

Translation of Excerpts from the diary of Selma Ellenberger.

September 25, 1906, Gelchsheim

I am alone with dear Mother. Elisabeth went to Würzburg to Heinrich and Frieda's home. (Heinrich was Selma's older brother.) She is to stay with the children as Frieda went to the wedding of her friend Lydia K. in Selgental. Elisabeth was happy to go to Würzburg. Time hangs heavy on my hands. My work is all done, so I am using the time to write. I am starting a second booklet and will see what all I can write in it in the course of the year.

In the evening - Now I already have something special to write in the book. At twilight when I was getting the milk from the dairy, the Postman met me and gave me a letter from America from our Lydia. I took it to Mother and read it to her. The letter contained what Mother had for some time surmised and at the same time feared. Lydia's brother-in-law Jakob would like to have Elisabeth as his wife. This is the second time that he has come with this wish. The first time Elisabeth had to say "no" because of Mother and me. We were sick and needed her help. She has faithfully taken care of us for 6 years. By the grace of God we are I am well now and can take care of dear Mother. So our future will develop differently than it has been up to this time. We take the matter as from God's hands, and he will continue to care for us, and His promise which he gave me in His House in Canstatt through his Spirit anointed servant, Osteritter, is now further fulfilled. The Lord has gloriously and wonderfully led us this far, he will also do it further and will fulfil, if it be His will, the promise for dear Mother: "At evening time it shall be light."

Sept. 28, 1906 - Elisabeth is here again now; she suspected nothing -- Finally it had to be said. I went into the gable room with her and gave her the letter with the words, she should read it and think like Mother and me that the Savior had further intervened. It was a long time before she came back and then talked it over with Mother. She has decided to go (to Halstead Kansas, USA), since one can clearly see God's will and purpose in the matter. It was decided that on Sunday I go to Würzburg to talk the matter over with Heinrich and Frieda. I got news that Anna in Reichenberg is sick; I'll visit her at this opportunity.

October 2, 1906 - On Sunday I rode to Giebelstadt to the worship services there. Heinrich had come to the service by bicycle and fortunately I had a chance to slip him the informative letter secretly. So they had a chance to talk the matter over before I came in the evening. At five o'clock I said good-by in Reichenberg. The Van der Smitten girls met their parents at the railway station and then went with me to the R. Street. Frieda was standing at the window and saw us coming. Heinrich also appeared behind her. Judging from their happy faces, the letter had been well received. When we were alone - (Lieselchen, of course, gave me no rest, kept calling to me, "You, Aunt Mema!") we discussed the important matter. To Heinrich and Frieda God's leading in this was also marvelous and remarkable. In the spring Elisabeth is to travel to America, God willing. Mother and I will go to Würzburg to Heinrich and Frieda, since I cannot take of the household and Mother by myself. The concern about moving Mother to Würzburg, the other problems yet to come, we lay all of them on the heart of Him who says in His Word: "Cast all your cares upon Him, for he cares for you!"

Oct. 14, 1906 - We are ^{still} enjoying the lovely autumn weather. It is doubly pleasant because we have company: little Elisabeth and her father. Yesterday I thought it was an illusion of my imagination as I looked out of the window and saw Heinrich coming with Lieselchen on his arm. That was a joy for the whole house! The darling child wins everyone's heart. In the morning Heinrich and Elisabeth went to the worship services, so I was alone with the child. I was in the garden much of the time with her and the boys of the house.

Oct. 21, 1906 - Sunday - I am alone with dear Mother. Elisabeth went with others to a conference in E. During the last few weeks dear Mother has often had difficult days. This makes me fear for my future. But I will not worry or be afraid.

Dec. 9, 1906 - Second Sunday of Advent - This week we had a visitor - Uncle from Rotmannshardt. We had written to him about the matter of Elisabeth. So he talked with dear Mother about this and expressed the opinion that he had the impression it was supposed to work out this way. At our suggestion he told Uncle and Aunt here in the house about the matter. Because of all too bitter experiences with the latter, we were very uneasy about it. And now the faithful Saviour made it work out in such a way that Uncle came and talked to her about it. So, for the time being, she will not criticize or blame us. Up to this time everything about the matter has worked itself out, so it will turn out well.

Dec. 25, 1906 - Christmas Day. Christmas Eve with it's shining lights and children's joy is already past. Today we four girls and Sister Christine went around and sang the Christmas songs we had practiced. In the morning we sang for the Grandmother in this house. Then for a sick day laborer, and for dear Mother. In the afternoon we were at Uncle and Christine's and also sang there. Everywhere we were applauded! Last night, Jakob got me again as last year to play the Hammonium for the celebration in the Castle. I was richly rewarded in all sorts of ways. The Würzburg children bring us much joy. (Elisabeth and Gerhard Ellenberger) They are so darling!

New Year, 1907 - I have again lived through a whole year. Last night we were at the castle until midnight. Cousin Jakob came and got our group of girls and Fritz. At the castle everything went nobly. First cousin Jakob gave a New Year's sermon, earnest words about "Remain with us, for evening is nigh and the day is far spent." Then we drew songs and Bible verses for our relatives and friends. So the time passed swiftly and we were sorry when we had to break up. It was so strange for me to walk at the stroke of twelve at midnight through the quiet, snowcovered streets of the village in the moonlight. We slipped through the back door into the house and stood in a half circle on the stairway landing, cousin Adolf in the middle, holding the candlestick. Then we let our voices ring and sang, "Jesus shall the watchword be, now a new year has begun" (Jesu soll die Losung sein, da ein neues Jahr erschienen) and "Take Thou my Hand, O Father" (So nimm den meine Hände). Last we sang in three parts, "Praise to the Lord, O my Soul" (Lobe den Herren O Meine Seele). In the morning we were given compliments on our midnight singing.

Jan. 6, 1907 - Sunday. Drove to Giebelstadt to the church services. Uncle Horsch from here (Gelchsheim) spoke on the text Phil. 4: 1-7. I had to be organist again. Preacher F (Fellman?) looked so very serious. At the close of the service I found out why. Preacher Vander Smitten announced that Pastor F was also to be ordained as Elder with Uncle Herseh Landes (?), which Pastor F agreed to only after a difficult decision. On the way home we had a gay time in the closed carriage. Fritz and three boys were with Elisabeth and me, and I told them an interesting story, so the trip went very fast. I was at Uncles in the afternoon with Elisabeth. The Christmas tree was lit for the last time in the Castle, and we sang Christmas songs with the children. Elisabeth is to come to Uncle for support so, God willing, everything about this matter (her marriage to Jacob) will go right and good.

Jan 9, 1907 - Würzburg. Came here today to the prayer meeting. Elisabeth, the two Fritzes and Christians also along. Went from the train station to the services. A student from here spoke. It is astounding how much spirit and zeal he shows. Went home with Frieda.

Jan. 10, 1907 - Würzburg - Played and sang with Liesele this morning.

March 17, 1907 - Sunday: Now there are only two days, then we want to risk the move with Mother. We are uneasy about how everything will go. I can't get the words out of my mind: "He who spared not his own Son, but gave him up for us, shall he not give us all good things?" One can include such a matter as this in that, too. Elisabeth went to Würzburg to get the room ready there, so that when we come everything will be ready, and Mother can be carried to her bed right away. Here it is empty in the rooms in which we have lived so long. Only the old furniture which is to stay here, is still here.

March 19, 1907 - Tuesday - Würzburg. Thanks and praise to God a thousand times! We arrived here today at 12:30. Everything, the ride of 4 hours, Mother's walk in Gelchsheim from our room down the stairs to the street door, to the large carriage, a big undertaking, went much better than expected. It was a miracle before our eyes! Everything is behind us now - the effort, the concern until everything was arranged. Yesterday evening Heinrich came during a heavy storm. The relatives all advised that we shouldn't go in this kind of weather. And behold! The coachman from here arrived in Gelchsheim in pouring rain at 6 o'clock in the morning, but at our departure at 12:30, with all of the relatives standing around with serious faces as though Mother's journey was her funeral procession, the clouds parted and the sun broke through and shone during the entire long ride. Some ambulance attendants were here and carried Mother up the stairs to her bed in a hammock. Little Elisabeth stood at the top of the stairs and watched with a horrified expression. Afterwards she said, "The men carried Grandmother and she had a veil." What a lovely room Mother has. The old furniture in the new setting "does itself well". Everything is so dear and cozy. I have to constantly with folded hands look at Mother's bed. I can still hardly believe it that everything is over and that it went so fast and so well. Praise the Lord, my soul. Thank the Lord, for he does wonders. "With Jesus mine, I enter the house", Mother said as we drove up to the house. Where Jesus is, it is good to be. He is with us as he promised. Help me, Jesus to draw nearer to Thee in Würzburg.

March 23, 1907 - Würzburg - Again I can write, "Thanks and praise to God a thousand times. Mother has not had to suffer any bad after effects. Today ^{met} our Adolf at the train station.

March 24, 1907 - Sunday. We are celebrating Mother's 60th birthday today. All four of her children are gathered around her. Lydia in America should also be here. But Frieda fills out the number five. We can only praise and thank God. With tears Mother said, "Think what the Almighty can do, who meets you with love." We were all five at the worship service. Van der Smissen preached about Mary's pouring out the spikenard (ointment). The main point of the sermon was, "Nothing is too much and too costly for Jesus."

March 28, 1907 - Thursday - The Easter season has begun. May we receive a rich Easter blessing. Elisabeth is making farewell visits in the Palatinate. In the meantime we are beginning to adjust to being alone and getting along without her. The minister for emigration in Bremen has already reserved a place for her on the ship Rhein, which sails April 27.

April 12, 1907 - Elisabeth again away on a farewell trip. Too bad that the time is so short or she could have postponed this visit and also attended the revival meetings which are currently being held by a Negro preacher from Amerika. I also attended last night. It was held in the Bahnhof Hotel. The Negro had an excellent interpreter so nothing was lost of the words and the impression of this black evangelist. His text was I Cor. 13. He spoke effectively - to the hearts.

April 14, 1907 - Yesterday evening (Sunday) I again heard the Negro preach. The working of the Holy Spirit could again be mightily felt.

April 21, 1907 - Today is the last Sunday that our Elisabeth is with us. This past week evangelistic services were being held, but I could not go because I didn't feel well. Also, Frieda is not at home. She went to the funeral of her Uncle. So Elisabeth is still in demand during her last days here. In the city there is a flower exhibition which is supposed to be undescribably beautiful.

April 25, 1907 - This is a very difficult day for us. Our Elisabeth said farewell to us forever. Everything is going on in the usual routine. I did my tasks as usual, the hours came and went as always, and still so very much has been changed in my life and existence. I am comforted by the prospect that later I can join my sisters in America, but it is still very, very difficult for me not to have a sister near by anymore, and especially the support and stay that Elisabeth was for me and dear Mother.

April 28, 1907 - Two cards from Bremen from Elisabeth came today. So far everything has gone well, but the ship is delayed a day and is sailing today. I forgot to write that I was also at the flower exhibition, and that it really was a lovely sight. Yesterday Frieda had a birthday. I fixed a birthday tray for her.

May 1, 1907 - Würzburg - The lovely month of May has come. It has brought us a dear visitor, the Pfarrer's Tante from the Kohlhof. Heinrich and I were to meet her at the train station. Aunt has not been together with dear Mother for 18 years, and they were always very good friends. So it is a great joy to see her again.

May 6, 1907 - Yesterday evening I was at the singing worship service. It was very nice. I especially liked the song, "Master, the storm winds are raging", with its closing refrain, "Peace be still; He says 'Peace, be still'". Today Aunt El came back from Gelchsheim. She liked it there very much. She was the first guest to sleep in our former living room, which has been converted into a lovely guestroom. She also experienced all kinds of things. Since the first of May the railroad to Gelchsheim has been opened, and Aunt rode with Van der Smisens on this new section. There was an accident, two horses were run over, it was terrible. The blood poured into a nearby brook. The owner of the horses was miraculously not injured. The tracks make a bend and the train embankment is still open, not yet blocked. And so the accident happened. The man was hard of hearing.

May 15, 1907 - Received word that the ship with our Elisabeth landed safe and sound in New York.

May 22, 1907 - Received a long letter from Elisabeth. She got along very well on the sea voyage; was not seasick. In fact, she rested on the trip. How happy and thankful we are that things went so well for her. Frieda's mother from Bockschaft came with her youngest son. But things are not going well for my dear Mother today. I do not venture from her bed. She is feeling the after effect of Elisabeth's farewell, the concern how it will go for her on the trip. What a contrast between the two mothers! The one so sick and weak; the other healthy, not a widow, etc. But I dare not give way to such thoughts.

May 25, 1907 - I took Elisabeth's letter to Hunsickers. Since dear Mother was feeling better, she sent me away. I ran into a thunder storm, which however, did not become violent until I was under cover.

May 29, 1907 - Another letter from Elisabeth. She already arrived on May 15 at our sister Lydia's place, and also on this part of the journey she was wonderfully led and directed. Praise and thanks to God.

June 16, 1907 - Sunday - Yesterday evening I went for a walk along the Main with Frieda, Heinrich, and Oscar Fellman. Everything was so quiet and peaceful; the lights of the city stood out brightly in the darkness; frogs sang their night songs. The students came this afternoon and took Frieda and Heinrich along on an excursion into the woods. So I was alone, but company came - Frau van der Smisens and her sister from the "Aunt House" in Giebelstadt, both nieces of dear Mother.

June 25, 1907 - Today I celebrated my first birthday here. How much lies between today and a year ago. Upon awakening, dear Mother spoke loving words to me. Frieda had prepared a lovely birthday table for me, also some flowers. Early in the morning while I was still asleep, Mr. R. brought a box of lovely strawberries from B. (Bockschaft? The mailcarrier brought a lot to us today. He brought me 10 cards and letters. Everybody wishes good things for me. O, that the wishes would be fulfilled! I need strengthening outwardly and inwardly. The most important letter came from America. Our Elisabeth likes it very well in the foreign land. She likes "him" the best. May God's blessing be upon both of them. Her descriptions are interesting and of such a nature that desire is awakened in me also - later - when nothing keeps me here any more, to also emigrate to America. As God will. The rarity on my birthday table are the pressed dog roses that Elisabeth sent from America. There are many of them around the house there.

August 25, 1907 - Have been alone now with Mother for almost four weeks.

