



CAROL STUART WATSON

*The Beall-Dawson House, c. 1815  
home of the Montgomery County Historical Society  
103 W. Montgomery Ave., Rockville, Maryland*

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## LILLY MOORE STONE, FOUNDER OF THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

by Mary Charlotte Crook

Wife, mother, grandmother - business woman, churchwoman, club woman - genealogist, historian, writer - Lilly Catherine Moore Stone, founder of the Montgomery County Historical Society, was all of these and more in her 98-year lifetime. In a life with more than its share of sadness and hardship, her strength of character and firm belief in God supported her. Her great interest in history and never-ending quest for knowledge left an indelible mark on her beloved Montgomery County.

Lilly Catherine Moore was born on July 20, 1861, the second child of John Duke of Wellington Moore and his wife, Sarah B. Coltman. The senior Moores and Coltmans lived in the District of Columbia where John and Sarah were married November 25, 1858. The marriage ceremony took place at the bride's home and was performed by an ex-chaplain of the U.S. Senate. The newlyweds settled in Montgomery County on a

107-acre farm which John and his father had purchased in 1853 and which was located south of River Road and west of Seven Locks Road.<sup>1</sup>

John D.W. Moore's father, John Moore, was born near Old Fields in Prince George's County, Maryland, but grew up in the family of a Captain Everhardt near Lovettsville in Loudoun County, Virginia. He was a captain of Virginia troops in the War of 1812 and took part in the Battle of North Point where the British troops who had captured the city of Washington were beaten. John Moore married Mary Mann of Loudoun County and made his home on Jefferson Street in Georgetown. He was a contractor for the C&O Canal Company. Because of the financial difficulties of the Company, he accepted payment of about \$50,000 in bonds; the worthless bonds are still in the possession of his descendants and are regarded as historic souvenirs.<sup>2</sup> Another form of payment for his services was the grant, on December 23, 1852, of the Three Sisters Islands in the Potomac River. Those now-famous rocks above Key Bridge were, in those days, islands large enough to be enjoyed as picnic sites. One hundred years later Lilly sold the islands to the Federal Government for \$1200.

This John Moore's father, Lilly's great-grandfather, was also John Moore. He came to the colonies at the age of 14. At 18 he entered the Revolutionary Army and served throughout the seven years of the war in the Seventh Maryland Regiment as a corporal.<sup>3</sup>

Lilly's mother, Sarah Coltman, was the daughter of Charles Lilly Coltman who was superintendent of buildings and grounds during the administration of President Andrew Jackson. The Coltman family had come to Washington from Philadelphia when the government offices were transferred to the new Federal City in 1800. Coltman also manufactured bricks in his brickyard at Vermont Avenue and Thirteenth Street, now Logan Circle.<sup>4</sup>

John and Sarah Moore had four children. The oldest, William, died at the age of three in November 1862. Lilly was the second child. Her brother, Lewis Willoughby Moore, was born December 20, 1863, and a sister, Clara May, was born February 26, 1867.

The children attended the local public school, Friendship School, on Persimmon Tree Road just up the hill from the Conduit Road (now MacArthur Boulevard). Friendship School was typical of the schools of that time - a one-room log cabin with one teacher for grades 1 through 8 and heat from a wood stove. Even with eight grades there were at most only 25 children in the school. One of the favorite pastimes of the children at Friendship was to slide down the red clay bank beside the road in front of the school. Children were taught at an early age to appreciate books. Thus books were frequently treasured gifts for both birthdays and Christmas. Lilly also enjoyed horseback riding and sleighriding in the winter. After grade school, Lilly attended a "finishing" school, the Greenwich Female Seminary in Greenwich, Virginia.

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1. Montgomery County Deeds, Liber JGH 2, f. 243.

2. The Sunday Star, July 8, 1917.

3. Ibid.

4. The Sunday Star, February 23, 1919.

In 1879 John D.W. Moore purchased 118 1/2 acres from Charles Dodge and his wife, Elizabeth Davidson.<sup>5</sup> This land was south of Moore's farm and contained a large frame house built in 1864 by Dodge, who was a Navy paymaster. The home, named Glenmore, was reached by a long lane from Persimmon Tree Road. The Moores moved into this spacious home with its 14-foot ceilings. In the front of the house are small rooms on each side of the entrance hall. Back of the room on the left is a large living room, and directly ahead from the front entrance is the dining room. The kitchen is in a wing to the right. Upstairs are five bedrooms, and in its early days there was a widow's walk on the roof.



