They both "taught" together, which in her terminology, meant at the same time.

Dr. Patten delivered all Mother's children (at home; came by horse and buggy), my brother and sister. Margaret was always kind to me; Marian was my age, and Bill(y) was my brother's age. It was Margaret who showed me through the new home; she was so proud of it. Once, while visiting from California, I walked down to see Marian when she lived in an apartment on Main St.

Let me tell you a little something about Julia, your grandmother. She was frail in appearance, although a lovely face. She declined in health. Dr. Patten later attended my mother when she developed the same symptoms. At that time he told Mother that "If I had known then (about the thyroid deficiency and the medication) I could have saved Julia." He took over the medical management of my mother, and she lived to an old age. I remember accompanying my father to the Doctor when he had accidentally sliced into his left biceps; he tied a dish towel around his arm and went to Dr. Patten. He refused even a local anesthetic, just pulled out his pipe and bit on the stem while the suturing was going on.

Dr. Patten was always so very kind to me. On another trip home, while nursing my father who was dying, my mother and I heard the 'phone (party line) ring in the middle of the night. We both listened in. It was Jim Kemp, 2 houses down from Mother's (this was after they had left the farm and moved to town). Jim was speaking to his daughter and said "I think Ada's going." I slipped on a robe, took my Blood Pressure kit and walked down. After examination, I called and reported to Dr. Patten. He told me exactly what to do. I didn't expect to see him, but in 20 minutes here he walked in, cleaned and combed and shaved and he had to be past 70 at that time. He spent some time at the bedside. What shocked me so was when Jim said: "Hey, Doc, hand me that fly batter." By this time I had such awe of a doctor I would never have said that to anyone!" When Doctor Patten died I wrote a letter to the Shelbyville paper, and mentioned this incident. I stated that very, very few doctors deserved a halo, but

but that I felt the only doctor I had ever known or worked with who deserved one was Dr. Patten. I still feel the same, after working with hundreds more.

We were all devastated when the fire occurred. But the family moved in with Aunt Becky Allendar, on Main St., and I remember going to a birthday party for Marian there. Marian always let me play with her beautiful doll.

Dr. Patten always encouraged me, but he was not around to share in my pride when I finally at age 45 finished my BSN, went on in 3 years to get a M.S. in Education, went on & completed requirements for a life-time teaching certificate K-14 in California. I spent most of my professional life in Administrative Nursing and teaching; was at one time Assistant Professor at a southern California University. I think, too, he would have approved of the heavy and sorrowful load I carried with 2 husbands who were so very ill, and who expired; of the way I came home from Philadelphia to nurse my father, and of the care I took of my mother when she visited me in California and was informed of a terminal malignancy.

Your grandmother was such a lady. She was the same age as my mother, Julia Ann's mother. She passed along wonderful dispositions and high moral standards to her children. I feel that your mother must have done the same for you, otherwise you all could not have paid such a beautiful tribute to her.

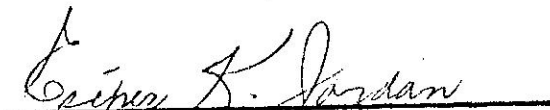
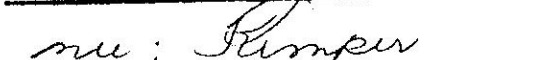
I live in the Hill Country. If I had known Margaret was not too far from me, I would have invited her here. We came here in 1972. Or, I could have stopped to see her when we made several trips back to New Mexico from whence we had come. I note that Ann, Sue, and Grace all live in Texas. Please ring my bell someday. You all are welcome. Everyone eventually winds up visiting the Hill Country, so please do come.

My brother still lives in Shelbyville, and my sister in Arlington. She does a lot of good deeds for Julia Ann. I am very fond of her children, although I have not seen the older daughter in years.

It breaks my heart now since I am old, and not so rugged, when old friends depart. I worked up until a couple of years ago, and I cried when I had to quit. I am not living a very productive life because of a handicap and unreliable health.

I think I've not done a very satisfactory project with this letter in trying to relive some of the past for you all. I am sure Margaret must have lived a very exemplary life and must have had a great faith in God. I am also just as sure she passed some of her innate goodness on to all of you. Be assured that God is good, and that your mother is now under the shelter of His wings.

With love and deep sorrow,


me: 

I enclose a Carbon for Bill if you think appropriate.