September 1, 1907 - This week Frieda and Lina and the children came home. Frieda had to go to Gelchsheim right away (Lieseke insisted on going along, so Frieda took her) where the first daughter arrived on August 31. That is a great joy - after four boys to finally have a little girl. Gerhard is very good. But he still cannot talk.

September 5, 1907 - Lina also went to Gelchsheim, so I am alone again with Mother. Heinrich is still in Bockschaft. He wants to first finish a painting of the old mill before he leaves there.

September 16, 1907 - Now I can relax since they are all safely here again. Today we had visitors who came from Gelchsheim, where they had been for several days. It is a Russian couple who fled to Prussia to escape death in the revolutionary turmoil in Russia. (They were already on the death list.) The woman was with Mother also for a little while. She has a distinguished appearance, and what is most important, one can tell from the first glance that she is a child of God. Another Prussian minister and Missionary Klaassen, who with his family is at the time living at Gelchsheim, were also along. It was a too short, but lovely visit. Things are lively at Gelchsheim, so many visitors and so many children. Babette H. was here with me last week, when she had to go to the doctor here in Würzburg. Something so stupid happened. Babette had to get something in the pharmacy for which she didn't have enough money. I didn't have any either, so I ran home, but noticed on the way that I had left my key in the pharmacy, so I had to go back there again. Finally I got there with the money, and we just barely had time to get to the train.

* September 29, 1907 - Rudolf from Bockschaft (Frieda's brother) came yesterday to live here for a year since he will do his one year military service here.

Oct. 10, 1907 - A letter came from Elisabeth. She will be married this month. A great longing arose in me to also be there at the wedding. But that is impossible. Elisabeth's bridegroom also wrote to Mother. One can only be happy over his attitude which is apparent. And so with God's help everything will go right for our Elisabeth.

November 20, 1907 - A report of her wedding arrived from Elisabeth. She had a lovely wedding reception in the home of her husband's parents. The wedding text was: "The Lord bless thee and keep thee, etc." As she and her spouse neared their home on the evening of their wedding day, the moon rose up over the trees.

* Sept. 25, 1907 - Today it is a year since the important letter from America arrived. How much has happened since then! Elisabeth has been in the far-away part of the world for some time; dear Mother and I have already been here for six months. Continue to be our Support and Shelter, our Confidence and Strength. On Monday evening I was at the Methodist chapel here with Elise and Lydia Van der Smitten. A visiting minister, who 23 years ago was the first minister here, spoke on the parable of the enemy who sows tares in the field at night. We have to daily examine ourselves whether our frame of mind is from God or from the enemy; is the thoughts that come, the words we speak are from God or from the enemy. The man spoke very briefly and then reported on his six year long work in London among the Germans living there.

Translation - Excerpts from the Diary of Selma Ellenberger

December 22, 1907 - The last Sunday in Advent. The lovely Advent time is now over and Christmas is at the door. These weeks of Advent were very difficult for me since Mother was deathly ill. Praise and thanks to God, those times are mercifully past, and today is a nicer Sunday for us.

December 25, 1907 - Christmas Day. This is a quiet Christmas for Mother and me. Everyone else went to Gelchsheim. Here we already received our presents on the 23rd. I received many presents. The children's jubilation was without bounds. I read a lot, since I am so undisturbed. Van der Smisens visited me. Aunt sent me something very lovely to read, and I hope that I receive a blessing in these quiet days.

January 1, 1909 - New Years Day - This morning at the worship service I heard a fine sermon over the words: "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today, and forever." Last night we all stayed up until the stroke of twelve. Milli and Big Ernst were our guests. From the hall window we all watched as at midnight the soldiers on the fortress wall sent twelve shots over the city. The flare of fire and the flashes of the shooting were spectacular to look at in the night.

January 3, 1908 - Yesterday evening there was a missionary hour at our place. A missionary, who will be sent to Africa in February, was the guest speaker. He spoke very interestingly about the mission there, also talked about the white people there who do a great deal of damage to Christianity by the kinds of lives they live, and their attitude toward the Blacks.

January 14, 1908 - Today there is something lovely on the devotional calendar sheet:
 Nothing is too small for Jesus' concern
 Nothing is too large for his power,
 And nothing is too troublesome for his Love.

March 24, 1908 - Today dear Mother celebrated her birthday. Among those congratulating her were Uncle and Aunt from Rottmannshart, who were here for a visit; departing again today for their home. It is so good for us emotionally to be able to be together with these dear relatives. Mother is very upset and tired. Praise and thanks to God that she was spared to me and that I may continue to nurse and care for her.

April 5, 1908 - Anna from Reichenberg is now permanently here with her brother and sister in Würzburg. The departure from her woodland home was very difficult for her. The forest greeted her as a farewell in a white winter garment of snow. I have already visited Anna a number of times. She and I are glad that we are so close together in the same city. She still has something very difficult ahead of her, the departure of her brother Michael and his wife Lene. In May the voyage to America will take place. The two have for a long time thought of emigrating, and now it has become a reality. Marie and Bobette from Louisgarde are traveling with them. (Marie Horsch Storrer of Walla Walla, Washington and Babette Horsch Lichtl of Reedley, California.) I feel sorry for Babette, since at the request of her aunt in California (probably Marie Horsch Hege or her sister Mrs. Bähr) she had to make up her mind so suddenly to emigrate. Marie is going along so that Babette is not alone. Marie is light hearted and takes everything from the brighter side.

April 20, 1908 - Easter Monday. Mother and I are alone; the others went to Gelchsheim. Anna visited me today in her wheelchair, accompanied by her sister Lene, who is also here since Reichenberg was dissolved. Her visit was good for me.

May 7, 1908 - This morning I was at the train station to say good-bye to the Heges forever. Still we have the comfort: Christians never see each other for the last time. It is now a year since our Elisabeth parted from us and found herself on her ocean voyage. The Lord graciously helped her over and through everything. He will also do this with these four individuals. Elisabeth is very happy with her husband. She has continued to write faithfully and to describe the circumstances in America clearly and vividly. For Mother's birthday she also sent a well done picture of her at the side of her husband. This picture is now on display in a golden frame on the piano in the living room.

June 21, 1908 - Sunday - I have already received a birthday letter from America. Things are going well for our dear ones, except that they are having many thunder storms with cloud burst type of rain, which is very damaging to their crops. Last night we had a very violent thunder storm. I sat for two hours on a footstool beside Mother's bed, shaking and trembling. In addition, Mother's condition was very bad, so that these were very difficult hours for me. Thanks to God, the storm mercifully moved on, and dear Mother feels better today. On Thursday, June 18, we had a Mission Festival. Mr. and Mrs. Missionary Claassen were here for the last time. They travel back again to Java in August.

June 25, 1908 - Now I am already celebrating my second birthday here. How many things have I experienced in the past year? Frieda fixed a lovely birthday table for me, and I received many presents. Van der Smisens also remembered me and brought a blooming potted flower. Even our Lina, who is at home with her parents since January, sent me a box of cherries with congratulations. Many, many good wishes were sent with letters and cards; may the Lord fulfill them according to His Will and pleasure. Dear Mother has had very difficult days, so my birthday happiness was somewhat saddened. Yesterday on the Johannes holiday all of the Johannes fires were again burning on all of the hills. I received a letter from Frau Eberhard in L. (Luisgard?) She is now the happy mother of a little boy. Three years ago when I celebrated my birthday in Reichenberg, I had no idea that in a few years so much would change in her life and in the lives of the Reichenberger relatives. The four travelers (Lena and John Landes, Babette and Marie Horsch) got over the ocean well. The girls have for some time been in the place where they were going, as Elisabeth, who had a letter from them, wrote. It will no doubt be more difficult for Lena and John to become accustomed to the foreign land. Now one can no longer go to lovely Reichenberg. In my life there will be another parting this year. I will have to make another move with dear Mother. Heinrich and Frieda have built a lovely little family house for themselves on the mountain slope (or hillside) and we will move there in the Fall. We take it as God's will that everything happened as it did about the building of the house. And it is in many ways much more pleasant when one has one's own house in the city. Also, for dear Mother it will be nice when she is up in the little house on the hill.

June 30, 1908 - Visited Anna today. (Anna Landes, who was crippled and was in a wheel chair.) From her I found out that her brother and his wife (John and Lena Landes) in America are already at home there. I read their letter myself. It is nice that they can be with Lena's brothers. Anna is happy and cheerful again. The first pain of parting is over and she is well taken care of at her sister's home.

August 23, 1908 - A very difficult week is behind me. Mother was especially ill, so that I had to reckon with the worst. Praise and thanks to God, she is finally better today. I was even able to go to the church services. Our Elisabeth wrote again from America. How happy she is with her good husband! For her birthday he gave her stationery and a dollar's worth of stamps so that she would be sure not to get the idea that he thought she was writing too many letters. That is very thoughtful of him, and especially made Mother happy. We also received a card from the Reichenbergers (John and Lena Landes) which they mailed when they were visiting our sisters in America. That was a mutual joy, to have German relatives as guests.

September 1, 1908 - A new month has begun. It will bring many changes for us - the dreaded move into the neat little house on the hill. Dear Mother was again deathly ill, so that we had to think that she would be allowed to move into another lovelier home still higher upwards. We are already deep into the work of moving. I am not at all well. The anxiety about dear Mother affected me very much.

September 4, 1908 - Praise God, Mother is feeling better. The Lord will graciously help us over the move. I needed a little diversion and refreshment badly, and for this reason took a walk up the little Sieboldshill, where it is quiet and lovely. I sat down on a bench sheltered from the wind, and would have liked nothing better than to just stay up there in the quietness.

September 8, 1908 - This morning at 7 o'clock we brought dear Mother up here into the house. It was very nerve racking until she was carried down from her room and lifted into the carriage, and again out of the carriage and up the steps into the house. But, thanks and praise to God, everything went well in spite of the bad night Mother had. I announced the happy news with cards to the nearest relatives, and now my diary shall know it also.

September 9, 1908 - Today the rest of the furniture was brought to the house, and there is a lot of work to do before everything is in order. We got Mother's room ready as quickly as we could so that she could get out of the noisy guest room, which is so near the railroad track. Then she and I moved in by ourselves. We cannot be thankful enough for this dear, private little room. From her bed Mother can watch a very busy street leading to the very popular excursion spots: Sieboldshöhe and Keesburg. This is a very pleasant diversion for her. I received a letter from Elise in Louigard right away on the first day, in which she wished: Good luck and good weather for the move and God's blessing in the house!

Christmas, 1908 - Another Christmas Day is here. I have experienced many difficulties since I last wrote in this diary. I was very sick, and then, after my convalescence, I was weak and miserable for a long time, and still feel that way. My illness was caused mainly by the difficult emotional turmoil I experienced. It was very dark in my heart for a long time.

New Year, 1909 - Today, after a long time, I again attended the church services. At this time we have many ^{money} worries. Building a new house is not as simple as one thought.

January 5, 1909 - Today was a Prayer Hour; it was very nice. We had many guests, including Elise, but she, unfortunately, could stay only a short time. So that her sister Marie and I could still be with her a little longer, we decided to come to the train station.

January 17, 1909 - Sunday. Dear Mother is very ill; and I am weary and tired, physically and emotionally. Frau v.d. Smissen was here to visit Mother, but Mother could not use any visitors. Frau v.d. Smissen wanted to report to her about the blind Aunt in Giebelstadt, who is lying in bed very sick. If only the dear Aunt, who is also almost deaf, could "go home".

January 24, 1909 - Sunday. Mother was so weak today that I stayed at home from the Worship Services. In the afternoon Mother was considerably better. Just now there is a lot of flooding here in Würzburg. The Main, as a consequence of the rapid thawing weather has become a rapid stream which has overflowed its banks a wide distance. In the Old City one has to travel the streets in boats. The many shops and dwellings had to be evacuated. Yesterday evening Heinrich and our Marie with the two Mr. Fellmans were in the Old City until 12 o'clock at night and looked at the interesting picture and activities. Today Heinrich took his wife and children along, and they insisted that I also go along. Mother especially encouraged me to go. I went reluctantly, since I was emotionally very upset. On the way Heinrich picked up Mr. Oscar Fellman, and he made us wait a long time on him. I became very tired with the walking around and looking at things, so Oskar Fellman called a carriage, and Frieda, the children, and I rode home.

February 21, 1909 - A quiet Sunday for me and dear Mother. The others all left home in this nice weather. Frau E. H. visited us. We talked about our Americans, from whom, God be praised, we have good news.

March 14, 1909, - Today is a quiet Sunday. Marie and I are alone with Gerhard, since the parents and little sister, with many other guests are at Fr. to celebrate their Silver Wedding. Mother is not having a good day today; her condition worries me a great deal.

March 19, 1909 - Today it is two years since Mother and I moved here. How much I experienced in this time, and how faithfully the Lord has helped us through all the difficulties. At the present time my heart is heavy and I am very much concerned about Mother, whose condition becomes more and more critical.

March 19, 1909 - Today it is two years since Mother and I moved here. How much I experienced in this time, and how faithfully the Lord has helped us through all the difficulties. At the present time my heart is heavy and I am very much concerned about Mother, whose condition becomes more and more critical. Recently many disturbing events have happened. That is not good for her heart ailment. First came the news that in America an unusually large boy was born to Lydia, weighing 11 pounds. Consequently Lydia's condition was not good. We are very anxious to get more news. Then we heard the Babettchen in G. (Gelchsheim? Giebelstadt?) condition is critical, the end is near. And I wanted to visit her on Tuesday. Then came the notice of the death of the blind aunt in G. All of this contributed to worsen Mother's condition, and she is now very ill. Yesterday I attended the funeral in Giebelstadt. Aunt was carried to her grave on her 80th birthday. I met many dear relatives and acquaintances on this occasion. Uncle from Rottmannshart was our guest today. He came with me yesterday from the funeral. At his departure he said to us that he found dear Mother considerably sicker than on his visit in December. My heart became very heavy to hear something like this. I hope that Mother will recover again. I still need her so very badly.

March 21, 1909. - Today was a very restless Sunday. We had a lot of visitors. Elise was here and could stay the whole afternoon. It is lovely spring weather. "Our family" went walking with the Fellman family and toward evening brought the bridal couple (Frieda's sister Elisabeth and Oscar Fellman) and S. with them. They stayed with us for supper. The couple have a lot to look at and discuss at every visit here, since in the fall after the wedding, they will set up their first home here with us in the cottage until Oscar has completed his year of Practicum. The house will be full then, since the Gelchsheimer boys will also come here to go to school.