Glenmore, circa 1910

Religion played a dominant role in Lilly's life. Her parents were members of the Georgetown Presbyterian Church. The family would visit the senior Moores in Georgetown on weekends so as to be able to attend church on Sundays. Other Presbyterians in the neighborhood traveled to Rockville and Bethesda to church. Because travel by horse and buggy was slow and the distances to church were great, the Presbyterians in the vicinity of Persimmon Tree Road met at the home of Mrs. M.C.H. Carter on January 5, 1874, to constitute the Hermon Presbyterian Church. Thomas Dowling gave 3/4 acre of land on which to build the church, and the group raised

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5. Montgomery County Deeds, Liber EBP 20, f. 22.

\$1000 and borrowed \$500 more.<sup>6</sup> John and Sarah Moore and Lilly were among the founding members of Hermon Church. John Moore was the first elder and remained in that capacity, serving as clerk of the session until his death in 1914. The picturesque white frame church, which looks today much as it did when it was built, became and remained a center of Lilly's life. She played the organ there for 50 years, taught Sunday School, and served dinners at her home to raise money for the church. In 1930 she was ordained an elder of the church, probably the first woman elder in the Washington Presbytery.<sup>7</sup>

Among the neighbors of the Moores was the family of Philip Stone. The Stones lived at Stonington, which was located about two miles north of the Conduit Road on what is now Avenel Farm. Stonington was built in 1820 by Philip's mother, Anna Garnette Stone, an English woman who was a school teacher. She had four sons, Philip, John, Frank, and Charles. Charles went to Mississippi, but the other boys stayed at home and worked to clear a tract of 600 acres, which they farmed. Philip married Olivia Dunbar Magruder, the daughter of Lloyd Magruder. Philip and Olivia had eight children; their third child, Frank Pelham Stone, was born at Stonington on January 13, 1846. Frank became a civil engineer. In the early 1870's he made a survey from Upper Marlboro to Richmond for the Pope's Creek Railroad. After this assignment, he contracted to build the Cincinnati Southern, a railroad running through the mountains from Cincinnati to Chattanooga. He then went to Mexico where he was involved in mining and milling.<sup>8</sup> After his return to Montgomery County, he began a long courtship of Lilly Moore. They were married December 21, 1892, at Hermon Church; Lilly was 31 years old, and Frank was 46. Their first child, Frank Pelham Stone, Jr., was born August 26, 1895. The little boy died two weeks later. A friend thoughtfully copied the poem below to ease the sorrow of Lilly and Frank. Its thoughts must have meant a lot to Lilly for she kept it all her life.

#### My Little Angel

I have one little Angel waiting for me  
On the beautiful banks of the crystal sea  
Not impatiently waits my darling there  
For smiles light up his brow so fair  
And his little harp rings out so clear  
So soothingly sweet to the listening ear  
And he basks in the smile of a Saviour's love  
Who so early called our child above.

I have one little Angel waiting for me  
On the beautiful banks of the crystal sea  
Forever free from sorrow and pain  
Spotless and pure from all earthly stain  
Never in erring paths to rove  
Safe in the bosom of Infinite Love  
Evermore, evermore walking in light  
My beautiful Angel robed in white.

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6. Rev. George S. Duncan, Outline History of Captain John, Hermon and Cropley Presbyterians Churches in Montgomery County, Maryland (Washington, D.C.: Printing House of James G. Wood, 1926), pp. 5-7.
  7. The Gaithersburg Gazette, November 14, 1974.
  8. The Sunday Star, June 10, 1917.

I have one little Angel waiting for me  
On the beautiful banks of the crystal sea  
When my weary heart is throbbing with pain  
As I fain would clasp my darling again  
I look away from this earthly strand  
To the beautiful fields of the "Better Land"  
And I think of my Angel waiting me there  
And offer to God a thankful prayer.

I have one little Angel to welcome me  
When I too shall stand by the crystal sea  
When the Great Refiner his image may trace  
In the heart He has changed by His saving grace  
And in robes of Christ's own righteousness drest  
My soul shall seek the home of the Blest  
On the beautiful banks of the crystal sea  
My darling still waiting shall welcome me.

