

1846 continued.

History of the Lapen
8th Edition

" Nov. 12th
" 19th
" 26th
" Dec. 3rd
" 10th
" 19th
"

Preface

Preface to this series of
letters by

John P. Pendergust
124 Strand Road,
Sandymount
Dublin.

August 15th 1890.

My dear Frank,
your regularity in
writing every Sunday to your Mother
during her lifetime and to me
since her death in February
1885 is now I hope rewarded
by such a record as few possess.
From the time you left
this house for Dresden, there
to continue for an entire year
to perfect yourself in German
you

~~My dear mother~~

have been in the habit of sitting
down every Sunday in your
absence from home to indite
a letter to home.

You yourself may probably
have forgotten that you worked
in such and such a place;

But here is almost day by day
certainly week by week that which
will recall them to your
memory.

To your children it will be a
proof of all you have travelled
all you have done.

It is a pity that the several
volumes of letters during your
earlier years were not bound up
as well and as artistically
as the Seven Volumes I

now transmit comprising
all your letters between
1874

1874 and 1889, a period
of fifteen years.

But you have got these
earlier letters, or at all
events I sent them to you
shortly after your mother's death
in February 1875;

Your letters were her greatest
comfort in your absence.

She used to say (in allusion to
your sleeping in the front room
which was only divided by a partition
wall from ours)

"I like to know I have him just
behind my head" - for the
bed where Uncle Frank is dying
was your's just behind your
mother's and my head.

It was an amusement to me
when I went into the Entrance
hall at the postman's knock

to sing out to your mother,
"Nothing — but only a letter
from Frank" — the thing
she most coveted.

She would say, "Now I am
happy for two days to come,"
for when two days were over she
would begin to think of all the
evil chances that might befall

you.
In her letters to me on Friday you
will find how her Father (George
Emory of Androp near Longhought in
the county of Armagh) thought
there never was so fond a
mother.

And she in some
of those early letters asks me
"Did I think she was exceedingly
fond beyond all other mothers of
her son?"

I have sent Mary, your wife,
a volume of these letters, beginning
in 1843 and ending (if I remember

rightly) in 1850.
She told me with pride, of
a beggar woman, as she was
walking with you along the
sea road to Merion, she
heard her say
"God bless that mother and
son!" as if she was moralising,
and it escaped her involuntarily,
she remembered it often with
unalloyed satisfaction.

Your marriage was a great
source of joy to her; for she could
not conceive how you could get
acquainted with any decent people.
One day you spoke in your
letters of the beauty of a girl that
opened some gate for you as
you were driving.

Your Mother said to me
"Do you believe Frank will
think of marrying that girl?"

When you had engaged
yourself, (to my great regret)

to your cousin Caroline Irwin, of
Loughgilly Rectory, in the county of
Armagh, there came a letter to
your Mother from her eldest
sister, Elizabeth Irwin, the mother
of Patrick to say that Caroline
was going to be married to the
Rev. Mr. Finlay, of Ballymoyer
parsonage near Manor Hamilton
in the county of Armagh, while
your Mother was in tears; while
I laughed with joy.
She thought only of your feelings
as she knew they would be wounded
for the moment: I looked to
the future and rejoiced.
We were at breakfast together
at Oxford when this letter was
delivered, I being then engaged
with the Rev. Dr. Russell, President
of Maynooth on the Fort Papers
in the Bodleian Library there.
When

When Mary your wife miscarried
of her first child it was an
inexpressible grief to her:
the more so as it was probably
the result of the visit you and
your wife paid to us here in
this house in the year —.

Sarah White our little
red haired Presbyterian girl
told me after your Mother's
death she admired and wondered
at your Mother's resolution in
going through her daily work
of weeding the garden, thus
to try to occupy her thoughts,
and Sarah White saw that
she was often weeping while
she worked.

In these letters you will also
have a record to prove to your
sons how hard you worked
for them.

One of

One of your hardest trials must
have been the suddenness of
your separations from your
wife and family.

In it would not be to wait,
the business must be accepted
at once, often nearly by return
of post, or rather an answer
to be sent by telegram.

And thus you would be obliged
to part and go hundreds of miles
away from your happy home
to be divided from it for months
and months.

Nothing seems truer than what
once you wrote,
An Engineer's profession
according to these separations

Your Mother did not enjoy
the happiness of seeing you and
you

your son Joppy here in 1884.
I can scarcely conceive the
overpowering delight it would
have given her.

May you have, my dear
Frank, all that happiness
you so well deserve.

Your affectionate Father
John P. Prendergast

St Francis Xavier Prendergast,
National City,
California.