March 24, 1909 - Today is mother's birthday. The children brought a bouquet of violets to her bed this morning, and Frieda baked waffles in honor of the occasion, which was especially important to the children. Unfortunately mother had a very difficult day. Yesterday I was able to carry out a visit to Gelchsheim. I found Babette extremely weak. She was very happy over my coming; held my hand in hers for a long time. She already has a completely transfigured facial expression, and is happy to leave this world. But for her parents it is unspeakably difficult to have to give up their only child.

March 25, 1909 - Thank God, Mother's condition has improved over yesterday.

March 28, 1909 - A quiet Sunday. Mother is very sick since Friday. I am fearful and alarmed how things will go. Mother gave me this comfort: "Just believe firmly that the best will be determined for you."

April 12, 1909 - Easter Monday - Now the lovely Easter time is again almost over. Until today we had lovely spring weather and the Easter rabbit was able to lay the eggs with the pretzels and the little banners for the children into the grassy nest in the garden. What a jubilation! Yesterday I was able to celebrate Holy Communion. We had a lot of visitors yesterday, fourteen persons. Because of that one could really not get the proper Sunday rest. Babette's funeral in Gelchsheim was on Palm Sunday. There was a long procession. There is much sympathy from all sides. From America we had good news. Lydia and her little Walter are well. Also the former "Reichenbergers" wrote Mother a happy letter. They are very well satisfied with their nice little house with the orange garden in glorious California.

April 20, 1909 - Today Oscar Fellmann came with the surprising news that his sister Milli will announce her engagement on Sunday to the fine, kind, warmhearted Missionary Löwen. Milli will have to ^{go} away for more than a year to study. Her fiancée has to go to Holland for two more years, then in two years he will take Milli as his wife to Java.

Translation of Excerpts from Selma Ellenberger's Diary

April 25, 1909 - Today it is two years since our Elisabeth said "goodbye" for always.

April 29, 1909 - A little Hildegard arrived at our place. What joy and happiness this was for the children. They have been with their grandparents for four weeks; this evening they will come home. The little sister with her mother will meet them and their father at the train station. What happiness!

June 25, 1909 - Today I will celebrate my birthday here for the third time. Today is a difficult day for me. Dear Mother is not feeling at all well. I went with the children for a little while up into the quiet Sieboldshöhe (Siebolds height) and looked for some wild rosebuds. Elisabeth sent me two American four leaf clovers. Perhaps they indicate something lovely? Milli also thought of me and sent me a little box of chocolates.

June 27, 1909 - Sunday - Dear mother is very sick. It is quiet in our little room. If only it would be quiet within me, too. Mother comforts me, The Lord will adjust what happens to the measure in which I can bear it. We had visitors from America, a cousin of Frieda's. Things are going well for the relatives across the ocean, according to what Otto Hege told us. The merry Marie from L. (Marie Horsch Storrer) is engaged. No wonder that she wrote that she does not want to come back to Germany.

September 28, 1909 - Saturday F's grandfather passed away. Today was the funeral. I went with Frieda since we were in the group which sang two lovely songs at the open grave.

October 20, 1909 - I have a very dear guest for several days, my dear Anna, who has for a long time wanted to come to see us again, and now finally took advantage of the lovely fall weather. She and I spent as much time as possible on the veranda, and Anna is very cheerful. It is a pleasant change for Anna to come from the lodging house surrounded by buildings in the middle of the city to us in the suburbs where the sun shines brightly and warms Anna's poor legs. (Anna was crippled)

October 21, 1909 - Today the Wan der SmisSENS got Anna to have her spend several days with them, too. The place feels very empty to me since she left.

Christmas, 1909 - What a rejoicing there was again in our house! The two boys from Gelchsheim have now been here with us for several years, since they are attending the Gymnasium here. That makes more life in the house. Before Christmas there was a difficult time for us. First Lisele was sick with diphtheria, and then Frieda became sick. We thought it would be a sad Christmas. But Frieda recovered quickly, and could be at the giving out of the presents on Christmas Eve after all.

New Year, 1910 - Much has changed in Gelchsheim. The estate was sold to a Jew, and the relatives have to move by June, and don't know where to go. Also, Aunt Horsch is very sick, her care is very difficult and tiring. Perhaps she will be allowed to die before the move. Elise Hodel told us about Aunt's condition so that Mother knows how her sister is getting along. The boys, Ernst and Heinrich, who have been here with us since August, ride home every Sunday, and in this way we here and those in Gelchsheim are well informed about how things are in both places. The boys often help me to forget my troubles, when I sit beside them in the dusk in the evening before bedtime and tell them stories. Without stories the two cannot exist, the two rascals. They are still full of mischief in spite of their diligent studying of Latin.

February 25, 1910 - We received the good news that a strong little boy arrived at our Elisabeth's in far away America, a Helmut, who was born on the 11th of February. Their joy is very great, since they had to wait so long on the child. Thank God, Elisabeth is well.

Translation of Excerpts from Selma Ellenberger's Diary

March 19, 1910 - A very unhappy day and a sad week lies behind me. Dear Mother's condition has worsened since a week ago, worse than has every yet been the case in the many years that she has been sick. O what hours those are, when the possibility comes into my mind that Mother, who is all in the world to me, will be taken from me, perhaps in the near future. The Lord alone knows what this means for me, and I read the verse: "The Lord is faithful, He will strengthen and keep thee."

June 26, 1910 - A lot has happened since my last entry. Dear Mother has not recovered the last months as usually. The bad times always come more and more frequently. Up until now she has always been spared to me. Mother's sister, the aunt in Gelchsheim, has now been released from this world. All of the Gelchsheimers are now gone except for H. After a long search, Uncle has finally found a suitable home in Giebelstadt for him and the four who cannot go out into the world and provide for themselves. The four sons, naturally have to go elsewhere, I wonder where they will go. H. Horsch is also in Giebelstadt with his wife. The other Horsch's are in lovely Luisgarde for the present. We received all kinds of news from America. Lydia's children were all very sick, and Walter, a year old, died on March 3. That was hard! Then the children's father broke his foot while jumping off the wagon, and had to lie in the hospital because of that. The foot is healing very slowly. Lieschen's (Elisabeth's) husband also had an accident, but came away with only a few wounds. Little Helmut is thriving splendidly. He is round as a ball, and very good. Elisabeth and her husband also experienced a Cyclone, which took their biggest barn, but still there was very little damage. Visitors came from America, a cousin and his wife. These had visited my sisters in America and brought me Elisabeth's watch. I am to consider it my possession, since I do not yet own one. I was so very happy about this unexpected present, happier than I thought it possible to be in such heartbreaking sorrow.

July 3, 1910 - A quiet Sunday. Dear Mother again has difficult days of suffering. Outside the wind is raging. For several weeks there have been heavy storms in this area, which have done much damage. Also, many people have lost their lives through floods and being struck by lightning.

Christmas, 1910 - What a sad Christmas this is for me, because I am now an orphan. My dear faithful Mother was allowed to go to sleep forever during the night from the 9th to the 10th of December at 12:00. She can now, as she so eagerly wished, celebrate Christmas in heaven. I cannot describe what my dear mother, my good, faithful mother still had to suffer before she was allowed to go home to the rest accorded to God's people. Now it is desolate and barren in my life, yet I will not sink into hopeless sorrow because Jesus is here with me.

1. Jesus is Here

Though dark the valley and violent the torrents
Though burdens are weighty and embers are dim,
Though none can comfort me, far and near,
Jesus is here!

3

And though my soul at the waiting despairs,
The encouraging, hopeful words I can hear,
"Help will not fail you. It's already quite near.
Jesus is here!"

5

What more do I need, what else do I lack?
My soul and my body have all that they need.
I say it to me and to those I hold dear,
Jesus is here!

2.

Yes, above the suffering and the deep pain
I feel it and know in my trembling heart
As if I saw him, to me it's so clear,
Jesus is here!

4

Jesus, who is never to late or mislead
The Jesus who suffered and died in
my stead,
Whose loving eyes see my innermost fear
Jesus is here!

These words will be my comfort. Aunt Marie van der Smissen gave them to me to read. The van der Smissen family showed me much love in this difficult time, and Frau van der Smissen stood by me faithfully during the many continuous nightwatches. These became so difficult that a nurse had to be here the last three weeks. At the

Christmas, 1910, continued

present time I am very exhausted physically and emotionally through the trying, tiring, perturbing time during the last months. Here in the home of dear Heinrich and Frieda I am well taken care of, but I do not enjoy it here any more. The two older children now sleep here with me in our little room, which was greatly changed. But I still always feel that a great Peace lives in this room, and it is also consecrated through the many prayers which rose from here to the High Priest, who represents us before God, and through the blessed death of dear Mother. And here in this room she also lay adorned like a bride in her casket. Much, much will now be changed in my life. As God opens up the way for me I will travel to America next summer or fall to be with my sisters. They will be very happy to have me, and are taking care of what I need for the undertaking.

December 26, 1910 - I visited my dear Anna today on this holiday. She and her family show me much love. Anna gave me a lovely picture which depicts Jesus as the Good Shepherd holding the littlest, weakest Lamb in his lap. I am that little lamb. Anna is very unhappy that I want to go across the ocean so soon, but is also happy to know that there I will be well taken care of. Anna will lose all for whom she cares deeply. Because Lisa, our good Lisa, in Louisgarde was completely unexpectedly called into eternity on November 20. She left behind her three little children, the youngest only six days old.

December 29, 1910 - Since I now have "vacation days" because my former illness (or problem) is making itself noticeably known, I have time to write. I am becoming very much alarmed about my health. I cling to the hope that God will graciously let things get better again soon. It is impossible to describe how terrible it is for me. And oh! I am so lonesome with no mother anymore, who bore everything with me, even to the smallest thing, who prayed for me and cared for me. The others in the house do not have time for me. Today I read this verse in the devotional booklet: "Thou miserable one, over whom all of the storms pass - and thou comfortless." I have been made into a pitcher of tears. But in the poem it says:

And if you make me into a pitcher of tears
Two things, Lord, I desire
Let me retain room enough
Also for my neighbor's tears
And shape me bit by bit
Into a vessel for your glory.

In the evening before mother's funeral Uncle from Rottmannshart sat with me on the sofa. He held my hand firmly in his and said these words: "All is well. As the Lord leads me, it is good. He holds me in His care. All is well!" Uncle told me that he thought that I would go to my sisters in America. That would be the most natural thing to do. We received a copy of Mother's graveside sermon from Pastor van der Smissen. The text is Rev. 7: 14-17. A lovely farewell song was sung at the open grave. The last line says: "Remain faithful until the Savior calls you! Farewell till we meet again." I stayed at home with Frieda instead of going to the cemetery. It would have been too much for me. The next day, Dec. 13, I went to the grave. I stood by the mound covered with gorgeous wreaths under which the dearest in the world to me lies.

Only Today

You do not need to carry more than the load for today
And do not further need to ask than what God now has to say
You need not be anxious about more than what pleases God today.

For today, not for the future Jesus gives courage and strength
Gives power and strength and shelter in his blood;
For today flows the fountain, for today shines his light;
For today he has provided courage and peace; Do not despair.

New Year, 1911 - A new year is beginning. For me the old year closed sadly, and the new year begins just as sadly. My health is getting worse. We had to call the doctor for advice so that I will not continue to make so much work. Frieda badly needs rest after all the difficult times that had to be endured in our house. The children were all sick; Liesele was operated on her eye in November. Frieda also had to go to bed. So it continued constantly.

January 4, 1911 - I am still a patient. The doctor was here again and very displeased that no improvement has set in. I am no longer confined to my room since everything is caused only from my nerves. I can be up and around the house, if possible also in the fresh air, and I am to visit the doctor next Saturday or Sunday. From our Lydia in America we received a letter, which unfortunately, did not contain good news. Lydia's husband was deathly sick, as a result of his foot, which has not yet healed. The doctor said that there would be no improvement until the injured foot would be amputated. That is very difficult for Lydia and Samuel. Elisabeth sent me a pretty Christmas card mentioning how painful the knowledge is that for us no Mother heart beats any longer. For me it is the most difficult of all. The three are married, so such a loss is not felt quite so greatly as for an unmarried person like me. Adolf is completely at home at Bruckberg, hangs with every thread of his existence and being on the institution and its residents. Thanks to the goodness of Elisabeth's husband he will be able to remain there. In such a manner the faithful heavenly father cares for his poor and weak children. He will not forget me either.

January 15, 1911 - Praise and thanks to God, I am feeling better. Wednesday night Frieda had to go to the hospital and at 3:30 in the morning a little daughter, Adelheid had arrived. Everything went much better than expected. Frieda is well taken care of in the hospital by the nurses.

January 22, 1911 - Frieda was allowed to come home today with her baby. What happiness that was! Things are going quite well for me. I had a big surprise. Elisabeth sent me a nice sum of money, which I can really use.

January 27, 1911 - I received two letters from Elisabeth. She is very happy about my coming. But she also had to go through a lot. Her darling little boy was deathly sick with pneumonia, and they thought that he would be taken from them. Thank God, the danger is now mercifully past and the child is recovering. I will probably still be here until September or October.

February 12, 1911 - I finally went to the cemetery this Sunday afternoon. Brilliant sunshine lay over the silent graves and I knelt on the mound, now covered with wilted wreaths, under which my mother sleeps until the resurrection. My tears flowed freely, and I am glad that I could cry out my pain and grief. These words came into my mind:

Over the breaking heart's pain
A loving, pitying everlasting heart.

Yes, this must be my comfort, in this overwhelming sorrow, which often threatens to crush me.