Frank and Lilly's second son, John Dunbar Stone, was born January 7, 1897, at Glenmore. Farming provided the family's livelihood. Glenmore Farms, in addition to producing crops, was a popular place for Washington residents to board their horses.

Although farm life was busy and demanding, social activities had their place in the community. One of the neighborhood activities of the 1890's was the Fortnightly Club. Typical of the times, club meetings were not only an occasion to visit but also an occasion for broadening one's knowledge. The Club met in the afternoon at the home of a member during those times of year when the weather permitted travel. Meetings featured a formal program on a subject selected in advance, usually an author or a foreign country. The topic of a meeting at the home of Mrs. Frank Stone on July 2, 1896, was Cuba. The minutes of the meeting describe the program as follows: "Mrs. Darius Clagett had an article on the political aspects of Cuba. Mrs. Frank Stone had a paper on the products and national resources of that country. Mrs. Pratt then gave us some music, Lives Dream Waltz. Mrs. Russ read a paper entitled The Cuban Situation and Miss West gave us Gen. Daniel Sickel's able article The Cause of the Cuban Revolution. Mrs. Pratt played Twinkle twinkle little star and Mrs. Saunders read a Cuban story entitled The Race for Freedom. Mrs. Frank Stone played Borders of the Rhine and Miss West closed the program by reading us her paper which was much enjoyed." The hostess had some conundrums about Cuba for the members to guess while refreshments were being served. Mrs. Pratt was the wife of the local doctor who, with Dr. George S. Duncan, the minister of Hermon Church, were among the male members of the Club. Mrs. Russ's husband operated a gold mine on land that had been part of Stonington. Mrs. Saunders, the author's grandmother, lived on a farm near the Stones, and Mrs. Clagett lived in Potomac.

In 1904 Lilly Stone bought 150 acres from Joshua Offutt's estate.<sup>9</sup> This property included an old stone house built in 1767 by Samuel Brewer Magruder, a lieutenant in the Revolutionary War. The three-story house, still standing just above the intersection of River Road and Seven Locks Road, is built of local stone and its walls are 20 inches thick. After fire caused by lightning had destroyed the stables at Glenmore Farms, Lilly and Frank Stone moved into the old stone house, which they had extensively remodeled, in 1909. They named the house "Stoneyhurst."

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9. Montgomery County Deeds, Liber JLB 180, f. 195.

During World War I Dunbar Stone joined the Army and was sent to France. While he was in France, his father suffered a stroke, which left him paralyzed and blind. Lilly was forced to run the farm alone. At her request Dunbar was discharged and returned home. But he found his father's condition so depressing that he went to Arizona where he worked for relatives in a copper mine.

After a long illness, Frank Stone died on February 1, 1921, at the age of 75. Lilly persevered in running the farm until a few years later when fire struck again. Two barns, filled with the year's harvest, burned. It was a difficult time for Lilly - should she continue to try to earn a living by farming or sell the farm and move to the city as many friends and neighbors were doing at the time? Her own words best describe her momentous decision: "But I was born on this farm and was attached to this country. I was desperate and prayed to God for guidance, but had no thought of the quarry, when a gentleman I had never seen rode up to me on the lawn and said, 'Mrs. Stone, you have fine stone on your place. If you will have it quarried and delivered, I will buy it.' . . . It seemed a stupendous undertaking for me, but I hired some men and bought a second-hand truck guaranteed for two years, and started in. Before the two years expired I ordered new trucks."

Thus, in her early sixties, when most of us think of retirement, Lilly Stone began her career as a business woman. Before long Dunbar returned home to help his mother in the business. Quarrying was not a totally new venture in Lilly's family. Her father and grandfather had operated a small quarry on the farm on which she was born. The Moores were granted permission to construct and operate a railroad through the farm of Gustavus White to the C&O canal for the transportation of stone, wood, and other produce. The agreement contained a provision for termination by the Moores "in the event of their quarry being exhausted."<sup>10</sup> Under this agreement the Moores built a tramway to the canal. Mules pulled the tram cars loaded with stone to the canal where it was loaded onto canal boats destined for Georgetown. Stone quarried at that time was used for walls and steps in Oak Hill Cemetery in Georgetown and Congressional Cemetery in the District of Columbia.<sup>11</sup> While the quarry was never completely abandoned, the business proved to be unprofitable, and John D.W. Moore turned to farming for his livelihood.

