

Paints Own Christmas Cards For His Worldwide List

A family whose peregrinations have carried its members to most of the civilized countries of the globe, and some that are not so civilized, would be expected to compile a Christmas card mailing list.

The Wells family of 179 Belleville Ave., Bloomfield, with members living in such divergent places as Karachi, Pakistan; Saigon, Indochina, and New Haven and Westport, Conn., has compiled a modest list of 700 names.

The patriarch of the clan, Franklin Wells, now a semi-re-

tired architect, did more his share to build the list. in Beirut, Lebanon (then part of the Turkish Empire), Princeton, N.J., and elsewhere. Educated and the former head of a YMCA for foreign travel in Peking, China, in post-Boxer rebellion days, Wells is now a shirk the issue and buy a set of cards in the corner store.

Paints Own Cards

Since he painted his first Christmas card in 1912, Wells has made 125 cards. Beginning in 1919 he married Sophie Dou-

glas, and their home-made card became a family project.

Since then the couple has brought up four daughters, and Mrs. Wells is now in New Haven awaiting the arrival of their 10th grandchild.

The 1956 edition of the Wells holiday greetings is on its way to such far-flung places as Brazil, Japan, Lebanon, Indochina, India, South Africa and most of the countries of Europe. The cards serve a three-fold purpose. They bring greetings, reports on the whereabouts of family members—including announcement of new additions—and usually carry a brief philosophical message.

On Museum Board

Wells, an accomplished amateur artist who is a member of the board of the Montclair Art Museum, sits down to his drawing board each year before the holiday season, pushes plans for houses out of the way and produces either an appropriate oil painting, water color, ink drawing or montage of all three.

The motif may vary from a patchwork quilt design to a



SEASON'S GREETINGS—Franklin Wells of Bloomfield displays some of Christmas cards he has designed over many years for delivery to family and friends in many lands.

Newark News Photo



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scene from one of the countries in which a family member currently resides to that of a zodiac wheel with a family member representing each sign. It is reproduced by linoleum block, zinc cut, photo offset or half tone printing in postcard size.

"The worst part of the whole job," Wells says, "is stamping and addressing all those darn envelopes."

Descendant of Bradford

The family penchant for travel is traditional and dates back at least as far as the 17th Century, when William Bradford, a direct ancestor of Wells, disembarked from the Mayflower and became the first governor of Massachusetts.

Wells was born in 1889 while his father, Dr. Franklin Wells Sr., was attempting to set up the first women's hospital in Beirut. The customs of the country doomed the venture to failure. Dr. Wells later taught medicine for several years at the American University in Beirut.

Wells ended most of his travels when he settled down to the family man's life after returning from China. But his four daughters uphold the burden of the migratory tradition.

Mrs. Timothy Pfeiffer has just returned from Karachi with her husband, who served there with the U.S. information service after stints in Lebanon, Turkey and Puerto Rico.

Daughter in Saigon

Mrs. Gay Mize and her husband, David, who is serving in Saigon with the U.S. Information Service, have been in Indochina for two years after spending three years in Beirut.

Daughter Lydia, who now lives in Westport, served with the Waves in Hawaii and met her husband, Michael Horton former Paris Tribune staff member, while she was working for the U.S. State Department in Paris. The couple also lived in Switzerland before returning to this country.

The only stay-at-home is Mrs. Penelope Butler, who settled down in New Haven after a few side trips to Europe during her college days.