February 26, 1911 - Contrary to expectations, things are going very quickly about my journey to America, since the best traveling companions possible have been found for me. An elderly couple, Müllers (not related to Elisabeth's Jacob), who are in the Palatinate for a visit since Fall, are traveling back again to Halstead, the very town where my sisters live. It will not be easy to find such travel companionship again, so we regard it as God's leading. My sisters sent the couple my address with the request that they bring me along. Mr. Fritz Müller immediately wrote to me, and so my place as a passenger on the steamer Main, which sails on March 30, is already reserved. So, unfortunately, I will have very little time left, and last Sunday I quickly made my first and last visit in Giebelstadt to my dear uncle there. Those were lovely days which I spent there. I was completely overwhelmed by the love the dear ones expressed to me. I also sang with Mariele and Christel to the accompaniment

February 26, 1911 (continued) - on the old Harmonium. All of the others could also not get enough of the singing. It is so seldom that anyone makes music for them, since there is no one there to do it. What an ideal home these dear relatives found. Everything is so dear and cozy. They regret very much that I will not be able to come any more now. Yes, it is something serious and sad when one has to say: "For the last time." I was also in the "Aunt's Home" several times. Since Christian married again, Babette is alone, so it is nice for her that the elderly couple, H. Horsch, have found a home with her. These two have also gone through many difficulties. I was also in the little church for the last time, where I used to come from Gelchsheim as a happy, carefree child for the church services (the church in Giebelstadt) where as an uninhibited young woman I was baptized with one whom I must now leave behind and forget, but I will have difficulty doing it; where I celebrated the Lord's Supper for the first time, where my dear mother was married, and so often, later as a widow, listened to the words of the minister and took part in holy communion. Although she was already then very weak physically, she still made the trip, which was long and tiring for her, until at last she could no longer go along. Then came the nine years in which she suffered so unspeakably much, confined to her sickbed. O, my dear Mother! Now she may sing and celebrate above, here below she so early had to unlearn the singing. What memories go through one's soul when one enters such well known rooms for the last time.

March 24, 1911 - Today is dear Mother's birthday! A sad day for me, and yet I should be happy that my mother may now be with the Lord always. I will be here in the German fatherland only a few more days. Everything is behind me, the preparations for the trip, the farewell visits, etc. On March 21 I was at the grave of my faithful mother for the last time. That was the hardest, as I knelt on the mound for the last time - a special, solemn seriousness lies in those words - "for the last time". What all went through my mind there! Yes, dear Mother's grave contains much for me. Much lies buried there which no one knows. The parting from me was undescribably difficult for my dear Anna. Dear Mrs. van der Smissen got the loving idea to invite Anna and me to her home, and so we spent the last afternoon together there. Anna said that she was very happy to be able to take leave of me there rather than in her sister's home with so many people around. Also Elise Hodel, my dear faithful childhood companion was able to visit me last Sunday. How fast the few hours flew by! The parting is much more difficult for the others than for me. I go around, almost like in a dream. My life had been filled completely with Mother's great love, and then the concern over my ailing mother. Now ^{that} all of this no longer exists for me, everything is empty and still. For that reason the parting, with the exception of one person, is so easy. From Elisabeth I received a loving, affectionate letter, so that all I can do is to look forward to seeing her again and entrust myself calmly to the truest leader and friend in this life as far as the difficult journey is concerned, as it says in the song which Mother said to me in regard to my journey to America: "He who has Jesus with him, can journey safely." Yes, dear Mother spoke often with me about this, gave me much advice, and arranged to have Aunt van der Smissen pack my trunk, since she has a lot of experience in such things. This was done as mother suggested. Last week Aunt packed my large trunk correctly. Mother wished me to emigrate to America when she no longer needed me, and I promised her that I would do it. And so all will be well.

March 29, 1911, Bremen - Yesterday I arrived here with my travel companions. I had to leave Würzburg at 3:00 in the night. We ordered a carriage, which took me with Heinrich and Oskar Fellman, who was my travel companion as far as Bingen, to the train station. Oh, I would not have thought it possible that knowing that everything, everything has to be buried and abandoned would cause me so much inner pain and conflict! I have lost all of my courage, and that must not be. Yesterday's journey was interesting. Till Bingen, Oskar and I rode second class. We were alone in the compartment, and I was taken for his wife. That is really mockery in my present emotional condition! At Bingen I met the Müllers, who accepted me cordially. But I felt somewhat uneasy. He seemed to me to be a bit tipsy from drinking too much wine and beer.

Translation of Excerpts from Aunt Selma Ellenberger's Diary

March 29, 1911 - Bremen, continued - He certainly acted that way. But I will not say anything, and luckily, Mrs. Müller is always near by. Yes, I already began to feel strange on the way. The trip on the Rhine I will never forget as long as I live. The high crags with the ruins of castles on their summits, the majestic stream which rushes past them. Later the trip became boring and tiring. Müllers are very talkative and started a conversation with many of the passengers on the train. In that way everybody found out that I was also going to America, and one gentleman said, to my great disgust that I wanted to get an American for myself. As I emphatically denied this, he answered, such a pretty, strong young lady like I am would soon have an American lover. I would have liked to have jumped out of the train window, especially because when the afore mentioned gentleman was gone, Müller would not let me alone about such things. The more I denied it, the more he maintained that what the gentleman had said was so. Here in the Hotel Grieme it is comfortable. I have a nice little room by myself. Wrote a long letter to Würzburg. Tomorrow morning we will board ship.

March 30, 1911, on board the steamer Main - This morning at eleven o'clock we boarded ship in the loveliest sunshine. To the sound of music we sailed out of the harbor and now we are sailing far out on the open sea. I sat in the sunshine on the foredeck and could not look enough at the coming and receding waves. But the homesickness and grief stepped on board with me. Already in Bremen I had a difficult mental struggle. I know that this is the right way for me to go, and I want and want to reconcile myself to the fact that my homesickness, my consuming homesickness for _____ will never be appeased. I had no idea that my inner struggles showed outwardly, and was startled when a lady met me on the stairs and cried out, "My God, how deathly pale this young woman looks!" and looked at me so sympathetically. I am often taken for a married woman, and yet I'm so little. Here on the ship there is an interesting life and much activity. There are many Bohemians among the passengers. One sees many types of people and costumes, and hears almost nothing but foreign sounds. If I remain well, the sea voyage will be enjoyable. Also I had the special fortune to get a cabin by myself. I have Mr. Müller to thank for this. Up to this time I am getting along very well in every respect, and can only be happy about how my Savior cares for me. One thing throws a deep shadow on my enjoyment. Müller is very vulgar, and has continued to pester me here as he did in the hotel. If I could only find protection or escape from him.

March 31, 1911 - Slept very well this first night here. We are now sailing through the English channel; there is thick fog, for that reason the fog horn sounded all night and until noon, which was answered by other ships. After the sun won out over the fog, we sailed along the English coast. It was very interesting to get a close up view of the many large and small steamships, sail boats, and fishing boats. One of these boats traveled past quite close to our ship, and the passengers on the foredeck waved their hats in greeting, which was answered by one of the fishermen by lifting up a large fish and waving it. The so called Chalk cliffs of England presented a lovely sight. They lifted themselves blinding white in contrast to the sea, and turned a rosy hue at sunset.

April 2, 1911 - Sunday on the high sea. I feel very forsaken and lonesome; am asked why I look so sad. I cannot join the Müller couple, that makes me shudder. He again bothered me in my cabin. I couldn't manage to lock the door quickly enough, but defended myself as well as I could, and then the fellow said that I should not tell his wife about it. I am constantly trying to avoid him, and he is also so insolent. He doesn't seem ashamed at all of what he is doing. I think that my sisters in America have no idea that the man is that kind of a rascal, or they would not have entrusted me to him. I observed Sunday quietly by myself. I have not found any like minded, congenial person, except a 77 year old "mother" who is accompanied by her two sons. (These three sit at my table. She has discussed all sorts of serious things with me. She told about her mother, how she had suffered severely for eleven years,

Translation of Excerpts from Aunt Selma Ellenberger's Diary

April 2, 1911, continued - and I told her about my precious mother. O, when the glittering sunshine sparkles on the water like a golden street, I feel that I would like to walk on it to heaven to be with the Lord and with Mother.

April 3, 1911 - God be praised, I am still getting along fine. I can sleep and eat very well. We have lovely weather on the ocean. There is nothing lacking for a pleasant voyage, if I could only have someone loving and belonging to me here. As it is, I am completely alone, without companionship. But I want to think on this: "Your heavenly Father knows what you have need of." He also knows what I need on my voyage.

April 7, 1911 - We have had two very stormy days. The comfort and relaxation came to an end. Almost all of the passengers were seasick. The little group of well ones (I am one of them) stood on the foredeck, holding fast to the railing and watching the raging fury of the waves. Whenever a wall of waves came up, the steamer lay on its side so that the floor under our feet was like a steep roof. Everything was constantly thrown violently back and forth, especially I in my little cabin. All of us could keep our balance only with great effort. I am very happy that I still feel so well. As I, even in the worst weather, showed up for each meal, the head steward said, "My, the little lady is steady!" He also thought I would make a good seaman's wife and should marry a seaman. I have to laugh about how things are going for me. The elderly "mother" has become very fond of me, especially since, at a hint from her, I knitted a pair of little stockings for her grandchild. She has become very sick, and everyone feels sorry for her. One gentleman expressed his idea that it was risking too much to take such an old mother over the ocean. I had to visit her in her cabin, and there it came out that the Mother had a ridiculous idea for me. She thought I should marry her son, who is also on the voyage, and who cares tenderly for his mother. When I emphatically said I wasn't interested, she became really angry. The son had definitely courted me, but has stopped that now. He probably noticed that it was repugnant to me.

April 9, 1911 - Today is the second Sunday on the ocean. It is rainy, stormy weather, so that nobody can stay on deck. In my cabin I read interesting stories by the author Marlitt. One could tell that it is Sunday by the fact that the Steward's trumpet group blew a Choral.

April 11, 1911 - The last day at sea. America is constantly coming nearer, one could see land since this morning. The pilot is already on board. We will be here yet until this afternoon, then we will disembark. "With Jesus I enter the new land", I pray. He will help me through.

May 14, 1911 - Burrton (America) - I have already been on the farm now with my dear sister and brother-in-law for four weeks. But getting accustomed to being here is very difficult. The adjustment is much more difficult than I would have thought possible. I am emotionally sick with homesickness. Often I do not know how to endure it. I am well taken care of here with my sister, and she ^{can} use me very much with all of the work she has. In America the housewives have to do everything alone. It is very hard to find someone to get people to do the work. God willing, I will stay well that I can really be a help to Elisabeth. I moved in on Good Friday, April 14 at 10:30. During the train ride, two days and nights of continuous traveling, I was very sick. I had a sort of dysentery, and suffered terribly because of the continual shaking and bumping. The trains in this country travel furiously fast. I was very glad when I was finally delivered from this torture and could get off at Halstead, where my brother-in-law Jakob met me in a buggy with the beautiful dapple grey ponies. As I was met by Elisabeth at their home, I almost felt as if I had come to dear little Mother. And now she has constantly comfort and reassure me so that I don't yield myself too greatly to approaching myself for undertaking the venture of coming over here. It is nice that I can live together with my sisters here, but still I cannot bear the thought of remaining here forever. I have already made many excursions with my sister and brother-in-law and their darling little boy. We visited the grandparents, ^{and} my sister Lydia. There the

May 14, 1911, continued- three children enjoyed me very much. They showed me their chickens, the setting hens in the nests, the little pigs, and the colt. Also I was at their place with little "Bubi" last Wednesday. Elisabeth drove to town and let us off on the way. I sat with the children on the grass under the trees in front of the house. Still everything is spoiled for me by the consuming homesickness. If only the Lord would take it away for me. Our farm here is a barren place. The former owners did not plant anything, and the many trees that my brother-in-law planted are still very small. With time it will be very nice here, too. I like my brother-in-law very much. He enjoys playing fourhanded at the piano or playing chess with me. I brought my game with me and taught him how to play it one Sunday when the weather did not allow going away. Here one always goes visiting on Sunday.

June 25, 1911 - Sunday - My first birthday in this foreign land and without dear Mother. This morning Elisabeth brought to my little room upstairs a bouquet of flowers and a book in which she had looked up the words for today: Genesis 26: 24 - "Fear not, for I am with thee."

Though my faint heart sees but danger
And I fear I will succumb
Jesus offers me His hand,
My weakness helps me overcome.
God's strong arm to hold me fast
Is my confidence and strength.

Yes, that is what I will do, to look to Jesus and not at what makes me fearful. He will certainly not forsake me, not even in this foreign land. Today it is terribly hot, hotter than it has been for a long time here. A blazing hot wind is blowing, so that one can almost not bear it. If only my health holds out. This climate is very difficult

April 5, 1912 - It has been a long time since I wrote in this diary. I have been here for a year now, and have so far overcome the difficulties of beginning the new life here, but the hope still lives in me that in later years I can go back to Germany again. It all lies in God's hand. Today is Good Friday. I am alone in the house. Elisabeth and Jacob with the little boy went to church. What all I have experienced in this one year! First, on August 27 a little daughter arrived here. She has the name "Mili" (Emilie or Amelia) after my brother-in-law's first wife. At that time, when the child came, I had a very difficult time. Here it is very hard to get anyone to help with housework, so I undertook all of it, which was very much, especially since I had absolutely no experience in household work. And then to take care of a mother and two small children. God helped me through it all. Elisabeth was very weak for several weeks, and as soon as she had recovered her strength, I had to go to my other sister. There on Sunday, November 19, a little son arrived. Unfortunately, poor Lydia had to suffer very much, and was so weak that the doctor was in doubt that she would live. Oh, what a difficult time that was! Finally, there was hope, but Lydia was very sick for two weeks with high fever. I continually had to remember that at that time it was a year ago that dear Mother had to suffer so much. That also was a difficult time for me! Then on Mother's death day, which fell on a Sunday, we were able to celebrate Lydia's convalescence. Lydia then recovered very quickly, but the baby, which they had been awaiting with so much longing because 3 years ago the little boy, Walter, died at the age of one year, did not get along well. The doctor was called for consultation, but nothing helped. During the night from 29th to 30th of December, 1911, Lydia knocked at my door with the words, "Our little boy is dying." I could not believe it. We then sat at the child's bedside from 3:00 in the morning until 7:00, and it was terribly difficult to watch the child's difficult breathing. Then at 9:30 in the morning, it quietly went to sleep. Before that, it looked around once more with its beautiful blue eyes. For the parents the death was terribly hard, especially since they do not have the prospect of ever having another child. After Lydia had recovered from all of her difficulties, I came

back here to my other sister and brother-in-law on February 7, 1912. I have often marveled that I had the endurance for this difficult time at Lydia's, especially since there was also such a heavy work load resting on me. In addition, we had a terribly cold winter, such as very seldom happens. I went through unspeakably much, but I was helped through it. Adolf wrote to me from Germany that Lydia had written to him, "What would we have done in this winter if we had not had Aunt Selma!" I am very thankful if I have been useful, then my being here is not in vain, and I did not come here for nothing.

