

Mennonite Library and Archives  
Bethel College  
North Newton, Kansas

## Selma Ellenberger Papers 1900-1963

### Overview of the Collection

ID: MS.384  
Extent: 4 cu. ft.  
Names of creators: Ellenberger, Selma Emilie (1885-1963)

### Biography of Selma Ellenberger (copied directly from obituary in MWR)

Selma Emilie Ellenberger was born June 25, 1885 at Monsheim, Rheinhessen, in Germany, the youngest of six children of the Mennonite pastor, D. Adolf Ellenberger and Anna Marie Landes Ellenberger. She passed away at Halstead, Kan. on Dec. 19, 1963 at the age of 78 years and six months.

When she was four years old her father passed away and her mother took the family to live with relatives in Gelchsheim, Bavaria, near Wurzburg.

Early in life she learned to know Jesus Christ as her best friend and a Saviour who forgives sins. Each Sunday she and others were given catechism instruction by her uncle John Landes. Later she received baptism preparation instruction from the elder of the Giebelstadt-Wurzburg Mennonite Church, John Hunsinger, and was baptized by him upon her confession of faith on May 31, 1903.

In 1907 she and her mother went to live with her oldest brother, Heinrich, in Wurzburg. When her mother passed away in 1911, Selma came to America to make her home with her sister, Elisabeth, Mrs. Jacob Mueller, on a farm near Halstead, Kan. Another sister, Lydia (Mrs. Samuel Mueller), also lived in this community. Later she moved with the family to Hamshire, Texas and Deer Creek, Okla., then back to Halstead in 1927.

When she first came to America, Selma transferred her church membership to the Garden Township Mennonite Church, then to the Deer Creek Mennonite Church. From 1927 until her death she was a member of the First Mennonite Church of Halstead.

In addition to her mother and father, one sister Emma and two brothers, Heinrich and Adolf, preceded her in death. She leaves to mourn her two sisters, Lydia (Mrs. Samuel Mueller), and Elisabeth (Mrs. Jacob Mueller); 13 nieces and nephews, 41 grandnieces and nephews, 11 great-grandnieces and nephews, also a number of other relatives, neighbors and friends.

Funeral services were conducted from the First Mennonite Church of Halstead on Dec. 21, 1963 at 1:30 p. m. with Rev. Arnold E. Funk officiating. Casketbearers were great nephews. Burial was in the Halstead Cemetery.

### Scope and Contents of the Collection

System of arrangement: processed

Access points:

- Mennonites - Germany
- Mennonites - Kansas
- Mennonites - Oklahoma
- Mennonite women - Diaries
- Music - Manuscripts

MLA.MS.384 Selma Ellenberger (1885-1964)

Languages and scripts of the material:

English  
German

## Administrative Information

Conditions governing access: open for research

Immediate source of acquisition: 1 Oct 1995. Donated by Adam and Amelia Mueller.

Accruals: Additional items donated by Muellers up to 29 Jan 1998.

Other notes:

Other materials of Selma Ellenberger, especially correspondence received from German relatives after moving to Halstead, are found in the Adam, Helen, and Amelia Mueller Collection (MS 343). Many letters are addressed jointly to Selma and her sister Elizabeth (Mrs. Jacob Mueller), with whom she lived after moving to the United States in 1911 until her death in 1963. MS 343 also contains correspondence between Selma and Elizabeth prior to their moving to the United States. Selma's diaries and translations are found in both collections along with some materials related to Selma's funeral in MS 343. A few of her books are in MS 343 but most, including children's books she brought from Germany, are in this collection.

