

Alf Pilkington's letter to New Zealand - July 8, 1906



City Hall, 425 Westminster Ave. COVA reference no AM54-S4- City P47

Alf Pilkington and family fled the [San Francisco earthquake and great fire of April 8, 1906](#). By July 8, Alf has re-settled in Vancouver as the city accountant, and writes to his uncle in New Zealand, giving a picture of his life and work here.

This transcript has been made from a photocopy of the original document, which had been damaged.

[A. J. Pilkington letter \(photocopy\)see or download](#)

Sixth Avenue East,

Mount Pleasant,

From A. J. Pilkington Vancouver, B.C.,

Canada.

8<sup>th</sup> July 1906.

Dear Uncle James.

Since my last to you in which I described how we had been burnt out or shaken out in San Francisco, I am sure you would be feeling anxious to know how I have been getting on, so am writing to let you know that I have settled down here. I just managed to catch last mail with a letter to Ernest telling him that I had made a start here, but I know you would sooner hear direct. The position I have secured is that of Accountant to the "City of Vancouver" at what they would call in Auckland the "City Council". It is a good billet with a good salary, and plenty of chances of advancement, especially as the City is growing very fast. The population at present is between 50,000 and 60,000, not quite as big as Auckland, but at present rate of progress there should be 100,000 inhabitants in four or five years. I made a start on the 17<sup>th</sup> May, seven weeks ago, and have got a solid grip of everything now, and find the position first class. Office hours are 9 to 5, with an hour and a quarter for lunch, 12 to 1:15, and as we are living within 10 minutes tram ride from the City Hall, I have plenty of time at home, far more than in Sydney. Also I have a free pass on all the City tram lines, so can get around without any trouble or expenses. We have been fortunate enough to rent a nice little house of seven rooms, with electric light, hot water fittings, etc., and a lawn for Frankie to play in, so I reckon that we have been very lucky, considering that houses are very scarce here for renting.

As far as I can see there is very little agriculture this side

of the Rocky Mountains, but I have not had any chances yet of getting out of the town. Certainly there is no farming in sight of Vancouver, and will not be until the heavy bush is cleared. When I learn the country a little more I will write to you more fully about the country.

It is summer here now, and the weather is very much like Auckland summer without any wind. In winter I am told it rains oceans, six months without a stop – in fact the older residents are said to be web footed.

Got a severe nervous shock from the earthquake and has not recovered yet, but Frankie and I are both first class. We are expecting a letter from you soon, and I will then write again. We hope everybody is well, and that Nelson is quite better. The photos from Harold have not yet arrived – we are expecting them any time now.

Did I mention that your photo was in the Gladstone Bag that we saved from the fire? Hoping to hear from you very soon.

I remain, with love to all,

Yours Alf