May 10, 1912 - In the one year that I have been here, much has changed in the old homeland. Heinrich is renting out his lovely little house on the hillside and has rented one in town because he has given notice that he wants to leave the Gynnasium in Würzburg, and is waiting for a call at any time to go somewhere else. O, it pained me very much to think of strangers being in charge of the beloved rooms, living in the room where dear Mother died, and I cannot even visit Heinrich and Frieda in my thoughts any more. However, since it is very advantageous for Heinrich to leave Würzburg, all of that is of secondary importance. Oscar and Elisabeth Fellmann had to leave their lovely home, which they had together with us. They are living with their parents in Fr. street. On February 24 their first child arrived, which, however, lived only one hour. It was an especially well developed, beautiful child. Many people in the city went to the mortuary to see it. It looked as though it was sleeping. I feel very sorry for Elisabeth that she had to go through this experience. She had Marie from Selgental as nurse. Milli in Java also has a son. He arrived on his father's birthday and is named Theofiel. Well, I would still know much to write, but in America one does not have time for long jottings.

June 25, 1912 - Already my second birthday in the foreign land. I have much to be thankful for because, in spite of the difficult beginning here, it is still clear to me that it was good for me to have come here. My body is much stronger and energetic than in Germany, also I have already learned much for my inner life also. I read a book belonging to the sister of my brother-in-law, "What a Young Woman ought to Know." Oh, I wish I had read this book 8 or 10 years ago. How much I could have saved myself. I was much too ignorant in a certain area, but now I cannot relive past times with a different point of view, which would have caused me to act differently. I have to think that I walked an unknown way, but it was woven and entwined with the compassion and mercy of my Saviour. As it says in the little booklet "Jesus' Word for the Weary" - I can leave everything to my Saviour. He will in grace make everything right that I cannot make right any more. On Sunday, June 23, I made a pleasure drive to the little town of Moundridge. Our father's brother Christian lives there. He is already over 70 years old and lives with his wife, who is 20 years younger, in a little house, completely hidden by flowers. Both of them were very happy to learn to know the niece from Germany with whom they were not acquainted. I had resolved, and also carried it out, to treat this scorned relative only with love. Uncle was an alcoholic in his younger days, caused his parents much heart-ache, and for that reason emigrated to America, but unfortunately had no luck here either, and has raised chickens in Moundridge for over 30 years. He has a lot of very nice chickens. Because of his age, this work is becoming more and more difficult for him. He was concerned about his wife, who is not well, and who would be alone if Uncle died, since they have no children. But God will take care of things for them. I look back with deep inner satisfaction on this visit to these relatives because it seemed to me to have been pleasing to God. I would still have much of interest to write about the country and people, customs and fashions, but there is not enough time. Now a new year of life lies before me. What will it bring?

July 28, 1912 - We have five miles to drive to church. Sometimes it is a pretty way, sometimes the dust storms, which occur almost constantly here in Kansas, dishevel us and cover us with dust. One sees mulberry trees in the long, high hedges which line the roads, also a kind of chestnuts, and wild orange trees, whose fruit does not ripen, but falls onto the ground as large green balls. All kinds of birds nest in these hedges, bright red, blue, yellow, and black feathered. I enjoy looking at them, but unfortunately, none of these pretty birds can sing. One hears only the single toned call of the wild turtle doves or the whistle and cry of the mockingbird. How often I have thought when I got water at the well that someone was whistling at me, but when I looked for them, it was only the gray bird. In the church, called the Middle church because it stands half way between Halstead and Moundridge on the 20 mile road which goes from Halstead to Moundridge, we have no permanent minister. The church is served by students from Bethel College, as the Christian University in Newton is called. We often hear only an empty lecture, often, however, also God's Word. Recently I heard a serious sermon on the words: "And the remnant shall yet again take root downward, and bear fruit upward. 2 Kings 19:30" It was interpreted in this way: that those who volunteer for special service for the Lord must first be trained for the service. This will often take many years before they have grown roots under them, before they can bear fruit above them. Jesus himself spent 30 years in seclusion before he began his open ministry. Paul, the great apostle of the Lord, also the heroes in the old testament: Elijah, Daniel, and Moses, first had to let themselves be prepared. Just so all the leaders, or great ones, in the Kingdom of God, and also each individual child of God. One has to wait until the right time has come when God can use us. This sermon was very comforting. I have often reproached myself that, in gratitude for having my health restored to me through God's great grace, I did not volunteer myself in the service of the Lord after Mother's death, as I had thought of doing, in Bielefeld, the large institution of 4000 poor epileptics, working with the children there. I had read at that time a call from the now deceased leader of the institution, to the young women of Germany. Dear mother, of course, thought that I would not be strong enough for such service. But since I have been able to endure so much here, the reproachful thought arose in me ... If Mother had not gotten the idea to send me to America, a place for me could certainly have been found for me in Bielefeld where the need is so great. But I must be content and think that I can also serve the Lord here by helping my sisters. I can also be in His service in doing menial, unimportant tasks. I can also dedicate my life to Him even if I cannot do any great deeds and my life is spent in seclusion and solitude.

Christmas, 1912, Burrton - Already the second Christmas in this foreign land. This year it is a happier one than last year. At that time the concern about Lydia's ailing child lay heavily on me. A week after Christmas the great Friend of Children called it to himself. This year Christmas was specially celebrated in the Mueller families. The brothers-in-law have the rare good fortune to live close to their parents and the other two married brothers. Also the fifth brother, Rudolf, the best of them, is still at home with the parents, as are the two youngest sisters. And these three, at the suggestion of the oldest brother, arranged that we get together in the older brother's home for the purpose of practicing Christmas songs. There were eight of us. The only daughter of the house, 10 year old Esther, accompanied us on the organ. These were very nice, enjoyable evenings that we experienced. Each time that there was a pause in the practice, the good housewife, Käthe, brought us refreshments, one time some cake, which has the name, "angelfood". The rides to these singing practices in the evening in the moonlight were also very enjoyable for me. Then on Christmas Day, we all got together in the home of the Grandparents, 26 persons. That was a merry confusion. There was also much singing and playing of music. The oldest grandson, John, and his sister Marie, presented lovely Christmas music on the organ and the violin together. Oh, I was reminded of

another violin player! The children also recited Christmas verses and sang the song, "We're celebrating Christmas at Grandmother's today", Rudolf said a prayer, and then after all of that we all sat down in the dining room and a so called "lap meal" was served. Everyone received a napkin, cup, and plate. Then Esther, her mother, and the two daughters of the house went around and served tea, milk, pastry, and cake. That is American. Finally, at about 9 o'clock in the evening we parted with the hope that in three years, God willing, we would celebrate the golden wedding of the grandparents in the same way. Yes, I was at this lovely family festival, and yet in my heart the grief remained. I have the impression that I am to go on my life's way alone. And I will not be forsaken.

Although the way be hidden that I should travel home,
I will not fret nor worry; the leader knows it well.

A number of other things have also happened which I don't have time to write about. Elise from Luisgart also came to America last fall; she had wanted to travel with me, but since I left in such a hurry, she could not go along because she wanted to wait for her oldest brother who was still doing military service at that time. Well, Elise had the same experience as I had. She had difficulty making the adjustment to the foreign land, and wanted to go back to Germany again as soon as possible. It happened, however, that she went from one of her sisters to the other to meet the stork, or rather, her little nephews. Each of her sisters married soon after their immigration. Jolly Marie had her choice of three men, and chose the best, an older, serious minded man. And now, as Elise came to the third of her sisters, Babette, she promptly gave up the idea of a return to Germany. She became engaged to a Will Leisy. And so now, since November 18, she is Mrs. Leisy in lovely, sunny California. She lives only three miles from Babette. Babette wrote to me that Elise is the only one in that congregation who comes to church in an automobile. Yes, she didn't make a bad catch! She sent me a picture, which shows her and her Will in an elegant Auto driving through a lovely region. I thought "da fährt sichs gut" (One travels well, with the meaning of "She got a good bargain".) No wonder that she gave up going back to Germany. Babette lives in a house which is entirely overshadowed by a huge oak tree, according to what Elise wrote. It must be a good feeling to know that one is safe in one's own home. Elise's husband is a handsome man. I heard from a relative of his who lives here that he is as tall as Sam, and Sam is very tall. Elise is not much taller than I am. Leisy is supposed to be a fine and also a well to do man. So Elise is in the best of hands.

New Year, 1913 - Again the beginning of a new year. How quickly the days and years hurry by, and who knows how soon the end will come. I am now at Lydias for a few weeks. She has a lot of work, since she has carpenters for meals and lodging. Sams are building a large, lovely house and other buildings on their own land, very near our land and house. After Sams live on their own land we can mutually watch each other. We have a lot of work, and I have no time to write in this diary.

February 9, 1913 - Day before yesterday was "somebody's" birthday in Germany. But for what purpose am I writing this? Is it right to even think about him? Rudolf Mueller and his two sisters came from Sam's new building, which they had looked at. I was standing at the churn, around me the biggest disorder from the children's play. In addition they had just strewn the floor thickly with corn kernels, as the girls came in. Rudolf had stayed outside with Jacob. Later, after order had been somewhat restored, both brothers came in also, and we had a genial coffee fellowship. I am here again now, since Elisabeth needs me more than Lydia. From Germany I received the surprising news that Heinrich was transferred to Neustadt on the Hardt. Heinrich and Frieda are very happy about God's gracious leading in this, because Neustadt is a good place to be in every regard. It is not for nothing called the "Pearl of the Palatinate". Now the leaving lovely Würzburg will not be difficult for them.

February 9, 1913 (continued) I am very happy for the dear brother and sister-in-law, but a deep sigh wells up from my heart. If I had remained in Germany, I would now be away from Würzburg without having had to emigrate to America. O, dear Mother. If she could have foreseen this, she might not have wished me to go away to America? I dare not let such thoughts come, because the change was extremely necessary for me. I am physically and emotionally healthier than ever before, and I hope that all things will work together for good for me. The house on the hillside is rented to a distinguished family. The man is very nervous (neurotic or emotionally disturbed). He sleeps in dear Mother's room. Will he feel something of the peace that still dwells in that room?

Easter, 1913 - We have to celebrate Easter this year in ice and snow. The Easter rabbit laid his eggs into the snow, and the children were happy that he had not forgotten them in the snowstorm. It will still have to be Spring in spite of snow and ice. If only the accusing thoughts and reproaches of the past would not continue to rise up in my mind! I want to look to Jesus instead of at the accusing thoughts and approaches. Where I caused hurt, he can still make everything right. I received all sorts of letters from Germany. It would take too long to write everything down here. Dear Elise (Hodel?) had a lung sickness, but could, praise God, recover again in the forest air of Luisgard before the Horsch family, whom she has faithfully served for many years, and from whom she also received all of the nursing and consideration she needed, have to leave lovely Luisgard. Now the place where Lisa lived and died and where she rests under the sod is also in the hands of strangers. The Horsch family found a permanent home on the estate, Hellmannsberg. It is in the same area from which the grandparents Mueller came, and they are very much interested in that. Also, Hellmannsberg belongs to the same congregation as dear Uncle in Rottmannshart. His son Emanuel has married the dear Sister Lydia, whom I mentioned before. Who would have thought this would happen, when she turned him down before and he became engaged to someone else, and then that engagement was broken up. When two are meant for each other, it seems that nothing can prevent it. Emmanuel is an excellent proclaimer of God's Word. Dear Heinrich and Frieda are now in Neustadt, where they like it very much. Daily walks in the pine forest, on the mountains, through the vineyards. Yes, they have it better than on a monotonous farm. Gerhard especially enjoys the fact that from their home he can see the railroad train as it slips into the tunnel of the Wolfberg. My dear Anna in Würzburg faithfully gives me information about the happenings there, but about the most important person there, she says nothing. That is good, too. Dear Mother was right that after that Ascension Day she again and again encouraged me to emigrate to America, so that it would be easier for me to get over it if I did not see or hear anything about him any more.

July 20, 1913, Burrton - It's a long time since I've noted anything in this book, and during that time I have experienced very, very much. On the 6th of May a little Hilda arrived for Elisabeth and Jacob. What a delight that was for the children! I'm sure the father had definitely counted on a son, but he does not show it. When the child was four weeks old, on June 5, we received the sad news by phone that the elderly Uncle Christian in Moundridge was run over by a train as he started to push a wheelbarrow filled with chicken feed over the train tracks. Uncle did not see well, and thought the train was going in the opposite direction. In America the railroad crossings are open, not blocked (shut off) when a train approaches as in Germany. The locomotive caught him; he received a blow in the temple, and both of his legs were cut off. Fortunately, he was killed immediately. But his poor wife. Everyone was afraid she would not survive the shock. I stayed with Aunt for a week, since one could not leave her alone at first. I went through very much. Then I had to go home because of the harvest. Since Aunt did not know where to go - her home was sold so that she would not be completely penniless - we have made up our mind to have her live with us. But first an addition has to be built on our house, since

July 20, 1913, continued - otherwise we will have no room for her. For that reason Aunt Marie for the time being has moved into Lydia's lovely new home, in which they are living since March. Yesterday Aunt and I moved in from Moundridge. I should say that I had been in Moundridge for a week again to help Aunt with her packing. Also I made various visits and learned to know all sorts of people, including the sister of Jacob's first wife, who was especially loving to me. Jacob's first wife was a good, capable woman. When I first came here, Elisabeth told me that I reminded Jacob very much of his Mill, since I have the same dark eyes, and the same walk as she had. At that time Jacob also told Elisabeth he would be sorry if I left again. And so I have to be very thankful for all the love that I am permitted to experience, also that I have been able to help the poor aunt, that ~~dees~~ cannot be comforted. Aunt Marie and I also experienced a little adventure. We were to be driven home in the large auto of the Elder of the church so that Aunt could be quickly transported and could take along her 17 potted flowers. On the afternoon of July 18, after Aunt's house had been emptied, we two went to a good neighbor to wait there for the auto. But a rainstorm came up in the direction in which we had to drive. So the Elder came to tell us that he could not drive us. He wanted to take us to his home, but we preferred to stay with an acquaintance. So we started out for the home of an old single woman, Anna D. (Dester?), who had shown Aunt Marie much kindness, to ask her for lodging. On the way another good neighbor saw us and quickly called Anna home by telephone, since she was visiting someone. As we stood at her door in her beautiful garden, she came hurrying up by a back path and laughed aloud as she saw us poor homeless people standing there. We enjoyed a companionable evening. I had to laugh to myself when Anna gave me the advice to be sure and not hesitate in case an opportunity to marry was offered to me. In later years when one is older, it is very hard when one is unmarried. She knows this from experience. The next afternoon the Elder drove us home in his carriage instead of his Auto, and Aunt, to her great sorrow, could not take all of her potted flowers in it. The good neighbor is taking care of them, also Aunt Marie's watch, which needed repair, and will be picked up later with the flowers. Hopefully Aunt Marie will adjust well, and we will not have to regret that we acted according to Jesus' Word: "As ye do it to the least of these, you do it unto me. From Germany I also received some interesting news. On my birthday a second child arrived in the home of Oscar and Elisabeth Fellman, a little son, which hopefully they will be allowed to keep (Their first son died at, or soon after, birth. It received the name of the three oldest nephews of his parents: Ernst, Gerhard, Theophil. Also I neglected to remark that the Claassen family had to come back from Java for the second time because of her health. That was also not easy. They have four children, now live in Heilbronn, near the van der SmisSENS, who were also transferred there. Elise van der SmisSEN is in France, with a Sommer family; she wants to study the French language. I have a lot of omissions in my entries in this diary; cannot fill all of them in, but do want to add yet that on March 27 a special guest honored us with a visit, our cousin Michael Horsch from California. He told us many interesting things about all of the relatives there, also that Elise Leisy has a very fine, able husband. Michael has a lot of resemblance, especially in his voice, with his and our cousin, Heinrich Landes of Gelchsheim. How long it has been since he died! I had good news about Uncle and family in the little house in Giebelstad. They can be happy that they found this nice home.