Lilly's quarrying venture in the 1920's proved far more successful. The first quarry she opened was not the quarry her father had operated but a new one on the Stoneyhurst property. This quarry, on River Road just west of Seven Locks Road, is still in operation. In time three more quarries were opened along Cabin John Creek north of River Road. Stoneyhurst stone is of two kinds - gneiss and mica schist - both of which are hard, durable rock close to the granite family. The stone is of eight distinct colors with variations. Stone from Stoneyhurst has been used for the Mount Vernon Memorial Highway bridges in Virginia, the floor of Crypt No. 2 in the Chapel of Aramathea in the National Cathedral, the Jewish Community Center near Rockville, the birdhouse and other structures at the National Zoo, Tyson's Corner Shopping Center, the Bethesda Post Office, and many other public and private buildings. Because of its great beauty it is also found in homes as far away as Texas, in the War Memorial in Richmond, in an apartment house in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, and in a hospital in Cincinnati. At the base of the famous flagpole at Valley Forge are the seals of the original thirteen colonies, each mounted in native stone; the Maryland seal is mounted in Stoneyhurst stone.

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10. Montgomery County Deeds, Liber JGH 3, f. 87.

11. Bethesda Journal, May 19, 1939.

As Lilly's business grew so did her family. On May 28, 1925, Dunbar Stone married Katherine Pool at her home, 3993 Grant Road, in the District of Columbia. Dunbar and Katherine had three children: Frank Pelham Stone, Lilly Catherine Stone, and John Pool Stone. The family lived with Lilly in the old house at Stoneyhurst. In 1937 the home at Glenmore, which had remained in the family's possession, was extensively remodeled. A small wing was added on the left to balance the kitchen wing on the right, stone veneer was added to the entire house, and the one-story front porch was replaced by an impressive entry with two-story columns. For a short time the house was rented to a member of the German Legation. When he and his family were recalled to Germany on the eve of World War II, Lilly and her family moved back to Glenmore to stay.



Glenmore, circa 1950

Lilly's life was not restricted to her family, her home, and her business. In 1909 she had joined the Daughters of the American Revolution as a charter member of the Janet Montgomery Chapter, which was founded in February and confirmed in April of that year. In 1914 she presented a paper on General Braddock's march through Maryland to Fort Duquesne before the Maryland Historical Society - the first time a woman had spoken before that Society.<sup>12</sup> She also joined the Daughters of 1812 and the Woman's Club of Bethesda.

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12. The Record, Montgomery County, Maryland, October 12, 1950.

In her 50 years as a member of the DAR, Lilly served the Janet Montgomery Chapter in many capacities, including regent, chaplain, and historian. She undoubtedly enjoyed most her selection as chairman of the historical places committee. Because of her great interest in history, she was head of the committee to mark graves of Revolutionary War soldiers and pre-Revolutionary or historic homes. Among the places she had marked were the Potomac Methodist Church (1916); Locust Grove, the home of Samuel Wade Magruder (June 29, 1940); her own former home, Stoneyhurst, the home of Samuel Brewer Magruder (October 19, 1940); and Montevideo, the home of John Parke Custis Peter (May 22, 1948). On all except the last of these occasions she wrote and delivered the principal address summarizing the historical significance of the site. At Montevideo the historical sketch she prepared was delivered by her daughter-in-law Katherine.

In 1936 Lilly was asked to bring the Montgomery County flag to a State DAR conference in Baltimore. She soon found that the County had no flag and determined to do something about it. The DAR Chapter appropriated \$50, and the Flag Committee, composed of Lilly Stone as Chairman, Mrs. B. Peyton Whalen and Mrs. Hewitt Griggs Robertson, set about to design a flag.<sup>13</sup> Their design was approved by the County Commissioners in 1936 and by the State Legislature on June 1, 1937. Several years were required to have copies of the flag made, and it was not until 1944 that dedication exercises were held to present the county with its own flag for the first time. The flag has recently been redesigned, but without Lilly Stone's initiative Montgomery County might never have had a flag.