## Detailed Description of the Collection

Box	Folder	Contents
1		Obituary
		Church and Sunday School Records, Manheim/Gelchsheim, 1886-1899
		Documents related to obtaining US citizenship, 1939-42
		Correspondence to Selma before leaving Germany, 1900-09 (from Elise Hodel, Marie van der Smissen, Lydia Ellenberger (sister), and brother, Albert, and sister, Elizabeth
		Correspondence, 1901-1920 from Anna Keller and Anna Landes (2 folders)
		Correspondence to Selma and Elizabeth, primarily from German relatives, 1907-29 and undated
		Correspondence to Selma around time of leaving for US, 1910-11
		Correspondence to Selma, mostly from L. and then Martha Hirschler, also in Halstead, 1914-29
		Correspondence to Selma, mostly from Elizabeth Horsch, cousin, in Alta Loma, and Elizabeth Groff, in Upland, CA
		Correspondence to Selma and Elizabeth, mostly from German relatives, especially from brother, Alfred, 1922-35
		Additional correspondence from Anna Keller, 1926-36
		Correspondence from Helena Quiring Buhler, in Medford, to Selma, 1927-32

Box	Folder	Contents
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		Correspondence to Selma (and Elizabeth, 1930s
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		Additional correspondence from Helena Buhler, water damaged, 1933-37
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		Documents regarding Sabine Keller from Wurzburg, 1933
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		Correspondence to Selma (and Elizabeth) from brother Adolf in Munich and other relatives, M. van der Smitten at Thomashof, 1936-37
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		Correspondence to Selma and Elizabeth from Hodels and Landes. 1936-39
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		Correspondence to Selma from Elizabeth Leisy in Paso Robles, 1936-40
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		Correspondence to Selma and Elizabeth from German relatives, especially Adolf, and US relatives, especially A. Barbara in Random Lake, WI, 1940-41
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		Correspondence, continued, 1942-43
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		Correspondence, mostly US, 1944-50
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		Post-war correspondence from German relatives, 1946-48
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		Correspondence to Selma, some from E. Leisy in Paso Robles, also several from Abraham Schowalter in Bethel Home for the Aged, 1946-47
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		Correspondence to Selma, 1946-60
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		Correspondence to Selma from Anna Keller in Wurzburg, 1946-51
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		Additional correspondence, 1946-61 (10 folders for late 1940s, mostly from German relatives)
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2		Correspondence to Selma and Elizabeth (25 folders for 1950s and 1960-66) (The folders are based on the original order and sorting of the collection, and the organizational scheme is unclear) Many letters are from German relatives, including those sent to Elizabeth following Selma's death.
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3		Postcards (8 folders) - Numerous cards, 1898-1910 while still in Germany. Additional folders contain cards sent to Halstead, 1911-13; Hampshire, 1914-15; Deer Creek, 1915-1927; and then in Halstead, 1920s-50s
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		Notebook - entitled Meadow Flowers (in German), compiled by Heinrich Ellenberger and duplicated (many pages are faded), 1928-34
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		Many fragments of verses and other text, some perhaps by Adolf
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		Selma's funeral book, 1963
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		Correspondence from Frieda and Heinrich Ellenberger in Germany to Selma's older sister Lydia in Halstead, 1922-38
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		Letters from Maria Hirschler in Geisberg to Anna Bergmann, 1945
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		Old autograph book, probably of Selma's and from her mother, first entries are from her four brothers and sisters, many others are from family in Bavaria (a couple of entries were made in Kansas, 1913, 1915), 1900-1910
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		Selma's diary, 1905-06
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Box	Folder	Contents
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		Selma's diary, 1906-16
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		Selma's diary, 1959-60
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		Three notebooks with excerpts of the diaries, translated by Amelia Mueller
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		<b>Books</b>
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		<i>Allezzeit frohlich!</i> Braunschweig und Leipzig, Verlag von Hellmuth Wollermann, undated, inscribed to Selma from Heinrich in 1905