New Year, 1914 - A new year; a large step nearer to eternity. Praised be the Lord that His goodness and faithfulness is with us daily. It is a long time since I wrote in my diary; I don't have time for it. We are, thank God, well. Little Hilda, especially is doing well, and brings us a lot of happiness, as also do the other two.

New Year, 1914, continued - Aunt Marie is with us since September. There was a lot of work because of the addition to the house before she could move in, and now the reward for all of our effort and love to Aunt Marie is that we have bitterly regretted that we took her in. Aunt reveals herself more and more as a person who in all sorts of ways wants to pamper herself, and who in general has a bad disposition. I constantly try to influence her and try to remain loving to her. It is especially hard because Elisabeth cannot accept the situation and constantly has something to scold about, also lets Aunt Marie notice too much how she feels. I hope and believe that if it turns out as it will, that Aunt Marie will in time become an unbearable burden for us, the Lord will provide the means and way that she will have to leave. I lay this on His faithful heart, he will certainly see to it.

From Germany I again heard many things. Adolf made a big trip and sent an interesting travel report. He visited many relatives, was also in our home town in the Palatinate. Alfred Fellman, who was so emotionally ill that he had to be taken to a mental institution, is restored to health again. But he has to give up studying to be a missionary, and is in Hellmansberg with the Horsch family to do agricultural work. Adolf also made the remark that it is too bad that Alfred and his brothers are so little interested in knowing the Saviour. That made me very sad because S is probably also one of them. Alfred apparently went backwards in his inner life through his illness, since Adolf wrote that Alfred is getting along fine physically, but spiritually not. This young man was once such a true little friend, I am very sorry about him. Also, I was informed of two engagements. Anna from Bockschaft was engaged to Missionary Johannes Wiebe already in September. He served in German East Africa as missionary for six years, and now came back to get himself a bride. The wedding is to be in the summer. How it happened that Wiebe chose Anna, I don't know. She will fit very well to such a calling and is now in Tübingen to take all kinds of courses for her vocation. During the last summer which I was allowed to experience with dear Mother, Anna L. told me confidentially that this engagement would take place. How she knew, I still don't know. Mother and I would have liked to have found out more about it, but Heinrich and Frieda said nothing about it, so we kept quiet, too. Now the rumor has become reality. Also Martha from L (Lautenbach?) is engaged to an Otto Hege from the Palatinate. Elise (Hodel?) from Hellmansberg wrote that he looks amiable. How many Martha would have liked to have had, only they didn't come. This one must be the right one for her. And last year I failed to write that Marie v.S. was married to D. Schneider, an uncle to Babette Horsch. If she could have lived to know this, how happy she would be. D. Schneider is an appointed revenue officer of a prince, and Marie has become an elegant officers wife. Frieda will no doubt be satisfied about this.

February 8, 1914 - Today is Sunday. Yesterday was somebody's birthday, and Rudolf Mueller was here at our place again. That is the third time that the coincidence was remarkable to me. This time he came to see if everything was all right here, since the head of our house, brother-in-law Jacob, is not at home. He is on a long trip to the south, on the Gulf of Mexico in Texas. It is supposed to be wonderfully nice there and if everything is as it has been described to us, Jacob wants to buy land there. Then there would be great changes in our life, and what is most important to me is that we would be rid of Aunt Marie. Yes, that doesn't sound a bit brotherly loving, and I have to go back to my latest experiences. At the end of January I was at Lydia's to help with the butchering, and at that time she told me what insight she had gotten into Aunt Marie's heart and disposition during the time she lived with them. O, how unspeakably heavy in spirit I felt then. If only someone in Moundridge would have told us about Aunt Marie's real character. When, on that day I walked home from Lydia's over the quiet prairie, I could only continually groan and implore to the bright star filled heaven above that the Lord, who sees everything in the future, would take Aunt Marie away from us, if she would become

February 8, 1914 - continued - too great a burden to us in the course of time. And now, if such a big change would be made, then my prayer would have been quickly answered. Aunt Marie does not know where Jacob went, or why he left. From Germany I received all sorts of news. Mrs. van der Smitten wrote that Gertrude from L. died quite unexpectedly, and was carried to her grave on Christmas Day, her 21st birthday. So in life contrasts appear side by side. In this large family in L. the oldest daughter Martha a happy bride, and the fifth daughter on her death bed. She went "home" happy and blessed, this blonde, blooming Gertrude, about whom Anna wrote me two years ago that I would later receive an engagement announcement with a candidate for the ministry. A week after Gertrud's death, twin girls arrived for her aunt, Mrs. Claassen; the one girl was named Gertrud, the other Dora. All of the other dear ones in Germany are getting along fine. In Hellmannsberg, they have, already since a year ago, a Dora, who is supposed to be an image of her cousin Dora in Neustadt. From Neustadt, I received many photographs, which brother Heintich took himself. Now he finally has the wished for camera. Judged from the pictures the children are very sweet and look well. I really got homesick for them, also the pictures of Neustadt are very beautiful. I also received all kinds of accounts from California. The two young women have now become happy mothers. Babette has a Dora, already since June 1913, and Elise, since September, an Esther, a Sunday child. Marie in Idaho had to lose her three year Elisabeth, her little songbird, from a serious throat ailment. The child pleaded, even during her worst suffering, "Mamma, please sing." Now she is out of harm's way in the arms and lap of the Shepherd, and her happiness is complete. But for the parents it is very hard. The "Reichenbergers" in California received a homemade sausage from us, which tasted remarkably good to them. Now for Easter they want to send us a box of oranges from their garden. Some time ago they sent me a picture which shows them both in the garden. He is standing on a ladder, and still looks exactly like the jolly master of the house in Reichenberg nine years ago. Oh, if only poor, dear Anna could be transferred from her "prison" in Würzburg to California. But, unfortunately, this is not possible.

March 1, 1914 - Jacob is at home again. He liked it so well in the South that he asked Rudolf to come down there, too. And Rudolf also liked it, so both of them bought land, not only for themselves, but also for the grandparents and for their brothers, Samuel and Peter. They all want to live together again as here in Kansas, and everything has been planned for each individual. It would take too long if I wanted to explain how it happened that the Muellers decided to emigrate to the South. In Hamshire, Texas we will be the beginning of a new Mennonite settlement, even have the prospect of a minister, which is worth a lot to us, A Dr. Hirschey, former professor and minister of a High School, or Teachers College in the North. He is a very well educated and much traveled man who had to go south because of his health. All of that is good and fine. But Jacob, unfortunately bought the land, making the purchase irrevocable without knowing whether he or Sam would be able to sell their farms here. The prospect of selling farms is not good, and we are greatly worried and distressed. I wrote to Adolf asking him to join me in prayer that the brothers-in-law, who did so much for Adolf, would be able to sell their farms.

April 12, 1914 - Easter Sunday. "Today is Easter", we sang with the children this morning. Yes it is beautiful Easter outside in nature, and also in our hearts we can celebrate a happy Easter. Above all expectations we became rid of our grievous worries. On April 7 a man, who belongs to our congregation in the Middle Church, came and bought both of the farms of the brothers-in-law. In addition the man has the money to pay, and otherwise is also easy to deal with. That turned out better than expected and prayed for. (That happened above prayer and comprehension). Lydia, of course, said, "Now we no longer have a roof over our heads." But since the moving to Texas was already irreversible fact, and if one could not sell here we would have been in great financial trouble, one has to be thankful that such a buyer came. The night before that April 7 morning, I had a singular dream; I saw Adolf with four large goldpieces in his hand. I said to Elisabeth in the morning that perhaps that meant that a buyer would come. On the same day he came and paid Jacob 1400 dollars. That would be the four gold pieces in the dream. But I don't want to pose as a dream

April 12, 1914, continued - interpreter. Aunt Marie now knows everything, and is very angry that Sams have also sold. She had believed that they would take her in.

She told me that with us was not the right place for her, since I have to suffer too much because of her being here. It startled me when Aunt Marie said that. Can she read thoughts? It is true that I have certainly suffered unspeakably much emotionally because of her. In March we had visitors from Nebraska, Schowalter, Peter Mueller's father-in-law. He was also in Texas and bought a lot of land since he liked it as much as the others. There will be a nice number to make a beginning there. Schowalter has a large family. I hope that the Lord will guide us in His way and we will be kept from going our own way. Everything concerning Texas has been committed to Him. He will make things right.

May 12, 1914 - Today we made our farewell visits with Aunt Marie. We were also at the Grandparents Mueller. These trips are always very welcome to me, especially when we drive along the wildly rushing stream along which stand ancient trees from the time of the Indians. But today the visit with the parents was especially important because something unusual happened. Grandmother took me aside and explained to me that her son, Rudolf, would like to have a wife at the time when he emigrates to Texas with us. Would I know of one for him? They had thought of Kathrine Hodel about whom she had heard recently in letters from Germany that I had let them read. I was very surprised and happy at the same time. About Kathrine, since Elisabeth also encouraged it, I could only say that she would fit well for Rudolf if her father would allow it that she make the long journey across the ocean. And I also remembered that last night in a dream I clearly saw Kathi's father and her brother Heinrich, and in the background the turbulent ocean with a steamer that was nearing land. Yes, Kathi's father was always against traveling to America, and so I am going to turn to Uncle in Rottmannshart by letter about this important matter concerning Kathrine and Rudolf. Uncle, at the time, was the one who baptized Rudolf, and Katherine is his grandniece. He will have the best judgment about this union. But now we are anxious to find out how everything will turn out. At least I am now rid of the problem concerning Rudolf, and he also seems to be happier. He has his heart set on also having a wife as his brothers do.

Pentecost, 1914 - Today we were in the worship services, and visited afterwards with a prominent family who invited us. They are the parents of the wife who will become the lady of the brothers-in-law's farms. Now everybody is talking about the fact that we are moving to Texas, and many, many voices have been raised against the move. What if the unfavorable things they say come true? Aunt Marie moved out yesterday with her plants to Moundridge. From there she is to go to an Old Peoples' Home in Goessel. Her trunks and boxes are packed and ready to be taken away. Now she was with us only seven months. Oh, perhaps she has taken a blessing with her anyway, even if it will only be apparent later. The important letter to Uncle has now been mailed. Our prayers accompany it, and for Rudolf the waiting is difficult. What kind of answer will come?

June 25, 1914 - Already it is my birthday again; already the fourth in this foreign land. I have much to be thankful for and to praise when looking back over the past year. But looking forward to the future I am almost afraid; what experiences are ahead of us. And yet, concerning the change in homes, I feel very calm and confident. My niece Frieda brought me a beautiful card as present with the verse: Psalm 32: 11: "Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice." Frieda thought these words would fit for me, and she is right. Since June 13 I have experienced inner emotional feelings which I cannot understand. On the afore mentioned Sunday it came over me suddenly, that old enraptured, yearning feeling for one, who for me has to be dead. I have not experienced anything like it during the four years that I have been here in America. On the contrary, I have been so free, and also inwardly so happy that I continually had to thankfully think that I had attained that for which I longed, namely that this homesickness and longing will be taken away since I do not at any price want to

June 25, 1914, continued - grieve my Lord with it. I do not know what to do. The worst is that after I had with all of my strength kept down this welling up of the feeling, now a constant inner accusation and reproach about all that happened in the past has set in, which gives me no rest night or day. It is terrible for me. From Germany I received a picture from Neustadt which shows the four children grouped around the doll house. Heinrich wrote that on May 28 a little daughter, Gertrud, arrived at Aunt Elisabeth Fellmanns. I was very much surprised, since the other child will not be a year old until June. That one is a darling curly head, wrote Anna L., that brings much joy to Elisabeth. But now she will have a lot of work, if the stork is in such a hurry for her. Also, Milli in Java has her second child. Milli was very sick in Sumatra. I am reminded how Milli, before my departure from Germany as we rode together from Louisgarden said, "Who would have thought that both of us would get to such a far away land. And how much each of us has experienced in the far away lands.

August 7, 1914 - Yesterday we moved from the farm, which has been our home for years, and now we are at Sams until the end of this month. Oh, and into all of the trouble of the moving came the shocking news that the long feared world war broke out in Europe on July 31. Oh, the beloved Fatherland is now surrounded on three sides and the Russians are in East Prussia and who knows how much further they will penetrate into the land. We hear terrible things, and we do not know how our loved ones are faring. And who of those I know will be among the soldiers who are in this dreadful battle? Is a certain one among them? I ask myself and get no answer. I can only hold onto the one plea: "Save his soul!" So I knelt in my little attic room, in the empty room for the last time. It is difficult for me to leave this room; otherwise it is easy for me to leave Kansas. That little room has something special in it. Elisabeth has often said, she likes to go into it, even when she has nothing to do there. It seems as though dear Mother is living in it. Perhaps my little room in Texas will become just as homelike. Today is also a commemorative day for me. I sat on the porch in the twilight and let the past pass before my mind's eye, and everything culminated in the words: "Save his soul! Otherwise let things happen to him according to Your will." In reference to the war I drew the verse: Isaiah 33: 22 Perhaps this will become true for our German Fatherland in its greatest need. "For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king; he will save us."