Mrs. Stone's activities in the DAR and her own historical and genealogical research had brought her into contact with many people who shared her great interest in history. Since she felt some of these people should join together to preserve memories and records and to make the history of Montgomery County known to the public, she invited those particularly interested in County history to Glenmore on June 29, 1944. Twenty-three people attended this organizational meeting, including Senator George L. Radcliffe, President, and Mr. James W. Foster, Director, of the Maryland Historical Society.<sup>14</sup> After the meeting Mr. Foster wrote: "We doubt very much whether there is another man or woman in the state of Maryland who could have done what you did on Thursday evening in assembling so many persons and entertaining them and finally getting an organization started. It was a remarkable achievement to have twenty-four persons come out on a hot evening, travelling a considerable distance in a time of gas shortage." At a second meeting on August 23, 1944, the Montgomery County Historical Society was formally organized with Lilly Stone as its first president, an office she held for three terms. At the end of her third term as President, the nominating committee reported: "Unfortunately our able President, who has so well directed and administered the Society for the past three years, advises that she can no longer devote the necessary time and energy to the duties of that position. We have reluctantly accepted her decision, but we feel that her valued services in the founding and development of the Society merit continued recognition. Your committee, therefore, respectfully proposes the creation of the office of Honorary President and that it be gratefully tendered one of Montgomery County's leading historians, Mrs. Lilly C. Stone." The proposed actions were taken at the next meeting of the Society.

Other organizations accorded her similar honors. She was made honorary chaplain of the Maryland State DAR in 1944,<sup>15</sup> and on June 14, 1948, she was selected to be honorary vice president of the Woman's Club of Bethesda.

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13. Montgomery County Sentinel, December 29, 1955.

14. Martha Sprigg Poole, The Montgomery County Historical Society, 1944-1969.

15. The Tribune, Bethesda, Maryland, July 14, 1944.





Lilly Catherine Moore Stone

Lilly Stone personally operated the stone quarries for 30 years before she finally turned the day-to-day operation of the quarries over to her son Dunbar. Dunbar and his wife, Katherine, were active in the business until he was almost 70 years old, when their son John took over. John had been fascinated with the quarries from the time he was a little boy. At the age of 10 he worked as a water boy for about 10 cents an hour. After a summer of work, he had saved enough money to buy a pair of candlesticks to give to Hermon Church in memory of his older brother, Frank, who had been killed in action at the age of 19 on the island of Okinawa on June 9, 1945.<sup>16</sup>

Lilly remained active until the mid-1950's. Even after she turned the operation of the stone quarries over to Dunbar, she visited the quarries once a week to

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16. The Gaithersburg Gazette, October 3, 1968.

be sure the accounts were in order. Her interests in the DAR and the Montgomery County Historical Society never waned. In fact, in 1952, when she was 91, Lilly called together at her home members of the Society who were actively interested in history - as differentiated from members who attended meetings and paid dues but were not interested in active involvement. The group, first known as the "Historical Projects Committee" and later as the "Historian's Active Group," erected road markers, planned pilgrimages to historic sites, and began publication of The Montgomery County Story.<sup>17</sup>

Lilly Stone spent the last five months of her life at the Congressional Manor Nursing Home where she died on February 8, 1960. She was buried at Oak Hill Cemetery, where her husband and parents had been buried. Appropriately her portrait hangs in the Beall-Dawson House, headquarters of the Montgomery County Historical Society. The artist, Naomi Rabb Winston, said of her contact with Mrs. Stone during the painting of the portrait: "I have grown to love her for her courtesy, hospitality, ready wit, interesting conversation, love of beauty, and grand cooperation."

After the death of Lilly Stone, Dunbar and Katherine Stone lived at Glenmore, ran the stone quarries, and carried on the family tradition of service to Hermon Church. They died in recent years and were buried in the little cemetery surrounding the church. The home at Glenmore now belongs to Lilly's granddaughter and namesake, Lilly Stone Lievsay.

The main quarry of the Stoneyhurst Quarries is still in operation, producing 17,000 tons of stone annually under the direction of grandson John Pool Stone. The quarry now covers three acres and is 114 feet from its highest point to the bottom. Whereas in 1854 John Moore had made provisions in case his quarry was exhausted, it is estimated today that there is still 7,000,000 tons of stone in the ground.

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The assistance and cooperation of Lilly Stone Lievsay, John Pool Stone, and Mrs. Jesse T. Price of the Janet Montgomery Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution in the preparation of this story is gratefully acknowledged and sincerely appreciated.

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17. Poole, op. cit.