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		<i>In Jesu Nachfolge</i> , von J. Paul, pastor, Striegau, 1903, Christmas present inscribed to Selma from uncle L. in 1903
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		<i>Suchet in der Schrift Tagliche Betrachtungen fur das ganze Jahr mit Anhang</i> von E. Schrenk, Kassel, 1892 (inscription from Christian Landes, Gleschsheim, April 1901 to Elizabeth Ellenberger)
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		<i>Fort, fort, mein Herz, sum Himmel!</i> Gedichte von Dora Rappard, Basel, 1899, Christmas present inscribed to Selma from Horsch family, 1903
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		<i>Tagebuch eines namen Frauleines</i> , von Marie Nathufius, Leipzig, inscribed to Selma from sister Anna Fuchs, 1905
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		<i>Edelweis</i> , volumes one and two, Verlag von Carl Hirsch, undated, signed by Selma
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		<i>Die Taglichen Losungen</i> , fur das jahr 1966, Stuttgart
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		<i>Gerich bis zum Siege</i> , von Otto Stochmayer, Bassel, undated, inscribed to Selma from Babette Horsch in 1903
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		<i>Christlicher Gemeinde=Kalender</i> , in Kommission von Abr. Hirschler, Kaiserlautern in der Rheinpfalz, 1916, 1917, 1921, 1928 volumes (published by south German Mennonite conference)
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		<i>Tagliche Andachten</i> von D. Funcke, pastor an der Friedenskirche zu Bremen, 1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> volumes, Cincinnati and Bremen, undated, inscription in volume 1 (not to Selma)
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		<i>Das Neue Testament</i> , Dr. Martin Luther's, Koln, 1872, inscription in back for Rt. 2, Pueblo, Colorado
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		<i>Bilder aus dem Pilgerleben</i> , von J. Ellenberg, 1880 (book plate for First Mennonite Church Library, Halstead) (inscription M. J. J. B. 64)
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		<i>Im Licht der Weihnachtssonne</i> , von Ernst Evers, Berlin, undated, inscribed to Selma
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		<i>Heidi</i> , von Johanna Spyri, Gotha, undated, inscribed to Selma
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		<i>Unsere Geschichten, Erzablungen fur kinderplege und kinderstube wie fur die Sonntagsschule</i> , Karlsruhe, 1895, inscribed to Selma
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		<i>Singet und spielet dem Herrn in euren Herzen!</i> Title page missing, no date or inscription, binding damaged.
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		<i>Worte Jesu an die Muden</i> , 9 Auflage, Barmen, undated, inscribed to Selma Ellenberg, 1929
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		<i>Bibellesungen fur den Familienkreis</i> , 3 <sup>rd</sup> volume, Hamburg, 1908, no inscription
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		<i>Waldtraut</i> , von M. Rudiger, Schwerin I. Meckl., 1901, inscribed to Selma Ellenberger
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Box	Folder	Contents
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		<i>Ein Gottlicher Wandel</i> von Ernst Modersohn, pastor, Mulheim an der Ruhr, undated, inscribed to Selma, 1911
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		<i>Fenseits der Brucke</i> , von Hedwig Andrae, undated, inscribed to sister Selma from Frieda and Heinrich, Christmas, 1913
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		<i>Predigten fur alle Sonn=, Fest= und Feiertage</i> , von M. Ludwig Hosacter, Wurttemberg, 1864, long inscription dated 1865
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		<i>Himmelsblumen, Neue Erzablungen fur Jung und Alt</i> , 4 <sup>th</sup> volume, verlag von Carl Hirsch, undated, inscribed to Selma
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		<i>Beate Paulus</i> , von Philipp Paulus, Stuttgart, 1897, inscribed to Selma
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		<i>Jugendblätter</i> , herausgegeben von G. Weitbrecht, 1899, inscribed to Selma (very poor condition)
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		<i>Friedensgrusse, aus Geroeks Liedern</i> von Ernst Gebhardt, Bremen, inscribed to Selma, 25 June, 1905 in Reichenberg with several Psalms quoted
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		<i>Psalter und Harfe</i> von Karl Johann Philipp Spitta, Stuttgart, undated, inscribed to Selma in Gelchsheim, 1905
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		<i>Ein neues Reis am alten Stamm</i> , von Panch, mit pastor J. Jaspis, Barmen, 2 <sup>nd</sup> volume, undated, inscribed to Selma
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		<i>Der Kalendermann von Reitsberg</i> von D. Staubrecht, verlag von Carl Hirsch, undated, inscribed to Selma from her mother for Christmas, 1901
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		<i>Heidis, Lehr- und Wanderjahre</i> , von Johanna Spyri, Gotha, undated, inscribed to Selma
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