August 23, 1914 - We have now been at the dear grandparents since Thursday, since Sam's house is also empty. The men have already "steamed" away to Texas with the train cars holding all of the household things. Only Jacob, whose car the carpenter who is to build our houses, will look after, will ride with us women and children. It is nice to be here at the grandparents' home. They have a nice farm, and I spend most of the time sitting under the trees. I am very glad for this time to recover, since I was very sick at Sam's. The fear and excitement because of the war on top of all the work was too much for me. I was afraid that I would not be able to travel, but now I think I can risk it after all. From Germany we have heard nothing. My brothers-in-law ordered a good German newspaper for Texas, so we will be able to find out the truth. The English papers tell a lot of lies. Today is the last Sunday in Kansas. The grandparents want to follow in the fall. They will have sold their farm by then. It is too bad that they will sell this place. If only we will not have to regret having undertaken this change. God watch over us.

August 30, 1914, Sunday, Hamshire, Texas - The first Sunday in this foreign land. Our trip went well; it was interesting. It lasted two days and nights. On August 27, Mili's (Amelia's) third birthday, we arrived here. It was evening, and so quiet, only here and there a croaking frog could be heard. That sounded peculiar. It has rained very heavily here, as we have never before seen it rain, and the land is full of water, especially Peter Mueller's, so that they cannot live or build on it. That was a doleful evening, that first one. O, what heavy burdens fell on us, - had we after all gone our own way, and will now as a result experience great worries and

misery. Jacob was so discouraged that he did not want to unload the traincar, and wanted to back to Kansas right away. Peter Muellers can't leave since the stork is coming to them in October; they are living in an empty school house. They want to exchange their land for some that is drier. We and Sams live in an old empty house, which we first had to thoroughly clean yesterday before we moved in. How will things come out for us in the South?!

November 15, 1914 - Sunday. Today is the wedding anniversary of my dear parents; it is 40 years since that Sunday. We have experienced very much since I have written in this notebook. Since November 12 we have been living in our own, new house. Everything is so lovely and convenient compared to the one in Kansas. I have such a pretty room. On the wall hangs the large picture of dear Mother; it is as if her eyes are alive and follow me. We hope to be able to remain in Texas. We will have to live for two years "out of our pockets, and the men will have to work hard and put in a lot of money before the land will become productive. Peter Muellers built first, and were able to move in quickly before the stork brought their fourth child, a little Herbert, to them. Now Sams are building. From my south window I can watch the building. In the old house we experienced a lot of discomfort, trouble, and adversity. The children, their mother, also Sam's children and I, were all sick at about the same time. Then the worst befell me. I got blood poisoning in the right hand through a very poisonous insect sting on my thumb. Here there are many such insects and the screen on the window was bad, so, since I slept along downstairs, the insect found me. Oh, I went through a lot; I suffered very much. We thought it was an abscess, and the doctor that was called, confirmed that idea, and through the incorrect treatment made things still worse. Then Jacob had me go to Beaumont, a large city 22 miles from here, in an auto where I was seen by a competent doctor, thank God. The trip in the auto on the oystershell highway through the southern forest would have been very lovely and interesting if it had not been such a painful way. Through the treatment the bad hand healed quickly. Even so, it took two months, also my thumb remained somewhat stiff. But I have much to be thankful for. That little room in the old house I called, with reason, my "room of pain." In addition, a large number of rats lived in that house, and during the sleepless nights they were really bothersome with their noise and impudence. They shared my quarters, and danced around under, beside, and on my bed. I will never forget that time, but I also was able in the little room to experience what the poet sings:

I have blessed hours, often with Thee, O Lord,
Experienced strength from you, when heavy was my heart!

To our joy, we received a card from brother Heinrich from Germany, which told us very much. The loved ones are getting along well, the news from the English that things are going badly for Germany are lies. Heinrich told about his brothers-in-law: Rudolf and Heinrich Schmutz from Bockschaft are in France; Oscar Fellman as an officer has to hold watch in a tunnel where daily many French prisoners are transported. Heinrich visited him there and saw many Frenchmen, among them really old men. Peter and his brother are also in the service; Peter, luckily, still in Würzburg as orderly of a staff officer. Elise can be happy about that. If I could only get some information about another one, but Heinrich is silent about him. Peter wrote to me yet to Kansas before the war, a long letter. He made a visit to Hellmannsberg. For whom that was intended is easy to guess, and I almost envied my dear Elise (Hodel). But I will be quiet. I read something which made me feel good. I have often asked myself if I could still pray for someone who is "dead" for me. Now I found these words: It is the right of real love to continue to love, also when the beloved rejects that love. It is sanctified love's right to pray for the beloved's happiness, without asking for anything for oneself.

Christmas, 1914 - Our first Christmas in the new home and without question a miserable one. The children enjoyed the tree and the gifts as at other times, and also sang, "O Du fröhliche, O du selige Weihnachtszeit!" But we grownups are very worried. It has been raining for weeks, completely disconsolate; also Jacob was advised against staying here by a number of people who have lived here for a longtime. So Jacob in all seriousness wanted to leave again, selling this lovely home or letting it stand empty, as unfortunately many large houses stand empty and forsaken in the area. I would then have to find myself a place where I could support myself when the sister and brother-in-law go back again to Kansas. Under the circumstances I could not stay with them. So I thought of traveling to California where we have so many relatives, and especially the former "Reichenbergers" would take me in for the time being. But the thought of having to go among strangers was abhorrent to me. If I weren't so inept and imperfect in household work - housekeeping. It was very late in my life before I got any experience in such activities because of my ill health as a child, and then the care of dear Mother. If I could only speak English; it is not so easy to learn it. O, I cannot express the thoughts that assail me. I drew three verses from Mother's little Bible verse chest:

I was completely overwhelmed as I read these words, and thankfully took them for me. I also believe that everything will yet turn out all right, and we will be able to stay here. Jacob's brothers and also the relatives in Kansas have strongly advised us to stay here and calmly wait to see how things turn out. Only after living here a year can one really judge how things will be. Rudolf was here in November to investigate everything; he was in good spirits. How happy I am that he is so happy and is exchanging letters with Katherine; he sent her a nice, well done photograph. She will be proud of that. I wrote many good things to her about him, and I told Rudolf things about her. So they become closer to each other, even if they do not know each other personally. Now we want to be patient about whether we stay here, and hope for the Lord's help. From Germany a long, very interesting letter arrived from brother Heinrich. But what a heartbreak for the dear relatives in Giebelstadt. Also the fine Dr. Neff, who entertained us so well in Würzburg, who was so full of love for life (who so enjoyed life to the full) and was so full of energy and courage, died a heroes death for the Fatherland. He died on September 3, 1914 from a shot in the head in France as a lieutenant. Oh, what a pity it is for him and all of the countless vigorous, promising young lives who are falling an offering to this terrible war, which is unique in history. Heinrich wants to sell his house on the hillside in Würzburg if he can find a buyer. Oh, it hurts me to know that that lovely home, the room where Mother died, will be in unfamiliar hand. But everything in this world is transitory.

New Year, 1915 - What a year lies behind us, and that which lies ahead of us will be still more difficult and dark than the past year. "Jesus Christ, yesterday, today, and the same in eternity" the children said this morning as their memorized New Year's verse, also the lovely verse:

they said to their father to his surprise. Yesterday on Sylvester evening my heart was very heavy and my thoughts were continually in Germany with all of the loved ones there. All this misery and sorrow, unspeakably great in this calamitous world, depresses one's soul. Still the Lord is still certainly greater than these war chariots (ammunition wagons) and the waters of affliction. Since August I have been at peace as far as my inner emotional experiences are concerned. Yesterday evening it came so strongly again that I looked around the room full of fear, whether I would not see someone. I firmly believe he was thinking of me, or I would not have been able to have this feeling of his nearness. I drew verses for my loved ones from my little Bible verse file and also took a card for my special concern. As I read the words in I Sam. 1: 27 - "For this (child) I prayed, and the Lord hath given me my petition which I asked of him." a great joy overwhelmed me, and I took the words as a gift of Grace with a thankful heart.

New Year, 1915, continued - I hope I have not ventured into false or wrong things, but may rejoice that my Savior thinks of me. Today we had a lot of company, the parents and brothers and sisters of Mrs. Peter Mueller. There are 4 sons and two daughters. The oldest, Barbara, is exactly as tall as I, which makes me especially happy. But she is very dainty and pretty, also in other ways a real American. She wants to be good friends with me, which makes me very happy, since I have been very lonesome until now.

February 7, 1915 - Again this day, and in addition it is Sunday. Oh, what thoughts come into my mind, and yet I was allowed to experience something very lovely. Since my brothers gave me information about all of my acquaintances, but nothing about the most important one, I prayed that since he is in this horrible war, I would be able to find out something definite. Last week I received a card from brother Heinrich from Würzburg. He was there in order to finalize the sale of his house. A distinguished professor is now the owner of the house. He stuffed a library of 16,000 volumes into the house, and the room in which dear Mother and I lived is now his bedroom. Such an elegant gentleman in the same bedroom as my little mother was! Heinrich wrote the card in the military hospital Schillerschule in Würzburg, where he was visiting cousin Jacob and Heinrich H (Hodel? Horsch?) who are both wounded. Heinrich also reported further that S. met him as a soldier on the way home from the drill ground. How much these few words told me, and I happily thanked God inwardly that my petition had been heard and answered. At the time I again observed the connection because on the day before New Years Eve the two met each other on the street in Würzburg, and since then I again have the same inner experiences as last year. It comes each time at 10 o'clock and continues until one or three o'clock in the night. It has at times driven me out of bed. I stood at the window at night, looked at the clock, and had to wait until this influence on my mind or emotions or spirit, or however I should describe it, stopped. Then I go to sleep at once. We are 7 hours ahead of Europe in time, and it would at the that time that I cannot rest, be evening or late afternoon in Germany. This is the worst during the night of Saturday to Sunday. Now I would like to know how long it will be before he has to go to the Front into the firing line - sooner or later. How is it with his soul? Is he prepared to die? I constantly ask this in my mind. I read an excerpt from a sermon in the Sonntagsblatt, which we get monthly from Germany. It happened that I found comfort for this question in it. "Never have we crossed the threshold into a new year in deeper darkness. Terror behind us, fear before us. How many lights of hope were extinguished in an instant as the terrible storm broke over us. Oh, thousands of human eyes are among them. It will get still darker. But one light remains for us, and just now wants to carry out His eternal destiny in us. It is He, who has been from the beginning and will be in eternity, through whom all things were made, in whom everything exists, before whom all will some day come: Jesus Christ, our Saviour. Also there, where the fear and the terror are the greatest, on the fields of battle, the military hospitals, and in the prison camps, the heavenly light shines. Oh, the compassionate Lord whom we and our dear young ones so often, in so many ways ignore or pass by negligently or even disdainfully, does not hold it against us. He is drawn out with them, he gives the weak strength and courage, he shows the fighting ones the goal. He bends over the wounded lovingly and approvingly. He stretches out his arms to carry the dying home. All those who accept him, and that is now many, many, these he will give the power to become God's children and heirs of everlasting salvation.

April 4, 1915 - Easter - It is our first Easter in the South and what's more, so very cold as we did not think possible. The brothers-in-law planted many fig trees, orange trees, sugar cane, and Japanese potatoes. We hope that everything will still turn out well. The land is fertile and good. From Germany we received letters.

April 4, 1915, continued- Things are going very well for the Neustadters in spite of the war. Still, they see a lot of misery since five military hospitals are set up in Neustadt. For the fifth hospital Heinrich and Frieda gave, on a loan basis, furniture, among which was my washtable and reclining chair; the last they can use especially well. Who had any idea that my things would serve wounded heroes. When a hospital train comes, it stirs up sympathy from everyone; it is unbelievable what the poor soldiers have to endure. Kathrine Hodel also wrote. She longs to be here. The time is getting very long for her and Rudolf. Anna from Bockschaft is in her parental home as long as the war lasts. In August the stork will visit her. Milli with her family came home to Würzburg from Sumatra. That must be very hard to already have to come back from her field of service in India because of illness. They had three children; one died, the others are with her and are also sick. So it goes in this world; nothing but misery and sorrow. The dear Mrs. van der Smitten also wrote in detail. Her Elise is still in France and experiences dreadful things with the family Sommer, with whom she is as help. They had to flee from one place to another. Through the German military mail they could send letters home for a while. Martha from Lautenbach is also near the French border, as the happy wife of the owner of Stangenwalterhof. But they still have not experienced any of the terrors of the war there. Her brother Christian is in the war, also so many others that I know. Alfred Fellman, my once upon a time little friend, is at Dapern in the defense trenches. I cannot write in detail all that was written to me. Unfortunately I heard nothing about S. In February I had many bad nights, especially from 25/26 February. I would like to know what caused it. I can hardly believe that he still thinks about me.

May 16, 1915 - Sunday - Were at the worship services this morning. We hold these in an empty house, in one room of which benches were constructed from boards. We have become quite accustomed to this simple room, and hardly miss the nice churches. We are glad that God's Word is being preached to us. Dr. Hirschy is our preacher. He is a very learned and well traveled man, who for health reasons went to the south. This afternoon we had a party in the forest with the related families. It was very nice. Barbara was together with me and we sat on a tree stump by the so called Bai (bayou?) in which there are even supposed to be crocodiles. But none of these monsters disturbed us. Barbara has a lot to talk about. On the way home Barbara fell off the wagon as it went over a ditch and the wheels almost went over her, if her brother had not been able to stop the horses quickly. So we all came off with the fright, and Barbara with several bumps.

June 25, 1915 - Again my birthday, the first in Texas. How much that was new and difficult this past year brought, so that I have to say: "In how much trouble the gracious God has spread his wings over me." And when I look ahead, and see the new year lying so dark before me, I will say, as the song says: "I trust Jesus and all things work out for good for me." I like it here continually better and better. It is so pretty; everything grows, thrives, blooms, is green. Especially the roses and other flowers are so pretty. In May, when the perfume of the orange blossoms (similar to Jasmin) mingled with the roses, I hardly wanted to go into the house in the evening, it was so lovely; then in addition the southern starry sky, and the many lightning bugs large and small, on the ground and in the grass, and in the air. Yes, this climate is fine and healthy, and I have a nice home with the loved ones here, and am thankful from the heart for all the good things. From Germany I received a number of letters. When we were still in Kansas I had some photographs made of me, and because of the war I didn't send them overseas until this year. Now I heard from everybody that I look so well (how good I look). Heinrich from Neustadt wrote that he and all that had seen my picture said that I had changed very favorably. Aunt Lenschen from Friedelsheim and Aunt Elise from Kohlhof wrote they hardly knew me, I had changed so much, and Aunt Elise added that I had become an American lady! Now I have to be careful that I as an old maid do not still become vain. Dear Elise from Hellmannberg also wrote to me and she sent a picture of her and also her sister Marie. Marie is engaged to Fritz Horsch,

June 25, 1915 - continued - about which I am very happy. He belongs to the ambulance corp directly behind the Front. Elisa told me about Uncles in G. (Hodels in Giebelstadt?) Peter is still in ordinance duty in Würzburg and does not have to go to the Front. Jakob is already out there again. Helmut v. N. also wrote very interestingly. His brother-in-law Oscar had to leave the Front for the second time because of illness. I think that Aunt Elisabeth would rather have him sick at home than well near the firing line of the enemy. The jolly Heinrich from Bockschaft ? is a lieutenant at Arras. He received the iron cross because he and 60 other men stormed the French trenches. At their "Hurrah!" the French retreated (ran away). From S. Heinrich wrote only that he is also on the battle field, so I do not know if he is in constant danger of death, and I would like so much to know just where he is. His good friend, Rudolf from Bockschaft, is a non-commissioned officer at an ammunition station in the Argonne. The big Ernst is also in the war, and Theodor Hege, the only one (only son or child?). I feel so sorry for the relatives, especially my dear Anna, who has to experience so much wretchedness in Würzburg. Unfortunately she has not written to me any more since the war started, and so I receive news from my old home only incidentally and indirectly. Oh, the terrible war! And still there is no end in sight.

August 15, 1915 - Sunday - A lovely Sunday today. It rained overnight and now there is sunshine. Everything is fresh and luxuriant. The cornfields, the fruit trees, the sugar cane and the "Sunflower Forest" as the children say. It is a magnificent sight, these stems that are taller than a man with golden flowers the size of dinner plates. When the seeds are ripe, they will be used for chicken feed. Now the flowers tower above everything else, and we really enjoy them. If God continues to give his blessing, we can be happy and thankful. We took a short walk over to Sams. An older couple came there also. Mrs. Fischer is a very energetic, always jovial person and we talked about all sorts of things together on the porch. We talked about the tripple wedding, which we hope to celebrate in the Spring. The dear parents (of Jacob) and his sisters and brother want to come here in September, and in February, God willing, the parents will be able to celebrate their golden wedding. Also, Helene, their oldest daughter, is engaged to Christian Baehr, a cousin to Frieda, our sister-in-law in Neustadt. Then we hope that Kathrine will be here from Germany by that time, and so the three bridal pairs will be complete. Helene is a nurse in California in the Upland Sanatorium, and has found her best friends in our relatives, the former Reichenberger (Hannes or John and Lena Landes.) She has invited them to the wedding, and they have accepted if Kathrine will be able to come from Germany by that time. Oh, what happiness wells up in me at the thought of seeing them again, and I will finally have the experience of attending a wedding. I failed to mention that on June 24 we had a picnic in the forest. All of the residents of Hamshire came together in a lovely place in the forest. We took along table cloths and food. The cloths were spread on the ground and everyone sat down and we had a happy feast. There was also a barrel full of lemonade and an enormous coffee pot, in which the coffee was cooked over a fire on the ground.

August 22, 1915 - Sunday. Again a Sunday! Who could have surmised last Sunday what a difficult time was ahead of us. A terrible coastal storm (hurricane) struck us in the night of August 16-17. What a night of terror! We feared for our lives, but were mercifully spared. Our house and the others here in Hamshire withstood the fury of the storm, but nearer to the Gulf many people were killed. The sea water came over the land to within a few miles of our place, also at our place everything was full of water several feet deep, only on the west side of the house, it was dry under the house. We have the best place far and wide. But on the south-east side of the house the water swirled and rushed for days in foam tipped waves. The sea gulls flew over, screeching, and at night the moon shed its eerie light on the water through the black shreds of clouds. The waves broke under my window on the large stone blocks on which the house stands, and it gave me an uneasy, uncanny feeling as I looked out of my window at night. How many people, and also thousands of cattle herds, ruins of houses and buildings swam in the water. Jacob's large barn also collapsed and buried every living thing under it. Like a miracle

August 22, 1915 (continued) - on the large stone blocks on which the house stands, and it gave me an uneasy, uncanny feeling as I looked out of my window at night. How many people, and also thousands of cattleherds, ruins of houses and buildings swam in the water. Jacob's large barn also collapsed and buried every living thing under it. Like a miracle the three valuable mules were unhurt. The wagon standing near them held the fallen roof. With only a small hatchet- everything else was buried in the wreckage - Jacob had to work his way through the ruins to rescue the animals. But the very badly needed good cow was so injured that she had to be killed. At our brother-in-law Sam's place the chicken house was demolished and the chickens drowned. The material damage is very great, since the trees were also badly damaged and for years ahead the area will suffer from it so that we cannot support ourselves here, and have to leave. But to where? We turned to the California relatives. For the time being we will have to stay here since the stork will come to us in November. It is very sad and difficult, to leave this lovely home standing, and all the land in which our money is invested. With the little that Jacob still has, we cannot do much here. And I will also have to find a place to stay. Maybe I can find a place where I can earn \$40.00 in a year. Because this is the amount we need for Adolf, and now Jacob cannot as before pay that money. That is the biggest worry for me. I remember very vividly how dear Mother said on Nov. 4, 1910, shortly before her death, with tears in her eyes: "You and Adolf are the two sparrows." At time I had read the verses to her: Matt. 10: 29-31, "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and not one of them shall fall on the ground without your Father: But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore; ye are of more value than many sparrows." I will cling to these words of my Savior when I become fearful about Adolf's and my future. Who would have thought last Sunday as we talked about the weddings as we sat on Sam's porch that with one blow all hopes and expectations would be destroyed. The water went down very quickly and the sun is shining as if a storm had never raged here. The lovely sunflowers lie with their bare stems in the water on the ground. So the beauty of this world quickly disappears, but God's grace remains to eternity.

October 31, 1915 - Sunday - Now it is two months since the catastrophe struck us, and our spirits have calmed; also the matter of our future has clarified. We will stay here in the south in the comfortable climate, we get to keep our lovely home with the porch surrounded by greenery, the red and white roses, the shrubs and trees. Since the storm we have had the loveliest weather, and everything is still green and blooming, so that one has to marvel. In September Jacob traveled to Kansas to visit his deathly sick mother. By the time he got there the dear patient was on the way to recovery, to everyone's joy. In Kansas Jacob was advised by everyone, especially those who had recently come from California, not to go there, and he decided to find a home in Oklahoma. However, he found only one place for temporary expediency. While he was in Kansas, Sams packed their belongings and moved to Halstead on September 24. There they have found a good home. It is the place where Jacob and Elisabeth began their household when they were first married and where their first child was born. Naturally the parting was very hard for them. Letting everything stand like this is not simple. Sam experienced on his two week trip with his freight car all sorts of adventures, and wrote that he did not want to make such a trip in his life again. Lydia wrote that they were welcomed by all of their acquaintances in Kansas cordially and affectionately. After Jacob then came back from Kansas and reflected on everything and figured things out, he came to the decision to stay here and to risk the rest of his money in a last venture. He wants to build a silo and raise cattle. That is the most certain thing here, and many well-to-do cattle owners live around us. Jacob will naturally have to start out small, and for a number of years we will have to cut down on everything. Still if God gives his blessing, things will be all right. Now we

will be living "in exile" as Jacob jokingly says, since the Kansas relatives will not be coming. I am very sorry about Katherine's coming, that she will not come to but to Kansas, and also we will not be in on the wedding celebration. From Germany we had news through brother Adolf. He wrote so sympathetically and consolingly about the catastrophe that struck us, also he informed us that brother Heinrich in Neustadt will pay for him. So I will not need to go among strangers to earn this money. Of course, the two young women in California invited me heartily and sisterly to come to them. Elise needs help in the spring, and then Babette wants to take me into her home; the little room in her house which Elise had before her marriage would be mine. I would certainly like it, Babette thinks. But a trip to California costs a lot of money, so I will stay where I am and the money can be used for Adolf. Adolf told me a lot about the relatives and acquaintances. Things are going quite well for Uncle and Aunt in Giebelstadt concerning their sons; only Fritz is in France with the light ammunition group; Jacob is in the Palatinate as the mail officer in a prisoner of war camp. He knows English and French well, so he fits well for such an assignment. Peter is still in Würzburg. Theodor H. is in Arras; Alfred was transferred to Russia, where his regiment had a distinguished part in the capture of an important road (or railroad); his brother, big Ernst, is in north France; poor H (Heinrich?) Model is lying badly wounded in the field hospital for the second time. He has 10 wounds in the legs, arms, and neck. Oh, it is terrible with this war and its consequences. Also, what I had long feared happened. S. is also severely wounded with a shrapnel shot in his forehead. He is getting along better. He was, or still is, in Italy. Eh, what feelings overwhelmed me as I received this "Job" letter. And still I had to be thankful that the shot was not fatal, or that his eyes were not blinded. But many, many questions well up in me, which no one answers for me. Since Adolf wrote this on September 25, four weeks have passed. How will he be getting along now? Will he have to go out again when he has recovered? Will his wounds heal without any lasting damage, etc., etc. I drew a verse for me from Mother's little box - Isaiah 41: 10 - "Fear not, I am with you." And for him: Psalm 91: 10: "There shall no evil befall thee, Neither shall any plague come nigh thy tent." These words comforted me and I can only be thankful for these precious promises. And the question also rises up in me whether my inner experiences are connected with him. In the night from 11-12 September I again had no rest before midnight, and in the night from 21-22 September I had such a vivid dream that I woke up over it and I had a premonition that something had happened to him. And in the night of 26-27 September such a longing and desire for him overwhelmed me that I could hardly endure it. I could only sob that the Saviour would free me from it through the power of his blood, so that I would not grieve Him. But since then I feel like last year in June, only lessened - - I pray with the Psalmist

I also received an interesting letter from the dear Mrs. van der Smissen. She is filled with praise and thankfulness. Her sons are not in the war. The oldest is in the army hospital Zwiken as attendant or nurse. Her daughter Elise, who was interned in France since March was unexpectedly allowed to come home in June. Elise was allowed to experience God's wonderful hand over everything. Her mother wishes her to, and she wants to, tell me herself about her experiences. But I will have to wait until the strict war rule has been lifted. In Germany only letters of one page with plain handwriting can be sent. Oh, if only there would finally be some prospect that of peace.

New Year, 1916 - A new year is beginning. The past one brought us much, much sorrow and grief, and still there is much to be thankful for. In the night of 15-16 November a little, big Elfriede Marie arrived. Her poor mother was badly off since something was not right, and she was very weak. On the 10th day we women were alone. Jacob had ridden to Winnie about his silo, which the storm had blown over, and which was now standing for the second time ready to be filled in

New Year, 1916, continued - In the evening about 5 or 6 o'clock a storm came up which drove the rain through the roof of the house, like in the big storm in August. The poor sick one in her bed got wet and could not be rescued from the situation until Jacob came home. He almost didn't get home. The storm rolled him on the ground in the water, and if the light in our window had not been shining and lighted his way, he would not have found the house. The storm also blew the silo over for the second time, and it was supposed to be filled now. The fear and excitement because of the storm made Elisabeth so sick that we feared for her life. In addition she became sick with malaria fever, and at the same time I was also overcome with this fever. But I could still force myself out of bed, and the good Barbara Schowalter helped me for three days. Still, it was a very difficult time for us. Elisabeth is recovering very slowly. In addition, so many worries also came, all of which I cannot enumerate. Only this much, Jacob is now completely ruined. Some of the cattle herd, through unfavorable weather, is sick and many of the valuable cows have died. In addition he has to pay the rest of the money for the cattle by February 5, and with what? We have to leave here, to move to the place in Kansas which we thought was not good enough for us, and the Kansas relatives who have only blame and reproach and no sympathy, will have to loan us the train fare. It is very dark for us. I drew the verse for Elisabeth, who is very depressed: "Be comforted, fear not." And for me, for someone whom I cannot forget in spite of all the sorrow: "The very hair of your head are numbered." That is comfort and shelter enough, whatever may happen to him. I have the firm faith that we will still be helped out of our need here.

February 24, 1916 - My faith has not been put to shame. Beyond asking and understanding we have been helped. On February 4, the day before the debt for the cattle had to be paid, a cattleman came and bought all of Jacob's cattle, naturally at a great loss, but still we were helped. Then a rich rice farmer came and bought many things - the buildings on Dan's farm. The buildings were moved. We could watch as the lovely house was moved. Also, Jacob could sell his silo and other buildings and his lumber, so that we have the money for train fare ourselves and do not have to borrow from the Kansas relatives. The best is that Jacob will not have to abandon his land with the house and buildings. Everything will be exchanged for a lovely modernly furnished house in Halstead! That was a remarkable happening. The carpenter who came to Texas with us and built our houses made the exchange. He found a bride in Hampshire and wants to stay in the South. His house in Halstead has no value for him, and for us it is a very good fortune. In Halstead the grandparents celebrated their golden wedding, and Aunt Helen her wedding, without us. It is too bad that we missed that. What will happen about Rudolf and Katherine's wedding no one knows. The war does not come to an end. We have had no news from Germany for a long time. We are anxious and fearful until the trip and the move from here and the moving in at Halstead is over. Elisabeth is still very weak. The man who is giving us the place in Kansas wrote a friendly letter, saying that he will have the house ready by mid March, before we plan to move. What all will we still experience this year!?

Geary, March 19, 1916

This is the last entry in the diary, just this date line. Aunt Selma probably had neither the privacy nor the time to do more writing in it after that. She never again, either in Deer Creek nor in Halstead until we moved onto the Warkentin place in 1933, had a room by herself. How she must have missed the cozy attic room on the farm north of Halstead and even more her lovely room in the new house in Texas. In Deer Creek she slept at one end of the upstairs attic and Jake slept at the other end until a room was added to the house. Then she shared a room with Elfriede, Hilda, and me. On the Hertzler place near Halstead she shared a room with Doris and Elfriede. She did have her own room at the Warkentine place and the Hertzler farm east of town, and her own suite upstairs after the move to 604 North St. I once heard her tell a visitor about this: "and now I have this lovely comfortable home for my final years."